

OUTPOURINGS

OF THE

SPIRIT

REV. W. A. MCKAY, B.A.

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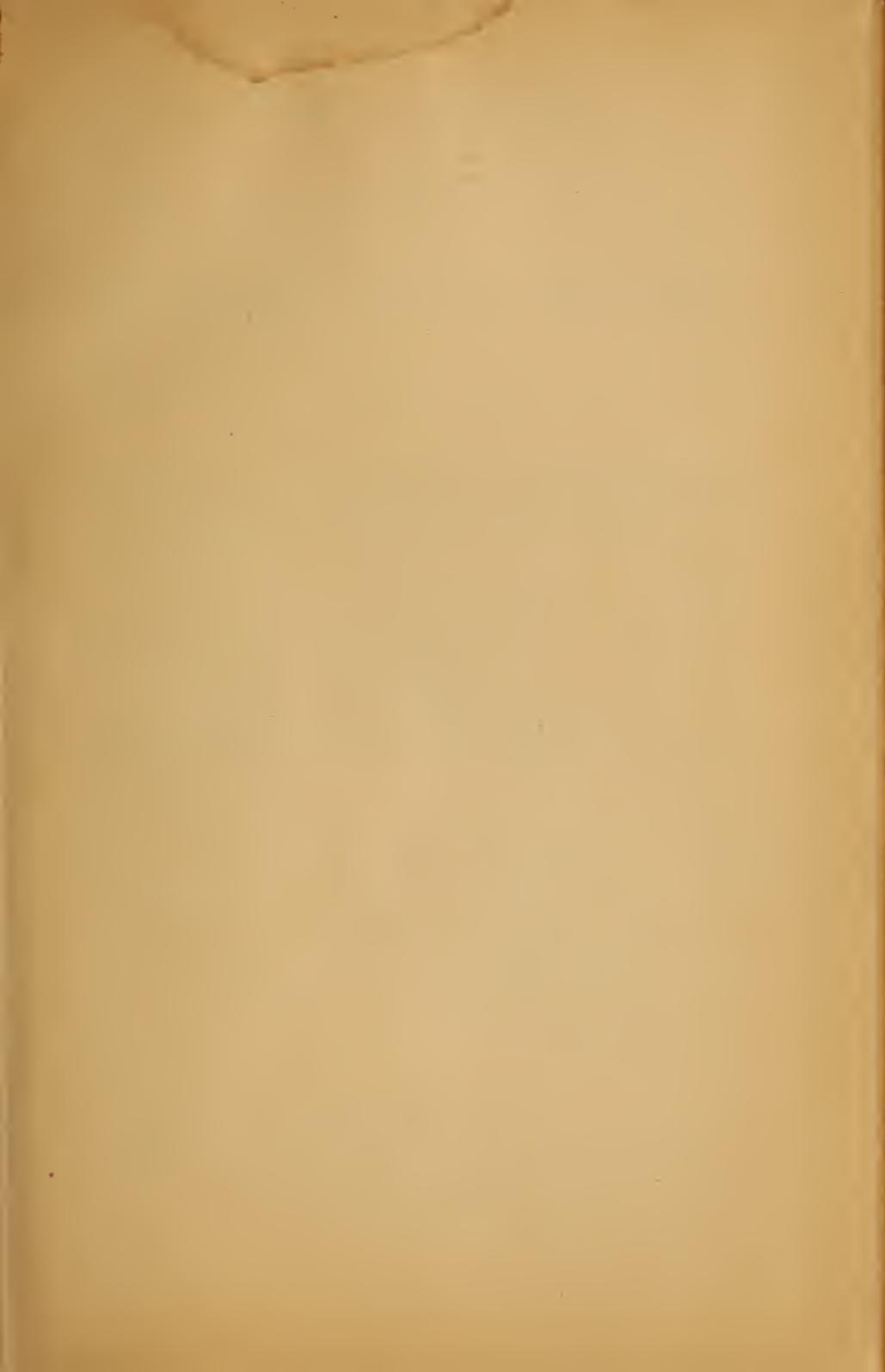
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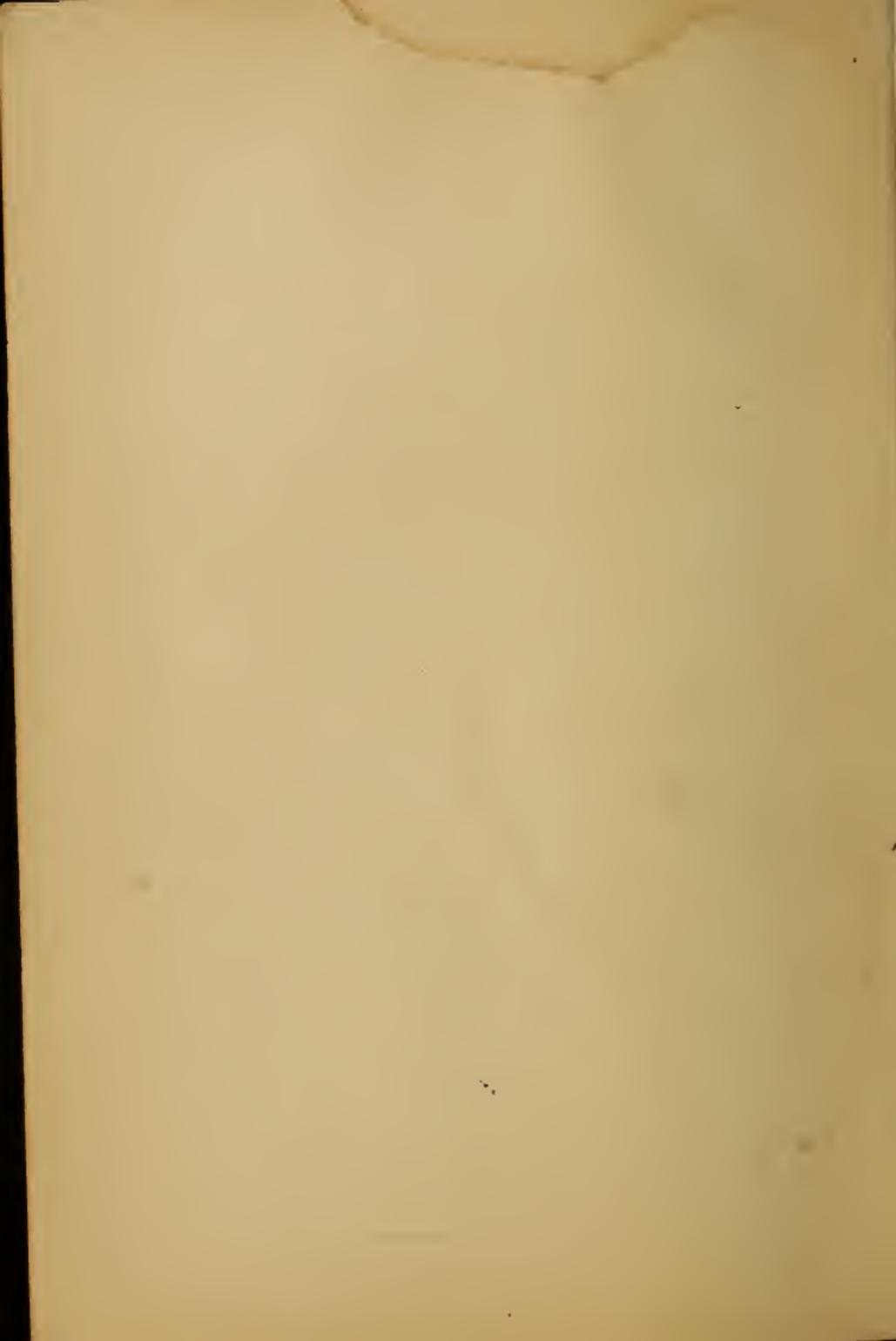
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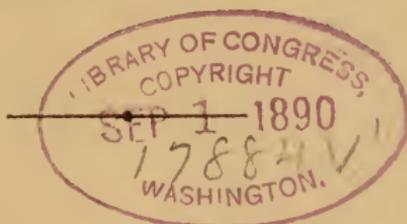
OR,

A NARRATIVE OF SPIRITUAL AWAKENINGS IN
DIFFERENT AGES AND COUNTRIES.

William Alexander
BY

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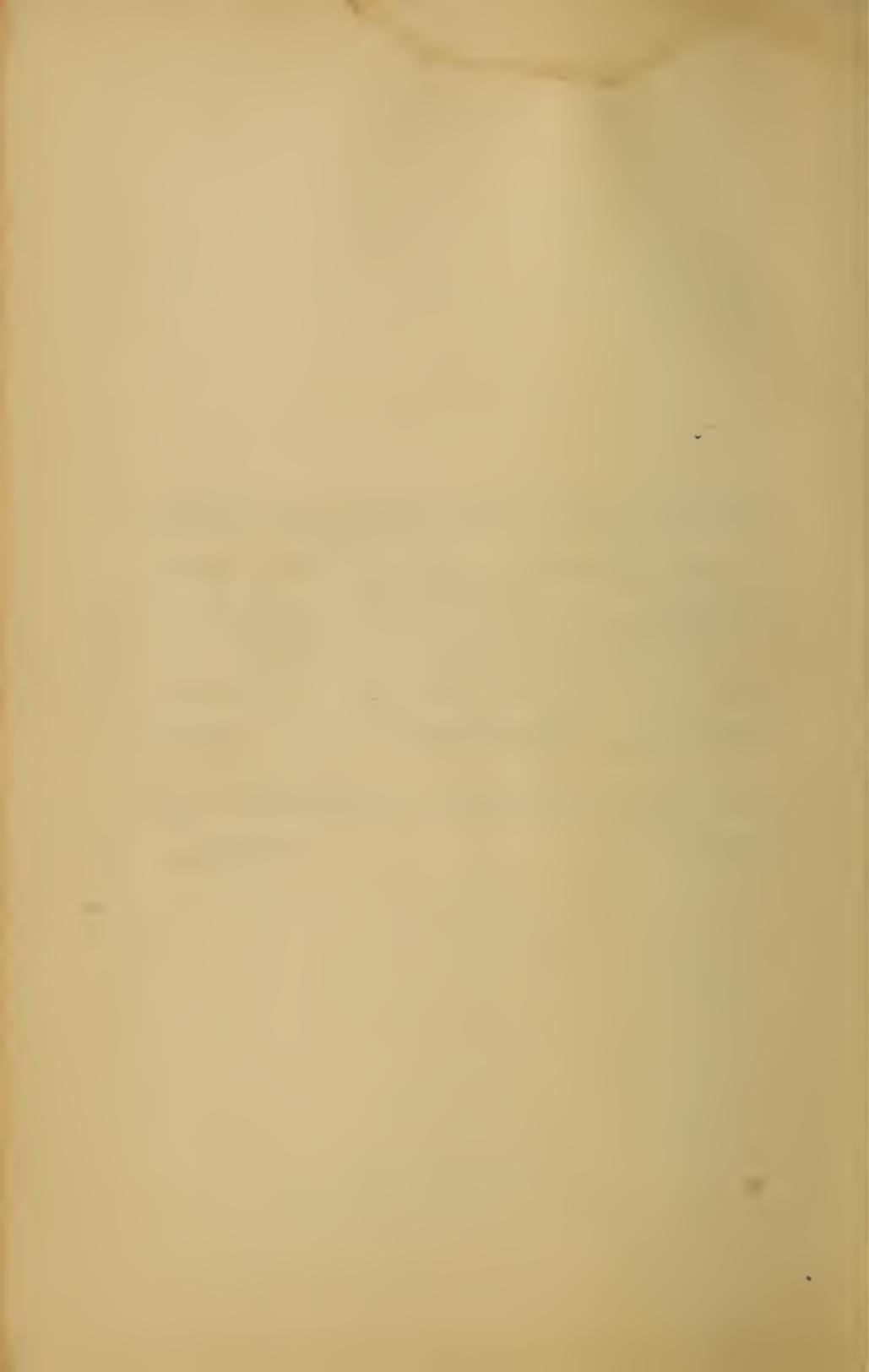
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To the people of my charge, to whom I have been permitted to minister these twelve years, and with whom I have enjoyed many seasons of refreshing, this little book, composed during fragments of time snatched from a busy pastorate, is respectfully dedicated by the

AUTHOR.



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OUTPOURINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT IS A REVIVAL?

THE NEED OF A REVIVAL—ENCOURAGEMENTS TO SEEK FOR IT.

THE last few years have been characterized by powerful revivals of religion. In Great Britain, in America, in Germany, in Switzerland, in France, and especially in India, Japan, and the far-away isles of the sea, Pentecost has had its successors. A few considerations concerning the nature of a true revival, our need of such a gracious visitation and the encouragements we have to seek it will occupy our attention in this chapter.

What, then, is a revival of religion? Briefly, it means a season of special religious interest and activity. The word is a familiar one. We read of a revival in the study of the fine arts, a revival in science and literature, a revival in trade and commerce. By this is meant a sudden and more or less widespread interest in these departments of business or learning. How deep the interest usually felt in such revivals! How interested the merchant is in the revival of trade! How he watches the rise in the markets, observes the multiplication of orders and rejoices in the decrease and cessation of failures! And see the gardener, how he watches the revival of the season! No sight so welcome as the opening leaves of the trees, the brightening green of the grass, the forming buds of the flowers and the promising blossom of the fruit. Or behold the mother bending over her sick child. How she watches for the return of strength, for the first sign of renewed appetite, for the deepening of the color in the cheek, the bright-

ening of the light in the eye and the gathering of strength in the voice! But of far greater importance and interest is the revival of religion in the soul. This was one great purpose for which the Son of God came into the world. "I am come," said he, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." A religious revival is such an outpouring of the Holy Ghost as results in the quickening of believers, the reclaiming of backsliders and the conversion of the unregenerate.

The first effect is undoubtedly upon the hearts and lives of God's own people. Unbelief gives way to faith and dark despondency to bright hope. Christians are brought to more vivid impressions of divine truth, more solemn views of sin and guilt, more soul-stirring thoughts of the love of God and the grace of Christ, more concern for a perishing world and more fervent prayer for the Spirit. Those who before were cold, formal, heartless in their worship have now

their hearts filled with love to God and love to their fellow-men. Those who before seemed indifferent to the salvation of others now pray earnestly and labor zealously to bring sinners to Christ. Those who before were cheerless and gloomy are now filled with a holy joy and peace. "The joy of the Lord is their strength." Divisions are now healed, and the devils of discord, envy and strife cast out. The temple is cleansed and a higher standard of Christian experience attained. What delight now in the house of God, what attention to his word, what bursts of holy song, what breathings of real devotion, and then what efforts for the salvation of souls! Oh, this is revival. It is the recovery of spiritual health. It is the Church's spring-time. It is the jubilee of holiness. It is the feast of fat things. It is the beauty of the Lord. Hear the ministers and elders of the Free Church of Scotland, convened in General Assembly during that wonderful work of grace under the preaching and sing-

ing of the American evangelists,—hear these venerable brethren singing, amid streaming tears of joy, the words of the one hundred and twenty-sixth psalm :

“When Zion’s bondage God turned back,
As men that dream’d were we.
Then filled with laughter was our mouth,
Our tongue with melody :
They ’mong the heathen said, The Lord
Great things for them hath wrought.
The Lord hath done great things for us,
Whence joy to us is brought.”

Such an arousing and intensifying of the spiritual life of a Church cannot fail to impress the masses outside the Church. Before such breathing of the Spirit the most stubborn wills bend like the blades of grass before the wind. Thus the awakening becomes general. Sinners are converted, the membership of the Church increases : worldly and wicked men may sneer and misrepresent, but in spite of all opposition, the good work goes on. Christians are happy and angels rejoice. All this we see abundantly illustrated in the lives

of Nehemiah, Paul, Luther, Knox, Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Tennent, Payson and many others.

The gracious work usually begins with a single man or woman. One live coal kindles a great flame. See the sinner of Samaria. Her mind was dark, her life was unholy, she was not even seeking a Saviour. But Jesus revealed himself to her. She believed, and instantly she became a fountain of life to others. And in that revival of "two days" (John 4 : 39-42) many were saved. The Spirit's work in a community, as in the individual soul, is usually like the water which the prophet saw in his vision, small at the beginning—first ankle-deep, then rising to the knees, then to the loins, and finally waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

Should not such seasons be the objects of intense desire, fervent prayer and earnest effort on the part of God's people? It may, indeed, be said that the Church should

always be awake and thoroughly in earnest. We readily admit the "should be," but who will claim that the Church is so at the present time? It is not a question of duty or privilege, but a question of fact. With the murderous liquor-traffic, legalized by the votes of church-members, in full blast on every side of us; with Romanism so aggressive; with the spirit of worldliness so prevailing; with immoralities of various forms eating, like a cancer, into the very heart of the community; with the overwhelming majority of our young men never inside a Christian church, and only five per cent. of them members of the Church; with our prayer-meetings so small; and with a liberality amounting to less than one-seventh of a cent a day from each communicant for the evangelization of a thousand million heathen,—who will say that we have no need of revival—no need of a revival in temperance, truthfulness, uprightness? The time may come when the Church will be all on fire of earn-

estness; when every heart will be stout and every arm will be strong in the conflict against evil; when the Sabbath assemblies will be crowded and the prayer-meetings times of refreshing; when church-members, full of the spirit of their Master, will rise above the large greeds and little givings of former days, and, like Araunah, as a king give unto a king, pouring out their treasures as brave warriors do their blood; and giving, or at least striving to give, after the measure of Him who, that we and a lost world might not perish, gave his only-begotten Son. But the time is not yet.

The ideal Church will be always earnest, active, hopeful, full of spiritual life and joy. But the actual Church is often weak in faith, poor in effort and low in experience. At such a time ought not our earnest cry to ascend, "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?" If already we have some degree of spiritual life and vigor, would it not be better if we had

more? Look at animated nature. There are the lower orders of life and the higher. In the higher we find much sensitiveness, consciousness, energy, heat and expression, while in the lower we see but little. So there are Christians who are barely living, and others who have "life more abundantly." About the lowest order of life is a small jelly-like thing which does nothing more than stick to the substance on which it feeds. Are there not too many Christians who are boneless, nerveless jelly-fish "hangers-on" in the Church? How many professing Christians are fast asleep! Rev. Dr. Rice of Virginia declares his solemn conviction that four-fifths of the membership of our churches add nothing to the real power of the Church.

It must not be forgotten that spiritual life, whether in the individual or in a community, is seldom, if ever, uniform. There are seasons of declension. "My people," saith the Lord, "are bent to backsliding from me." Who that considers the condition of modern

society, the keen competition in business, the craving for amusements and sports of every kind, the excitement of politics and the high strain at which we live, but must admit the terrible power of those influences which, at the present time, distract even the most serious Christians and tend to divert their minds from close and constant intercourse with heaven? Where is the Christian assembly in which there is no reason to lament the prevalence of sinful conformity to the world, the decay of piety and the lukewarmness of many professors? Where is the Christian who does not find within himself a proneness to decline from the spirit and power of godliness? We become weary in well-doing. Indifference, apathy, deadness come upon us.

“With outstretched hands and streaming eyes,
Oft I begin to grasp the prize;
I groan, I strive, I watch, I pray;
But ah! my zeal soon dies away.”

How is this downward tendency to be checked? Obviously, the only remedy for

a season of spiritual declension is a season of spiritual revival.

“Rise, Lord, stir up thy quickening power
And wake me that I sleep no more.”

The encouragements to seek a revival of religion are many and great. God is willing to revive us. His pleasure is the prosperity of Zion and the conversion of the world. His promise is, “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.” “Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come.” We are living in the dispensation of the Spirit. Supposing the Christians of our land were as dead as the bones Ezekiel saw in his vision, and as separated, one from another, as were they, yet in response to earnest, persevering prayer for a revival the Almighty will bring every bone to his bone, or will clothe and bind them with flesh and sinew, and cover them with skin; yea, he will breathe upon the yet lifeless forms and they shall live; yea, they shall

live a united and strong army to do valiantly for the Lord God of truth and mercy. This indeed would be a day of life, of joy, of power. May the Lord send such a season to all the churches! "Awake! awake! put on thy strength, O Zion! put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem." "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Showers of blessings are descending here and there. "Ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

CHAPTER II.

REVIVALS IN BIBLE TIMES.

PREJUDICES AGAINST REVIVALS—THE GENUINE MUST NOT BE REJECTED BECAUSE OF THE COUNTERFEIT—INCIDENTAL EXCESSES—REVIVALS IN THE DAYS OF ENOCH, MOSES, JOSHUA; IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES; IN THE DAYS OF SAMUEL, ELIJAH, JONAH, HEZEKIAH AND NEHEMIAH—NEW-TESTAMENT REVIVALS, AND THEIR GLORIOUS RESULTS.

IT is well known that a strong prejudice exists amongst some good Christians against what are termed “revivals of religion.” Perhaps this is not to be wondered at. There has been so much defective if not erroneous teaching, so much fanatical excitement and so much hollow profession, connected with some so-called

revivals that it is not surprising that many earnest but sober-minded Christians have acquired a distaste for the very word "revival." But let us beware of rejecting the genuine gold because of its worthless counterfeit.

It is only the good, the precious, that is counterfeited. Were there no true Christians, there would be no false ones, and were there no real revivals, there would be no imitations.

How careful also we should be lest we discountenance a real work of grace because of some things which occasionally may accompany it! There may many things occur during a season of special religious interest that do not constitute a part of the revival. When Whitefield was once preaching in Boston, the place was so packed that the gallery was supposed to be giving way, and there was a panic in which several persons were trampled to death. But it would be unfair and unreasonable to blame the revival for this. Connected with many revivals there has been

much of an emotional and spasmodical character. But these are only incidental. The adventitious is not to be confounded with the essential. We do not despise the great river because of the sticks and straws that may occasionally float on its surface. The greatest possible evil is a deadly insensibility. The storm is preferable to a parching drought. Better, if that were necessary, to have noisy animal excitement than that the sterile wastes of worldliness should not be transformed into fruitful gardens of the Lord. Notwithstanding incidental excesses, there is such a thing as a true revival of religion. The psalmist when he prayed, "Wilt thou not revive us again?" was not guilty of presumption and mockery; nor the prophet when he cried, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." God's promise is not a meaningless one: "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread,

and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon." In this chapter we shall look at some of the revivals in Bible times.

Under the old dispensation there were many seasons when the people felt the nearness of the Lord and the power of his Spirit in an extraordinary manner. We have a glimpse of such a season in the days of Enoch, when "men began to call upon the name of the Lord." That was a genuine revival of religion when Moses, after communing with God on the mount for forty days and forty nights, called the people together, gave them the commandments of the Lord and spoke to them particularly concerning the building of the tabernacle. Great indeed was the exuberance of their devotion. Every man and woman did offer willingly unto the Lord of the gold and the silver and the jewels, and of the blue, the purple and the scarlet and fine linen, and of all their possessions. So freely and liberally did the people contribute that Moses was compelled to send

forth a proclamation restraining them from bringing any more. What a blessing such a revival would be to the empty treasury and languishing mission schemes of many congregations at the present time! We have the record of a powerful religious awakening in the last chapter of the book of Joshua. All Israel is gathered at Shechem, and Joshua, old and about to die, gives them his farewell words of warning and exhortation. "Put away," said he, "the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel. And the people saith unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." That day they renewed their covenant with God. Nor were the results of this awakening spasmodic or shortlived, for "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua."

We read of a revival of religion in the time of the Judges, when "Israel cried unto the Lord," and he raised up Deborah and Barak

to rescue them from Jabin and Sisera ; and in the days of Samuel, when " Israel lamented after the Lord," and he thundered upon the Philistines and discomfited them ; and in the days of Elijah, when the prophet triumphed gloriously, and the people, convinced and repentant, fell upon their faces crying, " The Lord, he is the God ! The Lord, he is the God !" and in the days of Jonah, when the voice of the stranger, preaching in the streets, carried conviction and penitence into the hearts of all the people of Nineveh from the king to the beggar ; and in the days of Hezekiah, when " a very great congregation " assembled at Jerusalem to observe the passover, and a series of " special services " was held for two successive weeks amidst " great gladness " because of answered prayer and spiritual blessing.

One of the most remarkable revivals recorded in the Old Testament is that of which we read in the eighth chapter of Nehemiah. For eight days all the people were gathered

in the street. The time was occupied with Bible-reading, free conversation, prayer, praise and confession of sin. There was "very great gladness," also deep conviction, for "all the people wept when they heard the words of the law." "And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground." Many of the Psalms bear striking testimony to special manifestations of the mighty power of God in reviving his people.

Coming to the New Testament, we find frequent and powerful revivals of religion. This is the dispensation of the Spirit. Christianity was born in a great revival. "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." What awakenings under the preaching of John and Jesus, of James and his brother John, of Peter and of Paul, of Silas and of Barnabas! How won-

derful the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, when three thousand were converted under the preaching of one sermon! And so on through the apostolic age. Those were the days of heaven upon earth. Converts were then daily added unto the Church. Sometimes they came by tens and sometimes by thousands, and "great grace was upon them all." What an experience believers then had! What communion with God! What joy in the Holy Ghost! What tender sympathy with one another! The rich cheerfully gave of their abundance to supply the wants of the poor, and believers abounded in prayers and good works.

The history of Christianity during the first three centuries is a history of one almost unbroken revival. The gales of the Spirit then blew with unwonted freshness. The Church was all on fire with earnestness. Christians were Christians indeed. They believed what they professed; they knew what they spoke; they testified what they had seen; and, filled

with an irrepressible life, they went forward with an unconquerable energy which even the iron power of Rome could not resist. There were no honorary members in the Church. Every disciple felt that the Lord's last command was addressed to him, and whatever his circumstances—whether he moved in Cæsar's household or, like Lydia, in the pursuit of humble commerce—he sought to publish the glad news. Nor was the preaching confined, as is too much the case in our day, to places specially set apart for that purpose, but they went from house to house; they went to the river-side, to the street-corners, to the market-places, as well as to the synagogues. History tells us of the rapid and far-reaching results. Without our modern facilities for travel or our multiplied agencies for missionary work, in less than three centuries from the death of Christ the cross was uplifted in every land, the name of Jesus was proclaimed in every known dialect, missionaries passed through the deserts, penetrated

into the remote recesses of uncivilized countries and the whole known world was evangelized.

But, alas! in her prosperity the Church forgot God. Her faith became corrupted, her love waxed cold, and consequently her activity declined. Under Constantine she entered into an alliance with the world. The great papal apostasy followed. The Man of Sin, who "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God," appeared, and for about one thousand years darkness covered the whole earth and gross darkness the people, until the light was restored and the Church was redeemed by those wonderful revivals of religion that followed the faithful preaching of the word by Huss, Jerome of Prague, Wyclif, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Farel and the great host of British and continental Reformers and martyrs. We have said enough to show that religious revivals, instead of being something to be dreaded or regarded with suspicion, constitute an important factor in the divine econ-

omy in carrying on the work of grace in the world.

“There is not,” says one, “a denomination in Christendom to-day that has not sprung out of a revival.” He who indiscriminately condemns revivals is really challenging the ways of the Almighty and fighting against God.

CHAPTER III.

REVIVALS IN ENGLAND.

WYCLIF, HIS "PRIESTS" AND LAY-PREACHERS, AND THEIR WORK—LUTHER, CRANMER, RIDLEY, LATIMER AND HOOPER—THE PREACHING OF THE PURITANS CHARACTERIZED—THE WESLEYS AND THEIR TIMES—WHITEFIELD AND HIS WORK—THE METHODIST CHURCH AND REVIVALS.

ALTHOUGH the term "revival" was not generally applied to active religious movements in the fourteenth century, yet even at that date England experienced an awakening which might well be called by that name. To Wyclif, "the Morning Star of the Reformation," must be given the credit of inaugurating this movement. The key-note of the pe-

riod was "an open Bible." Too long it had been a sealed book. But Wyclif made a remarkably faithful translation from the Vulgate, and the people were exhorted to study that blessed book for themselves. He regarded the Scriptures as the supreme authority. "Even though there were a hundred popes, and all the monks were transformed into cardinals, in matters of faith their opinion would be of no account unless they were founded on Scripture."

Realizing that it was impossible for a single individual to accomplish all that was required to be done, he organized a company of itinerants who could carry the gospel far and wide. These men were students and graduates of Oxford, and were known as the "poor priests." But though poor in this world's goods, they were rich in faith and good works, and they emulated the zeal, the heroism, the devotion and the enthusiasm of their master. To render the work still more effectual, he sent forth a com-

pany of lay-preachers, who labored principally around Oxford and Gloucester. Clad in the plainest garments, without shoes and armed only with a staff, they traveled through the country and summoned men to repentance. Although the results of this movement cannot now be tabulated, yet there can be no doubt that the efforts of Wyclif, as well as those of his "poor priests" and lay-preachers, were crowned with great success. Many of the clergy were induced to lead purer lives; many of the careless awakened; many of the thoughtless aroused; many of the defiant made penitent; and the moral tone of many districts was greatly elevated and purified.

But gradually the Church was lulled to sleep again, and, though dreamily opening her eyes as spasmodic efforts were made here and there, she was not thoroughly aroused till the sixteenth century. Then the trumpet-blasts of Luther in Germany were heard in England, and the strains were echoed by such men as

Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer and Hooper. Their movement met a serious check during the reign of Bloody Mary, but was revived with fresh power under the Puritan divines. Great indeed was the impetus given to spiritual life and activity through the characteristic preaching of these men. The style of their preaching was clear, logical and doctrinal; the tone was calm and subdued; and if it lacked the "fire" that characterized some of the later English revivals, it was eminently calculated nevertheless to tear down the props of self-righteousness and to build up a vigorous type of Christian character.

The third and grandest of the English revivals was inaugurated in the last century by the "Holy Club" or "Methodists"—names given in derision to the Wesleys and their like-minded fellow-students, who met regularly on stated days of the week at Oxford, for prayer, Bible-study and mutual edification. There was a crying need for a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost. With the res-

toration of the Stuarts there rolled in a flood of licentiousness which swept away almost every barrier interposed by religion for the safety of good manners and morals. Many of the upper classes were saturated with infidelity, while many of the lower were shamefully ignorant of the first principles of Scripture truth. "The Church," says one, "was a fair carcass without the Spirit." Many of the clergymen were ignorant of theology, and in their preaching they passed the gospel by on the other side. Sad to say, not a few of them went drunk into the pulpit. The river of life seemed to be frozen over. "England," says Isaac Taylor, himself a Churchman, "had lapsed into virtual heathenism when Wesley appeared." "No man could tell," says Cardinal Manning, "into how deep a degradation England would have sunk had it not been for the preaching of John Wesley." But the darkest hour is just before the dawn, and about the year 1730 gleams of light began to stream out from Oxford.

The light glimmered for a short time in London, where George Whitefield spent a few days preparatory to his embarking for America. A few months afterward it burst in full glory upon the crude, benighted, irreligious colliers in Kingswood, where Whitefield, who had returned from America, began the then unpopular practice of field-preaching. His preaching was indeed a revelation to these men. They had been so long neglected that they had become coarse and brutal. So much terror did their very name inspire that scarcely any one would venture to go among them. But Whitefield was no coward. The door was opened and he entered. This was on Feb. 17, 1739. The effect was marvelous. From their sooty pits these swarthy colliers listened with uplifted faces and streaming eyes to the words of life. Whitefield himself says: "The first discovery of their being affected was to see the white gutters made by their tears, which plentifully flowed down their cheeks as they came out of their coal-pits."

It was no unusual sight to see an audience of twenty thousand persons, and sometimes sixty thousand, many of them visibly affected. "Probably," writes one, "no other uninspired man ever preached to so large assemblies or enforced the simple truths of the gospel by motives so persuasive and awful, and with an influence so powerful upon the hearts of his hearers." A single incident will serve to show the power of Whitefield's oratory. Chesterfield was listening on one occasion while Whitefield described the sinner as a blind beggar led by a dog. By-and-by the dog left him, so he was forced to grope his way guided only by his staff. Continuing, the preacher said, "Unconsciously he wanders to the edge of a precipice; his staff drops from his hand down the abyss, too far to send back an echo: he reaches forward cautiously to recover it; for a moment he is poised on vacancy, and—" "Good God! he is gone!" shouted Chesterfield as he sprung from his seat to prevent the catastrophe.

From Kingswood the movement spread to the neighboring town of Bristol, where Whitefield was joined by John Wesley. The latter had some scruples against field-preaching, but under the persuasion of his companion he set them aside. It was a good thing for these two great preachers that they were shut out of the churches; they might have been shut in. Day by day the interest deepened. Thousands flocked to hear the preachers, and both before and after service hundreds came to inquire the way of salvation. The opposition was mighty, but not almighty, and divine grace prevailed. Moorfield, Gloucester, Halstead, Dedham, Ipswich, Withersfield, Colchester and other places were visited, and in all a gracious work was accomplished. In Moorfield in a single day about three hundred were converted. "Give me," said John Wesley, "one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; they alone will shake the

gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven upon earth." He got his heart's desire.

The early preachers of Methodism, though for the most part strangers to college-training, were men of conviction, men of courage, and, if not profusely adorned with literary titles, they were certainly behind none of us in faith, in zeal, in self-sacrifice and in a determination to win the world for Christ. The gates of hell were indeed shaken, Satan was aroused, and the preachers were subject to almost every form of insult and outrage. They were mobbed and spit upon, and not infrequently they returned from a religious service bleeding with wounds. But sometimes "fools who came to scoff" remained to pray." On one occasion Wesley was preaching in a barn. At the close of the service a man emerged from his hiding-place in the hay-loft, and with club in hand thus accosted the preacher: "I came here, sir, to break your head, but you have broken my heart." So true is it

that God is sometimes found of those who are not seeking him.

Fortunately for the cause of Methodism and for Christianity in England, John Wesley was a master organizer. His brother Charles supplied the hymns which were then and are still such a power in the Methodist Church, and no less than thirty of which are found in the Hymnal lately authorized by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Men of apostolic zeal, like Fletcher and Dr. Coke, did much to advance early Methodism. There can be no doubt that to the great awakening in which Wesley and Whitefield were the leaders may be traced back many of the ever-widening and deepening streams of religious beneficence of the present day.

The history of the wonderful progress of Methodism since the days of Wesley is almost a continuous history of revivals. To only one of these can we here refer, and that in the briefest terms. Many on this side of the Atlantic will distinctly remember the Rev. James

Caughey. Wonderful indeed was the power of the grace of God as seen in the labors of this man in many parts of England. During the two years 1845 and 1846 more than ten thousand persons professed to have been converted through him.

We look at the great Methodist Church throughout the world to-day with five million communicants and twenty-five million adherents, so evangelical, so earnest, so mighty a power for good, and we ask, How did this Church attain its present position and character within the comparatively short period of a hundred and fifty years? The reply comes: Its converts have been made not one now and another again, but they have come in by fifties, by hundreds and by thousands under mighty outpourings of the Holy Ghost. The Methodist Church is a revival Church, and we thank God for revivals.

CHAPTER IV.

REVIVALS IN SCOTLAND.

AN ERROR CORRECTED—PRESBYTERIANISM IN SCOTLAND BORN IN A REVIVAL—KNOX, WISHART, COOPER—THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1596—JOHN LIVINGSTONE AND THE KIRK-OF-SHOTT'S REVIVAL—OTHER AWAKENINGS—REV. W. C. BURNS AND KILSYTH—REV. R. MCCHEYNE AND THE REVIVAL AT DUNDEE—THE "LAYMEN'S REVIVAL"—THE MOODY AND SANKEY REVIVAL.

"PRESBYTERIANS don't believe in revivals." So wrote a youthful member of the Church to a minister who was at the time assisting a brother in special evangelistic services. At the funeral of Jabez Bunting, when the officiating clergyman declared that there was not such another

just and good man living as Jabez Bunting, a somewhat eccentric but veracious woman cried out, "Thank God, that's a lie!" I was strikingly reminded of this good woman's reply when I read the statement, "Presbyterians don't believe in revivals." On page 822 of the *Minutes* of the Second General Council of the Presbyterian Alliance, which met at Philadelphia, 1880, I find the following statement: "It is a matter of record that probably seven-eighths of the hundreds of thousands of Presbyterian communicants in America are the fruits of these blessed means of grace" (revivals). Presbyterians may, indeed, conscientiously differ from some of their fellow-Christians as to the best means and methods of conducting and promoting revivals, but they most assuredly believe in revivals, and no Church on earth owes more than the Presbyterian to powerful and extensive awakenings.

We will look in this chapter at her history in Scotland. There she was born in a revival, and has prospered largely by means of revivals;

and to-day her clear apprehension, unflinching maintenance and earnest propagation of Scripture truth evince her origin and her history. See the earnestness of John Knox, who under the burden of souls could not sleep, but, leaving his bed in the cold night, knelt down and prayed for Scotland; and when his wife importuned him to come back to the pillow, replied, "Woman, how can I sleep when my country is not saved? O God! give me Scotland or I die!" Under the preaching of John Knox, George Wishart, William Cooper and other men with glowing hearts and tongues of fire Scotland from centre to circumference was aroused from spiritual slumber, redeemed from the blight of the papacy, and a direction was given to the whole of modern Scottish thought that has made itself felt throughout the civilized world. A gracious rain descended on the pastures of the wilderness, and the thirsty land became springs of water. "The whole nation," says the historian, "was converted by lump. Lo! here a nation born in a day."

It would be difficult to estimate the far-reaching influence of that mighty outpouring of the Spirit upon the General Assembly of 1596, when more than four hundred ministers and elders humbled themselves before God with "sighs and groans and shedding of penitential tears." These were also the days when the venerable Bruce preached with such power at Edinburgh, the house of God becoming literally "a Bochim," a place of weeping.

Who has not heard of that memorable day in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism (Monday, June 21, 1630) when John Livingstone, only twenty-seven years of age and not yet ordained, took his stand on a tombstone in the churchyard at the Kirk of Shotts, and preached amid a heavy shower of rain; but the Spirit of God came down with such power that nearly five hundred souls were converted in one day? Nor did the good work cease on that day. "It was," says Fleming, "the sowing of a seed through

Clydesdale, so that many of the most eminent Christians in that country could date either their conversion or some remarkable confirmation from it." Again, in 1638 refreshing showers of divine influence were poured on many congregations, so that Livingstone said, "In all my lifetime, excepting at the Kirk of Shotts, I never saw such motions from the Spirit of God. I have seen more than a thousand persons all at once lifting up their hands and tears falling down from their eyes." Space will not permit us to dwell upon the great spiritual awakenings that occurred in 1742 at Cambuslang and Kilsyth, at Campsie and Calder, and in all the regions round about. Saints were quickened, sinners were converted and God was glorified.

In 1771, under the preaching of Whitefield, the mighty power of God was seen in many places, particularly at a place called Lundie, five miles north of Dundee. Scarcely had the preacher begun when the divine presence was felt. "Never," adds his fellow-

traveler, "did I see such weeping in any congregation."

We read of an extensive awakening at Moulin in 1800, at Arran in 1813, at Skye in 1814 and at Lewes in 1834. Under these gracious outpourings many a barren spot became fruitful, many a sorrowing heart was made glad and many a wilderness home blossomed as the rose.

In 1839, while Rev. W. C. Burns, afterward the famous Chinese missionary, was preaching the gospel at Kilsyth, the Spirit of God was poured out on the people. "They were," says one, "overwhelmed with a flood of commingled sorrow and joy, so that frequently the voice of the preacher was drowned in the sobs and cries of the penitents." The power of the Lord's Spirit became so mighty upon their souls as to carry all before it, like the rushing mighty wind of Pentecost. The movement soon spread to Dundee, where a glorious work was accomplished chiefly through

the instrumentality of Rev. R. M. McCheyne, of blessed memory. There is much in the biography of this eminent minister of Christ from which every Christian worker, and especially every gospel preacher, may learn useful lessons. His was a strong intellect and a loving heart, but, more than all, a soul living in closest communion with God. Herein lay his wonderful power. And so still : real, effective power lies not so much in what a man says as in what a man is. There is no rhetoric so persuasive, no logic so powerful, as the earnestness of a man who lives near to God. We want eloquent sermons, but the sentences that are most brilliant, that please the ear and charm the fancy, may be as hard as diamonds and as cold as icicles. The sermons that fall upon men's hearts as the good seed of the kingdom, that germinate and bring forth fruit, are not always great intellectually ; but they are sermons that have been "steeped in prayer, and that are preached to those whose spirits have been mellowed by prayer."

“When one who holds communion with the skies
Has filled his urn where those pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence these treasures are supplied.”

But we must return to the Dundee revival. It began under the ministry of W. C. Burns while McCheyne was absent from home on a mission to the Jews in Palestine. McCheyne tells us that on his return he found no less than thirty-nine prayer-meetings held weekly in connection with his congregation; “five of these were conducted and attended entirely by children.” Within three months not fewer than from six hundred to seven hundred came to converse with him about their souls, and this by no means included all who were deeply concerned. “I have observed at times,” says McCheyne, “an awful and breathless stillness pervading the assembly, each hearer bent forward in the posture of rapt attention. . . . Again at times I have heard a half-suppressed sigh rising from many a heart, and have seen

many bathed in tears. At other times I have heard loud sobbing in many parts of the church, while an awfully solemn sense of the divine presence pervaded the whole audience. . . . I have seen persons so overcome that they could not walk or stand alone. I have known cases in which believers have been similarly affected through the fullness of their joy." I am sure my readers will excuse me for giving a few more words from this, one of the most saintly and Christ-like ministers that ever blessed the Presbyterian Church of Scotland or of any other land. Speaking of the immediate and outward results of this revival, he says: "The effects upon the community are very marked. It seems now to be allowed, even by the most ungodly, that there is such a thing as conversion. Men cannot any longer deny it. The Sabbath is now observed with greater reverence than it used to be, and there seems to be far more of a solemn awe upon the minds of men than

formerly. I feel that I can now stop sinners in the midst of their open sin and wickedness, and command their reverent attention in a way that I could not have done before. The private meetings for prayer have spread a sweet influence over the place. There is far more solemnity in the house of God, and it is a different thing to preach to the people now from what it once was." Farther on he adds: "I do entirely and solemnly approve of such meetings, because I believe them to be in accordance with the word of God, to be pervaded by the Spirit of Christ and to be oftentimes the birthplace of precious never-dying souls."

In 1859 tidings of the work of grace in America and in Ireland stirred the hearts of Scottish Christians, and in many places there were gracious awakenings. These awakenings were called the "Laymen's Revival," from the fact that at this time the divine Head of the Church, as if to assert his own sovereignty and the power of divine grace in

the salvation of men, was pleased to raise up an extraordinary number of eminent laymen to preach the gospel. Among these honored laymen the following may be mentioned: Brownlow North, Reginald Radcliffe, H. M. Grant, Duncan Matheson, James Turner, Robert Annan and Robert Cunningham. The revival was indeed led and sustained by bands of earnest ministers of various denominations, but the laymen named and many others were extra harvest-hands called to the work on this remarkable occasion, and many were the sheaves gathered in. We cannot go into particulars, but in many parts of Scotland congregations and communities rejoiced that the winter was gone and the time for the singing of birds had come. A single illustration must suffice. Duncan Matheson thus writes of one place: "At eight o'clock Mr. Campbell and I preached to thousands in the open air. What a night! We had over and over to preach. The crowds had to be divided, for they were too large. We could not till nearly eleven

o'clock get away from the awakened. Pray for us. The Lord is doing great things. I believe almost every time one speaks souls are brought to Christ."

An outpouring of the Spirit at this time reached the fishermen of Scotland, a class usually found to be painfully proof against the operations of the ordinary means of grace. Out of the crews of two boats numbering fifty men, forty-two were converted to Christ, and on many a fishing-boat earnest prayers were offered, and the sweet melodies of David's psalms might often be heard mingling with the still more ancient harmonies of the great ocean.

Rev. J. Macpherson says of this revival: "Many thousands were added to the Lord. Of these a large proportion consisted of young men, not a few of whom are now ministers at home or missionaries abroad. In fact, there is scarcely a church in which you do not find some of them in honorable posts of office or useful spheres of work. Nor is there a for-

eign mission in connection with which some of them are not laboring. Out of that movement there sprang, too, a host of Sabbath-school teachers, district visitors and other Christian workers. The impulse given to family religion was a striking feature."

The last, and perhaps the greatest, revival of religion that has blessed the Scottish churches since the days of John Knox was that under the now world-renowned American evangelists, Moody and Sankey, in the latter part of 1873 and the beginning of 1874. Space forbids going into detail. The record of the work is a history of one long-continued miracle of grace. Drs. Blaikie, Bonar, Brown, Duff, Thompson, A. Moody Stuart, Prof. Calderwood and a large number of the most eminent ministers and professors in Scotland joined hands with the evangelists, prayed for their work and rejoiced in their prosperity. No building could contain the multitudes that came to hear Moody preach the gospel and Sankey sing the gospel. At an open-air

meeting in Glasgow the policemen on the ground estimated the number present at not less than fifty thousand persons. In a place with a population of not more than twenty-five hundred as many as fourteen hundred persons would come together for prayer. Rev. C. H. Spurgeon says of this work: "The gracious visitation which has come upon Edinburgh is such as was probably never known before within the memory of man. The whole place seems to be moved from end to end. When we hear of many thousands coming together on week-days to quite ordinary meetings, and crying, 'What must we do to be saved?' there is, we are persuaded, the hand of God in the matter." Speaking of the work, Dr. Bonar says: "In all my life I never preached to such an audience. The vast multitude bowed under the simple preaching of the gospel, and without any excitement were melted into tears of penitence and the children of God to tears of joy. . . . The presence of God pervaded the very

air and was felt everywhere." Upward of three thousand persons were added to the various churches of Edinburgh alone as the result of this great awakening, and the work was endorsed as a great work of God by the most eminent clergymen and Christian workers in the land. I now leave it for the readers to say whether or not Presbyterians believe in revivals. Oh for the fire from heaven!

CHAPTER V.

REVIVALS IN IRELAND.

THE SETTLEMENT OF ULSTER—EARLY REVIVALS—UNITARIANISM AND ITS BLIGHTING EFFECTS—THE YEAR OF GRACE (1859)—THE BISHOP OF DOWN—CHURCH UNION—“STRIKINGS,” “SEIZURES,” “PROSTRATIONS”—SOME WORSE THINGS THAN PHYSICAL EXCITEMENT—THE MOODY AND SANKEY REVIVAL.

IF religious revivals have not been so frequent in Ireland as in England and Scotland, they have undoubtedly been more fervent. What is lost in extension is gained in intension. In Ireland, very emphatically, the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence and men of violence have taken it by force. Protestantism in Ireland dates from the Plan-

tation of Ulster about the beginning of the seventeenth century. At this time many Presbyterians in Scotland fled from persecution in their native land and settled in the province of Ulster. In 1615, the first Protestant Confession of Faith was drawn up by James Ussher. It was not, however, till 1626 that the beginning of the Presbyterian system was laid by Hugh Campbell. Blair, Livingstone and other men of good parts represented the Presbyterian cause about this time. Under their preaching a very powerful revival of religion occurred about the year 1628, and continued for some years thereafter. This revival Fleming describes as "a bright, hot sun-blink of the gospel," and as "one of the largest manifestations of the Spirit and of the solemn times of the downpouring thereof that almost since the days of the apostles hath been seen." As to the effects of it upon the character of the people, Livingstone, after describing the conversion of a very bold and wicked man, says, "But why do I speak of him?"

We knew, and yet know, multitudes of such men who sinned, and still gloried in it, because they feared no man, yet are now patterns of sobriety, fearing sin because they fear God." The goodly vine that was planted at this time struck its roots deep into the soil and spread its branches over the whole province of Ulster, and, watched over by the heavenly Husbandman, it is still bringing forth good fruit. How is it that the people of Ulster are to-day educated and industrious, happy and prosperous, while the rest of Ireland is poverty-stricken and distracted with lawless violence? Any answer to this question will be exceedingly defective that does not point us to the powerful awakening during the first half of the seventeenth century.

But trying times were in store for Presbyterianism in Ulster. Especially did it, in the course of time, suffer grievously from the withering blight of Unitarianism, which though, perhaps, the best heathenism, is the poorest Christianity the world has ever seen. And

although Unitarianism was, after many a hard battle, driven from the field, a general indifference and deadness reigned throughout the whole province. The outward form of religion was there, but the inner life was gone. Church organization was complete, but of spiritual power there was none. A corpse is as well organized as a living body.

Many ministers and earnest Christians felt this spiritual death and mourned over it, and the burden of many an earnest prayer was, "O Lord, revive thy work." Their prayers were answered in the great awakening of 1859. This was *Annus Mirabilis*, a year of wonders in Ulster. During the preceding year news of the extraordinary display of divine grace with which the American churches had just been visited was borne across the Atlantic and widely circulated through the country. That year the General Assembly devoted a portion of its sittings to special conference and prayer with reference to this great spiritual movement. These conferences were sea-

sons of peculiar spiritual solemnity and sacredness; and "when one after another of the fathers rose up in his place to tender his paternal counsels, and when the voice of praise and supplication ascended afterward to heaven, all hearts were touched as by a common sympathy, while from the reigning harmony and fervor many fondly cherished the expectation of a time of more abundant blessing." The blessing came, but far beyond their expectations. It was indeed a "cloud-burst" of grace. Within one year eleven thousand were added to the Presbyterian Church alone. The Episcopal Church also largely shared in this wonderful work. Mr. Brownlow North, a member of that Church and an eminent evangelist, visited the country, was publicly acknowledged by the Presbyterian Assembly as an eminent servant of Christ, and preached in Presbyterian pulpits, as well as in those of his own Church, with the happiest results. "When Christian love is at a low ebb," says the late Dr. James Hamilton, "the different

sects stand apart, like shrimps in the pools on the sea-coast when the tide is low. Each company of shrimps lives in its own little pool, knowing or caring nothing about those in the other pools; but when the tide rises and overflows the little pools, they are all brought into the same great ocean and form one family. Thus, when Christian love is strong it overflows all minor differences; it overcomes previous barriers, and all who love the Lord feel that they are brethren." So it was during the "year of grace" with the different branches of Christ's Church in Ulster. And a powerful revival of religion would do more toward effecting a real union of the different branches of the Church of Jesus Christ in any country or place than any number of deputations, committees or resolutions can ever accomplish.

The bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore bears the most gratifying testimony to the spiritual blessings of the revival, such as the careless aroused, the impure made pure, the

drunkard reformed, the prayerless prayerful and every means of grace eagerly attended. From the queries addressed by His Lordship to the clergy of his diocese on the subject of this revival, I submit the following two, along with a number of answers from the clergy :

Q. I.—“How has the revival operated in reference to your congregation—the attendance at the Lord’s Table or at your school-house or cottage lectures?”

A. 1.—“I formerly had about twenty at a cottage lecture; for the last ten weeks there has been an average of about seven hundred every Thursday evening at an open-air service.”

A. 2.—“Hundreds leave my church unable to get in. Communion three times the former average.”

A. 3.—“The effect of the attendance on every means of grace has been almost miraculous. The Sunday-morning service is more than double; the evening service has been

increased sixfold, and the communion quadrupled."

A. 4.—"Congregation increased. School-house lecture overflowing. A most solemn feeling and deeply-seated earnestness characterizing all."

Q. II.—"Since the appearance of the revival have you observed any improvement in the habits of your people?"

A. 1.—"Decidedly less drunkenness, less violation of the sanctity of the Lord's Day."

A. 2.—"A most marked improvement. Drunkenness and other notorious vices have almost disappeared. In one large establishment the business of each day is commenced and ended with prayer."

A. 3.—"A total change for the better; the police have confessed that they have little to do."

A. 4.—"It is most gratifying to observe the habit of reading the Bible among families where it was before totally neglected—now become so prominent."

A. 5.—“A reverence for religious subjects and a willingness to converse upon them.”

A. 6.—“The habits of the people completely changed. Formerly, drunkenness was the prevailing habit; now, sobriety. There had been a total neglect of family worship; it is now very general.”

A. 7.—“In almost every house and by the hedges I find the Bible read.”

A. 8.—“Religion is the universal topic of conversation.”

A. 9.—“The general aspect of the place is changed.”

Here is another striking testimony to the good results of this revival. The speaker is the judge addressing the grand jury of the Coleraine county court. After observing that there was but one case on the calendar before him, and that an unimportant one, and after contrasting this happy state of affairs with his former experiences, when “calendars were filled with charges for different nefarious practices,” he asks, “How is such a gratifying

state of things to be accounted for? It must be from the improved state of the morality of the people. I believe I am fully warranted now to say that to nothing else than the *moral and religious movement which commenced early last summer can the change be attributed*. I can trace the state of your calendar to nothing else."

The origin of this revival is sometimes traced to a prayer-meeting composed of four young men who met in an old school-house near Kells. But its more remote source is probably a Sabbath-school teachers' prayer-meeting at Tannybrake. It was held at the close of the Sabbath-school. Parents were especially invited. And the one great and absorbing topic was salvation through faith in Christ. The beginning of a revival is always hard, perhaps impossible, to fix. We can see only a little way back, and that which we regard as a cause is itself only the effect of some previous cause. Whatever the human agency employed, we must never forget

to give all the glory to the great First Cause. He alone can awaken the slumbering and quicken the dead.

Reproach has been cast upon this revival because of the intense physical excitements that in some places characterized it. Not that this element was absent from previous revivals in Ireland, England, Scotland or America; but it was far more intense and violent on the present occasion than in any other awakening yet mentioned. These "physical agitations," "striking," "seizures," "prostrations," or whatever they may be called, have been variously accounted for. Some think they have sufficiently explained them by referring them to temperament, sympathy, hysteria, etc., but even admitting that they may be so referred, it is still open to inquire if this in the least removes these phenomena from under the divine superintendence and control. Does not the Moral Governor rule by law in everything? Granting,

therefore, that these excitements may be explained on some purely physical theory, may they still not have a most important and spiritual mission? Some, again, have regarded them as the work of Satan and designed to frustrate the work of grace. And undoubtedly, when God is doing a glorious work, Satan will rage and to his utmost intrude, and by intermingling his work darken and hinder as much as possible God's work. But we are not left without a sure test to determine what is a work of God and what a work of the devil. Satan does not cast out Satan. And when we see a great reformation take place in a community; when we see multitudes of men suddenly turned from their intemperance, Sabbath-breaking, profanity, uncleanness and worldliness; when we see error, sin, and selfishness giving way to truth, holiness and love,—we say, unhesitatingly, this is not the work of Satan, but a great and glorious work of God. And we will hold our conviction none the less firmly because the change has been

brought about not in ways of our choosing or devising.

Many eminent theologians, such as Dr. Gibson and President Edwards, regard these physical phenomena as the work of the Holy Spirit through various agencies, and graciously designed to glorify God by making a direct appeal to the senses of the unbelieving and the careless. It is well known that in Ireland infidels and scoffers who came to see and ridicule the work were frequently stricken down, and thus convicted and converted and made monuments to the power of the Spirit of God. It is not, however, the purpose of these articles to promulgate any special theory of revivals. Our object will be attained if we succeed only in imparting useful information, removing unseemly prejudices and awakening a more widespread and earnest cry for a work of grace throughout our land. We are willing to leave the Holy One of Israel to do his work in his own way. May the Spirit descend upon us as the gentle dew, silently im-

parting life, growth, and beauty ; but if God so will it, let him come with the thunder and the lightning and the storm. It is a good thing if under any circumstances men are awakened from the slumber of death and brought to rejoice in a new life. Better, sure, to breast the roaring surge on the live ocean and speed on before the favoring gale, than lie becalmed and motionless amid the stagnation and putridity of the waveless sea of death. Give us the roar of the raging cataract rather than the deadly miasma of the stagnant, putrid pool.

We cannot here dwell upon the Moody and Sankey revival in Ireland in 1874. This awakening was in many respects a striking contrast to that of 1859, and similar to that by the same men in Scotland, already noticed. No wild excitements, but quietness, order and profound solemnity prevailed. The size of the meetings was determined by that of the largest buildings in Belfast, Londonderry and Dublin. Over eight hundred

ministers of all the evangelical denominations took part in the work. At some of the meetings there were as many as seven hundred and fifty inquirers; and at one meeting two thousand persons professed to have given their hearts to Christ during the preceding six months. Thus Zion put on her robes of salvation and converts to Jesus were multiplied as the drops of the morning dew.

CHAPTER VI.

REVIVALS IN AMERICA.

THE "GREAT AWAKENING" OF 1729-35—
JONATHAN EDWARDS AND HIS CO-WORK-
ERS—"THE REVIVAL OF 1800" AND SOME
OF THE GLORIOUS RESULTS—VARIOUS TES-
TIMONIES, INCLUDING THAT OF THE PRES-
BYTERIAN GENERAL ASSEMBLY—THE FUL-
TON STREET PRAYER-MEETING.

"OH, sirs," said a wise and good man on his deathbed, "I dread mightily that a rational sort of religion is coming among us. I mean by this a religion that consists in a bare attendance on outward duties and ordinances, without the power of godliness." Such was the state of religion throughout the American colonies at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Church machinery, indeed, there

was in abundance, but the power of godliness was sadly wanting. As the author of *The Tongue of Fire* would say, the cannon was there and the ball and the powder, but each was powerless in itself, and all put together were powerless, for the fire was not there. Jonathan Edwards says: "It was a time of extraordinary dullness in religion." A sort of moral chloroform had put the Church to sleep. The old people thought only of their work, the young only of their play. Sin abounded. God was forgotten. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. When God is going to accomplish a glorious word he usually does it upon very unpromising material. "I fully believe," says Spurgeon, "that the darkest time of any Christian Church is just the period when it ought to have most hope, for when the Lord has allowed us to spin ourselves out till there is no more strength in us, then it is that he will come to our rescue." This is in accordance with the

promises. It is not the field where there is some good growth already, but the wilderness where nothing grows and nothing is to be seen but dry sand and barren rocks, that is converted into "a fruitful field." It is not the good soil, but "the dry land," that is made "springs of water." Hear the word of the Lord: "I will give waters *in the wilderness* and rivers *in the desert*, to give drink to my people, my chosen." Thus the power and freeness of divine grace are more conspicuous, and God in all things is glorified.

Such was the experience of the American churches at the time of "The Great Awakening" extending from 1729-35. The dry bones were "very many and very dry," but a mighty breath of the Spirit came upon them, imparting to them life and beauty and power, and they stood up upon their feet, "an exceeding great army." The enemy came in like a flood and threatened to overrun and sweep away all that was precious,

but the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard for the people. In the midst of the prevailing irreligion, apostasy and profligacy there were those who cried day and night that the Lord would refresh his weary heritage.

“If,” says the prince of preachers, quoted above, “there be only two or three whose hearts break over the desolations of the Church, if we have only half a dozen that resolve to give the Lord no rest till he establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth, we shall see great things yet. If they *will* have souls saved, if so they plead and agonize, oh, then the Lord will turn his gracious hand and send a plenteous stream of blessing upon their district.” Has he not said, “When the poor and the needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth them for thirst, I the Lord will hear them. I the God of Israel will not forsake them; I will open rivers in high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a

pool of water, and the dry land springs of water" ?

Jonathan Edwards, Whitefield, Noyes, William and Gilbert Tennent, David Brainerd and Samuel Davies were the foremost among those raised up at this time to arouse a slumbering Church and awaken a dead world. The revival extended over the whole of the New England colonies, and it was reckoned that during its continuance upward of one hundred thousand souls were brought to Christ. Edwards said of it : " It is evident that it is a very great and wonderful and exceedingly glorious work of God, such as has never been seen in New England, and scarcely ever has been heard of in any land." Describing the awakening in his own town of Northampton, this eminent divine says : " There was scarcely a single person in the town, either old or young, that was left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world. Those that were wont to be the vainest and loosest, and those that had been most disposed to think

slightly of vital and experimental religion, were now generally subject to great awakenings. And the work of conversion was carried on in a most astonishing manner, and increased more and more; souls did, as it were, come by flocks to Jesus Christ. . . . The work of God, as it was carried on and the number of true saints multiplied, soon made a glorious alteration in the town. People were now done with their old quarrels, backbitings and intermeddling with other men's matters; the tavern was soon left empty. The place of resort was now changed; it was no longer the tavern, but the minister's house; and that was thronged far more than ever the tavern had been wont to be. . . . The town seemed to be full of the presence of God; it never was so full of love nor so full of joy, and yet so full of distress, as it was then. There were remarkable tokens of God's presence in almost every house. It was a time of joy in families on account of salvation being brought to them—parents rejoicing over their

children as new-born, husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands. The goings of God were then seen in his sanctuary; God's day was a delight and his tabernacles were amiable. Our public assemblies were then beautiful; the congregation was alive in God's service, every one earnestly intent on the public worship, every hearer eager to drink in the words of the minister as they came from his mouth; the assembly in general were, from time to time, in tears while the word was preached, some weeping with sorrow and distress, others with joy and love, others with pity and concern for the souls of their neighbors."

A little more than half a century from this awakening brings us to what is known as the "Great Revival of 1800." This extended over the whole of the United States, but was most powerfully felt in the region extending from the Allegheny Mountains westward to the borders of civilization and in the Southern States. Great meetings were held in the

open air, usually in the forest and under the green foliage of the trees. In Kentucky, particularly, was the mighty power of God felt. Here the revival began at a Presbyterian meeting under the ministry of two brothers called McGee, one a Presbyterian minister and the other a Methodist. Vast multitudes attended the meetings, many coming from ten to fifty miles to witness the work. "The people," says one, "fell under the preaching like corn before a storm of wind," and many were converted. The beginning of the present century was indeed a time of refreshing throughout nearly all Christian lands. There was a general shaking of the valley of dry bones. God manifested himself in his glory in building up Zion. Evangelical religion then made the grandest advance since the days of Martin Luther. Then originated the British and American Bible Societies, by which already millions of copies of the word of God have been distributed in about three hundred of the

languages and dialects of the earth. Then also commenced nearly all the modern home and foreign missionary efforts of the evangelical churches, being a direct result of the gracious refreshing. And we confidently believe that the good work then begun will go on and on until the universal and final effusion of the Spirit shall restore the whole of this lost world to God.

To write the history of this great revival in America would be to write the religious history of nearly every State and city and town in the Union for a number of years. The well-known Dr. Gardiner Spring of New York thus writes: "From the year 1800 down to the year 1825 there was an uninterrupted series of these celestial visitations spreading over different parts of the land. During the whole of these twenty-five years there was not a month in which we could not point to some village, some city, some seminary of learning, and say, 'Behold what God hath wrought!'"

Dr. Samuel Ralston says of it: "That this is a gracious work of the Spirit of God is apparent to me from the effects it has produced. It has reclaimed the wicked and the profligate, and transformed the lion into a lamb. It has brought professed deists to become professed Christians, and turned their cursings into blessings and their blasphemies into praises. Its good effects have reached all ranks, ages, sexes and colors—the African as well as the European and American. The combined hordes of deists, hypocrites and formalists are generally opposed to it. Some also have fallen away, but this is no objection, but rather an evidence that it is the work of the Spirit of God." This revival was, in the opinion of many, one of the most extraordinary that ever visited the Church of Christ. "Surely," said Bishop Asbury, "we may say our Pentecost is fully come this year." The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1803 bore the most unqualified testimony to the extent and power of the

work. A single quotation must suffice: "There is," it says, "scarcely a Presbytery under the care of the Assembly from which some pleasing intelligence has not been announced; and from some of these communications have been made which so illustriously display the triumphs of evangelical truth and the power of sovereign grace as cannot but fill with joy the hearts of all who love to hear of the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom."

Some of the results of the revival of 1800 I have already indicated. And here it ought to be mentioned that most of the theological schools of the United States were the outgrowth of this revival. In 1810 the General Assembly decided to erect a seminary "to train up persons for the ministry who shall be lovers as well as defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus—*friends of revivals of religion* and a blessing to the Church of God." The institution in the year 1812 was located at Princeton, N. J., and many of the most de-

voted Presbyterian ministers in the land have received their theological training there.

Very soon afterward many other seminaries sprung up in other parts of the land as a result of this revived interest in religion. Among these the following may be mentioned: Auburn, the Western Seminary, Columbia, Lane, Union and Danville. Eternity alone can tell the good accomplished by these schools of the prophets in sending out preachers of the glorious gospel "who have been lovers as well as defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus—friends of revivals of religion and a blessing to the Church of God." Space forbids us dwelling at length upon the "Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting Revival" of 1857, so small in its beginning, but so mighty in its development. The voice of prayer and praise was heard in theatre and warehouse and blacksmith-shop and factory, and the noisy cries of the mart were drowned out by the more earnest cries of the people, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

I close this chapter with the words of President Humphrey of Amherst College: "After all that our eyes have seen and our ears have heard I marvel that any one should look with suspicion on revivals. Rather let us hail them, in this midnight of tribulation, as the harbinger of the light of seven days" (Isa. 30 : 26).

CHAPTER VII.

REVIVALS IN CANADA.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION—THE AWAKENING OF 1800 EXTENDED INTO CANADA—“THE REVIVAL CONFERENCE”—PLAYTER THE HISTORIAN—DR. GREGG’S “HISTORY OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN CANADA”—EARLY METHODIST AND PRESBYTERIAN REVIVALS—A CAUTION—THE OLD COMMUNION SEASON OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—RESULTS—PRESENT DUTY.

ACCOUNTS of revivals in other lands have been written by inspired and uninspired men, but the narrative of revivals in Canada has not yet, so far as the writer is aware, engaged the pen of any historian. The Canadian churches have, however, at various times enjoyed gracious visitations, the accounts of

which, apart from incidental notices by the historians Playter and Gregg, must be gathered from church records, from the ephemeral prints of the day and from the grateful memories of the Lord's people. Though such seasons have never been witnessed in Canada as Whitefield and Wesley saw in England, Livingstone in Scotland, Gibson in Ireland or Edwards in America, the Christians in Canada have not been left without tokens of the presence of the Lord, and many congregations can recall seasons when the divine power was wonderfully manifested in the quickening of saints and in the conversion of sinners.

The great awakening of 1800 in the United States, already described, extended into Canada, up along the shore of Lake Ontario, even to the head of the lake, to Niagara, and thence to Long Point on the north-western shore of Lake Erie. This gracious work is closely associated with the name of Rev. Joseph Jewell, a Methodist minister who traveled throughout

this newly-settled district, preaching in log houses, in barns and sometimes in groves, and everywhere beholding the power and grace of God. About this same time a powerful work of grace was carried on in the district of Niagara, chiefly through the instrumentality of Rev. Joseph Sawyer.

In 1805 was convened at Elizabethtown what has since been usually known among Methodists as "the Revival Conference." "No other conference in Canada," says Playter the historian, "is like it, nor any other session of an annual conference in Great Britain or the United States. The awakening and converting power of God has appeared frequently at these sessions, but at none of which there is any record where the divine power was so greatly manifested and with such results." It has been reckoned that during the five days the conference was in session more than one hundred persons were awakened, and the total increase of membership from this

blessed revival at the Elizabethtown Conference was about fourteen hundred.

Again I quote the historian already named :
“ In this great revival the labors of the preachers, local and traveling, were very great, and some wrought for God beyond their strength. . . . A great impression was made on the public mind by the strange, sometimes wonderful, change of character and life in so many persons and in so short a time. The young had forsaken their frivolities, and were now serious, fond of the Bible and seeking knowledge to make them useful. Those indifferent to religion, lovers of pleasure, and not lovers of God, were now zealous for the truth and lovers of the Sabbath. The quarrelsome had learned in meekness and love to bear with evil ones and to forgive. Many drunkards had substituted a resort to the house of God for the tavern, the psalms and hymns for the songs of Bacchus, and cleanliness and sobriety for rags and strong drink. Rude companies and neighborhoods loved the devout

assemblies of the saints, spent their Sabbaths in the house of God and became orderly, civil and hospitable.”

Thus the Methodist Church in Canada, as in England, was born in a revival, and from the commencement to the present day she has been pre-eminently a revival Church.

Other branches of the evangelical churches in our land have had their times of refreshing. At present we shall refer only to those in the Presbyterian Church. The readers of Dr. Gregg's *History of Presbyterianism in Canada*, pp. 534-551, will learn how largely early Presbyterianism was blessed with seasons of revival.

As early as 1809, Rev. D. W. Eastman of the American Presbyterian Church preached in the Niagara peninsula. For about twenty-five years he labored alone in a wild and comparatively uncultivated field. In 1830 two or three other ministers joined him. In 1833 the Niagara Presbytery was formed, and from a narrative prepared by a committee of that

Presbytery, and embodied in Dr. Gregg's *History*, I extract the following: "From that time (1830) to the present God has greatly enlarged our Zion. This he has done, so far as means are concerned, chiefly by protracted meetings. These commenced in the churches under Mr. Eastman's care, and they have been held in many places within our bounds with the most blessed results." Of these meetings in the church at Gainsborough the Presbytery says: "Truly it was a time of the right hand of the Most High. The Spirit of the Lord was poured out in rich effusions, humbling and quickening his people, filling their hearts with comfort and converting sinners to Christ. Between seventy and eighty, we believe, were born into the kingdom of God, about fifty of whom at once united with the Church." Special mention is made by the Presbytery of revivals about this time in the churches at South Pelham, Hamilton, St. Catharine's, Chippewa, Drummondville, Brantford, Era-

mosa and Esquesing. It is interesting to notice that at this early date so much attention was given to the religious instruction of the young and to the temperance cause. In the Presbytery's narrative it is recorded that there was a temperance society in connection with each congregation, and in some cases we are informed that every member of the church was also a member of the temperance society. Is not a revival of this kind greatly needed at the present day?

Let us guard against a dangerous error. Many hear of a revival, and instantly there are associated in their minds a series of crowded meetings, fervid preaching, much emotional singing, many manifest conversions, many anxious inquirers and much religious excitement. But let us beware. There may be much that is outward and demonstrative, and yet no true revival. It is no evidence that a man has wings and can fly because a tornado puts its suction

upon him, lifts him up and hurls him across the street; and it is no evidence that a man is converted because a tremendous physical excitement lifts him for a moment out of the slough of his bad habits, blows the mud off him and crazes him, so that he talks and screams in the language of virtuous insanity. Then, on the other hand, there may be a true revival of religion where the Spirit of God comes down like the dew, gently, silently, imparting life, beauty, vigor; where God is heard, not in the thunder and the storm, but in the still small voice; where the convicted take each step deliberately, perceiving it to be a duty, and the converts come into the Church quietly and beautifully as buds and blossoms to a tree. Wherever saints are being quickened and sinners converted and an impulse given to the cause of true religion we should gratefully recognize the special work of the Spirit. The ideal state of a Church is undoubtedly when each member thereof is so pervaded with the

Spirit of Christ, so "filled with all the fullness of God," that revival in the popular sense would be impossible. There may be no "floods upon the dry ground," but if the genial showers regularly descend and the enlivening sun shed his beams, there will be life and growth and beauty.

Were not the old communion seasons in the Presbyterian Church days of hallowed influences? Who that has enjoyed them can ever forget those sweetly solemn sacramental occasions? Then the Lord made a feast of fat things, and the King sat at his table, and the spikenard sent forth the smell thereof; then believers sat under his shadow and found his fruit sweet to their taste. He brought them to his banqueting-house, and his banner over them was love. It was no unusual thing for persons to come thirty or forty miles to attend "the communion." And so great was the concourse of hearers on these occasions that it was frequently found neces-

sary to have two separate assemblies, one in the church and the other in some grove near by. The season lasted five days, beginning with Thursday. There were two or three services each day, and in a large and scattered country congregation there would be each evening from five to ten prayer-meetings in private houses in different parts of the congregation. Presbyterianism has always been distinguished for "decency and order." This distinctive characteristic was observable in all the communion services. Each of the five days had its own distinctive name, indicating the general character of the services on that day. This was especially the case among the Gaelic section of the Church. I will give these distinctive names in both tongues: Thursday was called the Day of Humiliation or Fast Day (*La Trasgaidh*); Friday was the day of Self-examination (*La Rannsaichaidh*); Saturday was the Day of Preparation (*La Ulluchaidh*); Sabbath was the Day of Communion (*La*

Comunnaidh); and Monday was the Day of Thanksgiving (*La Taingealichd.*)

The various religious services of prayers, singing, sermons, exhortations, and the personal conversation of each day always had respect to the uniform subject of that day. Monday was the last, and not infrequently the great, day of the feast. Joy commingled with sorrow filled the hearts of the Lord's people—joy because of the spiritual and social blessings of the season, but profound sorrow that now the communion was at its close and they were about to separate and return to their distant homes, many of them not expecting to meet again for another year—*i. e.* till the next communion season. "When shall we have a communion without a Monday?" was an expression on the lips of many, and meaning, When shall we meet to part no more? Most of these grand old saints are now enjoying their communion without a Monday. May the sons be worthy of the fathers! The com-

munion season occurred yearly, and was a "time of refreshing" to Christians, giving spiritual tone to the religious life during the whole year. Under the ministry of Richard Baxter there were, we are told, long streets in the town of Kidderminster on which there was not one house that had not its hours of prayer. But the writer knows whole districts of Ontario where there were concessions many miles in length on which there were few, if any, houses where prayers were not offered morning and evening and the sweet melody of psalms heard slowly and solemnly ascending to the God of heaven. The blessed results are to be seen at this day in the sobriety, industry and faith of their descendants. One such congregation known to the writer has given upward of forty men to the Christian ministry, and has sent forth not a few who have taken the very first place in the legal, teaching and medical professions.

But we must not live in the past. "Act,

act in the living present." Wilt Thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee? A genuine revival of religion throughout our land would do more in a single year to remove our commercial and financial troubles, and secure us against those national dangers which thoughtful people now see looming up in the distance, than our worldly-wise politicians can accomplish in a decade of years. Dishonesty, private or public, intemperance, immorality, infidelity, socialism, communism, or Jesuitism cannot prevail among a people who honor God and whose hearts are full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER VIII.

REVIVALS AND THE YOUNG.

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE OF SO MANY OF THE YOUNG—VARIOUS CAUSES—THE CHIEF CAUSE IN THE HOME—PARENTAL NEGLECT AND INCONSISTENCIES—HOW SHALL WE DEAL WITH THE EVIL?—A PLEA FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM TO ITS TRUE POSITION IN THE CHURCH—A SOLEMN APPEAL.

WHY are so many of our young people undecided for Christ? How few of them attend the Bible-class or are seen in the weekly prayer-meetings or are engaged in any specific Christian work! Five millions out of the seven millions of the young men of America were never, or practically never,

inside a Christian church! Only five per cent. of them church-members, and only three per cent. engaged in any religious work! Whither are we drifting? There are breakers ahead. Is not American society "dying at the top"—that is, in its young men? May the Lord awaken his Church before it is too late! A very large proportion of these young men are the children of Christian parents; they were early dedicated to God in baptism; they have grown up under the ordinary influences of the home and the sanctuary; and yet they have turned their backs upon the Church, ignoring alike the obligations and privileges of the Christian; and millions of them are rushing forward into life's solemn responsibilities apparently without a single thought of consecrating themselves by personal act to the Lord. Here is how the official organ of one of the largest and most active churches in our land speaks: "The indifference manifested by the vast majority of

young men is sufficient cause for solicitous alarm. Comparatively few of our young people, young men especially, are being converted. Thousands, especially in our cities, scarcely ever enter a place of worship, and very few are actively engaged in Christian work. Many boys leave our Sunday-schools as soon as they grow into manhood, and gradually drift off from all church relations. Many others remain with us as regular attendants upon our public services, moral and respectable, but worldly and spiritually indifferent."

Various causes have been assigned for this religious indifference on the part of so many of the young. The vigorous and aggressive skepticism of the day; the speculative and materialistic spirit of the age; false views of liberty, properly called libertinism; licentiousness; eagerness to get wealth without regarding the morality of the means; the popular amusements of society, and the excesses usually connected with them; the extensive

reading of trashy, sensational literature,—all these are doing an incalculable amount of mischief by indisposing and unfitting multitudes of the young for serious reflection or the discharge of Christian obligation. Intemperance with its kindred vices and associations is making havoc of many souls. Then, again, the worldliness, the selfishness, the unkindness of many church-members, are repelling the young from the bosom of the Church, and driving them to seek enjoyment in the world and the things thereof.

But, powerful as these evil agencies are, they do not by any means constitute a sufficient explanation of the indifference—in some cases, positive aversion—to religion on the part of so many of the young. Would we trace this deplorable evil to its source, we must look beyond the mere tendencies and temptations of our time—these are themselves but effects which are closely connected with certain causes; we must look beyond the imperfections of church-members

—these are probably no greater in our time than at any former age of the Church ; we must look to the *home*. What we want at the present day is a powerful revival of practical piety in the family. We need a deeper and more scriptural sense of the importance of the family and its relation to the State and Church. “Out of families,” says Luther, “nations are spun.” The character of the Church as well as of the nation is determined in the home. There the first and strongest impressions are made, and an education is insensibly gained which schools can never supply nor after-influences ever efface. The family is God’s institution (Gen. 2 : 18 ; Ps. 68 : 6), and for more than two thousand five hundred years after the Fall the knowledge of the true God was preserved among men chiefly by heads of families. In the absolute and long dependence of children upon their parents for the supply of nearly every want, God surely teaches us how sacred is the trust that lies in the mother’s gentle

arms and claims the father's tenderest care. The young lamb and the little nestling, with the whole animal creation, soon learn to take care of themselves. But the immortal child is first a helpless babe, and long an infant in body and mind, thrown upon the warm bosom of maternal love, a delicate, sensitive, precious being—the charm of the household, the gift of a beneficent God, to be nourished and brought up in God's fear and for his glory.

Would we save our young people, we must begin at the beginning. We must begin our work, not in the world, nor in the Sunday-school, nor even in the church, but in the home, praying that God in his mercy would “turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers.” Parents must carry their religious principles into daily practice. Their home-life must be a standing evidence of the power and value of religion. By little deeds of kindness, by gentle words, by wise counsels, by pleasant

looks, by a loving spirit, and, when necessary, by Christian admonition, reproof, correction, they must exhibit to their children the religion of Jesus. Nothing can compensate for the loss of parental example and instruction.

In the prevailing lack of family religion and parental authority throughout our land we find a sufficient, though a sad, explanation of the youthful indifference and irreligion which we deplore. Young persons come to the church, the Sunday-school or the Bible-class, and they are taught the supreme claims of religion and the duty and privilege of professing faith in Christ. But they go home and see their parents—who, perhaps, are members of the Church—as selfish, as worldly, as fretful and irritable in temper as those who make no profession of religion. In the home they see little of the profession and less of the practice of religion. The parents live from day to day as if money-making were everything, and religion only a thing of naught or at

best only an old respectable custom. The public ordinances of religion, such as the congregational prayer-meeting or the Sabbath assembly, or even the observance of the Lord's Supper, are for the most trivial excuses neglected. And even where the parents attend upon these means, how often are the children left at home or allowed to wander no one knows where on the Sabbath! Children see and feel all this, and instinctively reason, "If there were any great importance in religion; if God and Christ and heaven and hell were what our ministers and teachers tell us they are, our fathers and mothers would not only tell us so, but they would be pious themselves. Our parents know better than we what is right and safe, and if they are not Christians why should we be concerned?" Is it surprising that under such home-influences so many young persons soon come to regard religion with indifference and all public profession of it with positive aversion?—not a few of them living as if God were a myth, heaven

a dream, the atonement a cheat and eternity nothing?

How are we to deal with this great evil on the part of parents? Does any one say it is vain to attempt to arouse our people to a right sense of duty on this matter? I reply, No good work is hopeless so long as there is a God of infinite power and grace in heaven.

Let every pulpit in the land speak out faithfully, calling parents to repentance for their sin and warning the young of breaking covenant with God. Let parents be exhorted to walk before their children with a perfect heart, praying not only for their children, but with them, taking them aside one by one for this purpose. John Newton is not the only one who has been saved from destruction by the memory of his mother's prayers. Let Christian example and fervent prayer be accompanied with faithful instruction. "And these words which I command thee, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy

children" (Deut. 6 : 6, 7). First let the word of God dwell in the parent's own heart, and then let him seize every opportunity to impress that word upon the tender mind of his child. The love, the sovereignty, the justice, the holiness and the goodness of God; the perfect requirements of his law; the lost condition of all men by nature; the only way of recovery through Jesus Christ; the necessity of a change of heart by the renewing of the Holy Ghost; and also of repentance toward God and faith in Christ, such faith as shall produce universal obedience to divine commands,—these are the leading truths of revelation with which the mind of the child should early be made familiar.

Let the holy sacrament of baptism be restored from that condition of neglect and obscurity into which, alas! it has in so many instances fallen, and let it receive that same prominence and reverence in the teaching of the Church that the other sacrament, that of

the Lord's Supper, now receives, until parents clearly realize that baptism is not a "christening" or a mere "giving a name to the child," but a solemn sacrament in which they recognize their child as the property of the Triune God, and enter into a covenant with God on its behalf. Then as the child grows up it should be taught the nature and design of its baptism as a dedication to God. In every spiritual way it should be made to understand that God is its Proprietor and has supreme claims upon its love and obedience. A child thus instructed with meekness and tenderness will soon learn something of the nature and awful desert of sin and its own lost condition as a sinner. It will learn something of the character of Jesus and of his work as a Saviour. The heart of that child will go out to the Saviour, and it will be a delight to submit to that yoke which is easy and that burden which is light. Instead of being hardened by sin in the "far country," such a child will never by bitter experience know what it is to

wander from his Father's house, and he will never remember the time when he did not love the name of Jesus. "If parents," says the holy Baxter, "were true to their vows in baptism, nineteen-twentieths of those consecrated to God in infancy would grow up pious and dutiful, and when they came to mature years would personally assume the vows of their baptism by an open profession of their faith at the Table of the Lord."

"If God hath wrought," says Matthew Henry, "a good work in my soul, I desire in humble thankfulness to acknowledge the influence of my infant baptism upon it." Well might an equally high authority say, "If infant baptism were more improved, it would be less disputed." Kind reader, whose eyes now scan these lines, are you a parent? Then let me plead with you on behalf of those dearest to you in life. You are not, like the ostrich in the wilderness, indifferent to your offspring. Your heart is not made

of the nether millstone. You love your children. Well, then, can you think of them sinning against God, abiding under the wrath of the Most High, rushing forward to eternity, having no God and without hope, and yet horror not take hold of you? If you saw your child in the street and the wheels about to run over it, would you not rush to the rescue? And can you see your child in danger of eternal destruction and yet not be moved to earnest, continued action to save it from the awful doom? Speak to your children concerning the soul and salvation; do it with all the powerful oratory which the fond heart of a Christian parent can supply; take them aside, one by one, and plead with them "day and night with tears;" put them in mind of their early baptism; explain to them the nature of that sacrament; labor to make them esteem its privileges and to feel its obligations; bring them to the house of God with you; walk in your house with a perfect heart; pray for your children as the Syro-Phœnician

woman prayed for her child,—and the covenant God will be a God to you and to them.

Or am I addressing one of the baptized children of the Church? Then I would speak an earnest word to you concerning your relationship to the Christian Church. God remembers your baptism. He remembers that your parents dedicated you to him and put his seal upon you. He would look upon you as his child. Will you not look upon him as your God? Luther tells us of a pious woman who, when tempted to sin, replied, "*Baptizata sum*"—I am baptized—and thus overcame. And so, my young friend, when you are tempted to sin or when you are living in neglect of duty, solemnly say to yourself, "I am baptized; I have been sealed to God in a solemn covenant; I am not my own, I am God's; therefore I cannot yield to temptation or live in willful neglect of duty. I dare not repudiate the covenant made on my behalf

with the Father, Son and Spirit. Rather will I anew dedicate myself to the God of my fathers, the God who loved me and cared for me in earliest infancy and through all the way of life, and I will seek grace to walk every day as in covenant with him."

Young and old, all you who fear the Lord and mourn over the desolations of Israel, come join in prayer for such a thorough revival of religion by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as will break up the all-engrossing spirit of worldliness that so generally pervades the homes of our land, causing a great shaking among the dry bones—"very many and very dry"—the divine breath entering in until our revived and quickened people, parents and children, shall stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army, ready and willing to do the Lord's work, whatever difficulties or discouragements may lie in the way.

CHAPTER IX.

EMINENT REVIVALISTS AND HONORED TESTS.

A MUCH-NEEDED CAUTION, WITH ILLUSTRATION—JOHN LIVINGSTONE AND KIRK OF SHOTTS—ORIGIN OF THANKSGIVING MONDAY—WHITEFIELD AND THE THREE R'S—TESTS—JONATHAN EDWARDS AND HIS GREAT SERMON—SOME OF HIS TEXTS AND THEMES—EDWARD PAYSON: HIS LIFE—TEXTS AND THEMES.

WE are not of those who love to exalt men or one class of Christian workers above another. No need to sound a trumpet for any, for when the great trumpet shall sound every man's work shall be revealed. The true Christian worker is like the harp which, as one says, sounds sweetly, yet hears not its

own melody. We are poorly qualified for comparing Christian workers, and much harm has been done by unduly magnifying the office of the evangelist to the disparagement of the regular ministry. Two men enter a forest and toil hard during the winter months felling the trees. Then when spring comes they spend long weary months chopping and logging and rooting and stumping, until, with great patience and perseverance, they succeed in gathering the whole into heaps. All over the ten acres there are the piles which result from their industry, and no one perhaps but themselves knows how much of labor it required to accomplish such a result. It was hard work, but very quiet and obscure and seen only by a few. But one day a third man starts into the field with a shovel full of coals, and, applying them to a heap, sets it all ablaze. The flames leap up to the sky, and as he goes from heap to heap with his torch he soon has the whole field in a fury of fire and smoke, and people for miles around

see. and wonder. Who did all this? Why, we are told, the man with the torch, who has run from pile to pile to start it blazing. It is thus oftentimes in the Church that laborious pastors work through long years of care and toil, getting things ready for somebody else to fire and put in motion. They preach and pray and teach and weep and agonize for a long, anxious time, and then the stranger arrives and by a few explosives ignites the heaps and sets all ablaze, and gets all the praise.

Honor to whom honor is due. They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever ; and our object in this chapter is to mention a few of these eminent workers, and especially to point out those precious passages of Scripture which in their hands were so wonderfully blessed by the Spirit.

Monday, June 21, 1630, will ever remain a memorable day in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism. On that day John Living-

stone, twenty-seven years of age and not yet ordained, preached a sermon in the church-yard at Shotts under which five hundred souls were converted and a great work commenced which spread through the whole of Clydesdale, and the results of which eternity alone will fully unfold. The circumstances were very interesting. The day before was a communion Sabbath, and the Spirit of God was evidently working mightily upon the hearts of the people. For several days previous much time had been spent in social prayer. After being dismissed on the Sabbath many spent the whole night in different companies in prayer. On the Monday morning the ministers, seeing the people still lingering, as if unwilling to leave a spot which had been to them as the very gate of heaven, agreed to have service on that day, though it was not usual at that time to preach on the Monday after communion. Young Livingstone was selected for the sermon. His diffidence, however, was great, and he was over-

come with a sense of unworthiness and unfitness to speak on such a solemn occasion and in the presence of so many aged and more experienced ministers. Alone in the field in the morning, he began to think of stealing away rather than address the people, and had actually gone some distance, and was just about to lose sight of the kirk, when the words, "Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?" (Jer. 2 : 31) were brought to his mind with such clearness and power that he durst no longer distrust God. He returned, took his stand upon a tombstone outside the church, and preached from the text (Ezek. 36 : 25, 26), "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." The rest I will give in his own words: "I had about an hour and a half on the points I had meditated on; and in the end, offering to close with some words of exhortation, I was led on about an hour's time with such liberty and melting of heart as I never had the like in public all my life."

The first indication of awakening among the people was in this way: During the time Mr. Livingstone was preaching there was a soft shower of rain, and when the people began to move about he said, "What a mercy it is that the Lord sifts that rain through these heavens on us, and does not rain down fire and brimstone as he did upon Sodom and Gomorrah!" After this the practice, still observed in most Presbyterian churches, of having a thanksgiving service on the Monday following the sacrament, became general in Scotland.

Whitefield has been characterized as "the Field Evangelist." His epitaph records that he was born at Gloucester, England, Dec. 16, 1714; educated at Oxford University; ordained in 1736; that in a ministry of thirty-four years he crossed the Atlantic thirteen times and preached over eighteen thousand sermons. His average congregation was two thousand; frequently he preached to ten thousand; at Philadelphia

to twenty thousand; at Boston Commons to thirty thousand; and at Moorfield to sixty thousand! He had a voice of wonderful richness and pathos, and his delivery, according to Southey, was perfect. His subject was always one or all of the three R's—Ruin, Regeneration, Redemption: man ruined wholly, eternally ruined by the fall; man regenerated by the Spirit and made a new creature in Christ Jesus; man redeemed from all his sins by the precious blood of Christ. He always honored God, and God honored him, and made him as a mighty angel flying from country to country, preaching the everlasting gospel to every creature. Some of his most frequent sayings were: "Let us be all heart;" "The world wants more heat than light;" "Lord, make us all flames of fire;" "We are immortal till our work is done." I subjoin a number of the texts from which he most frequently preached:

Jer. 6 : 14: "Saying Peace, peace; when there is no peace."

John 9 : 35 : "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

Jer. 23 : 6 : "The Lord our Righteousness."

Acts 26 : 28 : "The Almost Christian."

John 5 : 39 : "The Duty of Searching the Scriptures."

Acts 19 : 2 : "Marks of having Received the Holy Ghost."

1 Cor. 6 : 11 : "Justification by Christ."

1 Cor. 2 : 11 : "Satan's Devices."

2 Cor. 5 : 17 : "Regeneration."

Eph. 5 : 18 : "The Sin of Drunkenness."

Matt. 25 : 46 : "The Eternity of Hell Torments."

Josh. 24 : 15 : "The Great Duty of Family Religion."

Ps. 46 : 1-6 : "Christ the Believer's Refuge."

Gen. 5 : 24 : "Walking with God."

Ps. 45 : 10, 11 : "Christ the Best Husband."

Isa. 54 : 5 : "Thy Maker is thy Husband."

This last was the text that was most blessed while he was preaching in Scotland ; and most of those who were converted through the instrumentality of this sermon were men.

Jonathan Edwards is thus described by Mr. Prince in his *Christian History*: "He was a preacher of a low and moderate voice, a natural delivery, and without any agitation of body or anything else in his manner to excite attention except his habitual and great solemnity, looking and speaking as in the presence of God and with a weighty sense of the matter delivered." The best known of his sermons is that on "Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God." The text is Deut. 32 : 35: "To me belongeth vengeance and recompense ; their foot shall slide in due time ; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste." It was preached during the time of the "Great Awakening," and was accompanied with extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit's power. As Edwards

preached, suddenly the Holy Ghost descended, the people began to tremble and even cry out under the terrors of conviction, and the awakening spread through all the New England colonies, and many thousands were added to the Lord. The following are some of Edwards' themes and texts, and from them may be gained a pretty clear idea of the truths that were so wonderfully blessed in his hands:

Ps. 94 : 9-11 : "Man's Natural Blindness in the Things of Religion."

Rom. 5 : 10 : "Men naturally God's Enemies."

Rom. 4 : 5 : "Justification by Faith alone."

Rev. 5 : 5, 6 : "The Excellency of Christ."

Ps. 25 : 11 : "Pardon for the Greatest Sinner."

John 14 : 27 : "The Peace which Christ Gives to his People."

Rom. 9 : 18 : "God's Sovereignty."

Deut. 32 : 35 : "Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God."

Ps. 65 : 2: "The Most High a Prayer-hearing God."

Heb. 11 : 13, 14: "The Christian's Life a Journey toward Heaven."

Edward Payson was born at Rindge, New Hampshire, July 25, 1783, and died at Portland, Me., Oct. 22, 1827. His life was one of much physical suffering, occasional mental despondency, but uninterrupted and most joyous confidence in Christ as his personal and ever-present Saviour. Love to the Saviour and for the souls of men was with him an all-absorbing passion. His preaching was characterized by extraordinary pathos and solemnity, but the most remarkable thing about him was his prayers. These were just the outpourings of a soul filled with a glowing, ardent, overpowering affection for Christ. One who enjoyed his ministry for seven years says: "It was my custom to close my eyes when he began to pray, and it was always a letting down, a sort of rude fall, to open them again when he had concluded and find myself still

on the earth. His prayers always took my spirit into the immediate presence of Christ, amid the glories of the spiritual world; and to look around again on this familiar and comparatively misty earth was almost painful." His ruling passion was strong in death. "The Celestial City," he said, "is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ear, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of Righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he approaches, and now he fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun, exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness." Among his last words were the following: "The battle's fought! the

battle's fought! and the victory is won! the victory is won for ever. I am going to bathe in an ocean of purity and benevolence and happiness to all eternity." I subjoin a few of Payson's texts and themes:

Dan. 5 : 27 : "Men Tried and Found Defective."

Job 22 : 5 : "Our Sins Infinite in Number and Enormity."

1 Thess. 5 : 23 : "Amiable Instincts not Holiness."

2 Cor. 5 : 10 : "The Final Judgment."

Matt. 23 : 33 : "The Difficulty of Escaping the Damnation of Hell."

Jer. 22 : 24 : "Punishment of the Impenitent Inevitable and Justifiable."

John 6 : 37 : "Christ Rejects None that Come to Him."

Gen. 15 : 16 : "Why the Wicked are Spared for a Season."

Jonah 1 : 6 : "The Sleeper Awakened."

Mark 10 : 14 : "How Little Children are Prevented from Coming to Christ."

CHAPTER X.

SHALL WE HAVE A REVIVAL?

PRESENT STATE OF THE CHURCH AND OF THE WORLD—HUMAN AGENCY IN A REVIVAL—THE MEANS: PLAIN, EARNEST PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL; CONSECRATION OF LIFE; PRAYER; PERSONAL EFFORT; GIVING GOD ALL THE GLORY.

Do we not need a revival? Where is the congregation the members of which are as holy, as earnest, as prayerful, as liberal and as aggressive as they ought to be? Do not many professors rest in the mere form of religion? They have a name to live while they are spiritually dead. Do not the vast majority of Christians live far below their privileges, satisfied with a mere glimpse of Christ's pardon, a mere crumb from his table,

a mere drop of his love? Think of the multitudes outside the Church who do not even profess any interest in Christ or give any evidence of a change of heart. In the light of God's truth how sad their condition, how terrible their danger! Try to realize it. Whitefield saw it, and sometimes standing before the thousands, he could only exclaim, "The wrath to come! The wrath to come!" and, overcome with emotion, sit down again. Paul felt it, and you know how he expresses his agony for the salvation of souls as a travailing in birth (Gal. 4 : 19). The Psalmist saw it and felt the danger of the unconverted: "Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law" (Ps. 119 : 53); and again: "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes because they keep not thy law" (Ps. 119 : 136). Isaiah saw it, and hear his language: "Therefore, said I, Look away from me, I will weep bitterly; labor not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people" (Isa. 22 : 4). Jeremiah saw it, and hear him:

“Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people” (Jer. 9 : 1).

But where is this weeping, this intense earnestness, this intense soul-agony, on the part of the Lord's people at the present day because of the souls perishing around us? Six millions of people die every year, the vast majority of them professing no interest in Christ. The whole world lieth in the evil one. The enemy is coming in like a flood. Intemperance, Sabbath profanation, licentiousness, worldliness, fraud prevailing on every side. Only, as observed in a former chapter, five per cent. of the young men of America are members of any Church, and only three per cent. of them are doing any religious work, while seventy-five out of every hundred are practically never inside a church-door. The prospect is sufficiently appalling. Oh, sirs, the Church of Christ to-day is engaged in a terrible conflict. We need the baptism of the

Holy Ghost. Shall we not then cry, "O Lord, revive thy work!"

We are apt to regard a religious revival as a kind of miracle or as some arbitrary manifestation of the Almighty's power, given in his own time and without any reference to any action of his Church as a preparation for it. There is no use trying to "work up a revival," we often hear said. "A revival," it is urged, "depends upon the sovereign will of God, and we are not to move until there are unmistakable signs that God is about to commence a work of salvation, lest we run before we are sent, and injure the cause of religion." All such reasoning is based upon an erroneous conception of the divine method. Undoubtedly a revival is a work of God, otherwise we need not pray, "O Lord, revive thy work." But God works through means in the spiritual as in the natural world; and he has ordained that his people shall be co-workers with him in extending his kingdom. They are to plant and to water, in order that he

may give the increase. It is the Spirit that quickens believers and converts sinners; and the Spirit is given not in any arbitrary manner or without regard to the human will, but in answer to prayer and to render the human agency successful. A revival is thus in an important sense the result of means employed by the Church. If the Church is seeking a revival, she must "awake and put on her strength;" she must stir herself to take hold of God. Isaiah said: "As soon as Zion travailed she brought forth children;" and it is true of the Church to-day.

What, then, are the means which the Church should employ to promote revivals? I answer, We must have much plain, earnest preaching of the gospel. The apostolic Church was a revived and revival Church, and it gave the very first place to preaching. The most striking figure in the Pentecost scene is Peter standing up to preach in the company of his brethren. Wherever the apostles went it is said, "There they preached the gospel;" "they so

spake the word;" "the word of the Lord was published throughout all that region;" "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Preaching, then, is God's chief means for advancing his kingdom. But remember, it must be the *preaching of the gospel*. However the agnostic may sneer and the ungodly rage, that preaching is the best preaching, the most effective, the most edifying, the most soul-saving, that has the most of Christ in it. Such was Paul's preaching. He determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ. "I am not ashamed of the gospel," he says. And when we say that Christ ought to be the subject of every sermon, let no one think that the subject will ever grow threadbare—Christ in his divinity and humanity, in his person, his character, his work, as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; in his birth, life, death, miracles, parables, his prayers and his preaching; Christ suffering and conquering, Christ exalted and ruling, Christ all

in all ! Why, the subject is endless ; eternity cannot exhaust it. And it must be *plain* preaching if it is to affect the masses. The hiding of the cross beneath the veil of fine language and the flowers of rhetoric is, I verily believe, the source of much of that want of sympathy with the Church which so sadly characterizes many in the lower ranks of society at the present day. And besides being plainly preached, the gospel must be *earnestly* preached. McCheyne was accustomed to visit some one or two of his dying parishioners on the Saturday with a view of being stirred up to greater earnestness in the Sunday's work. Of his preaching one says, "He appeared as if he were dying almost to have you converted." There is a beautiful legend of St. Chrysostom. He was a man of much culture and refinement, yet in his earlier ministry he was not remarkable for success. But one night he had a vision. He thought he was in the pulpit. Round about him were holy angels.

Beside him was the Lord Jesus, and before him the congregation to which he was to preach. The vision deeply affected him. The following day he ascended the pulpit; he felt the impression of the scene, he thought of the holy angels as if gathered around him, of the blessed Saviour as at his side listening to his words and beholding his spirit; he became intensely earnest, and from that time forward a wonderful power attended his ministry. Multitudes gathered around him wherever he preached. Though he had the simple name of John while he lived, the ages have called him Chrysostom, the Golden Mouth. Could we as ministers forget ourselves in the pulpit, and remember only that there is a heaven above and a hell below with dying sinners before us and a living, loving, mighty Saviour at our side, and that we are commissioned by that Saviour to speak with those sinners, and to plead with them in the name of his love to flee from the wrath to come and lay hold on eternal life, would not

our preaching be earnest and would not the almighty Spirit bear our words with wings of fire to the hearts of the people, arousing the careless and convicting the unconverted?

“We’d preach as though we ne’er should preach again,
And as a dying man to dying men.”

If we want a revival of religion we must see that the faithful preaching of the gospel is backed up by holiness of life. Our God is a God of holiness. Before he appeared on Mount Sinai, the children of Israel had to cleanse themselves for three days. And before Israel could take possession of the promised rest of Canaan, Joshua had to see to it that they were purified. So if we wish God to do a great work for us, we must sanctify ourselves. Whatever of pride or envy or anger or evil-speaking or worldliness or covetousness or slothfulness we find in ourselves, we must be willing to give up forever; for these things grieve the Spirit, and the Lord will not hold fellowship with us

while we indulge them. Do we not see the explanation of the cheerless, low spiritual life of many in the Church? They are neglecting some known duty or living in some known sin.

“The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.”

Truth is most powerful when presented in a life transfigured and ennobled by it. The most effective way to commend our religion is by a godly life. Character is mightier than profession. The world cares not how we preach on the Sabbath or how you speak and sing at the week-evening meeting; but if you live soberly, righteously and godly; if you are gentle in temper, patient in trouble, honest in business, always generous, cheerful, unselfish, and always seeking to make others happy—the world will see it and recognize it, and ask the reason why. Holiness

of life is an argument for the truth and power of religion which the most hardened will observe and the most obtuse understand. And if the modern Church is far behind the ancient in faith and zeal and in revival power, perhaps it is because it is far behind it in godly living.

And if we want a revival we must *pray for it*. "I would rather," says Moody, "pray like Daniel than preach like Gabriel." We cannot explain the "why" or the "how," but we know by revelation and experience that true prayer will give birth to revival. The reason many congregations have no revival is because they do not pray. Ah, my reader, don't criticise your minister, and complain that he does not preach well enough, until you are sure that you yourself have done your full duty in the case. Don't say, "It is Moses' fault that the Amalekites prevail," when God has told you to hold up Moses' hands and you have not done it. When the Church groans and travails in pain and pours forth loud cries and

tears, the blessing will come, the life will be manifested. When God promises to give a new heart and a new spirit to Israel, he says, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." When God promises to give to Christ the heathen for his heritage, he promises it in answer to prayer: "Ask of me and I will give thee." When he would give life to the dead and dry bones in the open valley, he directs his servant to pray, "Come from the four winds, O Spirit, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." When Elijah prayed, the nation was reformed; when Hezekiah prayed, the people were healed; when the disciples prayed, Pentecost appeared; when John Wesley and his companions prayed, England was revived; when John Knox prayed, Scotland was refreshed; when the Sabbath-school teachers at Tannybrake prayed, eleven thousand were added to the Church in one year; when Luther prayed, the papacy was shaken; when Baxter prayed,

Kidderminster was aroused; and in the lives of Whitefield, Payson, Edwards, Tennent, whole nights of prayer were succeeded by whole days of soul-winning. To your knees, then, ye Christians! Plead until the windows open, plead until the springs unlock, plead until the clouds part, plead until the rains descend, plead until the floods of blessing come.

Then to faithful preaching and holy living and earnest prayer there must be added personal effort to save souls. What would be thought of a man praying for a harvest of wheat, but neither ploughing nor sowing? Yet this is what many are doing in the Church. So far as personal effort to rescue the perishing is concerned, multitudes of church-members are doing nothing. They are barren trees in the vineyard, withered members of the Christian body, drones in the hive. The minister and a few earnest, consecrated men and women are left to do the whole work, while perhaps two-thirds of the members are fast asleep. Now all

this must come to an end if there is to be a revival in the congregation. The whole Church must be organized for work, and all must feel that they are equally called to work as they have opportunity. When our Saviour fed the hungry multitude he gave to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. So, in order to reach a dying world in their various conditions and necessities, we need to organize and distribute by making every member of the Church a disciple indeed ; and as they go forth with the Bread of Life, he will bless the labor and work to the famishing thousands around. What we want is not an occasional spasmodic effort, to be followed by a folding of hands and a going to sleep. The whole Church must be engaged in a persistent attack on the devil, the world and the flesh. We want special efforts by all means, but after these—what? Do we not need to be as earnest and diligent as ever in watering the good seed sown, in building up and strengthening the tender vines

which have been transplanted from the wilderness, in encouraging the zealous disciples who have become fellow-helpers to the truth, and in watching, working and praying with Jesus?

Look at the early days of Christianity. Those were the days of earnest, persistent personal service. As soon as a man was converted to God in those days he became a worker for Christ. Every Christian, whether he moved in Cæsar's household or, like Lydia, in the pursuit of humble commerce,—every Christian did something for Christ and sought to advance his cause. And what was the result? Why, within three centuries after the death of Christ the cross was uplifted in every land; the name of Jesus was pronounced in every known dialect; missionaries passed through the desert, penetrated into the remote recesses of uncivilized countries, and the whole known world was evangelized. They were all at it, and always at it, and the Lord blessed their labors. So,

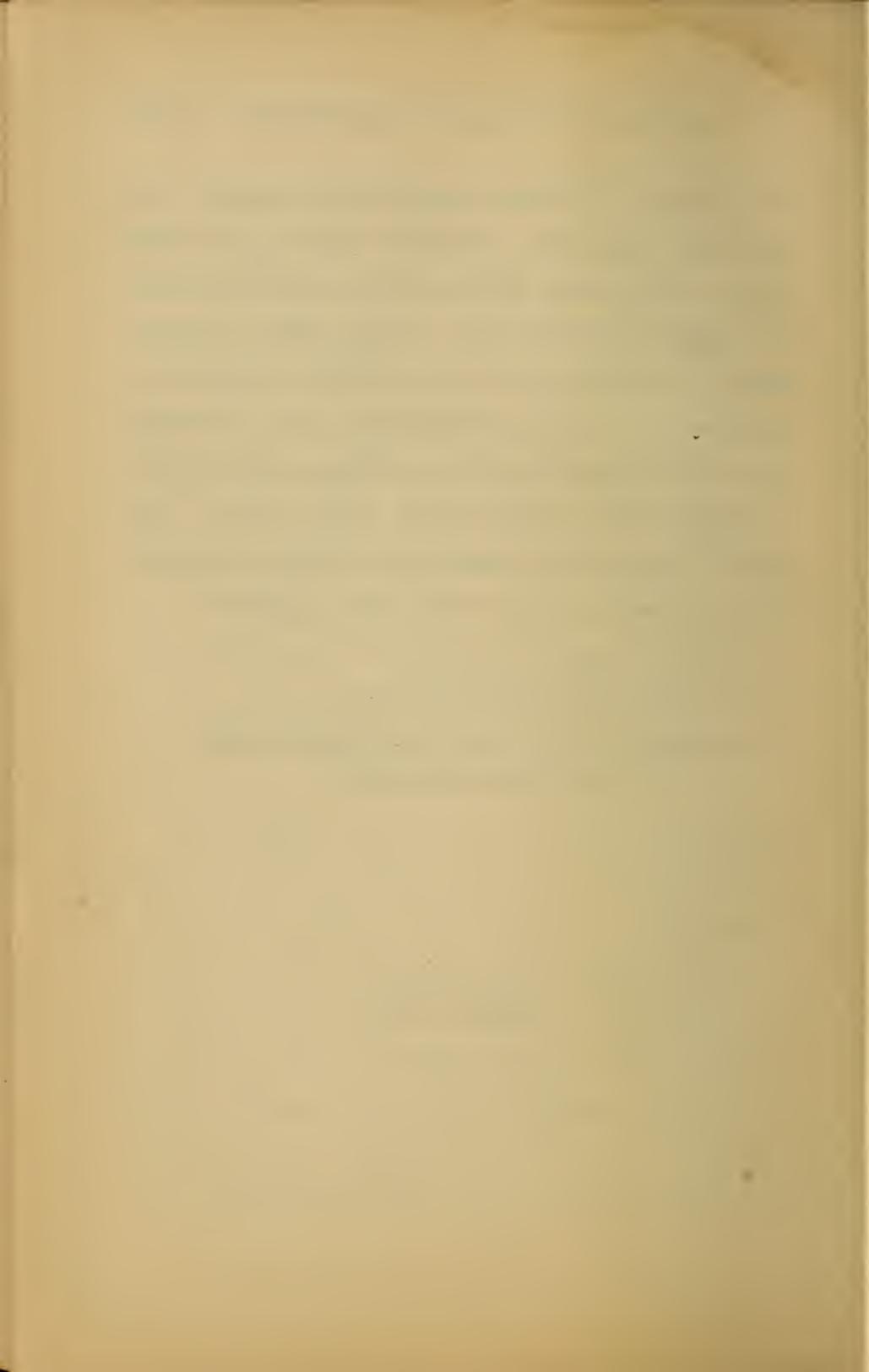
ye soldiers of the cross to-day! if you are to obtain glorious victories you must not rest satisfied with one man in a hundred going to battle. Every man of you must fight the good fight of faith, every heart must be stout and every arm must be strong; every follower of Christ must march forward with the courage of a hero and with the strength of God, to do battle against the common enemy of mankind. Thus, and thus only, will a true, real and permanent revival of religion be experienced, will sinners be seen flocking to Jesus as doves to their windows, and will the glory of the Lord cover the whole earth.

And, lastly, let us never forget to give God all the glory. Whatever instrumentality he may employ, the work is all his. It is only where the Sun of mercy shines that the fruits of grace will grow. Without the Spirit of God the best arranged means are useless—lamps without oil, sails without wind, coals without fire. Underrate this truth, and you cut yourself off from the very fountain-head

of revival. We may plant and water, but spiritual increase is from God, and God alone. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. Nothing short of God's omnipotent might in Christ's everlasting love, through the Holy Spirit's divine efficacy, can revive a single soul. Remember this, for it will guide your actions, raise your hopes, strengthen your faith and warrant your prayers.

“Revive thy work, O Lord,
Thy mighty arm make bare:
Speak with the voice that wakes the dead,
And make thy people hear.”

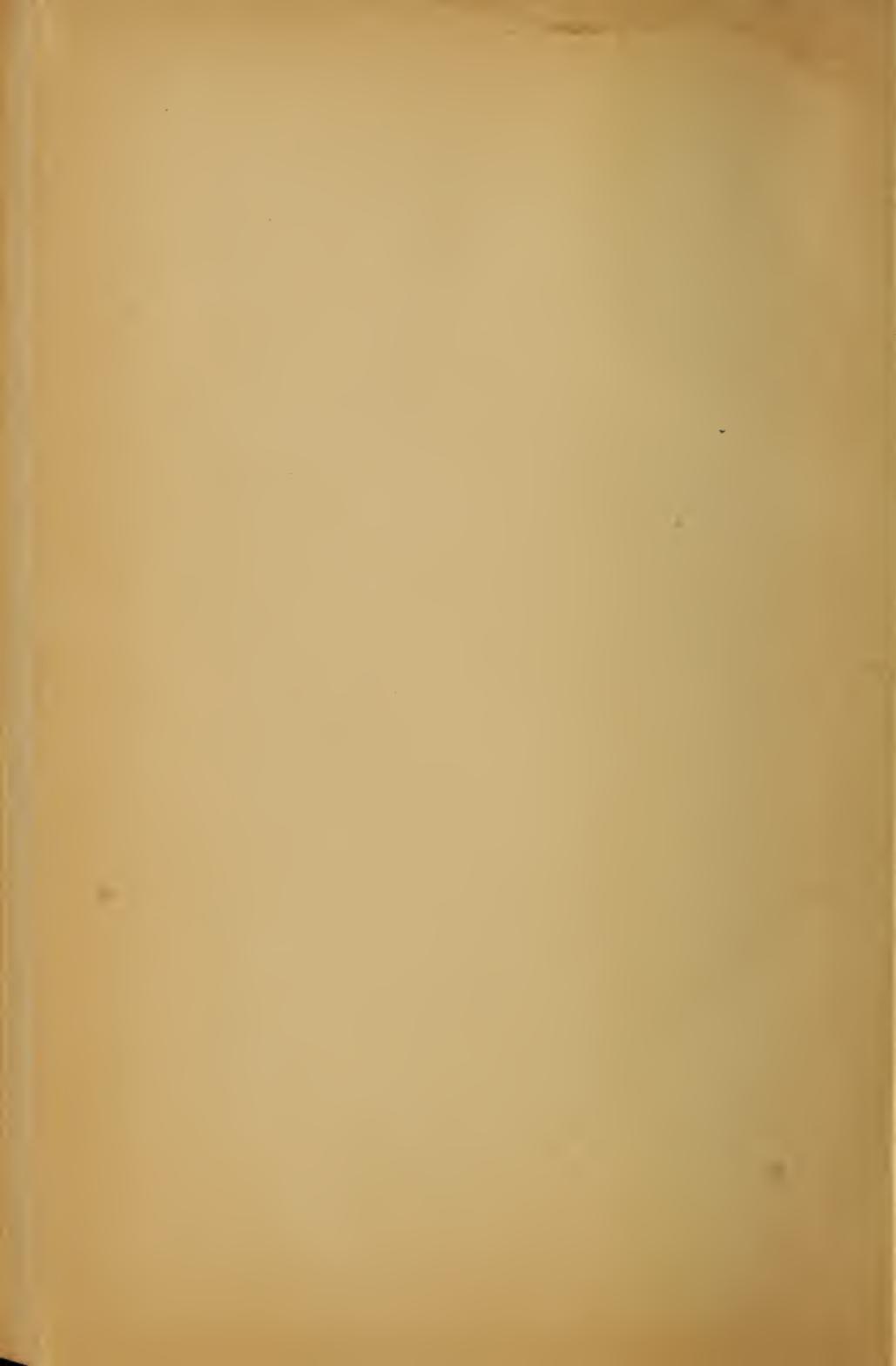
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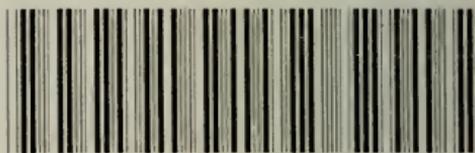
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