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*THE INFLUENCE OF REVIVALS UPON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

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Most of the histories of our denomination tell of the organization of presbyteries and synods, of the adoption of creeds, of the establishment of schools and colleges, of the efforts of our forefathers in behalf of civil and religious liberty. There are many heroic chapters, but one wishes that more were told us of the way in which evangelical truth worked in the hearts of the people. In attempting to trace the influence of evangelistic movements upon our Church one is at a loss as to where to begin. We are the spiritual heirs of Presbyterian and Reformed Christians of Switzerland, France, Holland, Germany, England, Scotland and Ireland, and these were in turn the spiritual heirs of the Protestant Reformation. That movement was far more than a protest, far more than a reformation. It changed men's souls and had great political, social and economic results, as well as religious. It was indeed the greatest revival since the days of Paul.

But while we are heirs of other Presbyterian and Reformed bodies, our real Mother Church was that established in the North of Ireland by the Scotch immigrants to that country.

*The present year has been set aside by our Assembly as pre-eminently a Year of Evangelism. We are therefore publishing in this issue three articles bearing on this important subject. Others are to follow in later numbers.

Presbyterianism gained a foothold and flourished there through two notable revivals, in 1625 and in 1641.

When the wild Irish Catholics forfeited their lands to the Crown during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, efforts were made to introduce immigrants from England and Scotland. The former, however, were too unaccustomed to hardship to prove effective settlers, whereas the Scotch, being more hardy, quickly established themselves in Ulster and other counties. The following account by Stewart is not a flattering one of our Scotch-Irish ancestors: "Most of the people were all void of godliness, who seemed rather to flee from God in their enterprise than to follow their own mercy. Yet God followed them when they fled from him. Albeit at first, it must be remembered, that as they cared little for any church so God seemed to care as little for them. Thus, on all hands, atheism increased, and disregard of God, iniquity abounded with contention, fighting, murder, adultery, etc., as among a people who, as they had nothing within them to overawe them, so their ministers' example [*i. e.*, those they found in Ireland] was worse than nothing. And verily, at this time the whole body of this people seemed ripe for the manifestation either of God's judgment or of God's mercy."

God manifested his mercy. There were seven noble preachers of the Presbyterian faith in Ireland: Brice, Ridge, Hubbard, Glendinning, Cunningham, Blair and Hamilton. Strange to say, the revival broke out through the ministry of the preacher who was regarded as the least able and weakest of these brethren. Stewart tells how Mr. Blair occasionally heard Mr. Glendinning preach and, finding in him some ability to warn the worldly and stir up the consciences of the wicked, sent him to Oldstone near the town of Antrim. Here he awakened the consciences of the lewd persons by preaching to them unrestrainedly the law, wrath and terrors of God. Many were convicted and cried out for salvation. The effect of his preaching was especially marked upon the most wicked and bolder spirits in the community, men who seemed incorrigible, and yet who through these sermons were subdued and won to Christ.

The revival spread through the county and attracted people of both high and low degree. The other preachers joined in the revival which spread until the news of it reached Scotland and able ministers from that country, such as Josiah Welch, a grandson of John Knox, came over to assist.

Two elements manifested themselves in this revival, which were present in all great awakenings. First, *prayer* by individuals and in groups. The house of Hugh Campbell, in the parish of Oldstone, was used as a monthly meeting place where Christians gathered to spend their time in prayer, mutual edification and conference. The number of people who attended these gatherings increased so rapidly that the ministers thought well to set up monthly meetings at Antrim, which in turn became a means of grace and of encouragement for the ministers and laymen who were taking part in the work. It is recorded of Robert Blair, the directing mind of the revival, that "he spent many days and nights in prayer alone with God and others and was vouchsafed great intimacy with God."

The second element of all great awakenings is great *preaching* of the Word. Men and women went gladly thirty or forty miles to attend communion. We will see this again when we come to the later revivals in Virginia. It is a pity that we have such few records of the actual sermons preached by the leaders of this revival, but testimony is general that their messages were delivered with great effectiveness.

This revival was followed by a period of stagnation and persecution which resulted in an attempt on the part of the leaders in the Presbyterian group in the North of Ireland to settle in New England. The voyage of the *Eagle Wing* is a thrilling chapter in itself. Difficulty after difficulty, storm upon storm, hindered their way until finally their boat having sprung a leak, their rudder having broken, they limped pitifully into Lockfergus nearly two months after they had sailed away. Though subjected to ridicule and persecution, it seems that this strange providence was mightily used of God for the ultimate settlement of the Scotch-Irish in America. On their return to Ireland their ministers were either forced to

withdraw or to submit to prelacy, and the more conscientious and able ones returned to Scotland. This was in 1636. Five years later, when the Irish Uprising occurred, the Presbyterians suffered far less than other Protestants, and when peace was established a new opportunity for leadership was thrust upon our spiritual forefathers.

Until that time no Presbytery had been formally organized in Scotland, and in this day when everything that relates to wars and armies is so distasteful to many it is interesting to remind ourselves that the presbyteries which gave birth to and nurtured Presbyterianism in America were themselves organized in the regiments of General Monroe's Army. The Insurrection was subdued by Scotch troops. Immediately thereafter a revival led by the loyal Presbyterian chaplains broke out in the army. Godly soldiers were elected and ordained to the eldership, and sessions were organized in the various regiments. Presbytery was then set up with representatives from the four regiments. The inhabitants of the land shared in the revival which followed and in great eagerness embraced the opportunity to be organized into sessions and presbyteries. Ministers were sent for from Scotland and the preaching of the Word was so eagerly attended that no house could be found sufficiently large for the congregations. Field preaching was resorted to and even the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in the open. Missionary journeys were undertaken as far as the army could afford protection. Thus in the army was accomplished the real founding of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, which more than any other church is the Mother Church of our denomination in America.

The effects of these revivals in Ireland upon American Presbyterianism cannot be over-estimated. "Col. Stevens, from Maryland besides Virginia," requested the Presbyterians of the North of Ireland to send a minister who could preach to the Presbyterians who had settled in his vicinity. Francis Makemie was sent and under his influence Presbyterianism was organized on this continent. Following him in rapid succession came Hampton, McNish, the Tennents, Samuel Blair,

Alexander Craighead and many more. The economic and religious persecution in the North of Ireland sent a steady stream of God-fearing men and women of this faith into the back country of Pennsylvania and South Carolina. Although there were other streams, the main one entered through Pennsylvania, leaving a large portion in that colony. Migrations set in south and west, filling the valleys of Western Pennsylvania, passing through the Valley of Virginia and then over the Blue Ridge into the fertile fields between the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers in North Carolina and extending finally through South Carolina to North Georgia and Alabama. There were offshoots such as the Caldwell Settlement near Cub Creek in Charlotte County, Va., which led to the establishment of Presbyterian churches often isolated from other groups of their own faith.

These men of Presbyterian antecedents had scarcely settled in this country when the Great Awakening occurred. The movement began almost simultaneously in New England and in Old England. At Northampton, Mass., where the funeral services of former President Coolidge were held this month, the great revival under Jonathan Edwards gained headway. Shortly thereafter Gilbert Tennent was engaged in successful evangelistic efforts. This antedated by several years the great outpouring upon the Wesleys and their group at the historic meeting in Fetter Lane. The Awakening, however, found its outstanding preacher and greatest power in Whitefield, so that the two movements were closely identified. His arrival stirred up the flame afresh in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and South Carolina. Humphrey says, "It is questionable whether any preacher since the days of the Apostles has done so much in a degenerate age to arouse the churches."

While the Awakening had considerable direct and tremendous indirect influence upon Georgia and the Carolinas, yet its chief theaters were New England, the Middle Colonies and Virginia. It is estimated that in New England from twenty-five to fifty thousand were converted out of a population of 340,000. In New England many of these were affil-

iated with the Congregational Church, but in New York, New Jersey and especially in Pennsylvania the preaching of Whitefield, the Tennents, Finley, Blair and others produced outstanding results in the Presbyterian Church. Unfortunately in 1741, before the full effects of the revival were felt, there was a division into the Old Side and New Side, the Synod of Philadelphia leading the former, which was opposed to revival methods, the Synod of New York leading the New Side. We shall see how this division not only affected the Middle Colonies, but also the beginnings of Presbyterianism in Virginia.

In spite of divisions, this great evangelistic movement was mightily used of God in the establishment and spread of the Presbyterian Church in the colonies. In the History of Old Redstone, which was the name of the presbytery which first embraced the territory in which Pittsburgh is now located, the author, in referring to this Great Awakening, asks, "But why was this sojourn in the Middle States? We may say, indeed, that their western and southern homes were not yet open for them. But was there not another reason in the divine purpose, though employing secondary causes as the immediate instruments of its will? A sublime mission for them and their children was intended, though altogether concealed from their view. They were not yet prepared for that mission. They must receive that preparation through the great revivals under Whitefield, the Tennents, the Blairs and a host of others whom God raised up in the earlier part of the last century to be instruments in his hands of spreading a new life through the Church. From 1740 to 1760 there was a mighty baptism of the Church of God in this land; and then were prepared the noble spirits that afterwards were called to so glorious a work in Virginia, North Carolina and Western Pennsylvania. And these again trained and marshalled those who in after years were to spread the gospel through all the West."

We of the South are probably more concerned with the effect of this movement upon our own locality. We see it first in Virginia. Strangely enough, the impact was not first upon

the Scotch-Irish in the Valley but upon the English settlement in Hanover. The Synod of Philadelphia, Old Side and conservative as regards revivals, was trying to care for the Presbyterians who had settled across the mountains near Opequon and further up the Valley. The New Side members of the Synod of New York came to the help of the little group seeking light in Virginia. The movement began in the house of Samuel Morris, where, in 1743, the neighbors began to gather in order to hear the reading of a volume of Mr. Whitefield's sermons. From week to week this reading continued, accompanied with conversations about Christian subjects, until finally the participants were summoned to Williamsburg to substantiate their claim for the right to worship as dissenters under the Act of Toleration. Knowing little about Presbyterianism, but remembering that Luther was a great reformer, they claimed to be Lutherans. Later, when William Robinson of the Log College, Gilbert and William Tennent, Samuel Finley and Samuel Blair visited them and preached, they recognized themselves as Presbyterians and claimed the right to worship as such. We see now the trouble caused by the division into Old and New Side in the Middle States. Governor Gooch had granted permission to the Synod of Philadelphia to send missionaries to the Presbyterian flocks west of the Alleghanies. When that body denied all knowledge of the Presbyterians in Hanover and claimed that the ministers who had visited them from Pennsylvania were schismatic, it was exceedingly difficult for this little band of Presbyterians to secure toleration. They finally managed to secure permission for Samuel Davies and certain others to preach and conduct worship.

No history of the evangelistic movement among the Presbyterians of the South would be complete without at least a reference to Samuel Davies. In a very real way he was the Father of Presbyterianism in Virginia east of the mountains. He was perhaps the greatest American preacher of his day. His labors covered five counties and his constituents were scattered in one or two others. The extreme limits of his congregations were from eighty to ninety miles, and he covered ter-

ritory held by eight Episcopal ministers. Failing in his attempt to get Jonathan Edwards to assist him in Virginia, he secured Rev. John Todd and several other ministers, settling four of them in the field which he formerly occupied. Presbyterian ministers were soon working in Prince Edward, Charlotte, Pittsylvania and Cumberland counties. Craighead and Brown were settled in Augusta County and through them the Awakening had its effect in the Valley. This was greatly increased after the union of the Old and New Side in 1758. As the revival progressed and as the Scotch-Irish across the mountains became more interested, the Presbyterians devoted themselves more to these people of their own antecedents, and large areas in Eastern Virginia and the Northern Neck, where Davies had assiduously labored, were neglected.

We should not minimize the effect of this revival in Eastern and South Side Virginia. From it have sprung some of the leading Presbyterian families of the South, whose influence, through their descendants and through Hampden-Sydney College and the Theological Seminary which they established, has been momentous. An outstanding illustration of this is the conversion of William Smith and of his wife, Mary Ann Smith, of Cumberland County. A loyal subject of King George II, and a nominal member of the Church of England, he bitterly opposed his wife's attendance upon the ministry of the dissenter, Samuel Davies. Later he himself was converted and then gladly rode many miles with his wife, fording rivers, to attend Presbyterian services. From this couple have descended the Hoge, Marquess, Binford, Hawes, Brooks and many other lines whose labors have added to the spreading of Presbyterianism. Hanover Presbytery, the first presbytery of the South, was a direct fruit of the great evangelistic movement which is known as the Great Awakening.

The Awakening advanced the Presbyterian Church in other sections of the South, notably in North Carolina, through the ministers who were sent out as a result of the revival. In 1755 Hugh McAden from the Synod of Philadelphia set out on his itinerating journey through the Valley of Virginia into

North Carolina. His diary shows the great amount of hardship which he endured. In most places his preaching was received with great favor and in many places with enthusiasm. He touched not only the Presbyterian churches of the Valley and the Piedmont section of North and South Carolina, but also the Cape Fear country which had been settled by the Highland Scotch. The later ministers who settled in North Carolina, such as Patillo in the Upper State, Craighead at Rocky River, Caldwell in Buffalo and Alamance, were the fruit of the Awakening. Not only so, but the Synods of New York and Philadelphia maintained their interest in the Presbyterians of North Carolina and repeatedly sent to them some of their best men, as, for instance, William Tennent, Jr., Nathan Ker, Geo. Duffield, William Ramsey, James Latta, Elihu Spencer and Alexander McWhorter.

Already the revival had had its effect upon the Highland Scotch settlement of the Cape Fear. Whitefield had preached to them in 1739 "not without effect." The services of the first Presbyterian minister in that settlement, James Campbell, who arrived in 1747, were secured through Whitefield. Having been settled over a church of Dutch immigrants in Philadelphia, Campbell had entered into a state of despondency and had ceased to preach, but through Whitefield his doubts were removed and he resumed his ministry, laboring effectively at Barbacue and Longstreet churches near Fayetteville. Hugh McAden's visit merged the two streams of Presbyterians in North Carolina just as the two in Virginia had been merged through the Great Awakening.

South Carolina and the scattered Presbyterian settlements in Georgia likewise felt the quickening of this great movement. As early as 1680 there had been mixed Presbyterian and independent churches in the Charleston area, as well as French churches. After 1724 there was a large influx of Scotch Irish, many of whom penetrated farther inland. Whitefield was a frequent visitor to the city, preaching there in 1738, 1740 and 1744, as a result of which there was a quickening of the spiritual life of the Presbyterians of that community, which re-

sulted in the establishment of new churches in the upper country and in the merging of many independent congregations, which led finally to the forming of the Presbytery of South Carolina. One of the most striking effects was in that group of New England Puritans who were destined to form the historic Midway Church of Liberty County, Ga. Having settled on Ashley River in 1695, one of their members, writing in 1746, said, "About two years ago the number of communicants in our church was a little over thirty. Now it is about seventy." This was but six years before the removal to Georgia, which occurred in 1752. From that congregation thus affected by the Great Awakening came the stream of men and ministers, including such names as Stevens, Baker, Way, Lupton, Winn, Spencer, James, Glass, Goulding, Girardeau, which so powerfully affected the future development of Presbyterianism in the world.

A word should be said regarding the effects of this great evangelistic movement. Beardsley groups these roughly under four heads. First, there was a spiritual awakening of the churches, whereby a membership which before had been too largely unregenerate and indifferent was marvelously quickened. In addition to this, thousands were added to the roll of the Church. Of the number converted the Presbyterians reaped the major harvest. The number of Presbyterian ministers was more than doubled during the twenty years between 1740 and 1760. A second result was the new interest of missionary activity. This found its first expression in the effort to Christianize the Indians. David Brainerd, who was converted during the revival, began his work in 1743 and it was the reading of an account of his life that inspired Henry Martyn to become the first modern missionary to the Mohammedans. Edwards himself was at one time a missionary to the Indians. A third result was the awakening of educational interest. The Log College played a major part in the revival and out of the Awakening were born Dartmouth and Princeton in the North, Liberty Hall, later to become Washington and Lee, and Hampden-Sydney in Virginia. Other institu-

tions, such as Jefferson College, Pennsylvania, and the University of North Carolina, can likewise be traced to the impetus given to education by the Great Awakening. A fourth result was its contribution to the rise of democracy. It both furnished a great constituency for Madison and Jefferson, and also brought to the attention of political leaders the Presbyterian form of government, after which our Federal Government is so closely modeled. Gewehr, in his "Great Awakening in Virginia," points out that it also had a great effect in ameliorating the condition of the Negroes, in leading to a betterment of their physical condition and also to a great effort at converting them. Cub Creek, one of the churches in Eastern Virginia which grew out of the revival, had before the end of the century nearly twice as many Negro members as White.

In conclusion, it may be profitable for us to note that in this revival, as in the revival in Ireland, prayer and preaching were the chief elements. In Wesley's account of the revival at Northampton we find that much prayer preceded and accompanied the Awakening. This we know was also true in the Oxford Group. John Wesley, writing of the meeting at Fetter Lane, in 1739, says: "About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us in so much that many cried out for exceeding joy and many fell to the ground. As soon as we had recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of His Majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.'" This was just eight months before Whitefield sailed for America on the journey which gave him his greatest conquests. Again we see prayer emphasized in the little group in Hanover. Can we not say that it is a universal antecedent or a concomitant of an Awakening?

Seldom has there been such preaching. Whitefield's power of utterance is known to us all. He has been judged by many as the greatest preacher since Paul. But to the Tennents, Finley, Baird, Davies, Robinson, McAden, Craighead and

others great gifts were also vouchsafed. It is doubtful if the Presbyterian Church at any subsequent period has ever possessed such a large proportion of outstanding pulpiteers. There was no mourners' bench, no anxious seat, none of the methods of evangelism such as have later grown up, but there was constant prayer, preaching and *conversation*. Indeed one is impressed that in the scant records which we have of these meetings conversation about the things of God takes its place with prayer and preaching as one of the great elements in the Great Awakening. Must not these elements of evangelism which so prominently stood out in the Great Awakening find a place in our Church again if we are to experience a revival?

*THE GREAT COMMISSION.

A Study of Acts 1:6-8.

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Ten times at least Jesus appeared to his disciples after the resurrection. As we read the various accounts it seems plain that His first purpose was to convince them that He was alive. He succeeded to such an extent that nothing thereafter could shake them from that belief, neither ridicule, nor persecution, nor death. The second purpose, it seems, was to impress upon them what we call the Great Commission. Over and over again he laid upon them the obligation to carry the gospel to the ends of the world. We find this commission repeated in Matthew, in Mark, in Luke, in John, and in the Book of Acts, five different forms, delivered on at least five different occasions.

*A sermon preached by Dr. Thompson, as retiring Moderator, at the opening of the Synod of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, September 6, 1932, and published by request of the Synod.