

Classic Books for Today

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Old Time Revivals

By John Shearer

CHAPTER ONE The Puritan Fire

The story of the Puritan Revival is that of England itself in the most heroic period of her history. It is the story of her great uncrowned king, Oliver Cromwell; of an earnest and sustained endeavor to found the government of this realm upon the deep, broad base of the Eternal Righteousness; of a time when, in the glowing language of Baxter, "England was like to become a land of saints, a pattern of holiness to the world, and the unmatched paradise of the earth."

And it is all this because it is the story of the English Bible. The real beginnings of Puritanism are seen in London, when, as the fruit of the sacrificial labors of Tyndale and his brethren, the Book of God was at last given to the people in their own tongue. The first six Bibles were set up in the nave of St. Paul's, and day after day crowds flocked to the edifice to drink from the living stream. Good readers were in great request, and one of these stands out vividly in the page of the historian, John Porter, a fresh young man, big of stature, to whom the multitude resorted, "because he could read well and had an audible voice." Soon that glad and solemn scene was repeated throughout the whole land, for in every parish church the Bible was displayed, chained in the porch, and, as in the days of Nehemiah, men listened with streaming eyes to the words of the Book.

But the Book did not remain in the porch. In the form of the small Genevan version, it entered the homes

of the people, and there it was deeply, prayerfully pondered. It is well that it was so, for the clergy of that day, ere the Puritan fire reached the pulpit, were faithless shepherds and in many cases grossly immoral. In Baxter's parish, the vicar, an old blind man, holding two livings twenty miles apart, never preached at all, but repeated the prayers by heart (and without heart!) being assisted latterly by his son, the best stage player and gamester in the country round. Sunday was a day of revelry. The Morris dancers, in their fantastic dress, entered the church, gave careless heed to the mumbled devotions, then ran out to play. But, quietly and surely, the Bible did its divine work in the homes of the people. Everywhere men and women, as they read, were awakened and converted.

These converts of the pure Word were marked at once as a peculiar people. A deep sense of the Holy Majesty of God possessed them. An ineffable light seemed to spring from the Book and invest them. The awful purity of God, contrasting with the foul world around them, almost overwhelmed their spirit. It entered into them and filled them with a tremendous earnestness of moral purpose. No wonder they appeared to their neighbors as inhabitants of another sphere. Men tried to find a name for them, and as often before and since, the nickname they invented stuck fast. They called them Puritans.

In other days Puritanism might have held on in its quiet channels, vitalizing the nation by a gently pervasive influence. But the course of events brought

it into a great and terrible prominence. Because of the decisive part it played in the Civil War, we are apt to think of it as essentially stern and warlike; but, in truth, Puritanism found its strength in a quiet and peaceable people. They suffered long and patiently under the cruel tyranny of the Stuarts. Rather than lift the sword against their unworthy rulers, a multitude sought refuge in the New World, and, battling with Nature's grim but honest powers, built up a free and righteous state. In the course of some ten years, 20,000 of the best of England's race crossed the Atlantic, and the great American Commonwealth is the direct outcome of the Puritan awakening. From the days of the Pilgrim Fathers America has been the Home of Revival, and there the living waters have again and again appeared to diffuse a world-wide blessing.

In England itself a strange and wonderful time followed the triumph of Cromwell and the Puritan host. By the Solemn League and Covenant, the nation bound itself to God in holy obedience. The Bible was placed on the table of the House of Commons and recognized as the fount of its laws, the inspiration of its life. Vital godliness became the indispensable qualification for public office. Swearing, drunkenness, and impurity were criminal offences. Every theatre in the land was closed. England became a refuge of the oppressed, the tower and strength of Protestantism in Europe. It never stood higher among the nations than in the days of Cromwell's Protectorate.

These were the days of the great

Puritan preachers – of Owen, Howe, Baxter, Goodwin, and the immortal Bunyan, whose works have enriched every generation of preachers since, and whose pastoral devotion has never been surpassed. In a brief account of one of these we may taste the quality of a Puritan minister and feel the power of the Puritan Fire. When Richard Baxter went to Kidderminster it had a population of about 3,000, shrewd, hard-headed weavers, who worked diligently and lived in considerable comfort. Their vicar was a weak, incompetent man who preached but once a quarter, and then so foolishly that he roused only the laughter of his audience, while his curate was a common drunkard seldom out of the alehouse, and ignorant even of the Children's Catechism. The people, thus neglected, abode in deep spiritual darkness, ignorant, wild, and ungodly.

When Baxter settled amongst them they gave him a rough reception, but the utterly selfless spirit of the man soon secured their respect. His was one of the finest intellects of the time. He was a master of mathematics, physics, and medicine. But the whole mass of his knowledge, the whole being of the man, were aglow with the love of God and of his fellows. His whole energy flowed in one channel; he was always and everywhere a soul-winner. He preached with passionate earnestness, and ever, he tells us, "as a dying man to dying men." Soon the large church was filled to overflowing, and gallery after gallery had to be added, to the number five.

How often is the pastor lost in the preacher! Baxter felt that his work was but half done when he had studiously prepared and forcefully preached his sermon. He must come into vital, personal, individual touch with his people, and so he invented his own method of catechizing. He arranged that every family in his parish should come to his house, one by one, and with each family he spent an hour. Then he took each member apart, and urgently, tenderly besought

him to make immediate decision for Christ. Seldom did a family leave Baxter's door without tears. The fruit of this labour was most precious, and filled the faithful minister's heart with an overflowing joy. Fully a third of the older inhabitants were converted, and the young received a great blessing. Family worship was set up in almost every home, and as one passed through the streets, the songs of Zion might be heard resounding from every quarter. Kidderminster became a "colony of Heaven" in the days of the Puritans. The blessing spread to the country around. The neighboring ministers especially felt the Heavenly influence, and Baxter became a shepherd of shepherds to his brethren. "The Reformed Pastor," that great Puritan homiletic, contains the gist of his instructions, and it has inspired and directed some of the noblest ministries of modern times. This book and his "Call to the Unconverted," with "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," are his abiding legacy to the Church.

CHAPTER TWO

A Great Day at Kirk of Shotts

John Livingston was born in the manse of Kilsyth in 1603. He was one of those happy souls who can never date their second birth. Claimed for God in his infancy by the mighty faith of his parents, reared in a home that shone with the beauty of holiness, he could never remember a time when he did not love God, and yearn to please Him. In his schooldays he was a member of the Church at Stirling, and never did a communicant approach the table in a more fitting frame. A holy awe came upon him that made his very body tremble, but soon sweet comfort and assurance came to this lamb of the Good Shepherd. He ardently desired to serve Christ, and at first he thought he could best do so as a physician. But one day as he meditated in a cave by the Mouse Water, God spoke and called the lad. He left the cave with

the conviction that one path alone lay open to him. He must serve in the ministry of the Gospel.

He prepared himself at Glasgow College, and in 1625, when the holy fire fell at Stewarton, he began to preach Christ. The true Church was quick to perceive the grace of God in him, and in many places his pastoral services were eagerly sought. But everywhere the Bishop forbade his settlement. His warm evangelism was highly offensive to the "moderate" palate, and so young Livingston entered the furnace. For five long years he remained there. It was a heavy trial. With a heart hungering to preach Christ, with fields of service invitingly opened before him, he was held back by the grim hand of the royal episcopate. But, though he knew it not, God's hand was quietly overruling the enemy's purpose, and refining him for a glorious task.

And now we have to note, as so often before in the story of Revival, how God made use of a seemingly fortuitous circumstance to further His great purpose of grace.

It happened that some ladies of high rank, who mourned in secret the decline of the Reformed Faith, were traveling in the neighborhood of Shotts when their carriage broke down. The accident took place beside the manse. The minister, Mr. Hance, hastened out and invited them to shelter under his roof until repairs were completed. They gladly did so, and finding the minister's house was sadly dilapidated, and indeed in a still more parlous state than their carriage, they returned his kindness soon afterward by building a new manse in a better situation. Kindness begets kindness. When Mr. Hance waited upon the ladies to thank them, he asked if there was anything he could do to express his gratitude. Then they ventured to make a bold request, a request that was the real outcome of their secret prayers. Would he open his church at the coming sacrament to some of the persecuted ministers, whom they named? Mr. Hance at once consented,

and amongst those named was the young man, John Livingston.

The communion was fixed for June 20th, 1630. Great interest was aroused, and from all parts a vast assembly was gathered together. Rich blessing followed the Word at the Sabbath services, so rich indeed that it was felt they could not part without an added day of thanksgiving. And it was on this added day that God outpoured the superabundant blessing. After much persuasion Livingston consented to preach on the morrow. Finding their hearts too full of joy for sleep, many formed themselves into little companies, and spent the whole night in fervent devotion, in praise and supplication. The young preacher was one of these praying bands, and when the morning came a sore trial beset him. As he thought of the great, expectant multitude, he was overwhelmed by a sense of utter unworthiness, incompetence, and insufficiency. All strength seemed to leave him, and he was brought down to the dust of death. So real and painful was the abasement that he gave up all thought of preaching, and was preparing to steal away through the fields when his friends gathered about him, and constrained him to remain. And so, on June 21st, in the Churchyard of Shotts, John Livingston stood up amongst the people, feeling himself the weakest and least of God's creatures. Then was fulfilled the saying of the prophet Hosea, "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel." God uplifted him and perfected His strength in the young man's weakness. His text was Ezekiel 36:25-26: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." As he expounded it, burning thoughts and burning words filled his heart and lips. For an hour and a half he preached to a people who seemed rooted to the ground in a great stillness. Then when he thought he must close, again the Spirit filled him with a fullness that

must be outpoured, and for another hour he continued with a melting of heart and liberty of utterance he never experienced before and never after. Five hundred men and women, some from the high ranks of society, some poor wasters and beggars, were converted where they stood, and lived from that day as those who had indeed received a new heart and a new spirit. The memory of that day has never died, and the very telling of its story, as at Kilsyth, has proved a fount of revival.

CHAPTER THREE The Revival in New England

Jonathan Edwards was one of the master intellects of the world. Burdened by the cares of an arduous and harassing pastorate, he had a marvelous power of detachment, and lived, as few men have lived, in the realm of pure thought.

But what especially interests us is the fact that this giant intellect was captivated utterly by our Lord Jesus Christ. It might be said of him, far more truly than of Spinoza, that he was "a God-intoxicated man." The sublime doctrine of the sovereignty of God, at first repulsive to him, became sweet and glorious in his eyes when he found Christ, and his whole life of thought and action then centered in his God and Savior. In the Divine Hand he became the instrument of a great and far-reaching Revival. He has himself recorded the story of that wonderful work, bringing all his powers of consecrated thought to bear upon it; and nowhere is the glorious subject of Revival, in its genesis, nature, distinguishing marks and attendant dangers more fully elucidated than in the works of Jonathan Edwards.

He was born on October 5, 1703, at Windsor, Connecticut, where his father ministered the Word of Life for sixty years. As a boy he felt the powers of the world to come, and in his seventh year, he and his companion made a

booth in the lonely swamp where they resorted for secret and social prayer. He entered Yale College in 1716, and it was here that he read Locke "On the Human Understanding," and discovered the strong bent of his genius. That great book opened to him the doors of thought. His student days were passed in "plain living and high thinking," in the laborious and passionate search for knowledge and truth. He rose regularly at four, and spent thirteen hours in his study daily, a practice continued throughout his life. His pen was seldom out of his hand. He trained himself to think with it, noting down his thoughts continually, and thus securing clearness and exactness in his gathered wisdom.

But the Christian was not lost in the student. On the contrary, his spiritual impressions deepened in his college days, and the Bible became his supreme Text-Book. With characteristic energy and thoroughness, he determined to master it, gleaning every thought with his assiduous pen, finding rich treasure in its most dark and difficult portions, and thus, while yet a youth, writing his own commentary on the Scriptures. About his seventeenth year, God drew him into a more sweet and intimate fellowship with Himself. He found inexpressible delight in the thought of God, "the King eternal, immortal, invisible"; and now the whole earth seemed full of His glory. How often are the eyes of the student holden when he walks abroad in the fields, for still in spirit he walks amid his books. But for young Edwards, Nature was a lovely volume written by his Father's hand. The streams sang His praises.

"The clouds were touched, and in their silent faces did he read unutterable love."

He could not contain his joy, but sang forth his thoughts, mingling his song with the birds. In his famous "Resolutions," composed at this time, he sets on record the unreserved dedication of his whole being to God. They are seventy in all, and the pithiest is

the sixth. "Resolved to live with all my might while I do live."

He was licensed to preach in his nineteenth year, and spent eight very happy months in New York, ministering to a little company of saints. He afterwards took his degree, and passed some years in further preparation and teaching. Then, in 1727, he entered upon his great pastorate at Northampton, Massachusetts. He was here for a time the colleague of his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, whose lengthy ministry had been brightened by five awakenings, or "harvests," as he loved to call them. But, unfortunately, Mr. Stoddard latterly adopted a view of the Lord's Supper, which is alien to the spirit of Revival. He came to regard it as a converting ordinance, and encouraged all to draw near as to the Gospel feast. It is not strange, therefore, that in these later years there was a marked decline in the religious life of the community, and when Edwards came to the place "sin seemed let loose." Among the young people especially the bonds of morality had sadly relaxed. "Frolics," as they were termed, were held constantly. They continued far into the night, and merriment became the handmaid of vice. There was also a serious division in the town, and the jealousy of its two opposing parties greatly embittered its life.

For eight years, the young minister gave himself to prayer and the ministry of the Word. Gradually a better spirit prevailed. The "frolics" ceased, and toward the end of this period the message in the sanctuary was heard with that solemn, hushed intentness, which is one of the sure precursors of Revival. About this time, a controversy on Arminianism greatly disturbed the New England churches, and Edwards, in a series of weighty sermons, expounded the grand Evangelical doctrine of "Justification by Faith." As a preacher, he was entirely destitute of the art of oratory. His pulpit manner indeed was in the furthest degree removed from that of

a "revivalist" in the popular idea. His voice was weak. His sermons were written, and closely read. His sight being defective, he was compelled to hold his manuscript up to his eyes! Yet these sermons, thus painfully delivered, were so filled with the burning passion of the man's heart – there was such an awe upon his spirit while he spoke, as of one in the immediate presence of God – that men listened spellbound, and sometimes leaped to their feet and gripped the pillars of the church lest they should fall into the pit that seemed to open beneath them!

In these tremendous discourses the incoming Spirit found His fitting channel. On a sudden, conversions began to take place throughout the town. One of the first was that of a frivolous young woman, a leader in the "frolics." She became in very truth "a new creature," so humble, pure, and gracious, so utterly transformed, that she was an object of wonder and amazement. He tells us that the news of this conversion "acted like a flash of lightning upon the hearts of the young people"; and as it flew from lip to lip the convicting Spirit seemed to pierce every heart that heard it. Indeed, throughout this Revival, probably the most potent awakening agency was the simple news of another's conversion. A hunger for the same blessing was at once aroused in the hearer's heart. In the early months of 1735 the people pressed into the church daily, and for a time Northampton was literally filled with the presence of God. In almost every house parents were rejoicing over their children, and in the sanctuary the tears of penitence, of new-found joy, and deep compassion flowed freely. The whole congregation became like a heavenly choir, and praise was a sweet and holy sacrifice. The Bible was a new book. Texts that had been read a thousand times appeared with such a fresh and novel interest that even old saints were tempted to think they had never seen them before, and regarded them with a strange wonder. Young converts read

their Bibles with such eager intensity that their eyes became dimmed and they could not distinguish the letters. The tavern was emptied, and in the streets men paused to speak to one another of the beauty and dying love of Christ. As the fruit of the Revival, almost the whole adult population of the town joined the Church.

Ministers from other parts came to witness these wonders of Divine Grace. When they recounted them to their people, the Spirit used their testimony, often in a remarkable way. The fires spread thus from town to town and from county to county. Edwards entered upon a glorious ministry of itineration, and his famous and awful sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," was preached at Enfield, marking the beginning of an awakening there. But the good news spread not only throughout New England; it passed to other lands, and in the first of these sketches we have already shown how the Revival at Cambuslang was linked with the American awakening.

CHAPTER FOUR The Great Awakening

The eighteenth century opened for England in deep spiritual gloom. The Puritan fire was almost extinct, and a cold Deism, that hardly troubled to disguise itself, reigned in the Church. A gross darkness covered the people. The court was foul. Vice walked naked and unashamed. In the high circles of Government bribery had become a fine art. It was a day of cynical time-servers. In many parts of the country the people had relapsed into simple barbarism. England, indeed, was not far from the abyss when she was suddenly rescued, uplifted, and launched upon a career of glorious victory and expansion by the Great Evangelical Awakening. In the judgment of even the rationalist historian she was saved and, as it were, reborn by this great movement of the Divine Spirit.

It was in Oxford University that the new life first appeared, but if we search deeply we shall find its hidden spring in the heart of a praying mother. In truth, Revival is largely the story of praying mothers. Susannah Wesley, wife of the Rector of Epworth, is one of the great women of the Church, and her devoted indomitable spirit had deep and abiding influence upon the founder of Methodism. In 1730 we find John Wesley the leader of a little band of earnest young men who gave themselves to prayer, the Bible, and works of charity. Men called them in derision the Holy Club, Bible moths, then, observing that they were very exact and methodical in their habits, dubbed them Methodists. Wesley himself was yet a seeker, and weary years passed before he found the peace of God. The real beginning of days came for him on May 24th, 1738, when he went, rather reluctantly, to a little company of Christians gathered in Aldersgate Street. One of the brethren read Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, and, as he listened, he found himself strangely stirred. The Spirit of Christ, like a fragrant wind, breathed through his being. He ceased from weary, hopeless struggling, and cast himself, as a little child, upon the arms of Jesus. Then John Wesley knew the deep unutterable peace of God.

He at once began to preach with wholehearted conviction, expounding the great master-texts of the Gospel, making Christ the Alpha and Omega of every discourse. But the more earnestly he preached, the more firmly were the churches closed against him. Often, when he descended the pulpit stairs, an irate clergyman would meet him with the words, "Sir, you cannot preach here again." But the common people heard him gladly, and gradually there gathered about him a band of men whose hearts God had touched. They formed themselves into little companies for prayer and conference, making a chapel in Fetter Lane their headquarters. Increasing opposition

drove them, with intense earnestness, to the Throne of Grace, and then, in the wonderful providence of God, drove them out into the fields.

In this great emancipation George Whitefield led the way. The son of an innkeeper, he was drawn into the goodly fellowship of the Holy Club by the influence of Charles Wesley, and when he began to preach, a great gift of eloquence was revealed in him. Soon the complaint was rife that he was driving people mad, and the churches began to close upon him also. One day, as he declared the Gospel in a building filled to the uttermost, he cast his eyes outside and saw a thousand yearning and disappointed faces. The thought seized him, Why not go out and preach in the open? But this was a thing unheard of. When he consulted his brethren they condemned it as fanatical notion. While thus exercised, he went to Bristol, and preached with such fervency that, in a fortnight, every church in the place shut its doors against him, in emphatic protest. There remained the prison. He preached to the poor prisoners the Gospel which the Church refused. But soon that door, too, was closed by order of the mayor. Thousands were hungering for the Bread of Life, but neither in church nor in prison was there room for Whitefield to dispense it. He now recognized the clear hand of God. Turning from these barred doors he saw, far out in the fields, the beckoning hand of the Master who had found his pulpit on the green hillsides of Galilee. He obeyed.

Near Bristol was a wild region known as Kingswood, once a royal chase, but now a miners' country, without a church, inhabited by a rough and lawless people. Driven from Bristol, Whitefield went out to this neglected spot. On Saturday afternoon, February 17th, 1739 (is it not the supreme date of that century?) he took his stand on a little green hill and began to preach the Gospel. In vast amazement some 200 colliers gathered about him. Such a sight had never been seen. A

minister, a minister in gown and bands, preaching on a hillside! As he continued, day after day, his audience soon grew to twenty thousand, who pressed upon him eagerly to hear the Word of Life. They filled the hedges. They climbed the trees. Nature itself seemed hushed to hear. A sweet summer stillness prevailed. The sun shone from a blue sky, and the strong, clear voice of the young man, eloquent with the very love of God, reached to the utmost bounds of the great assembly.

Then Whitefield saw a moving sight. He saw white channels forming in the black faces of the miners. The whole multitude was drenched in penitential tears. Ere he ended black faces were washed white, and black hearts, too! He at once wrote to Wesley in London: "Come, the fire is kindled in the country." The summons was obeyed, and when John Wesley came and saw the grace of God, he was glad. Whitefield, called to other parts, left him to continue the work, and Wesley entered upon his great career as a field preacher, that career which may be studied in his diary. Henceforth the world was his parish. As he passed from place to place, the fire of God followed him; yea, it traveled to the remotest parts of the country, and, crossing the sea, quickened the life of the universal Church.

CHAPTER FIVE

The "Wark" at Cambuslang

Cambuslang, on the outskirts of Glasgow, now a populous and thriving town, was, in the eighteenth century, a small parish of about 900 souls. Here a memorable and far-reaching awakening took place, and its green braes are fragrant to this day with the Divine breath that breathed so sweetly there in 1742.

The work is abidingly associated with the name of William M'Culloch, minister of the Parish Church. He was not at all a "popular" preacher. His delivery was slow and cautious, but his

message was intensely Biblical. He rose at five that he might revel in the riches of Divine Truth. He abounded in charity, but, above all, he was a man of prayer. He loved the secret place, and he was ever encouraging his people to unite in praying bands, and to make the chief burden of their petitions the revival of God's work.

Like Elijah's servant, he eagerly scanned the heavens for the tokens of coming blessing, and the news of the gracious movement under Wesley and Whitefield filled his soul with joy. He at once began to tell his people the story of the great Revival in England and America. The church being small and in need of repair, the services were often held in a green hollow of the surrounding hills. Here, then, on the Sabbath evenings, when his sermon was finished, he told his flock, little by little, the great tidings that had gladdened his own heart. His preaching, more than ever, became a solemn and awakening call. For fully a year he dwelt on the need of the new birth, and strictly kindred topics, and gradually the effect was seen in deepening reverence and a growing hunger for prayer.

God times the movements of His obedient servants with a beautiful accuracy. He now sent Whitefield to Scotland, the first of a long series of visits. In July 1741 he commenced a truly apostolic ministry in Dunfermline. When he gave out his first text, the rustle of the leaves as the whole audience opened their Bibles, filled him with surprise and delight. He felt like Paul in Berea. The soil had been enriched by long and systematic study of the Scriptures, and the good seed at once took deep root. At Edinburgh he preached twice daily, and every morning he had "a levee of wounded souls." He then turned to the West, and the vast graveyard of Glasgow's ancient Cathedral became the birthplace of a multitude of souls. When he went south in October, Whitefield had the assurance that God had visited His people in Scotland, and that greater things were in store.

In Cambuslang the work had received a new impetus. The year of grace 1742 opened with lively hope. In January a petition was presented to Mr. M'Culloch from ninety heads of families, requesting that a weekly service be held for the further ministry of the Word. Thursday was at once fixed for this purpose.

Prayer now became importunate. On Monday, February 15th, and again on Tuesday and Wednesday, a band of intercessors gathered at the manse. Next day the newly established service was held, and when the sermon closed it was evident that the great power of God had been liberated. The Word, quietly delivered, cut like a sharp sword, and when the minister retired to his house fifty people followed him in an agony of conviction. The whole night was spent by Mr. M'Culloch in the blessed labour of directing these wounded souls to Christ. The following day the church doors were thrown open, and for twelve weeks he preached daily to a stricken people. The deep conviction that their sins had pierced the Son of God – this was the heart of their sorrow. Now the Gospel was heard, as it were, for the first time, and beholding the Lamb of God, their sorrow was turned into a joy unspeakable. Heaven seemed to come down to earth again, and the very glory of God seemed to shine on every hillside. A mighty hunger for the Word seized the new-born converts, and old people went to school with the children that they might learn to read the Bible. The life of the community was transformed. Drunkenness and blasphemy ceased. A spirit of tenderest love filled their hearts and shone in their eyes. Faults were confessed and forgiven. Restitution to the utmost was eagerly made. Family worship was revived, and every one sought to bring another to the Savior.

The tidings of this gracious movement spread far and wide, and the "Wark at Cambuslang," as it was called, became the talk of Scotland. People came flocking from all parts of

the land to see the grace of God, and Mr. M'Culloch now frequently ministered the Word to ten thousand. The blessing culminated in two great communions, the like of which Scotland had never seen. The first was fixed for July 11th. On the previous Tuesday, Whitefield, again in Scotland, came to Cambuslang for the first time. He preached thrice, at two, at six, and at nine o'clock. The people were literally smitten down, and had to be borne into the surrounding houses. When he was exhausted, Mr. M'Culloch continued to preach until long past midnight. Through all that night the voice of prayer and praise was heard in the fields and barns of the country around. On the Sabbath twenty thousand assembled to hear the Word, while more than 1700 pressed to the communion tables, sitting down by companies upon the green grass, as in Galilee of old.

So great was the blessing that it was determined to hold a second Communion on August 15th. Many traveled from afar to the sacred feast. Old Mr. Bonar, minister of Torphichen, from whom has sprung a famous and godly seed, though very frail, was determined not to miss this crowning joy. He took three days to ride the 18 miles that lay between, and joined Whitefield and the goodly band of ministers who had come to Mr. M'Culloch's assistance. More than thirty thousand hearers assembled, and three thousand sat down at the Lord's Table. The windows of Heaven were again opened above the thronging multitude, and an even richer blessing was outpoured. There was indeed no room to receive it, and again the mourning of stricken hearts mingled with the song of the redeemed throughout the night.

The "wark" was of God, and it stood the test of time. When the flood of spiritual ecstasy subsided, a rich soil remained, and a bountiful harvest was securely garnered. The movement spread quietly through the land, and not a few of the subsequent

and seemingly isolated outbursts of the Holy Fire can be traced to a spark wafted from the great blaze on the hills of Cambuslang.

CHAPTER SIX

Brainerd and the Indian Revival

The name of David Brainerd, like that of Robert M'Cheyne and Henry Martyn, lingers in the memory of the Church with a haunting sweetness. His life was brief, but the influence of his devoted spirit is felt to this day, moving men to a noble self-forgetting. In the great story of Revival his place is assured. Answering the question, "What can be done in order to revive the work of God where it is decayed?" John Wesley replied, "Let every preacher read carefully over the life of David Brainerd."

He was born in 1718 near Hartford, Connecticut, and was early orphaned. He inherited a constitutional weakness, and the seeds of consumption were early sown in his feeble frame. Throughout his life he fought a losing battle with this terrible physical foe. But his story is like that of Turner of Peterhead, and shows how weakness itself, linked by faith to the power of God, can triumph gloriously.

Before he entered the life of faith he wandered long in the dreary desert of legalism. But, one day, he tells us, as he walked in a thick, dark grove, unspeakable glory opened to his view. In that one moment of vision he learned more than in all the laborious years of the past. He saw that God's will is the one fount of undefiled peace and joy. To do that will at any cost became the passion of his life.

He was trained at Yale College, and in 1742 he was licensed to preach the Gospel. At first his desire had been to evangelize the heathen abroad, but his eyes were now open to the need of the poor Indians of his own land. Miserably debased by the white man's vices, and despised as an inferior creation, he saw in them souls for

whom Christ had died, a field ready to harvest. Eagerly he accepted the appointment of the Scottish Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge to labour as their missionary amongst the Indians.

He had little success in his first setting out. His station was at Kaunaumeeck, in New York Province, "a most lonesome wilderness," where he lodged on a heap of straw. The Indians were indifferent or suspicious, while the white settlers bitterly resented his presence. His health began to decline rapidly, and after a year of unremitting toil and hardship, he was forced to retire from the field.

He was soon invited to the pastorate of several New England churches. The temptation to settle in East Hampton was especially great. Here, in a lovely country, amid a wealthy and kindly people, he might recover his strength, and spend happy and useful days. The tender tie of a pure affection for the daughter of Jonathan Edwards also constrained him to stay. His experience at Kaunaumeeck had clearly shown him that the Indian wilderness held for him certain and speedy death, and what fruit had he to show for his labour? Surely then in this sweet clime, where health and love and delightful service awaited him, he should cast his lot. But as Brainerd hesitated, literally between life and death, he heard from the far-off woods a pathetic cry. It was the wail of "his poor Indians." No man cared for their souls! They, too, were calling him, and, turning from the white church, taking his life in his hands, he set out again for the Indian wigwams. This was the decisive moment in his life. Had he settled amongst the good folk of East Hampton, he would in all probability have regained his health and discharged a faithful ministry. But we should never then have heard of David Brainerd. He deliberately cut short his days, but in the brief remnant of life that remained to him, he accomplished a glorious work and unlocked a spring of heroic inspiration for generations to

come. He made the uttermost sacrifice, and God gave him the uttermost reward. Henceforward his journal is the record of constant journeyings amongst his poor Indians, covering more than 3,000 miles, through pathless forests, over dark, dangerous mountains, in fierce rains and freezing cold. His body was reduced to a pitiable state of extreme weakness. But as his strength ebbed his compassion grew, grew till it became a great hunger that would not be denied. Whole nights were spent in agonizing prayer in the dark woods, his clothes drenched with the sweat of his travail.

Just at this point, on the very eve of Revival, he felt a strange straitening. God seemed to desert him. His message began to halt. Like John Livingston at Shotts, before the great outpouring, he was made to feel that he was indeed but a man, that the blessing must come from above. When Brainerd, in utter humility, acquiesced in this, all was ready for the forthputting of the mighty power of God.

Suddenly – how often must that word be used in the history of Revival! – suddenly, the Spirit was outpoured upon the whole region of the Susquehanna. His first audience there had consisted of four women and a few children. Now there came streaming in upon him from all sides a host of men and women, who pressed upon him, and grasping the bridle of his horse, besought him with intense earnestness to tell them the way of salvation. In a great, glad wonder he looked upon them, and the text that leaped to his lips was, "Herein is love."

Men fell at his feet in anguish of soul. These were men who could bear the most acute torture without flinching. But God's arrow had now pierced them; their pain could not be concealed and they cried out in their distress, "Have mercy upon me." What impressed Brainerd most deeply was that though these people came to him in a multitude, each one was mourning apart. The prophecy of Zechariah

was fulfilled before his eyes. The woods were filled with the sound of a great mourning, and beneath the Cross every man fell as if he and the Savior God alone were there. Gradually as the missionary spoke, there came to them, one by one, the peace and comfort of the Gospel. As the days passed he had full proof that a Heaven-sent Revival had come. A passion for righteousness possessed the converts. The wretched victims of the fire-water were delivered, and the Indian camps were cleansed at once from their physical and moral filthiness. The love of Christ expelled every unlovely thing. As one poor woman expressed it, "Me to be Him for all," became the motto of their lives. They became themselves ardent missionaries of the Cross. The Light spread through all that dark region, and a strong Indian Church was established.

Brainerd's work was done. His body, utterly exhausted by his labors, was quickly mastered by disease. But what mattered that? It had been the means of a triumphant work of faith. It endured until the Divine Purpose had its perfect fulfillment, and when in 1747, in the house of Jonathan Edwards, he breathed his last, he died in an ecstasy of joy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Great Missionary Revival

In every revival there is the reassertion of the Church's missionary character. Men return to Calvary, and the world is seen afresh through the eyes of Christ. The infinite compassion of Christ fills the heart, and the passion evoked by Calvary demands the whole wide world as the fruit of His sacrifice. Thus the evangelical awakening of the 18th century culminated in a mighty missionary movement which restored the Church's Pentecostal witness to every nation, and established a real and growing dominion of Christ in every land.

In the accomplishment of this great

work, God, who loves to uplift the small and despised, was pleased to use a poor cobbler in the Midlands of England. Born in 1761, in Paulerspury, near Northampton, born again of the Divine Spirit in his eighteenth year, the story of William Carey is one of fierce, almost desperate, struggle with poverty. He found solace in books, the money for which he obtained by the simple expedient of starving himself, so that he literally fed his mind at the expense of his body. His cobbler's shed in Hackleton became his college, and here as he wrought with open book before him, he mastered Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and acquired a working knowledge of French and Dutch. Soon a still higher delight entered his life. He developed power as a preacher, and in 1785 he became pastor of the little Baptist Church at Moulton. His salary was but £15, and he was obliged to teach a school, but this necessity that seemed to confine his usefulness was really the narrow door through which he entered upon the illimitable field of his great life work. It was while he taught the children geography with the aid of a leather globe he had constructed, that the great missionary idea entered his mind, and became the passion of his soul. Isaiah saw the Lord in the Temple, and as surely did William Carey see Him in that little schoolroom, as surely did he hear Him say, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" and as earnestly did he respond, "Here am I, Lord, send me!"

Carey was now a man of one grand idea. One glorious thought dominated his whole life. Christ had died for all mankind, and to every creature under Heaven must be borne the glad tidings of salvation. In conversation this was his uppermost, ever-recurring theme, but he found no response. The missionary enterprise seemed wholly Utopian, "a wild, impracticable scheme." Repulsed by his brethren, he turned to the Press. He wrote his "Inquiry," showing the still-binding force of Christ's last command, and pleading for concerted prayer for men

and money. Repression only served to make the fire within him burn the more intensely, and gradually some of the men about him began to share his passion, notably Andrew Fuller, of Kettering. Then, after six years of waiting, came his great opportunity. Now pastor of the church in Harvey Lane, Leicester, he was invited to preach to the ministers' meeting at Nottingham, and in his sermon the long-curbed fire leapt forth, a fire that was destined to set the whole Church ablaze. He took for this text Isaiah 54:2-3 applying its truth in two mighty maxims that have been the inspiration of missionary endeavor from that day to this:

"Expect great things from God,
Attempt great things for God."

His brethren were deeply stirred, but even then there was danger that feeling might evaporate in tears, and fail to move the springs of action. The meeting closed; the ministers were about to separate. Even Fuller, on whom he had counted, made no sign. It was a moment big with fate. If it passed without some definite deed, all was lost. In an agony he seized the arm of Fuller. "Oh," he cried, "are you, after all, going to do nothing?" Fuller looked into Carey's eyes, and found their appeal irresistible. He recalled his brethren, and then there was inserted in their minutes this momentous decision: "That a place be prepared against the next meeting at Kettering for forming a Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the heathen." The Society was formed a few months afterwards, on October 2nd, 1792 (it is one of God's dates), in the low-roofed back parlor of Widow Wallis, at Kettering. It consisted in the beginning of twelve men, and its first subscriptions amounted to £13 2s. 6d. Its first secretary was Andrew Fuller, and its first missionary was William Carey.

The Society was nearly strangled in its birth. The East India Company

refused to convey missionaries to India. It held them more dangerous than the pestilence. Thus Carey and his companion, Dr. Thomas, sailed in a Danish vessel, and it was finally in the Danish soil of Serampore that the young Society struck its roots. Long and cruel were the hardships he now endured, but he toiled and toiled with unflinching faith and hope. He labored for seven years without a convert. Then Krishna Pal, long burdened by the sense of sin, found in Carey's Savior the great Rest-Giver and the great Deliverer. Carey baptized him in the river on December 28, 1800, the first of a countless host, who, from every kindred and tongue and nation, have come to adore the name that is above every Name.

For fourteen months no news came to England of the great venture of faith. But Fuller and his little Society labored in prayer and held fast the ropes in the Homeland, assured that God was with the toilers in the dark mine beneath. When at last Carey's letters arrived, a joy that was truly unspeakable and full of glory filled their hearts. They came together and sang the hymn of Williams of Pantycelyn, the triumph-song of missions:

“O'er those gloomy hills of darkness,
Look, my soul, be still and gaze;
All the promises do travail
With a glorious day of grace.”

In that same year, 1794, they began to publish their “Periodical Accounts,” relating the story of the Mission, and then fast-crowding and glorious events showed that the Spirit of Missions had indeed gone forth. These simple leaves went through the land and over the earth like flakes of Pentecostal fire, and society after society sprang into being in England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and America. In 1794 the London Missionary Society, in 1799 the Church Missionary Society, entered upon their glorious careers. So deeply moved was Robert Haldane

that he at once sold his estate of Airthrey, and gave himself and all he had to the heavenly Cause. Thwarted by the Government in his design of going abroad, his eyes were opened to see that the great Field of Missions is one and that it begins at a man's own door. He and his brother James became missionaries in Scotland, and bore the Evangel to the remotest glens of their native land. Haldane's Home Mission, now merged in the Baptist Union of Scotland, is one of the finest proofs of the great law enunciated by Dr. Chalmers, that Foreign Missions act upon the Home Church, not by exhaustion, but by fermentation, revitalizing its drooping life. On the other hand, the manna that is kept unused becomes a fount of corruption. When the life energies of a church are restrained, and turned in selfishly upon itself, at once they begin to break it up; they are transmuted into the awful and horrible activities of death. But the Church lives and flourishes exceedingly when it gives its life to a perishing world.

Carey never returned, but lived to a green old age in India, dying in 1834, no less than thirty-four distinct translations of the Bible into the Indian tongues having come from his hands. On his tombstone, by his own desire, are inscribed the words: “A wretched, poor, and helpless worm, on Thy kind arms I fall.”

CHAPTER EIGHT A Revival Amongst Students

Geneva is forever associated with the great name of Calvin, whose massive theology is not unlike the majestic Alps which tower above the city. But in the days of Robert Haldane, Geneva had long discarded the faith of her fathers, and a deep darkness shrouded the once radiant fount of Protestant truth. Infidel philosophers like Gibbon and Voltaire found a congenial home in her neighborhood. Her noble School of Theology was corrupted by

an insidious Unitarianism. The Bible was entirely set aside as a textbook; Plato and Seneca taking the place of Christ and Paul. During the whole four years' course the only use made of the sacred volume was in the teaching of Hebrew, when a few Psalms and chapters were read. The students were thus profoundly ignorant of Gospel truth, and readily imbibed the new theology of that day, which magnified the natural goodness of man and denied our Lord's divinity.

In 1816 Robert Haldane was strongly moved to visit the Continent. His eyes had been gladdened by a work of grace in his own land, and he longed to see the light spreading to the still darkened lands of Europe. The peace had opened doors long closed, and at the end of the year he set out accompanied by his like-minded wife. He expected to be absent six weeks. Three years, the three greatest years of his life, were to elapse before he returned. In Paris he found a spiritual gloom that could be felt, and small wonder, for not long before diligent search had been made, and in all the capital not a single copy of the Scriptures could be discovered! Here he sought vainly an opening for the Gospel, and then went on to Geneva. As he passed through its ancient gates he prayed fervently for Divine leading, for he knew not one person within it. At first all things seemed unfavorable. Day after day he labored to find a door of utterance, and he was on the point of departure when suddenly the whole situation changed.

How often has it been found that what we call a trivial incident is really a finely wrought link in the golden chain of Providence. An old pastor had promised to conduct a short excursion beyond the walls, but prevented by sickness, he sent in his place a young man, a student of Divinity. Mr. Haldane at once began to speak of the Gospel, and to his great joy, as the youth listened, his wonder awoke. He returned with Mr. Haldane to his chambers, and continued with him till late at night,

hearing strange things. Next morning he appeared with another student, equally curious. So astonished were these young men by what they heard that they could speak of naught else to their fellows. A very strange teacher had come to Geneva, they said, a man of one book, and this book, the Bible, was indeed a great book, well worth the perusal of Divinity students! They had been amazed to find that problems which perplexed them were solved in a moment by some passage from this wonderful volume, for the man who made so much of it was "a living concordance," and could at once turn to the very text that was needed! "He knew the Bible like Calvin!" These reports so roused the interest of the others that soon Mr. Haldane was besieged by inquirers, and it was in the endeavor to satisfy these seekers that his famous Home Bible College, as it might be called, came into being.

It was arranged that about thirty students should meet with him thrice a week, and spend two evening hours, from six to eight, in the study of the Holy Scriptures. They were seated round a long table on which were placed copies of the Bible in French, German, English, and other languages, besides the original Hebrew and Greek. Mr. Haldane's method was simplicity itself. At first they were full of questions and every difficulty, every sophistry was at once brought to the test of Scripture. He spent no time in argument, but, opening his well-worn Bible, pointed to some pertinent text, saying, "Look here – how readest thou? What thinkest thou?" and as he did so light would dart from the Book and perplexities vanish like ice in a burning sun.

Having thus cleared the ground, he proceeded to sow the Divine Seed. He commenced a systematic study of the Epistle to the Romans. Here they were at once confronted with a terrible truth which flatly contradicted their accepted teaching, the truth of man's depravity, his impotence, his utter sinfulness. Gathering all the force of

Scripture on this great fundamental, he earnestly pressed home the truth until the awakened conscience gave full assent to it. Then what he had hoped and prayed for came to pass. A very beautiful thing happened. The merely intellectual thirst for knowledge changed into a deep spiritual concern. The Theological Class became a class of anxious inquirers! How eagerly now did they follow the exposition of the great Epistle as their teacher passed on to the grand disclosure of the grace of God in the Gospel!

It was the great hour of Haldane's life, and he knew it! As a spiritual strategist he had come to Geneva! He knew the value of a student won for Christ. He saw not only these young men before him. He saw the thousands who would come under their influence. Could he but bring these men to Christ this upper room in Geneva might be the spring of Pentecostal reviving to Europe. A deep solemnity came into his utterance. The young men felt, as they listened, that a prophet charged with a great mission was among them. And to the praise of the God of all grace and to his own unspeakable joy, he succeeded. One by one, sitting round that table, before the open Book, they surrendered to Jesus Christ! When Haldane passed on to the great chapters on sanctification and the Christian life, his class had become a band of men whose hearts God had touched.

Such a striking work could not be accomplished without arousing the wrath of the professors and clergy of Geneva. A bitter persecution followed. But God preserved the precious life He had created in a wonderful way. When Haldane passed on to Montauban to win further victories for the Gospel, He sent another teacher to continue the work. Henry Drummond (well named!) a talented and wealthy young Englishman, a devoted servant of Jesus Christ, was on a voyage to the Holy Land, when a Heaven-sent storm compelled his ship to seek refuge in the port of Genoa.

Here he heard of the Student Revival, changed his plans, and came on to Geneva, arriving just two days before Mr. Haldane's departure.

The persecution itself was made the instrument of a larger blessing. It ultimately scattered the students throughout Europe, and thus realized Haldane's primal intention. Henry Pyt became the missionary of the Bearn and the Pyrenees. Merle d'Aubigne, driven from his native city, went to Berlin, became a notable preacher, and the famous historian of the Reformation. Dr. Gaussen, the author of "Theopneustia," and Dr. Caesar Malan exercised large influence in our own and other lands. Charles Rieu went to Denmark, where he finished his course after a brief but fruitful ministry. Felix Neff, the Apostle of the High Alps, though not a student of Haldane, traced his inspiration to the same source. Christopher Burckhardt died at Aleppo. These are but a few of the noble names in that honored band. In after days it was found that the seed of many a rich harvest was sown in the sacred upper room in Geneva. In the town itself a living Church arose, and Geneva became again, as in Calvin's day, the Fount of Evangelical Truth.

CHAPTER NINE The Great Awakening Under Finney

While men turn expectant eyes to the great cities, God fashions His instrument in the desert. Born in 1792, Charles Grandison Finney spent the first twenty years of his life in the then thinly-peopled region of Oneida County, New York, and in the wilderness to the south of Lake Ontario. Just when a meeting-house was erected, and a minister settled in their neighborhood, the strange leading of Providence would again thrust forth the little family into the great lonely backwoods. At last this stern discipline ended; and, in 1818, we find the young man settled as a

teacher and studying Law in the town of Adams. He had received little religious instruction from his parents, and had readily adopted infidel principles, yet he was drawn to the services of the church, which were all wonderfully new to him. He even went to the prayer-meeting, but, while an inner restlessness deepened, he more openly avowed his unbelief, and the minister sorrowfully told his people that prayer for Finney was utterly vain.

There was no hope for this young skeptic! Then suddenly God put forth His Hand! The carefully-veiled anxiety became an agony that could not be dissembled. He had to fly to the woods, and there amongst the trees Finney cried for mercy to the God he had denied. The Spirit recalled to his mind the promises of the Gospel, and he seized them like a drowning man. Then a great quietness came. When he returned from the woods, he was a new man in a new earth! His mouth was immediately opened in testimony. The news of his conversion spread through the town, and when the church gathered in the evening, Finney addressed them in burning words. It may be truly said, he commenced that night a ministry which continued for half a century, and its dominant note was Revival.

When Finney arose, the American churches were in a sickly state. For the most part they occupied two opposing camps. They were either Hyper-Calvinists or Universalists. The doctrine of Election was so preached that men felt they were bereft of all responsibility. On the other hand, God was represented as an indulgent Father, and the law was robbed of all its terrors. Thus the very nerve of Gospel ministry was cut, and a dreary apathy prevailed. Then God sent Finney fresh from the desert and the unbiased study of the Word. He drew his message straight from the Bible, and all aglow with the warmth of his own living experience of the grace of God.

Finney preached a full Gospel.

Christ died for all men, and all men are commanded to repent. The burden of responsibility that man had cast upon God, he rolled back with tremendous force upon the sinner. A characteristic text was "Make you a new heart." He called upon men to flee from the wrath to come. Hell was no myth, but a terrible reality to Finney. His preaching was marked by an incisive definiteness. He was a lawyer, and logic penetrated by a flaming zeal is a mighty instrument in the ministry of the Gospel. Men and women were cut to the heart by his sermons. They often fell upon the ground as men stricken by a sharp sword.

Spirit-filled, and believing with all his heart in the leading of the Holy Ghost, Finney valued the discipline of a sound education. He carefully prepared himself for the ministry, and was duly licensed to preach by Presbytery. Later in life, he himself helped to establish a college in Oberlin for the training of young men as pastors and missionaries. Above all, his was a prayerful ministry. The parallelism of secret prayer and public service is wonderfully illustrated in his life.

Early in his career, he came into touch with Rev. Daniel Nash. "Father Nash," as he was called, had a singular experience of judgment and mercy. His ministry at first was cold and graceless. It was his habit to pray in the pulpit with wide-opened eyes that stared upon the worshipers. But God touched those irreverent eyes. A painful darkness fell upon him, and in that darkness he discovered his sinful self and his merciful God. Prayer became a passion with him. When, later, he emerged from his sick chamber, with a thick black veil upon his eyes, his life-mission, he felt, must be to pray men into the Kingdom. He joined Finney, and often while the evangelist preached to the multitude, Nash in some adjoining house would be upon his face in an agony of prayer, and God answered in the marvels of His grace.

The record of those wonders is best

read in the plain but thrilling pages of Finney's Autobiography, a classic on Revivals. We recount a few incidents. At Evans' Mills, where he labored at the outset, the first to be smitten was a lady, an exemplary church-member! It is good to picture the scene; the consternation of the church as it witnessed the soul-agony of one who had seemed immaculate, and who now confessed that she had never really known the grace of God! This mightily disturbed the easy and comfortable assurance that prevailed so widely. It led to great searching of heart, to a wholesome doubt, and eager attention to the Word. Wherever Finney went, this was a prominent fruit of his labors. The sinners in Zion were awakened.

Once he was asked by an old man to preach in a village where religious services were unknown. On reaching the place, he found the schoolhouse filled with an audience of wild-looking men, many in their shirt-sleeves. After the singing, or rather bellowing, of a hymn, he cast himself upon his knees in prayer. There God gave him his text: "Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city." He rose, and told them the story of Sodom and its one righteous man, Lot. As he spoke, they cast furious looks upon him, and small wonder!

Their village was known as Sodom for its great wickedness, and the old man who had brought Finney was nicknamed Lot. Of this the preacher was ignorant. The Spirit had given him the needed word, and now he used it as a two-edged sword. Suddenly an awful solemnity came upon them, and then before two minutes had passed, almost the whole congregation fell upon their knees or their faces, and began to cry out for mercy, while old "Lot," sitting in the midst, looked round in utter amazement! That meeting continued until next morning. Finney himself had to leave to keep an appointment, but the old man had the unspeakable joy of directing wounded souls to Jesus, and in this case Sodom was really saved through its one righteous man!

During the revival at Rome, near Utica, the influence of the brooding Spirit was so mighty that the very atmosphere seemed charged with holy awe. One day the sheriff of the county had to visit the place. To him the whole movement was matter for mirth and amusement. But the moment he crossed an old canal, and came within the vicinity, he found he had entered this wonderful atmosphere! His jocular spirit fled. His heart seemed to melt within him. With the greatest difficulty he refrained from tears, and wherever he went that day the heavenly influence literally enveloped him and all with whom he had dealings. Not long afterwards he was numbered amongst the hopeful converts of that Revival.

But while the blessing seemed to cling to certain places, as a cloud to a hill-top, in others it spread like a fire with a marvelous rapidity, and in every direction. A closing incident will illustrate this. The northern portion of Pennsylvania was then known as "the lumber region." Here a vast number of scattered households dwelt in almost heathen darkness. A great awakening took place in Philadelphia, under Finney's ministry, and some of the lumbermen, coming down to the city with their wood, heard the message and carried a spark from the fire back to the great forests. There it caught, and spread in an astonishing manner. In a region where there was not a single minister settled, 5,000 were converted in a very short time.

The revival that swept over Rochester, New York, under Charles Finney was the beginning of one of the most remarkable spiritual awakenings in the history of the Christian Church. Dr. Lyman Beecher afterwards spoke of it as "the greatest work of God, and the greatest revival of religion that the world has ever seen in so short a time. One hundred thousand were reported as having connected themselves with the churches, as a result of that great revival, and this is unparalleled in the history of the Church, and of the progress of religion."

CHAPTER TEN The Kilsyth Revival

The spiritual awakening that has made Kilsyth memorable in the records of grace is naturally associated with the name of William Chalmers Burns, its most honored instrument, but there was a long, patient preparation in the faithful ministry of his father. When W. H. Burns commenced his work there as parish minister in 1821, the population of the town was about 3,000, for the most part consisting of miners and weavers. Its morality was very low. Drunkenness and its kindred vices were rampant. All bargains and payments were made over the "friendly glass." The session clerk had his office in the public-house, where he speedily became a victim of the prevailing sin, while the typical funeral service was composed of long prayers interspersed with rounds of drinking.

One of Mr. Burns' first acts was to found a Temperance Society, but his chief and abiding hope was in the revival of God's work. He stirred and quickened the embers of a Prayer Meeting which had sprung from the Cambuslang Revival of 1742. Like a trail of holy fire this meeting stretches through a hundred years, connecting the movements in Cambuslang and Kilsyth, and suggests the fact that revivals which seem so sporadic are really intimately and vitally related. One of the most precious fruits of a true Revival is the establishment of a living prayer meeting, and it is here also that we find the seed of Revival.

As the years went on the need of a Divine awakening burdened the pastor's heart increasingly, and more and more his ministry was directed to this great and glorious end. He studied eagerly the story of Revivals, and in 1822 we find him with Dr. George Wright of Stirling bending over the old records of the kirk session, reading of wonders of grace in 1742, and

fervently praying that again the glory of God might be revealed. In those distant days God had largely used a very devoted pastor of the Church, the Rev. James Robb, and that he might impress afresh the lessons of that fruitful ministry, Mr. Burns took his stand one Sabbath afternoon upon the grave of his honored predecessor, and preached earnestly to his people. Gradually it became evident that rich blessing was yet in store for Kilsyth. There was a deepened seriousness in public worship. The prayer meeting was thronged. Gracious drops, the forerunners of the coming shower, began to fall. There were some undoubted conversions, and faith grew strong.

In 1839 the full blessing was out-poured. In His sovereign grace God was pleased to use the minister's son as His fitting instrument. William Burns had been laboring in Dundee, in the church of the saintly Murray M'Cheyne, and he had deeply felt the fragrance of that beautiful spirit. There he had seen a genuine work of grace, and there God had been preparing him. One touch only was needed to make him a polished shaft in the Divine hand – the touch of sorrow. It was given through the death of a dear relative, and as the young man stood by the grave of his brother-in-law in Paisley, the shadow of death was the shadow of God's hand, laying firm hold of His servant. On his return home a very manifest unction accompanied his preaching. He spoke with power at Banton on Saturday, and again on Sunday.

On Tuesday, July 23rd, the great refreshing came. On that day a large assembly gathered to hear him in the market place of Kilsyth. Rain began to fall, and they entered the church, which was soon filled to overflowing, stairs, passages, and porch being blocked by an eager people. Solemn prayer was followed by the reading of the second chapter of Acts, and then, taking for his text Psalm 110:3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of

Thy power," the young man began to address the people. As he spoke, a wonderfully sweet and tender spirit came upon the gathering. Hearts melted and tears began to flow. At the close he told the story of the Shotts Revival in 1630; how John Livingston, himself a native of Kilsyth, in preparation for an after-communion service, spent a whole night in prayer; how God gave him such a vision of His glory and his own unworthiness that he turned to flee; how his friends found him in the fields and gently forced him to return; how the trembling youth stood up to speak, and was suddenly clothed with irresistible power so that on the spot five hundred people, from all ranks of society, were converted through that one sermon. As William Burns recounted this marvelous work of God, he saw that the same Spirit was moving the people before him. An intense earnestness seized him, and he urged the people there and then to accept Christ, clinching his message with the solemn words, "No cross, no crown." As he uttered them the whole audience broke down and an indescribable scene followed. The arrows of conviction smote the people, and from every part of the building there was a cry of agony, "What must I do to be saved?"

Happily there was a band of prepared servants of God ready for such an emergency. The stricken ones were gathered in the vestry and session house, and there dealt with individually. Many soon obtained the peace of God, but others remained under painful conviction for days. The church was opened for daily service, and night after night for months a great reaping took place. In the market place and in the church-yard assemblies of three or four thousand were addressed by Mr. Burns. A great hunger for prayer and for the Word of God possessed the people. They could not be satisfied! The effect upon the community was very great. It was largely transformed. Drink received a fatal blow. The town was cleansed from its vice.

Loom shops became places of prayer, and many a home became a Bethel. It proved an abiding work. The converts went on from strength to strength, and the very memory of the Revival has remained a blessed influence in the place to this day.

CHAPTER ELEVEN The Revival in Dundee

After ten months' labour in Larbert and Dunipace, Robert M'Cheyne was called to Dundee, and here in the *quoad sacra* parish of St. Peter's he found his great life-work. He was appalled at first by its heathenism. He mourned its "idolatry and hardness of heart," and the feeble influence of the surviving church. But with the fortitude of faith he set himself to his task. Very soon he established a weekly prayer meeting on the Thursday evening, and here he read to his people or told them the story of God's marvelous work in past Revivals. Once again, as so often before and since, the seed of the great harvest was sown in the prayer meeting.

He devoted himself to his pastoral duties, and often, after several hours of visitation, he would again meet the gathered families under some friendly roof and declare the Word of Life. Preaching was to him an unceasing delight. It was the unfolding of the beauty and glory of Him he loved. He carefully prepared his message. One of his oft-quoted sayings is: "Beaten oil – beaten oil for the lamps of the sanctuary." Like Bunyan, he was "ever in the Word." Asked one day if he was ever afraid of running short of sermons, he replied: "No, I am just an interpreter of Scripture in my sermons, and when the Bible runs dry, then I shall."

He loved to make his appeals to the careless "on the back of some massy truth." God's Word was in his hands like a hammer, and yet none ever preached with greater sweetness and tenderness.

But M'Cheyne was himself his greatest sermon, and here is the secret of his success. He walked with God in the beauty of holiness. Our Lord's presence seemed to envelope him, diffusing a heavenly aroma. His very manner, his bearing as a man standing in God's presence, was often the means of awakening indifferent sinners, so that men who could not remember a word he said found themselves with an unforgettable impression that God had drawn very near to them.

From the beginning God set His seal to his ministry. Callers of an unusual type appeared at the manse – men and women in trembling anxiety of soul! Like the physician's house in an epidemic, his home was marked and became the resort of sin-sick souls. Men gathered from all parts of the town and district to his ministry. That surest sign of coming Revival, an enlarging prayer meeting, was now appearing, when a strange thing happened.

This instrument of Revival, so delicately fashioned, so perfectly adapted, was suddenly, in the eyes of men, laid aside by the great Master Builder, and another uplifted. Never robust, and unsparing in his labors, M'Cheyne broke down under the strain of his strenuous pastorate. Serious heart trouble developed, and he was compelled to leave the scene of his delightful duties and seek rest and renewal, first in Edinburgh, and later in a pilgrimage of inquiry amongst the Jews in the Holy Land.

It may be that men were regarding too fondly the instrument, and forgetting the Hand of Sovereign Grace that wielded it. But M'Cheyne was not really set aside. God had used his preaching most markedly. Now He would use his prayer! During all this period of isolation his heart bore the burden of Dundee, and, like Epaphras, he "labored fervently in prayers." Sore sickness again fell upon him in the East, and he lay at the gates of death. But still he agonized for his flock, and it was one day, while thus

he travailed on the brink of Eternity in far-off Bouja, that the great shower began to fall in Dundee.

William C. Burns, already used so mightily in the Kilsyth Revival, was further honored in opening the flood-gate of blessing in Dundee. He took M'Cheyne's place in his absence, and it was on a visit to Kilsyth that the memorable awakening took place there, on July 23, 1839. On his return to Dundee at the Thursday evening prayer meeting on August 10, he spoke of the wonders he had just witnessed, and invited those to remain "who felt the need of an outpouring of the Spirit to convert them." About a hundred waited, and, as he addressed them, suddenly that infinitely tender Spirit whose incoming in power can never be mistaken, came upon the people, and the whole assembly was bathed in tears. From that night the work went on increasing in might. The church was opened and densely crowded night after night for four months. The Word of God proclaimed by Mr. Burns and like-minded ministers had piercing effect. The most tender presentation of Christ produced the bitterest agony of soul, so that strong men cried out for mercy in the midst of the congregation.

The whole city was moved, for Christ again was centered amid an adoring people. Whole families were affected at once, and were found mourning apart as in the prediction of Zechariah. A great spirit of reverence came upon the community, and sin was greatly restrained.

Renewed in strength, Mr. M'Cheyne returned to his flock while the showers were yet falling. No slightest tinge of jealousy disturbed his fellowship with Mr. Burns. Each had learned a great humility at the Master's feet, and co-operated in pure disinterested love. He has described his first service after his return – the church crowded to the doors, the pulpit stairs filled on one side with the aged, on the other with little children; the wonderful singing, so sweet, so tender and affecting, the

intense hearing of the Word, the manifest hunger for the Bread of Life; and then the strange convoy homeward, when the people thronged about him in the street, pressing upon him, as upon his Master in Galilee, constraining him to stop and pray and speak again and yet again on his way to the manse!

During these days of Heaven upon earth, a multitude passed from death to life. They were very largely from amongst the poor and working classes. The rich, he laments, were almost untroubled. Then gradually the flood subsided and flowed quietly on, a brimming river within its banks. The works stood, for it was maintained by unceasing prayer. For a time no less than thirty-nine prayer meetings were held weekly in connection with his church, and of these five were carried on wholly by children. He loved the children dearly, and had himself the free joyousness of an innocent child. The work amongst these little ones was remarkably deep and abiding, as is witnessed by his tract, "Another Lily Gathered." These lambs of the flock were lovingly welcomed, and at the Lord's Table their bright young faces, radiant with a Heavenly joy, gave a fresh sweetness to the feast of love.

Robert M'Cheyne had now three years to live. He was haunted by the conviction that his career would be short. During those last years a deep solemnity and a great yearning love marked his utterance. He preached verily as a dying man to dying men, watching for their souls as one who must shortly give an account. The sense of a fast-approaching end saved him from the snare of popularity. "Oh, for closest communion with God," he cried, "till soul and body – head, face, and heart – shine with Divine brilliancy! But oh! for a holy ignorance of our shining!"

His labors increased and extended, and the memory of his evangelistic tours lingers in many parts of Scotland to this day. The end came on March 25, 1843.

The typhus fever, raging in his parish, suddenly seized his enfeebled frame, and, after a very brief illness, he succumbed. In his delirium he was ever in spirit with his beloved flock, praying, preaching, and directing them Heavenward. He died with his hand uplifted in the act of benediction.

After his death a letter was opened addressed to him by one who heard his last sermon. It read as follows: "I hope you will pardon a stranger for addressing to you a few lines. I heard you preach last Sabbath evening, and it pleased God to bless that sermon to my soul. It was not so much what you said as your manner of speaking, that struck me. I saw in you a beauty of holiness that I never saw before. You also said something in your prayer that struck me very much. It was, 'Thou knowest that we love Thee.' Oh, sir, what would I give that I might say to my blessed Saviour, 'Thou knowest that I love Thee.'"

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Revival of 1857

In Britain we speak of the '59 Revival, but in America of the '57. A growing corruption marked the years that preceded it. The gulf between rich and poor was widened by an extraordinary luxury. Crimes of violence rapidly increased. Spiritualism, in its modern phase, had its rise in America about this time, and soon its foul flood was flowing strongly. It fiercely assailed the marriage relation, and openly espoused the doctrines of "Free Love." Corruption was patent and unashamed in commercial and political life, while the cruel evil of negro slavery was still established by the law of the land. Atheism lifted its head boldly and the mass of men seemed thrice hardened in indifference.

By the terrible onset of evil the American Church was driven in upon God. Early in 1856 it began to pray definitely for Revival. The

denominations drew together. The Church united its forces at the Throne of Grace. A great commercial crisis at the close of 1857 was undoubtedly used by the Divine Spirit to deepen the sense of need. Banks stopped payment every week. Failures were numbered by thousands. In a severe winter tens of thousands of the unemployed wandered about the streets, a pathetic and heart-moving spectacle. In this year a convention of 200 ministers was held in Pittsburgh, and after fervent prayer an address was issued to be read in the various churches on the 1st of January, 1858, recommending practical measures for the revival of true religion, such as definite preaching on the subject, and house to house visitation.

But the greatest measure, and that which was pre-eminently blessed, was united prayer. Indeed, the Revival of 1857 should be known as "The Revival of the United Prayer Meeting," for this was not only the fount of the great blessing; it was throughout its course the chief, and almost sole, instrument of the Divine Spirit.

As a rule, some great name is associated with a Revival; some one man is signally used. But the movement of 1857 is exceptional. It is not linked with any outstanding personality. It is thus difficult to fix a place of origin. The wonderful fact is this: in answer to the Church's united cry, ascending from all parts of the land, the Spirit of God, in a very quiet way, and suddenly, throughout the whole extent of the United States, renewed the Church's life, and awakened in the community around it a great thirst for God. Thus it came about that, in the same city, the movement began at the same time in different quarters and proceeded for a while before that fact became generally known. As in the miracle of 2 Kings 3, into the thirsty valley, filled with ditches by the labor of believing, praying men, there came on a sudden the quiet flow of the gracious Spirit, and in a moment the churches became channels brimming with the living water. When the

American Church awoke to the full consciousness of the miracle it found that from East to West and from North to South the whole land was alive with daily prayer meetings, and it was in these daily united prayer meetings that the great majority of the conversions took place.

Two of these meetings are noteworthy. Jeremiah Lanphier, longing intensely for Revival, begged a few of his fellow-Christians to meet with him. For some time he was alone in the appointed place of prayer, on September 23, 1857. Later in the day he was joined by five others. This was the origin of the famous Fulton Street Noon Prayer Meeting in New York, which has continued to this day. When the blessing came this meeting at once increased mightily in numbers and power.

In Jayne's Hall, 4000 met daily to wait upon God. Drawn from every class, they were massed together in a great stillness, broken only for a while by the sobs of the penitent. Then brief, earnest prayers would be offered, often only a few broken sentences. The presence of God, vividly realized, produced a marvelous quietude and orderliness. Brief exhortations, the repetition of a single text, pierced the heart like a knife. At the end of the hour, the multitude quietly dispersed and returned to business, but they looked as Jacob looked when the sun rose upon Penuel.

Throughout the land this took place everywhere, and day by day many were drawn gently into the Church. Joyous song and full-hearted confession marked the movement. "Stand up for Jesus," the dying words of a young minister, suddenly taken in the midst of great service, became the great watchword of the Revival.

The Divine fire appeared in the most unlikely quarters. A large number of the aged were gathered in. White-haired penitents knelt with little children at the Throne of Grace. Whole families of Jews were brought to their Messiah. Deaf mutes were reached

by the glad tidings, and though their tongues were still, their faces so shone that they became effective messengers of the Gospel. The most hardened infidels were melted, some being led to Christ by the hand of a little child.

Nor was the blessing confined to the land. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and a multitude of seamen saw a great light. It was as if a vast cloud of blessing hovered over land and sea. And ships, as they drew near the American ports, came within a definite zone of heavenly influence. Ship after ship arrived with the same tale of sudden conviction and conversion. It was wonderful beyond words! In one ship a captain and the entire crew of thirty men found Christ out at sea and entered the harbor rejoicing.

Perhaps the most striking awakening took place on a battleship. The North Carolina lay in the harbor of New York. Her complement was about a thousand men. Amongst these were four Christians who discovered their spiritual kinship and agreed to meet for prayer. They were permitted to use a very retired part of the ship on the orlop deck, far below the water line. Here, then, they gathered one evening. They were only four men, but they were a united band. The great prerequisite of the Revival was here, for they represented three denominations, one being an Episcopalian, another a Presbyterian, while two were Baptists. As they knelt in the dim light of a tiny lamp, the Spirit of God suddenly filled their hearts with such a joy of salvation that they burst into song. The strange sweet strain rose to the decks above, and there created a great astonishment. Their ungodly shipmates came running down. They came to mock, but the mighty power of God had been liberated by rejoicing faith. It gripped them, and in one moment their derisive laugh was changed into the cry of penitent sinners! Great fellows, giants in stature, and many of them giants in sin, were literally smitten down, and knelt humbly beside the four like

little children. A most gracious work straightway began in the depths of the great ship. Night after night the prayer meeting was held, and conversions took place daily. Soon they had to send ashore for help, and ministers joyfully came out to assist. A large number were added to the various churches, and the battleship became a veritable House of God! The North Carolina was a receiving ship, from which men were constantly drafted to other ships. The converts of the Revival were thus scattered throughout the Navy. A Revival convert is a burning brand. The holy fire spread rapidly from ship to ship. Wherever they were they started a prayer meeting and became a soul-winning band. Thus ship after ship left the harbor of New York for foreign seas, each carrying its band of rejoicing converts, and the fire of God was borne to the ends of the earth.

Dr. Frank G. Beardsley in his "History of American Revivals," says: "For a period of six to eight weeks, when the Revival was at its height, it was estimated that fifty thousand persons were converted weekly throughout the country, and as the Revival lasted for more than a year it becomes evident that the sum total of conversions reaches a figure that is enormous. Conservative judges have placed the number of converts at five hundred thousand, and this estimate in all probability is approximately correct."

"Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN The Ulster Revival of 1859

In 1855 Rev. J. H. Moore, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Connor, urged one of his young men to do "something more" for God. "Could you not gather at least six of your careless neighbors and spend an hour with them in reading and searching the Word of God?" The young man

agreed to attempt "something more," and the result was the commencement of the Tannybrake Sunday School. After two years' labor, the teachers of this little school did again "something more." They asked the parents of the children to come to a meeting for prayer and Bible reading at the close of the school. Only one responded at first, but the meeting grew, and soon the Sabbath School Teachers' Prayer Meeting became intensely interesting, for the Spirit of God came pouring into this newly-opened channel. "Christ and the Cross" became the one absorbing theme of the gathering, and an intense desire to win souls for Christ seized the workers.

Amongst these praying folk were four young men – M'Quilken, Meneely, Wallace, and Carlisle – who were very strongly bound together in the fellowship of prayer. The story of George Müller quickened within them a mighty faith in God as the Hearer of Prayer. They began to meet regularly in the old schoolhouse of Kells, pouring out their hearts in passionate supplication for Revival. Like-minded brethren joined them, and now decided conversions, clearly following definite and insistent prayer, greatly encouraged them. In 1858 came the news of the American awakening. They heard how in New York 12,000 business men met daily for prayer, and, like Jacob, they cried, "We will not let Thee go, except Thou bless us." Nor was the answer delayed. Prayer meetings multiplied all around them. Daily conversions took place. Soon Connor was manifestly ablaze with holy fire.

A great Revival is like a forest fire. You may trace its early course, following the first thin line of flame. But soon its progress is so swift and widely diffused that the eye can no longer keep pace with it. The flame bursts forth at once in many places, and now we see but one great conflagration. So it was with this marvelous work of grace. You might observe its course in Connor and a little beyond in 1858. But in 1859 the Heavenly

fire was leaping up and spreading in all directions through Antrim, Down, Derry, Tyrone, and the other counties of Ulster, and to this day "'59" is remembered as the pre-eminent year of grace.

As it advanced it burned with a fiercer intensity. In Connor the conversions were of a comparatively quiet type. But in Ahoghill, Ballymena, and elsewhere there was a great smiting down. Sin was felt as a crushing and intolerable burden, and men and women often fell to the earth and continued for days in a state of utter prostration. Others were suddenly pierced as by a sharp sword, and their agonized cry for help was heard in the streets and in the fields. Here, for example, is a farmer returning from market in Ballymena. His mind is wholly intent upon the day's bargain. He pauses, takes out some money, and begins to count it. Suddenly an awful Presence envelopes him. In a moment his only thought is that he is a sinner standing on the brink of hell. His silver is scattered, and he falls upon the dust of the highway, crying out for mercy.

There was a wonderful work amongst the children. The blessing had come to Coleraine, and one day the schoolmaster observed a boy so troubled that he was quite unfit for lessons. He kindly sent him home in the company of an older boy who had already found peace. As the two lads went on their way they saw an empty house, and went into it for prayer. While they knelt the painful burden lifted from the boy's heart. He sprang to his feet in a transport of joy. Returning to the school, he ran up to the master and, with a beaming face, cried out, "Oh, I am so happy! I have the Lord Jesus in my heart." The effect of these artless words was very great. Boy after boy rose and silently slipped from the room. In a little while the master followed and discovered his boys ranged alongside the wall of the playground, every one apart and on his knees! Very soon their silent prayer became a bitter cry. It was heard by

those within and pierced their hearts. They cast themselves upon their knees, and their cry for mercy was heard in the girls' schoolroom above. In a few moments the whole school was upon its knees, and its wail of distress was heard in the street without. Neighbors and passers-by came flocking in, and all, as they crossed the threshold, came under the same convicting power. Every room was filled with men, women, and children seeking God. The ministers of the town and men of prayer were sent for, and the whole day was spent in directing these mourners to the Lord Jesus. That school proved to be for many the House of God and the very Gate of Heaven.

It pleased God to use, in a very remarkable manner, the simple testimony of the four young men of Connor. Through them the revival reached the Capital. On a sudden ministers who had toiled in vain for years found themselves surrounded by sin-sick souls clamoring for the life-giving Word. But for the loving co-operation of Sabbath school teachers and other friends, they would speedily have been exhausted with the work. Vast and memorable gatherings were held. Districts, notorious as the scenes of party strife, witnessed the triumph of the Gospel of Peace. Bitter opponents knelt together at the Saviour's feet. Belfast became like a city of God.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Aberdeenshire Revival of 1859

In 1859, the Heavenly rain-cloud that so mightily refreshed the American Church in the previous years, crossed the Atlantic, outpoured upon Ulster an unspeakable blessing, and then hovered over the whole extent of the British Isles. Nowhere was the effusion more marvelous than in Aberdeenshire. For some years before many had mourned in secret the long spiritual dearth and, as God's set

time approached, these gathered into little praying groups throughout the county. In Aberdeen itself there were not a few of these watchful bands of intercessors, the largest meeting on Saturday evenings in the Free North Church.

It was surely in answer to these prayers that Reginald Radcliffe, a Liverpool solicitor, came to Aberdeen at the close of 1858. He came to conduct a ten days' mission. It extended to five months. In the most unpretentious fashion he began in the small Mission Hall of Albion Street Congregational Church. Here he was content to labor first amongst the boys and girls, but soon men and women came to hear his simple and earnest appeals. His message breathed the love of God in its infinite tenderness, but was full of terrible warning to the Christ-rejector, calling constantly for instant decision. Soon old Greyfriars' Parish Church was opened to him, and the work then grew with great rapidity, until the whole city was deeply moved. He frequently preached six or seven times on the Sunday, and so great was the hunger for the Word, that whenever a congregation dispersed, the waiting multitude without at once poured in and again filled the place.

It became known that in the house of Mr. Brand, in Dee Place, anxious inquirers would be welcomed. To this house many flocked at the close of the services, and every room was filled with weeping penitents. On the Broadhill and on the links by the seashore memorable meetings were held, and here Duncan Matheson, with George Campbell, James Smith, Dr. Duncan, and other zealous ministers of the city, co-operated with Mr. Radcliffe. For a time Divine things formed the one absorbing theme of conversation. People might be seen reading the Bible in the railway carriages and in the streets, and even customers in the shops, when they had completed their purchases, would make wistful inquiries as to the way of salvation.

A passion for prayer and for the

Word of God seized the converts. They spent many hours together in prayerful study, and in Rubislaw Quarries all-night prayer meetings were held. As in every Revival these praying converts became most potent evangelists, their abundant life overflowing in soul-winning service. Organized by Mr. Radcliffe, in whom the gift of wise leadership was fully consecrated, they went forth to the surrounding districts, and Aberdeen became a fount of spiritual life to the whole county.

In the little town of Old Meldrum, Radcliffe's faith was tested in a very striking manner. The Free Church was crowded to hear him. Expecting an address of extraordinary eloquence, the people were greatly disappointed by the simple, unadorned message of the evangelist. At the close the workers gathered about him in dismay. Not one person had remained in response to his appeal. But now the God of wonders revealed Himself through the man who utterly trusted Him. "Friends," said Radcliffe, "have faith in God. Let us ask God to send them back."

Then he prayed, speaking to God with the simplicity of a child addressing his father. As he continued in prayer there was a movement at the door. Someone entered, then another and another. The people were all coming back! For, on their homeward way, even as they were criticizing "the poor discourse" they had just heard, a Divine hand arrested them and compelled them to return! And now all cold indifference was gone. The simplest word pierced and melted their hearts. Soon the whole assembly, children, youth and maidens, fathers and mothers, were bathed in tears at the feet of Jesus. Old Mr. Garioch, the minister of the church, was transported. His face shone like an angel's and that night a work of grace began that continued for months and entirely transformed the community.

If there were space, one would fain tell the story of James Turner, the Peterhead cooper, who continued

Radcliffe's work. He was devoid of learning, and had no gift of utterance. He was a consumptive, and when his great task commenced, a dying consumptive whose days were nigh numbered. He was little in stature, his voice was feeble, his eye deformed by a squint. But this frail, broken, disfigured vessel was filled with a passionate love to Jesus Christ, an intense hungering compassion for souls, and an invincible faith in God. He could pray! Therefore God was able to lift him up, out of weakness made him strong, and in two crowded years of glorious life, He used the dying consumptive to win for Him eight thousand souls! On December 6th, in the little fishing village of St. Combs, he began his memorable mission. From village to village he went, and everywhere along the sea coast his course was marked by a trail of the Divine fire. As he went on the blessing increased, and his coming was awaited with intense eagerness, and then, as happens when Revival reaches its flood tide, a wave of great joy passed over the people. They thronged around him and marched in a body from town to town, singing as only those can sing who have drunk "the royal wine of Heaven," the joy unspeakable and full of glory. In this way he at last reached Banff, and the night of March 10th is one much to be remembered by the church there. It was found impossible to dismiss the people, and through the whole night a great reaping went on. Many of the most notorious sinners in the town were saved, and many who first saw the Lord that night went forth to declare His glory in all parts of the earth. Turner had much of the spirit of M'Cheyne, and his end was like his. The matchless love of Christ filled his vision, and his last words were, "Christ is all."

Time tested the Aberdeenshire Revival, and proved that it had the enduring quality of its native granite. Fifty years after, at a jubilee celebration meeting in 1910, a multitude gave thanks to God for its precious and

abiding fruits, manifest not only in the county itself, but in every part of the world. The material results alone have arrested the careless eye. A gentleman once drew his friend's attention to several rows of beautiful cottages. "Look! these houses have sprung up as if by magic in room of the wretched hovels in which the fisher folks used to live. Formerly the money that came from the deep salt sea went down into the depths of that more dark and bitter sea, the public-house. All that is changed. The Revival came. The public-house was dried up to the bottom, and you see the hard-won earnings of the fishermen in these handsome and comfortable homes. Revival is a reality here. You can see it, you can touch it, you can measure it, you can go into it and be sheltered by it, and taste some of its material sweets!"

Its spiritual fruits? Eternity alone will disclose how much Aberdeenshire owes, under God, to Reginald Radcliffe and James Turner.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN Moving Two Nations Godward

About the middle of last century, in the Bible class of Mount Vernon Congregational Church, Massachusetts, U.S.A., there was a rather rough, self-willed lad of seventeen, called Moody. He was ignorant of the Scriptures, and when the Gospel of John was mentioned he diligently sought for it in the Old Testament! But his teacher, Mr. Kimball, was drawn to the young fellow, and earnestly instructed him in the way of salvation.

A day came when he felt that the decisive appeal must be made; and entering the shoe store at Boston, where Moody was employed, Mr. Kimball found him tying up a parcel. Laying his hand on his shoulder, in a somewhat stammering fashion he told him again of Christ's love, and asked him to return it by yielding his heart to Him. The Spirit had gone before him, and the lad responded. As he

hurriedly left the shop, little did that faithful teacher think what a glorious, what a world-moving career, he had helped to initiate!

Moody's fascinating story should be read in the noble biography written by his son. Its early wonders took place in Chicago, where he became a successful business man, and was rapidly "making his fortune" when God called him to be an evangelist. He began his gospel work there in a tiny mission Sunday school. When he applied for a class it was pointed out to him that sixteen teachers were quite sufficient for twelve scholars! Off he went to the little ragamuffins that swarmed in the neighborhood, and next Sunday led eighteen of them into that school, more than doubling it at a stroke! This act is characteristic of Moody all through his stirring life. For him there was always a way out! He never waited for things to turn up. *He turned them up!*

Limited space forbids the telling of the famous (and deeply-moving) tale of the dying teacher in Chicago, and how he won his whole class of careless young women for Christ. It was while Moody knelt in prayer with that class around their teacher that the unspeakable glory and joy of soul-winning was discovered to him. He rose from his knees, saying, "O God, let me die rather than lose the blessing I have received tonight!" From that moment, it may be said, in perfect truth, that money, talents, learning, all things, were nothing to D. L. Moody, except in so far as they could be made useful in the all-absorbing, passionate quest of souls for Christ.

As a city missionary and pastor in Chicago he did a deep and abiding work that has rooted itself and grown in that great city of desperate spiritual need. His utter devotion to the "one thing needful" became proverbial. Accosting a young man from the country one day, he asked, "Are you a Christian?" "It's none of your business," was the reply. "Yes, it is." "Then you must be D. L. Moody!"

But before Moody could be

fitted for his world-task three great influences must enter his life. His theology needed correcting, and God used England's boy preacher, Henry Moorhouse, to equip America's greatest evangelist. As he listened to the frail youth preaching, night after night, in the Chicago church, on the one text, John 3:16, the amazing love of God was revealed to him as never before, and the tears sprang from his eyes. Up to that time Moody had pictured God as pursuing the sinner with a double-edged sword to destroy him. Now he saw the Infinite Love in pursuit of the worst of sinners, and a new and melting note entered into his message.

The second great influence came also through a lowly channel. In 1867, on a visit to England, he had heard someone say, "The world has yet to see what God will do with, and for, and through, and in, and by the man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him," and, as he listened, Moody had said, "I will be that man." God now prepared to make him that man. Two quiet women sat on the front seat of his church, and he saw that they were constantly praying for him. When he asked them why they prayed so much for him, and not for the people, they greatly surprised him by their reply. "It is because you need the power of the Spirit." "What!" he thought, "I need the power! Have I not the largest congregation in Chicago, and are there not many conversions?" But they continued to speak to him of the need of divine anointing for special service, and at last a great hunger awoke within him for the very fullness of the Spirit of God. Then came the great fire of Chicago, which swept his church and many another fine building out of existence! In this hour of desolation God gave him his greatest spiritual qualification. It was an experience on which he never cared to dilate. Like Paul's it was too sacred for words. Suffice it that a day came in New York when all barriers in his soul were broken down and the heavenly tide came sweeping in. So moving then was the

revelation of the divine love, that he asked God to stay His hand!

However great the blessing God gives a man, He never completes him in himself. Always He leaves him in need of his brother man. Moody's name is difficult to recall alone; it is forever linked and divinely linked with Sankey's. Paul's almost pathetic dependence on his comrades in the Gospel is one of the most touching things in his life; and this modern Paul, D. L. Moody, competent, confident American though he was, clung to his fellow-man for support, and in the gracious personality of Ira D. Sankey he found his complement. Moody's preaching and Sankey's singing formed a double-edged sword, mightily used by the Spirit of God. It is significant that the first hymn Moody heard Sankey sing was "There is a fountain filled with blood." Both were Calvary men. Both had found their refuge in the Saviour's riven side, and their only boast was in the Lamb of God.

The story of how Moody and Sankey came to Britain, and how God used them here for the Revival of His work, is a great chapter in the new Acts of the Apostles. The gracious hand that directed Paul to Europe led them and opened for them, in a wonderful way, the door of utterance. God's providence is ever secretly working, and long before they came, He was preparing for their advent. In a church in North London there were two sisters. Constant sickness kept one in bed, and at first she feared her day of service was over. Then the Holy Spirit showed her He had not laid her aside but drawn her aside that she might pray for the Revival of God's work. Day and night she gave herself to the task. One day she read in a paper of Mr. Moody, and felt led to pray that God would send him to her church. How unlikely! Moody in Chicago across the Atlantic; she in one of London's ten thousand assemblies! But in 1872, Moody came on a second visit to England. He was determined not to preach. His one desire was to

learn more of the Bible from English expositors. When, however, at the close of the Old Bailey prayer meeting, he was asked to preach in a North London church, he found he could not refuse! It was the church of the praying saint! The morning service was dull and lifeless. He wished he had never come! When the suppliant heard from her sister that a man Moody from America had preached that morning, she cried, "I know what that means!" The remainder of the day she gave to prayer, calling mightily upon God. Most reluctantly Moody came back to preach in the evening, but as he labored through his discourse, on a sudden everything changed. A strange hush came upon the people and the preacher's tongue was loosened. The building was filled with a Presence unmistakable. God was there, and when Moody asked those who would like to become Christians to stand up, the people rose in masses! None was more amazed than Moody himself. The people crowd into the inquiry room, and that night a work began which resulted in 400 being added to the church.

In the following year, accompanied by Sankey, he returned to England, this time definitely for evangelistic service. Never did a mission begin under more discouraging conditions. When he landed in Liverpool he found that the three friends who had invited him were dead, and no preparation had been made for his coming. It was then that he pulled out of his pocket an unopened letter received just before he sailed. It contained an invitation from York, and there, in June, 1873, in a small prayer meeting, began a marvelous movement of grace which mightily affected the whole religious life of Britain, and whose precious fruits are around us today. At first the novelty of Moody's methods kept many aloof, but the utterly sincere and selfless spirit of the man was soon apparent and the meetings increased greatly, ministers of all denominations lending a hand.

God set His seal to the work. Many were born from above and began to live as new creatures in Christ Jesus. From York they went to Sunderland and then to Newcastle, and here the famous Moody and Sankey hymn book first saw the light. It began as a humble pamphlet of sixteen pages, issued by Morgan and Scott. It grew with the work, and the tiny rivulet of song has now become a great, brimming river, bearing the joyous Evangel to the utmost parts of the earth.

From Newcastle the evangelists proceeded to Edinburgh, and here the work was so deep that the attention of the nation was aroused, and Moody and Sankey became household words. Andrew Thomson, an honored Edinburgh minister, thus testified to the Divine nature of the work: "I have shared with many beloved brethren in this sacred pleasure, and it is like eating angels' bread, first to hear the cry of conviction and then the joy of reconciliation and peace. I was much struck by the variety among the inquirers. There were present, from the old man of seventy-five to the youth of eleven; soldiers from the castle, students from the University, the backsliding, the intemperate, the skeptical, the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated; and in how many cases were the wounded healed and the burdened eased!"

In Glasgow the same moving scenes were witnessed. Here Andrew Bonar's testimony is weighty. "Men are coming from great distances to ask the way of life, awakened by no directly human means but evidently by the Holy Spirit, who is breathing over the land. It is such a time as we have never had in Scotland before." He notes that the great theme of the evangelists was "Christ made sin for us, Christ the substitute, Christ's blood, Christ's righteousness, Christ crucified." The great closing gathering in the Botanic Gardens recalled the glorious days of Whitefield's ministry, thirty thousand listening in awed silence while Moody preached for an hour on "Immediate Salvation."

Then followed memorable visits to the principal Scottish, Irish, and English cities, and the long two years' campaign culminated in a London mission, which stirred the great city to its heart.

So decisive and far-reaching were the effects of this awakening that it may be said that with Moody and Sankey we enter upon the era of Recent Revivals, extending from 1873 to the present day. It formed channels – among them the Bible reading, the Gospel solo, the after-meeting, the inquiry room – in which the spirit of Revival has freely moved ever since. In this new Revival era we have organization developed as never before, and here is at once its strength and its weakness. It is much easier in our days, because the machinery is at hand, to "get up" a Revival, and there is nothing more woeful and destructive than a "got up" Revival. Then we must safeguard ourselves as Moody and Sankey did, by utter faithfulness to the Bible, the Cross, and the Spirit, who alone can "bring down" the Heavenly blessing.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN A Revival Around the World

The conviction is deeply rooted in the popular mind that revival is in its very nature intermittent and spasmodic. But if Revival is the renewal of Divine Life in the soul, this is manifestly but another of many popular fallacies. The new life, it is true, often bursts forth in the most unexpected manner, but the spring becomes a river that flows broad and deep, and it is entirely our own fault if the heavenly stream becomes choked by the sands of encroaching worldliness.

It is the testimony of Dr. Torrey that, in every church to which he ministered, he enjoyed a continuous Revival. He taught his people that this great blessing is simply the restoration of the Church's health, and it is the Lord's will that His Body should

enjoy robust and unflinching vigor, ever renewing its youth and drawing fresh strength from its trials. We believe that it was because he held so tenaciously this high New Testament doctrine of Revival that God was to uplift him as His instrument in that worldwide awakening which dates from 1902.

We discern the beginnings of this mighty movement in a little group of praying people who, in 1898, began to meet in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago on Saturday evenings from nine till ten o'clock. Their numbers grew until 300 assembled weekly to cry out to God for a great awakening. So heavy became the burden on the heart of Dr. Torrey that he and a few others would continue in agonizing intercession until the early hours of the Sabbath, and one morning he was led to pray definitely that God would send him round the world with the message of salvation. It was an altogether new petition that he never dreamt of offering when he entered the room, but he left it with the conviction that God had heard and given.

Within a week came the answer as startling as the prayer. At the close of his church prayer meeting two strangers came up to him and invited him, in the name of the united churches of Melbourne, Australia, to conduct a simultaneous mission there. Months before they had been sent out to search for a man who should lead them in a forward movement and in Dr. Torrey they were convinced they had found God's appointed servant. He gladly consented and, in April 1902, he and Mr. Alexander began that mission in Melbourne which proved but the first of a glorious series of missions that girded the world with the Heavenly Flame.

From the outset God set His seal to the work. Huge crowds, sometimes numbering 15,000, would endeavor to pack themselves into the great Exhibition Building which seated 8,000, and ere the four weeks' mission closed more than 8,000 decisions had been recorded. The message was the

old but ever new evangel. How often it is said today that the next Revival will witness a departure from the Gospel of our fathers. This has been prophesied in every age of the Church and every new Revival has proved its falsity. In every awakening there is the same return to the Cross, the same solemn emphasis upon the blood of Christ, the same acknowledgment of the Holy Ghost. Dr. Torrey has plainly declared his creed. "I preach four great truths. I preach the whole Bible from cover to cover. I accept everything; except nothing. I preach the power of the blood of Jesus Christ to save – the doctrine of the Atonement. I preach the Personality of the Holy Spirit. I preach the power of Prayer."

In Charles M. Alexander he found a worthy successor of Sankey, as he himself was the true successor of Moody. This Greatheart of Song, his face radiant with the joy of salvation, had an extraordinary power of enthusing the great choirs he organized, and his songs seemed to uplift the people as on angels' wings. The Glory song "ran like wildfire over the country" and henceforth, wherever they went, it opened the way for them. For six months they passed from town to town, and the fire of God went with them, until the whole Commonwealth was evangelized, and the Australian Church again shone with the Beauty of Holiness.

The seeds of a still greater harvest were being sown amidst this joyous people. Dr. Torrey had written a book on Prayer and in it he used the expression, "Pray through." Is not prayer like boring a tunnel and is not its great assurance that, while we bore through on our side, God is at work on the other? When the importunate prayer of faith and the Infinite yearning Love have won through, what a way is opened for the power of God. A lady in Melbourne, who read the book, was gripped by the phrase, and at once began to organize her friends into prayer circles determined to pray through. The movement spread

through the city and soon Melbourne had 1,700 of these bands of God's Engineers. Shortly afterwards this lady went to England and at the Keswick Convention she told the story of the Circles. The idea was eagerly adopted and soon Britain and Ireland were alive with these praying bands. In 1904, thirty thousand saints were enrolled throughout the world, whose daily prayer was, "Revive thy work, O Lord." Surely here is the secret, in no small part, of the marvelous outpouring in Wales that marked the year 1905, of the great movements of the Spirit in other places in Britain and in America, and of the truly pentecostal revivals in India and China.

The tidings of the Australian Revival gladdened the universal Church and an urgent invitation came from England to conduct missions there. They set out in response to this call, and on their way they visited India with far-reaching results. Many conversions were recorded but, best of all, the spirit of prayer was mightily quickened in many a missionary's heart. Two ladies of the Khassia Hills Mission, after hearing Dr. Torrey in Calcutta, returned to their stations with a passion for prayer, a passion that passed to their people, and proved the spring of unspeakable blessing in 1905 when 8,000 souls were added to the Church.

The campaign that followed in Britain, recalled the wondrous days of Moody and Sankey. A deep work was accomplished in Liverpool. The multitude that flocked to the Philharmonic Hall was so great that it was found necessary to hold double meetings. A pathetic hunger for the Word prevailed and people would stand for an hour in the rain, in the hope of winning an entrance. "The Hall is full; why don't you go home?" said a worker to the waiting crowd. "Please, sir," said a woman, "we are waiting for somebody to faint." "But surely you don't want anyone to faint." "No, but they do faint there sometimes, and then we get their seat."

There was a beautiful work of grace amongst the children. The Sunbeam Song, "Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam," was their favorite, and many a child brought the sunshine of Heaven into a dark and dreary home by faithful witness to the Saviour. A little girl wrote to Dr. Torrey, "I was singing one of your hymns on Christmas day. Mother had come home drunk and there was nothing in the house, so I thought I could do nothing else but to pray for the revival and to sing to my Heavenly Father who has done such a lot for me." Surely that little child had already learned the Song of Habakkuk.

Great use was made here, as in all the missions, of the phrase, "Get right with God." Printed on a little card, it was widely broadcast and proved indeed an arresting word, many remarkable conversions resulting from it.

The Birmingham mission bore rich fruit and very memorable were the services held in Bingley Hall, where about 8,000 conversions were recorded within thirty days. Even the buses and tramcars were sometimes turned into enquiry rooms so eager to win souls were the workers and so troubled were the sinners. One of the most striking incidents was the conversion of an entire football club. It was in Birmingham that Mr. Alexander met the lady who became his wife, Miss Cadbury, and the influence of a new and very gracious personality was added to the strength of the evangelists. As the founder of the Pocket Testament League Mrs. Alexander became a living force in evangelism throughout the whole world.

The Welsh campaign has a peculiar interest as it was held on the very eve of the great awakening. A month was spent in Cardiff, where a huge iron tabernacle, seating 7,000, was erected. At first the people were unresponsive, but when they did catch fire, their enthusiasm was boundless. In the light of after events probably the most fruitful meeting was a convention of

the evangelical ministers of South Wales. Many bore a blessing back to their churches and thus prepared the way for that triumphal progress of the Gospel which marked the course of Evan Roberts.

But the crowning blessing was given in London. At the invitation of the London Evangelistic Council, headed by Lord Kinnaird, five months, from February to June, 1905, were devoted to the evangelization of its vast multitudes. For the first two months the meetings were held in the Royal Albert Hall. They were then transferred for a like period, to a large structure of iron and glass in South London, and finally to another in the Strand. The work was most carefully organized and a choir of 4,000 voices was enrolled, about a thousand of whom were present at every service. "There are diversities of operations but it is the same God that worketh all in all." England never saw a grander illustration of that truth than in this year of grace. In Wales all organization broke down; the Spirit in His fullness overflowed all bounds and swept multitudes into the Kingdom. But in London, the same Spirit, at the same time, making free use of elaborate plans and a complex mechanism, that had been prayerfully conceived, wrought a glorious work that proved equally genuine and abiding.

At the opening meeting, when Dr. Torrey had spoken on "What it Costs Not to be a Christian," hundreds rose to confess Christ; the very first to leap to his feet, on the platform, being a

member of the nobility, Colonel Horace Beauchamp, C.B. Many notable conversions took place, among the most remarkable, being that of Quentin Ashlyn, a popular concert-hall singer and entertainer. He confessed afterwards that, while amusing others, he had been himself the most miserable man in London. His gifts were now devoted to Christ and he became a most joyous and fruitful evangelist.

The Glory Song captured London as it had captured Melbourne, and God was also pleased to use, in a very wonderful way, the simple melody, "Tell Mother I'll Be There."

In closing, let us hear the testimony of an eye witness. He is describing a typical Men's Meeting. The text was John 3:16. "For nearly three-quarters of an hour Dr. Torrey pled most earnestly and passionately with his vast audience to surrender to the love of God and yield themselves to Christ. The address was not rhetorical or oratorical. It was not filled with glowing imagery, nor spiced with much humor, but from the first it was convincing and convicting. He closed abruptly and, after a brief prayer, called for decisions. There was a pause, then a man arose, and Dr. Torrey exclaimed. 'God bless you, sir.' Then in every part of the huge building, men began rising, singly and in twos and threes, and for several minutes Dr. Torrey was kept busy repeating, 'God bless you – and you – and you – and you, my boy – and you, sir – and you.' Then while the audience was hushed and silent before God, Mr. Alexander said that,

instead of singing an entire hymn as usual, he merely wished to sing one verse. Many eyes were wet with tears as he sang touchingly,

'See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?'

"While the audience remained seated, Dr. Torrey asked all those who had risen to move out into the aisles and corridors and come down to the front of the building, and there confess Christ publicly before their fellow-men. It was a heavy ordeal but the men faced it bravely, and presently long lines of young men, old men and boys were seen streaming down to the platform. It was a magnificent and thrilling spectacle. In a few moments about 250 men were standing packed closely together around the platform, extending out on either side and down the center aisle in the form of a cross. Facing the audience, they repeated after Dr. Torrey in ringing tones: 'I have taken Jesus as my Saviour, my Lord, and my King.'"

It is estimated that during the four years' world tour of Dr. Torrey and Mr. Alexander in Australia, India, Great Britain and America, more than 100,000 people publicly confessed the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.

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