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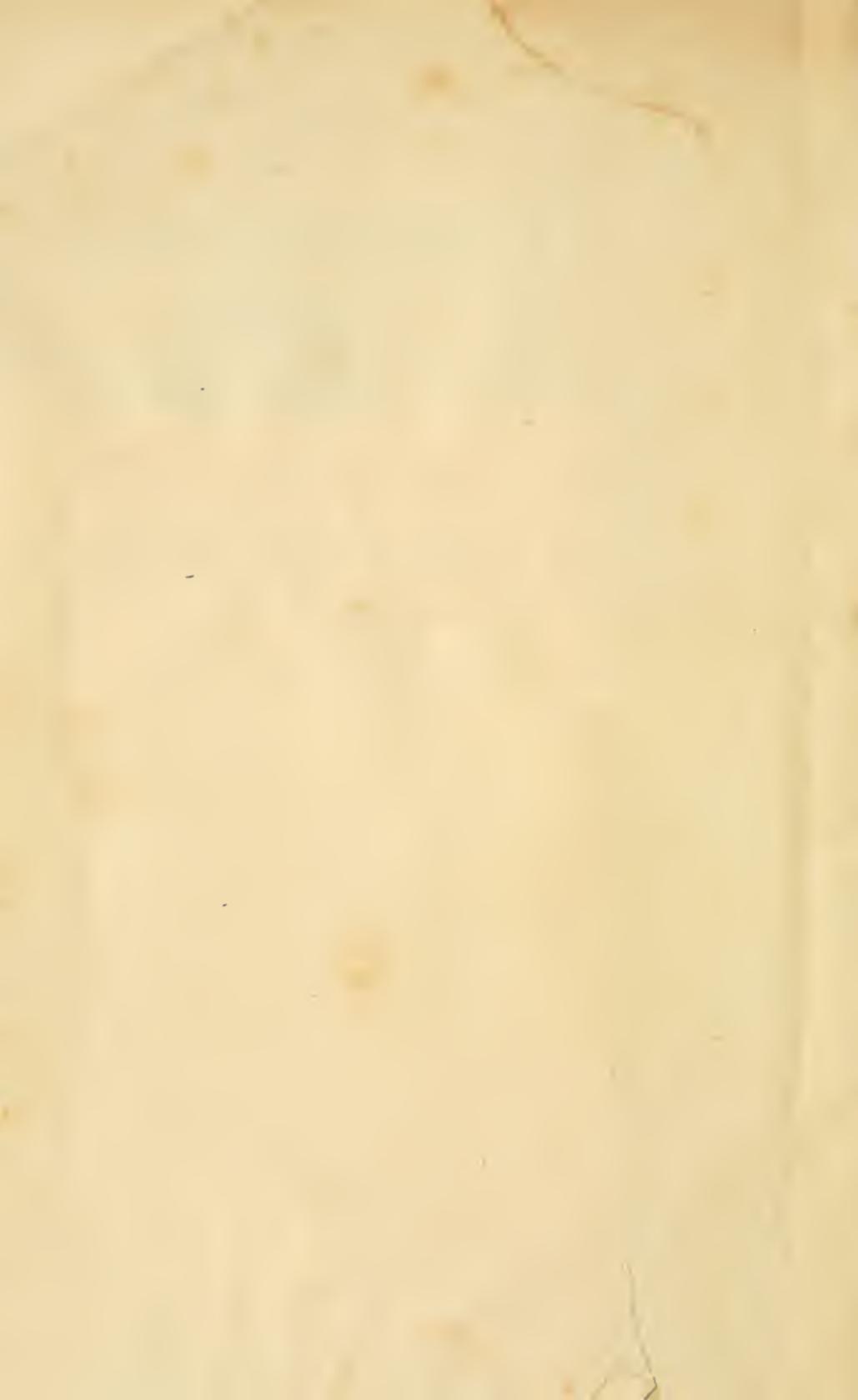
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LIFE  
OF  
REV. GEORGE DONNELL,

FIRST PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN LEBANON;

WITH

*A Sketch of the Scotch-Irish Race.*

BY

PRESIDENT T. C. ANDERSON.



Nashville, Tenn.:  
PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.  
1858.

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## Preface.

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AFTER earnest and repeated solicitations, the author reluctantly consented to attempt a biography of the Rev. George Donnell, first pastor of the church in Lebanon. The little volume now offered to the public is the result of the savings of the fragments of time amid the pressure of laborious official duties.

The loss of important presbyterial and synodical records, the want of opportunity to collect material in the field of his early labors, and the inexperience of the author, necessarily render the narrative defective and incomplete.

Whether judiciously or not, the author has yielded to the temptation to incorporate with the biography a sketch of the Scotch-Irish race, from which the subject of this memoir, and almost all of the primitive members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, sprung. It is hoped that the sketch will be interesting, and afford material for the future historian.

In the preparation of this part of the work, D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation, Macaulay's History of England, and Foote's Sketches of Vir-

ginia and North Carolina, have been consulted. Respecting the emigration of the Scotch-Irish from Virginia and North Carolina to Kentucky and Tennessee, and the difficulties they encountered in settling the vast wilderness, Foote's Sketches, Ramsay's Annals, and Haywood's History of Tennessee, have been quoted as authority. In reference to the great revival of religion which originated with the Scotch-Irish, and prevailed through Kentucky and Tennessee, and which led to the organization of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the author has made free use of Foote's Sketches, Smith's History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Cossitt's Life of Ewing, and his Review of Davidson, together with original sources of information.

In the preparation of the biography, Rev. S. M. Aston and Rev. William Smith, co-laborers of Mr. Donnell during his missionary operations in East Tennessee, have kindly furnished material aid, for which the author returns unfeigned thanks. Many other brethren have laid the author under lasting obligations, by furnishing items and incidents of interest. Dr. Langdon has conferred a special favor by furnishing files of the Religious Intelligencer, the Revivalist, and the Cumberland Presbyterian; and Dr. Cossitt, by furnishing bound volumes of the Banner of Peace.

Hoping that this little volume may do some good, the author submits it to the judgment of the Church.

THE AUTHOR.

# THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. GEORGE DONNELL.

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## CHAPTER I.

SHOULD any question the propriety or the utility of religious biography, they are referred to the Sacred Scriptures. Biographical sketches of the great and the good make up large portions both of the Old and the New Testaments. Some glimpses of antediluvian life are revealed. Nôah, the chief survivor of the old world and the patriarch of the new, is honored with a full portraiture. The faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has been recorded for the instruction of all succeeding ages. Millions have read with tender emotion the inimitable biography of the beloved Joseph. The patience of Job, the admirable institutions of Moses, the heroism of Joshua, the equitable administration

of Samuel, the songs of David, the wisdom of Solomon, and the zeal of the prophets and apostles, have imparted impressive lessons of instruction to all succeeding generations, and will minister incentives to virtue through all future time.

But of all the characters portrayed in the Scriptures, or elsewhere, that which has shed the purest light upon the world, and contributed most to reform, elevate, and purify mankind, is the immaculate life of the meek and lowly Saviour, so beautifully delineated in the Gospels of the four Evangelists.

But why so much biography in the Scriptures? Because Infinite Wisdom saw it to be the most impressive manner of imparting instruction, and prompting others to imitate the life of the good and the great. Nations learn wisdom from the rise and fall of empires; but individuals are inspired with lofty aspirations and prompted to generous deeds of renown by noble examples of magnanimity and heroism. Alexander and Cæsar have filled the world with heroes. Paul, Peter, Stephen, and John have a long line of worthy successors. The Saviour came not only to redeem the world, but to inspire his disciples with a self-sacrificing spirit, and to leave for their imitation a perfect model of Christian and ministerial character. And hence the delineation of his character in all its loveliness and majesty by *four* of the Evangelists.

If God has graciously favored us with sketches

of the lives of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and saints, for our edification, ought not the deeds of the good and the great of every age to be recorded for the benefit of succeeding generations? And if we are so edified by the examples furnished us, will not the biographies of holy men of our day edify our successors? Will not character faithfully delineated on the printed page speak to the heart as effectually as living example? and will it not reflect upon the hearts of those who contemplate it something of its own likeness?

Entertaining the hope that the light of unobtrusive, yet earnest, ardent, resistless piety, may reproduce its like, the author has undertaken the very difficult task of attempting to portray the character of Rev. George Donnell; yet he has a painful consciousness of his utter inability to do the subject justice.

GEORGE DONNELL was born August 9th, 1801, in Alamance congregation, Guilford county, North Carolina. He was the third son and the seventh child of a family of twelve children. His father, George Donnell, senior, was a ruling elder of the Alamance church, and George was dedicated to God in baptism by that celebrated minister, David Caldwell, D. D., who was for nearly sixty years pastor of the Alamance church.

George Donnell, senior, his wife, Isabella Kerr, the venerable pastor, and almost all of the members of the Alamance church, were of Scotch-Irish descent. And it is remarkable that nearly all of the

ministers and most of the members of the early Presbyterian churches in Virginia and North Carolina were of the same race. And from these churches proceeded the ministers that planted and the members that constituted the primitive churches in Kentucky, Tennessee, and the South-western States. The honored agents in originating and promoting the great revival of 1800, the founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and nine-tenths of its early members, were Scotch-Irish. McGready, the two McGees, McAdo, Hodge, Anderson, Ewing, King, McLean, Bell, Porter, Kirkpatrick, Foster, Calhoon, Donnell, Harris, Chapman, McLin, and the Barnetts, were all Scotch-Irish, and all emigrants from the churches in Western Virginia and North Carolina.

Of the same race and from the same churches proceeded almost all of the first generation of Cumberland Presbyterian preachers, who entered the ministry after the organization of the Church. McSpadden, Bumpus, Morrow, the Guthries, Sloan, Lowry, Hunter, Knight, Berry, Beard, Baker, Ralston, the Donnells, Reed, Burney, Aston, Bird, Bone, Hill, Bryan, Downy, the Tates, Douglass, the Russells, the Smiths, the Lansdens, the McDowells, Feemster, Cowan, McCord, Morgan, Wier, Wilson, Davis, and many more of the first and a large majority of the present generation of Cumberland Presbyterian ministers have descended from the Scotch-Irish race.

It is very remarkable that so large a majority of

the ministers and members of any Church in this country, filled up, as it is, with a mingled population from all climes, should be able to trace their ancestry up to a province in the north of Ireland. But it is almost incredible that the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which was organized, not upon the sea-coast, nor by a colony direct from Ireland, but in the heart of the wilderness, almost a thousand miles inland, should, nevertheless, be composed almost entirely of one race; yet, strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless true. And whoever will take the pains to inquire into the history of the various families composing the body of the Church at its organization, or at the present time, may verify the statement.

But how shall we account for that which seems so singular and inexplicable? Shall we explain it upon the principle of national affinity? The Scotch and the Irish are both clannish. But these clannish affinities have not at any other period, or in any other quarter of the globe, originated a new Church and an original system of theology. Can it be that the Scotch-Irish emigrants, after a residence in this country for nearly a century, and after various migrations through the Atlantic States, penetrated the depths of the wilderness, and there organized a new Church upon a new theological basis, for the sole purpose of maintaining the identity of their race, or perpetuating their clans? The inquiring mind will not be satisfied with this explanation; it will seek a more adequate cause—

some radical, deep-seated religious principle—some guiding providence working out the purposes of the Divine Will by the operation of such secondary causes as usually govern human actions.

There must have been a reason why the Scotch-Irish did not commingle with other races in the Atlantic States, and thus lose their identity—a reason why they came to the Western wilds, and braved contact with the savage—a reason why they withdrew from the Presbyterian Church, and organized the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. And that reason is to be sought, not in a clannish or gregarious sympathy, but in the religious and political principles of that singular people.

But principles, and especially religious principles, like races, have their history. Not unfrequently they are a part of our inheritance, which has descended to us through several generations. If, therefore, we would understand the present, we must know the past. Principles, like men, have their origin, their growth, their maturity, and, sometimes, their decay. This gradual development is the work of time. Ages may elapse between the origin and the maturity. And if we would comprehend the force and power of principles in controlling the destiny of races, we must trace their history, and note the several stages of development. But to do this understandingly, we must study the history of those races which have held and have been governed by those principles.

Seeing, then, that the subject of the contemplated memoir, and the principles which formed the basis of his Christian character, were of Scotch-Irish origin; seeing, moreover, that a large majority of the ministers and members of the Church in which he lived and labored till death were also Scotch-Irish, some knowledge of the religious history of this peculiar people would seem to be indispensable to a proper appreciation of the character and labors of the subject of the biography.

An additional inducement to take a brief survey of the religious history of the Scotch-Irish race, is found in the conviction that such investigation will shed light upon the origin and early history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

It is admitted that history is not the province of the biographer. Yet if a brief sketch be indispensable to a proper elucidation of the subject, he may be indulged—especially when it is believed that the digression will afford to the future historian a clue to a field rich in material for the vindication of the fathers of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church against the oft-repeated charge of disorder, delusion, and fanaticism.

Under the deliberate conviction that a more intimate acquaintance with our ancestors—the Scotch-Irish—is essential to a right understanding of our own history; and being persuaded that it will be acceptable to the Church, and at the same time

favor the author's plan of treating the subject in hand, he will adventure a hasty sketch of the religious history of that peculiar race, even though it should provoke uncharitable criticism.

## CHAPTER II.

## ORIGIN OF THE SCOTCH-IRISH RACE.

CHRISTIANITY was propagated in England and Scotland during the first half of the second century. Already the fame of the rich mines of Cornwall had reached Asia Minor, and the opulent cities on the Levant were prosecuting a lucrative trade with the savage Britons. Merchant-vessels, laden with the products of the East, came every summer to the coast of England, to barter for the tin and copper of Cornwall.

The missionary, following in the wake of commerce, bore to our pagan ancestors the gospel of peace. Roman legions were, at this period, stationed in every district of England; and it is said that some of the soldiers who had learned Christ, imparted to their heathen vassals a knowledge of the Christian religion. It is said, moreover, that certain British captives at Rome, having received the gospel, were liberated, and returned to preach Christ to their pagan brethren.

But through whatever channels the natives of the island may have received the gospel, it is certain that, previous to the reign of the Emperor

Dioclesian, many churches had been planted in England and Scotland, far beyond the Roman dominion; as, during the persecutions of that cruel Emperor, many Christians fled from England to their brethren in Scotland.\*

But long after the rude Briton and ferocious Scot had abandoned their bloody rites and meekly yielded to the benign influence of Christianity, gross darkness still brooded over ill-starred Ireland. Her benighted barbarians continued to offer human sacrifices to their gods. The first convert to Christianity in Ireland was Succat, a Scotch youth, who had enjoyed the instructions and prayers of a pious mother.

But whilst yet a boy, when playing one day on the sea-shore, he was seized by Irish pirates, hurried away, and sold into slavery. His master "sent him into the fields to feed swine;" where, enduring his hard lot, with no other companions than the swine, like the prodigal, "he came to himself," and remembering, with gratitude and contrition, the pious lessons which a Christian mother had taught him, he poured out his soul in prayer to God. It was the first prayer ever offered up in Ireland! The Lord heard and answered in mercy. Succat became a solitary Christian in a heathen land. "The love of God," says he, "increased more and more in me: the Spirit urged me to such a degree, that I poured forth as many as a

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\* Tertullian.

hundred prayers in one day. And during the night, in the forest, and on the mountain, where I kept my flock, the rain, and snow, and frost, and the sufferings which I endured, excited me to seek God.”\*

Longing to impart the glad news to his parents, and commune with pious Christians, he escaped from the land of darkness, and fled to Scotland. But, whilst enjoying the pleasures of home and Christian fellowship, he felt an irresistible impression to preach the gospel to the Irish pagans, among whom he had found a precious Saviour. Parents and friends endeavored to restrain him; but by day and by night the Spirit pursued him: he tore himself away from home and friends, and returned to the land of his captivity. Summoning the wild Irish “in the fields by beat of the drum,” he narrated to them in their own tongue, and in simple apostolic style, the story of the cross, and his own happy conversion, while serving them as a captive slave. His simple narrative reached the hearts of the rude peasantry: many were converted to God, and the son of the chieftain joined him in preaching Christ.

So enduring were the labors of this evangelist, that, for two centuries, primitive Christianity maintained firm footing in Ireland, despite the opposition of pagan superstition. But when Roman Catholicism overran the island, primitive Chris-

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\* D'Aubigné, vol. v., p. 22.

tianity was extinguished, and Succat was canonized as a *Catholic* saint, under the familiar appellation of "Saint Patrick," the patron saint of Ireland.

About the time that Succat terminated his labors, the Saxons overran England, drove the Britons into the mountains of Wales, and erected heathen temples dedicated to their gods, Thor and Wooden. A century of warfare between the Saxons, Britons, and Scots, had well-nigh exterminated primitive Christianity, when Columba, a member of one of the churches planted by Succat in Ireland, was impressed to revive Christianity in Scotland. Taking a few devoted Christians with him, he embarked in a frail craft, constructed of osier bushes and hides: landing upon Iona, a small island near the coast of Scotland, they established a missionary station, and preached the gospel to the Scots and Picts. The King of the Picts, and many of his nobles and subjects, were converted. Many copies of the Scriptures and other precious manuscripts were collected and conveyed to Iona, which became the seat of a theological school for the study of the Scriptures. From this school missionaries were sent through all the provinces of England, and the idolatrous Saxons were evangelized. Another school was established at Bangor, which sent missionaries to the Continent to preach the gospel to the heathen tribes of Germany.

As England and Scotland had originally received the gospel from the Asiatic Churches, before the

primitive forms of Church organization had been abolished by ambitious prelates, the Presbyterian form of government and ordination were cœval with the introduction of Christianity into Britain. They ordained elders in every church, and set apart evangelists to their work "by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." And when the Pope of Rome claimed supremacy, the British churches resolutely rejected his dictation.

As the British Church had sent missionaries to the Continent, who had planted Presbyterian churches in Germany and Switzerland, the Pope thought it time to subject them to his authority. About the close of the sixth century, Pope Gregory dispatched to England Archbishop Augustin, charged with the double mission of subjecting the British churches to the Papal supremacy, and of converting the pagan Anglo-Saxons to the Roman faith. The latter part of the commission was promptly executed. Though the haughty Saxon nobility had spurned the gospel when preached by their slaves, the subjugated Britons, yet Catholicism, arrayed in Roman magnificence, and introduced by an archbishop and his imposing retinue, met a welcome reception.

Ethelbert, the chief of Saxon kings, had married a French Catholic. Through the queen, Augustin sought and obtained an interview with the king. Attended by forty monks, bearing a huge cross, upon which the Saviour was represented, and chanting Latin hymns, Augustin approached the

king. After the interview, the king and a thousand nobles received baptism in one day.

But the subjugation of the British churches was not so easily accomplished. After several interviews with the elders, failing to seduce them to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope, Augustin called a general assembly of the elders and bishops. The assembly declined submission to the Pope. The haughty archbishop replied, "If you will not receive brethren who bring you peace, you shall receive enemies who will bring war." From that day a war of extermination was waged against those unoffending and defenceless churches. The sword of the Saxon was now employed for their conversion. Instigated by the archbishop, Edelfried marched against Bangor, the seat of primitive Christianity in England. The Christians betook themselves to prayer; and while twelve hundred, assembled in the woods, were prostrate in prayer, Edelfried fell upon them, and put every one to death! Bangor was demolished, and all Christians slain! England was thus subjugated to the Roman See by the sword of a heathen king! Such was Popery in its infancy, and such it is in its dotage.

But primitive Christianity was not extinct. Scotland was unsubdued, and it now became the stronghold of Christian liberty. Thousands who escaped the Saxon sword fled hither, and found an asylum among brethren. Scotland still defied the Pope. The sword, Papal authority, intrigue, flattery, and lying miracles, were all employed; but

the Scotchman cleaved to his liberty and the word of God. The contest was protracted for centuries, but Caledonia proved invincible.

This protracted contest fostered in the Scots a spirit of independence and self-reliance; it engendered hostility to all encroachments upon their rights, and eternal hatred toward the Roman hierarchy. As they opposed the word of God to the authority of the Pope, they were sustained by the conviction that they were contending for the Divine authority against the pretensions of an impious imposture. Thus religious principle, with all its sustaining power, came to the support of their patriotism and innate love of liberty. - And whether they rose up against the encroachments of a foreign priesthood, or battled with a prince known to be favorable to the Catholics, or sought seclusion from a conquering foe in the wild glens, or pined away in a loathsome dungeon, faith in God and a righteous cause sustained them! In the school of adversity they learned "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

But the king of the Scots was at length reached through his vanity. "How much more glorious to belong to the powerful Church of the universal Pontiff than to a congregation superintended by miserable elders!" "The Roman Church is a monarchy, and it ought to be the Church of every monarch." The king was converted, and Romanism for a time established in Scotland.

Iona, alone, remained the "light of the western world."

But she too must be converted, though it cost a miracle. A devoted monk is sent with rich presents and flattering words. These alone would have been unavailing; but he comes with a lie in his mouth: an angel from heaven had sent him with a message to the elders of Iona. It was enough. Even Iona could not refuse a heavenly message: she fell, and left Rome mistress of the western world. The light of primitive Christianity was, for a time, extinguished, and gross darkness covered the earth.

In addition to the universal ascendancy of Roman superstition, the Danish invasion brought down upon the British isles northern barbarism, and for two centuries the land was steeped in crime and soaked in blood.

But the Sacred Scriptures survived the general devastation, and the word of God redeemed England from barbarism, and, ultimately, from the more weighty curse of Catholicism. The Bible had been translated into the Saxon tongue, which had become the prevailing language, and the Catholics had a Latin version. When order was somewhat restored, and the schools reöpened, the Scriptures began again to be read. A retired, meditative priest would occasionally study the Bible more than was meet for a good Catholic, and thereby fall into the heresy of showing more deference to the word of God than the word of the Pope. Grostete, when ordered by Pope Innocent

to celebrate the canonry of his infant nephew, replied, "Though the chief of the angels should order me to commit such a sin, I would refuse." A professor in Cambridge, enlightened by the word of God, would occasionally venture an opinion at war with the pretensions of the Pope, and such expressions excited thought, and put mind in motion. Light and knowledge increased, and therewith a manly independence of thought. Finally, Wycliffe, perceiving that the Saxon version was unintelligible to many in his day, dared to translate the Scriptures into the English language as then spoken, though the Pope had forbidden the reading of them in any other tongue than the Latin.

The kings of England had repeatedly resisted the encroachments of the Pope upon the royal prerogative. ~~A mutual jealousy had grown up between the Pope and the king, and for a century there had been a struggle for the ascendancy,~~ when Henry the Eighth proclaimed independence, abolished Papacy, and established Episcopacy.

Notwithstanding Succat, and after him other faithful evangelists, had preached the gospel in Ireland, yet the last vestiges of their labors were obliterated by the Danish invasion; and during the dominance of that barbarous race the island was "wholly given to idolatry." And thus it remained until Roman Singenuity invented a more expeditious mode of converting heathen than the preaching of the gospel.

In the year 1156, Pope Adrian issued a bull

authorizing and urging Henry the Seventh of England to invade Ireland, and extirpate idolatry by the sword, compel the natives to submit to the Papal authority, and to pay tribute to the Catholic Church. The Irish were at that date destitute of implements of war, except the most rude; without discipline, and ignorant of the tactics of systematic warfare. Untutored barbarians could not withstand a regular army inured to service. Henry had an easy conquest. Ireland was annexed to the British crown, and subjected to the Roman See. Though converted by the sword instead of the word of God, priestcraft found little difficulty in reconciling the wild Irish to the exchange of pagan for Roman idolatry.

For three centuries Ireland vied with Italy in loyalty to the Pope. And when Henry the Eighth renounced the Papal supremacy and established Episcopacy, Ireland rejected Episcopacy and adhered to the Pope. Then originated between England and Ireland an antagonism, which even to this day has not entirely subsided. Instead of giving the Irish the Scriptures in their own language, and thereby inducing them to renounce the absurdities of Catholicism, the English government relied upon its *authority*. It *commanded* Ireland to renounce Papacy and embrace Episcopacy. A college of bishops and clergy were sent over to enforce this command. Ireland rebelled, and hence the estrangement between Ireland and England.

Though centuries had elapsed since Ireland

became a nominal appendage of the British crown, no attempts had been made to elevate and improve the condition of the natives. They were bigoted Catholics, but they were savages, without learning, and destitute of the arts and comforts of civilization. And when the English clergy were obtruded upon them as their pastors, the first book placed in their hands—the first ever published in Ireland—was the *Liturgy of the Episcopal Church*. Five years afterward, the Bible was introduced by a bookseller, and, as it was a great novelty, seven thousand copies were sold in a few weeks. But the Catholic priests stirred up opposition, and ill-fated Ireland became the field of conflict between Episcopacy and Catholicism. During the long reign of Elizabeth, it was the scene of incessant warfare. A few weeks previous to her death, Mountjoy completed its subjugation—the last O'Donnell and the last O'Nielle had submitted.

When James the First came to the throne, he conceived the idea of providing against future rebellions by colonizing Ireland with Protestant subjects in sufficient number to keep the rebel Catholics in subjection. As the Province of Ulster had been almost depopulated by the protracted war, it was selected as the seat of the projected colony.

As James was King of Scotland, when the regular succession brought him to the throne of England, the two kingdoms were thus united. And as he had made proof of the loyalty of the Scots, and

could confidently rely upon them, they were chiefly chosen to colonize Ireland. The lands which had been held by the Irish nobility were confiscated, and offered to emigrants, upon condition that they would settle on them in a specified time. As the districts which had been held by the chieftains were extensive, such as are now claimed by Spanish cavaliers in Mexico and South America, whole counties were thus offered for the occupation of the colonists.

About the year 1610, the emigration from Scotland to Ireland commenced. All the northern and central parts of Ulster were settled by Scotch emigrants. Some Englishmen settled the southern part, and built Londonderry, Coleraine, and Hillsboro.

The early emigrants encountered many trials. The limited tracts of land that had once been in cultivation, had, during a century of warfare, relapsed into a wilderness, infested with wild beasts. The savage Irish were ever hovering about the little colony, plundering whatever they could seize by day or by night; the rank vegetation had obstructed the streams, causing a great increase of marsh lands, which rendered the country very unhealthy to immigrants. Nevertheless, the colony prospered; and in eight years after the first settlement, it numbered eight thousand fighting men: at a subsequent period the colony could marshal eighty thousand tried soldiers.

The colonists, in order to distinguish themselves

from the Scots, on the one hand, and the native Irish on the other, called themselves *Scotch-Irish*. And this appellation they brought with them when they emigrated to America. Taken in its limited sense, the term applies only to the descendants of the Scotch emigrants. But the English dissenters in Ireland, and the Scotch Presbyterians, being compelled to make common cause against the encroachments of the Episcopacy on the one hand, and the insurrections of the wild Irish on the other, gradually coalesced and melted into one race. Hence the English names found among the Scotch-Irish. And, therefore, in its comprehensive sense, the term includes all the Protestant Irish whose ancestors were Britons, whether English or Scotch, whether resident in Ireland or America.

Emigration ever causes a change in the habits of life, and not unfrequently a radical change of character. The emigrant, in his new home, finds himself encompassed by new circumstances: "old things have passed away"—all is new and strange. The climate is different, requiring a corresponding difference in the habits of life. The state of society, the manners and customs of the people, are different; and, with all his predilections for early associations, he cannot long resist the constant temptation to conform to the prevailing customs of society. We are prone to imitation, and he must possess a strong will who is not moulded in some degree by the influences around him.

The Scots who emigrated to Ireland, though

they had only crossed the North channel, found themselves in a new world. At home they had been rigid Presbyterians—so strict that they had long borne the epithet of “Puritans;” and many of them were, doubtless, truly pious. But they went to Ireland to better their temporal condition—to acquire extensive tracts of fertile land. They did not take their pastors with them; for the government having established Episcopacy, Presbyterian ministers were not allowed to preach in the colony, unless they would first submit to Episcopal ordination. There were a few Episcopal churches and ministers in the province, and Presbyterians and Catholics were taxed for their support; but they had imbibed prejudice toward their formalities, and they would not attend the services of ministers toward whose support they were compelled to contribute; so they were as sheep without a shepherd.

Deprived of the public means of grace, religion would have declined, though they had been subject to no corrupting influences. But Catholic licentiousness and English infidelity were prevalent; and Scotch Puritans soon lost all claim to that distinction. With few exceptions, they became grossly immoral. The English clergy were formal and spiritless; while the Roman priests were licentious, intriguing, “and full of all manner of subtlety.” It seemed inevitable that, without a speedy reformation, vital piety must soon become extinct in the colony, and in all Ireland.

The state of society in the colony awakened solicitude, both in Scotland and England, and several Presbyterian ministers from the former, and Dissenters from the latter, went over to labor among the emigrants. Some of the Dissenters had received Episcopal ordination, and they had no difficulty in obtaining from the Bishop of Ulster license to preach in his diocese. But the Presbyterian ministers were required to submit to Episcopal ordination, or abstain from preaching in public. They submitted to the restriction, but preached clandestinely in private houses or in the woods.

Most of these missionaries were evangelical, and some of them had been "tried as by fire" in former persecutions. Of one of them the historian says: "In all his preaching he insisted on the life of Christ and the light of his spirit and word in the mind." Of another he says: "To my mind, he was the one man who most resembled the meekness of Jesus Christ, in all his carriage, that I ever saw." Of Mr. Blair it is said, "He spent many days and nights in prayer alone and with others, and enjoyed great intimacy with God."

Mr. James Glendenning, though the weakest of all those missionaries, deserves, on account of his peculiar piety, a more formal notice.

He received Episcopal ordination, and settled in one of the towns occupied by English emigrants. Mr. Blair having heard him preach, and discovering some talent for usefulness, but regarding him as too weak-minded to sustain himself in an Eng-

lish town, where infidelity was rife, advised him to retire to the country, and labor in a Scotch community. The good man, following this advice, retired to the country, and commenced preaching in private dwellings. But moved by the great wickedness of the people, he preached the terrors of the law, and exhorted them to repentance. Many of his audience became the subjects of most pungent convictions. To use the language of a quaint historian, "they fell into such anxiety and terror of conscience, that they looked upon themselves as altogether lost and damned." "I have seen them myself," says he, "struck into a swoon with a word; yea, a dozen in a day carried out of doors as dead—so marvellous was the power of God, smiting their hearts for sin." "And these were none of the weaker sex or spirits; but, indeed, some of the boldest spirits, who formerly feared not, with their swords, to put a whole market-town in a fray."

The excitement which originated at Oldstone, under the preaching of Mr. Glendenning, extended to other neighborhoods, and awakened great religious interest throughout the country. "The demand for preaching was unceasing, and the labors of the ministers unremitting, and great numbers were awakened and hopefully converted." It is added that this revival was accompanied by "new and strange bodily exercises: the subjects were violently affected with hard breathing, and convulsions of the body." The young converts gave the usual manifestations of joy and transport.

Hugh Semple, the clerk of one of the Scotch-Irish congregations, while waiting for the arrival of the minister, engaged in singing; and after he had sung a psalm with much spirit and fervor, he began commenting upon the sentiment with "such light and liberty as astounded all present." The minister made "private trial of his capability to teach, and gave him license to exercise his gifts in private houses and families. With this license, he went through the country with great acceptance: the people flocked to hear him, filling dwelling-houses and barns; and to very many he was the happy instrument of God in their conversion."

Another subject of this gracious revival, Hugh Campbell, a man of intelligence and influence, feeling deep concern for those who were anxiously seeking salvation, invited them to meet at his house for prayer and conversation. The meeting was greatly blessed, and other appointments were made; and such was the interest, that Campbell was constrained to keep up his anxious-meetings, till they were superseded by meetings of a similar character held by the regular ministers.

Thus was Mr. Glendenning, though a weak man, made the honored instrument in exciting one of those powerful and widely-extended revivals, which, in different ages and countries, have waked the Church to life and activity—such as has been witnessed among the *same race* in America. And, like those in our own country, it was attended by

certain bodily exercises, the mention of which will not fail to arrest the attention of those who witnessed the 'great revival of 1800 in Kentucky and Tennessee, and that of 1802 in North Carolina.

Those under conviction swooned, fell down, were carried out as dead, had "convulsions"—the *jerks*—lay in a swoon for hours, waked to newness of life, and praised God aloud! How like a Western revival! But they had lay preachers who *rode the circuit*, and preached in private houses. They held anxious meetings, and gave the mourners *personal* instructions, and thousands were converted, and the whole face of society was changed—just as it was in 1800. How striking the coincidence! Religion, when freed from the trammels of dull formality, is the same in every age and clime.

When the news of this remarkable revival reached Scotland, it awakened an unusual interest there. The Scotch ministers caught the revival spirit, and began to preach with a power and energy hitherto unknown. Five hundred persons attributed their conversion to one sermon, preached by John Livingston. The excitement attracted the attention of the Episcopal bishops, and, under the charge of a violation of Church order, Mr. Livingston was suspended from the ministry. He then went to Ireland, where he was allowed to preach for a time. But he was presently suspended by the Bishop of Ulster.

The Reformation in Ireland continued for several years. It wrought such a thorough transformation,

as to extort from Mr. Hume, the celebrated historian, the admission that “Ulster, from being the wildest and most disorderly Province of all Ireland, soon became the most highly cultivated and the most civilized;” and if he had not been a skeptic, he would have added, the most religious. An intelligent traveller said, “You need not ask when you are to pass from the Catholic to the Protestant counties: you will see and feel it in every thing around you.”

But the piety and zeal of the Presbyterian ministers was a standing reproach upon the worldly-mindedness, pride, and avarice of the Episcopal clergy, who made complaint to Bishop Laud, whose zeal for order prompted him to silence all ministers who would not strictly conform to the Liturgy. The ministers, and many of their flocks, rather than yield the right of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience, returned to Scotland; and many who did not remove were in the habit of visiting their friends in Scotland, that they might enjoy the privilege of communing at the Lord's table.

The colony being greatly weakened by the return of multitudes to Scotland, and the army having been withdrawn from Ireland to aid King Charles against his English subjects, then in a state of rebellion, the Catholics deemed it a favorable opportunity to regain their liberties by exterminating both Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Accordingly, an indiscriminate and a murderous

warfare was waged against all Protestants, and thousands fell by the sword of the relentless Catholics. The Scotch army was ordered into Ireland to quell the rebellion there, and, after many hard-fought battles, the Protestants finally subdued the rebellious Catholics.

The government having granted toleration to Presbyterians, as the reward of their loyalty and courage in subduing the rebellion, the ministers who had attended the Scotch army in the capacity of chaplains, availing themselves of the toleration thus granted, constituted the first presbytery of Ireland, the steel-clad soldiers and the plumed officers standing around and taking a lively interest in the solemn exercises. Enjoying temporary toleration, this presbytery, thus constituted in the midst of a military encampment, soon expanded into the Synod of Ulster.

But when Charles the Second came to the throne, he received from Louis the Fourteenth of France a pension of two hundred thousand pounds per annum, upon the condition that he would establish a despotic government and the Catholic religion. With a view to this object, stringent measures were adopted to enforce upon all classes of Dissenters strict observance of the Liturgy. Two objects were to be accomplished by this show of zeal for the national Church: first, Dissenters were to be put down in the name of Episcopacy, without discovering his ultimate design, and without reproach to the Church which he intended to establish; and,

secondly, having brought all parties to submit to Episcopacy, there would then be but one step between them and the Papacy.

It was, therefore, soon apparent that Scotch-Irish Presbyterians had nothing to hope from Charles the Second but persecution and ejection. And as James the Second, the heir to the throne, was known to be an avowed Catholic, the Presbyterians, seeing no prospect for the enjoyment of their rights, and already wearied with frequent persecutions, began seriously to meditate emigration to America, to seek, amid its solitudes, the repose they had so long sought in vain in their native land.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE SCOTCH-IRISH IN AMERICA.

DURING the reign of Charles the First, the Scotch-Irish, harassed by the persecutions of Archbishop Laud and the exactions of Deputy Wentworth, attempted to emigrate to America. John Livingstone and Robert Blair, who had been twice deposed from the ministry for nonconformity to the Liturgy, headed the expedition. An agent had been sent over, and a site for the location of a colony selected on the Merrimac. The "Eagle Wing" set sail from Lockfergus in September, 1636, freighted with Scotch-Irish emigrants and their effects. When in mid-ocean, the vessel encountered a violent storm, which drove her back to port in a disabled condition.

No further attempt was made till about the close of the reign of Charles the Second: in the year 1686, a colony came from Ulster, and settled in Pennsylvania and Jersey. As James the Second was a bigoted Catholic, this colony received large accessions during his reign. The fertile valley of the Susquehanna was soon settled with a mixed population of various creeds. The Scotch-Irish

Presbyterians, desiring to constitute a community to themselves, and being inured to the privations of border life, began to sell out their improvements to more wealthy but less hardy immigrants, and retire into the depths of the wilderness, where the wild beast and the savage were their only neighbors. From Pennsylvania they passed to the valley of the Potomac and the Shenandoah, in Western Virginia. Here they found a delightful country—fertile prairies covered with tall grass, mountain streams wooded with a dense forest, and game of all kinds in great abundance. Here, fenced in on either hand by gigantic ranges of the Alleghany Mountains, they imagined they would enjoy that exemption from ecclesiastical oppression which they had hitherto sought in vain. Dwellings were erected, farms enclosed, schools established, and churches organized. The inviting prospect drew thousands not only from Pennsylvania and Jersey, but from Ireland, to this lovely valley, where, in their seclusion, they anticipated long years of the quiet enjoyment of Christian liberty.

But these reveries were soon to be dispelled. Episcopacy was the established religion of the Virginia colony; and though Dissenters were tolerated for a time, as the Presbyterians extended their settlements and multiplied their churches, they soon came in contact with the clergy of the Established Church, whom they found to be as bigoted and intolerant as their brethren in the mother country. And notwithstanding the Governor of

the colony had granted the Presbyterian ministers license to preach as Dissenters, yet the clergy invented many means of annoying them, and in some instances they had influence enough with the government to have them silenced and even imprisoned for pretended breaches of the law.

Restricted in their worship, and harassed by the frequent interference of the clergy, the Presbyterians began to meditate another removal. Some of them, wearied with vain attempts to avoid Episcopal oppression by retiring from its presence, and reluctant to forsake their pleasant homes in the beautiful valley of the Shenandoah, resolved to abide, and withstand, as far as practicable, all encroachments upon their rights; while others determined once more to brave the dangers and the privations of the wilderness, for the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience.

And as the colony of North Carolina held out promises of toleration and protection, the tide of emigration set in that direction. From the valleys of the Potomac, the Shenandoah, and the James, it flowed towards the Dan, the Yadkin, the Haw, and the Catawba. The fertile plains soon became fruitful fields; and conspicuous among the log-cabins of woodsmen, arose the school-house and the "meeting-house." Pastors were called from Pennsylvania and Virginia, and churches were organized. As each was composed of comparatively few members, of limited means, two or three

churches united in settling and sustaining one pastor.

In 1764, Alamance church was organized by David Caldwell, then a licentiate and a missionary. Buffalo had been organized some years previous by Mr. Patillo. These two churches united in calling Mr. Caldwell to be their pastor, which call he accepted, and in 1765 he settled in the bounds of the Alamance congregation.

George Donnell, Senior, was five years of age when his parents became members of the Alamance church, at its organization. His wife, Isabella Kerr, was one of the first children baptized by Mr. Caldwell after he became pastor of the church. As he was teacher for the congregation, as well as pastor, they were both educated by him, and were regular attendants on his ministry for thirty years.

The same year that Mr. Caldwell settled in Guilford county, Mr. Patillo accepted a call to Hawfield, Eno, and Little River, in Orange. About the same time McAdan settled in Caswell, McCorkle in Rowan, Hall in Iredell, Craighead in Mecklenburg, and Alexander in Balch county. While the Scotch-Irish were organizing churches and establishing schools in the western counties, a colony of Presbyterians direct from Scotland located upon Cape Fear river, in the eastern section of the State.

Under temporary toleration, these churches flou-

rished and received annual accessions by immigrations from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Jersey, Ireland, and Scotland. But when the colonial government had accomplished its design in offering toleration, namely, the settlement of the colony, then commenced a system of opposition calculated to force Presbyterians either to conform to Episcopal usages, or to drive them out of the colony.

Presbyterians, in common with other subjects, were taxed for the support of the Episcopal Church. Had the tax been limited to the support of the government, they would most cheerfully have paid it. But when, in addition to a heavy State tax, they were compelled to aid in sustaining a Church which for centuries had oppressed their race, and toward which they had inherited from their ancestors uncompromising hostility, the opposition which they cherished toward the Established Church was transferred, in part, to the tax which was extorted for its support. The tax was opposed as wrong in principle; but the manner of collecting it gave more offence than the tax itself: the collectors of Gov. Tryon were notorious swindlers, extorting from the people double the sum authorized by law, with a view of enriching themselves.

The western counties were subjected to much greater annoyance and oppression than those lying nearer the seat of government. Tryon's minions, either mistaking the spirit of the Scotch-Irish, or hoping to conceal their fraudulent exactions, ex-

torted money under various false pretexts.\* A spirit of insubordination was excited in Guilford, Orange, and other western counties. Public meetings were held, and petitions were addressed to the Governor, setting forth their grievances, and praying the removal of those corrupt officers. Redress was promised, but never granted. The official pets of Gov. Tryon were permitted to repeat their extortions, and quietly to enjoy their ill-gotten gains. Continued oppression generated open rebellion. A public meeting was held at Murdock's Mill, which solemnly adopted the following resolutions:

*“Resolved,* That we will pay no more taxes until we are satisfied that they are agreeable to law, and applied to the purpose therein mentioned, unless we cannot help it.

*“Resolved,* That we will pay no officer any more fees than the law allows, unless we are obliged to do it; and then to show our dislike and bear our open testimony against it.”

Acting upon these and similar resolutions adopted at various public meetings, the *“Regulators,”* as they were called, resisted the sheriffs, dispersed the courts, and drove the whole troop of Tryon's unprincipled appointees out of the country. The Governor came at the head of the army to quell the Regulators. The parties met on Alamance Creek. Dr. Caldwell interposed to prevent blood-

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\* Foote's Sketches.

shed, but in vain: the firing commenced while he was between the lines, interceding with the parties: a battle ensued: nine of the Regulators and twenty-seven of Tryon's party were left dead on the field, while many more on both sides were severely wounded. Thus, as early as 1771, five years before the Declaration of Independence, Alamance was baptized with the first blood of the Revolution.

The Regulators had assembled without order, without officers, without discipline, and many of them without ammunition, and, consequently, they were soon dispersed; and as no commanding officers had been appointed, each returned to his home, or sought refuge in some secure hiding-place, as inclination prompted or discretion dictated. Order was soon restored, and hundreds of the Regulators were compelled to take the oath of allegiance; while some that fell into the hands of Tryon atoned for their rashness with their lives.

But the circumstances attending these public executions tended only to enhance abhorrence of Tryon and his detestable administration. The "rebels" were dispersed, and, for a time, discouraged; but the spirit of rebellion was not quelled, but intensified. The western counties continued to cherish a spirit of unyielding opposition to all unlawful exactions, till, finally, a public meeting was called, which assembled at Charlotte, on the 19th of May, 1775, to consult measures for the pub-

lic welfare. The result of that consultation was a "Declaration of Independence," which would do honor to the heads and hearts of any assembly of any age or country. Two resolutions selected from the Declaration will show the spirit and tendency of the whole:

*Resolved*, That we, the citizens of Mecklenburg county, do hereby dissolve the political bonds which have connected us with the mother country, and hereby absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British crown, and abjure all political connection, contract, or association with that nation, who have wantonly trampled upon our rights and liberties, and inhumanly shed the blood of American patriots at Lexington.

*Resolved*, That we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent people; are, and of right ought to be, a sovereign and self-governing association, under the control of no power, other than that of our God and the General Congress; to the maintenance of which independence we solemnly pledge to each other our mutual coöperation, our lives, our fortunes, and our most sacred honor."

Here we have an open and formal Declaration of Independence, more than a year in advance of the celebrated Declaration of the Continental Congress. And this was no empty bravado. The spirit of the Regulators was abroad: hundreds of them were in that meeting; other hundreds would have been there, but for the oath of allegiance which Tryon had imposed upon them, at the point of the

bayonet. The thousands who that day pledged their "most sacred honor," stood prepared to redeem that pledge with the sacrifice of life and fortune.

Troubles continued to thicken till the Revolution was fully developed, and then the authors of the Mecklenburg Declaration remembered, and nobly redeemed, their plighted honor. Many of the Regulators who had been restrained by their oath of allegiance from participating in the Mecklenburg Declaration, felt themselves absolved when Congress proclaimed independence, and threw themselves into the thickest of the fight. The hour for vengeance had come, and they remembered their wrongs at Guilford Court-house, at King's Mountain, and in numerous spirited forays against the Tories.

The section of country where the spirit of opposition to Tryon's unlawful exactions had been most prevalent, suffered most during the revolutionary struggle, especially the congregations of Alamance and Buffalo. The Tories remembered the blood shed at Alamance in 1771; and Dr. Caldwell had delivered several patriotic discourses to those churches, and the people of his charge were known to be uncompromising Whigs. They were an industrious, thrifty people, and supplies for the soldiers were known to be abundant in that section. These considerations induced Lord Cornwallis, when he invaded North Carolina, to direct his march toward Alamance. (He encamped for many

days on the farm of Dr. Caldwell. He and his staff of officers took possession of Dr. Caldwell's dwelling, capturing him, and driving his family to the smoke-house for lodgings. But the Doctor had the good fortune to make his escape, and to conceal himself for ten days in the woods. All the male members of the Alamance and Buffalo churches who were able to bear arms were mustered into service, and joined the American army. Major John Donnell, "a man of great respectability and moral worth, a staunch Whig, and an enterprising officer, commanded a company which gained distinction in the service."\*

Amid scenes of civil warfare, George Donnell, Senior, passed his youth. When the enemy approached the neighborhood, and his relative, Major Donnell, raised a company, George Donnell joined the ranks, though he had previously served one campaign, and remained in service to the close of the war, acquitting himself honorably in several spirited conflicts with the enemy.)

Independence having been achieved, and peace restored to the country, the soldiers of the Revolution began once more to turn their thoughts to the attainment of domestic comforts. During the seven years of conflict, the ordinary pursuits of life were interrupted, and social pleasures were seldom enjoyed. The youth of the country had ceased to seek matrimonial alliances, and those already con-

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\* Caruthers' Life of Caldwell.

tracted were postponed to a more auspicious day. But so soon as peace was restored, præexisting engagements were consummated, and new alliances were formed. (George Donnell, Senior, and Isabella Kerr were united in matrimony, August 13, 1784. Having assumed the weighty responsibilities devolving upon the head of a family, Mr. Donnell, noted for sobriety and Christian propriety, was elected ruling elder of Alamance church, and clerk or leader in the singing exercises. This latter office has been abolished in modern churches, but in the days of our fathers it was a position of some distinction. The clerk, after the hymn had been read by the minister, rose up in front of the pulpit and "lined it out," raised the tune, and led the singing.)

During the war the regular ministrations of the gospel were frequently interrupted, and in some sections wholly suspended. Several pastors raised volunteer companies in their congregations, and led them to battle and to victory. But when immunity from oppression and persecution was attained, the war-worn pastors most gladly resumed their sacred office, and sought to collect their scattered flocks, and lead them again to the house of God. But how afflicting to contrast their meagre congregations with the full houses that were wont to assemble in former days! Many a vacant seat called up sad memories of the waste of war. The manly forms that had occupied those seats now vacant, constituted a part of the price of liberty: some had nobly fallen on the battle-field, others had

wasted away with disease. But some were absent who were not dead: they had imbibed French infidelity. The pastors shed tears over departed worth, but they grieved most over the living who had renounced the religion of their fathers, and embraced a cold skepticism that promised only a life of licentiousness and the vain hope of annihilation.

Dr. Caldwell labored assiduously to purge out the leaven of infidelity, infused by intercourse with the French allies, and to restore the time-honored customs of strict Presbyterianism. The Sabbath was reclaimed from profanity, and sanctified as a holy day. All of the families of the church were required to study the Scriptures and the Catechism, and at stated times public examinations were held, when every man, woman, and child was questioned as to his or her attainments in religious knowledge. Twice a year communion-meetings were held in each church. These meetings uniformly commenced on Friday, which was observed as a fast-day, and closed on Monday evening. The doctrines of human depravity, sovereign grace, repentance and faith, were preached with great plainness and cogency. In all his measures for the reformation of morals and the promotion of piety, Dr. Caldwell had the coöperation of an exemplary eldership.

But while the outward forms of religion were restored, the tone of vital piety remained very low. Many were admitted to Church privileges with no other pretension to religion than the observance of its outward forms, and some of these formalists

were promoted to the holy ministry. The case of Rev. James McGready affords a familiar example of the practice of the day.

While he was yet a child, his parents settled in the Buffalo congregation, where he enjoyed for many years the instructions and ministrations of Dr. Caldwell. And, as he was noted for sobriety and strict morality, at seventeen he was admitted to Church privileges. Shortly after his admission, an uncle of his, being on a visit to the family, was so much pleased with the boy's steady habits and ardent desire for a liberal education, that he conceived the idea of preparing him for the ministry. Application being made to his parents, he readily gained their consent to take James home with him and put him to school in Pennsylvania, to be educated for the ministry.

After young McGready had been in college a year or two, he accidentally overheard a conversation between the gentleman with whom he was boarding and one of his neighbors. "Do you think," said the neighbor, "this young man you have here studying for the ministry has got any religion?" "No, not a spark," was the prompt reply of the other.

McGready was at first much offended, and resolved that he would no longer board with one who entertained such opinion of his piety. But when passion had subsided, reason and conscience dictated a careful examination of the grounds of his hope. Accordingly, he examined first his creed, and satisfied himself that it accorded with his un-

derstanding of the Scriptures. Next, he reviewed his conduct, and, as he had ever been strictly moral, here again the verdict was favorable. But when he came to scrutinize the exercises of his heart, and compare them with the word of God, his conscience condemned him: his Christian experience did not correspond with that of David, Paul, Peter, and John. He discovered more spirituality, more joy in the Holy Ghost, more of communion with God, in the Scriptures, than he had ever realized in his experience. Like Paul, "when the commandment came, sin revived," and his hope died. "The sins of his whole life stood up before him in awful array;" especially the sin of having repeatedly approached the table of the Lord without due preparation of heart—the sin of having essayed to teach others while he was ignorant of the first principles of vital godliness. The conflict was protracted. He sought rest, but found none until, as a guilty, self-condemned sinner, he cast himself upon the mercy of God in Christ. Then he experienced, for the first time, the joys of salvation.

## CHAPTER IV.

## REVIVALS IN NORTH CAROLINA.

His own experience deeply impressed upon the mind of McGready the solemn conviction that thousands, like himself, had been received into the Church upon an external morality who had never experienced regeneration. Believing that such persons were content with the outward forms of religion, while they were destitute of spiritual life in the soul, he seems to have felt more concern for such than for sinners out of the Church. Accordingly, so soon as he had completed his preparation for the ministry, he returned to North Carolina, and commenced preaching to the *Church*, urging upon its members the necessity of a radical and experimental change of the heart, wrought by the Spirit of God.

At first, some ridiculed and abused him, as presumptuous; whilst others were amazed at his doctrine, and the zeal with which it was urged upon their consideration. But, regardless alike of ridicule and personal abuse, he continued to press the consciences of members of the Church with the necessity of regeneration, and to enforce the truth

with a vehemence and power that were overwhelming. The result was that many Church members, who had long been recognized as exemplary Christians, acknowledged that they had been deceived, and, under the pressure of the most pungent convictions, renounced their hope, and earnestly sought and finally experienced regeneration.

This success in converting members of the Church, only rendered the opposition more violent. A mob assembled at Stony Creek church, and burned the pulpit, broke up the seats, and left a letter written with *blood*, warning him that "unless he desisted from his way of preaching, their vengeance would not be satisfied with the destruction of the pulpit." McGready, unintimidated by threats of personal violence, continued preaching to the Church, with enhanced energy and power. The revival which his pungent, experimental preaching had originated in the Haw River and Stony Creek churches, continued to expand until it embraced Alamance, Buffalo, Bethlehem, Hawfield, Eno, Cross Roads, and other churches in Orange and Guilford counties; and hundreds of Church members, as well as ungodly sinners, were converted.

Though Mr. McGready had charge of Stony Creek and Haw River churches, yet his labors were rather missionary than pastoral. He often visited Alamance, and was ever welcomed by the pastor and the congregation. He is said to have taken great interest in Dr. Caldwell's school, and to have

exerted a happy influence upon the students, many of whom were brought to repentance by his faithful and pungent appeals—some of whom became influential ministers of the gospel. He visited many other churches, and wherever he labored, convictions and conversions were common. Most of the pastors of the churches visited by him were favorable to the revival, and Rev. William Hodge was his travelling companion and fellow-laborer in the revival.

After having labored for three years in the promotion of this gracious work, annoyed with the continued opposition of a portion of the Church, Mr. McGready, in 1796, emigrated to the West, and after spending some months in East Tennessee, he settled in Logan county, Kentucky, where we shall hear from him again.

The divisions of Old and New School, as now known, had not then marred the peace of the Presbyterian Church. In doctrine, all were Calvinistic; but two parties existed then, as now. They differed, not in doctrine, but in measures. They were then denominated "Old Side" and "New Side." They might more aptly have been distinguished as the Revival and Anti-Revival parties.

The existence of two parties may be traced back in the history of the Church for centuries. Perhaps they are coëval with the prevalence of revivals; for whenever and wherever an extensive and gracious revival prevails, that portion of the Church under its influence will become more

spiritual in their devotions, and energetic in efforts for the promotion of religion, than those portions of the Church which have not participated in the revival. Then the active party, forgetting their former coldness and apathy, may be disposed to censure those who now manifest the same listlessness and inactivity which themselves had recently indulged. And the lukewarm will be sure to look upon the newborn zeal of the revival party as the offspring of fanaticism, rather than an increase of spirituality. This want of charity and forbearance will originate distrust, opposition, and strife.

Moreover, Christians, in the excitement of a revival, will not be content with ordinary efforts for the salvation of their friends. They will either employ extraordinary measures; or then, they will be more assiduous and faithful in the use of ordinary means. And whether they employ new measures, or the ordinary means in an unusual degree, the cold and formal members of the Church will be offended.

Hence, it may be expected that every genuine revival will develop two parties in the Church: one that approves and coöperates, another that condemns and opposes; one that does not hesitate to employ such measures for the promotion of the revival as experience and present circumstances indicate; another that opposes all *new* measures, and denounces them as unwarranted innovations, tending to mar the peace and sap the piety of the Church.

Such were the Old Side and New Side parties, in the days of Tennent, Whitefield, Edwards, Davies, and McGready. The revival party were spiritual in their devotions, and they were not so wedded to forms as to forbid a departure from the stereotyped modes of worship; for example, they preferred to use Watts's Hymns, instead of David's Psalms. But this gave mortal offence to the Old Side, who used the Psalms only, and would not tolerate hymns nor songs.

It may appear strange at this day that the singing of Watts's Hymns was ever regarded by orthodox Presbyterians as an offence of such magnitude as to call for Church discipline. Yet, strange as it may be, it is nevertheless true that it caused McGready no little persecution and reproach. It was the subject of frequent petitions to the presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. And when a complaint came up to synod from one of McGready's churches, the subject was regarded as involving so much delicacy, that the synod declined an opinion, but referred the petition to the Assembly. Party spirit became so intolerant that, in some instances, churches were severed. It became a source of serious embarrassment to Dr. Caldwell. Alamance was New Side, and Buffalo was Old Side. When he preached at Alamance, he sang the melodious strains of Watts; but when at Buffalo, he was constrained to chant the Psalms of David.

The Scotch-Irish were generally New Side, and favorable to revivals; while the Scotch, who had

emigrated directly from Scotland, were great sticklers for order, and their time-honored forms of worship; and, consequently, they were generally Old Side. Whilst they were bold in defence of the faith, and strenuous for a sound morality, they were equally firm in resisting any innovation upon their venerated modes of worship. And as the revival spirit is a great reformer, dispensing with cumbersome formalities, and evolving the life and power of religion by the use of any appropriate means, whether new or old, and attracting all hearts into unity of spirit, instead of a uniformity in the outward acts of devotion, it follows, as a legitimate consequence, that the uncompromising Scotchman, with his adhesiveness to cherished forms, would oppose revivals, as revolutionary and subversive of order. Though pious he may be, and rigidly orthodox, yet he is wont to manifest his piety by a bold and manly defence of the doctrines of the Church, and by unfaltering adherence to its established usages. But whilst intent upon maintaining, unchanged, his doctrines and modes of worship, he has overlooked the cultivation of the benign, forbearing, tolerant spirit of the gospel. He is a fearless Israelite, but not a "good Samaritan."

But the Scotch-Irishman, though originally of the same stock and faith, has become diverse in temperament and character. An exile from the privileges and hallowing influences of the "*kirk*," a homeless pioneer amid the wilds of Ireland, his first care was a cabin for his family and a stall for his

cattle; and next to this, the protection of both from the marauding incursions of the wild Irish, and the ferocious beasts of the forest. Beginning life anew, in a wilderness, physical wants filled his heart and his hands. Neither the minister nor the venerated kirk, with its stately proportions and impressive services, invited him to the sanctuary. The Scot in Ireland ceased to be himself. He may have remembered the “kirk, the creed, and the covenant,” but they had ceased to be the better part of his inheritance: his broad fields and blooming meadows filled his heart with hopes of worldly gain. And when, finally, religion sought him out in his wild retreat, she came divested of her regalia, in the simplicity of the humble missionary, preaching Christ in the cabins of the wilderness. A glorious revival ensued; thousands were converted, and lay members held meetings with heart-stricken mourners: the Scotchman was happier in the prayer-meeting than he ever had been in the kirk.

Having enjoyed, during the long continuance of the great revival, the spiritualities of religion—rapturous, unutterable, heaven-born felicity—attachment to outward forms abated, while ardent desire for the higher and holier joys of spiritual life gathered strength daily. Henceforth religion was associated, not with the formal services of the kirk, but with the fervent supplications and rapturous songs of the prayer-meeting—the heavenly peace and holy delight enjoyed in the cabins of Ireland.

And when the descendants of those who had participated in those hallowed scenes came to America, cabins in the wilderness were again their homes. To them also religion came divested of formality, and clad in the humility of the humble, self-sacrificing missionary. He was welcomed as a messenger from God. Their cabins became their sanctuary, where they worshipped in simplicity, and enjoyed communion with God. Revivals ensued, and they realized in the wilds of America all they had heard of the presence and power of God in Ireland.

Thus, for more than a century, this peculiar people, in the providence of God, had been undergoing a gradual but thorough transformation in their religious sympathies. The circumstances around them tended to wean them from outward forms, and lead them to the spiritual consolations of religion. Whether in Ireland or America, they were in the woods, where no tall steeple or chime of bells guided them to the splendidly-furnished sanctuary. They worshipped in the cabin, or in the woods, not in forms, but in the spirit; no studied harmony to charm the ear, no elegance of diction to please the fancy, nothing addressed to the outward senses, but all tending to strengthen the inner life.

Nor was this transformation limited to the religious character. The comparatively milder climate of "green Ireland," with its soft sea-breezes, had relaxed the rigidity and mollified the sternness of the Scotchman, and resolved him into a milder

type of humanity. Transported to the interminable wilds of America, where the whole face of nature is laid out on a grander scale, where a brighter heaven and a warmer sunlight shed their genial influence, the Scotch-Irishman experienced a second transformation. His views were expanded, his heart enlarged, his sympathies embraced a wider range, his spirit was ennobled: he became an American freeman.

But while the Scotch-Irish race had been undergoing these transformations, the inflexible, unchangeable Scotchman had been engaged in a fierce struggle with Episcopacy for the maintenance of his stereotyped forms and modes of worship. And so often had he drawn his sword and shed his blood in their defence, that with him they were sacred, and so essential, that he would have courageously sacrificed his life for them. It is not strange therefore that the Scotchman should be so tenacious of the externals of religion as to depreciate its spirituality.

These premises being admitted, we should expect the Scotchman to regard revivals with distrust, and tolerate them only when constrained to recognize the presence and power of God. He would not object to a revival, *provided* it should conform to his notions of order; but transcend what he regards the limits of propriety—adopt any new measure, sing a hymn or song, instead of a psalm—and he is against the revival, and down upon the mover of new measures.

But a crisis was approaching, destined to try the faith even of a Scotchman. In 1796, McGready emigrated to the West, and, after spending some months in East Tennessee, he passed Cumberland Mountain, and settled in the southern part of Kentucky. Here he found "sheep without a shepherd," many of whom were his old acquaintances from Carolina, and some of his former charge. Several small churches were organized, three of which, Gasper, Muddy, and Red River, engaged him as their pastor.

As early as 1798, the budding of the great revival of the age appeared first in the congregation at Gasper, and subsequently the excitement extended to the other churches under his charge. Its fame soon reached Carolina, and, in 1799, William McGee removed to the West, and settled in Sumner county, Tennessee, and in the following year William Hodge located in Sumner. They were both faithful and efficient co-laborers with McGready, and in the fall of 1800 the revival extended to all the churches in Sumner, and prevailed throughout the "Cumberland country."

As a majority of the population had emigrated from Carolina, constant intercourse was kept up, and many who had witnessed the wonderful displays of Divine power in the West returned on business or family visits, and narrated to their friends in Carolina what God had wrought in the wilderness—the thrilling scenes of interest, the impressive displays of the majesty and power of God

which they had witnessed. General interest was thus awakened, and great solicitude was felt that God would visit them in like power and grace. The churches in Orange and Guilford, where McGready had labored, and which had, under his ministry, enjoyed a gracious revival, were engaged in earnest, agonizing prayer that God would visit them again.

In August, 1801, a sacramental-meeting was held at Cross Roads church, in Orange county. The pastor, Rev. William Paisley, was assisted by Dr. Caldwell and others. The services were unusually interesting; the church prayed most fervently for a revival, but the time for closing the meeting had arrived without any manifestation of a revival. When the pastor rose to dismiss the services, greatly distressed that the meeting was about to close without any special interest, he essayed to give utterance to his feelings, but, overcome with emotion, he sat down without uttering a word. It was a solemn moment—manifest emotion pervaded the congregation. He rose again, but still, unable to speak, he stood silent, struggling with his feelings. At that moment a young man from Tennessee, who had been in the great revival, raising both hands, with a loud voice exclaimed: "Stand still, and see the salvation of God!" In an instant intense excitement thrilled the entire congregation, "and, as if by an electric shock, a large number, in every direction, fell down." "Mingled groans, sobs, and cries for mercy, arose from every part of the

house." "All thought of dismissing the congregation vanished. The remainder of the day was spent in prayer, exhortation, singing, and personal conversation, and midnight came before the congregation could be persuaded to retire. The excitement continued for a length of time, and many were hopefully converted to God."\*

In October following, a communion-meeting was held at Hawfields. Those from a distance came in their wagons, furnished with provisions, and prepared to camp on the ground, in imitation of the great camp-meetings which had been held in the Cumberland country the preceding year, the wonderful results of which were known in Carolina. The meeting continued five days, and such was the interest, and such the results, that camp-meetings soon became as common among the Scotch-Irish in western Carolina as in the Cumberland country, where they originated.

Dr. Caldwell appointed a camp-meeting to be held at Bell's Meeting-house on Deep river, and invited Dr. McCorkle and Dr. Hall to attend, and bring their congregations with them. Though it was midwinter, multitudes came. The ministers, and many of their flocks, reached the encampment on Friday evening, but those of Dr. Hall's congregation who came in wagons stopped five miles short of the encampment. At evening prayers, a man thirty years of age, who had long been a member of

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\* Foote's Sketches.

the Church, became deeply concerned about his soul, and in a short time almost all the young people in the company were in distress, and the most of the night was spent in prayer, singing, and personal conversations with those under conviction.

Next day, when they arrived at the meeting, the excitement soon spread over the whole assembly. That afternoon, towards the close of the public services, a large number fell, in great mental agony. Many obtained comfort, but some lay prostrate all night. On Sabbath morning a number of the anxious retired to the woods for prayer, where many of them "were struck down," and lay prostrate all day and all night, and until nine o'clock Monday morning. As it was midwinter, their friends had to furnish them with fire and bedding in the woods.

The excitement continued till the close of the meeting. What number experienced regeneration is not known, but Dr. Hall says: "More than nine-tenths of the young people were deeply impressed with a sense of the great importance of salvation." Speaking of his own congregations, he adds: "As the greater part of our young people received comfort before they returned home, it is easier to conceive than to describe the joy of the parents and the children at their meeting."

The last week in January, 1802, a camp-meeting was held in Iredell county. Dr. Hall says, "The number of wagons which came to the ground, besides riding-carriages, was about 180; the number

of persons who attended on Sabbath was about 4000." As an evidence of the intensity of the excitement, it is stated that "on Saturday a heavy sleet began to fall about nine o'clock, then snow, which turned into a heavy rain; this lasted till four in the afternoon; and the day was, without exception, the most unpleasant of any during the whole winter. Notwithstanding this, the people collected at ten, in two assemblies, and all ages and sexes stood there exposed until sunset." "The work went on, gradually increasing, until Tuesday morning, except a few hours before day on Monday morning, when the camp was chiefly silent." "No attempt was made to ascertain the number of those who were affected with religious exercises, but there must have been, during the meeting, several hundred."

Another meeting was held in Iredell the second week in March. The number of wagons present, 262; the number of persons in attendance, 8000 to 10,000. The multitude was divided into four assemblies, in all of which services were conducted simultaneously. The meeting continued four days, and great excitement prevailed. "Many hundreds were constrained to cry aloud for mercy, of whom many went home rejoicing."

Another encampment was held in Mecklenburg county about the first of April, 1802. Six or seven thousand were supposed to have been in attendance. Services were conducted simultaneously in five different places. Religious exercises were kept

up day and night, at the stands, in the tents, and in the woods, from Friday till Tuesday. On Monday the excitement was most intense. At the close of the sermon six ministers prayed in succession, and during these prayers "many more than a hundred sank down in less than half an hour." At this time "there was scarcely a cry to be heard," but shortly afterwards one of the ministers rose to address the assembly, when the excitement was so great that he failed to arrest the attention of "more than twenty persons, and he sat down."

Many other meetings of similar character were held during the summer and autumn of 1802. The revival extended over a tract of country two hundred miles in length and one hundred in breadth, and the following year it prevailed over a large portion of South Carolina.

The practice of inviting mourners to present themselves before the pulpit, for prayer and personal instruction, had not as yet been introduced, either in the Cumberland country or Carolina, and as to "anxious-seats," they were not thought of till twenty years afterwards. No means whatever were adopted to induce the serious to distinguish themselves. They were left to struggle with their convictions, till, overcome by conflicting emotions, they fell prostrate; then they were recognized as fit subjects for prayer and personal instructions. This seems to have been almost the only mark of distinction between those under conviction and the careless. Hence the custom of estimating the suc-

cess of a meeting by the number that were stricken down, instead of the number of professions, as at the present day. As in the West, so also in Carolina, intelligent, strong-minded men fell as suddenly, and lay many hours as powerless, as if stricken by lightning. Those thus affected did not always receive comfort before they rose, but they generally persevered till they were comforted.

These meetings were also attended by those "bodily exercises" which were so common in the Cumberland country, such as "jerks, swooning, falling into a trance, audible groans, and shouting." Of all these affections, the jerks are the most unaccountable. Mr. Foote, in his Sketches of North Carolina, gives the following instance: "A venerable clergyman, returning from a meeting, stopped for the night with a friend. During the evening his mind was deeply impressed with a sense of the presence, holiness, and majesty of God. After family worship, a sense of the presence of a pure and holy God overawed him; it seemed to him he should sink under it. He walked out to get by himself, and started to go across a little piece of corn, towards a small retired valley. Before he could reach the retirement, he was seized in a most surprising manner. Suddenly he began leaping about, first forward, then sidewise, and sometimes, standing still, he would swing backward and forward, see-saw fashion. This motion of the body was both involuntary and irresistible at the commencement, afterwards there was scarcely a

disposition to resist it, and in itself the motion was neither painful nor unpleasant. The people in the house, hearing the noise, came to his relief, and carried him to the dwelling. The paroxysm lasted about one hour, during which, if the attendants let go their hold, he would jerk about the room, as he had done in the field. Gradually it passed away, and he retired to rest, humbled at the exhibition he had made." The next day, while calmly conversing with a friend about the meeting, "he was suddenly seized again and jerked across the room, and continued under the influence of the exercise about fifteen minutes."

And these strange and stirring scenes, these bodily exercises, jerks, falling down, swooning, trances, raptures, transports, and shouting, that made the welkin ring, were all exhibited among a people who, ten years previous, would not endure the singing of Watts's hymns; a people that were ready to rend the Church because some pious souls would sing songs instead of psalms; a people that had actually petitioned the judicatures of the Church upon the momentous subject, praying the interdiction of songs and hymns. How changed!

Dr. Caldwell, Dr. Hall, Kirkpatrick, Currie, Wilson, and the Scotch-Irish generally, whose religious history was identified with the great revival in Ireland, where falling down, swooning, jerks, loud cries for mercy, and shouts of joy, had been common, recognized, at once, the revival of Carolina as a gracious but a strange work of God; while

the Scotch population generally, and some of the more fastidious of the Scotch-Irish, regarded it at first with alarm and disgust, and for a time set themselves in opposition to it. The experience of Dr. Samuel McCorkle, as given by himself, will show how some good men, of unquestionable piety, regarded this strange work at its commencement.

He did not attend any of the meetings held in the fall of 1801, but accepted, as we have seen, the invitation of Dr. Caldwell to join in holding the meeting in Randolph county, an account of which is given on a previous page. He brought many of his flock with him to that meeting, hoping that they might become subjects of the revival. But when he saw people falling down by the hundred, and heard their dismal groans and loud cries for mercy, mingled with prayers, exhortations, songs of praise, and shouts of joy, the scene was so strange, so different from any thing he had ever witnessed before, that he was utterly confounded. Said he: "This, to me, perfectly new and sudden sight, I viewed with horror, and, in spite of all my previous reasoning upon revivals, with some degree of disgust. Is it possible, said I, that this scene of seeming confusion can come from the Spirit of God? Can He who called light from darkness, and order from confusion, educe light and order from such a dark mental and moral chaos?"

But despite the prejudices of Dr. McCorkle, he found, amid this "confusion and chaos," an angel, in the person of a "little girl, about seven years

old, reclining, with her eyes closed, in the arms of a female friend. And O, what a serene, angelic smile was on her face! If ever heaven was enjoyed in any little creature's heart, it was enjoyed in hers. Were I to form some notion of an angel, it would aid my conception to think of her."

But so strong were his prejudices, that he debarred this little angel from the communion, because he found her deficient in "doctrinal knowledge." But he had the candor to acknowledge his error, for he says: "This I have since regretted, for I do believe, on cool reflection, that she possessed that *experimental* knowledge of salvation, which is infinitely preferable to all doctrinal or systematic knowledge in the world without it." A sensible conclusion.

Toward the close of this most interesting meeting, while the Doctor mused upon the exciting scene around him, still in doubt what to think of it, he was called to his own son, who was down and in great distress. While praying over his son, he became so deeply interested, not only for his conversion, but for the conversion of the world, and so overwhelmed with a sense of the goodness and ineffable glory of God, that all doubt was dispelled, and ever after he engaged cordially and zealously in the promotion of the gracious work.

When such a man as Dr. McCorkle, with all his predilections for revivals, could view this wonderful work of God with "horror and disgust," it is not strange that some less tolerant, and more strenuous

for order, should have condemned and opposed it. But, notwithstanding the opposition of some, and the honest misgivings of others, the revival prevailed in all the Scotch-Irish churches in the western section of the State, and even invaded some of the order-loving Scotch churches on Cape Fear river and the Atlantic coast.

Wherever its influence was felt, public morals were reformed, infidelity was silenced, religion respected, the house of God crowded with attentive and devout worshippers, thousands were converted, and Christians rendered more conscientious in duty and more spiritual in devotion. Many feeble churches were strengthened, and some new ones organized; ministers preached with more unction and power, and many were called of God to aid them in their arduous labors. In the language of Mr. Foote: "Throughout Carolina, wherever the revival prevailed, the community received unspeakable blessings, and the Church, in succeeding ages, can but remember with thanksgiving the mercy of God, and bear in her heart, and preserve on her records, the names of men whom God honored as the instruments of so many blessings to their fellow-men."

About the time this great revival commenced in Guilford county, a child was born in Alamance congregation, destined, in the providence of God, to preach Christ with a winsomeness and an unction that should woo thousands to the Saviour, and gain for himself a starry crown. Had the mother fore-

seen the extent of his labors of love, doubtless August 9, 1801, would have become an era in the history of the family, each returning anniversary of which would have been celebrated as a day of thanksgiving. But the future is wisely veiled from mortal vision. There was nothing in the appearance of the infant George indicative of his future career of usefulness. He was presented in old Alamance church, and baptized by that good man, Dr. Caldwell. Had the venerable patriarch known the future of that child, how his benevolent heart would have filled with unutterable emotion! Had angels known it, methinks they would have been present to witness the consecration.

## CHAPTER V.

## SCOTCH-IRISH IN TENNESSEE.

WHEN the British kings granted charters for the settlement of colonies in America, it was customary to grant the territory between specified parallels of latitude, "from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean." North Carolina, in common with her sister colonies, obtained a grant from "ocean to ocean;" and what is now the State of Tennessee was originally part of her territory. But the grant conferred nothing more than the royal permit to conquer, or acquire from the Indians by purchase, the vast domain thus ostentatiously ceded to the feeble colony. And for a century after this munificent grant, all the territory west of the Alleghany Mountains was the favorite hunting-ground of the red man, who was prepared to defend his rights to the last extremity.

The beautiful valley of the Upper Tennessee, lying between the Alleghany and the Cumberland Mountains, was claimed by the Cherokees, a powerful and warlike tribe. The Creeks and Chickasaws contended with the Cherokees for the possession of the fertile valley west of the Cumberland Moun-

tains and south of the Cumberland river; while the Shawnees held the country lying between the Cumberland and Ohio rivers; and the Chickasaws occupied the territory between the Lower Tennessee and the Mississippi rivers.

The Canadian French, the implacable enemies of the British colonies, had descended the Mississippi, and erected trading-houses at convenient intervals from the Lakes to the Gulf. They had also explored the eastern tributaries of the Mississippi, and erected trading-houses on the Ohio, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee. And they claimed the jurisdiction and right of trading with the aborigines in all the vast territory between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi river.

Thus, the moment that North Carolina attempted to pass the crest of the Blue Ridge, she was met by adverse claims. The French had already conciliated the natives, and instilled into their minds a prejudice against British encroachment. So, notwithstanding the ostentatious grant from "sea to sea," for a century, the jurisdiction of Carolina was virtually limited to the Atlantic slope.

Nevertheless, a passion for hazardous enterprise, and the hope of gain, led many adventurous spirits over the mountain into the heart of the solitary wilderness in quest of game and peltry. Hunters and traders had visited the towns of the Cherokees as early as 1740; and as the trade proved lucrative, the number of adventurers increased yearly. With the view of protecting the

traders, the Governor of Virginia, in 1756, erected Fort Loudon on the Tennessee, thirty miles below Knoxville. "This was the first structure erected in Tennessee by the Anglo-Americans."\* Two centuries previous, De Soto, a Spanish explorer, had camped for twenty days on the eastern margin of the Mississippi, where the town of Randolph now stands; and a century later, the French explorer, La Salle, erected a trading-house where Memphis now crowns the bluff; and still later, Charleville, from New Orleans, built a trading-house near "French Lick," where the proud capital of the State now stands. But Fort Loudon was the first building erected by the race whom God in his providence had prepared for the occupation of this lovely land, and the introduction of a purer religion and a higher civilization than France or Spain had yet attained.

The treaty of 1763, which terminated the Canadian war, extinguished the French claim to all the territory east of the Mississippi river. But the Indian title remained in all its force, and its extinction was beset with serious difficulties. The country was not occupied by any tribe. From the Tennessee to the Ohio there was not a solitary wigwam—all was a vast unbroken wilderness, where the buffalo, the bear, and deer roamed unmolested. This boundless park was claimed as a common hunting-ground by the Cherokees, the Creeks, the

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\* Ramsay's Annals.

Chickasaws, and the Shawnees; and a treaty with any one of these would not extinguish the claims of the other tribes.

Nevertheless, a treaty was contracted with those tribes supposed to have the best claim; and the beautiful valleys watered by the Watauga and the Holston were acquired, and cabins were soon erected along the margin of those crystal mountain-streams. Little did the red man dream that in thirty years these feeble settlements would expand into an independent State, stretching from the Blue Ridge to the Mississippi. Had he foreseen the giant growth of the infant colony, he would have strangled it in its cradle.

After the battle of Alamance, in 1771, hundreds of the Regulators, disgusted with the tyrannical and bloody administration of Governor Tryon, retired over the mountain, there to await in the quiet vale of Watauga the day of vengeance. It came sooner than they had anticipated. The Scotch-Irish, whose brethren had fallen at Alamance, rallied to King's Mountain, and there they met their old Tory foes, and terrible was the conflict: full atonement was exacted for every drop of blood shed at Alamance.

During the first year of the Revolution, many of the Scotch-Irish whom Tryon had compelled to take the oath of allegiance to King George, not feeling at liberty to violate a solemn oath, and resolved not to seem to favor British oppression by remaining idle spectators of the contest, or by sub-

mitting to enlistment against the patriots, retired over the mountain, where Tryon's press-gangs could not find them. And they swelled the tide of emigration to Watauga. And at the close of the war, thousands of the patriots came to locate the land-warrants which they had received for their service in the war; and many of them settled upon their lands. Very soon the population became too dense for the roving pioneers, who began to sell out to the more timid, and retire lower down into the valley of the Tennessee.

In the meantime, the hunters and traders had passed the Cumberland Mountain, and having penetrated the dense wilderness as far as the "French Lick," brought back such glowing accounts of the unparalleled luxuriance of the soil, and the innumerable hordes of buffalo that roamed through the interminable cane-brakes, that all Watauga was in commotion, and emigration to the "Cumberland country" became the ruling passion of the day. As early as 1779, a colony set out from Watauga to the Valley of the Cumberland. One party, numbering three hundred souls, with their horses and cattle, passing the mountain at Cumberland Gap, emerged upon the vast prairies of Kentucky, and entering the Cumberland valley from the north, reached French Lick early in 1780. Another party, having constructed a fleet of thirty boats, and having taken on board the women and children, and provisions for the colony, adventured the hazardous passage by water down the Tennessee to its mouth,

and up the Ohio and the Cumberland to French Lick.

When it is considered that no craft, save the Indian's bark, had ever passed the "Suck," at Chattanooga, or the "Shoals," at Florence; and that the margin of the rivers, through the whole of the voyage, was lined with hostile savages, the enterprise must be regarded as not less adventurous than the romantic voyages of De Soto and La Salle.

Leaving Watauga in the fall, the fleet passed unmolested till they reached the "Suck," where they were attacked by a large body of Indians collected on the brow of the overhanging bluff. Bearing toward the opposite shore, they were fired upon by a party concealed in the cane. Borne down by the rapid current, the boats were dashed upon projecting rocks, and one was lodged. In attempting to get it afloat, one man was killed, several wounded, and three taken captive. Another boat, the inmates of which were suffering with small-pox, was captured, and every soul on board was lost.

The fleet passed the shoals without loss or molestation. Having reached the Ohio, they constructed sails for their boats, and after months of toil against the current at spring tide, they finally arrived at French Lick, the last of April, 1780. Of the many adventurous enterprises attending the settlement of the wilderness, this voyage must be regarded as the most hazardous. It was conducted by Colonel

Donelson, who settled on Stone's river, ten miles east of the Lick, and improved the place afterwards known as "Clover Bottom."

The main body of the emigrants erected a fort on the bluff where Nashville now stands. A small party built another on the north side of the river; and several other small settlements were made around the principal fort, at the distance of several miles. But these were only outposts of the central fort, whither all rallied when an attack was anticipated. A feeble colony was planted at the mouth of Red river, forty-five miles below, and another at Bledsoe's Lick, forty-five miles above.

Thus, a defenceless colony of less than three hundred was planted in the heart of a boundless wilderness, three hundred miles from Watauga, and six hundred from the seat of government in North Carolina, whence alone they could look for protection. And feeble as they were, they were dispersed over a territory nearly a hundred miles in extent, surrounded on all sides by hostile savages, ever hovering about their cabins, lying in ambush along the paths and around the fields, seeking opportunity to fall suddenly upon the unwary and defenceless. The colony lived in constant dread, and well they might, for massacres were distressingly frequent.

Such was the daily waste of life by an invisible foe, that the colonists were driven within their fortifications, not venturing abroad to seek supplies

till reduced to extreme want. So hopeless was their condition, that a strong party were in favor of breaking up the colony, and returning to Watauga; but Colonel James Robertson, and other brave spirits, insisted on defending their position till relief came.

Had the colony been located within the territory of any one tribe, they would not have been so much exposed: that tribe would have been held responsible for all depredation. But situated as they were, upon the common hunting-ground of four tribes, and within gun-shot of the Lick, the great resort of the buffalo and the deer, whither all these tribes came in quest of game, the colony was the prey of all; and all were exasperated that the "pale faces" should obtrude themselves into the very "Eden of the red men."

But Providence had ordained that this goodly land—this Canaan of the West—which for unknown centuries had been the home of the buffalo, and the hunting-ground and the battle-field of the red man, should become the home of a vigorous civilization, and of primitive Christianity. The Scotch-Irish had entered the Cumberland country, and it was time for the buffalo and the red man to retire. Had the Indian received him as a brother, he would have proved a father to protect, and an angel of light to guide him to salvation. But he lay in wait for him by day, and stealthily invaded his domicile by night; he murdered his

wife, and carried his children into hopeless captivity. The white man knew his rights, and he had the courage to defend them.

Yet the occupation of this goodly land was destined to verify the prediction of the war-worn Oconostota, when he signed the treaty ceding it to the white man. "Brother," said he, "we have given you a fine land, but I believe you will have much trouble in settling it." A fine land it was, and much trouble they did have—such privation, hazard, and suffering, as only the race that occupied it would have patiently endured. They had been trained to hardships for more than a century. They had civilized Ireland, subdued the wilderness of the Atlantic slope, and made it "blossom as the rose." They had fought the battles of the Revolution, then scaled the rugged heights of the Alleghanies, and came down on Watauga as the "dew on Hermon." A broader and a richer land invited, and they penetrated the vast solitudes of the West. Their mission was "to subdue the earth and replenish it," and nobly did they fulfil that mission.

After fourteen years of incessant warfare, signalized by the most revolting barbarities, the colony had so increased by immigrations from Watauga, Carolina, and Virginia, that they were now able to carry the war into the strongholds of the enemy. The Chickasaws and Choctaws had made peace, and become faithful allies of the white man. Strong settlements in Kentucky had driven the

Shawnees beyond the Ohio. But the Creeks and the Cherokees continued their depredations. Desperadoes and outlaws from both these tribes occupied the Nickajack towns situated on the southern bank of the Tennessee river, whence they made frequent marauding incursions into the settlements, murdering inoffensive women and children, and driving off the horses and cattle.

In 1794, a company was organized for the purpose of demolishing those towns, and dispersing the horde of robbers and desperadoes congregated there. The company crossed the mountain where the tunnel now penetrates it. They reached the river opposite the towns late in the evening, and during the night the principal part of the force silently passed the river, and gained a position in rear of the town. About daylight next morning they attacked the town, while the enemy yet slept. Taken by surprise, the enemy fled: some attempted to escape by swimming the river, but such fell into the hands of the party on the northern bank. A general rout and great destruction of the enemy ensued: the towns were burned, and those who had not escaped were dispersed.

This expedition was piloted by Colonel Joseph Brown, of Maury county, who had been, when a boy, a prisoner among those Indians for a long time, and was acquainted with the face of the country, the paths, streams, and mountain-passes. While he was a prisoner, there was a proposition made in his hearing to kill him, lest he should escape, and

subsequently lead an army into their country. But more humane counsels prevailed: his life was spared, he did escape, and did pilot an army to their stronghold, which demolished their towns, and visited upon the guilty inhabitants a terrible retribution for all their atrocities. Colonel Brown still lives, and he is one of the oldest ministers of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, highly respected by all who know him.

This signal victory terminated the Indian war. Treaties of peace were concluded between the colony and the Cherokees and the Creeks, relinquishing all claims to the Cumberland country. All fears of future depredations being removed, an immense immigration from East Tennessee, Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky flowed in, and settled the rich valley of the Cumberland. And in 1796, Tennessee was admitted into the Union as a sovereign State, with a Constitution pronounced by Mr. Jefferson to be more republican than that of any other State in the Union.

At this period there were but three counties in the Cumberland valley—Davidson, Sumner, and Montgomery, then called Tennessee county. Long after Davidson and Sumner had been settled, Wilson remained an unbroken cane-brake, the common hunting-ground of the white and the red man.

In the year 1797, William McClain, Esq., father of J. S. McClain, Esq.; and John Foster, father of James Foster, Esq., made the first settlement in Wilson county, at Drake's Lick, near the mouth

of Spencer's Lick Creek. Two years later, Mr. Foster, William Donnell, father of Rev. Robert Donnell, and Alexander Barkly, made a settlement on Spring Creek, seven miles south-east of Lebanon.\* The following year settlements were made at the Big Spring, on Cedar Creek, and on Round Lick Creek.

In 1799 the county was organized, and the first court was held at the residence of Captain John Harpool, four miles north of Lebanon. Charles Cavanaugh was Chairman, Robert Foster, Clerk, and Charles Rosborough, Sheriff.

In the fall of 1802, there was a large immigration from Alamance and Buffalo, in Carolina. Rev. Samuel Donnell, and several other families of the Donnell connection, settled on Spring Creek, and became members of the first church in Wilson county. Rev. Samuel Donnell was chosen pastor. Two years later, George Donnell, Senior, came out and settled on Spring Creek, and he and his family became members of Spring Creek church. As he had been for many years a ruling elder in Alamance church, and as many of the congregation on Spring Creek had emigrated from that church, on his arrival he was added to the eldership of Spring Creek church.

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\* Mrs. William McClain.

## CHAPTER VI.

## STATE OF SOCIETY IN THE CUMBERLAND COUNTRY.

IN this age of steamboats and railroads, it is difficult, even for the border pioneers, to conceive of the privations and discomforts endured by the early emigrants into the Cumberland valley. Those who first traversed the great plains of the West, passed the Rocky Mountains, and planted the first colony on the Pacific slope, in the midst of hostile savages, may realize, in part, what it cost to settle the Cumberland country; but only in part, for they had the protection of the ocean on one side, and navigable streams penetrating the interior, and affording the means of transporting ample supplies from the coast; while the pioneers in the Cumberland country were encompassed on all sides by ruthless savages, with no means of obtaining supplies, except such articles as could be transported from the Atlantic on pack-horses.

At the present day, emigrants embark for the frontier on board of steamboats, laden with farming utensils, household furniture, and lumber prepared for constructing comfortable dwellings. And in five days after they have reached their destina-

tion, a house is erected, furnished, and the family snugly lodged in their new home, enjoying the comforts and even the luxuries of life. The minister, the teacher, the physician, the lawyer, the merchant, the printer, and the various artisans that minister to the wants of refined society, follow in the wake, and presently the frontier settlers are enjoying all the comforts of advanced civilization.

Not so with the hardy pioneers in the Cumberland country. Until 1799, when the first wagon-road was opened from Knoxville to Nashville, the country had been approached by a solitary "Indian trail," or path through the dense forest and the interminable cane-brake, barely wide enough to admit a single pack-horse. Along this path, salt, iron, and whatever the colony derived from the Atlantic States, had to be transported on pack-horses. Of course the supply of the most essential articles was meagre, and the price enormous. Salt was distressingly scarce at *ten dollars* per bushel, and iron was worth *twenty-five cents* per pound! Every article made of iron was proportionably dear. Nails, though deemed indispensable in our day, were not to be had at any price. Planks, boards, and shingles were fastened with wooden pegs.

Whatever a virgin soil and a teeming forest produced, they had in abundance; but all things else were rare, and those essential to personal security were chiefly sought after. Powder and lead were in greater demand than books and stationery. The wants of the physical superseded those of the intel-

lectual and moral man. Ever exposed to the deprivations of a savage foe, they were deprived of the ordinary facilities for mental and moral culture. "School-houses on the border settlements were unknown: teacher and pupils would alike have become the victims of Indian cruelty." Many a youth grew up to manhood without seeing a church or hearing a sermon.

Long familiar with savage warfare, and often instigated by the most revolting atrocities to unrelenting revenge, the heart of the pioneer had grown callous. He was an intrepid soldier, a faithful friend, a jovial companion, but a relentless enemy. Having taken vengeance into his own hands, he executed it with a promptness and a severity that rendered his name a terror to his savage foe. However indispensable to the public safety may be the cultivation of heroic daring and the stern infliction of merited chastisement, yet it must be admitted that the mode of life to which the pioneer was subjected tended to harden his heart and blunt his moral sensibilities.

In addition to the demoralizing tendency of his mode of life, infidelity was abroad in the land, sapping the very foundation of all morality and religion. In the fort and in the camp, the youth were exposed to its baneful influence. Many of the leading men of the colony had participated in the Revolutionary War, and had, by contact with the French troops, imbibed their skeptical principles. These licentious sentiments were presented with an

ability, and propagated with a zeal, worthy of a better cause. In the absence of the ministry of the gospel, and the ordinary facilities for the acquisition of biblical and theological knowledge, it argues no unusual perverseness to admit that many of the youth were caught with the enticing bait, and boasted themselves "free-thinkers." Deprived of the services of the sanctuary, and compelled to employ the Sabbath as other days, it is not strange that many professors of religion had become formal in their devotions and lax in their morals.

Such was the state of society in the colony at the close of the Indian war. But so soon as peace was established, the fort was converted into a school-house, and the church rose above the log-cabins of the settlers. The teacher and the preacher found a moral wilderness, as rude and uncultivated as the dark forest that environed the cabin and the corn-field. The sturdy youth of six feet had yet to learn the alphabet, and the man of years had forgotten his "Catechism." But there was mind of vigorous growth, energy of character, habits of industry, fixedness of purpose, and great eagerness for improvement.

The preachers that had long been forted with the colony, and had occasionally preached in the "block-house," when the men came with their guns, duly appreciated the privilege of assembling a congregation without fear of molestation. But what could two or three preachers do toward supplying a population dispersed over a territory

larger than some of the Eastern States? The necessity for ministerial aid soon drew preachers from the Atlantic States. As early as 1796, Mr. McGready settled in Logan county, Kentucky, upon the waters of Red river, a tributary of the Cumberland. And in 1799, Mr. McGee located at Shiloh, near Gallatin, Tennessee, and the following year Mr. Hodge took charge of Shiloh, and Mr. McGee removed to the Beech, in Sumner county.

As early as the summer of 1797, Mr. McGready began to witness the first fruits of his labors at Gasper, and in 1798 the three churches of his charge were blessed with reviving influences. But these seasons of refreshing were not signalized by any remarkable displays of Divine power until 1799, when the influences of the Spirit became so overwhelming that men of stout hearts and iron will fell down as dead, and, after lying speechless and powerless for hours, would wake to newness of life in Christ.

As the practice of calling out the anxious, and conversing and praying with them, had not been introduced, those who were laboring under conviction generally suppressed their feelings until they were overpowered and fell to the ground. And while some lay silent and motionless, others rolled and tossed as one in great agony, uttering the most distressing groans and piteous moanings. The muscles of the face were contracted, as when one is suffering intense pain, and in some cases the whole frame was convulsed with spasmodic action,

while the mind was agonized with convictions of sin and awful apprehension of hell. But when a consciousness of pardon was realized, the muscles relaxed, a heavenly radiance lighted up the countenance, and the tongue became vocal with praise and adoration.

The news of this strange work spread through the Cumberland country, arresting the attention of all classes, and disposing the public mind to thoughtfulness. And many from Tennessee attended the first meeting in Kentucky, in June, 1800. The multitude was so great that all could not be accommodated, and some who had come in wagons camped on the ground during the meeting. Great excitement prevailed; many were stricken down, and some, who came to deride, remained to pray, and, after a season of great agony, returned rejoicing in hope of heaven.

Having observed that those families who camped on the ground were peculiarly blessed, and foreseeing that it would be impracticable to furnish lodgings for the growing multitudes that congregated to the sacramental-meetings, Mr. McGready conceived the idea of a *camp-meeting*. He therefore made proclamation that at the next meeting, to be held in July, all who were disposed should come in their wagons, furnished with provisions, and prepared to camp on the ground during the meeting.

The news that there was to be a *camp-meeting* at Gasper was circulated in Tennessee. McGee and

Hodge, accompanied by many of their congregations, attended this meeting. A vast multitude congregated, the most of whom remained encamped during the meeting. The excitement was intense; many fell prostrate, and some of them lay all night. About forty-five gave evidence of having passed from death in sin to newness of life in Christ. Such, after lying prostrate for hours, would arise with the most brilliant and heavenly expression of countenance, glorifying God for his pardoning mercy. Many left the meeting under the most pungent convictions, some of whom professed on the road, and others after they reached home.

It was a remarkable feature of this great revival, from first to last, that convictions for sin, and professions of faith in Christ, were not limited to those beyond the pale of the Church. Many who had maintained for years a fair standing in the Church, and had never seriously doubted their interest in Christ until they witnessed the displays of Divine power manifested in the progress of this strange work, abandoned their hope, and publicly proclaimed their destitution of spiritual religion; and after days of anguish and despondency, they experienced regeneration and "joy in the Holy Ghost." Five of the members of the Shiloh church professed at the meeting at Gasper, and many others at subsequent meetings.

When the Shiloh people returned, they brought the revival with them, and the evening they reached home, a revival commenced in the congregation.

Samuel King was one of the five church members that had professed at Gasper. Solemnly impressed with the conviction that many of the members of the Church were resting upon a false hope, content with the outward form of piety while they were destitute of spiritual life in the soul, on his arrival at home he began to warn his friends of the necessity of a radical change of heart, assuring them that religion is a conscious experience of spiritual illumination, revealing the glory of the Saviour, and filling the heart with peace and joy. The fervor of his exhortations soon brought some of his associates to their knees, and before the morning light dawned, the Sun of righteousness shined into their hearts, revealing the glory of God; and they too were enabled to testify that religion is not a "dead faith," but a living principle in the soul.

The next day, the neighborhood came together for prayer, and some fell prostrate and were unable to rise, until they were regenerated and raised to newness of life in Christ. The revival became general, and by the next Sabbath about twenty had experienced a change of heart, most of whom had been for years orderly and acceptable members of the Church. Among the converts within the pale of the Church was Richard King, the elder brother of Samuel, and an intelligent and influential man, in the prime of life. His wife, a sister of Dr. James Blythe, and an acceptable member of the Church, became deeply concerned about her

soul, and after a season of prayer, without having experienced a change, she fell into despair, and for weeks believed herself doomed to perdition. Her friends induced her to attend one of Mr. McGready's meetings in Kentucky. She seemed indisposed, for a time, to engage in the exercises of the meeting. But her mind became so impressed with a sense of her hopeless condition, that, under the agony of her feelings, she mounted a bench, and began, in a most impressive manner, to exhort the unregenerate to repentance while there was hope, lest despair should overtake them. A crowd gathered around, while she admonished with a fervor and solemnity that carried conviction to the heart. Many inquired, "Who is that speaking so much like Dr. Blythe?" She exhorted sinners, till, overcome with exhaustion, she sank down, and remained prostrate till she experienced pardon, and then she rose to proclaim a Saviour's wondrous love.

During the fall of 1800, camp-meetings were held at the Ridge, Shiloh, and the Beech, in Sumner county, and at Craighead's church in Davidson. Great excitement prevailed. At Shiloh, Mr. McGready, Hodge, McGee, and his brother, John McGee, a Methodist minister, were in attendance. The congregation was the largest that had ever been assembled in the country on any occasion, and the excitement exceeded all that had hitherto been witnessed. On Sabbath evening, more than a hundred fell prostrate. The exercises of singing,

prayer, exhortation, and personal conversation, were kept up through the night. Monday morning witnessed a "glorious resurrection:" more than one hundred were translated from the bondage of sin to the light and liberty of the sons of God. During the preceding night, the whole encampment resembled a battle-field, resounding with the groans and piteous wailings of the dying; in the morning, it became vocal with shouts of joy and rapturous songs of praise.

Much has been said and written, in latter days, respecting the origin of camp-meetings. The meeting held at Gasper, in Logan county, Kentucky, July, 1800, of which we have given an account on a previous page, was the "FIRST CAMP-MEETING EVER HELD IN CHRISTENDOM."

And such were the happy results of this, and similar meetings held in Kentucky and Tennessee during the summer and fall of '1800, and so admirably adapted were they to the wants of a sparsely settled country, that they were at once adopted by all the principal denominations in the Cumberland valley; and for many years they were the chief reliance for the promotion of revivals. In the towns and densely populated districts, protracted-meetings have, of late years, superseded in part the camp-meetings, but in sparsely settled sections, they are, to this day, the favorite meetings with Cumberland Presbyterians.

A revival spirit went out from the great camp-meetings of 1800, which pervaded the whole

country. The public mind was excited, Christians were prayerful and conscientious, sinners were serious, and every neighborhood was anxious for preaching, and a majority of the principal householders were ready to open their doors to receive the minister and his congregation. Had the number of the ministers been increased tenfold, each would have had an inviting field. The few in the country could not supply a *tithe* of the demands for preaching.

In this emergency, lay-members, gifted in prayer and exhortation, were encouraged to make appointments in destitute sections for prayer-meetings and social exercises. Vast crowds attended, hundreds of penitent sinners sought the prayers and instructions of the Church, and scores were converted. But so far from supplying the demand for preaching, and the ministration of the ordinances of the Church, these meetings only increased the demand. What was to be done? All the ministers in the country who participated in the revival had become evangelists, and were riding and preaching all the time, and yet the demand far exceeded their ability to afford supplies.

At this crisis, Rev. David Rice, the eldest and most influential member of Transylvania presbytery, then residing near Lexington, Kentucky, visited the Cumberland country; and after witnessing the destitution, and hearing the earnest petitions of the people for preaching, he advised his brethren, resident in the region where the revi-

val was prevailing, to select from the laity men of undoubted piety, talents, and gifts for exhortation, and encourage such to present themselves to presbytery as candidates for the ministry, though destitute of some of the qualifications required by the discipline of the Church. Accordingly, Alexander Anderson, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King, all of whom had exhibited remarkable gifts in prayer and public exhortation, were selected, and induced to present themselves to the presbytery, in the fall of 1801.

A difference of opinion was expressed in the presbytery as to the regularity and the propriety of the measure, in consequence of which those brethren were not, at that time, received as candidates for the ministry. But they were authorized to exercise their talents in public exhortation, and instructed to prepare written discourses, to be read at the next session of the presbytery. When they appeared before presbytery in the spring of 1802, and read their discourses, Mr. Anderson, who was a man of more than ordinary natural endowments, and about forty years of age, was then received as a candidate for the ministry. At the fall session in 1802, Ewing and King were received also; and these three brethren were licensed to preach the gospel. At a subsequent session they were ordained to the whole work of the ministry.

Mr. Anderson's course was brief but brilliant. He survived his licensure only one year and a half, but he still lives in the hearts of those whose privi-

lege it was to have heard his burning eloquence. Ewing and King, after years of toil and privation, became the founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. And after more than thirty years of active and efficient labor in building up and extending the borders of that Church, each went down to the tomb covered with hoary honors, and the memory of each lives, and will live, in the affections of Cumberland Presbyterians. No minister of the gospel, of any denomination, has exerted so wide an influence in the West as Finis Ewing.

These ministers were ordained with the full knowledge that not one of them had acquired all of the literary qualifications required by the discipline of the Presbyterian Church. And in adopting the Westminster Confession of Faith, they were all permitted to except the idea of fatality, as taught under the doctrines of election and reprobation. And having publicly and solemnly rejected the doctrine of a limited atonement, they were careful, in their preaching, to dwell upon the fullness of the atonement, and thence infer man's free agency, and consequent accountability; and upon this basis they urged upon all the offer of free salvation. Many others were subsequently licensed who had not acquired a classical education, and they were also permitted to make the same exception to the Confession of Faith.

With these accessions to the ministry, they were enabled more fully to occupy the extending field, and particularly to supply the growing demand for preach-

ing. The young men were full of zeal, and they were wholly consecrated to the work. And wherever they went, for they were all evangelists, they were not only acceptable to the people, but their labors were efficient in extending the revival. In two years after they entered the field, churches were planted in all the principal settlements west of the mountains.

But this great revival was not to be confined to the western settlements. It passed into East Tennessee, and thence into North and South Carolina, as previously noticed. And everywhere it was distinguished by unusual displays of Divine power. In East Tennessee, and in the Carolinas, it was the same strange, awful, and gracious work of God, attended by the same peculiar manifestations. The jerks, falling down, swooning, trances, and transports of rapturous joy, were as common in Carolina as in Cumberland, and as they had been a century before in Ireland.

## CHAPTER VII.

## SPRING CREEK CHURCH.

As the oldest church in the county, and the foster-mother of Rev. George Donnell and other distinguished ministers, Spring Creek Church is entitled to notice.

Rev. William McGee has the credit of having preached the first sermon in Wilson county, in the fall of 1798, at the residence of William McClain, Esq. Dr. James Hall, of North Carolina, preached the first sermon in the Spring Creek settlement. He had been sent out as a missionary to the West, with instructions to extend his tour to Natchez. In the fall of 1800, he passed through Sumner and Davidson, and labored for a time in the great revival then in progress. Having spent the winter at Natchez, he returned early in the summer of 1801, and stopped, for a time, in the newly formed settlement on Spring Creek. He preached several times, and organized the few Christians in the settlement into a society.

The sending of a missionary from Carolina to Natchez, so early as 1800, speaks well for the missionary spirit of the Presbyterian Church of that

day. And it is ample proof of the zeal of the missionary, that he performed a tour of a thousand miles, through a wilderness, labored in the field nine months, and received for his services only three hundred dollars.

In the fall of 1802, Rev. Samuel Donnell and several other families of the Donnell connection emigrated from Carolina, and settled on Spring Creek. Mr. Donnell became pastor of the church, and established a classical school in his congregation.

Mr. Donnell is represented by Dr. Davidson, in his History of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky, as a "man neither qualified by nature nor education to be conspicuous or influential." This, in some sense, may be true, and yet, without explanation, it is likely to mislead those who had no acquaintance with him. As to education, he was a creditable classical scholar, educated and introduced into the ministry by that celebrated teacher and divine, Dr. Caldwell, of North Carolina. As to natural endowment, he possessed a logical mind, and could write and rehearse a systematic, orthodox, and logical sermon. Yet he was so tedious and spiritless—so cold and monotonous in his delivery, that those who heard him once, were willing to avoid a second infliction.

In the fall of 1804, George Donnell, Senior, and other families of connection, emigrated from Carolina, and settled in the Spring Creek congregation. As Mr. Donnell had long been an elder in Alamance

church, on his arrival he was added to the eldership of Spring Creek church.

While Mr. Donnell was on the road to Tennessee, Craighead, Samuel Donnell, and Bowman were prosecuting, before the Kentucky Synod, a charge against McGready, Hodge, McGee, McAdoo, and Rankin, for irregularity in ordaining Anderson, Ewing, and King, without requiring all the literary qualifications prescribed in the discipline of the Presbyterian Church; and allowing them, in adopting the Confession of Faith, to except so much as seemed to teach the doctrine of eternal election and reprobation. This prosecution originated in opposition to the great revival of 1800, and the measures adopted by the revival party for the promotion of that gracious work.

It has been shown, when treating of revivals in Carolina, that there always has been a party in the Presbyterian Church in America who are sticklers for *order*, and opposed to all "new measures." This party opposed the great revival of New England which originated under the preaching of Edwards. They opposed the revival awakened by Whitefield and the Tennents, in Jersey and Pennsylvania. They opposed the revival in Virginia under President Davies. And when McGready, by his pungent preaching in the churches of Orange and Guilford counties in North Carolina, awakened a general revival, this party stirred up opposition, raised a clamor about *new measures* and *disorder*,

burned his pulpit, and threatened him with *personal violence!*

That good man, deeply grieved that members of his own denomination should oppose, by deeds of violence, a gracious work of God, retired to the western wilderness, hoping there, amid its solitudes, to escape the opposition of men professing godliness, but zealous only for *order*. This faithful servant of God had not labored long in that distant region, when the hardy sons of the forest began to yield to the Spirit's influence. An excitement originated in the far West which surpassed in power any thing that had hitherto been witnessed on the continent. It spread eastward through Tennessee into the Carolinas, gathering strength as it advanced, until it reached those very churches where McGready had formerly labored. Opposition again croaked for *order*; but its voice was unheeded: the great revival had assumed a majesty and grandeur which no human power could withstand; its resistless tide rolled onward, bearing down all opposition, till it reached the Atlantic Ocean.

It is no novelty, therefore, that a party in the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky and Tennessee (some of them the very men that opposed McGready in Carolina) should be found opposing the great revival of 1800. Craighead was brought up under "Old Side," or what has more recently been styled, "Old School" influences. By education, and by

constitutional temperament, he was a stickler for order, and opposed to "new measures;" and as a consequence, he was, at heart, opposed to the revival from its origin; but while it was in the ascendant, he judiciously restrained his opposition within prudent bounds. Donnell and Bowman came to the country toward the close of the revival, when its power and spirituality had somewhat abated; and seeing some things and hearing of much that they disapproved, and knowing that Dr. Craighead, who had witnessed it in all its stages, was never cordial in its support, they cautiously kept themselves aloof from contact or identity with it. Had they witnessed the early stages of this gracious work; or had they possessed the spirit of a McGready, a Hodge, or a Hall, instead of opposing, they might have coöperated with the revival party. But, regarding all "bodily exercises," and all loud outcries, whether of joy or grief, as the offspring of fanaticism, they were annoyed with what they were pleased to denominate "disorder" and "wildfire."

It is quite natural that these men should take measures, when the revival began to subside, to redress supposed grievances which they had long endured, because resistance at an earlier date would have proved unavailing. But now that the revival spirit was abating, they hoped to bring back the usages and worship of the Church to the rules of order and formality which were so congenial to their phlegmatic temperaments. Hence the

charge preferred by Craighead, Samuel Donnell, and Bowman, against McGready, Hodge, McGee, and others.

The history of the proceedings of the Kentucky Synod against the revival party, presents some strange anomalies in ecclesiastical government, which no well-informed Presbyterian can be provoked to defend. Those who may wish to see a triumphant vindication of the revival party, are referred to Smith's History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and the Life and Times of Ewing, by Dr. Cossitt.

All who are informed on the subject, know that the revival party refused to submit to the unconstitutional assumptions of power by the synod, and memorialized the General Assembly. And after years of patient endurance, without obtaining redress, McGready and Hodge submitted to the synod; while Ewing, King, and McAdoo constituted the first presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

McGee declined to unite with them in the constitution of the independent presbytery, because he was then engaged in an earnest investigation of the doctrines of the Bible, to satisfy himself of the truth of a medium system of theology between Calvinism and Arminianism. And so soon as he had harmonized a system, which was neither Calvinistic nor Arminian, he joined the newly organized presbytery.

All of the Presbyterian churches in the Cumber-

land country sympathized with the revival party; and when the Cumberland Presbytery was organized, all, except Hodge's church, at Shiloh, Craighead's, at Nashville and Haysboro, and Donnell's, on Spring Creek, recognized the jurisdiction of the new presbytery. Though McGready returned to the Presbyterian Church, he could not take his flock with him. The churches in which the revival had its origin were among the first to recognize the jurisdiction of Cumberland Presbytery; and to this day Gasper and Red River churches are flourishing, with all their early partiality for revival measures.

Though the pastor of the Spring Creek church, and a few of the more formal members, were opposed to revival measures, the body of the church, especially the younger members, all of whom had professed in the revival, were its advocates; and they were not backward in manifesting their preference for the revival ministers. The pastor was careful to secure the aid at his sacramental-meetings of some of his anti-revival brethren, and then the lovers of order were not annoyed with excitement. But occasionally one of the revival ministers would come up unbidden; and then the anxiety to hear him would be so great as to constrain the pastor to invite him to preach. And then his preaching would be attended with such heavenly unction and power as to cause some good Christians to break the prescribed rules of order, and shout for joy; while poor stricken sinners

would be so pressed as to cry aloud for mercy. Such disorder was very annoying to the orthodox pastor and his formal members, and they finally resolved to protect themselves against it, by refusing permission to the revival ministers to preach in the church. Thus deprived of the occasional gratification of a spiritual sermon, the revival party in the church withdrew, and organized a separate church, a few miles distant, and invited the services of the revival ministers.

This secession of a large part of his flock rendered the pastor more hostile than ever. It was annoying to have "these enthusiasts" to call occasionally and preach their "wildfire" in his church; but they had now drawn off half of his flock, and secured a permanent organization within the limits of his congregation, where his people would be constantly exposed to their seductive influences. And to those who were familiar with the manner of his preaching, the danger would appear imminent; for however logical his discourses may have been, his delivery was so monotonous and spiritless, as to have gained for him the sobriquet of "Uncle Sammy Dry." On the other hand, the revival ministers generally, and especially his cousin, Robert Donnell, then a boy in the ministry, preached with an unction and subduing pathos which captivated and overcame all who heard without prejudice.

George Donnell, Senior, resided near the old church, and being one of the elders, he continued his membership there, notwithstanding his sym-

pathies were with the revival party, as manifested by his frequent attendance at the new church. It was in the old church, then, and under the ministry of his uncle Samuel, that the subject of the biography, Rev. George Donnell, passed his boyhood and youthful days.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## YOUTH AND CONVERSION OF GEORGE DONNELL.

HOWEVER distinguished at maturity, no man is celebrated at his birth: each works out his distinction. Usually, celebrity is the fruit of long years of toil and conflict with the stern duties of life, realized only at mature manhood or in advanced age. But if we could trace the history of mind as God sees it, doubtless we should often find the foundation of after distinction laid in early youth. But the means of tracing the successive steps by which mind ascends to eminence are usually wanting; we can seldom do more than note the development of those peculiar traits of character which lead to distinction.

Such is the case in relation to Rev. George Donnell. Though a distinguished preacher in his day, there was nothing remarkable in early life, foreshadowing his future celebrity: of his boyhood and youth but little is known. His parents were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, pious, and warmly attached to the doctrines and usages of the Church. Both received their education and religious training under Dr. Caldwell, of Carolina. They were plain, unpre-

tending, and very domestic in their habits of life, more solicitous to raise their children in the fear of God than to gain for them the admiration and applause of the world. Being in moderate circumstances, they trained all their children to habits of industry and economy. Much care was bestowed upon their religious education. They were gathered, morning and evening, around the family altar, a portion of Scripture was read, a hymn sung, and a prayer offered for daily blessings and constant guidance and protection. At an early age, the children were taken to church, and the Sabbath evening was spent in catechizing them upon the sermon and the Scriptures. So soon as a child had learned to read, if not sooner, it was required to begin the labor of committing the catechism, and this was prosecuted every Sabbath, till the whole was so fixed in the memory, that the child could begin at the first and go through without prompting.

George was the third son and the seventh child of the family. The oldest son, after he attained to manhood, studied medicine, and bade fair to become eminent in his profession; but while he healed others, he could not heal himself—he died in early manhood. The second son died in his youth, leaving George the oldest surviving son of the family.

When only six years of age, he sustained an irreparable loss, in the death of his amiable and fond mother. Naturally affectionate and susceptible, he

realized his great loss, and, for a time, was inconsolable. Thus early deprived of a mother's affection, and her earnest, subduing prayers, George's religious training devolved, for a time, wholly upon the father. Of course, it was not so influential as if the mother had shared the responsibility; but he received much religious instruction, and was the subject of many prayers.

Two years after this bereavement, his father married a second wife, and George again had a mother. But he never forgot his first love—the cherished image of his own dear mother lived in his heart. Though he rendered respect and obedience to his step-mother, she never gained the place in his affections held by his own beloved mother, and consequently she never could exercise the same restraining influence over him.

Sprightly, inventive, ardent, George was not likely to be idle, or uninfluenced by those around him. Affectionate and obliging, he became the idol of the family, and the centre of a wide circle of associates. A younger brother, the child of his own sainted mother, was his inseparable companion and constant charge. Dearly as he loved him, and vigilant as he was to shield him from all harm, with his own hands he inflicted a wound which was a source of regret while he lived.

In one of his boyish plays, he was conducting a sham Indian fight, when he charged upon his little brother, and shot off his pop-gun. Unfortunately, the wad struck the little fellow in the eye, and

injured the sight. George bitterly repented his rashness, tenderly sympathized with the little sufferer, and a thousand times assured him of his sorrow. But neither tears nor regrets could restore vision to the injured eye—it remains a witness of the thoughtlessness of boyhood. Whatever atonement a thousand kind offices and the warmest affection of a brother's heart could make, David has received and reciprocated. The injured eye seems to have been, through life, the occasion of a peculiar attachment.

In the school of his uncle, Samuel Donnell, George made rapid progress in the acquisition of the rudiments of an English education. But he gained quite as much distinction on the playground as in the school-room. Prominent in every sport, expert at every game, full of hilarity, humor, and wit, ever pleasant and affectionate, he was the favorite of all his companions. One of his school-mates, who knew him well, and loved him as a brother, says: "George was a warm-hearted, manly, honorable boy, mischievous and wild, but he never did a mean thing, was never profane, and always abhorred a lie."\*

On the farm, he was industrious, ingenious, and skilful in the use of tools, both in repairing and constructing the implements of husbandry and the fixtures on the farm. He was faithful in business, and careful of the interests of the family, and in

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\* Foster Doake, Esq.

various ways rendered himself an almost indispensable aid to his father, in conducting the farm and managing the hands. Consequently, he was kept at home during the farming season, and sent to school during the winter.

As he advanced in years, he became the ruling spirit among the youth of the neighborhood. Though free from every species of dissipation, yet, full of humor and mischief, he was ever ready to lead off in any sport or frolic that promised amusement.

As George had exhibited mechanical skill and genius, and as he was of slender frame, and his health rather feeble, his father thought that a trade would suit him better than farming. At that day, the trades of the country were few and simple, such only as ministered to the necessities of society; the carpenter, the blacksmith, the joiner, the shoemaker, the hatter, the millwright, and the wheelwright, were the principal. As all classes, at that day, manufactured their clothing at home, each family was compelled to have at least two wheels—one for cotton and wool, and another for flax—while many had a half dozen or more. The wheel-making was a thriving trade, and it required no heavy or disagreeable labor. It was therefore selected as the most suitable trade for George. Accordingly, at the age of seventeen, he was placed with Mr. Elihu Bone, who had a shop in the neighborhood.

During his stay here, he received his first abiding religious impressions. What circumstances

awakened conviction is not known. He has left no memoranda of his religious experience, and all that the surviving members of the family recollect is, that after he had been with Mr. Bone about a year, he came home in feeble health, and in a dejected and desponding state of mind, and asked permission to quit the trade, as he thought it was injuring his health. His request was granted, and he remained at home. As his health was feeble, he was not put to any regular business, but spent his time chiefly in reading, and in gloomy meditation. His former hilarity, humor, and mischief, had given place to thoughtfulness, melancholy, and despondency. He read the Bible, prayed much, and attended upon the public means of grace, but his convictions of sin gathered strength daily. Months wore away in deep gloom and despondency. Weighed down with a sense of guilt and condemnation, such was the anguish of his soul, that he became incapable of attending to business, and fears were entertained lest his mind should be impaired. Wan, emaciated, and desponding, "the arrows of the Almighty seemed to be drinking up the life of his spirit."

Had his pastor, Rev. Samuel Donnell, been as familiar with the workings of mind when under pungent conviction as he was with the doctrines of the Calvinistic creed, and had he been as intent upon leading mourners to Christ as he was in teaching the Catechism, he would have discovered the seat of poor George's disease, and would have

administered the promises of the gospel with a faith and suaveness that would have led him to the Saviour. But George had been a wild boy, and perhaps the old man did not regard him as one of the "elect." Be that as it may, George was left to mourn in solitude, until he obtained permission to attend a Cumberland Presbyterian camp-meeting, held at Sugg's Creek, in Wilson county. Here he presented himself among the mourners on Saturday night, and from that hour until about ten o'clock Sunday night, he was in great agony. But a sympathizing friend spoke encouragingly of Jesus, and gently led him, "by a way he had not known," to the foot of the cross, then bade him look and live. He was enabled, by the grace of God, "to lay hold upon the hope set before him," and, in believing in Jesus as his Saviour, to realize remission of sins and peace with God. And O, such peace! "It was sweeter than life, and stronger than death."

The height of his joy was proportionate to the depth of his despair. His convictions had been agonizing—his transport was rapturous; darkness had long enveloped his mind—the light of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus, shone upon his heart. Though prostrate upon the ground, he seemed to be at the very gate of heaven.\*

The camp-meeting at which he experienced regeneration was held in August, 1819; consequently, George had just completed his eighteenth year.

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\* Rev. Thomas Calhoun.

He returned home so buoyant in spirit, and with such an expression of heavenly serenity in his countenance, that all knew, on sight, that he had experienced a great and salutary change. His friends no longer feared derangement. He discoursed of Jesus with the familiarity of a mature saint, and with the sweetness and rapture of a seraph. To his late companions in sin, his appeals were so tender and earnest, as to subdue the most obdurate and resolute.\*

Among the youth of the neighborhood, George had been a leader in all manner of innocent mischief, and with them he had acquired a character for the originality of his inventions, and for tact and shrewdness in executing his plans. In jest and joke, wit and humor, anecdote and comic song, he had no equal. This faculty for fun had made him the favorite of all; but when he put on Christ, this was a snare to him: he was sorely tempted to indulge his propensity to humor, and often did his companions endeavor to entice him away from his sobriety. But grace triumphed. Abiding, anxious solicitude for the souls of those he loved, restrained his proclivity toward the humorous, and prompted many a touching and subduing appeal to the hearts of his associates.

Believing that Cumberland Presbyterians had been instrumental in his conversion, approving their doctrines, and recognizing in them a spirit

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\* Thomas Bell.

congenial with his own, he asked and obtained the consent of his father to join the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He applied and was received into the communion of the Bethesda church, the same that had been formed by the revival party which withdrew from the Spring Creek church. Having publicly professed Christ, and taken upon himself the obligations of a disciple, he became at once a consistent, active, zealous Christian.

## CHAPTER IX.

## CHRISTIAN LIFE AND LABOR.

SHORTLY after his conversion, George resumed labor on his father's farm. But not forgetting that he owed service to him who had redeemed him from bondage, at the price of blood, he improved every favorable opportunity of religious conversation with his young companions, especially his sister and younger brother. Night meetings during the week were common in the neighborhood. George was a punctual attendant. After the labors of the day, he would ride three and four miles to one of those meetings, and after laboring in the meeting till a late hour, he would then return home, that he might be at his post in the morning, ready for the labor of the day.

When called upon, he would lead in prayer and in singing; and he was ever active, when there were mourners, in giving them personal instructions, and in private conversations with his associates, to induce them to seek salvation. Sometimes, when deeply interested, he would adventure a public exhortation to his youthful companions; and then, such was the earnest wooing of his

spirit, that none but a heart of steel could remain unmoved. Already the winsome manner of his pleading with his young friends began to attract the attention of observant Christians; and the appropriateness of his instructions to mourners, and his singular success in winning them to Christ, became the subject of general remark.

Having passed the winter and spring succeeding his conversion laboring on the farm, during the summer of 1820 he was permitted to attend all the sacramental and camp-meetings within the limits of his acquaintance. At all these meetings he attracted public attention by the fervor and pathos of his prayers, by his peculiar tact in leading the anxious to trust in the Saviour, and by the rapturous spirit of his songs. The following narrative, furnished by Rev. S. M. Aston, will give the reader a better idea of his labors at this period than any description the author could present:

“During the summer of 1820, while attending a camp-meeting held at Moriah camp-ground, Wilson county, the writer (S. M. Aston) first saw George Donnell. As well as he now recollects, it was on Monday of the meeting. A sermon had been preached, and the mourners were invited to the altar for prayer. And as the writer had gone to that meeting to seek religion, he was found among the anxious inquirers for salvation.

“During the progress of the service, his attention was arrested by the appearance of a young man who seemed to be most deeply interested in behalf

of those who were crying for mercy. The warmth of his feelings was unusual, his manner so kind and affectionate—his directions, encouragements, exhortations, and prayers were so appropriate—that notwithstanding the writer was truly anxious to obtain the blessing of God upon his own soul, yet he could but notice that young man, and mark him as one truly skilled in directing sinners to Christ, and as being well qualified to encourage all who might be in any degree discouraged in striving to enter the strait gate.

“The writer was also particularly interested the first time he heard him sing one of the songs of Zion. The song is yet sweet to his ear; and scarcely ever does he read it, or hear it sung, without referring to the time and place where he first heard it. It was that rapturous song:

“‘Sweet rivers of redeeming love  
Lie just before mine eye;  
Had I the pinions of a dove,  
I'd to those rivers fly.  
I'd rise superior to my pain,  
With joy outstrip the wind;  
I'd cross bold Jordan's stormy main,  
And leave the world behind.’

Yes, he sang this song with such a full soul, and in a manner that seemed as though the heavenly land was really in his view, and that he was truly anxious to go and realize its blessedness. The writer could but mark him as one destined to that goodly land.

“As yet the interesting young stranger was un-

known to the writer, nor did he during the meeting learn his name. But as the camp-meeting season advanced, he often heard of George Donnell, as a very zealous and promising youth; but formed no personal acquaintance with him till the camp-meeting at the Big Spring. That meeting was one of great interest, as it was the last for the season. And being rather a central point in respect to surrounding churches, many, very many were in attendance; and to the honor of God be it said, many poor sinners found the pearl of price unknown, and will look back from the heavenly land to that meeting, as the time and place of their espousal to Christ. But to return to my narrative.

“When Tuesday morning came, and the people were preparing to leave—some eager to bear home the glad tidings that they had found the Saviour precious to their souls—one young lady seemed as though she could not leave, as she had not obtained the blessing. And it further appeared that if she were willing, her brother (my interesting stranger) would not suffer her; and how could he, when she was not comforted? He prayed for her, talked to her, encouraged her, wept over her, and in every way helped her to Christ. O, it was an interesting moment! The scene is all plainly before my mind, and I fancy I can almost hear the sweet persuasive voice of a brother to his sister, saying, ‘Come to Jesus!’ And when she gave evidence that the Saviour had blessed her soul, her

brother clapped his hands, gave a loud shout, and fell prostrate to the ground, where he lay some time, seemingly overcome with a sense of the goodness of God. He then said he could go home satisfied, now that his sister had found the Saviour. I then learned that my young stranger was George Donnell."

Such is the testimony of Rev. S. M. Aston as to the efficiency of Donnell's labors at two meetings, Moriah and Big Spring.

Rev. William Smith, who was at this period one of Donnell's associates, and subsequently his co-laborer in the ministry, says of him :

"During the summer of 1820, Brother Donnell labored much among the mourners at the several camp-meetings which I attended. He appeared, even then, to be very successful in leading the inquiring mind to the Saviour; and he seemed also to enjoy much of the real comforts of religion in his own soul."

The testimony of many living witnesses establishes the fact that, during the year 1820, he was very active and persevering in endeavors to influence his companions, and particularly his relatives, to seek religion; also, that his efforts in instructing inquirers were eminently successful. Many over whom he wept burning tears of sympathy, and for whom he travelled in agony of spirit, till "Christ the hope of glory was formed in the soul," have joined him in paradise, and many still live

to testify to his fidelity and zeal in the service of his Master.

The beloved sister for whom he manifested so much solicitude at the Big Spring camp-meeting, was not the only member of the family he won to Christ during the summer of 1820. At the Moriah camp-meeting he shed tears of gratitude and indulged rapturous joy at the conversion of his beloved brother David. This was a source of unspeakable pleasure. When a boy, he had thoughtlessly deprived him of an eye, and then he wept tears of bitterness on account of the irreparable loss; but now he had been instrumental in opening the eyes of his understanding, to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus. And now the two brothers rejoiced together, as though heaven had already been gained. This is the case George had on hand when he first attracted Mr. Aston's attention; it was over him he sang in such seraphic strains that heavenly song:

“Sweet rivers of redeeming love.”

Such was his zeal, and his wonderful aptitude in winning souls to Christ, that public sentiment generally marked him as a promising subject for the ministry. Already the leading traits of the future man were manifested in the youth of nineteen, namely, unusual solicitude for the salvation of souls, incessant efforts for the conversion of sinners, yearning sympathy with the mourner in

all his distress and despondency, untiring zeal and unequalled skill in leading him to Christ, a cordial participation in his joy in the Spirit, and a sweet singer in Israel.

He has left no memorandum concerning the exercises of his mind in relation to a call to the ministry; but as he often conversed with his brethren upon the subject, it is known that he labored under great embarrassment. His father was an elder in the Presbyterian Church, and held the sentiment of that Church, that a classical education is indispensable to a minister of the gospel. George had only a common English education. His father did not oppose his preaching, but insisted that he should first acquire a classical education. George knew that the views of his father were in conflict with the practice of the presbyteries. Such was the demand for preaching, that candidates, after a short probation, were licensed, and immediately placed upon a circuit, to learn to preach by daily practice. And he foresaw that he could not comply with the wishes of his father, and at the same time meet the expectations of presbytery. Then again, the responsibilities of a minister seemed to him overwhelming, and he shrank from the thought of assuming that responsibility, even with thorough preparation. On the other hand, the love of Christ and sympathy for souls constrained him. The conflict was protracted; but after much prayer, and intense mental agony, on the 5th of April, 1821, he appeared before pres-

bytery, then in session at Old Moriah, a few miles distant from the residence of his father. After a simple narration of the exercises of his mind, he was received as a candidate for the ministry, under the care of the Nashville Presbytery.

On the same day presbytery received four other candidates, Samuel M. Aston, Abner W. Lansdon, John Beard, and John Grier. The same day presbytery licensed Robert S. Donnell and Francis Johnston, and ordained John L. Dillard. That was a blessed day for the Church that recorded the reception of Donnell, Aston, Lansdon, and Beard, the licensure of R. S. Donnell, and the ordination of J. L. Dillard. How seldom do presbyteries of the present day exhibit such a record! And why do they not? Because they do not pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers, as our fathers did. At the time Donnell joined, when presbytery was about to afford an opportunity for candidates to present themselves, Rev. Thomas Calhoun rose and delivered a most pungent address upon a call to the ministry, at the same time setting forth in strong terms the wants of the Church, and the perishing condition of the world, destitute of the bread of life. During this address the members of presbytery were in tears and an agony of prayer; the whole congregation was convulsed; and the result was that *eight* youths presented themselves to converse with the presbytery, five of whom were at that time received, and the others subsequently. If we at this day would pray the Lord to impress

young men, and if we would often preach upon a call to the ministry, the Church would be better supplied with ministers, and probationers would recognize through life the solemn responsibilities of the sacred office.

Having been received as a candidate for the holy ministry, George felt that he must be about his Master's work. As Francis Johnston, who was licensed in the morning, made an appointment to preach that night, Donnell accompanied him, and at the close of the sermon he delivered a most pathetic exhortation to the young men in the congregation, and then called mourners. Many came, and general interest prevailed in the congregation. During the progress of the exercises, Donnell, impressed with the conviction that there was a want of faith in the Church, and impelled by his solicitude for the mourners, arose to encourage Christians to the exercise of more faith. With this view, he drew a picture of the Prophet Elijah praying for rain. While the old prophet prayed, he sent his servant toward the sea, to look out for the appearance of a cloud. The servant returned, and reported no cloud in view. Elijah prayed again, but still no cloud appeared. The prayer was six times repeated without signs of rain. The venerable prophet, loath to give up in despair, was represented as reverently bowing himself to the ground the seventh time, and pouring out his full soul before God in fervent, faithful, *prevailing* prayer. The servant reported a cloud in the dis-

tance, as large as a man's hand. The old prophet rose up calm and serene, confidently awaiting an answer from God. The cloud gathered, advanced, and poured down in torrents a most copious rain.

Mr. Aston says the representation electrified the congregation. "Though thirty years have now elapsed, the whole scene is most vividly before my mind: the effect upon the audience was most thrilling and impressive. Such exhibitions soon evinced to the Church that Donnell was destined to be a ready, moving, and successful minister of the gospel."

## CHAPTER X.

## HIS LABORS WHILE A CANDIDATE.

HAVING been received under the care of presbytery, George was placed at school with his uncle, Rev. Samuel Donnell, of the Presbyterian Church, not with any expectation of acquiring a classical education, but to study those branches of science required by the Discipline of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. In this school he studied English Grammar, Geography, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Astronomy, Rhetoric, and Logic. This was a limited course, as compared with that of the present day. But if the course was limited, more labor was bestowed upon each branch than is bestowed upon those branches now. And those who direct the education of youth should never lose sight of the fact, that a few branches thoroughly studied do more to develop and strengthen the intellectual powers than an extended course superficially studied.

George Donnell did not, as too many of our college students do, postpone efforts to do good until he acquired his education, but during his stay at school he was active in the field, so far as opportunity admitted. He rightly judged that the study

of science would not make him a practical preacher. He proceeded upon the common maxim that practice alone can give efficiency and skill. And then higher considerations than that of self-improvement urged him into the field: the worth of souls and the danger of delay pressed upon his spirit. His warm sympathy went out after many a youthful companion still living in sin, without hope and without God. The idea of postponing a warning to such, until he should finish his education, was, to his mind, cruel and wicked. He conferred not with flesh and blood, but resolved to do his duty, to follow the dictates of conscience and the promptings of his sympathetic heart.

During the summer of 1821, and while at school, he had appointments for prayer-meeting one or more nights in every week. Rev. William Smith says: "He made many appointments that were near enough for me to attend, at which meetings he would exhort, and frequently call mourners, then pray with and for them; and sometimes, when the interest seemed to justify it, he would continue the meeting till a late hour of the night." Rev. S. Y. Thomas says: "From the time Donnell joined presbytery, he was the most zealous and successful laborer with mourners I ever saw. He manifested great concern for his associates, exerted great influence over them, and labored most faithfully for their conversion."

Rev. S. M. Aston says: "During the summer of 1821, I attended a camp-meeting on Fall Creek,

where *Little George*, as he was usually called, distinguished himself in exhortation, prayer, and other camp-meeting exercises, winning for himself unfading laurels for a young soldier in the service of Jesus Christ, and inducing sinners to forsake the ranks of Satan, and enlist under the banner of their lawful Sovereign. There was so much of the spirit of Christ in his exhortations, prayers, and singing, that the influence was always impressive."

In September, 1821, George Donnell, S. M. Aston, and other candidates for the ministry, accompanied Rev. Robert Guthrie, John Provine, and James McDonald, to the Mountain district, to aid them in the camp-meetings on the Overton Circuit. "There it was," says Aston, "that an intimate acquaintance between Brother Donnell and myself began, which enkindled love like that which bound together the hearts of David and Jonathan, and which increased as our acquaintance advanced. Brother Donnell being a more experienced Christian than myself, was put forward with more confidence. And soon did he win the favor of the people, and demonstrate, by repeated exhibitions, that he was destined to be a burning and a shining light in the Church."

As there were but three preachers in the company, and they were all aged men, much of the labor of the meetings devolved upon the candidates. For the singing, exhortations, prayers, and instructing of the mourners, they were held responsible. And as it was the custom at that day to have a service before breakfast every morning, that exercise

devolved upon them. Aston says: "Brother Donnell usually held the morning meeting, and assisted in the services of the evening; and whenever, by day or night, exhortation was needed, to give interest to the exercises, he was ready in spirit and at his post. He faltered not, nor grew weary in the duties of singing, exhortation, and prayer. He was emphatically a laboring man in the cause of his Master. Would to God we had many such candidates in these days as was Donnell, who felt that he was called of God to labor for the good of souls, that he had no time for ease or gallantry, while one poor sinner cried to God for mercy."

It was the custom of that day to commence a camp-meeting on Friday, and close it invariably on the following Tuesday. Time was thus afforded to the preachers to recruit their wasted energies by repose and social intercourse. But this recreation, however necessary, was denied to Donnell and Aston. The time for the fall session of presbytery was approaching, and their discourses were not prepared. The leisure day or two, in the middle of each week, that should have been given to repose and recreation, had to be employed in preparing their discourses to be read in presbytery. It was not with them, as with some modern candidates, a hurried preparation, intended as a formal compliance with the requisition of presbytery, without any appreciation of its importance, or any expectation of solid improvement thereby. They regarded the exercise as a *real test* of their abilities

and pretensions to the ministry. They therefore labored to do their best; they read, and studied, and prayed, and wrote and re-wrote their pieces several times, and then they carefully compared what they had written with the Scriptures and the Confession of Faith; and even then, such was their sense of the responsibilities devolving upon a candidate for the holy ministry, and such their distrust of their abilities, that it was with great hesitancy and misgiving that they could bring themselves to submit their poor productions to the scrutiny of the presbytery.

But when Donnell had read his first discourse to the presbytery, prepared as it was by piecemeal while in the mountains, it was manifest to all that he possessed a mind of a fine mould. The composition indicated discrimination and judgment in treating the subject, and great facility in communicating his thoughts with perspicuity and point. The style was so perfectly natural, so free from all affectation or studied modes of expression, as to give the discourse, when read, the semblance of a spontaneous effusion, rather than the recital of a carefully prepared treatise. The subject of the discourse gave occasion for an appeal to his irreligious friends, and with such pathos did he pour forth the sympathies of his soul as to move the whole audience to tears. From that moment the presbytery regarded George Donnell as destined to be a suasive advocate for Christ; and those who, in after years, have hung upon his melting strains of love

till their hearts were dissolved, can testify that the anticipations of the presbytery were more than realized.

This discourse was read to presbytery at Big Spring church, in October, 1821. At this session William Smith was received as a candidate for the ministry. At the close of the presbytery, Smith accompanied Donnell to an appointment at Alexander Foster's, near Bethesda church. Many of Donnell's relatives and youthful associates were present. He addressed them with a yearning solicitude for their souls which they could not resist, and several vowed that night to seek the Saviour.

The following winter was passed in the school of his uncle, Samuel Donnell, prosecuting the study of the sciences. Though much interested and occupied with his studies, he did not forget his obligations to Him that had bought him, nor abate his zeal for souls. He had appointments for night meetings every week, conversions were common, and general seriousness prevailed. As his appointments were in different neighborhoods, the religious interest was extended, and a wide field was thus cultivated while he was in school, many souls saved, and many stars planted in his crown.

In March, 1822, presbytery met at Stoner's Creek church, when he read his second discourse, which was so satisfactory that presbytery was disposed to license him, and place him on a circuit. But anxious as he was to be warning sinners, and preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, he was reluctant to

abandon his studies, as he must do if placed upon a circuit. Presbytery therefore consented that he might remain at school one session longer. Aston was licensed and placed upon the Overton Circuit, to coöperate with Robert S. Donnell. George returned to his studies and his evening appointments.

Had the presbyteries allowed their probationers to remain at school after licensure, many of them might have acquired a liberal education, and, with the zeal of a Donnell, they might have been instrumental in the conversion of scores of souls, while prosecuting their studies. But the Church was expanding so rapidly, and the field of labor so enlarged, that presbyteries were constrained, in order to meet the growing demand for preaching, to place their probationers upon the circuit, where they were compelled to preach every day, in order to get around the circuit once a month. Such incessant labor in the pulpit left no time for literary studies. Licensure was therefore regarded as the termination of all literary pursuits, and the commencement of incessant labor.

In the fall of 1821, Cumberland Synod divided Nashville Presbytery, and ordered a new presbytery to be constituted out of the eastern section, to be known as Lebanon Presbytery. Shortly after the adjournment of the Nashville Presbytery, in the spring of 1822, the ministers within the territory to be embraced in the new presbytery assembled at Big Spring church and constituted the Lebanon Presbytery. The ministers were Thomas Calhoon,

Samuel McSpadden, John L. Dillard, John Province, and James McDonald. The territory embraced portions of Sumner, Wilson, and Rutherford counties, and the whole of Smith, Warren, White, Jackson, Overton, and Fentress counties. Five ministers and a few licentiates and candidates were responsible for the cultivation of a territory seventy-five miles in breadth, and more than one hundred in length, with an indefinite extension eastward.

But in the primitive days of our infant Church, the presbyteries necessarily embraced a wide extent of territory. The original Cumberland Presbytery, at its organization in 1810, included all the Presbyterian churches in the Cumberland country which had embraced the views and sought the ministration of the revival party. Hence, that presbytery embraced the southern portion of Kentucky and all Middle Tennessee. Three years after its organization, this territory was divided into three sections, and two new presbyteries were constituted—Logan, embracing the revival churches in Kentucky, and Elk, embracing the southern counties in Tennessee. And when these presbyteries constituted a synod, in 1813, the name of the original presbytery was changed from Cumberland to that of Nashville Presbytery. Each of these presbyteries enlarged their bounds as they extended their operations and planted new churches. Lebanon Presbytery was the first organized by the extension of the Nashville Presbytery.

The first regular session of Lebanon Presbytery

was held at Bethesda church in October, 1822. As George Donnell resided within its bounds, he fell under its jurisdiction. His third discourse was therefore read to this presbytery during its session at Bethesda. It was sustained as popular, and he was regularly licensed to preach the gospel, and ordered to the Lebanon Circuit, to coöperate with Robert Baker, who had been licensed by the Nashville Presbytery, previous to the organization of the Lebanon Presbytery.

## CHAPTER XI.

## MISSIONARY LABORS ON THE CIRCUIT.

THE Lebanon Circuit, upon which Donnell was placed, extended through Sumner, Wilson, Rutherford, and Smith counties. It included about thirty appointments, which had to be met once in every four weeks. Mr. Baker, who was on the same circuit, preceded Donnell about two weeks. Though travelling the same circuit, and preaching at the same places, they seldom met: each had his own appointments, for which he alone was responsible.

Mr. Baker was a most amiable man, an humble, devout Christian, and a persuasive, eloquent preacher, and could Mr. Donnell have enjoyed his society, it would have been a great advantage as well as a great satisfaction to him. But this privilege was denied him. It was the custom, however, to grant each licentiate the privilege of taking with him a candidate for the ministry; and if at any time the circuit-rider was unable to fill his appointment, the candidate held meeting as best he could. Donnell was attended by Samuel Y. Thomas, and to him we are indebted for any definite information respecting Donnell's first efforts in the ministry.

He says: "Donnell prepared his sermons in the woods, the Bible being almost the only book he used. He read, and studied, and prayed in the woods, till the hour for preaching arrived. One thing is worthy of remark: I never knew him to enter the pulpit to preach without going directly from secret prayer; and to this I attribute his great success in preaching."

As his discourses were chiefly drawn directly from that pure fountain of truth, the Bible, they were characterized by great simplicity of composition and style. His manner of delivery was peculiar to himself. Oppressed with the solemn responsibility of an ambassador for Christ, he was humbled under a sense of his unworthiness; inspired with an unusual measure of the sympathy of the cross, he yearned for souls, as Jesus wept over Jerusalem. Consequently, deep humility, great earnestness, and winning affection for souls, marked his delivery.

But when the melting strains of dying love failed to win and subdue the heart, he knew how to be pungent and withering, in warning the sinner of his doom, and imploring him to heed the calls of mercy, pleading with him with the moving pathos of one pleading for the life of his own soul. He never preached for applause, never made an effort at display, never seemed to conciliate the favor of man, but, always intent upon saving souls, he preached as though he expected himself and his audience to pass directly from that service to the judgment-seat of Christ. Though not lauded as

an orator, his preaching was resistless—none could hear him unmoved. Interest was awakened wherever he preached: all around the circuit, Christians were revived, and the unregenerate were yielding to their convictions. At almost every appointment, mourners came to the altar of prayer, and not unfrequently it was his privilege to participate in the joy of new-born souls, which to him was the most exquisite pleasure of life.

Such had been his activity in the service of his Master, from the hour that he experienced the joys of salvation, and such his untiring zeal in addressing his youthful companions in public and private exhortations, in the school, and at his night meetings, that when he entered upon his circuit, he had more experience and skill in addressing himself to the heart and the conscience, than some ministers acquire in a whole lifetime of formal pulpit services; and when he commenced preaching, all were astonished to observe with what facility and directness he wound himself into the hearts of his audience. Had they witnessed with what agony of soul he toiled night after night, toiled till a late hour, for the conversion of his associates, while at school, half of the mystery would have been dissolved. Let candidates for the ministry learn that indolence and indifference may fill the pulpit with prosing sermonizers, but never can make efficient ministers of Jesus Christ.

The success attending his labors is remarkable. A youth in years, limited in attainments, clad in

homespun, diffident to a fault, without reputation, he went forth among strangers an unpretending, simple-minded circuit-rider. Infidels curled the lip of scorn, and fops wagged the head, but wherever "Little George" told the simple story of the cross, in his own peculiar and tender style, the hearts of the people were subdued; and though he provoked no loud applause, yet he won the affections of all. No man could hear him once without desiring to hear him again, and though opposed to religion, and cherishing contempt for its ministers, yet he loved and respected Donnell. And when once he had gained the heart to himself, he seldom failed to lead it to Christ. His first six months' labor on the circuit brought many souls to Jesus, and planted many a gem in his crown.

It would be difficult for the self-indulgent, pleasure-loving circuit-rider of the present day to form any just conceptions of the exhausting labors and crushing responsibilities of the self-denying, humble-minded missionary of that day. A youth with limited attainments, and without experience, was required to preach every day, and then ride from ten to twenty miles to his next appointment; and whenever the interest seemed to call for it, he was expected to preach at night also, and then labor with the mourners till a late hour. Sometimes the interest would be so general that he would desire very much to remain, and encourage disconsolate mourners, but he was compelled to hasten on to the next appointment.

But Mr. Aston says: "Though the life of the circuit-rider was laborious, yet was it truly pleasant, for the Lord was with us in those days: generally, on some part of the circuit, there was a revival in progress, sinners were inquiring the way of salvation, happy converts were rejoicing in the glorious hope of the gospel, while Christians were striving together for the conversion of their children and friends. This religious interest kept the preacher from becoming formal or lukewarm, and from worldly-mindedness and vanity. In a word, it was sweet and pleasant labor. Ministers of that day can with propriety sing:

'What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!  
How sweet their memory still!'

How many there are even now, in the middle of the nineteenth century, who call to mind the former times, and then adopt the prophet's prayer, 'O Lord, renew our days as of old!'

The first six months of labor on the circuit having closed, Donnell and the other missionaries returned to enjoy a happy reunion at presbytery, which convened at Smith's Fork church, in April, 1823. Reports of revivals and general prosperity came up from all the circuits, but the report from Lebanon Circuit, where Baker and Donnell labored, elicited the deepest interest. Robert Baker was ordained and sent as a missionary to East Tennessee; Robert S. Donnell retired from the missionary field and became local; George Donnell was placed upon the Overton Circuit, Aston upon the Lebanon, and

Lansdon was sent to a new circuit in Sequachee valley, a romantic vale, nearly a hundred miles in length, with an average width of not more than four miles, lying between two ranges of Cumberland Mountain.

After a few days of repose and social intercourse with friends at home, the missionaries repaired to their respective fields of labor. The Overton Circuit included those counties lying on the first bench of the mountain—Warren, White, Jackson, Overton, and Fentress. It was a new field to Donnell, but a good report of his zeal had gone before him, and wherever he went he met a most cordial welcome. Encouraged by his kind reception, he commenced his labors in faith, and soon he witnessed the fruit thereof. Mr. Aston says: “He had many precious revivals on his circuit, and many souls were added unto the Lord. It was truly a season of triumph to the cause of Christ, through his instrumentality. When he would leave his circuit to attend a camp-meeting, it was manifest to the brethren present that he was growing strong in the Lord, and truly skilful in his work. There are many who, even at this day, will remember his sermon on the new birth, founded on the words, ‘How can these things be?’ and another discourse, founded on the words, ‘Thy kingdom come.’ His manner convinced all that he was in solemn earnest, and that he preached in full view of his fearful accountability to God.”

Mr. Aston says again: “His preaching was not

with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. O, there was a power that reached the hearts of the people! And perhaps no man ever labored among the people of the Mountain district with more success, or with more universal approbation, than did Brother Donnell."

Such is the testimony of one who had "personal knowledge of the facts," having exchanged a round on the circuit with Donnell toward the close of the term, and witnessed the result of his labors. When one so competent to judge, bears such testimony to his efficiency, in less than one year after his licensure, it must be admitted that he possessed more than ordinary talent for usefulness.

It is remarkable that one with so little experience should, in so short a time, acquire such power of speech and such reputation. And if we would seek an explanation, we will not find that he bestowed any attention upon the study or practice of elocution, but the secret of his power and influence lies in the cultivation of a devotional spirit, of intense sympathy, and an overwhelming sense of responsibility. Rev. William Smith, his associate in youth and his co-laborer in the ministry, says: "When he was going to preach, and felt his subject, as he usually did, it seemed to affect him all over. The awful power and presence of God which he appeared to realize, together with the weight and worth of souls, seemed so to affect him that his hands, even in warm weather, felt *cold*, and I have heard an elder remark that he could always tell

when Donnell was going to preach, by shaking hands with him—his hand would feel so cold.”

The explanation of the cold hand is, that the mind worked so intensely as to lay the whole body under contribution, and cause a flow of blood from the extremities to the brain; and if the elder had felt his head, he would have found it warm in the same degree that the hand was cold. Nor was the mind thus intensely wrought up with the matter and form of the sermon, but the pangs of Zion were upon him: he travailed for souls, his spirit was in an agony, and hence it was that his preaching was as resistless as the wooings of the Spirit of Christ.

Having fulfilled the term of his appointment upon the Overton Circuit, Mr. Donnell returned to meet the presbytery at its fall session, which was held at Providence church. He enjoyed a pleasant reunion with his fellow-laborers, the young missionaries who, like himself, had just completed another six months of incessant labor, and had come up to presbytery to make their reports and receive appointments for the future. He also met many of his old friends of the Lebanon Circuit. Presbytery, in those days, was the circuit-rider's jubilee. He rested from his labors for a few days, and this to him was grateful repose. He renewed his acquaintance with many endeared to him by former associations, and received the advice and counsel of his fathers in the ministry, and, if he had been faithful, their cordial approval; if unfaithful, their kind admonitions.

At this session, October, 1823, presbytery licensed William Smith, Hugh R. Smith, A. M. Young, John M. Grier, and Robert Randolph. Mr. Donnell was reappointed to the Overton Circuit, and A. M. Young was ordered to coöperate with him. Robert Baker and A. W. Lansdon were sent as missionaries to East Tennessee, William Smith was placed upon the Sequachee Circuit, and S. M. Aston upon the Lebanon Circuit.

After spending a few days at home, interchanging salutations and hearty greetings with the companions of his youth, Mr. Donnell returned to the Mountain district. His circuit friends were delighted that presbytery had been so considerate as to send them their favorite preacher, and expressed their gratification by most cordial welcomes. He entered at once upon his labors, encouraged by the approbation of the people and the presbytery, the "answer of a good conscience," and the smiles of his Saviour, in whose service he would willingly have sacrificed, if need be, life itself.

Having a companion in labor, A. M. Young, they were enabled to enlarge the field of operation, and afford additional services at some of the more important stations already occupied. Though it was the winter term, and many of the "meeting-houses" were open and uncomfortable, yet the fire of pure religion kept the preacher and the congregation warm and comfortable. There are those yet living in the mountains who love to tell, with tears of delight, of the "good meetings" which "Little

George" had on dreary winter days and dismal cold nights. The revival spirit which had been awakened during the preceding summer and fall was kept up during the winter, and at almost every meeting mourners were called to receive the prayers and instructions of the church; and often the circuit appointment, though it were in an open log-house or a private dwelling, became the scene of great rejoicing over some soul for whom the faithful little band had often prayed; and many a stout-hearted mountaineer, who had bravely withstood the heavy artillery of the camp-meeting, had the mortification of acknowledging himself overpowered by the small-arms of "Little George," and constrained to yield himself up a prisoner of hope.

With the opening spring came another session of presbytery, and another reünion of the missionaries. All gave encouraging accounts of the progress of the good work on their respective circuits, but none so encouraging as the report of Donnell and his fellow-laborer, A. M. Young: the fire still burned in the mountains.

The presbytery convened in the spring of 1824 at Smyrna church, in Jackson county. Samuel Y. Thomas was licensed, and, as usual, changes were made in the appointments of the missionaries. Brother Baker's health was impaired by the exposure and toil of the East Tennessee mission, and he was placed upon the Lebanon Circuit, A. M. Young upon the Overton, William Smith upon the Sequa-

chee, and Donnell and Aston were sent to East Tennessee.

Though it was an unequivocal expression of more than ordinary confidence in the abilities and prudence of the young licentiates, Donnell and Aston, to confide to them the important interests of the East Tennessee mission, and though they may have felt themselves flattered by the appointment, yet it was a sore trial. Lebanon and Overton circuits had been not only their field of labor, but their home, since the day they were licensed. Beyond this field they were unknown, without character, without friends or even acquaintance: within this field they could number friends by the thousand. All the endearing recollections of life bound them to this field: here were their homes and the companions of their school-days; here the scenes and associations of early Christian life and love, raptures and transports; here the theatre of their labors of love, and here were their spiritual children. All these endearments they were called to leave, for a distant field where all were strangers, and many cherished strong prejudices against the denomination they were to represent.

But if the young missionaries were reluctant to leave the scenes of their early labors, the people were yet more unwilling to give them up. Some looked upon them as their spiritual fathers and guides, others had often entertained them in their families, and strong personal attachments had been

formed, and all loved them for their devotion to the work of the ministry.

Mr. Aston says of Donnell's labors on the Overton Circuit, and the attachment of the people: "He had seals to his ministry that year, and when he left the circuit for a new field, many eyes wept and many hearts bled, when the thought entered their minds that they might see his face no more. Many fervent prayers followed him to the field to which his Master called him."

## CHAPTER XII.

## MISSIONARY LABORS IN EAST TENNESSEE.

THE eastern division of the State is separated from the Valley of the Cumberland by the Cumberland Mountains, a high table-land stretching across the State from north to south, varying in breadth from forty to seventy-five miles. This region was, at the time missionaries were first sent to East Tennessee, wholly destitute of inhabitants, with the exception of a solitary mountaineer here and there along the public roads.

The valley of the Tennessee lies between the Cumberland and Alleghany Mountains. Though not so fertile as the valley of the Cumberland, it is one of the most lovely and desirable regions in the United States. As it is contiguous to Virginia and North Carolina, it was settled twenty years prior to the settlement of the Cumberland valley. The pioneers into this inviting region were chiefly Scotch-Irish from the Presbyterian churches in Virginia and North Carolina. Rev. Samuel Doak was the first minister of the gospel who made a permanent settlement in East Tennessee. He came from Virginia, and settled on

the Holston, in 1777. Subsequently he removed to Washington county, and established a school, which was chartered by the Legislature of North Carolina in 1788, under the name of "Martin Academy," which was subsequently changed to "Washington College." This is the oldest literary institution west of the Alleghanies.

The next minister that settled in the country was Rev. Samuel Carrick. He organized the first Presbyterian Church at Knoxville, and established Blount College, now known as East Tennessee University, which was the second institution established in Tennessee.

These two ministers, and the institutions they founded, gave tone and caste to the morals and religion of East Tennessee. The decided and persistent advocates of education and staid piety, they devoted their lives to the cultivation of the mind and the heart, and they have left their impress upon society. Both were what was then called "Old Side" Presbyterians, strict Calvinists, and devoted to the creed. Mr. Foote says of Doak, "He was a rigid opposer of all innovation in religious tenets; very old-school in all his notions and actions; uncompromising in his love of the truth, and his hostility to error and heresy." Mr. Carrick is represented as more tolerant, urbane, and courteous.

The churches planted by these men and their co-laborers, Cummings, Balch, Crawford, Henderson, and Blackburn, were strenuous for the Cal-

vinistic system and a strict morality, but adverse to all "new measures." As early as 1796, Mr. McGready, when on his journey to Kentucky, spent some time in East Tennessee. Leaving his family with Colonel Francis A. Ramsay, an elder of the Knoxville church, he visited the churches in the region, and sowed some good seed which, years afterward, brought much fruit.

After he settled in Kentucky, he kept up a regular correspondence with Colonel Ramsay; and while the great revival of 1800 was prevailing in that State and West Tennessee, he wrote him glowing descriptions of the strange work, and kept him informed as to its progress. And as those returning from the Cumberland country to North Carolina passed through East Tennessee, and usually made some stay there, the revival spirit extended into that section in 1801. But it brought with it "new measures" and "bodily exercises," and on that account it encountered violent opposition.

Mr. McGready, in his correspondence with Colonel Ramsay, laments this opposition to a work of God, and warns his brethren of the consequences. Dr. J. G. M. Ramsay, son of Colonel Ramsay, and author of the "Annals of Tennessee," has politely intrusted to me several of McGready's letters, addressed to his father, Colonel Ramsay; and has kindly authorized me to make any extracts from them that may be useful. The following extracts will indicate the extent of the opposition to the re-

vival, and McGready's concern for his brethren in East Tennessee.

He says to Colonel Ramsay: "I awfully fear that the Presbyterian Church has contracted guilt which will not be easily blotted out, by their carnal prudence, and resistance of the present uncommon mode of God's work in our land. They call themselves friends to the work of God; but the uncommon bodily exercises they term the excrescences of it, and wish to suppress them. Alas! shall crawling worms of the dust pretend to direct the Almighty? or lay down plans for infinite, unerring Wisdom to carry on his work? I am often shocked and terrified, when I hear ministers and sober professors speaking of jerks, falling down, loud outcries, dancing, shouting, etc., with contempt and ridicule; and wishing to see a revival of religion carried on in another form. But they say these things are not religion, nor essential to it. I say the same. But it is evident that an infinite God, for wise purposes, has permitted falling down, loud outcries, jerking, dancing, shouting, laughing, etc., to attend this mighty revival of his work, in every part of our country where it has prevailed; and though these exercises and bodily agitations are not essential to the work, yet Jehovah has thought it proper that they should be attached to it. Therefore is it not fit and proper that such creatures as we are should submit to his sovereign will, and rejoice to see the Lord's work going on in whatever form Eternal Wisdom

thinks best? Is it not daring presumption for the potsherd of the earth to call the Almighty to order? to direct the operations of his Spirit? or to demand of him why or what he does? But I have often seen ministers and private Christians a thousand times more alarmed at the work of the Lord, than they are at carnality, hardness of heart, and stupid inattention to religion.

“My dear friend, I do not write thus to you from any apprehension that *you* are unfriendly to the work of God. No: your letters to me, and the reports of all Christians from your country, declare you to be a friend. I mention these things to you, because my mind is burdened and distressed on account of observations of this kind that I have made, and what I fear will be the fatal consequence.”

Thus writes Mr. McGready to his friend Colonel Ramsay, an elder of the Presbyterian Church. And in a subsequent letter to Colonel Ramsay, he sends the following message to his brethren in East Tennessee:

“Tell my Christian friends and brethren to let the Lord choose his own way of working; to bid the Spirit of God welcome, even though he should choose to work among them as he works among the Methodists. Tell them to be more afraid of sinners being damned for the want of religion, than of going into what they call disorder, by falling down and crying out for mercy. The blessed Jesus is welcome to come and convert my peo-

ple in whatever form or mode of operation he pleases.”

Such are the terms in which McGready—the man whom God was pleased to employ as the instrument in awakening the greatest revival that has blessed the Church since the days of Luther—speaks of the strange work of God then prevailing in East Tennessee.

From these extracts and other reliable sources, it is known that the revival encountered great opposition in East Tennessee. But the power of Jehovah was not to be restrained by the opposition of men. The revival pervaded almost all the churches in that section of the State, attended by the same “bodily exercises” which everywhere accompanied it. And falling down, swooning, jerks, outcries for mercy, and shouts for joy, were as common there as elsewhere. Hundreds were converted, and Christians were revived and greatly blessed, though some would “call God to order.”

The revival subsided; but from that day there was an Old School and a New School party in the Presbyterian Church in East Tennessee—a party favorable toward revivals even at the hazard of a little noise, and a party that must have *order*, and opposed to any excitement that would transcend that silence which they deemed essential to order and decorum in the house of God: a party which, had they been in the west, would have adhered to McGready, McGee, and Ewing; and a party that would have raised a commotion for order, and would have

joined Craighead, Bowman, and Samuel Donnell in their unholy persecution.

But the broad belt of the Cumberland Mountains intervening, separated the churches in East Tennessee from those in the west, by an unbroken wilderness which, at that day, was at least one hundred miles in extent, even where the settlements made the nearest approximation. Consequently, there was but little communication between the churches in the east and those in the west, and the ministers in the west had too wide a field around them to find time to visit the eastern churches. Nevertheless, such was the sympathy of some generous spirits in the eastern section with the revival party in the west, that persons have been known to come from the vicinity of Knoxville to attend camp-meetings in the Cumberland valley. And during the protracted controversy between the revival party and the Kentucky Synod, many in the east sympathized with those noble spirits whose only offence was the promotion of the most powerful and extensive revival that has blessed the Church since the days of the Reformation.

When the controversy was finally terminated, by the organization of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the remoteness of the churches in the east, the small number of ministers identified with the new organization, and the extent of territory over which the churches in the west were dispersed, forbade any effort to induce churches or individuals in the east to connect themselves with

the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. After the Confession of Faith had been adopted and published, and the new denomination began to assume a respectable position before the public, invitations were sent to Cumberland Presbyterian ministers to visit East Tennessee.\* But owing to the unparalleled expansion of the field of labor in the west, these invitations were not accepted till the year 1818.

In compliance with repeated solicitations, in the summer of 1818, Rev. Robert Donnell and Rev. Thomas Calhoun visited East Tennessee. They had sent on a series of appointments, and when they reached the first one, at Washington, they found a vast multitude congregated in a grove, there being no house in the place of sufficient capacity to receive all that had assembled. Mr. Donnell preached, expounding the distinctive doctrines of the new Church with a lucidness and suavity that enchained the multitude for two hours; then closing with a pathos and solemnity that moved the hearts of all.

The assembly was bathed in tears; expressions of rapturous joy welled out from many Christian hearts; while sighs and groans heaved the bosoms of sinners who had never before been known to manifest any religious interest. This was the first sermon ever preached by a Cumberland Presbyterian in East Tennessee.

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\* Rev. Thomas Calhoun.

From Washington the evangelists passed to Morgantown. Here both preached to a large assembly: much excitement prevailed, and many seemed to be amazed at the novelty and solemnity of the scene. The next appointment was on Baker's Creek, where the congregation were interested with the impressive manner of the speaker, and the reasonableness of the doctrines. On Sabbath, Donnell preached at Maryville, in Dr. Anderson's church. The audience was convulsed with feeling: descending from the pulpit, singing as no other man, even in that day of song, could sing, and shaking hands with the people, some shouted for joy, and many flocked around him, bidding him a cordial welcome, and entreating him to make another appointment. Calhoon preached the next day to a crowded house, and great solemnity pervaded the audience. Donnell preached the day following, at Mr. Houston's, a few miles in the country. Some of the old men shouted for joy. Dr. Anderson called on one of them to pray, hoping, as it was thought, to stop the shouting. But the old man prayed with such power and heavenly-mindedness that the shouting greatly increased, and the Doctor was constrained to let the Spirit work in his own way.

From Maryville they proceeded to Knoxville, and preached to a very attentive and interested audience, and lodged with Dr. Nelson, by whom they were kindly entertained. Passing to Campbell's Station, Donnell preached with unusual power

and spirit. Great excitement prevailed: some shouted, and others were affected with the jerks. One man was jerked under the benches, and continued jerking while under them, till he was extricated by his friends.

This strange affection was common in East Tennessee, as elsewhere, during the prevalence of the great revival in 1801; and had been occasionally witnessed from that date up to the visit of Donnell and Calhoon in 1818. It is said that Dr. Samuel Doak, who was much prejudiced against the exercise, was sometimes subject to it; and that on one occasion, while in the pulpit, he was seized with a paroxysm, and jerked so violently as to throw his wig from his head into the congregation.

From Campbell's Station the missionaries passed to a vacant church on Bullrun, where Calhoon preached with such power, as to leave an impress there that subsequently resulted in the organization of a Cumberland Presbyterian church at that place. At Kingston, Donnell preached to a vast multitude assembled in a grove. Great excitement prevailed in the congregation, and at the close of the sermon, Calhoon rose from a sick-bed, and, with a fever upon him, delivered a most powerful exhortation. Donnell preached the next day at Post Oak Springs; and as Calhoon was still sick, they set out for home, travelling slowly—Donnell preaching at Washington and other places on the road.

The visit of these missionaries greatly enhanced

the solicitude of a portion of the Presbyterian Church, and others, for the ministrations of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. And so urgent were the solicitations, that Mr. Calhoun made a tour through that section in the summer of 1819. He passed over the same field, and visited also the Hiwassee Purchase, where he found a very sparse population in detached settlements.

Notwithstanding the abiding solicitude for the labors of Cumberland Presbyterian ministers, such was the urgent demand in the newly-settled territories west and south, that no arrangements were made to occupy East Tennessee till 1821, when Rev. James S. Guthrie was sent out to labor there as a missionary. He was a young man but recently ordained: though of unpolished exterior, and near-sighted, he possessed the faculty of analysis, and by intense study of the Scriptures he had made unusual attainments in biblical knowledge for one of his age. Comprehending fully the distinctive doctrines of the Church, he was prepared to expound them in a manner so lucid and forcible as to commend them to the unbiased judgment; and then his great familiarity with the Scriptures gave him influence with the people, whilst his bold and independent manner rendered him a valiant defender of the truth. Grave and solemn, in and out of the pulpit, though deficient in culture, he was otherwise a fair exponent of the new Church; and his labors were so acceptable in East Tennessee, that when the term for which he was appointed had

expired, the people petitioned for a renewal. The petition was granted, and he continued his labors as a missionary in that section until the spring of 1823, when he was succeeded by missionaries from Lebanon Presbytery.

While Mr. Guthrie was in East Tennessee, the Lebanon Presbytery was organized by striking off the eastern section of the territory of the old Nashville Presbytery, and consequently the duty of supplying missionaries for East Tennessee devolved upon the Lebanon Presbytery. Accordingly, in the spring of 1823, Rev. Robert Baker, recently ordained, and Abner Lansdon, a licentiate, were sent to that field. Mr. Baker was a young man of no ordinary promise. Amiable, conciliatory, easy and agreeable in manners, sedate, deeply pious, affectionate and sympathetic, he was a model missionary. Possessing respectable talents, a voice combining with the volume of the trumpet the soft melody of the lute, and a sympathy of soul that wooed his audience in the tenderest strains of the gospel, he was such a preacher as we are apt to imagine the beloved disciple that reclined upon his Master's bosom. His manner was in striking contrast with that of Guthrie; yet in ability to expound and defend the doctrines of the Church, Guthrie was greatly superior to Baker.

Mr. Lansdon was a young man of some promise, who was sent to occupy the Sequachee valley, and coöperate with Mr. Baker in the valley of the Upper Tennessee, the field which Mr. Guthrie had

occupied. For the first term of six months they labored separately, except on special occasions. But in the fall, William Smith was sent to Sequachee, and then Lansdon was sent to coöperate with Baker in the valley of the Upper Tennessee. This gave Baker an opportunity of extending his operations into sections that had not hitherto been visited by Cumberland Presbyterian ministers. He made a tour through Blount, Sevier, Jefferson, Green, Hawkins, and Grainger counties, in all of which he found many that gladly received the Cumberland Presbyterian doctrines. They said: "It is just what we have long believed, but we have never before heard it preached so plainly." But the ministers and some of the laity treated him coolly, and spoke of the doctrines as a novelty. Nevertheless, he sowed some good seed, which, when mature, was gathered by those who succeeded him in that inviting field.

Though it was the winter season, and the houses were uncomfortable, that term of six months was attended with more success than any previous term. But the extensive travel, the incessant labor, and the constant exposure, had made alarming inroads upon Mr. Baker's health. From his youth he had been predisposed to pulmonary affection, and friends doubted the propriety of his entering the ministry. But the Lord had a work for him, and he felt that he must be engaged in his Master's service. And hitherto he had suffered little inconvenience from the exposure and hard

toil of missionary life; but when he returned to meet the presbytery at Smyrna, in the spring of 1824, his health was so feeble that it was deemed advisable to place him in a field where he could have more comforts, less exposure, and less labor. Accordingly, he was placed upon the Lebanon Circuit, where he could be at home if his health became too delicate for active labor, and, as has been stated, Donnell and Aston were appointed to succeed him and Lansdon in East Tennessee.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## DONNELL IN EAST TENNESSEE.

WHEN we consider the remoteness of the field, the magnitude of the interests involved in the success of the East Tennessee mission, the youth and inexperience of the missionaries to whom these interests were committed, we shall regard the appointment as a flattering expression of confidence in the prudence, ability, and efficiency of the young licentiates. Had it been a frontier settlement, where society was but partially organized, and the destitution such as to insure acceptance, we would be prepared to expect the appointment of inexperienced young men; but the Tennessee valley had been settled nearly half a century, and society was completely organized; the various denominations had strong and flourishing churches, enjoying the labors of a talented and a learned ministry, some of whom were known to entertain inveterate prejudices towards Cumberland Presbyterians. Under these circumstances, the appointment must be regarded as conclusive evidence of a high degree of confidence in the young missionaries.

With what feelings, what sense of responsibility,

what hopes and fears, these young licentiates entered upon their distant mission, may be inferred from the following reflection of Mr. Aston :

“This was, to us, truly a trying time. We were young men, and inexperienced in the gospel ministry; now sent among strangers, in a strange land, where our doctrines were not well known, nor kindly received. Calvinism, in its maturity, its strength, and sophistical forms, was there, and had gained the popular ascendancy. But the presbytery had said to us: ‘Go, my sons, and the Lord go with you and bless you in your labors.’ So we ‘conferred not with flesh and blood,’ but straightway took our journey, judging that the Lord had called us, and if so, he would go with us and be with us in our labor, according to his good word of promise.”

Baker and Lansdon had left a series of appointments, which our missionaries had been ordered to fill. So soon therefore as they reached the field, they entered at once upon their appointed work. By mutual agreement, Donnell filled the outstanding appointments, and Aston preached at night, whenever it was deemed advisable. Thus, for the first two weeks, they travelled together, leaving a series of appointments for Aston, to be filled two weeks thereafter. While travelling together, Aston says: “Feeling that there was much at stake, we carefully and kindly watched over each other at every step, seeking to aid and scrupulously guard the matter, manner, and spirit of each performance, so that, as much as possible, we might commend

ourselves to the favorable consideration of the people among whom our lot had been cast."

Having travelled together till the time arrived when Aston must enter upon the series of appointments which had been made for him, the missionaries now separated, and each took his solitary round on the circuit. But separation neither severed nor weakened the bands that had long united their hearts and their aims. They were not rival candidates for popular favor; they felt that they were engaged in a common cause, that together they must stand or fall. Each therefore felt an abiding and anxious solicitude about the acceptability and success of the other: so far from depreciating, each labored to build up and sustain the reputation of the other. Mr. Aston says: "Knowing that every thing was suspended upon the propriety of our course, and that every step and action was watched by those who were eagle-eyed to discern, but indisposed to cover, a brother's faults, we thought it important to help each other by all possible means. Therefore, as often as practicable, we met and spent a day or a night in council, and when separate, we kept up a most intimate correspondence. As we labored in concert, our attachment grew stronger daily, till we became true yoke-fellows, knowing by sweet experience how David and Jonathan could love so intensely."

Guthrie and Baker had organized several churches, and many individuals had identified themselves with the Cumberland Presbyterians where no or-

ganization had been formed, and many more received the doctrines who hesitated to connect with a Church of recent origin, of whose usages they knew but little. Much prejudice had been excited in the Presbyterian Church, and many arguments were employed to prevent their members from joining the Cumberland Church. It was said they had sent out their best preachers first; that when they had succeeded in organizing a few churches, they would be supplied with such as they would be ashamed to own, and then they would see the folly of leaving the Presbyterian Church to join "those boisterous Cumberlands."

As Donnell pursued his solitary round upon the circuit, filling the appointments left by Baker, he reached Blount county, in quest of an appointment at the residence of a Mr. Cowan, a gentleman of influence who had recently joined the Church, and opened his house for preaching. Meeting a gentleman on the road, Mr. Donnell inquired the way to Mr. Cowan's, and having received directions, he inquired whether there was an appointment for preaching there? He said there was, and asked if he was the preacher? Donnell told him he was. The gentleman then informed him that he was Cowan, and that if he would ride back a short distance to the town, he would accompany him out. The invitation was accepted, and the business in town having been dispatched, they set out for the appointment.

Donnell had the appearance of a boy, and he was

dressed in homespun jeans. Cowan eyed him rather coolly, looked disappointed and chagrined. "Sure enough, as the Presbyterians said, the presbytery have sent their best preachers first, and now they have sent a green boy. The Presbyterians will have fine sport when they see him." He drew him into conversation, and was somewhat encouraged to find that he could converse with propriety; but surely he cannot preach.

Thus distrustful of the ability of his new preacher, they arrived at the place for preaching. Donnell preached a creditable sermon, with a commendable spirit, but nothing extra. Cowan was relieved in part; but to-morrow (the Sabbath) everybody will be out to hear the new preacher, and surely he cannot meet expectation. The Sabbath came, and Cowan went with him to a church on Little river. A very large and intelligent congregation had assembled. Guthrie and Baker had left their names embalmed in the affections of this people, and expectation was up to high-water mark; but the sight of a boy in homespun cast a damper over the congregation. The boyish preacher rose calm and collected, sang as none but George Donnell could sing, prayed as if he were really holding converse with God, announced his text in impressive tones: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." The sermon was irresistible. Amazement spread over the face of the audience, rapturous joy lighted up the countenance of his friends, sinners were subdued, all were lavish of praise. Cowan said

he would never indulge another fear as to the kind of preacher the Cumberland might send, when a boy could preach such a sermon.

At the period when our missionaries entered East Tennessee, the Presbyterian Church was agitated by two parties, viz.: the Old School Calvinists and New School Hopkinsians. Dr. Doak was at the head of the Old School, and Dr. Anderson was leader of the New School. Controversy between the parties had excited prejudice, and weakened the attachment of many worthy members of the Presbyterian Church. As the Cumberland missionaries were spiritual, experimental, and practical, those who had become disgusted with the prevailing discussion of abstract doctrines were pleased with the spirituality of our missionaries, and not only entertained them in their families, but promptly tendered them the use of their dwellings for preaching. These kind offers were gratefully accepted, and regular circuit-preaching was kept up in the private dwellings of several members of the Presbyterian Church. Of those who thus favored the missionaries, we may mention John and Samuel Houston, uncles of General Sam. Houston, of Texas, Colonel Andrew Cowan, Colonel Campbell, grandfather of Governor Campbell, John and James Gillespie, the Russells, Lows, Gallahers, and others, who opened their houses for circuit-preaching.

Thomas Gallaher, the father of Rev. James Gallaher, a celebrated revivalist of the New School

Church, received our missionaries with great kindness, and his house was, for years, a regular preaching-place on the circuit. Mr. Donnell, on his first round on the circuit, reached Mr. Gallaher's on Saturday evening, and, having spent the evening in the family circle, he was so impressed with the staid sobriety, the dignified bearing of the family, and the general intelligence and biblical knowledge possessed by every member, that he felt great embarrassment at the thought of preaching before them. The Sabbath came, and a very large and intelligent audience assembled. He arose under embarrassment, and announced as the text, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He soon became absorbed in his subject, and forgot his embarrassment. He gave a thrilling picture of the scene at Bethesda, portraying with moving tenderness the compassion of the Saviour toward the "impotent man," that had been afflicted for "thirty and eight years," and then the exhibition of Divine power that restored him by a word. He then made the application to the sinner, as suffering an inveterate and hopeless malady. Christ is then present as addressing him: "Wilt thou be made whole?" The sinner is made to respond: "Yea, Lord." The Saviour commands him to rise: the sinner rises from death in sin to newness of life in Christ, rejoicing in hope of heaven. At that moment, old Mr. Gallaher, throwing up both hands, exclaimed, at the top of his voice, "Glory to God!" "Ah," said Donnell, "I have heard the like before: there

is no *confusion* in that; it is the perfection of *order!*" He thought no more of his embarrassment. That sermon sowed the seeds of a revival in that community, in which four of Mr. Gallaher's children, all that were not in the Church, professed religion, and joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

During the summer of 1824, each of the missionaries made a tour beyond the limits of the regular circuit. Mr. Donnell spent several days in Green county, among some relatives, in the congregation of Rev. S. W. Doak, son of Dr. Samuel Doak, and his successor in the pastoral charge of the church. As Mr. Donnell was distantly related to the Doaks, he called upon both. When leaving, the Doctor, taking him by the hand, gave him a serious lecture upon the impropriety of entering the ministry without a classical education, and receiving license from an unauthorized and a heretical Church, and closed by beseeching him, if he must preach, to go to some other region, as he did not wish him to come here "preaching your new-light doctrines to stir up division among our people." Donnell replied that he should not have thought of preaching in the neighborhood if there had been no sinners in the congregation, and when they were all converted he would leave without attempting to influence any in determining their Church relations.

The Doaks were Old School in all their sympathies, and high-Calvinists in their creed, and they honestly regarded every system that excluded high-Calvinism as heretical. They felt it to be their

duty therefore to discountenance Cumberland Presbyterians, and to discourage their people from hearing them preach; and as Donnell had an appointment in the neighborhood, they thought to embarrass him, by requesting him to preach upon the passage, "Give none offence, neither to Jews, nor to Gentiles, nor to the Church of God." Mr. Donnell accepted the text, and promised to make it the foundation of his discourse. It was soon noised abroad that the little missionary was going to preach upon a text furnished by Dr. Doak, and the multitude came out, expecting some entertainment.

Donnell rose and announced the famous text; he said he deprecated the giving of offence, but asserted his right to preach the truth as he conceived it taught in the Scriptures, and consoled himself with the assurance that his Calvinistic brethren—the Church of God—would take no offence, however the Jews and the Gentiles might take it. For if Calvinism be true, *all things* are foreordained, and are brought to pass in accordance with the Divine purpose, and by Divine agency. It was therefore foreordained that he should preach to them that day upon that text, and the matter of the sermon he should preach was all arranged in the Divine mind before the foundation of the world. Whatever might be said, would be but the development of the Divine purpose, and could not therefore give any offence to his Calvinistic brethren, for opposition to his preaching, with those that believe

the Calvinistic creed, would be opposition to the decree of God.

Having fortified himself against the possibility of giving offence to his Calvinistic brethren, he had no fears of offending either Jew or Gentile by telling them that Christ tasted death for every man, that he died for all that all might be saved, that he has no pleasure in the death of any, but willeth that all men might be saved. Having shown that the Scriptures authorize a tender of salvation to all, he proceeded to urge upon all the claims of the gospel, assuring them that ample provision had been made for all; that the Spirit operated upon all; that all might come to Christ and be saved; that if any were finally lost, it would not be in consequence of any secret purpose or decree of God, but solely on account of their unbelief and impenitence. Unusual solemnity pervaded the congregation, and many who had never been seen to weep before, wept burning tears of contrition, whilst many Christians, instead of taking "offence," shed tears of delight, and rejoiced in a full and a free gospel. After that day, Mr. Donnell was permitted to select his own text.\*

But there were some who, if not offended, nevertheless opposed the doctrines preached by Cumberland Presbyterians. And as Mr. Donnell had a youthful appearance, one of those who opposed thought to cast ridicule upon him, by asking him, in the

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\* Aston and others.

public congregation, if he knew how many commandments there were? He instantly answered, eleven. The gentleman laughed in derision at his supposed ignorance. Donnell stepped upon a bench, and calling the attention of the congregation, announced to them that when he should again visit that neighborhood, he would preach upon the *eleventh* commandment.

The appointed time came, and the populace assembled to hear the eleventh commandment, and the promised discourse. The youthful preacher rose to redeem his pledge. He said it was to be presumed that the congregation were all familiar with the decalogue or ten commandments, but that the decalogue did not embrace all the commandments which God had delivered to his people; that the Saviour had added another, which was as binding as any of those in the decalogue. He then read the words of the Saviour: "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." "This," he said, "is the eleventh commandment;" which he proposed to make the subject of his discourse.

He then proceeded to portray, in melting strains, the love of Christ toward a fallen world, and the tenderness of that love toward his own chosen disciples. He showed how Christ had manifested the depth of his love for his people, and then reminded his congregation that they were commanded to love one another, even as Christ had loved them. It is

said that such were his feelings whilst he dwelt upon the unspeakable love of Christ, and the dire consequences of disregarding the eleventh commandment, that he wept freely, and almost the entire congregation were bathed in tears. It is added that prejudice gave way, and from that day he had unusual success in preaching to that people: no sermon ever preached in that section was so blessed of the Lord.\*

When Mr. Donnell returned from his tour through the upper counties, he had the happiness to meet, in Knox county, Calhoon, McSpadden, and Baker, who had crossed the mountain to aid the young brethren in holding two camp-meetings. The previous week they had met Aston and Smith in Sequachee valley, and assisted them in holding a camp-meeting in the little church in Bledsoe county, about five miles below Pikeville. This was the first camp-meeting held in Sequachee; and though the congregations were comparatively small, owing to the limited population in that narrow vale, yet it was a meeting of much interest: there were a number of professions, and several accessions to the Church.

From Sequachee they had come to Knox to hold a meeting at Concord, a few miles from Campbell's Station. This was the first camp-meeting at this place. Rev. William Smith says there had been a camp-meeting at Low's Ferry, on the Tennessee,

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\* Rev. Joseph Brown.

the previous fall, 1823; but the meeting of 1824 was the first at Concord. At this meeting Andrew Russell, the Low family, Mr. Douglass, and the widow Love, were camp-holders. Mr. Evans came with his family in a wagon from the upper part of Roane, and Thomas Gallaher, with his family, from Anderson county. Both of these families remained encamped during the meeting, and were amply rewarded for their zeal in God's service, as four of Mr. Gallaher's and several of Mr. Evans' family professed during the meeting. Services commenced on Friday, and continued with increasing interest till Tuesday morning; and had it been customary in those days to protract camp-meetings, they might have been continued much longer. There is no record of the number of professions; but many living witnesses agree that it was a meeting of unusual interest. The Rev. William Smith says: "The number of professions was large, and that meeting laid the foundation for several flourishing churches in the surrounding country. It was conducted on the oldfashioned plan: the grove was made to resound with the groans of sinners and the prayers of Christians, agonizing with their friends who had no religion; at other times, shouts of triumph were heard throughout the encampment from some new-born soul, whose very countenance seemed to be lit up by a faith's view of the glory of God as reflected in the face of Jesus. Brother Donnell preached several times during the meeting, and each time, he really appeared to preach

in demonstration of the Spirit and power. His labors were not confined to the pulpit; for while there was a mourner in the altar, his voice could be heard directing him to Christ, or pleading with God to have mercy upon him."

From Concord, the elder brethren and the missionaries proceeded to Jerusalem, a camp-ground about one mile from Athens. There were but a few members of the Church in Athens and the vicinity, as it had been but recently settled. The meeting was, therefore, principally sustained by unconverted men. John Miller, Esq., and Joseph Robertson were principal camp-holders, and upon them, of course, the burden of sustaining the meeting rested. Neither of those gentlemen, or any member of either family, was at the time a professor of religion. But they served the Lord with their substance, and that was acceptable, as it enabled his faithful servants, the ministers, to preach to the people, day and night, for many successive days. The congregations were small, as the population was sparse, but much good was accomplished, and Mr. Robertson and family shared largely in the blessing, as he and his family professed, and subsequently became members of the Church. Mr. Miller, though a devoted friend to the Church, never made a public profession of religion, though his family did. We have no statistics as to the results of the meeting; but, doubtless, it was at least the seed-time of a flourishing church that was subsequently organized at Athens.

Mr. Aston says: "The visit of the elder brethren to East Tennessee, and their labors while there, were truly advantageous to our cause, tending greatly to strengthen and confirm the members in the doctrines and usages of our Church. It had the good effect to render the missionaries thankful to God, and to take courage in our arduous labors."

From the meeting at Jerusalem, the missionaries, in company with the elder brethren, set their faces homeward, filling a few appointments on their route. Mr. Aston doubtless gives a true expression of their reflections on the road. He says: "What an unspeakable pleasure fills the mind of the servant of Christ, when he has gone out in his name and by his authority, bearing messages of grace and peace to dying sinners, and returns with an approving conscience, having the witness that he has pleased his Master, and the evidence of the fulfilment of his gracious promise, 'Lo, I am with you always.' Such was the happiness of the young missionaries. They had been among strangers, but they had found friends and brethren. They had witnessed during the summer and fall many seals to their ministry, and they were now returning to receive the approbation of presbytery, and the counsel and instructions of older brethren in the Lord; then to enjoy for a few days the felicities of the home circle."

Presbytery convened in the fall of 1824 at "Kelton's Meeting-house," in the vicinity of Mur-

freesboro. The missionaries made their report, and the presbytery expressed their gratitude to God for the success that had attended their labors. And in view of the expansion of the field, and the growing demand for the administration of the ordinances of the Church, the presbytery ordered Donnell, Aston, and Lansdon to review during the winter their theological and scientific studies, preparatory to examination for ordination the next spring.

But whilst they were directed to prepare for ordination, they were at the same time ordered to return to their respective circuits, and prosecute their labors in the field, as hitherto. The reader can form some idea of the labor assigned them, when he is informed that the East Tennessee Circuit extended through Rhea, McMinn, Monroe, Blount, Knox, and Roane counties, embracing about forty appointments. But arduous as it was, Aston says: "We entered upon the responsible charge submissively and zealously. Taking our books of science, history, and theology with us, we preached by day and frequently at night, and then we employed the intervening hours, and hours late at night and before light of mornings, in our studies, that we might be able to meet the orders of presbytery."

From journals kept by the missionaries, it appears that each preached more than one hundred and fifty times between the fall and spring sessions of presbytery; and during the same period they reviewed all the branches of science, theology, and

history required by the Discipline of the Church, as preparatory to ordination. Of the success of their labors in the field, we have no particulars: it is only said in general terms that usual interest was maintained, and some professions were witnessed. But as it was the winter term, and the houses in which they preached were uncomfortable for a congregation, it is not presumable that they could have accomplished much beyond the keeping up of the regular circuit appointments. With the opening spring the missionaries returned to the west to meet the presbytery, and undergo the contemplated examination preparatory to ordination.

## CHAPTER XIV.

ORDINATION AND MINISTERIAL SERVICES IN EAST  
TENNESSEE.

THE young missionaries having returned from East Tennessee, in the spring of 1825, enjoyed a few days of repose at home, after which they repaired to Big Spring church, to meet the presbytery, feeling no little solicitude about the result of the pending examination. During the fore-part of the session, they were taken through a protracted examination upon all the branches of science and literature required by the Discipline of the Church; for the presbytery had not yet learned to slight its work by a sort of mock examination upon a few branches, skipping the more important, with the charitable presumption that the candidate was familiar with them. All the candidates in this case were thoroughly examined, and all acquitted themselves creditably. Aston says: "Donnell passed a very popular examination."

On Saturday, Aston and Lansdon preached their trial sermons, which were very acceptable. On Monday, Donnell preached on the text, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that

believeth." Aston says: "It was a masterly effort, perspicuous, forcible, and attended with such unction of the Holy Spirit as rendered it soul-stirring." McSpadden preached the ordination sermon, and Calhoon presided and gave the charge. "It was an interesting, a solemn, and a memorable day in the history of the Big Spring church."

When all the facts are taken into view, it may truly be regarded as an interesting day. McSpadden, Dilliard, Provine, and Baker, had long been members of that Church, and gone out from its bosom, to preach Christ to the perishing; Calhoon had been, for nearly twenty years, its revered pastor; Aston had sat under his ministry from childhood; Donnell and Lansdon were members of neighboring churches, but their earliest recollections of camp-meeting scenes hovered about Big Spring, and here each had made some of his first efforts toward preaching. And now the presbytery, the most of whom had sustained endearing relations to this church, were within its sacred walls, and in the midst of its membership, about setting apart to the whole work of the ministry one of its own and two neighboring sons, all of whom had already won laurels. And could they have foreseen what those young men would accomplish, how it would have intensified the interest of that day!

The solemn ordination services having closed, those three young ministers were ordered back to the field where they had already won the hearts of

thousands, who had so often sat under their moving and melting exhibitions of Divine love.

A few days after the ordination, the young ministers bade adieu to friends and home, and returned to East Tennessee. Clothed, now, with the highest authority of the Church, and charged with the government and guardianship of numerous and growing young Churches, dispersed over an extensive territory, none but those upon whom like responsibilities have been devolved can realize the pressure upon the feelings of those young ministers when first assuming these crushing responsibilities. Hitherto, they had labored as licentiates, preaching the gospel, but now they must administer the ordinances of the Church, ordain elders, preside in Church sessions, superintend cases of discipline, and perform the whole work of the ministry, without the counsel of older and more experienced brethren. It was a fearful responsibility, but they sought the guidance of unerring Wisdom, and went forward in duty.

They had left appointments upon the circuit, and so soon as they reached the field they entered upon their regular labors. Nothing of interest occurred until they reached Roane county. Here they had had a gracious revival a short time before they left the circuit for presbytery, and many had signified their desire to join Church; and now the ordinance of baptism had to be administered upon a number of the young converts. A council was held, and the duty devolved upon Donnell. Baptist influence

was prevalent in the neighborhood, and many of the Baptist brethren were present; this rendered it proper to explain the nature and design of the ordinance. This Donnell did, with great plainness, fortifying every position by apposite quotations from Scripture. Aston says: "There was light and point in all he said." But the Baptists were greatly aggrieved, and complained that he had taken the very passages upon which they relied for proof that immersion is the only baptism, and explained them away, and that "was more than they could patiently bear." Indeed, one went so far as to pronounce it "ungentlemanly."

But though the Baptists were offended, the Lord was not: he graciously manifested his presence and favor by blessing the labors of the young ministers, and giving them favor with the people. A gracious revival ensued, and on the evening of the very day the baptism was administered, many anxious mourners crowded the altar, and a goodly number that night and the subsequent day and night professed faith in Christ, and young converts, experienced Christians, and ministers, together sang and shouted the praises of God.

At the close of this meeting, Mr. Aston took leave of his brethren for a time, and made a tour through the eastern counties, Jefferson, Green, Washington, Sullivan, and Hawkins. In some sections he encountered strong prejudice against Cumberland Presbyterians. In one congregation, a communion-meeting was in progress. He at-

tended on the last day; was solicited by many to preach; but having received no invitation from the pastor, he, of course, declined. Finally he consented to have an appointment at a private house that night, as the sacramental-meeting was about to close. The pastor was requested to publish the appointment, but promptly declined, upon the ground that "the Cumberlands were seeking to make innovations into Presbyterian churches." Not the least intimidated by the opposition of the pastor, Mr. Aston found other means of giving publicity to the appointment; and at night he met a large and respectable congregation—the pastor among them. And notwithstanding the manifestation of clerical prejudice, the people evinced unusual interest in the new doctrines. Many solicited him to remain, and voluntarily tendered the use of their houses for public preaching. And when informed that he could not prolong his visit, they urged him to return, and favor them with the regular ministrations of the word and ordinances.

While Aston was travelling as a pioneer through the upper counties, Donnell and Lansdon were filling the regular circuit appointments. Nothing of special interest occurred till Donnell returned to Roane, where he had made the talk on baptism which had given so much offence to the Baptists. Here it so happened that his appointment conflicted with an appointment for Baptist preaching. He at once proposed that all should assemble in

the church, and that both should preach. But the Baptist minister was so prejudiced that he would not consent to preach with him. The Baptists, therefore, retired to the grove, and held their meeting. This caused considerable excitement, as it separated those that had long been accustomed to worship together—those who had labored and rejoiced together in the gracious revival which they had recently enjoyed. Donnell was greatly grieved that any thing he had done should be the occasion of such unpleasant excitement; yet, in reviewing his course, he was unable to perceive wherein he had erred; for he had done nothing more than assign reasons why he administered baptism by affusion, instead of immersion. He had carefully avoided assailing the sentiments or practices of others, content to explain the views and defend the practices of his own Church.

Oppressed in feeling that so great commotion should have grown out of the mode of water baptism, Donnell called upon God to guide him in such a course as should tend to allay the excitement, and his mind was directed to the words of the apostle, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." He preached with unusual tenderness and pathos, inculcating a spirit of kindness and brotherly love, with a suaveness that subdued all hearts, endeared him to the people, and greatly enlarged the circle of his friends. Thus, the effort to turn the tide of public sentiment against him tended only to enhance his reputation, and confer

a popularity which drew crowds to his ministry. Aston says: "Every round he made upon the circuit extended his fame, and enlarged the field of usefulness. Like the forerunner of Christ, "he was a burning and a shining light."

Shortly after this, Donnell and Lansdon attended a camp-meeting at a church under the pastoral charge of Dr. Anderson, of Maryville Seminary. As they were not personally acquainted with the Doctor, and did not choose to seek an introduction, they were permitted to pass the day in the congregation without an interview. The meeting was conducted in some respects in the same manner as among Cumberland Presbyterians. Mourners were invited to "anxious-seats," where they received the instructions and the prayers of the Church. At the close of the exercises, one young lady retired to the tent in great distress. Her father, who was acquainted with Mr. Donnell, and had witnessed his tact in instructing mourners, solicited him to walk to the tent and talk to his daughter. He went, and engaged the mourner in an earnest conversation. His sympathetic and melting tones of voice soon drew a crowd around the tent, and, among others, Dr. Anderson. After conversing with the young lady till his feelings became much enlisted for her conversion, Donnell proposed prayer. All kneeled, and he offered one of his most impressive and yearning supplications. The company were melted to tears, and Dr. Anderson, on rising from prayer, remarked to a member of his church: "It

grieves me to the heart that I am not at liberty to take to my bosom one who can pray and talk as he does." "And why can you not?" inquired the Church member. "Should I do so, what would be the use of denominational distinctions?"\*

Dr. Anderson had a reason for declining to fellowship Cumberland Presbyterian ministers, to which he could not allude without self-condemnation. He had, previous to this date, preached a sermon in Maryville, Madisonville, Athens, Grassy Valley, and other places, in which he had attacked Cumberland Presbyterians with great virulence, and grossly misrepresented their doctrines. He said he had heard one of their preachers labor for two hours to prove that "the influence of the Holy Ghost is a fiction." He said "their Confession of Faith was compiled by three ignorant boys." He ridiculed their pretensions to be recognized as a regular branch of the Church of Christ. He said "they had put to sea without chart or compass." He compared them to "mushrooms that had sprung up, as it were, in a night, and would soon wither and die in the sunlight of Divine truth."†

Any one who is familiar with the history and doctrines of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, will now readily understand why Dr. Anderson could not take Mr. Donnell, or any other minister of our Church, to his bosom. Having thus pub-

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\* Dr. Cossitt relates this anecdote, representing that Aston was Donnell's companion. That is a mistake—it was Lansdon.

† Major Andrew Cowan.

liely and repeatedly denounced a Church about which he evidently knew but little, beyond the fact that some of its young ministers—"ignorant boys," as he chose to call them—had not only convinced many of the members of his Church that their doctrines were scriptural, but that they possessed more of the spirit of Christ than the Doctor himself, and those that joined with him in denouncing them, the Doctor could not, with any show of consistency, recognize as authorized ministers of Christ those whom his own people had heard him so often denounce as irregular and heretical.

Having spent the summer in missionary labors, the young ministers assembled in the early part of the fall to unite in holding several camp-meetings. At presbytery, some more experienced ministers had been appointed to go over to East Tennessee in the fall to assist the young men in conducting the camp-meetings. Upon this assistance they had confidently relied; and without the supervision of at least one experienced minister, neither the missionaries nor the churches would have favored the appointment of camp-meetings.

At the appointed time the young brethren and the people assembled, in high hopes of there meeting some of the fathers in the ministry. But they met a sad disappointment: none of the aged ministers came. There they were, two hundred miles from home, in the midst of a cultivated community, that had long enjoyed the labors of an intelligent ministry, some of whom would attend the

meeting, not to assist the "ignorant boys," but to criticize, and to gather material for another attack upon them. And, to add to their mortification, some of the principal camp-holders had but recently withdrawn from this intelligent ministry, and joined the "boys," with the expectation that the fathers would be out to aid them at the camp-meetings.

Discouragement and gloom overshadowed the encampment for a time; but preachers and people, despairing of human aid, felt the more pungently their need of Divine aid; and being thus shut up to the happy necessity, they put their trust in God, and called upon him for help in this time of great need. Their prayers were heard in heaven, and answered in a most gracious outpouring of the Spirit. Great excitement pervaded the entire congregation, and scores were brought to inquire the way of salvation. An eye-witness says: "Almost all who were not professors were at the mourners' bench. You may have some idea of our meeting, if you will fancy yourself looking over the weeping congregation, and beholding here an Old School man on his knees, bending over four children, all come to years of maturity, and all crying for mercy; and there, an old gray-headed sire, with streaming eyes, in great agony for a whole family of children; and yonder, a mother in Israel, on her knees, bending over a husband and four children, all grown, and all unconverted."\*

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\* Major Andrew Cowan.

The meeting was one of great interest, and a great many professed faith in Christ, but how many, our informant does not know; but the children of the gray-headed sire, and the four children of the Old School man, and the husband and four children of the mother in Israel, all professed and joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church; and many more, that came to the meeting through curiosity, careless and unconcerned, returned with tidings of great joy. And what was of still greater moment, the young preachers and the people learned that, the Lord being present, they could have a most gracious meeting without the aid of the fathers in the ministry.

Thus encouraged, they went through the series of the camp-meetings, trusting in God; and though not one of the ministers had been ordained six months, the people had no occasion to regret the absence of more experienced ministers. Each meeting was attended with more than usual interest, and resulted in numerous conversions, and accessions to the Churches contiguous. The young men acquired much reputation, not only as eloquent and influential speakers, but as prudent, efficient ministers of Christ; and, notwithstanding all that had been said against Cumberland Presbyterians, as ignorant, disorderly, and heretical, no other denomination enjoyed a larger measure of public confidence, and many influential members of the Presbyterian Church gave expression of

their confidence by uniting with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The missionary labors for the summer of 1825 closed with the camp-meetings. The young brethren received the parting blessing of the churches they had planted and watered, and then set out to attend the fall presbytery, which met at Bethesda, in Wilson county. At this session of the presbytery Robert S. Donnell was ordained: he was cousin to George Donnell, and a young man of great promise. An orator by nature, and possessing more than ordinary talent, had he been as exclusively devoted to the ministry as his distinguished relative, Rev. Robert Donnell, of Alabama, he might have rivalled him in usefulness; but having married early, and becoming encumbered with the cares of this life, he never attained the distinction for which his eminent talents qualified him.

It was at this meeting I first saw George Donnell. About a month previous I had professed religion, and had gone with a young friend who was earnestly seeking salvation. When we arrived at the camp-ground, George Donnell, Aston, and Lansdon were sitting in the stand, and Robert S. Donnell was preaching his trial sermon. George was clad in a black suit of very fine homespun jeans, with a red bandanna silk handkerchief thrown loosely over his head. All were strangers to me, and I was curious to make up an opinion as to the preaching talents of the trio. After a careful survey, I finally settled upon Donnell as my favorite.

The selection was not determined by any indication of superior talents, so much as an expression of unusual susceptibility; and when I heard him sing, and pray, and converse with mourners, I was confirmed in my first impression. There was a tenderness, a moving sympathy, and a heavenly unction, in all that he said or sang, such as I had never heard before; and when he preached, I felt sure that my friend would mourn, and so he did. A number professed religion, and I had great hopes of my friend, and doubtless the day of eternity will reveal the fact that he was converted at that meeting, but he did not profess there.

## CHAPTER XV.

## DONNELL IN SYNOD—MISSIONARY LABORS.

IMMEDIATELY after the adjournment of presbytery, the young brethren proceeded to synod to take their seats for the first time as members of that body. The General Assembly had not yet been organized, and the synod was, therefore, the highest judicature of the Church. It was composed of a convention of all the ordained ministers of the Church; and in the fall of 1825, it held its annual meeting at Princeton, Kentucky. The young brethren were not only in a strange community, but they were unacquainted with a large majority of the members of synod.

It was the custom to appoint a committee composed of one aged minister from each presbytery to regulate the public services during the session of synod, and to select the ministers that should occupy the pulpit. It was customary to make appointments for the pulpit from the several presbyteries; and when the time came to make an appointment from the Lebanon Presbytery, Rev. Thomas Calhoun, who represented the presbytery in the committee, nominated George Donnell. He

was unknown to the other members of the committee, and as he was young and rather boyish in appearance, they were rather indisposed to ratify the nomination. But Mr. Calhoun declined to withdraw it; so, to gratify him, the appointment was reluctantly made, but not with the cordial approval of the committee.

When the hour came for Donnell to occupy the pulpit, several of the fathers in the ministry, expecting that "the boy would make a failure," and wishing to screen from observation their mortification, took a seat *behind* the pulpit, as the congregation was in a grove. Donnell was evidently embarrassed, and his commencement was rather unpromising. The old fathers hung their heads, and Calhoun did not appear easy in his seat. But as the speaker advanced upon an ascending scale, the fathers began to hold up their heads: the speaker grew animated, and began to pour out his soul in melting strains of heavenly love: the fathers began one by one to slide around in front of the stand, and ere the speaker closed they were all in front, and enraptured with the sermon and the young preacher.\*

At this session of the synod the propriety of establishing a college, under the supervision of the synod, for the education of probationers for the ministry, was under consideration. After a protracted discussion, it was decided in the affirmative, and a committee was appointed to draft a

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\* Rev. Thomas Calhoun.

plan to be reported to the next session of the synod. Mr. Donnell warmly advocated the measure.

Another subject of equal importance was under discussion, namely, the propriety of dividing the synod, and organizing a General Assembly, as the highest judicature of the Church. The young and growing denomination had, in fifteen years after its organization, planted churches in every section of Tennessee and Kentucky, and in some sections of Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana. To require all the ordained ministers dispersed over this vast territory to assemble in synod once a year, was thought to be an impolitic waste of time, especially when the demand for ministerial labor far exceeded the ability of all the ministers, though they should devote the whole of their time to the work. In view of this waste of time in travelling several hundred miles to synod, all parties admitted the propriety of a division of the synod. But while some were in favor of a General Assembly as the bond of union, others favored a delegated synod. Rev. Finis Ewing and other distinguished members favored a synod, but opposed warmly the organization of a General Assembly. The discussion was animated and protracted. Mr. Donnell, though a youth, mildly, though firmly, advocated an Assembly. As the synod was much divided in sentiment, after a protracted discussion, the whole subject was postponed indefinitely; and three years thereafter, Cum-

berland Synod was divided into four synods, and a General Assembly constituted.

Mr. Donnell preached with such general acceptance, that the synod appointed him and Rev. David Foster a committee to visit the Mission School in the Choctaw Nation, which had been established some years previous, and to report its condition to the next synod.

After synod, Donnell, Aston, Lansdon, and S. Y. Thomas, a licentiate, returned to East Tennessee. Thomas was placed upon the Sequachee Circuit, Smith having been transferred to the Lebanon Circuit. Aston spent the winter in the eastern counties; and on one tour, he penetrated as far as Abingdon, in Western Virginia. Lansdon and A. M. Young supplied the regular circuit appointments in the Tennessee valley; while Donnell travelled at large through the Tennessee and Sequachee Circuits, and coöperated with the other missionaries in holding two-days' and sacramental-meetings. Thus passed the winter, without eliciting any thing worthy of special notice.

In the spring of 1826, Lebanon Presbytery met at the residence of Major Andrew Cowan, in Grassy Valley, East Tennessee. The young missionaries had taken pains the previous fall to have all the churches in the east represented in presbytery, and their influence, in connection with a spirit of indulgence on the part of the ministers and churches west of the mountains, had availed to take the presbytery to East Tennessee. It was a

great satisfaction, not only to the missionaries, but to the members of the eastern churches, to have the aged ministers with them once more, and to wait upon their soul-inspiring ministrations. The deliberations of the presbytery did much toward building up and confirming the newly-planted churches. At this presbytery, Philander Y. Davis and G. O. Lewis were licensed to preach. After a pleasant and harmonious session, presbytery adjourned to meet at Flat Creek church, in Overton county.

Shortly after the adjournment of presbytery, Mr. Donnell set out on his mission to visit the Indian school among the Choctaws, in Mississippi. He passed through North Alabama, and called upon his distinguished relative, Rev. Robert Donnell. His stay here was very brief, but Father Donnell could not allow him to depart without sowing some seed in that field, which he had so long cultivated with singular success. He circulated an appointment for preaching at night in the church near his residence.

A good congregation came out, and the young missionary preached. There was in the congregation that night an intelligent young man from Tennessee, who was teaching a classical school in the neighborhood. He was then a stranger to Christ, and to his messenger, George Donnell; though, by the grace of God, he subsequently knew the Saviour, and became the true yokefellow with Donnell in the ministry. Yet at this period he

was fastidious in his taste, and as he was familiar with some of the first preachers of the day, he was disposed to look upon the "lesser lights" with a feeling of commiseration approaching contempt. And when "Little George" presented himself in his soiled jeans garb, and with a diffident and hesitating manner entered upon the services of the evening, our young teacher could not repress a feeling of pity, bordering on disgust. But before the sermon closed, he says he felt such convictions for sin as he never had before experienced, though he had often sat under the preaching of Calhoon and Robert Donnell; and he thinks that the close of the discourse equalled in pathos and pungency any thing he ever heard from the pulpit.

As the country between Alabama and the Indian school was at that day unsettled, no further opportunity for preaching was offered. And as Donnell could not preach to the Indians, except through an interpreter, and there were no white people in the vicinity, except those connected with the mission, it is probable that he accomplished little more than the business part of his mission—the delivery of the contributions of his presbytery, and the inspection of the condition of the school.

On his return, he called upon Rev. Robert Donnell again, and accompanied him to a camp-meeting in Madison county. He was appointed to preach at the most public hour on Sabbath; but some of the elders and camp-holders were so dissatisfied with the appointment, that they would not

go out to the stand, but lingered in their tents, that they might not witness, or become in any way identified with, the failure which, from the unpromising appearance of the preacher, they deemed inevitable. But long before the close of the sermon the tents were empty, and all had gathered as near the stand as possible, fixed in amazement, to hear a sorry-looking boy preach with such pathos and power. Christians were transported to ecstasy, and sinners were crying for mercy.

Father Donnell had left a sick family at home, and was compelled to return; but such was the interest manifested, and so encouraging the prospects for a general revival, that the thought of leaving the meeting at such a crisis so overcame him, that, on parting with the preachers in whose charge he was leaving the interests of the meeting, he wept freely. A wag standing by, and noticing the weeping, said: "Uncle Bob went off crying, because Little George had laid him in the shade preaching."

From the camp-meeting, Mr. Donnell came to Winchester, and assisted Rev. Samuel King in a meeting then in progress in the village. This community had been blessed with a gracious revival, a small church had recently been organized, and a revival spirit was still prevalent. Donnell was a stranger to all except Father King, and as he was still clad in his soiled jeans, now worn through at the elbows, the principal citizens were sorely vexed when King put him up to preach. He perceived the aversion of the congregation, and determined

to dispel it before entering upon the subject of the contemplated discourse. After the introductory service, and before announcing his text, he said that a false and slanderous rumor had gained currency in that community; that some of the members of the Church, and all of the men of the world, believed it, and were acting under its pernicious influence; that it had already done much injury, and, if permitted to go unrefuted, it would yet do much more injury; and as the slander involved himself, as well as members of the congregation, he had determined, stranger as he was, to meet and expose it.

Curiosity was on tip-toe; the people stared at him and each other in amazement, all wondering who had been slandering the shabby little preacher. Seeing he had the concentrated attention of the whole congregation, he then announced his text: "Ye have said it is a vain thing to serve God." "This," he said, "was a vile slander;" and then he proceeded, in a most masterly strain of argument, to demonstrate that it was *not* a *vain* thing to serve God. Then he showed that the men of the world, and inconsistent Christians, acted as though they believed it was vain to serve him, and thereby they gave currency to the slander upon the Divine character; and persisting in this course, they not only influenced others to believe the service of God a vain thing, but ultimately persuaded themselves that it was vain, and so died in their sins.

After showing that all undevout persons were

contributing their influence to the propagation of this slander, the belief of which was ruining deathless souls, he told the people he was commissioned of God to warn them to desist from propagating an error so ruinous, and to counteract, by repentance and faith, the evil they had already done.

When he closed, the congregation was bathed in tears, and many were groaning in bitterness of spirit. Mourners were called, and the altar was crowded, many of whom never rose till they had experienced remission of sins, and then they rose to testify publicly that it is not vain to serve God. One man, who sat in the window, would not go to the altar, but he mourned and prayed in the window, and refused to retire until he experienced the pardoning love of God. The little stranger was long a favorite with many good people in Winchester.\*

After some days of grateful repose, our young missionary took an affectionate leave of the young converts and the kind brethren, and set out on his return to East Tennessee, where he joined his companions in labor. The summer of 1826 was spent in attending sacramental and camp-meetings on the several circuits. These meetings were attended with unusual interest; a revival spirit pervaded the churches generally, and never had the labors of the missionaries been so successful. Converts were numerous at every meeting, and, during the

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\* Judge Green and Benjamin Decherd.

summer and fall, several hundred were added to the churches in the east. Indeed, it seems to have been a season of revivals in almost every section of the Church, as the synod of 1826 reported three thousand three hundred and five converts during the year. And as there were but eighty ministers in the whole Church, the total increase would give an average of more than forty to each minister.

After the close of the camp-meetings; the missionaries crossed the mountains to attend presbytery at Flat Creek church, in Overton county. In this section, Donnell, Aston, and Lansdon had labored as missionaries when first licensed, and, though young and inexperienced, they had souls for their hire, and as many devoted friends in the Mountain district as in any other field in which they had labored. After an absence of three years, a reunion with old circuit friends was mutually agreeable and edifying. The old folks were delighted to see their favorable predictions about the boys verified in the manly bearing and able sermons of the young ministers.

From presbytery, the ministers, with their elders, set out for synod, at Russelville, Kentucky. In those days, the meeting of synod was an occasion of unusual interest, as it was a convocation of all the ministers of the whole Church, affording opportunity to each of forming a personal acquaintance with all the ministers. And then, as the Church had no paper or public organ of communication, all were anxious to attend synod, to hear the reports of the

several presbyteries, detailing the revivals, the accessions to the Church and the ministry, the missionary enterprises, and the general advancement of the good cause, in their respective bounds.

At the synod of 1826, cheering reports of extensive revivals came up from every section of the Church, but none elicited so much interest as the reports of the young missionaries from East Tennessee. For here was a demonstration that the new theology, even in the hands of inexperienced young men, could maintain its medium ground, in the face of Calvinistic and Arminian opposition. It had prevailed gloriously, in the very shade of the schools of the Calvinistic prophets, and the "illiterate boys," as they were tauntingly called, had vanquished learned doctors of divinity.

From the synod, the young missionaries returned to the east, and resumed their labors. The winter was passed, as preceding winters had been, in visiting, instructing, building up, and fortifying the numerous and widely-dispersed churches which had been planted by their labors. In neighborhoods where there were no churches, meetings were held at private houses, by day or by night, and many precious little reviving seasons were enjoyed. But the days of protracted meetings had not yet been ushered in, nor did the life of the missionary allow him to remain long in any one place: appointments were always in advance of him, and he must be on the wing to meet them. Could he have delayed wherever buddings of a revival were

developed, he might have accomplished more, but much time would have been lost in getting out a new series of appointments. So he left the mourners to strive in solitude until his next visit. Generally he found them still serious, and some anxiously awaiting his return, while others had grown callous and indifferent. Under this system of operations, mourners were longer in obtaining comfort than in the days of protracted meetings, but the evidences of conversion were more satisfactory.

With the opening spring, the missionaries assembled at Andrew Russell's, to take their departure across the mountain to attend presbytery. Mr. Russell was an elder of the Concord church, and his house had been the home of the missionary from the commencement of their operations in that country, and the young men revered and loved him as a father. Parting with him and his amiable family was like leaving home. On this occasion, Aston had spent the night with the family; Donnell arrived after breakfast, and when they were about to take leave, he signified that he would like to pray with the family. All were assembled: he sang and prayed with a pathos and tenderness peculiar to himself; the whole family, white and black, were in tears; he sang a farewell song, passing round and shaking hands with each member as he sang: some wept and sobbed aloud, others shouted, and all were excited. The missionaries

departed with the blessings of the family upon them.

After presbytery, Aston, Lansdon, and Smith returned to East Tennessee, but Donnell remained, and spent the summer of 1827 in Wilson county, assisting the brethren wherever aid was most needed, but having no regular charge. After five years of incessant toil, a partial respite from labor was most grateful; but repose was not the only consideration that induced him to remain in Wilson. He had a matrimonial engagement with Miss Elizabeth E. McMurry, eldest daughter of David McMurry, an elder of the Big Spring church, and the chief object of his stay was the consummation of this delicate negotiation. Early in the summer, he and his chosen bride were united in wedlock. Of course, some time was spent in visiting relatives and friends; but such was the anxiety to hear him preach, that appointments were made and congregations assembled, and his bridal tour was attended by a series of meetings.

The latter part of the summer, and a portion of the fall, were passed in attending camp-meetings in Wilson and the adjoining counties. It was a rare treat to his ministerial brethren and his old circuit friends to have his labors once more at their camp-meetings; and it was a common remark that he preached better since his marriage than formerly. Many who had not heard him for several years, were agreeably surprised to observe the

growth and development of his intellectual powers. At no period in his ministerial career did he acquire so much reputation in so short a time, as during the few weeks he spent attending the camp-meetings in Lebanon Presbytery.

His amiable companion accompanied him to several of those meetings, and public opinion everywhere approved his choice. Having enjoyed the prayers and instructions of a mother distinguished for intelligence and piety, having moved in the better circles of Christian society, being naturally amiable, and so refined by grace as to be in sympathy with him in all his care and labor for souls, she was just the lady he should have chosen to be the companion of a devoted, self-denying minister of Christ.

Before the close of the camp-meeting season, the popular young minister and his amiable companion took an affectionate leave of numerous friends, and set out for East Tennessee. Mr. Donnell had made arrangements to locate as pastor of the Concord church. The journey completed, the young pastor and his bride were received with great kindness, and snugly located in a house belonging to Father Russell, the principal elder of the church. Here the young wife took her first lessons in housekeeping, and the young pastor his first in pastoral duties.

At this date, 1827, comparatively few Cumberland Presbyterian churches had settled pastors. Each minister usually supplied three or four

churches, and as these churches were dispersed over a wide territory, the minister was a missionary rather than a pastor; and as the churches were generally feeble, the population being sparse and in moderate circumstances, it required the contributions of several churches to sustain one minister. Concord was the first Cumberland Presbyterian church organized in East Tennessee, and when Mr. Donnell became pastor, it had more members and more wealth than any of the churches in that section of the State; and, as its members were dispersed over a large territory, he declined the charge of any other church.

But the limited contributions which were common at that day, soon proved insufficient to sustain the pastor and his small family. And as the church was in want of a teacher, it was proposed that he should take a school, and thereby make up the deficiency. Accordingly, he opened a school in the congregation, the income of which, in addition to the contributions of the church, afforded a competency.

Mr. Donnell was a charming singer, and passionately fond of sacred music. Attaching great importance to this delightful exercise, and discovering a deficiency among his members, and being thoroughly versed in the science of music, he was induced to open a singing-school for the purpose of instructing the members, and thereby improving the church music. The school soon awakened a general interest in sacred music; and to this

day some of his old pupils are the sweetest singers in Israel.

The synod of 1827 divided the Lebanon Presbytery, and ordered a new presbytery to be constituted in East Tennessee. The following is an extract from the Minutes of the first session of the new presbytery :

“Agreeably to an order of the last synod, George Donnell, William Smith, Samuel M. Aston, and Abner W. Lansdon, formerly members of the Lebanon Presbytery, met at Concord meeting-house, in Knox county, State of Tennessee, on Thursday the 17th of April, 1828, and constituted by prayer the presbytery to be known by the name of the Knoxville Presbytery; which opened its session by a sermon delivered by Rev. George Donnell, who was appointed the first Moderator.”

It was a merited distinction and privilege, that the first Cumberland Presbyterian church organized in East Tennessee should witness the constitution of the first presbytery in that section of the State. Little did they imagine, when they hesitatingly gave in their names, and therewith their adhesion to an obscure and despised denomination, of little more than ten years' standing, and not a congregation within one hundred and fifty miles of them, that in six brief years they would see a presbytery constituted at that place, gathering under its fostering care numerous thriving churches, planted over the valley of the Tennessee by a few

inexperienced missionaries. Truly, God hath employed the weak to confound the mighty.

Mr. Donnell's connection with the Concord church was pleasant and agreeable. The community was respectable, plain, but intelligent and substantial, noted for kindness, hospitality, and all the social virtues. They idolized their pastor, and he was warmly attached to his people. There was one, and only one, cause of discontent—the school was too confining. He longed to be out among his flock, making pastoral visits, preaching and holding prayer-meetings in neighborhoods remote from the church, visiting the serious and the sick, and laboring for the spiritual advancement of his charge. But if he gave up the school, the contributions of the church would not supply his family with the ordinary comforts of life. The struggle between a passion for souls and affection for his family was painful and protracted; but when the camp-meeting season came on, a sense of obligation to be engaged in his Master's work overcame all considerations of temporal comforts. He gave up his school and took the field, devoting himself wholly to the work of the ministry.

During the season of the camp-meetings, he was incessantly engaged, and never were his labors more successful. But the close of his first year's engagement with the Concord church now drew near, and the propriety of renewing the engagement must be decided. It was an embarrassing

question. He had demonstrated that the contributions of the church, independent of the school, would not support his family. The school trammelled him in his ministerial labors, and on that account he was opposed to the confinement. He desired to remain at Concord, yet if he remained he would be compelled to teach.

Ever since he had spent the summer of 1827 west of the mountain, great solicitude had been expressed to secure his services in Wilson county; and there was great need for more efficient labor there, for some of the churches were sinking into a state of apathy. His father and father-in-law had proffered assistance if he would return: he could have a little farm of his own, and servants to cultivate it. This promised a support without any curtailment of his labors in the ministry. This settled the question, and he decided to resign the charge of Concord, and return to his native county, where he could be wholly devoted to his ministerial labors.

As the fall session of the Knoxville Presbytery was to be held at Clear Spring church, in Rhea county, fifty miles west of Concord, on the road to Middle Tennessee, Mr. Donnell determined to set out on his removal to Wilson county, and attend the presbytery on his journey. He therefore made the necessary preparations for the removal of his little family, and taking an affectionate leave of the good people of Concord, he set out for presbytery, and thence to Wilson. At presbytery he met his

brethren with whom he had been so long associated, and sat with them in presbytery for the last time. After the adjournment, he bade adieu to his friends in East Tennessee, and his co-laborers in the ministry, and resumed his journey. His departure caused universal regret, but none were disposed to censure his course.

From the spring of 1824 to the fall of 1828, he had labored to plant and build up churches in East Tennessee. And could we duly appreciate the discouragements under which he and his companions labored, and then contemplate the results, we might then be prepared to judge of his fidelity and efficiency. But we cannot, at this day, appreciate the embarrassments that Cumberland Presbyterian ministers had to encounter in East Tennessee at that date. The Church had only reached the fourteenth year of its existence; its doctrines and usages were unknown, but strange rumors of heresy and disorder, "wildfire and fanaticism," had preceded them, and prejudiced the public mind against the new Church and its doctrines. It had no papers, colleges, or doctors of divinity, as exponents; in a word, nothing to give it character, save the piety of its members, the zeal of its ministers, and the purity of its doctrines. The missionaries themselves had enjoyed no advantages. They were young men with but limited attainments, and without experience; but they went forth armed only with the gospel message, and trusting alone in the power of God, who gave them the victory.

One of his co-laborers, Rev. William Smith, has presented the embarrassments under which they labored, and the success attending the first missionaries, in a light that will aid us in attaining an adequate conception of the difficulty encountered, and the magnitude of their labors.

He says: "Let any one look over the map of East Tennessee, and then reflect that when Donnell first went there, in the spring of 1824, there were only two small societies in all that section of the State, and those two embracing only a few members scattered over a wide territory; and then remember that each county was dotted over with Presbyterian and Methodist churches—the Presbyterian ministers noted for their extensive learning, and the Methodists equally noted for their vigilance to guard against any and every thing not Methodistical—and then the labor necessary to build up churches under such circumstances must be apparent. Yet that labor Donnell, and three or four other boys, as they were called, performed, without extensive attainments or experience to aid them. But boys as they were, without much human armor to defend them, they went forth to meet the enemies of God or Cumberlandism. They feared them not, though they might have acquired all the human learning to be attained in the schools. And what was the result? Why, from two small churches, in the spring of 1824, the membership was so increased, that, in the fall of 1827, the synod ordered them to organize a new

presbytery, with Donnell as the first Moderator. And I doubt not his influence did its full share in training our members in that section of the State in theology and Church polity; so that one of the fathers of the Church, after having travelled eighteen months through the whole Church, reported to the General Assembly, in 1835, that the churches of the Knoxville Presbytery were in a more flourishing condition than any he had visited."

Though Donnell retired from East Tennessee, he left Aston, Lansdon, Smith, and S. Y. Thomas in the field, all preachers of no mean reputation, and three of them familiar with the habits of the people. He left them with a presbytery fully organized, and churches and members dispersed from Sequachee to the Blue Ridge, from Watauga to Hiwassee, and the character of the Church challenging comparison with any other denomination.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## RESIDENCE IN WILSON COUNTY.

HAVING removed from East Tennessee to Wilson county, Mr. Donnell left his family with his father-in-law, and proceeded to synod, which convened in Franklin. Here he met once more all the ordained ministers of the whole Church, excepting those detained by sickness or some other providence. These reunions were very grateful to the brethren, and not without substantial advantages in promoting fraternity and unity in doctrine and usages. But they were enjoyed at an immense sacrifice of time and means; and all began to feel that the time had come when duty demanded a relinquishment of the pleasure of a general convocation of all the ministers—that the time thus consumed might be devoted to the growing want of an increase of ministerial labor.

Accordingly, the question of the division of the synod, and the organization of a General Assembly, came up again for consideration. It had been discussed in the synod of 1825, and, in consequence of the opposition of Father Ewing and a few other influential members, it had been indefinitely post-

poned. But the borders of the Church had in the meantime been so extended, and the number of ministers had so increased, that even those who had opposed the measure in 1825, were now convinced that it was inexpedient longer to require all the ministers of the Church to leave their respective charges, and travel from one to six hundred miles to attend synod. When, therefore, the proposition to divide the synod was made in 1828, it met general favor. The only subject of discussion was, whether the highest judicature should be a *delegated* synod, as in the Lutheran Church, or a General Assembly. Mr. Donnell now, as in 1825, advocated a General Assembly. The measure carried by a large majority, and the original Cumberland Synod was divided into four synods, namely, Franklin Synod, embracing a large portion of Middle Tennessee, and all of East and West Tennessee; Columbia Synod, embracing several counties in Middle Tennessee, all Alabama and Mississippi; Green River Synod, embracing Kentucky, Indiana, and a part of Illinois; and Missouri Synod, including Missouri, Arkansas, and a part of Illinois. It was also provided that the presbyteries should elect delegates to meet in Princeton, Kentucky, the next May, and constitute a General Assembly.

On his return from synod, Mr. Donnell settled on a small farm, lying seven miles east of Lebanon, and two miles south of Big Spring. Though his relatives and many friends had solicited his return to Wilson county, no church had given him a

call, as they were all supplied, either with pastors or a temporary supply. Rev. Thomas Calhoon was, and had been for many years, the pastor of the Big Spring church; Rev. John L. Dillard had charge of Providence; Rev. John Provine preached at New Hope and Bethesda, though he resided near Big Spring; Rev. David Foster had charge of Stoner's and Sugg's Creek churches; and Robert S. Donnell preached at Moriah and Smith's Fork. Each of those churches had a camp-ground attached, where a camp-meeting was held every fall.

Notwithstanding there were eight churches in the county, each of which could sustain a camp-meeting, there was no church in Lebanon, nor was there any stated preaching in the place by any minister of our Church. Father Calhoon and Mr. Dillard had preached there occasionally, but it is not known that either ever kept up regular appointments there. And as neither was preaching in the place when Mr. Donnell settled in the vicinity, he commenced about the first of the year 1829 a regular monthly appointment, usually preaching on Saturday and Sabbath. Much of his time was occupied in aiding other brethren at their two-days' and sacramental-meetings; and the remaining portion was bestowed upon neighboring towns, Galatin, Hartsville, Carthage, and Murfreesboro.

Up to this date Cumberland Presbyterian ministers had strangely neglected the towns. They had organized respectable churches in almost every populous section of the country, and had borne the

message of salvation into every glen and mountain cove; but the towns had received little more than an occasional sermon, and, in some instances, a two-days' meeting. As a legitimate consequence of this policy, there was not in 1829 an organized church of our denomination in any town of Middle Tennessee, excepting Winchester, where a church had been organized about 1825.

Mr. Donnell, deploring this policy, determined to bestow a large share of his labors upon the towns. For this devotion to communities too much neglected by his seniors in the ministry, he was sometimes jeered; but, conscious of the rectitude of his motives, and encouraged with the prospect of accomplishing much good, he heeded not an occasional intimation of personal vanity.

When he commenced preaching in Lebanon, it was a village of some seven or eight hundred inhabitants; and, though not so immoral as some other towns, it had but one church. The Methodist brethren had a comfortable house of worship, and a respectable membership, and they kept a minister stationed in the place. No other denomination had either an organized society or a place of worship. There were a few Baptist, Presbyterian, and Cumberland members in the town, who sometimes solicited and obtained an occasional sermon from the ministers of their own Church.

Rev. Amzi Bradshaw, a respectable Presbyterian minister, preached in the place occasionally.

And shortly after Mr. Donnell commenced preaching there, it so happened that their appointments conflicted. Mr. Donnell promptly gave way, and Mr. Bradshaw preached in the forenoon; and, contrary to his usual custom, he chose to animadvert with some severity upon the doctrines and usages of Cumberland Presbyterians, intimating that they had been ejected from the Presbyterian Church for heresy and disorder. Mr. Donnell announced that he would answer the charges in the afternoon, and explain the origin of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. At the appointed hour the house was crowded, and he proceeded to set forth and defend the faith and practice of his Church, with a lucidness and force of argument that surprised and delighted his audience. They knew that he could preach the gospel with a tenderness and pathos that was hard to resist; but they had not supposed that he possessed the power of analysis and the theological research which he displayed in defending his creed, and contrasting it with the Calvinistic system. They were not aware of the fact that, from his boyhood, he had been compelled to defend his Church against the assaults of such giants of the Calvinistic faith as Drs. Anderson and Doak, and that in every rencontre he had come off victorious. After this hasty pass, Bradshaw discontinued his appointments in Lebanon.

During the summer and fall of 1829, Mr. Donnell was almost incessantly engaged in camp and *protracted*-meetings, which about this time first

came in vogue. Wherever he went, and in whatever service he engaged, whether in the pulpit or the altar, he was a favorite with all parties. The churches generally were in a languid state; but toward the close of the season some indications of a general revival were manifest.

In October, 1829, the Franklin Synod held its first session at Big Spring church. This synod embraced East and West and more than half of Middle Tennessee, and consequently it brought together a large assemblage of ministers and elders. And as the ministers had been accustomed to meet all their brethren in general synod, they could not at once forego the pleasure of such association, and on this occasion several of the ministers of the Green River Synod were present. Mr. Donnell's house was the home of so many as he could lodge; and among the number Rev. Hugh B. Hill, of Kentucky. This was their first introduction, and the commencement of that intimacy which was maintained through life. Mr. Hill says: "I was kindly received into his family, and, as I thought, to his heart and confidence." Their first interview inspired mutual confidence, which after years of intercourse matured into a fraternity as intimate and stable as the affection of twin-brothers; and when separated by death, the survivor mourned as for an only brother.

When Mr. Donnell commenced preaching in Lebanon, his congregation for a time assembled in the Court-house. But his popularity soon drew

out more than could be accommodated there; and as the Methodist brethren had service only on alternate Sabbaths, they invited him to preach in their church. The invitation was gratefully accepted, and for several months his meetings were held there. Toward the close of 1829 he had a two-days' meeting, and on Saturday he organized the few members in town and vicinity into a little society. The members were Mrs. Colonel Finley, Mrs. Golladay, Mrs. Tolivar, Mrs. Hunt, Mrs. George and Mrs. Charles Cummings, and Miss Ibbey Martin. These seven members composed the nucleus of the church which was subsequently organized. The majority of these have doubtless joined the Church above. Mrs. Tolivar is the only one of the original members who still holds membership in the church in Lebanon; and she and Captain Tolivar are now the oldest citizens in the place.

The little society, being now organized, invited Mr. Donnell to continue his services, promising such remuneration as they might be able to contribute. The meeting closed with encouraging indications of a revival. But when he returned to his next appointment, to his great surprise and mortification, he found the doors of the Methodist church closed against him. The preacher in charge had taken offence because he had organized a society in their church, and had ordered the doors to be closed. Mr. Donnell, not the least disconcerted by this exhibition of opposition, re-

tired to the Court-house, where he held his meetings as formerly.

This discourteous and unbrotherly conduct on the part of the minister in charge, awakened in the community a general sympathy for Donnell and his few houseless members. Early in 1830, Mr. Donnell appointed another two-days' meeting, and secured the services of his friend, Rev. H. B. Hill, to assist him. And on this occasion, for some cause not now known, they were denied the use of the Court-house also, and were driven to the necessity of holding their meeting in a little old log-schoolhouse in the suburb. Public indignation was now aroused, and the irreligious swore that Donnell should have a church.

Many of the influential business and professional men of the town were Freemasons, and they proposed to Donnell to unite with him in building a two-story house, the Masons to occupy the upper story, and the lower story to be a Cumberland Presbyterian church. He promptly accepted the proposition, and engaged to get up a public subscription for the purpose. The original subscription reads as follows :

“The undersigned promise to pay to the following persons, to wit, Isaac Golladay, Thomas Hunt, H. L. Douglass, James Rucks, Edward E. White, and John S. Topp, Trustees, the sums annexed to our names, for the purpose of building a Cumberland Presbyterian church in the town of Lebanon, to be open for all denominations of Chris-

tians holding the essentials of religion, until such time as those denominations may build churches for themselves."

Colonel H. L. Douglass headed this subscription with \$50; then follows Colonel O. G. Finley and Thomas Hunt with \$50 each. Various other persons in town and the country subscribed smaller sums, ranging from \$40 down to \$2.

The building of a neat brick church in those days was a great enterprise, requiring as much canvassing and electioneering as the building of a college or a railroad in our day. Mr. Donnell was indefatigable in his efforts to raise the means; but he did not complete them in time to secure the erection of the building that season; but the means being secured, arrangements were made for its erection the next spring. In the meantime preaching was continued in the Court-house. Interest was increasing; general seriousness prevailed; mourners were frequently invited: many came, and some professions adorned and consecrated the old Court-house.

In the spring of 1830, several members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church residing in the country were induced to join the little society in town. Among these accessions were Colonel David Campbell and wife, formerly of Campbell's Station, East Tennessee, John Peyton and wife, Rachel White, and David N. Berry. Dr. H. C. Crutchfield had settled in town, and he and his wife joined.

In May, 1830, the society entered into the following covenant, preparatory to the organization of a church:

“We, a part of the citizens of Lebanon and its vicinity, feeling desirous of enjoying the means of grace in a regular manner in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, do agree to organize a church, to be known by the name of the Lebanon Church, under the care of the Lebanon Presbytery, to which we submit ourselves in the Lord, and to which we will look for such supplies of preaching, and the administration of the ordinances of the Lord’s house, as the said presbytery can supply.”

John Peyton, Esq., and Dr. H. C. Crutchfield were elected ruling elders. Thus was organized, in May, 1830, a church which has already done more to advance the interests of the Cumberland Presbyterian body than any other single church.

In the spring of 1830, Mr. Donnell commenced preaching at New Hope, a church nine miles northwest of Lebanon. This was an old church, and, like all the old churches of our denomination, it was originally a Presbyterian church, and was recognized as a branch of the Shiloh congregation in Sumner county. It had enjoyed the ministrations of McGee, Alexander Anderson, Hodge, and others. And when Hodge went back to the Presbyterian Church, it adhered to the revival party, and in 1812 it was reorganized as a Cumberland Presbyterian church. From that date until 1816, Rev. Hugh Kirkpatrick had charge of it; then the Rev.

John Provine served it until 1830, when Mr. Donnell was called to the pastoral charge.

Rev. Malchijah Vaughn says: "From its organization up to 1830, they had no special revival; consequently, it was in a languishing condition. Having had but few accessions, it numbered only twenty-five members."

The old camp-ground was so dilapidated that it was deemed impracticable to have a camp-meeting in the year 1830; but they had a protracted-meeting in the fall, which resulted in twenty accessions to the Church, and such increase of zeal as induced them to purchase a beautiful site, and erect a new and commodious church, with a spacious camp-ground adjoining. These improvements being completed, they held, in 1831, a camp-meeting, which resulted in more than one hundred conversions, and a large accession to the Church.

During the summer of 1831, the new church in Lebanon was erected, covered in, and furnished with temporary seats and pulpit; in October, the Franklin Synod held its sessions in the new church. In addition to the members of the Franklin Synod, Rev. David Lowry, H. B. Hill, and several others of the Green River Synod, were in attendance. It was the first time a synod had convened in Lebanon; there were a number of strange preachers present: a new church, erected chiefly by the means of gentlemen of the world, and for months previous indications of a revival had been manifest. All these circumstances combined to impart special in-

terest to the meeting. The preaching was solemn and pungent, and, from the first day, the congregations wore a serious aspect, and many seemed to be unusually interested. Mr. Donnell was in an agony, so great was his solicitude; and, before the sessions of the synod closed, several prominent citizens had bowed at the altar of prayer, in deep anguish of spirit, and Mrs. Gen. Caruthers, Mrs. Gov. Houston, Mrs. Topp, Mrs. Burton, and others, had professed faith in Christ.

The indications of a general revival were such, that Mr. Donnell resolved to continue the meeting after the adjournment of synod, though, at that day, the protraction of public services beyond a few days was unusual, and, by many, deemed inadvisable. He solicited a number of the brethren to remain and aid him in the meeting; but all declined except his friend, Rev. Hugh B. Hill, who remained some two weeks, and labored with unusual success.

In relation to the character of the meeting, Mr. Hill says: "At the solicitation of Brother Donnell, I remained, after the adjournment of synod, a number of days. The signs of a general revival were strongly marked, and soon began to be developed in a most triumphant work of conversion. Very many were the hopeful subjects of this most gracious revival, which laid the foundation, as I believe, of one of the most important churches in the West; and I believe that the working, revival spirit which has so distinguished that church, received its type in that ever-memorable revival of

1831. I shall never forget the spirit of the chief actor in that scene—the deep fervor, the untiring zeal, the heavenly unction, that were manifest in his songs, his prayers, and exhortations. The labor was all our own, for there were none to aid us; but God was with us, and his presence made the work easy and the results triumphant.”

After the meeting had been continued about two weeks, it was suspended for two weeks, when the services were resumed, and continued for a week; and for months, whenever they would have a service at church, so much interest was manifested, that the services were protracted. Mr. Donnell spent the most of his time in town, laboring with the serious, by day and by night, in public and in private, conversing with and encouraging the young converts, visiting persons seriously disposed who had not as yet given any public expression of solicitude, and urging upon them the importance of immediate action.

When his regular Sabbath appointment came on, he usually had a two-days' meeting, and generally it was protracted for a week. Occasionally, one or more of the brethren would assist him, but generally he was alone. As a consequence, there was a necessity for employing the young converts in the singing, prayer, and conversation with the mourners, and hence the “working spirit,” to which Mr. Hill alludes in his letter, from which we have given an extract.

The revival continued, with partial suspensions,

throughout the winter of 1831-32; and all who were of sufficient age must recollect the severity of that winter. Snows were frequent, and of unusual depth; the ground was covered to the depth of six to eight inches for eight weeks, and the cold was intense. But neither snow-storms nor cold could arrest the revival. One of the most violent snow-storms of the season came while a meeting was in progress. The congregations were but little diminished; the house was crowded by day and by night; professions were frequent; some young converts returned from church shouting the praises of God along the streets, and admiring newly discovered beauties in the falling snow. The fact that the revival could live through such a winter, is conclusive evidence of the strong hold it had upon the public mind.

At the opening of the spring, Mr. Donnell found himself pastor of a large and respectable church, embracing many of the more intelligent and influential citizens of the town, gathered from the world amid the snows of the severest winter within the memory of man. The congregation were worshipping devoutly in a commodious church, built chiefly by means contributed while they were yet strangers to the blessedness of the gospel of peace. And these gratifying results had been realized in eighteen months after the doors had been closed against him for organizing a little society of seven members in the Methodist church. Truly he could say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts,” hath this great work been accomplished. Let all learn not to despise the day of small things.

John S. Topp addressed a communication to the Religious and Literary Intelligencer, under date of April 13, 1832, in which he says:

“Truly the Almighty has been gracious to this village: the work of grace has been going on here since the commencement of the synodical meeting, and is still progressing with a good degree of success, both with the Cumberland Presbyterians and the Methodists.

“The Cumberlands number about fifty members in their church here, and the Methodists probably about seventy. I would suppose that the number that have made profession since the synodical meeting commenced may be safely estimated at fifty. Many are deeply concerned about the salvation of their souls, and they are not ashamed to manifest it before the world on all proper occasions; and although many are still halting between two opinions, yet I can truly say that religion and virtue are advancing and gaining ground among the enlightened and intelligent class of our citizens.”

The principal subjects of this gracious revival were John S. Topp and lady, Mrs. Gen. Caruthers, Mrs. Gov. Houston, of Texas, Mrs. Col. Burton, Mrs. Col. Smith, of Statesville, Mrs. Britton, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Cox, Mrs. Freeman, Sarah Ann Golladay, Col. Finley, Isaac Golladay, Mrs. Bullard,

Mrs. Martha Hall, Mrs. Thankful Cage, Mary Brevard, William Massey and wife, Lewis D. Berry, W. S. Foster, Mrs. Barbary White, W. P. Foster, Elizabeth Chandler, Mrs. Judith Harrison, James Warmick, Sina Warmick, Mary Bradley, and Nancy Stainbridge.

This revival gave occasion to a private letter from General Jackson, written while he was President of the United States, to Col. Burton, of Lebanon, which will be read with thrilling interest. Col. Burton, whose wife is a niece of General Jackson, had written to the General, informing him that Mrs. Burton had professed religion and joined the Church. Here is the General's reply :

“WASHINGTON CITY, November 24, 1831.

“I am truly gratified to hear that your lady, and Mrs. C——, and many other ladies, have joined the Church. I would to God that you and Mr. C—— would follow this good example. No people can flourish without true, genuine religion, which expels hypocrisy and deceit from their walks, purifies society, and calls down upon a nation blessings from above. How joyful to my departed wife, if she had been living, would this union of her nieces to the Church have been! If angels are permitted to know what mortals here below are doing, my dear wife, at the joyful tidings, is praising her Redeemer, and thanking him that so many of her dear friends have been awakened by the Spirit, and brought to experience the blessed change from

death unto life, and to exclaim, in the language of the Scriptures, that they now know that their Redeemer liveth. May you and Mr. C——, and hundreds more of your friends, neighbors, and connections, follow this example.

“Present me to your lady and Mrs. C——, and assure them that I rejoice with them on their happy change—a change that will give them peace and happiness in this world, firmness to meet misfortunes and visitations in this life, give them confidence that they can smile in Satan’s face, and meet a frowning world. There is no real content and happiness in this world, except the consolations of religion derived from the promises contained in the Scriptures. Have my little namesake (Andrew Jackson Burton) presented to the Church in baptism.

“ANDREW JACKSON.”

Mr. and Mrs. C——, mentioned in the letter, are General Caruthers and his lady, who is a niece of General Jackson. Let those who lightly esteem the religion of the Bible, ponder the sentiments of that great man, expressed from the presidential chair, the most exalted position on earth. He enjoyed a measure of the world’s favor, honor, and glory, which no other man since Washington has attained. And yet, in the very meridian of his glory, from the pinnacle of his world-wide fame, he proclaims that there is “no real content and

happiness in this world, except the consolations of religion derived from the promises contained in the Scriptures." Will the admirers of that great man still show contempt for the Bible and religion?

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE PASTOR AND HIS CHURCHES.

UNTIL the spring of 1832, Mr. Donnell had resided on his farm, seven miles from Lebanon; but finding it impracticable to give the church that attention which he and they desired, he sold his farm, and purchased a small place two miles from town. Hitherto, his regular appointments in town had been monthly, but he now engaged to preach on alternate Sabbaths, and to attend the evening prayer-meetings. For this service he was to receive a salary of three hundred dollars per annum. Though a very small salary for one-half of his time, it was considered, at that day, respectable; and it certainly was more than any other member of the presbytery was receiving for a like portion of time.

We may date the commencement of regular pastoral labors, both in Lebanon and New Hope, from the spring of 1832. For although Mr. Donnell had been preaching three years at the former, and two at the latter place, his regular appointments had been only monthly, and his residence was so remote that he could not often visit either except at his

regular appointments. Then the compensation was so limited, that he had been compelled to labor on the farm, in order to eke out a support for his family.

But now he was so convenient to town, that he could visit his members there almost daily; and his salary was such that he could afford to dispense with his personal labor on the farm. Accordingly, he now devoted himself to reading and to pastoral visitation. It is true, he was still some nine miles from New Hope, but he visited that church on alternate weeks, and spent some two or three days. And as he was actuated both by a sense of duty and the impulses of social feeling and religious sympathy, he managed to have frequent personal interviews with every member of each of his churches.

Thus, in little more than three years after he returned from East Tennessee, and settled without a charge or the prospect of one, we find him the pastor of two vigorous and flourishing churches, one of which he had hewn out of the quarry by his own toil, and the other he had revived and invigorated.

It was his custom to cultivate a frank, kind, and confidential familiarity with every member of his charge, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the influential and the obscure, the bond and the free. He not only visited each at his house, office, or shop, and conversed freely and kindly with him, respecting his spiritual condition, his trials and

conflicts, his hopes and his fears, his consolations and discouragements, but whenever he met one of his flock, he was as certain to inquire after his religious state as he was to inquire about his bodily health.

By this familiarity, he not only acquired the confidence of all, but he overcame that timidity and reluctance which all experience in conferring freely upon the subject of personal religion; and, by the frequency of his conferences, he impressed each one with the importance of looking well to the state of the heart, of maintaining a spirit of living piety, and striving for the consolations of religion. He also acquired an intimate knowledge of the peculiar temperament and the consequent besetments of each member of his flock, and was thereby enabled to give such advice, encouragement, or kind admonition as suited each individual case.

His conferences were not limited to the Church; he possessed, in a præminent degree, the faculty of rendering himself agreeable to the men of the world, without depreciating his reputation for piety and spiritual-mindedness. His humor, pleasantry, and wit rendered him acceptable, and he would converse and joke about the common topics of the day, till he had gained the confidence of the sinner, and thrown him off his guard; then he would pleasantly, but affectionately, approach him upon the subject of religion. If he discovered the least disposition to repulse him, he would gently waive the subject, by inviting him to attend church, or

to read some book which he judged suited to his case.

If he discovered any indications of seriousness, he would frequently visit such an one, and in those interviews he would endeavor to cultivate those serious impressions, affectionately urging upon him the importance of cherishing his convictions, and warning him of the fearful consequences of delaying attention to his religious interests. And when once induced to take action, or publicly commit himself, he would manage to cut off all retreat, and kindly urge him forward in the path of duty, till he was brought to unconditional submission to the claims of the gospel.

If misfortune befell any, he was sure to seize the occasion to turn the afflictive dispensation to good account. He would visit them in their affliction, and encourage them with the hope that the calamity might prove to be a blessing in disguise, and, if improved, might be the means of leading them to Christ. One of the first converts in the great revival of 1831 will illustrate his assiduity and final success in improving these adverse providences, so as to bring great good out of a most afflictive dispensation.

A lady of distinction, and of the most honorable connections, wedded a gentleman of high official station; but she had the misfortune, very soon, to find him so uncongenial and impracticable, that she was reduced to the painful necessity of withdrawing from all association with him, and secluding

herself from society, under the protection of a fond father. In her desolation she persistently declined to see company, or receive the kind sympathies of respected friends. Nothing discouraged by her known seclusion, Mr. Donnell visited her father, and solicited an interview. She promptly declined. He renewed his request, and, by the solicitation of a fond mother, she finally consented to give him audience. Veiled in deep mourning, she presented the picture of hopeless dejection and settled melancholy. He proffered her the consolations of religion, as the only solace to a grief so profound and peculiar, and, after many expressions of sympathy and kind encouragement to seek consolation in Christ, he closed the interview with a prayer that would have softened the adamant. She was melted to tears, and thanked him for his kind solicitude. He visited her repeatedly, and was always welcome, but she was too desponding to hope for an interest in the Saviour. Despairing of success in these private interviews, she was finally prevailed upon to visit a near relative in Lebanon, and attend the synodical meeting. She came, and when mourners were invited, she meekly bowed at the altar. Many hearts responded to the pastor's melting supplications. Divine light penetrated the deep gloom, the day dawned, and the Sun of righteousness shed beams of glory upon her soul. She retired from the altar full of the hope of heaven.

The sick-room was cheered by his daily visits

and soothing instructions. If it was a member of any denomination, he labored assiduously and prayed most fervently to bring the patient to an undoubting realization of a saving interest in Christ, and the enjoyment of a full measure of the consolations of the gospel. If it were a poor sinner without hope, he seemed to feel that, in the providence of God, his conversion was devolved upon him, and if he had been his brother or his father, he could not have manifested more solicitude. He would kindly warn him of the necessity of an immediate preparation for death, would unfold the beauty and simplicity of the plan of salvation, its adaptation to all cases, but especially to his, would urge its claims upon him, encouraging him to lay hold upon the hope set before him in the gospel. If the case seemed to be approaching a crisis, his anxiety grew into an agony, his efforts became unceasing, and prayers and songs breathed a sympathy that no heart could withstand. Few within the field of his labor died in despair, and when it was his misfortune to witness such a case, gloom overshadowed him for days.

While he was thus engaged in the cultivation of his own field, he was not unmindful of the wants of other sections. Whenever there was a sacramental or a two-days' meeting in the bounds of the presbytery, his attendance was solicited, and, when consistent with a sense of duty, always met a ready compliance. And when camp-meetings came on,

his regular services were suspended for two months, that he might attend a camp-meeting every week during the season.

As it was the custom of that day for each church, possessing the ability, to fit up a camp-ground, and hold an annual camp-meeting, early in the summer of 1832, Mr. Donnell began to discuss the propriety of having a camp-ground in the vicinity of Lebanon. It was a bold move for a church consisting chiefly of females, most of whom had been converted in the recent revival; a church having but three male members possessing the ability to erect and furnish a camp. But Donnell was not the man to yield to discouragements, when religious interests were to be promoted. He had in the church several good sisters, ardent in their first love, whose husbands, though unconverted, were generous, and able to furnish camps. He soon succeeded in inspiring these ladies with a desire for a camp-meeting, and, with their aid, the assent of the gentlemen was easily gained, and it was determined to have a camp-meeting in the fall of 1832.

The site selected for the camp-ground was a grove with a good spring, one mile and a half from town, on the Gallatin road. Three acres of land were purchased, the encampment laid out in a square, tents erected, enclosing three sides, a large shed, furnished with seats and a plain pulpit, occupying the centre. The fatted calves, pigs, lambs, and fowls were killed and dressed, vegetables and other necessaries collected, and on the appointed day the

families, with their servants, bedding, and cooking utensils, moved out to the encampment, and ere the setting of the sun, each was established in his newly-erected cabins, ready to greet and entertain his friends.

The camp-holders, at the first meeting, were John S. Topp, Esq., General R. L. Caruthers, Colonel Burton, Isaac Golladay, George and Charles Cummings, and Esquire Bullard.

The meeting embraced the third Sabbath of September. Rev. Hugh B. Hill and Rev. James Smith, and the brethren of the Lebanon Presbytery, were in attendance. Rev. James Smith, in a communication to the *Revivalist*, the organ of the Church, says :

“Although on some occasions I have witnessed more conversions, yet I have seldom seen a more pleasant and profitable season. The converts were from among the most intelligent and influential of the community. There were twenty-five professions, and, with one or two exceptions, we received them all into the Church before the close of the meeting.

“I would do injustice to my feelings, were I to conclude without expressing my high opinion of the liberality and gentlemanly conduct of the camp-holders, most of whom are not professors of religion, who put themselves to much trouble and expense to promote the cause of Christ, and gratify the feelings of their ladies, who are devoted followers.”

Of the accessions at this meeting, the following are some of the principal: William L. Martin, Esq., Mrs. Saunders, of Sumner county, and her daughter Ann, Mrs. McClain, Mrs. General Anderson, Henry Trigg, of Sumner, and his sister Mary, Caroline Figures, now Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Norvell Douglass, Frank Saunders, of Sumner, J. W. White, John Finley, E. A. White, Amos Bone, Martha Berry, Jane Irwin, Margaret Bettis, G. J. Mann, and Nancy Hunt.

One sister, who had entertained a number of friends at her camp, said she had been amply compensated for all her trouble, as *thirteen* of her company had professed during the meeting.

The next week, the camp-meeting at New Hope came on, and as the Lebanon church were generally in the spirit, many of them attended the New Hope meeting. A revival spirit was prevalent, and the attendance was unusually large. Rev. James Smith was there, and as he had just removed from Kentucky to Nashville, he was a stranger, and his manner of preaching was so peculiar that he attracted universal attention. His preaching on this occasion will be remembered by many who date their first pungent convictions for sin to his celebrated "Brickkiln Sermon," which carried terror to the hearts of hundreds. Terror alone will not convert, though it is usually the first step in that direction; but Donnell and Hill were there, to present the promises of the gospel, and woo the terror-stricken sinner to Christ; and more than fifty date their conversion at that meeting, many of whom

were mature men, who had long indulged a species of skepticism. But they were arrested, convicted, subdued, and led to embrace the hope of the gospel. Such was the interest awakened in the community, that after the meeting had been protracted ten days, they dispersed with the determination to hold another camp-meeting in two weeks.

At the appointed time, wagon after wagon, packed to its utmost capacity, rolled in, till every camp was crowded. The people congregated from every quarter, some having come as far as twenty-five miles. For many days the exercises were intensely interesting; mourners crowded the altar at every call, young converts made the encampment and the grove resound with glad shouts of joy and songs of praise. The world's follies, its hollow formalities, its pride and vanity, were forgotten; the social intercourse was not restricted to one caste, but a common sympathy drew all classes into one common brotherhood. After a jubilee of one week, they again dispersed, with the regret that they could not always be at camp-meeting.

Under date, Lebanon, November 5, 1832, Mr. Donnell makes the following communication to the Revivalist, a paper published in Nashville, by Rev. David Lowry and Rev. James Smith:

“Our second camp-meeting at New Hope commenced on the evening of Thursday, the 25th of October, and closed on Wednesday following. We had fine weather, a large, intelligent, and interested congregation, and that unanimity of feeling

among Christians which always promises success to their efforts in the cause of Christ. The gospel was preached plainly, spiritually, and powerfully, and the consequences were, God's children were refreshed, inquiring souls directed to Christ, and careless sinners awakened to a sense of their danger. The duty of secret prayer was promptly attended to during the meeting by the people of God, who took their serious friends with them to the grove, to encourage them to look to Christ, and to pray for them. The communion was interesting and comfortable, and from that time until the close of the meeting, the consolations of Divine grace gently distilled into almost every believing heart, and all looked with childlike confidence unto God for his salvation. And did the Lord disappoint the hopes he inspired in their hearts? No! be it said to the honor of his good name, he came down in sight of all the people. We have seen God in creation and in providence, in the whirlwind, storm, or tornado, exhibiting himself to his creatures in such a point of light as ought to inspire every heart with awe and admiration; but never did I see God in such awful grandeur as on this occasion, while he rode in glorious triumph in the chariot of his salvation, and led captive, in chains of love, scores of deathless souls. O, blessed captivity! Who would not be led away thus, from darkness and bondage, to the light and liberty of the gospel of Christ?

“At the close of this meeting, it was ascertained

that one hundred and seventeen were happily converted to God during the meeting, and about sixty joined the church. The work is still progressing, and may it progress until every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to God."

Although the camp-meeting was the great feast of tabernacles, and none esteemed it more than Mr. Donnell, yet, unlike some who are active only in the camp-meeting season, and supine or in chase of the world the balance of the year, he was stimulated by a successful campaign to redouble his efforts at home. The ordinary services of the sanctuary, and the various branches of pastoral duties, acquired additional interest, and called forth an increase of zeal and fidelity. And in addition to the regular services on the Sabbath and the weekly prayer-meeting, he always had out extra appointments for evening meetings, at private houses or school-houses in neighborhoods remote from church. Wherever he had a member, a mourner, or a serious friend, there he managed to have an evening meeting. And those private meetings were not unfrequently gladdened with the shout of the new converts, and in some instances they led to a general revival in the neighborhood.

Young converts were not left then, as now, to battle single-handed with the world; or, yielding to their doubts and fears, to walk in darkness without the light of experience, and finally to abandon their hope and fall into unbelief. But with more than a father's solicitude, or a mother's sympathy,

he watched over them, conversed with them freely and affectionately, comforted the disconsolate, encouraged the feeble and faltering, cautioned the self-confident and inconsiderate, wept over the backslider, and wooed him back to his first love. He kindly discovered to the deceived soul his fatal error, and urged him to begin anew, and do his first works over: he boldly unmasked the hypocrite and drove him to repentance. Such was the frequency and the confidential character of his interviews with each convert and member of his church, that he knew intimately the temperament and the weak points of each; and as all were sure of the lively sympathy of the pastor, whenever difficulties arose from any quarter, each fled to him for counsel and trusted implicitly to his guidance. Enjoying the unlimited confidence of all, he was mentor to each, and so faithfully and affectionately did he advise, admonish, and rebuke, that his church was never distracted with personal feuds.

How different the practice of some nominal pastors at the present day! Converts are carefully counted in the reports of revivals, and perhaps some pains are taken to induce them to join the church; but after that, no further account is taken of them, till their irregularities call for the discipline of the Church, when they are thrust out upon the charity of a heartless world.

Mr. Donnell esteemed it a privilege, as well as a duty, not only to acquire a knowledge of the temperament and religious life of his members, but to

find appropriate work for each. One must attend the young men's prayer-meeting and participate in its exercises; another must join the Bible-class; a third must be a teacher in the Sabbath-school; a fourth must be a deacon; a fifth an elder in the church. And if there was a young man of more than ordinary piety and promise, he was urged to inquire of the Lord whether it might not be his duty to preach the gospel. Knowing the peculiar talent of each, he displayed wonderful skill in assigning each his appropriate field, and engaging him in such duties as were adapted to his capacity. He held that it was indispensable to the proper development of Christian character to have each at work in his appropriate sphere; and hence the reputation of his church for activity and efficiency.

One means of employing his members was somewhat peculiar to himself. He always had some individual for whose salvation he was making special efforts; and he was devising ways and means to encompass his aim. Not content with his own efforts, he employed the agency of others. And herein he displayed great discernment. Invariably he would select the member most likely to have influence with the individual upon whom he was to operate; and then he would manage to enlist that member's feelings in behalf of that individual; and when properly enlisted, then he would indicate the course to be pursued. And then the whole matter was managed with so much tact and deli-

cacy, that when the conversion of the individual was finally secured, the member whose agency he had employed would imagine himself the prime agent in the case.

In the summer of 1833 the encampment at New Hope received considerable additions. The converts of the previous year erected camps, and became very active in sustaining the meeting. The annual encampment came on in August; Rev. James Smith and other foreign ministers were present. It was a gracious season, and many who had withstood the great revival of the previous year were reached and brought in. About forty were added to the church. Among the number was James Davis, Esq., a gentleman of intelligence and influence; but, unfortunately, he had been skeptical, and had collected some of the most noted infidel works, all of which he had studied diligently. And delighted to find his favorite creed so ably sustained, he had taken pains to commend his favorite authors to his family and friends; and he had the satisfaction of claiming his lady, and a number of his friends, as his disciples. But this apostle of infidelity, fortified as he was, was vanquished. Driven from every refuge, and exposed to the shafts of Divine truth, hurled with unerring aim at the heart, he fled to the cross of Christ, yielding himself a willing captive to dying love. No sooner had he experienced remission of sins, and realized the joys of salvation, than he began to denounce his infidel books, and to warn his

friends against their seductive influence. Convinced of their fallacy and ruinous tendency, he avowed his purpose to bring them all next day to the encampment, and burn them in the presence of the great congregation. But a council being held, it was decided that, instead of committing them to the flames, he should deliver them up to Mr. Donnell, that by perusing them he might be the better prepared to expose their sophistry and combat their doctrines. Mr. Donnell received them as an acquisition to his library, and having made himself familiar with their principles, he became noted for his skill in combating infidelity.

The result of this meeting was so encouraging, that, at its close, the congregation resolved to have a second meeting. But all the Sabbaths in September and October were occupied with appointments for other meetings; yet so intent were they upon having a second meeting, that they appointed it on the second Sabbath in November. And as they might expect cold weather so late in the fall, they determined to prepare for it by putting floors and chimneys in their camps. The meeting was held at the appointed time. Great excitement prevailed, and converts were numerous, but the number is not known.

The next week after the first meeting at New Hope, the annual camp-meeting at Lebanon came on. Additions had been made to the encampment. Wm. L. Martin having professed at the meeting in 1832, had erected a spacious camp, and

Mr. Norvell Douglass, whose lady had also professed, had established another. Mr. Donnell had secured the services of Revs. Alfred Bryan, H. B. Hill, and J. A. Copp, three of the most popular young ministers in the Church. Many had gone to the meeting with the purpose of seeking religion, and the character of the preaching influenced many more to join the large band of mourners. But the number of professions for several days was not proportionate to the number of the anxious. Mr. Donnell became much concerned lest the results of the meeting should fall far below what had been anticipated: he therefore announced that at a specified hour he would "make a talk" for the benefit of the mourners.

At the appointed hour the congregation assembled, and the anxious were invited to occupy seats immediately in front of the stand. He preached, or rather talked as no other man could, in a simple, tender, wooing, conversational style. His motto was: "Look unto me, and be ye saved." He began by enumerating the difficulties and discouragements that beset the mourners. One was too unfeeling, and therefore he must pray till his heart yielded, before he could venture upon Christ. Another had sinned away his day of grace, and therefore there was no hope for him. A third was waiting God's good time, and promising himself that when God should give him faith, he would believe and be saved. A fourth was such a sinner that it would be presumption for him to approach

the Saviour. A fifth was afraid of being deceived, and he was seeking with great caution and distrust. They all earnestly desired salvation; but each doubted the willingness of Christ to save him in the condition he then was—each had a preparatory work to perform before he could venture his all upon the Saviour.

He then proceeded to set forth, in a most lucid and convincing manner, the full and free atonement of Christ for all sin and all sinners; and then demonstrated that no previous preparation was needful or practicable—that each must renounce his sins and come to Christ in his guilt and pollution: that all effort to make his heart better was a presumptuous attempt to do for himself what Christ promises to do for him.

He then showed how they must come to the Saviour. But any attempt to follow him through his inimitable exhibition of the simplicity of faith in Christ and its power to save, would be futile. Suffice it to say, that he made the way so plain, that the blind did see and the simple did understand. And as he proceeded, pouring floods of light along his path, unveiling the glories of the Saviour, and calling upon all to “behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,” the excitement grew intense; and as he urged the mourner to “look unto Him and be saved”—to look and live—several, almost at the same instant, cried out; one exclaiming: “I see him, I see him!” Another, “I have found him, I have found him!”

The excitement became general, and in a short time almost all the mourners were rejoicing in hope of salvation.

The meeting closed with more than twenty conversions, and about the same number of accessions to the church. Among the number were, General Caruthers, Norvell Douglass, Samuel Lauderdale and lady, Mrs. Davis, wife of James Davis, Esq., Francis Anderson, Nathaniel Bell, and Jane Robb.

In October, 1833, Mr. Donnell attended a camp-meeting at Liberty, near McMinnville, where he preached with unusual power and effect for a week, when the meeting was removed to town, and the services continued another week. Several of the influential citizens were among the converts, and the whole number approached one hundred. Forthwith a subscription was commenced for the erection of a church in town, and the organization of a society. The enterprise, with the aid of the church at Liberty, succeeded. The congregation in McMinnville still worship in the neat two-story house which was, in part, the product of that revival.

The year 1833 was one of unparalleled prosperity throughout the bounds of the Lebanon Presbytery. For four months in the summer and fall, Mr. Donnell was incessantly engaged in protracted and camp-meetings, leaving his family and his churches to the care of a kind Providence. Revivals were general and powerful. Lebanon Presbytery reported more than a thousand conversions,

all the churches strengthened by accessions, and several new ones organized.

The winter and spring were devoted to the churches of his charge. Two services each Sabbath and Sabbath-school, a Bible-class on one evening, a prayer-meeting on another, and preaching in some destitute neighborhood on a third evening, together with almost daily pastoral visits, made up the round of weekly labors which engaged the energies of his ardent temperament. Odd hours were occupied with the preparation of spirited articles for the columns of the *Revivalist*, the only religious paper then published in the Church, and to which he was a regular and a welcome contributor.

The summer and fall of 1834 were, as usual, devoted chiefly to protracted and camp-meetings. But after two years of almost incessant revivals, the churches seem, from the reports of presbytery and synod, to have relapsed into a state of apathy. The Lebanon Presbytery did not report half as many conversions as had been reported during each of the two preceding years. The only additions to the Lebanon church were Elizabeth Robb, Narcissa Allen, Obadiah and Frances Gordon, Elizabeth E. Donnell, Harriet Abbee, Sophrina Kilborn, Charles and Elizabeth Cartmell, and Mrs. Allen.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## PASTORAL DUTIES, CONTINUED.

AT the close of 1834, Mr. Donnell sold his little farm in the vicinity, and moved into town, that he might be in the midst of his people, and have daily intercourse with them, and that he might free himself from the care and perplexities of the farm. From this date he was exclusively devoted to pastoral and ministerial duties. While on a farm, a portion of his time was necessarily occupied with the supervision of his farming operations; but having moved to town, and taken boarding in a private family, he was freed of all care, and his charge, and the interests of the Church at large, occupied his mind and heart.

He did not devote as much labor to the preparation of his sermons as those pastors who write out their discourses and then commit them to memory. The only use he had for the pen, in his preparation, was to put down the heads of the discourse, and the topics under each head; and even that was designed for preservation, rather than an aid in the pulpit. He carefully studied, digested, and arranged the matter of his discourses in his mind, relying

upon the suggestions of the moment for appropriate language for the expression of the thought. And as his sermons were always eminently practical, looking to present effect, he did not depend upon books so much as the reflections of his own mind. He always had a definite aim in view—the reaching of some sinner in the congregation, and bringing him to repentance at that hour, the extirpation of some vice then prevalent in the community, or the calling into immediate action some Christian virtue, or the elevation of the tone of religious feeling, or some other specific object which his observation of the community had suggested. And as he was intent upon attaining that end, ordinarily, books could afford him but little assistance. A knowledge of human nature, the working of the passions and prejudices, the means of operating upon the mind and the heart, were the chief subjects of thought. And as books could shed but little light upon these interesting topics, he depended more upon prayerful meditation, and Divine illumination, than upon the information derived from books.

True, he kept a good library, and read much, for the purpose of acquiring general information, and a critical knowledge of the Scriptures; but when it came to making a sermon adapted to a definite end, the books were not specific enough—he read and studied the hearts of those upon whom he would operate. And as he was in the habit of daily, intimate, and confidential intercourse with his congregation, he knew the spiritual condition,

the temperament, the weaknesses and prejudices of every individual, and from this source he derived much interesting material for his sermons. Few perhaps possess the exquisite sensibility to use profitably such delicate material, but he was most felicitous in adapting parts of his discourses to the known condition of certain individuals; and to this intimate knowledge of his audience, in connection with his skill in ministering to individual cases, is to be attributed much of his success in preaching.

Early in the summer of 1835, that fearful scourge of nations, the cholera, first visited Lebanon. A number of the citizens and transient persons were attacked, and not a few died. Mr. Donnell took the precaution to convey his family to the country, but returned himself, and devoted his whole time to the sick and dying, visiting and waiting on them, conversing with and praying for them. None of his flock fell victims to the "pestilence that walketh in darkness and wasteth at noonday," but several of them had deaths among their servants, and some in their families. Among the victims was Gen. McGregor, the brother-in-law of Col. Burton, at whose residence he died. The pestilence prevailed in several neighborhoods in the county, and many were suddenly called to eternity. Mr. Donnell was much exposed, but he escaped a serious attack.

The epidemic subsided before the opening of the camp-meeting season, and New Hope held its an-

nual meeting at the usual time; and though not so successful as some previous meetings, yet there were about twenty professions, and so much interest toward the close, that they determined to have a second meeting, which was accordingly held late in the fall. It was a most gracious season, and resulted in about one hundred and twenty conversions.

The camp-meeting at Lebanon was not as interesting as usual. There were but few conversions, and those few were mostly persons from a distance. The only additions to the Lebanon church were W. W. Crenshaw, Alfred Foster, J. Hawkins, A. Provine, and Nancy Provine.

In the fall of 1835, Mr. Donnell resigned the pastoral charge of the church at New Hope. The great body of the congregation parted with him with deep and abiding regret. As the town of Lebanon was yet too small to afford two good congregations, he and the Methodist minister preached on alternate Sabbaths, and he divided the remaining portion of his time between Gallatin and Murfreesboro.

The synod of 1835 organized a new presbytery out of portions of the territory of the Nashville and Lebanon Presbyteries. The town of Lebanon was embraced within the bounds of the new presbytery, and consequently Mr. Donnell and the Lebanon church were transferred from the Lebanon to the Chapman Presbytery.

The winter season, when not called off to dis-

tant meetings, was his favorite time for pastoral visitation and personal conferences. And no man ever more enjoyed such interviews, or rendered them more agreeable and profitable to the members of his charge. The most obscure received as much of his kind attention as the more conspicuous; the weak and the erring were his special care, and often were they reclaimed by his affectionate admonitions; but when kind attentions failed, he invariably brought offenders before the session, and subjected them to the Discipline of the Church. During the winter and spring, the columns of the Cumberland Presbyterian, formerly the Revivalist, were enriched with racy and spirited articles from his pen, but he always wrote on practical subjects, and with the sole design of promoting the interests of the Church.

In August, 1836, Mr. Donnell and the author attended a camp-meeting at New Moriah, in Rutherford county. Rev. Robert S. Donnell was pastor of the church, and consequently he had the management of the meeting. He appointed Mr. Donnell and myself to preach on Sabbath forenoon. There was in attendance a certain distinguished judge, who had recently become a preacher, and as he was known to be a little vain of his preaching talents, we besought the pastor to change his order, and appoint the judge to preach. But he refused to make the change. The judge received information of the order of the day, and instantly ordered his carriage, and left the encampment in a huff. Mr.

Donnell was greatly distressed that he should have been the occasion of the dissatisfaction, and entertained fears that the judge would reflect upon him as well as his cousin Robert, the pastor. In this state of mind I left him when called to the pulpit to preach the morning sermon, and when I returned to the camp, he told me he could not preach. I inquired the reason. He said that the occurrence of the morning had so distressed him that he had lost the spirit of his sermon, and he could not preach it. I told him he must preach something. He said the only subject that interested his feelings was one addressed to sinners, and as it was the hour for communion, that would not be suitable. I asked him what it was. He said it was a discourse founded upon the text, "Ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" I told him that was a terrible text for a communion service. But nevertheless he would have to preach something, and that in a very few moments.

"What shall I do?" he exclaimed; "I cannot preach the sermon I had prepared for the communion; it is as cold as a rock!"

"Then preach whatever is impressed on your mind," I replied, "and trust the results to the Lord."

The bell rang, and he went out to the pulpit, and after the introductory service, he read the text, "Ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" The congregation stared in amazement; but he commenced preaching without

any explanation. And such a sermon I never heard—such mingling of yearning tenderness and unsparing severity, such withering sarcasm and affectionate sympathy, such bold denunciation and tender wooing of the sinner to Christ.

At the close of that strange, unparalleled discourse, the whole congregation was convulsed. Sinners were groaning in spirit and sobbing with anguish, while Christians were weeping, praying, and burdened with solicitude for the ungodly. He paused, as in doubt what to do, and then remarked that he had been instructed to invite communicants to the table; but that he felt more like calling mourners, and weeping and praying over them, than feasting with Christians. Then he exclaimed:

“Christians, how can we feast together, while these poor sinners are perishing around us! What shall I do?”

I responded in a voice audible to the congregation: “Call mourners.”

“Well,” said he, “if the elders will remove the elements, I will call mourners.”

The emblems were removed, and in three minutes more than one hundred sinners were on their knees, crying for mercy. There was no more preaching that day or night. The exercises with the mourners continued through the day, and late in the evening Christians were invited to take their irreligious friends to the grove, and pray with them. For one half hour the encampment was deserted,

and unbroken silence reigned there. But the grove was vocal with the prayers of Christians and the wail of sinners, the songs of Zion and the shouts of new-born souls.

Arrangements had been made for the communion at night; but the mourners returned from the woods in such a state of excitement that it was deemed inadvisable. And again the table was removed and mourners called. The exercises in the altar were continued till a late hour, and many a poor sin-sick soul was made to rejoice in hope of salvation.

The communion table was spread the next day; but at the close of the first sermon, the excitement was so great that it was again removed, and the anxious invited. The work went on through that day and night without cessation. On Tuesday morning it was raining so that persons from the country could not get in; and as the shelter was leaking badly, the congregation assembled in the church, and after sermon the day was spent in instructing the mourners. The congregation did not retire for dinner till a late hour in the afternoon, and more than a score of souls were born of God during that blessed day.

As the mourners were nearly all converted, after supper the table was once more spread, and the communicants, in great peace, partook of the sacred emblems of the body and blood of the Son of God. Scores that on Sabbath were in the gall of bitterness, now sat down with Christians to commemo-

rate for the first time the sufferings which had procured the pardon and peace they had so recently realized. At the close of the meeting on Wednesday morning, it was ascertained that eighty-five had professed faith in Christ.

The next week he attended a camp-meeting at Jerusalem, in Rutherford county. Campbellism was prevalent and somewhat obtrusive in that vicinity. Mr. Donnell selected as his subject the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, praying in the temple. He first demonstrated that it was the privilege and duty of the sinner to pray, a doctrine denied by the Campbellites. He next showed that the unregenerate must present themselves before God *as sinners*, confessing their sins, abasing themselves in the Divine presence, and recognizing the justice of their condemnation. The Publican, "standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a *sinner!*"

He then contrasted the Pharisee with the Publican. He came, in the pride of his heart, to justify himself before God by his good works. He boasted of his morality, thanking God that he was not as other men, or even as the poor sin-stricken Publican at his side: he fasted twice in the week, and gave tithes of all that he possessed. And, well pleased with himself, he justified himself before God and man, and returned from the temple without offering one solitary petition, or asking one favor of his God.

The self-righteousness, self-conceit and vanity of the modern Pharisee were brought out so distinctly and so lifelike, that no one could mistake as to the original of the picture, though there was no direct allusion to the "Disciples." And yet the manner and spirit of the speaker were so winsome and unobtrusive, that no one could take offence. Whilst cogent, logical reasoning constrained conviction, a tender sympathy touched the hearts of all; and those who had hitherto been the advocates of Campbellism were moved to tears, and many of them were that day found at the altar of prayer, crying, "God be merciful to me a *sinner!*" And ere the meeting closed, some of them were heard to praise God for his grace and pardoning mercy. The meeting continued six days, and closed with about fifty conversions.

The camp-meetings at Lebanon had not, for two years past, been attended with any special interest, nor had the church, within that period, enjoyed a general revival. But, for months preceding the meeting of 1836, Mr. Donnell had been laboring to prepare the church for the occasion. It was made the subject of special prayer, in public and in private. He visited all of the members, and urged upon them the importance of a spiritual preparation for a holy convocation. He enlisted them in prayer for the conversion of certain individuals, and for a general revival. And such were the indications of interest, for weeks previous to the meeting, that the author, when addressing a con-

gregation in the State of Ohio, upon the subject of employing means to attain a revival, predicted that the church at Lebanon were then enjoying a most gracious revival, at their annual camp-meeting then in progress. This prediction was predicated upon the known preparation for the meeting, and the revival was anticipated as the legitimate fruit of that prayerful state of feeling known to exist; and such was my confidence in the indications witnessed at Lebanon weeks before, that the congregation which I was then addressing were authorized to publish me as a fanatic, if they did not, in two weeks, receive intelligence of a most gracious revival at Lebanon, Tennessee. The bold prediction was verified. Before I reached Tennessee, the papers published accounts of a revival, and upward of *eighty* converts at the camp-meeting, and a number more in town after the camp-meeting closed.

A majority of those who professed at the camp-meeting resided in remote neighborhoods, and such did not join the church at Lebanon, and many of those that professed joined other denominations, but the following names were added to the Lebanon church:

David Thomas, J. H. Fisher, Elizabeth Sumorhill, Elizabeth Hallam, Sarah Martin, Sally Pennybaker, Cassandra Pennybaker, John, Eliza, and Sophronia Allen, T. W. McDonald, Mary Dixon, Lucy J. Bullard, Churchwell Anderson, Robert Garrison, Frank Drake, William Hallam, James Crenshaw, Martha Penny, Mary Hawkins, Patience

Hall, James Malone, Rufus Foster, Pleasant Irby and lady, W. H. Ore, Charles Chambers, Delia Chambers, Mrs. Burk, Josiah S. McClain, Mrs. Dew, Mrs. Ann Chandler, James and Nancy Cowan, Mrs. Nancy Hibbitts, David and Ann McMurry, John and Mary Hall.

In October, 1836, Mr. Donnell attended a camp-meeting at Providence, and being invited to preach the funeral of a young lady who had died in the triumph of faith, he delineated in such rapturous strains the triumphant death of the Christian, as transported them to ecstasy; and then he contrasted the death of the Christian with the death of the despairing sinners, with such pathos and tenderness as convulsed the whole audience. Mourners were called, and a hundred came to the altar of prayer. A revival ensued, which continued for a week, and, at the close, numbered two hundred professions.\*

During the fall of 1836, a general religious interest prevailed throughout the bounds of the Chapman Presbytery. And though the smallest, in territory, of all the presbyteries, embracing not more than a dozen of churches, the records show an increase of about seven hundred communicants, besides a great number who were converted under Cumberland Presbyterian influence, but joined other denominations.

Mr. Donnell was at this period residing in town in a rented house, and devoting the whole of his

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\* D. C. Hibbitts, Esq.

time and energy to the interests of the Church. But inasmuch as he only occupied alternate Sabbaths in Lebanon, his salary was only three hundred dollars for the half of his time; and as he had given up the charge at New Hope, he had no other regular charge. He preached at Gallatin and Murfreesboro, but as there was no organized church in either place, he received little or nothing for these services. As a consequence, he began to experience a want of means to meet current expenses; and as he abhorred debt, he resolved to curtail expenditures by building him a house upon a vacant lot which he had bought. A good friend gave him the timber, and as he possessed more than ordinary mechanical skill, and had acquired the use of tools, he resolved to be his own architect. So, taking his negro man, he went to the woods, got out the timbers, had them hauled to his building site, and had commenced framing his house, when one of his ruling elders passing by, found his pastor toiling away in the hot sun, and inquired what he was doing. He told him that he was building himself a house, as he was not able longer to pay rent. The elder asked why he did not employ a workman to build it for him? He said he had no means to pay a workman, and he would rather do the work himself than incur a debt, with no reliable means of paying it.

The elder passed on, but with a heavy heart, as he contrasted his own ease and comfort with the toil and anxiety of his beloved pastor. No doubt

he formed some generous resolutions that evening, for when he came down in town next morning, he held in his hand a subscription, proposing to raise means to purchase a house and lot for his pastor. He passed around, related the interview of the previous day, presented his subscription-paper, and by ten o'clock the sum required was secured, and the house in which the pastor was living was purchased at a cost of twelve hundred dollars. Then he sought his pastor, and found him, as before, toiling upon his house. He presented him with a title-deed to the house and lot upon which he was residing, a gift from the congregation, by way of atonement for past neglect, with the assurance that, in the future, his wants should be supplied. The only condition connected with the presentation of this substantial donation was, that the pastor should *forthwith* give up his hard toil, and confine himself to the appropriate duties of his office, which was promptly accepted, and the project of building abandoned.

In 1837, Mr. Donnell represented Chapman Presbytery in the General Assembly. Several exciting questions were agitated. Cumberland College, at Princeton, Kentucky, was before the Assembly, with all its woes and wants, and its noted superintendent, Rev. John Barnett, was clamorous for relief. But, instead of appealing to the liberality of the members of the house, he sought to establish a *legal* claim upon the Assembly, insisting that it was under *obligations* to assume and liquidate the debts

of the college, amounting to eight thousand dollars. This claim was unfounded; but quiet, logical argument, such as Mr. Donnell deemed proper in debate, did not terrify, and therefore failed to silence the blustering advocate of this unfounded claim, who still pressed it, in his peculiar style. Mr. Donnell intimated to the elder from his presbytery, W. L. Martin, a professional lawyer, that he was the man to manage that case. Martin took the hint, and at the next sitting he took off Barnett and his claim in such handsome style as to call forth general applause. Barnett was so chagrined that he threatened to have Martin "ducked in the creek."

When the claim was voted down, and the college freed of Barnett's supervision, it was proposed to make up, by voluntary contribution, a sum sufficient to liquidate the indebtedness. To this proposition Mr. Donnell responded promptly and with commendable liberality.

The subject of a Church paper was discussed, and he warmly advocated the policy of one paper for the whole Church, published by a committee of three, upon the responsibility of the Assembly, the net proceeds to be appropriated to missionary purposes.

During the sessions of the Assembly a revival was awakened in the church, the credit of which was mainly awarded to the preaching of Alfred Bryan and George Donnell. By whomsoever awakened, they certainly did much to promote it.

During the summer of 1837, Mr. Donnell was

engaged in several revivals. The camp-meeting at Lebanon was a season of more than usual interest. The Methodist brethren had a good meeting in the vicinity the week previous, and general seriousness pervaded the community. On the first night of the meeting there were a number of mourners, and several interesting conversions. The interest increased as the meeting advanced. Sabbath was a solemn day. In the evening Christians conducted their irreligious friends to the grove for prayer, and from many a copse the wail of the desponding sinner and the fervent pleadings of the devout Christian ascended up to heaven. Presently the grove resounded with the rapturous song and the joyous shout of the young convert. Many that retired to the grove that evening, bowed down under the burden of sins unpardoned, returned rejoicing in sweet hope of heaven.

The excitement was so general that a sermon was deemed unnecessary. A brief exhortation and a call for mourners brought scores to the altar; among them, one who has long been on the walls of Zion, Rev. Joel E. Davis. His cousin, John Davis, had professed the first night of the meeting. They were classmates, and as intimate as twin-brothers. Joel had manifested no special interest during the meeting, and that evening the writer had had a long interview with him, but left him with the impression that he was strangely indifferent; and when I saw him walk into the altar with his hat on, still seemingly unmoved, I was shocked. But when I

saw him deliberately dispose of his hat, and, after finding a vacant spot, quietly kneel down in prayer, I was both surprised and delighted. The truth was manifest that a calm countenance is not always the index of a quiet conscience.

At a late hour, my attention was arrested by the exclamation, "JESUS!" oft repeated; and looking round, I saw Joel on his feet, jumping up and extending both arms, as though he would grasp something overhead, and at every leap exclaiming, "JESUS!" with a sweetness and a pathos that electrified the whole congregation.

Toward the close of the meeting, the session was convened to hear the experience of the young converts, and receive them into the Church. A numerous band presented themselves. Mr. Donnell conducted the examination in his inimitable style. Each convert was kindly led out into a full expression of the exercises of his mind, a few words of encouragement were fitly spoken, and a verse or two, the most appropriate in the whole range of song, were sung in strains sweet and melting as the song of seraphs. Then another convert was called upon to relate what the Lord had done for him; and thus the exercises proceeded for several hours. When Joel Davis was interrogated, he detailed briefly the exercises of his mind from the moment his cousin John professed till he resolved to present himself as a mourner, and then proceeded in the exposition of his mental struggle up to the moment when, out of deep despair, he

looked up to Christ: the exclamation, "JESUS!" terminated his narrative. Several times he attempted to resume it, but as often it was speedily cut short with the same exclamation. Mr. Donnell, perceiving that his feelings had the ascendancy, remarked: "Well, Joel, I suppose it was all Jesus from that point?" The only response he could give was, "JESUS! JESUS!"

In a letter published in the Cumberland Presbyterian, under date, September 26th, 1837, Mr. Donnell says: "We had not much preaching during the occasion, but what we had was pointed, plain, and commonly owned of the good Spirit in carrying forward his work. During the meeting there was much prayer in secret, and much attention paid in the grove to those who were seeking an interest in Christ. We had some of the most striking cases of conversion I have ever witnessed; and I hope they have made impressions upon the minds of the unconverted that will not be easily erased.

"From the best information we could obtain, there were at least sixty-five conversions during the meeting, and many left inquiring, What must we do? May they all believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they may be saved. How our hearts should be humbled before God in view of his amazing goodness to us! The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. May his blessed work still go on until his name shall be glorious on all the earth."

As at that day many persons attended camp-meetings from the distance of twenty to twenty-five miles, of course, comparatively few joined the Church where they professed; the majority returned home, and joined Church in their respective neighborhoods. The following names were added to the Lebanon church during the meeting, and shortly after its close:

James and Kitty Goostree, Agnes Saunders, Nathan and Sarah Cartmell, Elizabeth and Almira Cartmell, Britton B. Hunt, Mrs. Elizabeth Phipps, Miles and Kitty McCorkle, George Briggs, Ben. Cage, Martha Hancock, John Lewis, James C. and Sarah Jones, Matilda Hudson, Edwin Munford, Ann Hallum, Swift Dew, Eliza Fitzlin, Sarah Courtland, Jane Cox, James M. Irwin, Ed. Summerhill, Eliza Summerhill, Mary Irby, Irena Alexander, Elizabeth Saddler, Catherine Davis, Rachel A. Anderson, John and Elizabeth Williams, and Mr. Tarpley.

A few days after the close of this meeting I accompanied Mr. Donnell to Oak Grove camp-meeting, in the vicinity of Cairo, Sumner county. As this proved to be one of the most remarkable meetings on record, an allusion to the history of the congregation may be in place.

In the year 1833, Rev. H. B. Hill organized a small society in Cairo, and as he was a vigilant and zealous pastor, the little church increased yearly until 1837, when they, in connection with Hope-well, a society five miles north of Cairo, determined

to hold a camp-meeting. Great difficulty was experienced in procuring a suitable location. Finally a site was purchased in the heart of a dense forest of majestic oaks, two or three miles east of the village, in a neighborhood where the people had never enjoyed much preaching. The ground was cleared of undergrowth, and a shed and camps were erected. Many of the irreligious in the vicinity came in and assisted, and some of them built camps for themselves.

As it rained incessantly throughout the day on which the meeting was to have commenced, camp-holders did not move in until Saturday, and the first sermon ever preached on the ground was delivered by the author at three o'clock. Rev. J. M. McMurry preached at night, and made the first call for mourners; many came to the altar, and eight professed that night. On Sabbath, Mr. Donnell preached to an immense congregation, and, at the close of the sermon, about one hundred mourners crowded to the altar. All could not gain admittance within the enclosure, but they mourned without; and that day was as one of the days of the Son of man on earth. Conversions occurred at every hour through the day, and half of the night, not only in the altar, but in the congregation, in the tents, in the grove, and wherever sinners prayed and Christians encouraged them to faith in Christ.

On Monday, duty called me home. The pastor, Donnell, and McMurry, continued the meeting

through the week. On Saturday I returned, and found the meeting progressing with unabated interest. The altar was full, and many in the congregation were in deep distress; the Christians were all engaged, and the unconverted were all serious. The exercises were continued throughout the day without intermission. When any grew weary, they retired, and having taken refreshment, returned to the work, and others retired. About sunset all retired to the grove for prayer, and then assembled for public service. A song, a prayer, a brief exhortation, and a call for mourners, brought a crowd to the altar, and all were engaged till weariness of body constrained them to retire for repose.

On Sabbath, Rev. H. M. Bone preached to an assembly of at least three thousand persons. When the invitation to mourners was given, I was busily engaged in keeping the aisles open, that ingress into the altar might not be obstructed. I had just cleared one aisle, and a minute afterwards I saw eight corpulent old ladies, the youngest of whom seemed to be at least fifty, moving slowly down the aisle. I could not imagine with what intent they came, and, through deference to age, I stood aside, and awaited their movements. Having arrived at the altar, all passed in and kneeled at the same bench, filling its entire length. Never before nor since have I witnessed such a sight. They had been brought up under Baptist influence, and had long been waiting the "Lord's good time." The

preacher had insisted that *now* is the Lord's time, and the old ladies had come to test the truth of the sermon. When they had been in the altar about an hour, one of them found the Lord, and immediately began to encourage the others, telling them that she had been for thirty years waiting the Lord's good time, and that all that while the Lord had been willing every day. They gladly received the intelligence, and, ere the meeting closed, the last one of them professed.

The meeting closed on Monday, after having enjoyed a continued effusion of the Spirit for ten days. The following extract from a communication published in the Cumberland Presbyterian, under date of October 24, 1837, will show the results of this wonderful meeting:

“Our brethren in the ministry commenced in the spirit, the Church at once went unanimously to work, and God seemed at once to pour out his Spirit, and sinners to obey his voice and turn to him. It was the judgment of many who were present during the whole of the exercises, that such a time of ingathering of souls to Christ had rarely, if ever, been witnessed in the West. Among the converts were very many old persons, mostly old gentlemen, some of whom were the first emigrants to Sumner county. It was truly affecting to look along the mourners' bench, and see so many gray heads bowed in prayer and supplication, seeking pardon for the sins of many years. The converts were all grown persons, except two boys about the

age of thirteen or fourteen years; and we should say, for the encouragement of the world, that ten of our camp-holders were unconverted persons at the commencement of the meeting, but left it rejoicing in the pardoning love of the Saviour.

“The judgment of those present varied from two hundred and fifty to three hundred converts, for no eye but that of our guardian angel, or that of the Omniscient God, could have counted the converts. In view of what God has done for us, as a Church and a community, we should bless the God of camp-meetings, and, adopting the language of the Psalmist, should say, ‘Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, O Lord! be the glory.’

“H. B. HILL.”

It was the general belief at that time, and it is the prevailing tradition to the present day, that not less than three hundred persons professed religion at that meeting. Certainly no meeting ever wrought a greater reformation in any community. Previous to that meeting, drunkenness and gambling, and kindred vices, were lamentably prevalent, and a comparatively small proportion of the community made any pretensions to religion; but from that date, year after year, so long as their excellent pastor remained with them, larger and more successful camp-meetings were held at Oak Grove than at any other encampment within the presbytery. And though death, and removals to other sections, have left but few of the converts of 1837,

yet at this day there is a large and respectable church in the vicinity, still famous for extensive revivals.

At the fall session of Chapman Presbytery, eleven hundred and twenty-four conversions were reported as having occurred during the preceding six months. And subsequent to the session of presbytery, Mr. Donnell had about twenty professions within the bounds of his congregation.

Mr. Donnell's influence in the Assembly of 1837, and the reputation which the Lebanon church had acquired, secured the meeting of the Assembly of 1838 in Lebanon. It was the first time that body had convened at any other place in Tennessee than Nashville, and as none of the enterprises of the Church were at that time located in Lebanon, there was nothing except the known hospitality of the church, and the popularity of its pastor, to draw the Assembly to this place. Though not as accessible nor as central as some other places, there was nevertheless an unusually large Assembly. And though the town was then small, the hospitality of the citizens made the members so much at home, that all were delighted, and when, six years afterwards, Lebanon was again put in nomination, it carried by a very large vote.

The camp and protracted meetings held during the summer and fall of 1838 were not attended with usual interest, and the Minutes of the presbytery represent the churches as being in a state of apathy. Reaction usually follows great excitement,

and after the unparalleled success of the meetings of 1837, it is not strange that those of 1838 should be less interesting. But other causes were at work, among the members and churches of the presbytery, calculated to bring on a state of apathy. The demon of discord had entered, and marred the peace and confidence of brethren once united and harmonious.

It is painful to recur to the unhappy difficulty, but, inasmuch as it was the subject of presbyterial action, it becomes the duty of a faithful biographer to place the subject in such light as will enable posterity to render a just verdict.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## VINDICATION OF CHARACTER.

IN July, 1834, James B. McMurry, brother-in-law of Rev. George Donnell, and son-in-law of Rev. Thomas Calhoon, died of consumption. His decline was protracted, and for months previous to his death he was conscious of his approaching dissolution. He often conversed with intimate friends about the proper disposition of his property; but deferred the execution of his will till within a day or two of his death. He was still able to sit up, and to walk across the room; but becoming conscious that he was liable to strangulation in the paroxysms of coughing, he deemed it prudent no longer to delay that disposition of his property which he had long contemplated.

Knowing the sensibility of his only brother, Rev. J. M. McMurry, and solicitous to spare him unnecessary pain, he called upon his brother-in-law, Mr. Donnell, to aid him in preparing his will. Calling him to his bedside, he detailed to him the disposition he wished to make of each item of his property. Mr. Donnell made a memorandum of the several items, with the disposition of each.

This memorandum was read to Mr. McMurry, and received his approval. Mr. Donnell then retired to another room to prepare the will, according to the instruction received. Finding some difficulty as to the legal forms, Mr. Donnell called to his aid Rev. J. M. McMurry, and they jointly wrote out the will in due form, and when completed they returned and read it to J. B. McMurry, item by item, and when each and all had received his approval, as in perfect accordance with his wishes, it was then read to his wife for her approval, after which he sat up and signed it as his will.

The author was present when the will was made, but having been connected with the family only one month, I did not participate in its preparation. After it had been signed, I had a long and very satisfactory conversation with J. B. McMurry, respecting his religious interests, and his prospects in view of approaching dissolution. He expressed unwavering confidence in his Saviour, and a willingness to go at his bidding. He congratulated himself that he had disposed of his temporal matters, and could now devote his whole mind to his spiritual interest. He sat up that evening in his arm-chair, and partook of refreshments, and then participated in the family devotions, which seemed to afford him much comfort and peace. A day or two afterward he felt himself sinking, and requesting the presence of the family and servants, he took an affectionate leave of all; and while, at his request, Mr. Donnell sang: "O Jesus, my

Saviour, I know thou art mine," he expired, looking steadfastly up into heaven, and whispering the name of Jesus.

When the provisions of his will were known to Rev. Thomas Calhoun and his family, they were dissatisfied. The widow was not as well provided for as they had anticipated. James B. McMurry had no title to the farm upon which he had resided, and consequently he did not will his widow any landed estate, but provided that his father should give his little son whatever he had intended for him. He emancipated two negro boys which his father had given him, provided they should consent to go to Liberia. But he had willed to his wife all that came by her, and all his personal property; and notwithstanding the will had been read to her, and received her approval at the time, yet she was induced to bring suit to set it aside.

Her lawyer, John S. Topp, Esq., after a careful examination of the case, proposed a compromise. David McMurry, the father of the deceased, was opposed to a compromise; but finally, for the sake of peace among brethren and ministers of the same Church, he consented, and John S. Topp, Esq., Seymour Powell, and the author, were chosen to compromise the matter. For a time peace was restored, but there was a want of cordiality and fraternal feeling. Finally, in 1838, the widow, disregarding the compromise, instituted suit to set aside the will.

It came to trial in the Circuit Court, in June,

1838. Rev. Thomas Calhoun, Rev. J. M. McMurry, Mr. Donnell, the attending physician, Dr. James White, and the author, were the principal witnesses in the case. Rev. Thomas Calhoun testified that, in his judgment, James B. McMurry was not at the time the will was made of a sound and disposing mind—that the instrument which he was induced to sign was the will of George Donnell and J. M. McMurry. All of the other witnesses named concurred in testifying that the deceased was of sound and disposing mind when the will was made, and throughout his illness up to the last moment of his life. The writer, moreover, testified that James B. McMurry had told him, four months before his death, that he intended to emancipate his negro boys. The will was established without difficulty, and thereby the characters of Donnell and J. M. McMurry were vindicated from the unfounded charge of fraud. But unkind feelings were engendered; and it was soon blazoned abroad that ministers of the same Church had given in court conflicting testimony. Mr. Calhoun was an aged and venerable minister—one of the fathers of the Church, whose reputation was in all its borders. Mr. Donnell, though favorably known within the sphere of his operations, and beloved as far as known, was comparatively a young man; while McMurry and the author had not been in the ministry more than three or four years. It was natural, therefore, that those who had long known and revered “Father Calhoun,” but knew

little of Donnell, and less of McMurry and Anderson, should be disposed to credit the testimony of the venerable father. Then there were those who knew both parties, who seemed to think it incumbent upon them to sustain the character of one of the fathers of the Church, regardless of the rights of younger ministers, whom they were pleased to regard as "lesser lights."

The presbytery was divided in sentiment—the majority of the ministers and the laity endorsing the decision of the court, and acquitting Donnell and McMurry of the charge of fraud; while a minority, diminutive in number, but respectable in position and influence, were disposed to sustain Calhoun, though they did not profess to believe the charge of fraud. The parties themselves could not cordially coöperate in the ministry. Mr. Calhoun refused to withdraw the offensive charge; and yet he would not enter a prosecution, either in the court or the presbytery. In this state of the case, Donnell and McMurry, unwilling longer to rest under an imputation of such serious import, petitioned the presbytery to take up the charge upon the ground of common fame, and investigate it.

Accordingly, a presbytery was called for the purpose, which convened in Lebanon, September 4, 1838. The members present were Francis Johnson, Moderator, George Donnell, R. D. Bell, John M. McMurry, J. L. Dillard, John Provine, H. B. Hill, and Thomas Calhoun, ministers: Ephraim

Pursley, T. C. Beard, Thomas Davis, J. J. Hibbitts, and D. C. Hibbitts, -elders.

The presbytery having constituted, adopted the following resolution :

“WHEREAS, George Donnell and John M. McMurry consider themselves involved by public fame in a charge of fraud by their agency in the business of James B. McMurry, deceased ;

“*Resolved*, That presbytery, at their request, take up the matter for investigation.

“Upon examination, it appeared that the parties were not ready for the final action of the presbytery ; and therefore it was resolved that a committee of five be appointed and empowered to act in procuring testimony relative to the case now pending, who shall report to a session of this presbytery, which shall meet in this place on Tuesday after the fourth Sabbath in this month ; and that brethren John Provine, J. L. Dillard, Francis Johnson, H. B. Hill, and D. C. Hibbitts compose said committee.

“Presbytery adjourned to meet in Lebanon, Wilson county, Tennessee, on Tuesday, the 25th instant, at 10 o'clock. - Concluded with prayer.

“FRANCIS JOHNSON, Moderator.

“R. D. BELL, Clerk.”

The presbytery met according to adjournment. Ministers present, Thomas Calhoon, J. L. Dillard, John Provine, Francis Johnson, George Donnell, H. B. Hill, J. M. McMurry, and R. D. Bell. Re-

representatives present, E. B. Wheeler, Stephen McDaniel, Thomas Davis, T. J. Statton, Ephraim Pursley, J. W. Smith, and D. C. Hibbitts.

“The committee appointed at the former session of the presbytery to act in procuring testimony in the case pending, report that they have attended to the duty assigned them.”

After the report was considered, the following Minute was adopted :

“WHEREAS, Brethren George Donnell and John M. McMurry, at a previous presbytery, alleged that they were charged by public rumor with fraud in the transactions connected with James B. McMurry’s will, which rumor grew out of a discrepancy in the testimony given in court, in the town of Lebanon, Wilson county, Tennessee, by George Donnell and John M. McMurry, of the one part, and Thomas Calhoon of the other; and presbytery having heard the statements and views of those brethren, unanimously believe that they, the said George Donnell and John M. McMurry, are not guilty of that crime.

“*Resolved*, therefore, that the presbytery dismiss the case without further investigation.”

Thus we have the innocence of the party charged established beyond the possibility of a reasonable doubt. In the first place, it is highly improbable that two self-sacrificing ministers, noted for conscientious devotion to the cause of Christ, should conspire to rob a dying brother of his right to dispose of his earthly effects, and thereby defraud his

disconsolate widow. Then we have the corroborating testimony of the attending physician, the author, and other reliable witnesses, that, throughout his decline, James B. McMurry was at all times *rational*, as all consumptive patients usually are. Then the solemn decision of the court and the jury in establishing the will, and thereby refuting the charge of fraud, and sustaining the testimony in favor of the competency of the deceased. And, finally, the *unanimous* decision of the presbytery acquitting them of the charge, their *accuser* voting for their acquittal, thereby sustaining their testimony in court, and virtually condemning his own.

The truth is, there was no need that Donnell and McMurry should have petitioned the presbytery for an investigation. Though the charge of fraud had been made by a venerable father in the ministry, public opinion did not, at any time, endorse the charge to an extent that called for investigation. But Mr. Donnell was sensitive, and careful of his reputation, and having been charged with fraud by one whom all had revered, whose influence had been unbounded, he deemed it prudent to have so grave a charge adjudicated in the ecclesiastical court, that the evidence of his innocence might be placed upon the records of the Church as well as the State.

After the acquittal of Donnell and McMurry, some of Calhoun's personal friends, solicitous lest the decisions of the judicial and ecclesiastical courts should seriously depreciate his character, in-

troduced into presbytery, and succeeded in procuring the adoption of the following resolution :

“WHEREAS, Brother Thomas Calhoun, though not immediately connected with the action of the presbytery, is yet indirectly involved :

“*Resolved*, That the presbytery hereby express their belief that he was conscientious and strictly honest in all that he testified before the court relating to the transaction of James B. McMurry’s will.”

Though this resolution may seem, to those unacquainted with the circumstances, to conflict with the resolution *unanimously* acquitting Donnell and McMurry, yet it is possible that, for a time, Calhoun did believe James B. McMurry incompetent to make a will, and that the instrument that purported to be his will was dictated by Donnell and J. M. McMurry.

Mr. Calhoun was a man of strong passions and prejudices, and, when excited, his judgment was sometimes unconsciously biased. His after-conduct shows that his mind and feelings had undergone a radical change. While the charge was pending, he treated the parties accused, particularly Donnell, with reserve and marked coolness ; but after they had been triumphantly acquitted by the court and the presbytery, and when he saw that they enjoyed the public confidence, as fully as though the charge had never been preferred, he became conciliatory in his manner, and ultimately made direct and repeated overtures for reconciliation ;

and for some years previous to Mr. Donnell's death, he and Calhoon maintained friendly relations. And as McMurry never was subjected to so much opposition, advances of friendship and kindness were at a much earlier date tendered to him, and for many years he treated McMurry with marked respect; and after Mr. Calhoon's death, McMurry was called to the pastoral charge of the Big Spring church, over which Calhoon had been pastor more than thirty years.

Thus have we briefly sketched the rise, development, and termination of a difficulty which for years was a source of alienation of brethren, and a reproach upon the Church. That such a charge should have been preferred against ministers so blameless and so devoted, is evidence that the best men are liable to be impeached. That such a charge should have originated from a source so respectable, is indeed humiliating; but let it admonish all to beware of taking up an evil report or surmise against a brother. It is some consolation, however, to know that religion triumphed. At no period were the labors of Donnell and McMurry more blessed than while this charge was resting upon them; and when their characters were vindicated, they had grace to forgive, and to reciprocate advances for the restoration of fraternal feeling. Donnell and Calhoon died in peace with all the world, and no doubt have had a happy reünion in heaven, while McMurry lives to revere the memory of both.

## CHAPTER XX.

## A CHURCH PAPER—DONNELL EDITOR.

ABOUT the first of the year 1839, it became generally known through the Church that Rev. James Smith, the editor and proprietor of the Cumberland Presbyterian, the only periodical published in the Church, had become so embarrassed that he could not continue the publication. This awakened a general solicitude for the action of the Assembly in maturing a plan for the publication of a Church paper, upon the responsibility of the Church. But the Assembly of 1838 had adjourned till 1840, and consequently it would not meet in 1839. But such was the solicitude for the action of the Assembly, that a number of ministers united in requesting the Moderator to call a meeting of that body, to be held in Nashville in May, 1839. But the Moderator, Rev. Hiram A. Hunter, doubted his authority to call an Assembly, but he requested the presbyteries to appoint delegates to a Convention, to be held in Nashville in May, 1839, "for the purpose of adopting such measures as shall secure the perpetuation of the Cumberland Presbyterian."

In view of this call for a Convention, published in the Cumberland Presbyterian of March 12, 1839, Chapman Presbytery, at its session in April following, appointed a committee "to take into consideration the propriety of sending delegates to the proposed Convention." The committee reported in favor of sending delegates; accordingly, the presbytery appointed George Donnell, J. L. Dillard, and J. S. McClain, delegates to said Convention.

The Convention assembled in Nashville on Tuesday, the 21st of May, 1839, and organized by electing Rev. James B. Porter, Chairman, and Rev. James Wallace, Clerk. About forty delegates were present, among whom were many of the more influential ministers of the Church. A committee was appointed "to present a plan for the publication of a religious journal in the Church." Rev. Hiram A. Hunter, J. S. McClain, C. P. Reed, George Donnell, T. B. Wilson, Jesse Ford, and George Williamson, constituted said committee.

On Thursday, the third day of the Convention, the committee reported their plan, which on the day following was adopted, the leading features of which are as follows:

"Your committee to whom was assigned the duty of drafting a plan for the establishment of a religious newspaper, as the property and organ of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to submit the following report:

“1. The importance of such a paper is obvious to all, and your committee believe that the interests of the Church imperiously demand it, and that a large portion of the members are looking to this Convention to adopt some plan by which this desirable object may be obtained.

“2. This Convention shall locate the paper, appoint an editor and publishing committee, who shall hold their appointments until the meeting of the next Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, when successors shall be appointed for the term of two years, and for the same length of time for ever thereafter.

“3. The paper shall be exclusively the property of the presbyteries that shall subscribe for the same, in accordance with the plan herein proposed, and the net profits arising therefrom shall be divided between said presbyteries, in proportion to the amount they respectively subscribe, and the loss, if any, shall be sustained by the presbyteries in the same proportion.

“4. The presbyteries that take the stock in this paper may, at the next or any subsequent Assembly, surrender the whole concern to the management of the Assembly, provided that body will accept it, and undertake to carry it on according to the plan adopted by the Convention.

“HIRAM A. HUNTER, Chairman.

“On motion, the House went into the election of a place at which the paper should be published;

whereupon the town of Lebanon, Wilson county, Tennessee, was chosen.

“On motion, the Convention went into the appointment of a publishing committee, whereupon Brothers J. S. McClain, D. C. Hibbitts, W. L. Martin, J. Golladay, and R. L. Caruthers, were appointed said committee.

“On motion, Brothers Ralston, Warren, and Burrow were appointed a committee to confer with some suitable person on the subject of editing the paper, and report to this House.

“On the last day of the Convention, the committee recommended Brother George Donnell as a suitable person to edit the contemplated paper; whereupon Brother George Donnell was, by vote of the Convention, chosen editor.

“*Resolved*, That one thousand copies of these minutes, and as many prospectuses of our contemplated paper as the publishing committee may judge necessary, be printed for distribution throughout our Church, and that Brother George Donnell superintend the publication and distribution of the same.

“On motion, the Convention adjourned.

“Concluded with prayer.

“JAMES B. PORTER, Chairman.

“JAMES WALLACE, Clerk.”

Such are the results of the deliberations of the Convention upon the subject of a paper for the Church. It appears that they abandoned the idea

of continuing the Cumberland Presbyterian, and made arrangements for the establishment of a new paper, which was to be the property and the organ of the Church. The chief reason for adopting this plan was this: the Cumberland Presbyterian was the property of Rev. James Smith, and had been published upon his individual responsibility, and consequently he alone had the right to control it or dispose of it at will. In the exercise of that right, he chose to demand more for it than the Convention were able or disposed to give. They determined therefore to leave him in peaceable possession of his paper, at liberty to continue or discontinue its publication, as he might choose, and to establish a Church paper, which should be the property of the Church, and under its control.

The fact that Mr. Donnell was elected the editor of a paper, established as the organ of the Church, was a flattering expression of public confidence in his ability, integrity, and orthodoxy, and an unmistakable endorsement of the recent decision of the Chapman Presbytery, acquitting him of the charge of fraud. It was, moreover, a demonstration that his reputation had not been impaired by the unfounded charge.

The publication of the Cumberland Presbyterian was suspended previous to the meeting of the Convention; and as it was generally believed that its proprietor would not be able to resume the publication, the Convention instructed the publishing committee to make arrangements to publish the new paper im-

mediately after the fall sessions of the presbyteries, provided that a sufficient number of subscribers should be reported by that time. Accordingly, a large number of prospectuses were sent out with the printed minutes of the Convention, and the ministers, generally, went to work with zeal to procure subscribers for the Church paper. The enterprise of establishing a paper, the proceeds of which should belong to the Church, was very popular, and long lists of subscribers were obtained in almost every populous section of the Church, and the prospect was that the new paper would command a wide circulation.

But, contrary to all expectation, the publication of the Cumberland Presbyterian was resumed in September, 1839, a month before the fall session of the presbyteries, and consequently before they had taken any action committing them to the new paper. And as the first number of the paper published after the suspension contained a strong remonstrance against the proceedings of the Convention, many who had hitherto approved the plan for a Church paper began to waver, and to manifest a disinclination to commit themselves to the action of the Convention.

The Cumberland Presbyterian, though still edited mainly by Rev. James Smith, was published by Rev. R. D. Harris, of Kentucky, a man of some means and influence. The reasons assigned by Mr. Smith for resuming the publication were, first, that the Convention had not purchased his sub-

scription list, and therefore he had a right to dispose of it in any way that would subserve his interests; secondly, the Convention had made no arrangements to remunerate his subscribers who had paid in advance, and he had no other way of refunding; thirdly, he hoped that by continuing the publication till the next Assembly, he could induce that body to purchase his subscription list; and, finally, he claimed to be the accredited editor of the Assembly, and he denied the right of the Convention to supersede him.

These reasons were all plausible, and some of them valid; and as they were urged with cogency, it is not strange that the friends of the Convention and the advocates of a Church paper hesitated. In well-informed circles, it was understood that Harris could not long continue the publication of a paper whose patronage was constantly diminishing. But it was manifest, from the tone of the Cumberland Presbyterian, that the moment the Convention paper should make its appearance, a war between the two papers would be inevitable. So, for the sake of peace, Mr. Donnell and the publishing committee deemed it advisable to postpone the publication of the new paper till after the meeting of the Assembly. The Cumberland Presbyterian was published till the meeting of the Assembly in 1840, and then it was discontinued without the hope of resumption.

In the meantime, Dr. Cossitt had issued two or three numbers of a monthly, which he appro-

priately styled the "Banner of Peace." The tone and spirit were as oil upon the troubled waters. The Assembly, deeming it safer to encourage a paper already in circulation, which promised to meet the wants of the Church, than to attempt at that time to get up a Church paper, abandoned the project of the Convention, and encouraged Dr. Cositt to continue the Banner of Peace, with assurances of patronage. The Banner still floats, the largest and most widely circulated paper of the Church.

Though the project of the Convention was an abortion, yet the fact that Mr. Donnell was elected to the highly responsible office of editing the contemplated organ of the Church, shows in what estimation he was held by the Convention, embracing, as it did, many of the leading ministers of the Church. And the fact that, between the adjournment of the Convention and the reëpearance of the Cumberland Presbyterian, a period of little more than three months, a large subscription list had been obtained, proves that the appointment was acceptable to a large portion of the Church. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that composition was not his forte—that he was more at home in the pulpit and the altar than he would have been in the editor's chair.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## PASTORAL LABORS, CONTINUED.

THOUGH Mr. Donnell was, by the partiality of his brethren in the ministry, made to play a conspicuous part in the movement for the establishment of a Church paper, he did not abate, in the least degree, his zeal or vigilance in his pastoral duties. Never was he more devoted to the interests of his flock, or intent upon the conversion of sinners. The fall of 1839 was unusually laborious. Several of the camp-meetings were protracted to ten and twelve days, particularly Oak Grove and New Hope: at the former, there were one hundred and seventy, and at the latter, one hundred and eighty-nine conversions. The number of professions at the Lebanon meeting is not reported, but the following names were added to the church roll:

Rebecca Allison, F. N. Ewing, Elvira Phipps, Elizabeth Munford, James and Sarah Foster, Julia Bailey, J. L. Chapman, L. Wilkerson, Rebecca Perkins, Francis Peyton, Mary Burk, James Hunter, Ben. Castleman, Richard Rutledge, Harriet Rutledge, Caroline Wharton, Henry Cartmell, James Cummings, Elam and Mary Edge.

In May, 1840, Mr. Donnell represented Chapman Presbytery in the General Assembly. On his way to the meeting of that body at Elkton, Kentucky, he had an appointment for the Sabbath at Cross Plains. He did not reach the village Saturday evening, but stopping a few miles short with a friend, he rode in Sabbath morning, when he found the only church in the place occupied by a Universalist preacher. He attended the service with the intention of publishing an appointment for the afternoon and night. But at the close of the service, the Universalist, although he knew Mr. Donnell was there and expected to preach, announced that he would preach again in the afternoon. Mr. Donnell then rose and announced that he would preach at night. He attended in the afternoon, and heard the most licentious doctrines promulgated by the Universalist.

At night, Mr. Donnell preached upon the text, "Verily, verily I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He made no allusion to the Universalist or his doctrines, but preached, with power and pungency, the necessity of a thorough regeneration of the heart by the Eternal Spirit, and he enforced this central doctrine of the gospel with a pathos that drew tears from his audience.

When the service was closed, and the congregation was about to be dismissed, the little Universalist sprang up and requested the audience to remain a few minutes, as he wished to make some

remarks upon the sermon. Mr. Donnell then invited him to occupy the pulpit. He accepted, and commenced his harangue by complaining that he and his doctrine had been assailed; thought it rude and unchristian that a stranger in a strange land should be thus assailed by one professing to be a minister of the gospel of peace; insinuated that the preacher was destitute of the spirit of the gospel, and certainly he was ignorant of the courtesy due a Christian gentleman; then threw himself upon the sympathies of the community, to protect him against such rude assaults.

Mr. Donnell replied that he too was a stranger, having never before visited the place; that he had made no assault upon the gentleman or his doctrine; that through courtesy he had forbore any allusion to him or his unscriptural and pernicious sentiments; that he had simply preached a plain gospel sermon upon the necessity of regeneration, which all Christians admitted to be an essential doctrine of the gospel; that if the gentleman held sentiments so antagonistic to that vital doctrine, that the preaching to sinners what Christ himself preached constituted an assault upon him or his doctrines, then it was most manifest that his doctrines were antagonistic to the teachings of Jesus Christ, and if the gentleman had chosen to make up an issue with the God of truth, he must not quarrel with him because he chose to follow the guidance of Inspiration; that he did not feel at liberty to withhold one of the most prominent and most essential doc-

trines of the gospel, lest it should offend the gentleman's taste.

He then solemnly warned the people against the pernicious and licentious doctrines which had been taught in the discourses which he had that day heard. Appealing to the young men, he wished to know if they did not wish in their hearts that the gentleman's licentious sentiments were true; whether, if they could be assured of their truth, they would not feel themselves freed from all restraint, and at liberty to indulge their passions and propensities without restraint or remorse; whether, if they could believe his doctrine, they would not freely indulge in many sins from which they now refrained, under the conviction that such indulgence would endanger their salvation? And then he appealed to them to say whether a doctrine which tends to licentiousness, which tends to multiply sins, be of God or of Satan? Then, having notified the congregation that he should take no further notice of any thing the little Universalist might say, he retired.

The little Universalist sprang up and commenced a second harangue; but the congregation rose up *en masse* and retired, leaving him to bolster up, as best he could, four or five of his chopfallen disciples. The Universalist wrote a book in which he gave his rencounter with Donnell a conspicuous notice, but neither his preaching nor his book converted the people to his faith. When they would

think of adopting it, Donnell's sermon would rise up in judgment against it.

The Assembly of 1840 was a memorable crisis in the history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Several subjects of vital importance, it was known, would be pressed upon the attention of that body, and presbyteries were exhorted to send their ablest men. Rev. James Smith, editor and proprietor of the Cumberland Presbyterian, had failed for a large amount, involving many of his brethren in heavy security debts. He maintained that, inasmuch as he had been elected editor by the General Assembly, and when he was disposed to resign and discontinue the paper, he had been requested by that body to continue, with assurances that his subscription list should be increased, and as the increase was not equal to the promise, that the Assembly was under moral obligations to indemnify him for the loss he had sustained in continuing the publication. And fears were entertained lest brethren who had heavy securities to pay for Mr. Smith might favor his claims, as the only hope of recovering the losses they had sustained.

But the Assembly convened, and when Smith's claims were preferred, his suffering securities who were in the Assembly were, to a man, opposed to the extravagant claims for indemnity which had been set up and advocated by a few. A committee was appointed, and, after a thorough investigation of the whole subject, they reported in favor of

allowing a small indemnity—less than two thousand dollars—in consequence of certain definite pledges which had been given, by a former Assembly, to procure a certain number of subscribers, and which pledges had not been fully redeemed. But this indemnity did not cover the one-tenth of Smith's liabilities. The indemnity allowed was paid before the Assembly adjourned.

The subject of a Church paper, and the endowment of Cumberland College, at Princeton, Kentucky, were also under consideration. Upon all these vital questions Mr. Donnell's voice was heard in advocacy of sound, conservative principles, though efforts to intimidate were made, such as were never before nor since witnessed in a General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. But justice, reason, and conciliatory counsels prevailed; and the Church, after having been agitated by factious discord, and threatened with disruption, was pacified.

In the latter part of the summer of 1840, Mr. Donnell and the family connection experienced a sad bereavement. David and Ann McMurry, the father and mother-in-law of Mr. Donnell, after only a few days' illness, were both on the same day removed from the sufferings and sorrows of this life, to that rest that remaineth for the people of God. The author was at that time residing at Winchester. The following letter from Mr. Donnell, written the day after the extraordinary bereavement, brought us the sad intelligence.

“LEBANON, August 27, 1840.

“DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER :

“The Lord reigns, and the language of the pious should be, ‘Let him do all his pleasure.’ In all he does he will make all things work together for our good. When we compare our comforts or our sorrows with our eternity, what are they? This is at best a weeping world, and often we have to submit to the bitterest and the most trying bereavements; but let us ever try to feel that ‘it is the Lord; let him do as seemeth him good.’ If he takes our friends from us, and makes us strangers upon the earth, let us recollect that in eternity, (and we will all soon be there,) we will see how it has worked for our good. God grant us all grace to bear our double bereavement.

“I must disclose the melancholy intelligence that both of your beloved parents have left us to weep our lone way on earth, till we all shall meet in heaven.

“They were both taken sick on the same day, and on the eighth day, both died within twelve hours of each other. They were sensible till the last, and died in full prospect of meeting each other, and other long-lost friends, and especially the blessed Saviour, in the better world.

“We are truly a distressed family: we have just laid the dear old pair side by side in the same grave. I have not time to write more now, but will give particulars hereafter. Pray for us all. Farewell.

GEORGE DONNELL.”

We had previously been informed that both were sick, but neither at that date was considered dangerous. When a letter, closed with a black seal, was handed to me in the presence of my wife, a sudden pallor blanched her cheek. As I broke the ominous seal, and hastily sketched its contents, she drew near, and tremblingly inquired, "Which?" The response was, "Both." She sank prostrate, as though her own spirit had instantly joined the departed ones. She was taken up and quietly laid upon the bed. Nature revived; then came the paroxysm of unutterable grief. To speak to her words of consolation was impossible. A note was written and silently deposited in her hand, and then she was left for a season, all alone. Grace triumphed, and soon grief had subsided into a calm, subdued melancholy. So soon as practicable, we visited the homestead, and bedewed with tears the grave of the departed.

The year 1841 was a season of peace and repose in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, after years of dissension and alarms of division, and the active efforts of a few restless spirits to bring about a schism. Fraternal feeling and Christian confidence were restored; and brethren that had been estranged, and had regarded each other with distrust, now that the object of the schismatics had become manifest, were drawn together by their attachment for the Church and its doctrines. Though there was no general revival, yet many churches enjoyed seasons of refreshing. The Chap-

man Presbytery reported about three hundred professions. The only additions to the Lebanon church were :

W. T. Sayles, Osburn and Elizabeth Bettis, Joseph Burk, Sarah Cox, Caroline Smith, Jordan Stokes, W. P. McClain, and Matilda Hays.

The Assembly of 1842 constitutes an epoch in the educational interests of the Church. The necessity of collegiate education was recognized by the general synod, in the establishment of Cumberland College. And the indispensable necessity of an endowment had been recognized and provided for in the plan of the institution. But no adequate endowment had been raised, and the Trustees reported to the Assembly of 1840, that in consequence of this neglect, the permanence of the institution was in jeopardy. The Assembly, alarmed on account of the precarious condition of the only college in the Church, resolved to raise an endowment of \$55,000 at least, provided that the Trustees would liquidate the existing indebtedness.

Accordingly, agents were appointed to solicit funds for the purpose; and the Trustees reported to the Assembly of 1841 that \$15,781 had been raised. But there was no report of progress in liquidating the debts then hanging over the institution. This omission discouraged the agents and friends of the enterprise, and consequently but little was done during the following year toward increasing the endowment fund.

The Assembly of 1842 appointed Dr. Cossitt,

Feemster, Ralston, Aston, Bond, McKenney, and Leavell, a committee on education. They reported "that there exists a debt against the institution of \$5654 50, which will have to be raised, or else the college property will be sold by process of law." And in view of this indebtedness, the committee recommend that "inasmuch as the Assembly have never agreed or made any arrangements to raise funds to pay old debts, your committee think it inexpedient to make any attempt to raise the amount required."

The Assembly, disappointed in the expected liquidation of the debts, and despairing of building up a prosperous institution at Princeton, resolved to seek a more eligible location. This decision had been anticipated previous to the meeting of the Assembly; and in view of such a crisis, the citizens of Lebanon, influenced by Mr. Donnell and his church session, had sent up a petition to the Assembly, recommending that, in case that body should deem it advisable to locate a new institution, the town of Lebanon would be an eligible site, and promising aid in the erection of suitable buildings, in case it should be selected.

The Assembly appointed Rev. Robert Donnell, Colonel Robert Burton, Colonel George Williamson, Rev. Reuben Burrow, Finis E. McClain, Esq., Rev. F. R. Cossitt, D. D., Rev. B. Feemster, Rev. William Ralston, and Colonel Moses Ridley, as commissioners, and authorized them "to receive

propositions from all the towns and places, Princeton not excepted, desiring the location, to decide thereupon, and make arrangements to procure buildings for the use of the college, while permanent buildings are being erected."

The commissioners were instructed to meet in Nashville, in July following, make the location, appoint a board of trustees, and authorize them to elect a faculty, and put the institution in operation as early as practicable. Accordingly, the commissioners met in Nashville at the appointed time; a delegation of the citizens of Lebanon waited upon them, and proposed that, in case the college should be located at Lebanon, the citizens would erect a college edifice, at a cost of ten thousand dollars. No other place having offered that amount, and the site being deemed eligible, the location was made at Lebanon, and a board of trustees appointed.

A letter from the Secretary of the Board, W. L. Martin, Esq., published in the Banner of Peace of July 22, 1842, informs the editor, Rev. F. R. Cossitt, D. D., that the first act of the Board after its organization was to elect him President of the College, and Professor C. G. McPherson, Professor of Mathematics. On the 20th of September following, Professor McPherson opened a school in the Cumberland Presbyterian church in Lebanon; and early in 1843, Dr. Cossitt assumed the Presidency. In the fall of 1843, the author was in-

augurated Professor of Languages; and in February, 1844, the college was chartered, and opened its first session in the new college edifice.

Such is the origin of the University, whose latest catalogue, 1857, shows a faculty of eleven professors, and four hundred and forty-five students. And though Mr. Donnell's agency is not ostensible, except in the Memorial to the Assembly of 1842, yet it is a fact that, from the first conception to the final organization, he was the moving spirit that first awakened interest, and inspired men of influence to take the lead in the enterprise. Unambitious and unselfish, he ever sought to promote the interests of the Church in a quiet way, all the while shrinking from observation and declining notoriety. Yet his feelings were as deeply enlisted in this enterprise as though the salvation of the Church depended upon its success, and often did he make it the subject of prayer. When its enemies assailed the infant institution, his spirit was stirred within him, and his pen was wielded in its defence. He did not live to witness its triumph, but saw it in the future.

The fall of 1842 is memorable as a season of general and powerful revivals in almost every section of the Church, but especially within the bounds of Chapman Presbytery. Though the smallest in territory of all the presbyteries of the Church, embracing only fourteen congregations, yet within its limits eight hundred and fifty-one professions were reported, as the result of the meetings held pre-

vious to the fall session of the presbytery. In most of those meetings, Mr. Donnell was a principal laborer. At his own camp-meeting at Lebanon there were forty professions, and many more in town after the close of the camp-meeting. At Oak Grove there were more than forty professions. The meeting at New Hope continued ten days, and more than two hundred professed.

The accessions to the Lebanon church were: Mrs. Hewey, Hannah Lewis, Margaret Cox, Mrs. Douglass, Martha Robertson, R. M. Burton, Martha McGregor, Darthula Phipps, John Smith, Micajah and Charlotte Stone, Hannah Shutt, William and Sarah Ann Organ, Sarah Ann Cox, Andrew Allison, Benjamin Foster, and Mary Brown.

The location of the college in Lebanon, and the addition of the students and faculty to his congregation, constituted a new era in the history of Mr. Donnell's pastoral labors. Almost all the influential citizens had been gathered into the pale of the Church, and his energy and solicitude might have abated; but just at that time the college made a large addition to the unwrought material of his congregation, and consequently he felt at once a vast increase of responsibility. Hitherto, he had preached to his people on alternate Sabbaths, leaving them to attend the Baptist or Methodist church, while he supplied a vacant congregation, or preached in the neighboring towns. But now his congregation had grown so large, that it was deemed advisable to have preaching every Sabbath.

This arrangement devolved upon him double labor in preparing for the pulpit, and as his interest and sympathy were now concentrated upon one congregation, his solicitude became the more intense and his preparation more thorough, and consequently he preached with more power and pungency. But he did not rely upon pulpit effort alone. He early made the personal acquaintance of every student, and whenever he met him he had a few words of kindness and pleasant familiarity, but always managed to give the conversation a religious bearing, by inviting him to attend Sabbath-school or church, or intimating that he had a lesson to learn outside of the college course, and a degree to take which the faculty could not confer.

He frequently visited the students at their rooms, and held private religious conversations with them, impressing them with the idea that he felt the same obligation to labor for their conversion as for the children of his flock, and that they must allow him to visit them, and confer freely with them about their spiritual interests. The consequence was, he soon gained their confidence: they loved him as a brother, yet revered him as a father. And whenever there was any unusual interest in the services of the church, he was sure to enlist some of the students, and in all the revivals of the place, a majority of the converts were students.

He had commenced the study of the Greek language before the college was located in Lebanon, but now that the facilities for instruction were in-

creased, and the necessity for a higher standard of literature in his pulpit exercises enhanced, he prosecuted the study with untiring diligence. He soon acquired the ability to read understandingly the Greek Scriptures, and to him it was a source of daily interest and delight to dwell upon the identical words that fell from the Saviour's lips, and were penned by the Evangelist for our instruction and edification.

The protracted and camp-meetings of 1843 were attended with usual interest. No general revival prevailed, as in 1842, yet the meetings in Chapman Presbytery were interesting, and at the fall session four hundred and sixty-six conversions were reported. After the session of the presbytery, the synod met in Lebanon, and at the close of its sessions a revival spirit was indicated. The discerning pastor protracted the services, and a gracious revival was developed, which continued two weeks. A number of the students in college, and many of the citizens, made profession of religion. The following persons were added to the Lebanon church:

Matilda Allison, Martha Bell, Mary Bell, Elizabeth Burton, Martha Brown, Oliver Boddie, Sidney Boddie, W. B. Burton, John Cook, Mary Jane Caruthers, Ellen Cossitt, Samuel Caruthers, H. M. Cartmell, Eliza A. Debow, Mrs. Davis, N. Davis, Thomas Dew, Pleasant Decherd, Benjamin Decherd, John Gorden, E. J. Golladay, Sarah Góostree, Elizabeth Hibbitts, Eliza Hancock, Doretha Han-

cock, Mary McClain, Elizabeth McClain, Martha Watson, and Fidelia Wharton.

Mr. Donnell did not, as some ministers seem to do, consider his labor ended when he had added members to his church, but he regarded such as the *lambs* of the flock, needing the daily attentions of the faithful shepherd. He visited them frequently, and conversed freely with them concerning their religious exercises. He sympathized with them in all their troubles and trials, doubts and fears, joys and triumphs. To him it was a privilege, and often an unspeakable pleasure, to spend hours in conversation with young converts respecting their religious experience. But it was not for his own enjoyment he sought these interviews: he remembered the days of his early Christian life, how he was agitated between hope and fear, how he was tormented with needless doubts, and tempted to abandon his hope, and he was solicitous to save his young converts from the torment of yielding to doubts. And when he could not have interviews, it was his habit to keep up a correspondence. As a specimen of his pastoral epistles, we give the following, addressed to Mary Jane Caruthers and Martha Watson, while at school in Nashville:

“WALNUT FOREST, September 3, 1844.

“MY DEAR SISTERS:

“How often have I thought of you when I saw your seats vacant at prayer-meeting, and Sabbath-school, and preaching. Ah! and when I have

visited your *home*, where I used to see you so contented and happy, and saw you not, but in memory of other days. But you are at your books and school, and I am on the old beaten tread of pastoral duties about the town of cedars. Though separated, I have not forgotten to feel a pastor's care for your spiritual interests, so I take this method of communicating with you.

“I am aware that a student's life is not the most favorable to perpetual religious enjoyment, for the simple reason that study often, if we will allow it, intrudes upon the hours of devotion. Therefore allow me, as one of the guardians of your spiritual interests, to advise you, first of all, to a most rigid observance of system in all your devotional exercises. Have your set hours for prayer and reading the Scriptures, and then let no common occurrence prevent your attention to those duties. Sometimes it happens that, in the thoughtlessness of youth, professors of religion suffer a social call or conversation to interfere with their religious duties, but it ought not so to be. We ought to acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, and make religion second to nothing on earth. Its claims are first and paramount to all other considerations. If you would habitually enjoy a conscience void of offence toward God and all the world, ever maintain the spirit of prayer. Let no day pass without your offering of thanksgiving, praise, and prayer, being found, at least morning and evening, on the altar of secret devotion. The injunction of our great

Teacher is, 'Pray to the Father who is in secret, and the Father who seeth in secret will reward thee openly.' The form and spirit of private devotion prepares us for religion in the domestic circle, and religion in the family circle prepares us for the more public Christian duties.

"Private devotion is a matter between God and our own souls; and what a privilege it is to shut ourselves in with God and hold audience with the Deity!—to tell him our sorrows and our joys, to confess our sins to him, thank him for his endless goodness to us, and seek his protection and love! Could earth's richest stores, its brightest allurements, its sweetest entertainments, tempt you away from the sacred retreat?

"In all your sayings and doings with the world, endeavor to cultivate humility, gentleness, kindness, patience, forbearance, and charity. In all your religious duties, endeavor to be spiritual. Spirituality is the very soul of religion, and how deathlike a religion without it! In Nashville you will see much religion in style and form, with not more spirit than it ought to have; but remember that man looketh on the outward appearance, while God looketh at the heart. 'Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of *it* are the issues of life.'

"I was told on yesterday, by a young sister of yours, that she regularly prayed in secret three times every day; by another, this morning, that she often prayed in her closet. A good writer has said that backsliding commences in the closet.

Then pray much in secret, read your Bibles much, pray for your church, your town, your friends, and all the world, and don't forget to pray for your unworthy pastor. . . .

“When you read this, girls, if it is worthy of it, write me an answer, and let me know how you are getting along in your religion. . . .

“Your pastor,

“GEORGE DONNELL.”

We have introduced the above letter, not as a specimen of composition, for it is a familiar, private letter addressed to two school-girls, but to show the religious and social habits of the man, with his fatherly solicitude for his young converts, his appreciation of experimental and spiritual religion, the importance he attached to private devotion, and the means to be employed for the cultivation of personal piety. And it may be remarked that he did not prescribe for others more rigid rules than he imposed upon himself. In addition to family prayers, which were regularly held morning and evening, he invariably retired, morning and evening, for private devotion; and with him it was not merely a form of godliness, but its spirit and power.

There was no general revival in the bounds of the Chapman Presbytery during the summer and fall of 1844. In view of the apathy that everywhere prevailed, Mr. Donnell commenced in the fall a series of sermons upon the necessity of re-

vivals, and the means to be employed for the promotion of such awakenings. He had preached for several successive Sabbaths, with unusual interest and pungency, when he was called away to attend a protracted-meeting at Columbia. The church regretted his absence at the time, for already indications of a coming revival were manifest. He returned quite unwell, and in a day or two he was confined to bed. Soon his sufferings became intense, and solicitude for their pastor absorbed all interest about a revival.

He had long been afflicted with an affection of the spine, which had subjected him to much inconvenience and nervous irritation, especially when travelling on horseback; but neither he nor his physician had regarded it as likely to result in serious consequences. But when he was confined, it soon became obvious that the disease was approaching a crisis. A very large abscess was evidently forming, which threatened the prostration of his system. Every effort was made to disperse it, but all in vain—the disease was unyielding. For many weeks he suffered the most excruciating pain, and when partially relieved of the pain, the drain was so copious as to reduce the system to a hopeless state of prostration.

It soon became obvious to his family and friends that the fears of his physicians would be realized. It was a hard struggle to give up such a companion, father, friend, and pastor, in the prime of life, and in the full tide of usefulness. But the

decree had gone forth, and faith bowed in humble yet sorrowing submission. He needed not to be told that his change was approaching: he felt it in his utter prostration; he read it in the countenances of his physicians; he saw it in the tearful eye of kind friends that for eight long weeks had waited at his bedside; he read it in the expression of unutterable sorrow that lay upon the stricken heart of his despairing companion. He quietly arranged the temporal interests of his family, and then set himself to prepare his mind and spirit for the coming change.

He was soon in the enjoyment of a peace and serenity, occasionally rising to a rapturous transport, that made him long to soar away to visions of God. But he had duties yet to perform: he must see the members of his church, and take an affectionate leave of each. It was a touching scene, but full of interest: a strange mingling of chastened sorrow, gilded with the glorious hope of a speedy reünion in heaven. For two days his flock, his relatives, and friends pressed to the sick-room. He received all that came, gave each a word of encouragement, then an affectionate farewell, with an injunction to meet him in heaven.

Then came the most trying and tender scene of all—the taking leave of his relatives and his family. To his relatives he committed the guardianship of his orphan children, and the protection of his disconsolate companion. To each of his children, old enough to comprehend, he gave a father's dying

advice, and to all his parting blessing. His oldest son, David, was then confined in an upper chamber with a malignant disease contracted by incessant watching over his father, and was unable to come down to receive a father's dying blessing, but he was not forgotten. David had, some years previous, made a profession of religion, but for some time he had been in doubt and spiritual darkness. The dying father sent him word that though darkness now veiled his prospect, he believed that the Lord had converted his soul, and that he should yet meet him in heaven: that if called soon to follow his father, he must put his trust in the Saviour, and all would go well: if spared, he must live for God, and he should receive his unspeakable reward. Last of all, he came to his stricken companion: nature faltered, but grace triumphed: thanking her most affectionately for her untiring kindness, and commending her and the dear children to Him who had promised to be the God of the widow and the orphan, he bade her adieu, assuring her that the separation would be brief—that a speedy reunion awaited them in heaven. Then he laid him quietly down to await the Master's call.

Nor did he wait long. On Saturday night, March 22, 1845, his happy spirit, attended by a convoy of ministering angels, winged its flight to the bosom of the Saviour.

On Sabbath, Dr. Cossitt preached a funeral sermon to a church and community overwhelmed

with grief. And on Monday his remains were committed to the silent tomb, there to repose till the dead in Christ shall arise to appear with him in glory.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## TESTIMONIALS OF HIS WORTH.

THREE days after the departure of the beloved pastor, the church session made the following communication to the bereaved widow :

“At a meeting of the session of the Lebanon church, on the 25th of March, 1845, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted :

“WHEREAS, It has pleased Almighty God, since the last meeting of the session, to remove, from earth to heaven, our much-beloved pastor, Rev. George Donnell; to this inscrutable decree of Providence we mournfully bow with Christian submission, knowing that the great Head of the Church can do no wrong. Yet, as the session of the Lebanon church, of which he was the spiritual father, we cannot refrain from placing upon the records of our church an expression of our estimation, as well as that of the members whom we represent, of the great, if not irreparable, loss which we have sustained, in this afflictive dispensation of Providence.

“He whose death we now so deeply deplore was

the founder of our church in this place, and has sustained to it the endearing relation of pastor since its organization in the year 1830. By him its members, every one, were received into the church, and all of its elders ordained; by his fostering care and efficient instrumentality, under God, it has grown up from infancy to its present size and condition; he has watched over its growth and progress with a solicitude and interest which could only be equalled by that of a good and tender father toward his children. During the fifteen years he has occupied the pastoral relation to our church, he has been the first and only choice of its members. At no time would they have willingly submitted to a change. He was indeed a good shepherd, loved by his flock, and respected by all. As a minister, he was able, zealous, and devoted, occupying his position on the walls of Zion with dignity, efficiency, and untiring perseverance. As a Christian, he was ever seeking to do good, pouring the balm of consolation into every wounded heart, and illustrating, by his walk and conversation, the beauties of the Christian character. As a member of society, he was lovely and pleasant, his life was blameless, and his conduct beyond reproach. This session do therefore resolve:

“That in the death of the lamented Donnell, the widow has lost a husband, the orphans a father, society one of its most valuable and exemplary members, the Church one of the best of pastors, the ministry one of its brightest ornaments, and

the Christian cause one of its most efficient champions and vigilant watchmen.

“*Resolved*, That a copy of this preamble and resolutions be furnished by the clerk to the widow of the deceased, and to the editor of the Banner of Peace for publication.

“A copy from the minutes :

“ANDREW ALLISON,

“Clerk of the Session.”

In an editorial in the Banner of Peace, under date of March 28, 1845, Dr. Cossitt thus testifies to the worth of the departed :

“It becomes our duty, in this number, to communicate to the Church and the public an event which will fill many hearts with mourning and many eyes with tears. Rev. George Donnell, pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian church in Lebanon, has rested from his labors. . . . The church for whose interests he has devoted the best years of his life, which has flourished almost beyond example under his pastoral labors, and for which he seemed only to live and labor, will no more hear his instructive voice. The unconverted will no more hear his affectionate warnings, nor the mourning penitent enjoy his faithful guidance to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. The people of Lebanon will no more have the benefit of his fervent pleadings in their behalf, nor will his closet longer be a Bethel sacred to the remembrance of their spiritual interests, and the conver-

sion of the world. The bower of prayer, near his country residence, will no longer witness his heart's agony and his spirit's groanings for those who despise God's law. . . .

“During his sickness he seemed entirely to trust his all with the Saviour whom he loved, and most strikingly exemplified the power of sustaining grace under the severest trials. The blessed gospel which he preached to others was his consolation when earthly comforts failed, and, at times, filled him with exceeding great joy and rapturous emotion. He expressed his resignation to the Divine will, whether to live or to die.

“When we remember his career of surpassing usefulness, the confidence with which all who knew him regarded him, the tender affection with which his people loved him; when we reflect that he had arrived only to his forty-fourth year, and was filling one of the most important stations in his own Church, or perhaps of any other in the South-west, it seems to be a mysterious providence which has removed him. Well are we assured that our loss is his gain. But we are led to inquire, Why was such a father called from a most interesting family, when his continuance with them seemed, to mortal minds, so necessary and desirable? Why was a pastor so able, faithful, and successful, called from so wide a field of usefulness? Why was the presbytery and Church to which he belonged deprived of a counsellor so valuable, one whose mind was sufficiently capacious to pass beyond mere local inter-

ests, comprehend all the parts of a great whole, and regard with equal interest all members of our body? Why was this community to lose one of its brightest ornaments, and this generation a burning and a shining light?"

Such was the testimony of Dr. Cossitt, published in the Banner a few days after the death of the beloved pastor. An obituary notice appeared in the Banner of April 4, 1845, from which we make the following extracts:

"No perfection or exemption from the common frailties of humanity is claimed for him, but certainly few men have ever enjoyed a wider circle of devoted friends, or drawn more largely upon the affections and kind sympathies of the community at large."

Of his preaching, it is said that "the style was unique, unlike that of any other man living or dead. He was not reputed a *great* man, yet all esteemed him a great preacher. He was not an orator, in the common acceptation of that term, yet all classes loved to hear him preach—the man of letters and the African dwelt with equal delight upon his tender and moving exhibitions of a Saviour's dying love. He never attempted display, and yet no man gained more applause. He knew no ambition—was so unpretending as often to have been overlooked for a time—yet no man acquired more reputation within the sphere of his operations. He never courted favor or sought promotion, yet he was first in the hearts of all who knew him. He

never dealt in harsh denunciations, yet he was a close, pungent preacher, pressing the truth home upon the conscience of the sinner with a tenderness and unction that unmanned, overcame, and subdued him; then, in the most melting and soothing strains, he wooed him to Christ."

Such is the character drawn by the writer of his obituary. He is represented as unambitious. As the world accounts ambition, this is true; but he *was* ambitious to be *useful*, and doubtless herein was the secret of his success. Like Solomon, he had set his heart upon a worthy object, and God gave him his heart's desire, that for which he labored and devoutly prayed, unparalleled success in winning souls to Christ. For surely no man, whatever may have been his talents and ministerial qualifications, has been more useful within the limited sphere of his labors. Some, it is freely admitted, have labored more extensively, have acquired more reputation, and may have done more for the world, and brought more reputation to the Church; but none, we repeat, have been more useful within the comparatively limited field of his operations.

Chapman Presbytery, during its session in April, 1845, adopted the following preamble and resolutions:

"WHEREAS, It hath pleased the great Head of the Church, since our last session of presbytery, to remove, from earth to his rest in heaven, our much-esteemed brother, GEORGE DONNELL; to this most afflicting and inscrutable stroke of Divine Provi-

dence we mournfully bow with trembling submission, knowing that the Judge of all the earth will do right. . . .

“The deceased was, in all the relations of life, most eminently qualified to impart comfort, and to aid those with whom he stood connected; able in council, eloquent in the pulpit, animating in the social circle, and soothing in the chambers of sorrow and affliction. Truly he was a ‘good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith; and much people was added unto the Lord,’ through his agency and indefatigable labors.

“*Resolved*, That this presbytery most tenderly sympathize with the widow of the deceased in her irreparable loss, and her children, who have lost a most tender and kind father.

“*And be it further resolved*, That this presbytery, in the death of this esteemed brother, has lost one of its ablest counsellors, the church at Lebanon a faithful pastor, society one of its brightest ornaments, and the world a brilliant example of religion and patriotism.

“*And resolved finally*, That Rev. S. M. Aston be requested to preach his funeral, at such time as the health of his family may justify, and as may be agreed upon between themselves.”

Shortly after the death of the beloved pastor, a committee of the session waited upon the author, and requested him to make a suitable nomination of a successor.

“Well, what kind of man do you want?”

“We want another George Donnell in all respects.”

“You cannot find another George Donnell in the whole Church. There are men of more talent and learning, men that have acquired more reputation, men more profound in theology, men of more force of character, but there is not another George Donnell.”

“Well, if we cannot get another George Donnell, then we want one as much like him as possible.”

“But you cannot get one *like* him, for he was *unlike* all other men.”

The claims of all the distinguished ministers of the Church, known to myself or any member of the session, were discussed, and it was admitted that there was not one who, in the style and manner of address, or the tone and tenderness of his spirit, even approximated Donnell. The session, despairing of finding a second Donnell, contented themselves with a man of superior talents and reputation, but as unlike in spirit and temperament as the Apostles Peter and John, as McGready and Robert Donnell.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## THE FAMILY—CONCLUSION.

It is due to the memory of the deceased, and his numerous surviving friends, to take some notice of his family.

The stricken widow, with her orphan children, retired to their farm in the vicinity, where she lingered for several years in meek, uncomplaining sadness. She bore her bereavement with Christian resignation, and was never heard to repine on account of the mysterious providence of God. But it was manifest to all who saw her that the sun of life had set, never more to rise upon the shore of time. Dead to the world and all its charms, she seemed to be patiently biding her day, and waiting the summons that should call her to a reünion with him she had lost.

In the summer of 1848, her second son, Andrew K. Donnell, the express image of his father, and the inheritor of his spirit and temperament—a youth of seventeen summers, then a student in college, giving promise of becoming the light and ornament of the family—fell into a slow but steady decline. The mother could have given up the only

likeness of the father, had Andrew been prepared to join him in the abode of the blessed. But he had no religion, and how could she give him up? Only a mother who has wrestled for the life of a beloved son, can realize with what intense agony of soul she prayed for that boy.

The camp-meeting at New Hope was at hand, and the mother set out with her declining boy. The day was unpleasant, and a friend remonstrated. The only reply was, if she could have her boy prepared to meet his father in heaven, she should never regret it, though it should cost her life. The argument was unanswerable—she went: the sacrifice was freely offered and accepted. Andrew returned bright and happy, and even the mother was once more cheerful.

But she returned with a hectic glow on the cheek, and a distressing cough. In a few weeks she was confined to her room, and soon thereafter, to her bed. She saw her end approaching without regret, and with but one source of anxiety—the children. For their benefit she would have been willing to remain, though she had an irrepressible longing to depart. Her only brother, Rev. J. M. McMurry, was travelling in Arkansas. She longed to see him, and commit her children to his guardianship, and enjoin upon him the duty of governing them. Letters were written requesting his speedy return, but the mails were unfaithful, and he did not receive them. She feared that the indulgence of kind friends would spoil her children,

and as she could not see her brother, she left messages for him, charging him and another friend with the government of her children. Being assured that they should be governed, she said she could confidently leave them in the hands of God and her friends.

Her eldest son, David M. Donnell, now approaching manhood, had been her stay through all the days of her widowhood, and now he seldom left her room, even for an hour. Day and night he watched over her, ministering every comfort that the most devoted filial affection could devise. But notwithstanding all his tender nursing and perpetual watching, he saw his mother sinking daily.

Finally, on the 12th of February, 1849, it was apparent to all that the hour of her departure was near. In the afternoon, she had her children called in, and gave each a solemn and an appropriate admonition, then bade each an affectionate farewell. At her request the servants were then called, and each received personal exhortation and a last farewell. The guardianship and religious training of her children and servants was committed to her brother and the author, and then she expressed her readiness to depart. She lay in great peace and serenity, till, just as the twilight was fading away, the light of life faded so gently that those watching at her bedside could not determine the moment when the spirit retired to join those above.

After a funeral service, her remains were laid

beside those of her departed companion, and the church in Lebanon erected over them a stately monument, bearing the following inscription :

“REV. GEORGE DONNELL,  
BORN IN ALAMANCE, N. C., AUG. 9, 1801.  
DIED MARCH 22, 1845.

ENTERED THE MINISTRY OF THE CUMBERLAND PRESBY-  
TERIAN CHURCH, OCTOBER, 1822.

BECAME PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN LEBANON, 1830.

DEATH ONLY COULD SEPARATE HIM AND HIS PEOPLE.  
UNDER GOD, HE BUILT UP THE CHURCH.

IT ERECTS THIS MONUMENT TO HIS MEMORY.

FEW MEN HAVE BEEN MORE USEFUL,  
NONE LEFT A BRIGHTER EXAMPLE.”

On the face of the monument next the grave of Mrs. Donnell, there is the following inscription :

“MRS. ELIZABETH E. DONNELL

LIES HERE BY THE SIDE OF HER HUSBAND.

THEY WERE LOVELY AND PLEASANT IN THEIR LIVES ;  
AND IN DEATH THEY ARE NOT DIVIDED.”

Mrs. Donnell left five children, the eldest, David M. Donnell, about twenty, and the youngest in his fifth year. Andrew lingered until June following, when his happy spirit joined father and mother in heaven. His remains were laid by the side of those of his mother, who had so freely sacrificed her life to save her boy.

After seeing the children provided for, David, fearing his health might fail, located in Florida, where he made himself useful, and acquired character as a classical teacher. But recently, he has accepted the Presidency of Cumberland Female College, at McMinnville, where a wider field for usefulness invites his labors. The other children are members of the Church, and promise to become valuable members of society.

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## CONCLUSION.

I WAS induced to undertake a biography of Rev. George Donnell, in the hope that I might be able to present a model of evangelical preaching, that would be profitable to young ministers of the present day. Persuaded that any attempt at a formal description of a style that was unique and indescribable would be unsuccessful, I have been content to present his labors, with their results, hoping that the works will give some clue to the man. It may be proper, however, in concluding the narrative, to favor the reader with a description of his person, and, if possible, shadow forth some idea of his inimitable manner of preaching.

In person, he was about medium stature, slender, and slightly stooped; his head rather under

medium size; hair black and glossy; face rather small and pointed; features delicate; complexion ruddy; eyes clear blue, and ever lighted up with a mild lustre; general expression pleasant, but not striking. His bearing modest, retiring, and unpretentious. In society, he was easy, affable, and agreeable. Ever cheerful, and abounding in humor and wit, he was the life and soul of the social circle, without seeming to be conscious of his influence. To the young and the old, the gay and the gloomy, he was alike companionable. In the palace of the wealthy, or the cottage of the poor, he was alike at home. His social powers were unsurpassed, and yet he never made an effort to be interesting, or to engross attention.

In the pulpit, to a stranger, his appearance was not commanding or prepossessing, yet his voice was mellow, and its tones peculiarly tender; and when he commenced speaking, he invariably attracted attention, and, as he advanced, he held it enchained. Through the first few sentences, his manner of delivery was subdued, but soon the heart warmed, and the fire burned, and then, though not vehement or boisterous, his earnestness grew into an agony of spirit while he wrestled for souls, and though he shed not a tear, yet his eyes seemed as liquid as if dissolving in tenderness and sympathy. Or if he discoursed of heaven, or the glories of the Saviour, his whole countenance lighted up with a brilliancy that seemed to be the reflection of the glory he was contemplating. He conquered and

subdued, not by the force of popular eloquence, but by a happy mingling of persuasive tenderness and constraining earnestness. He penetrated the hearts of his audience, and subdued them, ere they were aware of his design.

In the preparation of his discourses, he reflected more than he read—relied more upon evolving thought from the depths of his own creative mind, than upon culling and collating ideas from books. He kept a good library, and read much when he had leisure; but when engaged in framing a sermon, he made but little use of books. He used a text as a nucleus around which he grouped his own thoughts, gathered from reflection, experience, and observation. He relied more upon the preparation of the heart—the elevation of his spirit and feelings to the proper degree of interest and solicitude—than upon the matter of his sermon. And yet his discourses were always fresh and interesting; they came welling up from the inner fountains of thought and feeling, the gushings of a warm heart, dissolving with sympathy for souls.

Yet it must be admitted that his power rested not so much in the *matter* as in the *manner* of his preaching—a manner not overpowering, but irresistible and all-subduing. He prepared for the press, and published in the “Pulpit,” two or three discourses. They are creditable productions, but he could not do himself justice with his pen. The printed page wants his inimitable delivery to give

it zest—his dissolving tones, his yearning solicitude, his heavenly unction.

To this unction, this yearning for souls, more than to all things else, is to be attributed that resistless influence which everywhere attended his preaching. And this heavenly unction, this love of souls, was the legitimate fruit of daily communion with God.

THE END.











