THE WESTERN REVIVAL IN ITS RELATION TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject.

1. The Subject Stated and Delimited.

Two consequences of the religious freedom which the church has enjoyed in America are revivalism and denominationalism.[1] Revivalism has been one of the distinguishing characteristics of American Protestantism. Its religious revivals have been the greatest single factor contributing to the growth and strength of the church in this country. The periods in the church's history in which the most progress has been made are those in which its revivals have occurred. One American church historian has said concerning the relationship which exists between revivalism and the church:

> "For almost two hundred years it is revivalism more than any other phenomena that has supplied the landmarks in our religious history - the undulations, upheavals, points of departure, and lines of continuity." [2]

Therefore, it is necessary to have a knowledge of the revivals which have accompanied and influenced its development in order to understand the history of the Protestant Church in America. Many remarkable revivals have made their appearance upon the American scene. Among the most notable of these have been The Great Awakening of the eighteenth century, The Second Awakening, or The Great Revival as it is sometimes called, of the early nineteenth century,

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1. Henry Kalloch Rowe, The History of Religion in the United States, pp. 56-58.
2. Peter G. Mode, The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity, p. 41.

The Prayer-meeting Revival of 1857, and the Moody-Sankey revivals of the late nineteenth century.

Denominationalism has exerted a great influence upon the life and work of the church in America. The various denominations, although striving to attain unto a common goal, have frequently adopted different means in order to accomplish their purpose. Revivalism has been employed at frequent intervals by the several denominations as an agency for the building up of the church and for the extension of its influence. All of the most notable revivals have been interdenominational in character, but each one has been influenced by, or has influenced, one particular denomination, or group of denominations, to the partial exclusion of the others.

This study will be limited to a consideration of the Second Awakening as it occurred in Kentucky and the relationship which existed between this western phase of the revival and the Presbyterian Church. It is the purpose of this study to consider the Kentucky revival of 1800 from the Presbyterian standpoint, i.e., to discover and trace, in so far as possible, the influence which the Presbyterian Church exerted upon the revival and also the effects of the revival upon the church.

2. The Subject Explained and Justified.

As stated above, in this study the attention will be focused upon the Second Awakening as it appeared on the frontier. This particular revival has been chosen because of the important place which it occupies in the chronicles of American Revivalism.

> "The story of this great revival is the story of the remarkable rebirth of aggressive evangelical Christianity in America . . . It was the first great revival which came to the United States of America after it had become an independent nation. . . . Historians call this "The Great Revival" ". 1

The term "Great Revival", when applied to the Second Awakening, is not misleading, for -

> "In view of the remarkable results which attended the Awakening of 1800, its salutary and long-continued influence upon the religious life of the American republic, the wide scope of the territory covered and the numbers which were reached by its quickening power, this revival was fully as remarkable as any which ever refreshed the life of the churches on the American continent." 2

Strange manifestations attended the frontier phase of the revival, and for this reason many students of revivalism center their attention upon this particular aspect of the movement. Due to the "fury of excitement" which attended the western revival many think of it only in that light, but the western phase of the Second Awakening was selected for this study because of the revolutionary and abiding results which were wrought by it. The religious and moral tone of the frontier country was completely changed because of this remarkable awakening which swept over it during the years 1797 to 1805.

The Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists "all had a part" in this great movement, but it was in frontier Presbyterian congregations that the revival had its origin.

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1. Arthur B. Strickland, The Great American Revival, p. 15.
2. Frank Grenville Beardsley, A History of American Revivals, p. 107.

> "The Great Revival was born in Kentucky among the Presbyterians in their precommunion preparatory services." [1]

Thus to the Presbyterian Church goes the credit for launching the western revival movement and though other denominations entered into the work as the revival progressed the Presbyterians were more or less closely identified with it throughout its existence. It is therefore reasonable to expect that each, the revival and the Presbyterian Church, had certain definite effects upon the other, and such was the case. First, the membership of the church was increased because of the revival. Second, the revival proved to be influential "in the development of the several departments of labor. . . which we now denominate the Boards of the Presbyterian Church." [2] Third, two great schisms occurred in the Presbyterian Church as a result of the disorders and disputes which grew out of the revival movement.

The unique but close relationship which existed between this great awakening in its different stages and the Presbyterian Church justifies a closer study of the influence which was mutually exerted. In order to understand the church as we have it today it is necessary to have a knowledge of those forces in history which determined its present state. The Second Awakening, especially in its western phase, was one of those forces which helped to determine the present state of this great church. It is also necessary to understand the forces which are responsible for, and operative

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1. Strickland, op. cit., p. 85.
2. William Speer, The Great Revival of 1800, p. 76.

in, any great movement such as the Second Awakening to be able to understand the movement itself. Therefore, if the purpose of this study which is to discover and trace the true relationship which existed between the Great Western Revival of 1800 and the Presbyterian Church is achieved the study itself is justified.

B. The Method of Treating the Subject.

In the course of this study the subject will be divided into three main sections. The first section will deal with the development of the Second Awakening. This section will include a survey of the background out of which the revival came as well as an account of its beginning and spread. Special attention will be focused upon the revival as it appeared in Kentucky. The second section of the study will deal with the Presbyterian Church and its relation to the Kentucky revival. Here both the position of the church prior to 1800, and the development of the church in the west, particularly as it was associated with the revival will be dealt with. In this section the lives and works of some of the great revival leaders will be considered. The last section of our study will deal with the effect of the revival upon the church, the new denominations coming out of the Presbyterian Church, the deepened spiritual life of the church, and the influence of the revival upon the organized activities of the church.

C. The Sources for Study.

The sources for our study are drawn chiefly from history. These historical sources may be divided into two groups: first,

those dealing primarily with the revival, and second, those dealing with the development of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. In each instance these two divisions may be subdivided into primary and secondary sources. The primary sources consist in descriptions of the revival taken from letters and other records written by eye witnesses; minutes of the General Assembly; minutes of the Transylvania and Cumberland Presbyteries; session records of some frontier Presbyterian Churches, and sermons preached during this period.

CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

OF THE GREAT AMERICAN REVIVAL

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THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE GREAT AMERICAN REVIVAL

In order to fully understand any given situation it is necessary to have a knowledge of the conditions out of which that situation arose. Therefore, it is impossible to be well acquainted with any one movement in history without being familiar with the background of that movement.

It is the purpose of this chapter to prepare the way for our study of the "Western Revival of 1800 in its Relationship to the Presbyterian Church." This purpose is accomplished in two ways; first, by providing the general background out of which the revival movement came, and second, by tracing the historical development of this great movement from its earliest appearance on the Atlantic Seaboard to its emergence as a deciding factor in determining the destiny of the new West.

A. The American Scene Just Prior to the Nineteenth Century.

Religious revivals have always made their appearance upon the American scene at a time when they were sorely needed. There have been those periods in the history of the United States when the moral and spiritual life of the people was at such a low level as to make a revival of religion a "national necessity."

1. The Great Awakening and Its Influence upon American Life.

The Great Awakening of the middle decades of the eighteenth century came at a time when it was much needed because of the

steady decline in the spiritual and moral life of the people of the colonies. In a letter written by Jonathan Edwards in which he tells of conditions which existed in Northampton about 1730 he says:

> "It seemed to be a time of extraordinary dullness in religion: licentiousness for some years greatly prevailed among the youth of the town; they were many of them very much addicted to night walking, and frequenting the tavern, and lewd practices, wherein some by their example exceedingly corrupted others." 1

This situation was not limited to any one section of the country, for there was a general drift away from religion.

The Great Awakening aroused the colonists to an appreciation of the spiritual and moral values in life, and influenced the social and religious activities of the people in all of the colonies. The outstanding revivalists were Edwards, the Tennants and Whitfield.

"The results of the Great Awakening were momentous and far-reaching", for the membership of the church was increased and its spiritual life was quickened; interest was renewed in missions and educational advancement, and a direct influence was brought to bear upon the principle and practice of religious liberty in the colonies. [3]

2. The Decline in the Moral and Spiritual Life of the American People and the Factors Contributing to this Decline.

Individual revivals did not cease with the close of the

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1. Jonathan Edwards, The Works of President Edwards, Vol.III, p. 232.
2. Beardsley, op. cit., p. 64.
3. Cf. ibid., p. 64-68.

Great Awakening, but general interest in religious and spiritual matters reached a new low level toward the end of the century. At least two powerful agencies were responsible for this degraded condition of society. These were: the two wars in which the colonies engaged during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and the influence of European thought and belief upon the religious and intellectual life of the American people.

a. The Influence of the French and Indian and the Revolutionary Wars upon American Society.

The colonies were engaged in almost constant warfare from 1756, the opening year of the French and Indian War, to 1783, the closing year of the American Revolution. During this long period of warfare -

> "Congregations were scattered, churches had been left pastorless and in many instances entirely destitute of religious services. . . Church organizations, moreover, had settled down into a state of apathy and active efforts for the propogation of religion had ceased." 1

Since war is so unfriendly to religion it is not surprising to find that the decade and a half following the American Revolution, marked by decadence in religion and morals, was one of spiritual deadness among American churches.[2]

b. The Influence of French Deistic Philosophy upon American Thought and Belief.

The French philosophy of the period was the second agency

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1. Beardsley, op. cit., p. 77.
2. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 322.

that exerted a detrimental influence upon the religious life of the young republic. French Deism invaded the United States and recruited many followers among whom were some of the influential political and intellectual leaders. Deism was a popular doctrine in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

> "Out of England Deism was born to France by Voltaire, where it became the creed of nearly all the skeptics who labored at the Encyclopaedia and the new philosophy of naturalism and humanity. From various directions the doctrine came to America, spreading among the intellectual leaders of the American Revolution." 1

To imitate the disrespect of these leaders for religion and their glorification of the reason, became a fad in this country.

> "The open and avowed infidelity of Paine, and of other writers of the same character, produced incalculable injury to religion and morals throughout our whole country; and its effects on the minds of young men who valued themselves on their genius, and were fond of novel speculations, was the greatest of all." 2

Thus the damaging influence of French thought left its stamp upon American social and religious life during the closing decades of the century. The Americans idolized and imitated the French to the extent that many Jacobin clubs and societies of the Illuminati came into existence in all parts of the nation.[3] On the frontier towns were named for leaders of the French "new thought" movement.

3. Social Conditions in the East at the Close of the Eighteenth Century.

During the closing decades of the eighteenth century it

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1. Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, The Rise of American Civilization, p. 448.
2. Ashbel Green, Letter XVII; in William B. Sprague, Lectures on Revivals of Religion, p. 342.
3. Cf. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 322.

became increasingly evident that a spiritual revival would be necessary to check the rapid decline which American Christianity was then experiencing. There was a general breakdown in the moral and spiritual life of the people in the older settlements.[1] Religious values and practices were no longer appreciated; in fact, infidelity, "in its most coarse and brutal form, sneered at religion and scoffed at morality."[2] One American church historian has said concerning the spiritual life of the church in this period:

> "The closing years of the eighteenth century show the lowest low-water mark of the ebb-tide of spiritual life in the history of the American church." 3

The facts of history witness to the appropriateness of this serious indictment. The decline was characteristic of all classes of society. According to Dr. Ashbel Green there were only two professed Christians in the student body of Princeton in 1782.[4] During this same period there was but one professed Christian among the students of Bowdoin.

> "Lyman Beecher who was a student at Yale College in 1795, describes in his interesting "Reminiscences" the religious condition in the college at the time. He says: "The College was in a most ungodly state. The college church was extinct. Most of the students were skeptical and rowdies were plenty."" 5

This extensive spiritual deadness made itself manifest in many ways.

> ". . .the General Court of Massachusetts boldly said the

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1. Cf. Strickland, op. cit., p. 26.
2. Beardsley, op. cit., p. 81.
3. Leonard Woolsey Bacon, A History of American Christianity, p. 230.
4. Sprague, op. cit., p. 342.
5. Sweet, Story of Religions in America, p. 323.

> Sabbath was too long. Country members demanded a Sabbath of thirty-six hours; the town members would give but eighteen, and had their way. The effect was soon apparent. Levity, profaneness, idle amusements, and Sabbath breaking increased in the towns with fearful rapidity." 1

The following portrait of commonly existing religious conditions in the country is contained in the Pastoral Letter of the General Assembly in 1798:

> "The evidences of our guilt are, unhappily, too numerous and glaring. We perceive with pain and fearful apprehension, a general dereliction of religious principle and practice amongst our fellow citizens. . . The profligacy and corruption of the public morals have advanced with a progress proportioned to our declension in religion. Profaneness, pride, luxury, injustice, intemperance, lewdness, and every species of debauchery and loose indulgence greatly abound." 2

4. Social Conditions on the Frontier at the Close of the Eighteenth Century.

Since the moral and spiritual decline in the seaboard states was so great it is little wonder that the situation was even more deplorable in the frontier states. The agencies which were so actively engaged in the disintegration of religious influence in the Eastern States were also at work in the new West, and in addition to these the "natural restraints" of religion which constituted an important factor in the lives of the settlers while they were yet in their native lands were almost entirely lacking on the frontier.

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1. John Bach McMaster, A History of the People of the United States, p. 566.
2. Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, A.D. 1789 to 1820 inclusive, p. 153.

a. The Frontier Settlers.

The original settlers of this frontier section were for the most part of Scotch-Irish stock. Toward the beginning of the eighteenth century they had settled in Pennsylvania, but between 1730 and the Revolutionary War many of them accompanied by other groups of settlers advanced up Virginia's famous Shenandoah Valley and took possession of the "up-country of Virginia and the Carolinas."[1] Here they were reinforced by those of their own kind who had come westward across Virginia from the coast.

> "Thus by the middle of the eighteenth century a new section had been created in America, a kind of peninsula thrust down from Pennsylvania between the falls of the rivers of the South Atlantic colonies on one side and the Allegheny mountains on the other." [2]

Toward the close of the war this group pushed past the settled regions again. Once more they entered the wilderness and in spite of the tremendous odds against them they succeeded in crossing the mountains into Kentucky. They made their first permanent settlement in Kentucky in 1775, and by the end of the year the region was in the permanent possession of this hardy band of pioneers. For the first few years the settlement of Kentucky progressed very slowly, but by 1784 "the population was numbered by the thousands, and each month brought hundreds of new settlers over the mountains from Virginia and the Carolinas, or down the Ohio from Pennsylvania and New Jersey."[3]

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1. Fredrick Jackson Turner, The Frontier in American History, p. 164.
2. Ibid., p. 164.
3. William Warren Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, Vol. II, The Presbyterians, p. 22.

Many of those who followed the first settlers were of an entirely different strain, for it was not long until law-breakers of all types emigrated to Kentucky to escape the penalty of their crimes.

b. The Low Level of Frontier Society.

With the influence of religion almost entirely removed from the lives of this mixed group of settlers, and especially when the adverse influences were so strong, it is not surprising that Peter Cartwright wrote as follows concerning Logan County, Kentucky, when he arrived there in 1793:

> "Logan County. . . was called "Rogues Harbor". Here many refugees, from almost all parts of the Union, fled to escape justice; for although there was law, yet it could not be executed, and it was a desperate state of society. Murderers, horse thieves, highway robbers, and counterfeiters fled here until they combined and actually formed a majority." 1

In the same year, 1793, the Kentucky Legislature "dispensed with the services of a chaplain, deeming it unnecessary."[2]

Thus in Kentucky, as in the East, both the people and the representatives of the people were so quickly forsaking the Christian principles of their fathers upon which the new republic, their home, had been founded.

5. The General Condition of American Society at the Turn of the Century.

The condition of spiritual and moral bankruptcy was

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1. Peter Cartwright, The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, p. 24.
2. Strickland, op. cit., p. 34.

nation wide. Abuse was heaped upon the church from every side and it naturally followed that dishonesty and immorality increased in the same proportion as the disregard and disrespect for Christianity grew. Washington must have had this general situation in mind when, in delivering his farewell address in 1797, he said:

> ". . . reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. . . .'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government..." 1

The attack against Christianity is also reflected in a letter written by John Adams in 1798 to the Grand Jury of Hampshire County, Massachusetts:

> "If the abuse of Christianity can be annihilated or diminished, and a more equitable enjoyment of the right of conscience introduced, it will be well; but this will not be accomplished by the abolition of Christianity and the introduction of Greek mythology. . ." 2

The American scene just prior to the nineteenth century was dismal indeed. It is little wonder that in 1799 the General Assembly admonished church members not to be discouraged, for there were many real reasons why Christians might well have been discouraged.

B. The Beginning and Spread of the Great Revival.

It is difficult to say just when, or where, the Great Revival made its first appearance, for as a cloud,"as small as

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1. George Washington, Farewell Address; in R. D. Owen, Learning Religion from Famous Americans, p. 86.
2. John Adams, To the Grand Jurors of the County of Hampshire, Massachusetts; in Owen, op. cit., p. 113.

a man's hand," herald's the approaching downpour, local revivals preceded the great national awakening which swept over the country during the closing years of the eighteenth and the opening years of the nineteenth century.

1. Early Revivals in the East.

> "By about 1790 in various portions of the country, and entirely independent of one another, signs of reviving grace began to appear." [1]

As early as 1787 revivals began to appear in the south. One of these began at Hampden Sydney College in Virginia and from there spread throughout the Presbyterian Churches in the "valley of Virginia." [2]

These early revivals were most numerous in New England. The first of these New England revivals of which there is any record occurred in 1790 at the First Baptist Church in Boston, and the following year there was one at North Yarmouth, Maine. In 1792, which year is commonly thought of as the date for the commencement of the New England revivals, an awakening of note took place in Lee, Massachussetts.

In 1794 a group of New England ministers set out a "circular letter" calling upon the churches to unite in prayer for a revival. This idea for a "Concert of Prayer" on the part of the churches of the country met eager approval among the denominations.

"The Presbytery of New York and the Synods of New York and

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1. Beardsley, op. cit., p. 84.
2. Ibid., p. 84.

New Jersey recommended the Circular letter call to all their churches." 1

The denominations and the individual churches not only responded to the suggestion with enthusiasm but they conscientiously heeded it as well. The results of these united prayers were soon apparent; the people were awakened to a "revival consciousness" and thus through prayer the way was prepared, in part at least, for the coming of the Great Revival.

2. The Revival Movement in Eastern Colleges.

The revivals which constituted the Second Awakening in New England differed greatly in one respect from their predecessor, The Great Awakening, for these revivals did not come as the result of the labors of great evangelists who went from one place to another attempting to arouse the church into action and to awaken the people to their need. If any one name is inseparably connected with this revival movement in New England it is that of Timothy Dwight, president of Yale College.

Dwight, the grandson of Jonathan Edwards, became president of Yale in 1795. When he entered into this office most of the students of the college were under the influence of the prevalent French philosophy. "He met the students on their own ground"[2] by inviting them to participate in free discussion concerning phil-

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1. Strickland, op. cit., p. 47.
2. William Warren Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 326.

osophical and religious matters. Much to the surprise of the students the first subject, chosen from a list submitted by them, upon which President Dwight invited free discussion was, "Is the Bible the Word of God?" What was probably Dwight's most famous address was the Baccalaureate sermon entitled "The Nature and Danger of Infidel Philosophy".

Dwight's efforts on the behalf of Christianity were soon rewarded. In 1797 a student organization known as the Moral Society of Yale College was founded "for the promotion and preservation of morality among the students of this university."[1] Five years later, in 1802, a revival began in which fifty-eight undergraduates joined the church. At least two other awakenings occurred at Yale during the administration of President Dwight. The first of these was in 1808 when twenty joined the church, and the other was in 1815 when the names of twenty-five students were added to the church roll.[2]

Other colleges experienced awakenings similar to those at Yale. In 1805 twenty Dartmouth students "gave evidence of conversion", and from that time till 1815, "the college was not without more or less apparent divine influence."[3] 1805 was also the year in which an increasing interest in religious matters was manifested at Williams College. In 1808 the now famous "Haystack Prayer Meeting" was held. This meeting is often considered as giving

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1. Strickland, op. cit., p. 71.
2. Cf. Jeremiah Day, Letter XVI; in Sprague, op. cit., p. 333.
3. Nathan Lord, Letter XIV; ibid., p. 324.

birth[1] to the organized foreign missionary movement[2] in this country.

3. General Characteristics of the Revival Movement in the East.

The marked characteristics of the Eastern revivals of this period were:

1. Their freedom from abnormal excitement.

2. Their permanency; they first appeared about 1790 and continued until near the middle of the next century.

3. The absence of outstanding revival leaders or evangelists, as noted above. This feature alone places them in marked contrast with the Great Awakening of the previous century.

The sudden rise and rapid spread of these Eastern revivals might also be considered as one of their distinguishing features. Dr. Griffin writing in 1832, while he was president of Williams College, said,

> "By 1802 revivals had spread themselves through most of the western and southern states; and since that time they have been familiar to the whole American people." 1

C. The Great Revival in the West.

1. The Appearance of the Revival Movement in Logan County, Kentucky.

The Great Revival in the West had its beginning "in the little frontier Presbyterian churches under the care of James McGready in Logan County, Kentucky, in the year 1797."[2] The Rev. James McGready came to Logan County, Kentucky, in 1796. His

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1. Sprague, op. cit., p. 360.
2. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 84.

earnest and zealous evangelistic preaching soon brought about religious revivals wherever he went. His successful attempts "to arouse false professors, to awaken a dead church, and warn sinners and lead them to seek the new spiritual life"[1] caused so much excitement that he was accused of "running people distracted." His denunciations of sin and hypocracy were so animated that violent opposition against him and his work was soon aroused in Carolina. Because of this opposition and because of the fact that some of his converts had immigrated to Kentucky he gave up his charge in North Carolina and came to Logan County where he became minister of the three small Presbyterian churches at Gasper River, Red River and Muddy River. His preaching in Kentucky was as effective as it had been in North Carolina and "within a year there were signs of the Great Revival that was to sweep over the western and southern states."[2]

Both the Eastern and the Western phases of the Great Revival were "kindled by prayer". McGready drew up a covenant of prayer which some of his church members joined him in signing. In it they agreed to set aside the third Saturday in each month for one year "as a day of fasting and prayer for the conversion of sinners."[3]

What might be thought of as the first actual indication

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1. J. M. Howard and J. M. Hubbert, The Cumberland Presbyterian Church; in George P. Hays, The Presbyterians, p. 452.
2. Catherine C. Cleveland, The Great Revival in the West, 1797-1805, p. 40.
3. Howard and Hubbert, op. cit., p. 453.

of the coming revival occurred with the conversion of one woman in the Gasper River Church in May, 1797. With this single conversion the interest of the entire congregation was apparently aroused, but was not sustained for long. By the time autumn came it had subsided. The spiritual quickening was revived at Gasper River during a sacramental meeting which was held there in July, 1798. The other two churches in McGready's charge experienced a similar quickening in September of that same year. The revival movement was growing, but it had not yet really taken hold.

> "In 1797 there arose a little cloud like a man's hand. In 1798 the heaven was black with clouds and wind, the chief apparent cause being McGready's thunderous personality." 1

The sky might have been "black with clouds", but the storm had not yet broken. McGready was both intensely sincere and determined, and even though the interest which had been aroused at each one of his churches had not been long sustained yet he did not give up. It began to be more generally apparent in 1799 that his efforts were about to be rewarded with success. Signs of the deepening revival spirit were much in evidence in a meeting held at Gasper River in August. They also appeared in a sacramental meeting which was held in October by McGready, McGee, and Rankin at the Ridge, a congregation in western Tennessee. During the winter of 1799-1800 the revival spirit was kept alive and broke forth anew the following summer.

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1. Fredrick Morgan Davenport, Primitive Traits in Religious Revival, p. 69.

In the summer of 1800 the so-called Logan County Revival reached its highest peak. The first important revival meeting of the year was held on Red River in June. McGready, Hodge, Rankin and other Presbyterian preachers were in attendance. The McGee brothers, William, a Presbyterian, and John, a Methodist, were also present at this service. Several of the preachers spoke. At the close of the Rev. Mr. Hodge's sermon all of the ministers except the McGee brothers left the room, but the people remained in their places. One can well imagine the air of expectancy which must have hung heavily over the assembled group. John McGee took this opportunity to exhort the already excited people and the result was that "many broke silence. . . the floor was soon covered with the slain."[1] According to McGready ten were converted in this Red River meeting. The Great Western Revival movement was under way at last. Those who were present in this meeting went home and told others of the "Wonderful things" which had happened at Red River. Following this meetings were held at Gasper River, Muddy River, and Edward's Chapel. These meetings attracted so many people that they had to be held in the open. Every settlement in that section was "full of religious fervor."

2. The Development and Spread of the Camp-Meeting.

Since many of the people who attended the meetings came from great distances it was necessary for them to travel in their wagons. Whole families, leaving their work at home undone, loaded

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1. John McGee in a letter; in Davenport, op. cit., p. 70.

wagons with provisions and arrived at the meeting places prepared to remain for several days. Thus the famous American camp-meetings, which were soon to be so widely employed by the different religious sects, developed.

> "The first planned camp-meeting was held at Gasper River Church in July, 1800. Invitations were sent out by McGready through the whole country, and a great concourse assembled "from distances of forty, fifty and one hundred miles." A regular encampment was arranged in the form of a hollow square, the interior of which was fitted up for worship, with parallel rows of hewn logs designed as seats, and with the stand in the center. Some of the people occupied tents while others slept in covered wagons." 1

The camp-meeting idea "spread like wild-fire", and almost immediately camp-meetings came to be considered as a regular part of the revival movement. Tasks were put aside, favorite pastimes were neglected; and homes were deserted as both young and old came from all directions and gathered at the camp-meeting. It is recorded that ten camp-meetings were held in the Cumberland and Green River settlements during that same year, and that no less than six were held in upper Kentucky between May and July of the following year.[2]

The length of these meetings varied, but usually they continued from four days to a week each. Frequently the meeting would commence on a Thursday or Friday and continue through to the following Tuesday. The exhorting, praying and singing which were a part of each day's program would often last far into the night

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1. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 85.
2. Ibid., p. 86.

"until darkness had begun to give way to light."[1] In addition to these regular daily camp-meeting "features" the Holy Sacrament was usually administered on Sunday.

3. Barton Stone Visits the Logan County Revival.

The news of the Logan County Revival spread far and wide and soon people were coming from long distances to see for themselves what was happening. Among those who came to Logan County to investigate the revival was Barton W. Stone. Stone, one of McGready's North Carolina converts, was the minister of two small Presbyterian congregations in Bourbon County. The spiritual life of his church members was at such a low ebb that in the spring of 1801 he decided to go to Logan County to see for himself what was being accomplished there by the revival movement.

He was not quite sure just what to make of the physical "accidentials" which accompanied the revival, but he was convinced that the movement was genuine. Concerning the scenes which he witnessed while attending the revival Stone wrote:

> "There on the edge of a prairie in Logan County, Ky., the multitudes came to gether and continued a number of days and nights encamped on the ground, during which time worship was carried on in some part of the encampment. The scene was new to me and passing strange. It baffled description. Many, very many fell down as men slain in battle, and continued for hours together in an apparent breathless and motionless state, sometimes for a few moments reviving and exhibiting symptoms of life by a deep groan or piercing shriek, or by prayer for

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1. McMaster, op. cit., p. 579.

> mercy fervently uttered. After lying for hours they would obtain deliverance. . . They would rise, shouting deliverance, and then would address the surrounding multitude in language truly eloquent and impressive. . . Their appeals were solemn, heart-penetrating, bold, and free. Under such circumstances many others would fall down in the same state from which the speakers had just been delivered." 1

4. The Great Cane Ridge Meeting.

a. The First Appearance of the Revival in Bourbon County.

Stone returned home to Bourbon County and upon his arrival there a great revival, similar to the one which he had just witnessed, began. It was evident by June that the revival movement had reached Bourbon County.

In that month a sacramental meeting was held at Concord, one of Stone's two churches. About four thousand people attended this service and the Lord's Supper had to be administered in a tent which had been erected for that purpose. As for the effect of this meeting which "continued five days and five nights without ceasing", upon the community, Stone says:

> "The effects of this meeting through the country were like fire in dry stubble driven by a strong wind. All felt its influence more or less. . . The whole country appeared to be in motion to the place, and multitudes of all denominations attended." 2

b. The Meeting at Cane Ridge.

What happened at Concord was merely the beginning; the introduction to that which was about to take place, for it was

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1. Barton W. Stone in a letter; in Beardsley, op. cit., pp. 91-92.
2. Sweet, The Presbyterians, op. cit., p. 86.

followed in August by the well known Cane Ridge meeting. This meeting which has been termed "the most remarkable of all meetings in Kentucky,"[1] was without a doubt one of the most famous single services in the entire history of revivalism. The Cane Ridge meeting was exceptional for two reasons: first, because of the enormous crowds which were present; and second, because of the unusual excitement which attended it.

No one knows just how many people were in attendance at this service, but it has been estimated by some of those who were present that between ten and twenty thousand persons attended this unusual meeting. One observer wrote that there were

> "one hundred and forty wagons, which came loaded with people, besides other wheel carriages. Some persons had come two hundred miles." 2

Another observer included the following account of what he witnessed at the Cane Ridge Revival in a letter written soon after that famous event:

> "I set off last Friday and arrived there on Saturday about 10 o'clock; I then began to note some of the most extraordinary particulars. I first proceeded to count the waggons containing families, with their provisions, camp equipage, etc. to the number of 147; at 11 o'clock the quantity of ground occupied by horses, waggons, etc. was about the same size as the square between Market, Chesnut, Second and Third Streets, of Philadelphia." 3

A third person who claimed to have counted all of the vehicles that

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1. Ibid., p. 87.
2. Rev. Geo. A. Baxter; in Alonzo Williard Fortune, The Disciples in Kentucky, p. 35.
3. "From a Gentleman to his Sister in Philadelphia; Lexington, Kentucky, August 10, 1801"; in Sweet, Religion on the American Frontier, Vol. I, The Baptists, p. 610.

were there on the meeting ground declared that all together there were eleven hundred and forty-five of them.[1] If these figures are even approximately correct a fair idea can be gained of the number of people who were gathered at Cane Ridge for this meeting.

The other striking feature of the Cane Ridge meeting was the intense excitement which was aroused by and in it. This unusual excitement which was characteristic of the whole revival movement in the West reached its height here and surpassed everything which had been experienced, or witnessed, at any of the other meetings. The people who were assembled at Cane Ridge belonged to a racial group who were naturally deeply responsive to the religious stimuli which such a situation provided.

> "Mr. Bryce has well characterized the South as a region of 'high religious voltage', but this characterization is especially applicable to the Upland South. . . These people saturated their religion and their politics with feeling." 2

When we take into account the emotional nature and natural religious fervor of these people some of the incidents that occurred at Cane Ridge as a result of the prevailing excitement are not surprising.

> "Great numbers were on the ground from Friday until Thursday following, night and day without intermission, engaged in some religious act of worship." 3

Preachers were constantly exhorting the crowd. Peter Cartwright, "the great Methodist itinerant" in his Autobiography refers to the

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1. Cf. McMaster, op. cit., p. 580.
2. Turner, op. cit., p. 164-345.
3. An eyewitness; in Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 339.

Cane Ridge Meeting and says concerning it:

> "It was not unusual for one, two, three, and four to seven preachers to be addressing the listening thousands at the same time from the different stands erected for the purpose." 1

The great number of persons gathered together at one place for a common purpose; the nature and attitude of those people; the length of the meeting; and the method of conducting the meeting all worked together to produce an emotional pitch which threw the assembled multitudes into a very "fury of excitement."

It is not surprising that the Cane Ridge meeting is famous in history for the physical manifestations which were associated with it. Confusion reigned! Preachers exhorted, groups sang, men and women shouted, and crowds rushed "from preacher to preacher" all at the same time. Few persons were able to resist the social pressure which was exerted upon them by the crowd. Individuals lost their identity and became one with the emotionally wrought-up group. Even those who "came to scoff remained to preach".[2] Under such conditions it was little wonder that many were physically and mentally overwhelmed, for the excited emotions soon became fatigued and as a result gave away under the prolonged strain.[3]

This giving away of the emotions was undoubtedly one of the chief causes for the "physical accidentials" which were associated with the Great Revival in the West. The most common of these

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1. Peter Cartwright, op. cit., p. 31.
2. McMaster, op. cit., p. 580.
3. Cf. W. S. Bruce, The Psychology of Christian Life and Behaviour, p. 133.

strange "exercises" was the one known as the "falling exercise".[1]

> "The whole body of persons who actually fell helpless to the earth during the progress of the meeting was computed by the Rev. James Crawford, who avers that he endeavored to keep an accurate account, to be three thousand persons. . ." 2

Since such a large number of the people "fell" at the Cane Ridge meeting it was impossible for the crowds to move about without trampling upon them, therefore the "fallen" were carried into the meeting-house. Those "stricken" were affected differently, some lay quiet and motionless, while some shrieked and groaned. A third group were able to talk, but could not move. It was also a common sight to see men and women rolling over and over on the ground.

There will never be any way to ascertain the number of people who experienced true conversion at the Cane Ridge meeting, nor can we be sure of the number who even professed conversion, but Peter Cartwright wrote:

> "It was supposed, by eye and ear witnesses, that between one and two thousand souls were happily and powerfully converted to God during the meeting." 3

5. The Spread of the Revival Movement in the West.

From this time on camp-meetings became definitely associated with the revival movement as it spread throughout the West. In a very short time revivals were not only common throughout Kentucky, but they extended southward so as to include Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia within their scope as well. They also

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1. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 87.
2. Davenport, op. cit., p. 77.
3. Peter Cartwright, op. cit., p. 31.

began to appear north of the Ohio, and by 1803 the movement had reached the Western Reserve.

6. The Extravagances and Disorders which Accompanied the Western Revival.

As the revival wave spread the emotional excesses which by this time had come to be looked upon as a part of the movement increased in intensity. The excitement which was generated assumed new and more startling forms. Some were seized with the "jerks". This exercise caused a "convulsive jerking all over".[1] Cartwright tells of seeing more than five hundred persons jerking in his congregations. In describing the actions of "proud young gentlemen and young ladies" who took the "jerks" he says:

> "The first jerk or so, you would see their fine bonnets, caps, and combs fly; and so sudden would be the jerking of the head that their long loose hair would crack almost as loud as a wagoner's whip." [2]

"The undue excitement of animal feeling"[3] which characterized the Western revival movement after 1801 produced other bodily manifestations just as violent and to many as distasteful as the falling, the rolling, and the "jerks". Among these new manifestations were running, the dancing and barking exercises and the "Holy Laugh."

7. The Effects of the Great Revival upon Frontier Society.

In order to make our study of the western revivals more

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1. Peter Cartwright, op. cit., p. 48.
2. Ibid., p. 49.
3. Davidson, History of Kentucky Presbyterianism; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 88.

complete it is essential that an evaluation of their influence upon the church and upon society in general be included as a part of it. It cannot be denied that certain very undesirable elements came out of and accompanied this movement. It is generally agreed that too much stress was laid upon the emotional side of the religious life for the development of the "well-rounded" religious personality, and it is also recognized that various evils naturally arose as the result of and accompanied the intense excitement which prevailed around the camp-meeting.

Regardless of the presence of these undesirable results it is generally agreed that on the whole the West owes a deep feeling of gratitude to the Great Revival of 1800. In 1803 during the course of the revival David Rice, who is generally considered as the founder of Presbyterianism in Kentucky, preached a sermon before the Kentucky Synod on the Present Revival of Religion in this Country, in which he said:

> "It appears to me that the present stir in the land, is a real revival of the Christian religion. . ." 1

The reasons he gives for arriving at this conclusion are:

> 1. "This revival has made its appearance in various places, without any extraordinary means to produce it. . .
>
> 2. . . .there appears to be in the subjects of this work, a deep heart humbling sense of the great unreasonableness, abominable nature, pernicious effects and deadly consequences of sin. . .
>
> 3. They appear to have a lively and very affecting view of the

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1. Rev. David Rice, A Sermon on the Present Revival of Religion in this Country, p. 18.

> infinite condescension and love of God the Father, . . . Jesus Christ and him crucified, appears to be All in All to the subjects of this revival. . .
>
> 4. They. . . have a very deep and affecting sense of the worth of precious immortal souls. . .
>
> 5. A considerable number of individuals appear. . . to be greatly reformed in their morals. . .
>
> 6. A number of families who had lived apparently without the fear of God, are now reduced to order, and are daily joining in the worship of God. . .
>
> 7. The subjects of this work appear to be very sensible to the necessity of sanctification as well as justification. . ." 1

In evaluating Rice's claims that the revival was directly responsible for the improved spiritual and social life of the people of that section it must be taken into consideration that in so much as it was preached before ministers who were in position to judge the effects of the revival for themselves it "has the value of testimony given in the presence of other competent witnesses, and liable thus to be questioned or contradicted."[2]

The revival also was directly responsible for greatly increasing the memberships of the churches which participated in it. It is true that the Presbyterians suffered heavy losses due to the schisms which occurred within the church as a result of the revival, but that particular aspect will be considered in more detail in another section of this study. The recorders of America's church history and the recorders of America's secular history appear in the main to agree with Theodore Roosevelt when he said regarding

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1. Ibid., p. 20.
2. Bacon, op. cit., p. 237.

the effects of the Western revival movement, that on the whole,

> "there was an immense gain for good. The people received a new light, and were given a sense of moral responsibility such as they had not previously possessed. . ." 1

D. Summary.

There has never been a period in the history of America in which a reawakening to the spiritual and moral values of life was more needed for the welfare of society than during the years following the Revolutionary War. Warfare and skepticism had left their imprint upon American society, and the influence of the church was fading before the attacks of its numerous critics. The great mass of the people were apparently indifferent to religion, and the general tone of our national life was distinctly secular. Was American Protestantism doomed to die thus in its infancy? Many true Christians who were deeply concerned over the state of affairs were stirred into action by the perils of the situation. They labored and prayed that a revival of religion might be sent among the people for they realized that nothing save a renewed religious consciousness on the part of the people could revive the moral and spiritual life of the nation.

The labors and prayers of these Christian leaders prevailed much, for the nation soon experienced what was probably the greatest religious revival which has ever visited it. It swept through the seaboard states and the frontier settlements reclaiming thousands

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1. Theodore Roosevelt, The Winning of the West, Vol. II, p. 458.

of those who had forsaken or neglected the Christian way of life. We have centered our attention upon the Western phase of this great revival because it was along the frontier that it wrought its most remarkable changes. Some idea of the difference which the Great Western Revival made upon frontier life in Kentucky may be gained from the following statements made by Rev. David Rice. When he came to Kentucky in 1783 he found "scarcely one man and but few women who supported a credible profession of religion"[1], but twenty years later, or after the revival had been in operation for about three years, he tells us that "neighborhoods noted for their vicious and profligate manners are now as much noted for their piety and good order."[2] This Great Revival was successful in reclaiming American society because it succeeded in reawakening the religious consciousness of the American people.

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1. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 325.
2. Rice, op. cit., p. 21.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH OF AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANISM

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Though it is true that the Church and the State are constitutionally separate in America it cannot be denied that each has exerted a great influence upon the development of the other. It is impossible to estimate to just what extent the history of the American nation and the history of American Presbyterianism have influenced each other, but it is evident to the student of history that neither has developed independently of the other.

The history of America is the history of her frontiers, and to a large extent the history of the church in America is the story of the way in which she has met the challenge of the frontier.

> "The greatest single task which the American churches faced at the beginning of the national period of our history was that of following the westward moving population." 1

It may be, and has been, questioned as to whether or not the Presbyterian Church made the most of her excellent opportunities on the frontier, but it cannot be denied that from the first it has been frontier conscious.

It is the purpose of the writer to sketch rather hastily the development of American Presbyterianism from 1683 to 1789 in the first part of the chapter, and to give a picture of the establishment and development of organized Presbyterianism on the frontier in the second and longer section of the chapter.

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1. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 23.

A. A Century of American Presbyterianism.

Francis Makemie has the distinction of being known as the "father" of American Presbyterianism. Makemie was sent to this country by the Irish Presbytery of Laggan in response to the request of the Scotch-Irish in Maryland for a minister. He arrived in America in 1683 and assumed his new duties and responsibilities immediately. In addition to journeying through the eastern colonies from New York to South Carolina as an evangelist Makemie also organized churches in the Scotch and Scotch-Irish communities of Maryland. Among the first of these churches to be organized were the ones at Snow Hill and Rehobeth on the eastern shore of the colony.

Makemie was keenly aware of America's need for more ministers, so in 1704 he went to London "and made his appeal to the Independent and Presbyterian Minister's Union".[1] His mission was successful for when he returned to America he was accompanied by John Hamilton and George Macnish. In 1705 Makemie and five other Presbyterian ministers met in Philadelphia and formed the first presbytery in America. In keeping with the service which he had rendered toward the establishment of Presbyterianism in America Makemie was chosen moderator of this first presbytery.

Greatly aided by the increased emigration of the Irish Presbyterians to this country, due to the passing of the "Test Act", American Presbyterianism from about 1713 onward grew rapidly. In 1716 the presbytery was divided into the four prebyteries of Phil-

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1. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 175.

adelphia, New Castle, Long Island, and Snow Hill. These presbyteries united to form the Synod of Philadelphia. Briggs says concerning this synod:

> "The American Presbyterian Synod remained without a constitution and without a subscription until 1729. It was essentially a meeting of ministers. It only gradually assumed the functions of Presbyterian government and discipline as circumstances required." 1

Because of the need for ministers in America the early Presbyterians were called upon to make an important and far-reaching decision relating to the policy which they intended to follow concerning the educational standards which were to be required of their ministry. The minutes of the Presbytery for September 10, 1710, tell of the efforts of a consecrated man, one David Evan, who felt himself called to preach:

> "Upon information that David Evan, a lay person, had taken upon him publicly to preach among the Welsh of Great Valley, Chester County, it was unanimously agreed that the said Evan had done very ill, and acted irregularly in thus invading the work of the ministry and was therefore censured." It was later "agreed that the most proper method is that David Evan lay aside all other business for twelve months and apply himself closely to learning and study under direction of three ministers of the presbytery. . . and it be left to their discretion when he should come up for trial". . . not until November, 1714, was Mr. Evan licensed and ordained." 2

Thus at this early date American Presbyterianism took its decided stand for an educated ministry and in so doing set a precedent which has been adhered to ever since.

Most of the ministers who became members of American

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1. Charles Augustus Briggs, American Presbyterianism, p. 208.
2. Wm. Thomson Hanzsche, The Presbyterians, p. 70.

Presbyteries during the first two decades of the eighteenth century came to the colonies from the Presbyterian Church in the "old country". Their orthodoxy was not questioned, but as soon as the men who had received their training in the colonies began to present themselves for licensure it was thought necessary by some that they should be made to subscribe to some standard of belief. The Presbytery of New Castle was the first organized unit within the church to require the ministerial candidates who appeared before it to subscribe to such a standard when in 1724 they entered on their books "a formula expressing adherence to the Westminster Confession, and their candidates were obliged to sign it at licensure in this language. 'I do own the Westminster Confession as the confession of my faith'".[1] In 1727 an overture was introduced in Synod by John Thomson, a member of the New Castle Presbytery, favoring subscription to the Westminster Standards. When first introduced the overture had but few backers, but by 1728 it was so generally supported that it had to be considered. Jonathan Dickinson, who has been designated as "the ablest man in the Presbyterian Church in the colonial period"[2], wrote a letter in April,1729, concerning this overture in which he said:

> "Tho subscription may shut the door of the church communion against many serious and excellent servants of Christ who conscientiously scruple it, yet it's never like to deflect hypocrites, nor keep heretics out of the church. I have no worse opinion of the Assemblies Confession for the second

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1. Briggs, op. cit., p. 210.
2. Ibid., p. 216.

> article in the XXth chapter; God alone is Lord of the Conscience, &c. . and I must tell you that to subscribe this article and impose the rest, ... appears to me the most glorious contradiction." 1

Regardless of the attitude of Dickinson and others toward the adoption of standards enough of the members of the Synod were of the opinion that the welfare of the church required that the applicants for the ministry should be called upon to "declare their doctrine in no uncertain terms"[2] that the question was referred to a Synodical committee. This committee was made up of six members; three who opposed the measure, and three who favored it. This committee drew up one of American Presbyterianism's most famous and influential documents. As a result of the general agreement which was finally reached concerning the question the Synod passed what is called the Adoption Act. By this act it was agreed that:

> "All the ministers of this synod, or that shall hereafter be admitted into this synod, shall declare their agreement in, and approbation of, the Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, as being in all essential and necessary articles good forms of sound words and systems of Christian doctrine." 3

The Adoption Act has been referred to as "the pivot" of the history of the Presbyterian Church in this country. It has probably been as influential in determining the course of the history of that great church in the United States as any other single act.

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1. Ibid., p. 213.
2. Charles Lemuel Thompson, The Presbyterians, p. 64.
3. Lewis S. Mudge, Presbyterianism, Encyclopaedia Brittanica, 14th ed., vol. 18, p. 447.

The presence and preaching of the great revival preacher, George Whitfield, in America was vitally related to the schism which occurred in the Synod in 1741. Great crowds flocked to hear him preach, and the Great Awakening, largely due to his efforts, spread until it touched the lives of thousands of the colonists. The Presbyterians reacted in different ways to the revival movement which was sweeping through the country. Many were thoroughly in favor of the work which was being accomplished while others were disturbed by the emotional element which is bound to enter in as a part of every revival movement. Itinerate preachers connected with the revival movement were the cause of much controversy within the presbyteries and within the Synod itself.

At least two points were at issue concerning the activities of these evangelical ministers. In their travels from place to place they sometimes held services in vacant churches which were within the bounds of presbyteries other than their own without first securing the permission of the presbytery within whose bounds the vacant church was located. In addition to this offense some of these ministers had been examined and ordained to preach by the New Brunswick Presbytery instead of by the Synod, and the Synod claimed that it alone had the exclusive right to examine candidates and issue them a certificate. At the synodical meeting in 1741 a protest was brought in by the Old Side, or anti-revivalists, against the New Side, or revivalist party. The Synod then proceeded to exclude the New Brunswick Presbytery from its organization. During the next few years both the New Brunswick Presbytery and the New

York Presbytery attempted to heal the breach but their efforts were in vain, so in 1745 these two presbyteries and the Presbytery of New Castle joined to form a new synod, the Synod of New York. The two synods continued to operate separately until 1758 when they reunited as the Synod of New York and Philadelphia on the basis of the Adopting Act of 1729.

The Presbyterian Church took no official action concerning the Revolutionary War yet American Presbyterianism supported the cause of the colonies almost one hundred percent. Under the leadership of such leaders as John Witherspoon, George Duffield, and John Rodgers, the Presbyterians assumed an active role in the struggle for liberty. During the period of the war the Presbyterians suffered heavy loss both in life and property, yet everything considered, "no church in America, at the close of the War for Independence, was in better position for immediate expansion than was the Presbyterian."[1]

A convention in which the various states were represented convened in Philadelphia in 1787 for the sole purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation, but instead it drew up the Constitution which was given to Congress to be sent to the states for ratification. By the end of June, 1788, the Constitution had been ratified by nine state conventions, and consequently it went into effect in those nine states, and by April, 1789, when George Washington became the first president of the United States under the

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1. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 3.

new Constitution all of the states had joined the new government. Thus a great political democracy was born.

During this period when the nation was revising its form of government the Presbyterian Church was also engaged in revising its form of government. In 1785 a committee was appointed to study the constitutions of other Protestant bodies, and to draw up a system of rules "for the government of the Synod".[1] During the years 1785, 1786 and 1787 the subject of standards was under serious consideration. In the meeting of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia in 1788:

> ". . . the Confession of Faith, somewhat amended in the matter of civil magistrate's relation to the church, the longer Catechism also somewhat amended, the Shorter Catechism, the Directory of Worship and the Form of Government and Discipline, were adopted." [2]

At this meeting it was also declared that four synods should be formed out of the then existing single Synod of New York and Philadelphia. In May, 1789, one month after Washington became President of the United States, the first meeting of the General Assembly was held in Philadelphia. The first General Assembly was made up of the four synods: the Synod of New York and New Jersey, the Synod of Philadelphia, the Synod of Virginia, and the Synod of the Carolinas.[3]

> "Dr. Witherspoon was appointed to open the first meeting of the General Assembly, and his name appropriately heads the

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1. Hayes, op. cit., p. 125.
2. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 290.
3. Hanzsche, op. cit., p. 91.

list of the moderators as now printed in the annual minutes." 1

B. The Development and Growth of the Presbyterian Church in the West.

1. The Relation of the Presbyterians to Westward Expansion.

Many Scotch-Irish, as they are called, came to America during the eighteenth century. These Scotchmen, as most of them were, from northern Ireland had one uniform religion; they were all Presbyterians. When they arrived in America the seaboard section was already colonized so they went further west to settle. Most of them made their first homes in central and western Pennsylvania. Having already pushed further on into the forest than the other groups many of the Scotch-Irish were not content to stay here but continued their advance into the vast unsettled sections beyond. During the first half of the century a great number of them, accompanied by other settlers, migrated from Pennsylvania to the Piedmont region of Virginia and the Carolinas. With the arrival of these hardy pioneers in the up-country the "West" now appeared in American history.[2]

These pioneers living in the up-country of Virginia and the Carolinas had not been content to remain in the more thickly inhabited regions of the country, and soon the more restless of them were just as anxious to leave their newly established settlements and press on into the "trackless wilderness" again.

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1. Hayes, op. cit., p. 126.
2. Cf. Harry Flood Byrd, Virginia, Encyclopaedia Brittanica, 14th ed., vol. 13, p. 188.

> "The American Revolution was followed by an extensive emigration from Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina which made its way either by the Ohio River from Fort Pitt or - the far greater number - by the Cumberland Gap and the "Wilderness road", as marked by Boone in 1775. At least 95% of this population, excluding negro slaves, were of pure English, Scotch or Scotch-Irish descent." 1

Because of their numbers and because of their personal traits the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians soon "impressed the stamp of their peculiar character on the civilization of the West and Southwest." 2

Thus American Presbyterianism was placed in a position to profit by this great migration movement. Because of the Presbyterian origin and tendencies of the majority of these pioneers it would seem quite natural for the Presbyterian Church to take advantage of the opportunity thus afforded it by attempting to extend its influence westward. That the Presbyterians realized the importance of extending their work in the West is shown by their recognition of the need which existed in the frontier settlements, and by the action which the church took in trying to meet this need.

> "We find among the records of the Synod of Philadelphia, as early as 1719, some notices of a congregation designated as 'the people of Potomake in Virginia' and their petition to have a minister sent to them." 3

In 1722, when it felt that it was able to do so, the Synod heeded the call of the frontier by sending three men there to preach for a limited time. In 1755, during the period of divi-

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1. Edward Tuthill, Kentucky, Encyclopaedia Brittanica, 14th ed., vol. 13, p. 335.
2. Roosevelt, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 87.
3. Robert Davidson, History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky, p. 17.

sion, the Synod of New York formed the Hanover Presbytery in Virginia, and in 1758 the re-united Synod of New York and Philadelphia appointed a half day of fasting on behalf of the frontier settlements.[1] Regularly ordained ministers were frequently sent as stated supplies into the newly established settlements to carry on missionary work there for a stated length of time. When this was deemed impossible "the Synod directed that students and licentiates should labor for a few months in the most destitute regions."[2] Charles Beatty and George Duffield were typical of the ministers who served their turn as missionaries on the frontier.

> "Rev. Charles Beatty was from Neshaminy, Bucks County, and in 1766 came to Carlisle where he was joined by the pastor of this church, Rev. George Duffield, on a missionary tour over the Pennsylvania frontiers, as far west as Ohio. They traveled by horseback and spent six weeks on the journey, preaching to settlers and to Indians." 3

After this manner most of the ministers and licentiates of the church were sent to the border settlements on missionary tours. It was far better to pursue this course than it would have been to have neglected the still sparsely settled sections of the country entirely. On the other hand, because of the adverse influences, this method of dealing with the situation was far from adequate, for:

> "Although these early settlers were imbued with a sense of religious obligation, and appear to have quited their homes with a pious trust in Providence, and although, probably,

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1. Cf. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p.23.
2. Thompson, op. cit., p. 89.
3. The Church Record, First Presbyterian Church, Carlisle, Pa., January, 1937.

> they formed many good resolutions, yet the new circumstances in which they were placed had a very unfavorable effect upon their character. . . It is not wonderful, therefore, that religion should have a small share in their thoughts and intercourse. The absence of ministers and Sabbath services, and being removed from the inspection and discipline of the church, tended to foster habits of carelessness and irreligion." 1

There was a "crying need" on the frontier for the establishment of churches.

2. The Establishment of the Presbyterian Church on the Frontier.

a. The First Frontier Congregations.

In the beginning frontier conditions appeared to be favorable to the Presbyterian cause, yet because of the scarcity of trained ministers the church was slow in organizing frontier congregations. In western Pennsylvania the missionaries appointed by the church labored for a period of ten years before "a single congregation was formed or a regular ministry established."[2]

Kentucky's first permanent settlement was established in 1775, but it was not until 1783 that a Presbyterian congregation was organized in the commonwealth. It is not difficult to account for the slowness in the forming of churches on the Kentucky frontier, because for the first few years the population of Kentucky increased very slowly. David Rice was the founder of Presbyterianism in Kentucky.

> "In the year 1783 in the fall the Revd. David Rice came to Kentucky and settled near Danville then a small village and

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1. Davidson, op. cit., p. 63.
2. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 25.

> next spring collected a church called Concord, and the next spring 1784 collected another church on Salt River & Cane Run three miles S.E. of Harrodsburgh." [1]

In 1784 the Mt. Zion Church in Lexington was formed under the leadership of Adam Rankin. Rankin "also took charge of the congregation of Pisgah, about eight miles south-west of Lexington." [2]

As early as 1773 two Presbyterian congregations in eastern Tennessee petitioned the Hanover Presbytery for the services of Rev. Charles Cummings. Cummings accepted this call in that year. Five years later Samuel Doak, another Scotch-Irish preacher, came to Tennessee. In 1780 Doak established the Salem Church not far from Jonesboro. [3]

b. The Early Frontier Presbyteries.

(1) The Transylvania Presbytery.

Due to the rapid growth of the church during the last half of the eighteenth century many new presbyteries were brought into existence. Most of the ones which were established during this period were frontier presbyteries. The first western presbytery to be formed was the Presbytery of Hanover. It was organized in 1755 by the Synod of New York. It was constituted to care for the Presbyterian immigrants who had made their way down the Valley of Virginia. As these Scotch-Irishmen pushed further on into the

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1. Robert B. McAfee, The History of the Rise and Progress of the first settlements on Salt River, and Establishment of the New Providence Church; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 30.
2. McAfee, MS p. 27; in Davidson, op. cit., p. 73.
3. Cf. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 34.

forest the bounds of the presbytery were gradually expanded so as to include all of the western country. When David Rice first came to Kentucky in 1783 all of that territory was a part of the Hanover Presbytery. In 1785 the Presbytery of Hanover was divided and the western division was known as the Abingdon Presbytery. In this same year the ministers located in Kentucky held two conferences with the end in view of establishing an independent presbytery. In the following year, 1786, their desire was fulfilled when the Synod of New York and Philadelphia divided Abingdon Presbytery into two presbyteries,

> ". . . the one by the name of the presbytery of Abingdon, the other by the name of the Transylvania, comprehending the district of Kentucky & the settlements upon the Cumberland River, consisting of the Rev. David Rice, Thomas Craighead, Adam Rankin, Andrew McClure, James Crawford & appointed the presbytery to meet at Danville in the district of Kentucky on the third Tuesday of October, 1786." 1

The minutes of the first meeting of Transylvania Presbytery throw some interesting side-lights on the conditions which existed in the church and in society at that time. The presbytery made an appeal to the vacant congregations to be faithful in their observance of the Lord's Day service. It also decided to comply with a decision of the Synod concerning the appointment of catechists to instruct the "young and ignorant" members of the vacant congregations, but at the same time it was made quite clear that such an appointee "shall not by the virtue of his appointment attempt to expound the Scriptures, preach the gospel or dispense the sealing

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1. Minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery, Oct. 17th, 1786; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 129.

ordinances thereof."[1]

One of the four synods which was formed at the time of the reorganization of the Presbyterian Church in 1789 was the Synod of Virginia. This synod was made up of the following presbyteries: 1. The Presbytery of Redstone in western Pennsylvania; 2. The Presbytery of Hanover in the lower counties of Virginia; 3. The Presbytery of Lexington in the Valley of Virginia; 4. The Presbytery of Transylvania which included within its boundaries "the district of Kentucky and all the settlements on the Cumberland river, extending into what is now the State of Tennessee."[2] The only difference which this reorganization made in relation to the Transylvania Presbytery was constitutional rather than geographical. Its boundaries had not been affected by the change, but whereas it had formerly been a part of the single Synod of New York and Philadelphia it was now a part of the Synod of Virginia, one of the four newly established synods.

The first trouble to arise within the Presbytery of Transylvania had to do with the use of the psalms in worship. Adam Rankin, one of the original and most influential members of the presbytery, objected to the use of Watt's psalms in the churches. In presenting his objections before the first General Assembly in 1789 he asked:

"Whether the churches under the care of the General Assembly,

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1. Ibid., p. 131.
2. Davidson, op. cit., p. 82.

> have not. . . fallen into a great and pernicious error in the public worship of God, by disusing Rouse's versification of David's Psalms, and adopting in room of it, Watts's imitation?" 1

The committee appointed to hear Rankin's complaint reported that:

> "The committee. . . are sorry to find that all of their efforts have been in vain; and, therefore only recommend to him that exercise of Christian charity towards those who differ from him in their views of this matter, which is exercised towards himself: and that he be carefully guarded against disturbing the peace of the church on his head." 2

It was soon quite evident that the efforts of the committee had been in vain, and it was also clearly demonstrated that Rankin had no intention of heeding the recommendation which was made to him that he "exercise Christian charity", and "be carefully guarded against disturbing the peace of the church", for:

> "No sooner had he returned home than he vented the most censorious invectives against the Presbyterian clergy as deists, blasphemers, rejectors of the revelation, and revilers of God's word." 3

In accord with his expressed belief that it was a sin to use "Watts's imitation" he would not permit any of his congregation who admired Watts to partake of the sacrament. When the Presbytery of Transylvania met in April, 1791, a petition, signed by a number of the members of the Pisgah congregation asking that they might be dismissed from the pastoral care of the Rev. Adam Rankin, was presented. The presbytery investigated the situation and in April,

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 25th, 1789, p. 11.
2. Ibid., May 26th, 1789, p. 11.
3. Davidson, op. cit., p. 88.

1792, proceeded to try him. When Rankin was called in to hear the findings of presbytery in relation to his case he refused to admit that he had done anything for which he could be censured, but said instead:

> "I appeal to God, angels & men that I protest against the proceedings of pby. & will be no longer a member of Transylvania Presbytery." 1

In one matter he and the members of the presbytery were in perfect accord, i.e., his statement saying that he would no longer be a member of that presbytery for then and there he was suspended until the October meeting at which meeting he was permanently suspended. When he left the Presbyterian Church he took a large number of his congregation with him. He and his followers were accepted into the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

In 1792 the General Assembly resolved:

> "That it be recommended to the several presbyteries of this Church to consider whether it would be proper to extend the time necessary for young men to apply to the study of divinity before they be taken of trials, to three years at least," 2

Transylvania took this resolution under consideration at their next meeting in October and came to the conclusion that the three year requirement "would by no means suit the state of our country & of our churches in the remote parts of the United States." 3

The minutes of the General Assembly of 1793 show that a majority of the presbyteries were in agreement with the action taken by

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1. Minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 138.
2. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 22, 1792, p. 60.
3. Minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 139.

Transylvania concerning this question. It must not be inferred from this action that the presbyteries were opposed to "higher education", for to the contrary, most of them were busy establishing schools and colleges during this period. In 1794 Transylvania took steps toward the establishment of a grammar school "that serious youth shall be sought for of promising abilities & put to school to obtain a liberal education."[1] In the following year a list of books was recommended by presbytery for use in the newly established Grammar School.

In 1799 the Presbytery of Transylvania sent a petition to synod:

> ". . . praying for a division of the said pby. into three presbyteries to be known by the names of the Transylvania, bounded on the north east by the Kentucky river, on the north & west by the Ohio, as also on the south comprehending all the settlements of Cumberland and its waters. . . Another pby. to be known by the name of the Western Lexington presbytery, bounded by the Kentucky on the south & south west, by the Ohio on the north & north west & by main Licking on the north & north east;. . . Another to be known by the name of the Washington pby. comprehending the remaining part of the state of Kentucky lying north east of Main Licking, & the settlements on the north west side of the Ohio." [2]

This petition was granted by synod and the area which the Transylvania Presbytery had covered was thus divided among three presbyteries. In 1802 these three presbyteries separated from the Synod of Virginia and formed the Synod of Kentucky. At the first session of the new synod the Cumberland Presbytery was

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1. Ibid., April 24, 1794, p. 142.
2. Ibid., March 27, 1799, p. 183.

formed out of the southern portion of Transylvania. It was in the Transylvania Presbytery that the western revival movement reached its spectacular heights, for it was within the bounds of Transylvania that the Cane Ridge and similar revival meetings were held. It was within Transylvania's bounds too, that the principle western schisms, occasioned by the revival, occurred.

(2) The Cumberland Presbytery.

Before the first meeting of the Kentucky Synod in October, 1812,

> ". . . all the ministers and churches south of the Kentucky river were under the inspection of one presbytery, and it was within the bounds of this presbytery, and particularly in the settlements on the waters of Green river and Cumberland, that the religious excitement was the greatest." 1

As a result of the revival the demand for ministers in this section of the presbytery was greatly increased. This increased demand so far exceeded the trained supply that the presbytery decided to settle the problem in their own way; in a way which was not entirely original with them, it is true, but nevertheless in a way which had seldom been resorted to.

In 1758, when the Presbytery of New York and Philadelphia was founded "the question of the examination of candidates as to their learning and religious experience was left to the presbyteries." 2 At the same time the power of the presbytery in this matter of licensing and ordaining ministerial candidates was very definitely

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1. Robert H. Bishop, Outline History of the Church in the State of Kentucky, p. 117.
2. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 208.

limited, for by a joint act at the time of their union, the old synods of Philadelphia and New York ordered:

> "That no presbytery shall license or ordain to the work of the ministry any candidate, until he give them complete satisfaction as to his learning, and experimental acquaintance with religion, and skill in divinity and cases of conscience, and declare his acceptance of the Westminster Confession of faith, and promise subjection to the Presbyterian plan of government in the Westminster Directory." 1

With the rapid growth of Presbyterianism in this country the demand for ministers increased "but in spite of these increasing demands the Synod refused in 1803 to permit the licensing of persons to preach the gospel who did not have a liberal education, and again in 1785 they reaffirmed the upholding of educational standards." 2 These standards set up by the Synod were maintained by the General Assembly after its establishment.

During the period of the revival it was a great temptation to lower these standards. This was particularly true in the sections where the movement had been especially active. In order to take care of new congregations which had been formed within its jurisdiction the Transylvania Presbytery, in 1801, authorized four men, Messers. Alexander Anderson, Finis Ewing, Samuel King and Ephraim McClain, none of whom had received "a liberal education" to exhort and catechize. The following year, 1802, the presbytery licensed all except McClain to preach the gospel. Almost immediately after this action was taken the presbytery was divided and that part

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1. Charles Hodge, Discussions in Church Polity, p. 181.
2. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 9.

"lying on the South Side of a line drawn along the Bigbarren river to the Mouth, and from thence to the mouth of the Salt River"[1] was known by the name of the Presbytery of the Cumberland.

The newly formed presbytery held its first meeting in April, 1803,and at this meeting those who had been licensed at the last meeting of Transylvania presbytery were continued as licentiates under the new presbytery. From the very beginning the Cumberland Presbytery was a "house divided against itself". The cause lying behind this disagreement within the presbytery was the revival. Even before the presbytery was formed the ministers in this section were divided into two groups: the revivalists, and the anti-revivalists. At this first meeting the ten members of the presbytery equally divided on the question, but soon the revivalists were in the majority and after that "they went on with great rapidity in their own way."[2]

In 1803 Alexander Anderson and Finis Ewing, two of the newly licensed candidates for whom "the ordinary rules of the Presbyterian Church respecting literary qualifications, and the length of time to be spent in the regular study of divinity by all candidates for the holy ministry"[3] were set aside, were ordained by the Cumberland Presbytery, and in the following year Samuel King, the third member of the group was likewise ordained. This was only

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1. Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky, Oct. 15, 1802; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 310.
2. Bishop, op. cit., p. 118.
3. Ibid., p. 117.

the beginning, for soon there were licensures at "almost every meeting", and the presbytery:

> ". . . in pursuing what they believed to be their duty, continued from time to time to license and ordain such men, both learned and unlearned (what is meant by unlearned here, is not want of common English education)." [1]

In a comparatively short time the number of these men "including exhorters, licentiates, and a few who were thus unconstitutionally ordained amounted to nearly thirty."[2]

In April, 1804, David Rice was appointed by the Transylvania Presbytery to forward a letter to the General Assembly "concerning the propriety of giving to persons permission to exhort publicly, without a view to the gospel ministry."[3] The reply which was received in response to this inquiry shows the attitude of the General Assembly toward the course which the Cumberland Presbytery was following in this matter. The General Assembly's answer was:

> "The inquiry which you propose, in the name of the Presbytery, concerning the propriety, in your present circumstances, of licensing and ordaining men to the work in the gospel ministry, without a liberal education, is certainly of great magnitude. . . . the reasoning seems specious at first, which would encourage us, in the instance you mention, to depart from the spirit of our standards on this subject; . . . it is the opinion of this Assembly, that where the field of labor is too extensive for the ordinary and regular

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1. Samuel King, Letter Addressed to the Societies and Brethren of the Presbyterian Church recently under the care of the Council of the late Cumberland Presbytery; in Foster, The Cumberland Presbyterians, p. 275.
2. Bishop, op. cit., p. 119.
3. Minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery, April 12, 1804; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 192.

> ministry, certain assistants, like the helpers or catechists of the primitive church, may, under proper restrictions and limitations, be usefully employed in instructing the young in the principles of our holy religion, and conducting the prayer and voluntary societies of private Christians. . . It must be left solely to the regular and established judicatories of the church, according to the circumstances which may exist within their respective limits, to judge upon the subject. . . .Let their duties be pointed out to them, and circumscribed within precise limits. . . if any, upon full experience, are found to possess requisite qualifications for preaching the gospel and promise to be eminently useful to the church, they may, in time, purchase to themselves a degree, and be admitted, according to the regular course, to the holy ministry." [1]

The so-called anti-revivalists of the Cumberland Presbytery continued in their opposition against the policy which the body had adopted in licensing and ordaining those who did not measure up to the traditional Presbyterian standards. In 1804, the same year in which the Transylvania Presbytery sent their inquiry to the General Assembly, Thomas Craighead, a member of the minority group remonstrated to the synod against the actions of the Cumberland Presbytery "charging the majority with irregularity and doctrinal unsoundness."[2]

A committee was chosen by synod to attend the next meeting of the presbytery to investigate charges. Synod also ordered both groups, "the complained of" and the "complaining", to appear at the next stated meeting of synod "with all the light and testimony on the Subject that can be afforded."[3] The committee which had been appointed made an unfavorable report concerning the records and

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 25th, 1804, pp. 299-301.
2. Howard and Hubbert, op. cit., p. 458.
3. Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky, Oct. 22, 1804; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 329.

actions of the Cumberland Presbytery. Upon receiving this report a commission was appointed to meet with members of "said presbytery". This meeting was held in December. The Commission inquired into the testimony concerning the charge that the presbytery was guilty of ordaining and licensing men to preach the gospel "contrary to the rules and discipline of the Presbyterian Church."[1] It wanted to know why the presbytery required its candidates to subscribe to the Confession of Faith "so far only as they in reason, think it corresponds with the Scriptures."[2] The majority spokesman, James McGready, answered this question by saying that:

> "The Confession of Faith was Human composition and fallible, and that they could not in conscience feel themselves bound any farther than they believed it to correspond with the Scriptures." 3

The Commission decided that it was in its place to examine the members of the presbytery who had thus been "irregularly licensed" and "irregularly ordained". The members of the presbytery did not appreciate this move, and they naturally refused to hear to it maintaining that presbytery alone had the right to examine and pass upon its own candidates. When the commission attempted to proceed with the examination, members of the presbytery "interposed" to prevent it. The men who were called upon to stand examination refused to submit to the authority of the commission. The commission concluded that this action on the part of the presbytery was a remun-

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1. Ibid., p. 338.
2. Ibid., p. 338.
3. Ibid., p. 338.

ciation of the jurisdiction of the church. It also resolved that these men be prohibited from the duties to which they had been attending until they were willing to submit to the said examination.[1]

At the next meeting of synod the question as to what action to take in regard to the Cumberland Presbytery was again considered. William Hodge and John Rankin, two of the regularly ordained ministers of the presbytery, declared themselves willing to be examined on points of doctrine, but they refused to use their authority in attempting to silence the men whose licensure and ordination were under question. For this refusal they were suspended from performing the privileges of their office. When Rankin and Hodge were asked if they wished to appeal from the judgment of the synod they replied "that they had not thought of appealing to any earthly tribunal."[2]

The outcome of the whole procedure was that synod declared that the difficulties which seemed to exist in Cumberland Presbytery were such as to "incapacitate them for doing business", and for this reason the synod felt that it was justified in dissolving the Presbytery of Cumberland. The members who had belonged to it were once more members of the Transylvania Presbytery.

In 1807 a remonstrance against the action of the Kentucky Synod in suspending them from the ministry was forwarded to the General Assembly by McAdow, Hodge, Rankin, and McGee, formerly members of the now disbanded Cumberland Presbytery. In answer to

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 341.
2. Ibid., Oct. 25th, 1806, p. 352.

this remonstrance the General Assembly addressed a letter to the synod in which they said:

> "While the Assembly have found it their duty on the one hand to approve of many of your proceedings on the very irregular and censurable conduct of that presbytery. . . on the other, to suggest that your proceedings in demanding that the young men irregularly licensed, be given up to your body for examination; in suspending the irregularly ordained ministers without process in their case; and in suspending Messrs. Hodge and Rankin, for not submitting to the re-examination of the young men, are at least of questionable regularity." 1

In the following year the General Assembly addressed a letter to the former members of the late Cumberland Presbytery in which they answered an appeal of these men that their case be tried by the Assembly itself. In it they stated that the only legal way in which their case could be handled was for them to appeal to synod first and that if satisfaction was denied them, then they had the right to appeal to the Assembly.

In 1809, after enough time had elapsed for a deliberate survey of the whole situation the Assembly wrote as follows concerning the synod's action:

> "The Assembly think it due the Synod to say, that they deserve the thanks of the church for the firmness and zeal with which they have acted in the trying circumstances in which they have been placed." 2

The Cumberland Presbytery was in existence for only four short years, but its span of life was crowded with events which were far-reaching in their influence. Though not solved to the satisfaction of all of those concerned, the actions of this short-lived

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., June 1st, 1807, p. 389.
2. Ibid., May 22d, 1809, p. 416.

presbytery gave rise to questions dealing with traditional and constitutional practices of the church. Are there conditions under which the church is justified in lowering the educational standards which it has set up for its ministry? Should a candidate for the ministry be permitted to accept the Confession of Faith as his faith only in so far as it seems to him to agree with the word of God? Does the presbytery, in exercising its power of passing upon the qualifications of its candidates for the ministry, have the right to ignore the specific constitutional requirements of the church? Does the synod have the constitutional right to demand that the presbytery order the men who have been licensed and ordained by it to appear for re-examination by the synod? What are the constitutional rights of both the presbytery and the synod in their dealings one with the other? These were some of the problems which came to the fore during the brief existence of the Cumberland Presbytery.

In 1808 the General Assembly suggested to the synod that its action in demanding that the young men who had been licensed by the Cumberland Presbytery should be re-examined was at least questionable, and that it had exceeded its authority in suspending any of the ministers of the late presbytery. But at the same time the General Assembly stated quite clearly that in its opinion some of these men had been irregularly licensed and ordained by the Cumberland Presbytery.

The following year, probably under the influence of the strongly emotional appeal of John Lyle who had come to the meeting to

defend the actions of synod, the General Assembly, without a dissenting vote, upheld the position of the Synod of Kentucky concerning the action which it had taken in dealing with the Cumberland Presbytery. Hodge, in discussing the temptation which existed at that time to lower the standard of ministerial education, states in no uncertain terms that:

> "To the honor of the Synod of Kentucky, it should be remembered that they submitted to the secession of that body now called the Cumberland Presbyterians, rather than to yield to such demands." 1

The ultimate and logical outcome of this whole affair was the establishment of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church about which more will be said later.

c. The Synod of Kentucky.

Although this organization has been more or less thoroughly discussed in the preceding sections it might be well to present in brief form a more unified picture of the synod. In 1785 the first presbytery west of the mountains, Abingdon Presbytery, was formed by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia. In the following year the northern part of the territory included within the bounds of the Abingdon Presbytery was placed under the jurisdiction of the newly formed Transylvania Presbytery. In 1799 the Transylvania Presbytery divided into three presbyteries and the three in turn united in 1802 to form the Synod of Kentucky.

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1. Hodge, op. cit., p. 446.

> "The Synod of Kentucky, according to the appointment of General Assembly held its first meeting in Lexington, on the 14th day of October, 1802, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. David Rice." 1

Rice was chosen Moderator, and Marshall, Clerk of the new synod. One of the first actions to be taken by the Synod of Kentucky was to divide the Presbytery of Transylvania and thus to form the Cumberland Presbytery.

At the opening of the meeting of the synod of 1803 Rice preached a sermon on "The Present Revival of Religion, in this Country". This sermon was so well received by the members of the synod that they officially thanked him for delivering it, and at the same time sought permission of him to publish it; this permission was granted.

In this same year, 1803, the charges of the Washington Presbytery that two of its members, Messrs. McNemar and Thompson, held Arminian tenets, were brought to the notice of the synod. The synod voted to examine these two men, but when the time for the examination came both of the defendants were absent together with four other members. When the synod was debating as to what procedure to follow the absent members appeared and through one of their group, Robert Marshall, presented a protest to the proceedings of synod in the affairs of Washington Presbytery. This protest was signed by Robert Marshall, John Dunlavy, Richard McNemar, Barton W. Stone and John Thompson. In it they said:

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1. Bishop, op. cit., p. 250.

> "We bid you adieu until through the providence of God it seem good to your Revd Body to adopt a more liberal plan respecting human Creeds & Confessions." [1]

Two committees were appointed by synod to meet with these men to try to "bring them back to the Standards and doctrines of our Church" [2] but they were unsuccessful in their attempts, and thus the seed of dissension took root and the synod was rent with schism.

The account of the synod's action in dissolving the Cumberland Presbytery in 1806 has already been given. It might be added here that in 1807, in its letter to the synod, the General Assembly expressed the hope that the difficulties between the two bodies might be overcome, and that the dissolved presbytery might be re-established. But in so much as the two groups concerned failed to adjust their differences the desire failed to become a reality.

C. Summary.

In order to understand the relationship which existed between the Presbyterian Church and the Great Revival it is necessary to know something of the historical development of American Presbyterianism. The course of action which the church followed concerning the revival movement was largely determined by traditional Presbyterian policies and practices of the church. In a general way it is the purpose of this entire study to discover what happened when the traditional policies and practices of the

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1. Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky, Sept. 10, 1803; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 319.

church came into direct contact with the frontier aspect of the revival. If this chapter has succeeded in presenting in a clear and logical manner the way in which specific policies and practices affecting the church's relationship to the revival originated and developed it has accomplished its purpose. Thus far we have studied the historical development of the revival and of the church separately, but from now on our attention will be directed to the relationship which existed between the two as they met on the western frontier.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PRESBYTERIAN PHASE OF THE WESTERN REVIVAL

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THE PRESBYTERIAN PHASE OF THE WESTERN REVIVAL

> "It is an interesting fact that most of the great American revival movements have come largely through Presbyterianism, and the great Revival in the West is no exception." 1

The Great Western Revival began in Logan County, Kentucky, in the little Presbyterian churches of which James McGready was the pastor. The development and spread of this religious awakening was so rapid that in a surprisingly short time churches in all parts of the West were sharing in the experience. Although the movement was Presbyterian in origin, yet it became too big to remain denominational in either scope or character. The Methodists and the Baptists were not slow in taking advantage of the opportunity which the revival offered, and the ministers of these three denominations were soon busily engaged in promoting the revival. In many instances close cooperation existed among the denominational leaders who shared in the promotion of this work, but there was a noticable "let up" in this spirit of cooperation as the movement spread.

Since we are not dealing with the inter-denominational aspect of the revival we will limit ourselves to the tracing of its development in its relationship to the Presbyterian Church.

A. The Presbyterian Origin of the Western Revival.

To James McGready, a Presbyterian minister of Logan County goes the credit for launching the western revival movement;

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1. Sweet, The Presbyterians, pp. 83,84.

for it was through his effective preaching that the people were first awakened from their spiritual apathy. The first indications of the coming revival appeared within his congregations in 1797, but it was not until two years later that the revival "took root". When the Logan County revival movement really got under way it picked up momentum so rapidly that it reached its culmination in the summer of 1800.[1] Congregation after congregation in the "Cumberland country" was visited by the revival. It spread like "wildfire", and soon men came with their families from great distances to attend the meetings.

Due to the great popularity of these meetings the camp-meeting was born. The first planned camp-meeting was held at the Gaspar River meeting-house, one of the three churches in McGready's charge, in 1800. Hence, the camp-meeting, which was destined to exert such a great influence upon the development of American Protestantism, was of Presbyterian origin.

It is interesting to note that most of the meetings within the church in which the revival spirit reached its highest pitch were those at which the Communion was observed. This is not hard to account for; it was only natural that the administering of the Lord's Supper in the midst of the already impressive surroundings would impart additional impressiveness to the service, and would thus aid in calling forth a deepened emotional response on the part of the participants. We have already seen how this

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1. Cf. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 85.

awakening led to strange and violent physical responses on the part of the members of the great crowds which gathered at the camp-meeting ground.

There was some opposition to the movement from within the Presbyterian Church from the very start, but this opposition failed to gather any effective strength until after the extravagances and disorders which accompanied the movement began to develop. The more conservative ministers lined up on the side of the "anti-revivalists", not because they failed to see anything good in the revival, but because they felt that the excesses which were tolerated and the doctrines that were proclaimed by some of the revival preachers were, on the whole, detrimental to the cause of the church.

B. The Spread of the Revival within the Presbyterian Church.

1. The Revival Movement in Presbyterian Churches in Kentucky.

The fame of the Logan County revival soon spread "far and wide", and in a short time ministers and laymen were coming from all directions to see for themselves that which had come to pass. Many of those who came were so impressed by what they saw of the great work which had begun in such a small way in McGready's parish that they returned to their homes to undertake similar movements there. Thus the work spread quite rapidly. Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian minister of Bourbon County was one of the visitors to Logan County who was so impressed with what he witnessed there that upon his return home he labored to lead the

members of his two congregations, Concord and Cane Ridge, into a spiritual experience such as the members of McGready's congregations were enjoying. Under his preaching Bourbon County soon experienced a revival of the same type as the one in the "Cumberland country". The most famous camp-meeting in the annals of American history, "the great sacramental meeting held at Cane Ridge"[1], occurred in August, 1801, as a result of Stone's efforts. Although the occasion for this meeting was the observance of the Lord's Supper, yet it was a union service with the ministers of three denominations, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist, sharing in the work.

The revival movement grew so that in an incredibly short time Kentucky Presbyterianism generally was under its domination. As it spread the abuses which characterized it multiplied, but such was its momentum that it was almost impossible to cope with these disorders. Quite naturally the gulf between the "revivalists" and the "anti-revivalists" continued to widen as time passed, but matters did not reach a climax until 1803 when the extravagances of the revival were for the first time opposed with at least partial success.

At the Walnut Hill Communion service in August, John Lyle preached a sermon from the text: "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace"[2]. Father Rice also "exhorted powerfully

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1. Cleveland, op. cit., p. 75.
2. I Corinthians 14:33.

against noise and false exercises."[1] After the service the ministers who were present convened at the house of the minister, Mr. Crawford. Rice read a paper before this small and informal gathering in which he called upon the ministers to make it their business to see that the camp-meetings were better regulated. This protest did serve to call attention to the scandals which were coming to be associated with the camp-meetings, and probably did help some of the revival leaders to be more careful in the future concerning the camp-meetings which they sponsored, but it did quite certainly serve to increase the gulf between the factions. The "revivalists" interpreted this move as an indication that the preachers who stressed the maintainance of order at the meetings were opposed to the revival movement as such. The result was that the protesting ministers were called "anti-revivalists", which name was certainly inadvisably applied to those who were in favor of the movement, but who merely wished to guard it from abuse.

Thus the Kentucky revival, which was born in McGready's small frontier congregations, swept rapidly across the state until in a surprisingly short time it must have touched every Protestant congregation in Kentucky.

We have noted the excessive emotional reactions which developed in relation to the revival movement in Kentucky, and we have seen how the tendency to "boisterous emotion" led to the

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1. Davidson, op. cit., p. 190.

abuses which brought about a definite cleavage in the ranks of Kentucky Presbyterianism, a cleavage which soon developed into schism. But in spite of the negative results of the Kentucky Revival it remains clear that:

> ". . . the Great Revival stimulated the religious life of the country as a whole, and did much to develop the region west of the Alleghanies." [1]

2. The Revival Movement in the Frontier Presbyterian Churches outside of Kentucky.

The revival in its most extreme forms seems to have been confined largely to Kentucky, "but the spirit of it went abroad through the nation."[2] It spread to the north across the Ohio and it was not long until "its fires began to light up western and central New York."[3] The revival in Central and Western New York is not as well known to history as some of the other phases of the movement, but according to Hays it was perhaps as influential there as in any part of the country.[4] The churches of western Pennsylvania experienced the revival, too.

Elisha Macurdy was the outstanding revivalist among the Presbyterians in Pennsylvania. He was the pastor of two congregations, Cross Roads and Three Springs. The movement first appeared in Macurdy's churches late in 1801, and early in 1802. One of the most memorable services connected with this phase of the revival was the observance of the Lord's Supper on the last Sunday of

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1. Cleveland, op. cit., p. 128.
2. Thompson, op. cit., p. 137.
3. Ibid., p. 137.
4. Cf. Hays, op. cit., p. 151.

October at the Cross Roads Church. Concerning this meeting the "Western Missionary Magazine" says:

> "A great crowd of people collected, many from a great distance, accomodated with provisions to continue on the ground during the whole of the solemnity. . . Nine ministers attended. . . The meeting house, though large, being insufficient to contain half of the people, the sacrament was administered at the tent to about eight hundred communicants." 1

Another celebrated sacramental meeting of the Pennsylvania revival was the one which was held at the Upper Buffalo Church on the second Sunday of November, 1802.

> "It was much the largest assembly which had ever been collected for divine worship in western Pennsylvania. The number was estimated at ten thousand. Fifteen ministers, all members of the Synod of Pittsburgh, were present and labored together during this solemn season with the utmost harmony. Mr. Macurdy was one of the number. . . The evening and night were spent in preaching, exhortation and prayer." 2

In its northward sweep the revival not only affected New York and Pennsylvania, but it also reached the Western Reserve section of Ohio as early as 1802. It then crossed over the international boundary line into Canada.

The revival movement not only reached across the Ohio into the settlements of the north, but it crossed over the mountains into the frontier regions to the south and east of Kentucky as well. It was not long until Tennessee, western Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia were sharing in the revival experience.

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1. The Western Missionary Magazine, Vol. I, pp. 334, 335; in Strickland, op. cit., pp. 99-100.
2. Ibid., p. 100.

C. The Attitude of the General Assembly Concerning the Revival.

In 1802 the General Assembly appointed a committee to prepare a report concerning "the general state of religion" within the bounds of the Assembly. A part of this report, which was adopted as an act of the Assembly reads as follows:

> "From the east, from the west, from the north, and from the south, the most pleasing intelligence has been received. Revivals, of a more or less general nature, have taken place in many of our Presbyteries. The pious have been quickened, the daring arrested, the haughty humbled, and multitudes of once thoughtless sinners have been added to the church. In some parts of the States of Virginia and North Carolina, the Spirit of God has, we trust, been poured out in an extraordinary manner; and by accounts received from Kentucky and Tennessee, the unusual work there, of which the Assembly was heretofore informed, appears, during the last year, to have been progressive. Doubtful as the nature of the revival there first appeared, from the very singular circumstances which attended it, the Assembly do exceedingly rejoice that in its progress abundant evidence has been given that its author is God." 1

At the next meeting of the Assembly, 1803, another report dealing with the general state of religion within the limits of the Assembly was read and adopted. This report, like the one of the previous year, had much to say concerning the revival in its relationship to the church. In this report we read that:

> "In most of the northern and eastern presbyteries, revivals of religion of a more or less general nature, have taken place. . . In many of the southern and western Presbyteries, revivals more extensive, and of a more extraordinary nature have taken place. . . The Assembly would only observe that though they forbear to express any opinion as to the origin and nature of those circumstances, which have attended the southern and western revivals;. . . yet they are constrained

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., p. 9.

> to acknowledge with thankfulness, that the last year while it presented a continuous, and great extension of this extraordinary work, furnished also increasing evidence, that it is indeed the work of God. . ." 1

It is apparent that the Assembly hesitated at first before placing its stamp of approval upon the frontier phase of the revival because of the "extraordinary" exercises which attended it, but the adoption of the above report by the Assembly is evidence to the fact that its members, after having ample time to survey the situation, considered the revival as the "work of God". It is also interesting to note that they wisely forbore "to express any opinion" concerning the "origin and nature" of the disturbing elements of the movement.

D. The Effects of the Revival upon Western Presbyterianism.

The authorities are not in complete accord concerning the results of the frontier revival upon the Presbyterian Church. There are no accurate records by which the number of people who joined the church as a result of the revival can be determined. It is estimated that the Western Conference of the Methodist Church added more than six thousand names to its rolls during the height of the revival, and that between 1800 and 1803 the Baptist churches in Kentucky alone increased their membership by more than ten thousand.

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., p. 11.

As we know, the western revival made its first appearance in Presbyterian congregations, but the Presbyterian Church did not experience as great an increase in membership as the Methodists and Baptists did. In spite of the revival and the resulting opposition towards its traditional policies which came from within the church, frontier Presbyterianism continued to demand the adherence of its ministers to the Westminster Confession, and to require of them that they meet the educational standards of the church. Because of the church's determined stand concerning its ministerial standards it was rent by divisions, and thus was not able to increase its membership to the same extent as the Methodists and Baptists did. Nevertheless many new members were accepted into the church because of the revival. That the Presbyterian Church did experience an increase in its membership is made clear in the Minutes of the General Assembly of 1803, for we read that:

> ". . . in the course of the last year, there is reason to believe, that several thousands within the bounds of the Presbyterian church, have been brought to embrace the gospel of Christ." 1

It is difficult to know just exactly how well informed the Assembly was concerning the situation which existed on the frontier, but there is sufficient reason for believing that they were well enough acquainted with the facts to know what they were doing when they said:

> "The Assembly considers the prospects of our church in the frontier settlements, as more favorable than they have been at the date of any former report." 2

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 26th, 1803, p.274.
2. Ibid., p. 275.

E. Conclusion.

The Great Western Revival was of Presbyterian origin. From Logan County, Kentucky, its birth-place, it spread "like fire in a dry stubble field" until the whole frontier from New York to Georgia felt the "glow" of it. In its rapid and striking conquest of the frontier the movement was marred by "many extravagances and much fanaticism" which came as the result of the emotional strain which it imposed upon the people. Due to these disorders which attended the revival the Presbyterian ministers were divided into two groups, the "revivalists" and the "anti-revivalists", although many of those who were classed with the latter group by the "revivalists" did not rightfully belong there, for they did not oppose the revival as such, but merely contended against the abuses which characterized it.

As a result of the revival western Presbyterianism experienced a permanent cleavage; most of the so-called "revivalists left the church, and because of the resulting schisms the Presbyterian phase of the Western Revival "burned low" some time before the general revival movement "died out".

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESBYTERIAN LEADERS

OF THE WESTERN REVIVAL

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PRESBYTERIAN LEADERS OF THE WESTERN REVIVAL

The contributions of the frontiersman to American history are seldom fully recognized and therefore cannot be thoroughly appreciated. Due credit is usually given the Puritan and the Cavalier for their contributions to American society, but the role which the pioneer played in the development of the nation is all too frequently over-looked, for it is doubtful "if we have wholly realized the importance of the part played by that stern and virile people, the Irish. . . the Scotch-Irish, as they are often called"[1] who pushed past the "settled regions", and established settlements of their own in the wilderness beyond. Their's was no easy task, for they, like the first American colonists, were compelled to follow a trail of their own making. Nor did they plunge into the wilderness to remain unheard of, for in a surprisingly short time they were exerting a determining influence upon the life and policies of the nation. More credit for the establishing and popularizing of both religious and political democracy in America belongs to them than to any other group.

The rapid advancement of western ideas and ideals to the fore in American life and thought is ample evidence that the frontier settlements and states enjoyed strong and effecient leadership. This fact has long been recognized in the field of government and politics, where the lives of such men as Clay, Jackson and Lincoln

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1. Roosevelt, op. cit., vol. I, p. 84.

serve as constant reminders of the national leadership which has come out of the west.

With the exception of the Methodists, who pay rightful tribute to the memory of their circuit riders, the Protestant denominations have not expressed an appreciation of the influence and work of their early western leaders in keeping with the accomplishments wrought by those leaders. We delight in honoring the memory of those leaders from the west who have helped to lay the foundations upon which our national life rests, but we neglect the memory of those frontier preachers who endeavored to keep the torch of Christianity burning in the western settlements which produced these leaders. It would be difficult to over-estimate the influence which was exerted upon frontier life and customs by the early western preachers. In laboring to keep Christianity alive in the newly established settlements they were instrumental in bringing about the Great Revival which in turn transformed the moral and social life of the settlers. Nor did they limit their activities to the preaching of the gospel, for they also established many schools and thus attempted to meet both the religious and secular educational needs of the frontier communities. This added responsibility was assumed by the ministry of the Presbyterian Church as a part of the "day's work" to such an extent that every minister in the west became not only a preacher of the gospel but a schoolmaster as well.

In view of the difficulties which these men faced and overcame, in accomplishing their assigned and assumed tasks it

is evident that they are worthy of more consideration and study on the part of the church's historians than they have heretofore received. That they played an important role in shaping the destiny of American Presbyterianism has already been illustrated, and will be more fully so before the study is brought to an end.

Our study would not be complete unless information pertaining to the lives and work of some of the leaders who were responsible for shaping the destiny of western Presbyterianism, and hence American Presbyterianism, were to be included. There are but few existing references relating to the lives of these Presbyterian pioneers and most of those which have been preserved appear on the pages of contemporary church records, for Presbyterianism -

> ". . . with its fine literary traditions and its high regard for its builders of the past, has been strangely negligent in the matter of laying literary tribute upon the memories of their denominational founders of the West. . . the few scanty references to the men, whose devotion and vision lay behind the achievements of Presbyterianism in the vast range of the American West, are almost lost amid the details of overtures, reports and statistics." [1]

A. David Rice.

1. Early Life and Settlement in Kentucky.

Rev. David Rice, "the father of Kentucky Presbyterianism", was born in Hanover County, Virginia, December 20, 1733. Like most of the early Presbyterian ministers who settled west of the Alleghenies Rice was a graduate of the College of Princeton.[2]

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1. Mode, op. cit., p. 180.
2. Cf. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 70.

He was licensed to preach in 1762 when he was twenty-nine years old. The following twenty-one years were spent in ministering to congregations in Virginia. In 1783 he journeyed from his home in Bedford County, Virginia, to the newly settled Kentucky frontier section. He did not make the trip to Kentucky with the intention of becoming a resident, but he went "solely with a view to make some provision for his numerous and dependent family".[1] His purpose was not accomplished, however, for he soon became disgusted "with the shameless spirit of speculation"[2] which he encountered in Kentucky and returned home without buying a single acre of land. During his brief and apparently profitless stay in Kentucky Rice preached wherever and whenever the opportunity to do so presented itself. Many of the settlers who heard him urged him to come to Kentucky and establish a church among them. He finally agreed to consider this request if the permanent settlers who wished to constitute themselves into a church would draw up and sign a written invitation to him. Soon after he came to this decision a paper was placed in his hands which contained about three hundred signatures. Hanover Presbytery recommended that he accept this petition and as a result he moved to Kentucky where he organized the Concord church in Danville as well as another church near Harrodsburgh.

2. Activities in Relation to the Work of the Church.

Rice was one of the organizers of the Transylvania

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1. Davidson, op. cit., p. 64.
2. Ibid., p. 64.

Presbytery and was chosen by his associates to serve as its first moderator. Partly because of his health but also because of certain difficulties which arose within the Danville congregation David Rice was granted a dismissal from his congregations by presbytery in 1797. Even though he severed his pastoral relationship and moved to a different part of the state he continued as an active member of Presbytery.

The first session of the Synod of Kentucky, October 14th, 1802, was opened with a sermon by the Rev. David Rice, following which he was honored by his fellow laborers in being chosen to serve as the first moderator of the new synod. When synod met the following year, 1803, it was again opened by a sermon by Rice. He preached a timely sermon on this occasion dealing with the "Present Revival of Religion, in This Country" in which he drew certain conclusions concerning the revival and its effects, and in which he also spoke directly to the ministers concerning their duties and responsibilities, saying in part:

> "Endeavor to improve yourselves in knowledge as far as you can; and especially in the knowledge of the sacred scriptures and the human heart. . . and attend chiefly to the reformation of the principles and practices of men, and the salvation of their souls. . . Endeavor as well and as fast as you can, in present circumstances, to train up a pious, sensible, prudent and learned ministry. I am fully persuaded of the utility, prudence and importance of learning." 1

That his interest in education was both genuine and practical is borne out by the part which he played in helping to

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1. Rice, Sermon on the Present Revival of Religion in this Country, pp. 18, 20, 22, 41, 42.

establish educational institutions in Kentucky. Rice was the first chairman of the board of trustees of Transylvania Seminary which was opened in 1783 in his house near Danville. Later, when the Presbyterians founded Kentucky Seminary he was chosen as a member of its first board of trustees.

3. Attitude Concerning the Revival.

Rice regarded the revival as "a real revival of the Christian religion", but he was deeply concerned over the abuses which came to be associated with the movement, for "the extravagant irregularities and enthusiastic fantasies which deformed the Great Revival,"[1] were very distasteful to him and to his more conservative associates.

Because of his concern for the welfare of the revival and religion in general he felt compelled to call attention to the fact that it was the duty of the religious leaders connected with the movement to exert their influence towards the suppression of the disorders which had become so closely identified with the western revival. In July, 1803, at the Walnut Hill Sacramental Service he and John Lyle made a strenous effort to impress upon the minds of their colleagues the necessity of guarding against the abuses which attended the camp-meeting. This protest brought to a climax the dissension which had been developing within the Presbyterian ministry over the revival issue and from this time on each faction was determined to follow the course of its own

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1. Davidson, op. cit., p. 140.

dictates.

Since he continued as an active member of both presbytery and synod during the period in which the natural reaction to the revival movement occurred Rice was a witness to, and participated in the schisms growing out of it which rent the Presbyterian Church asunder. Through the period of controversy he conscientiously supported the policy adopted by the church concerning its adherence to the standards and requirements which it had set up for its ministry. He is also credited as maintaining a particularly sane attitude toward the revival,[1] and because of this "sane attitude" he gave the revival credit for the good which it had accomplished; but on the other hand when the irregularities which attended the movement began to make their appearance he was one of the "judicious men" who were "fully persuaded that there was much that was wrong in the manner of conducting the work, and that an erratic and enthusiastic spirit prevailed to a lamentable extent."[2]

Even though he himself was a member of the group which opposed the activities of the more radical revival element in the church, he was honest enough to admit afterwards that in his opinion the church had not acted wisely in its handling of the revival. In speaking of the relationship of the church to the revival in 1808 he said:

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1. Cf. Sweet, Story of Religions in America, p. 333.
2. Dr. Alexander, letter to Editor of Watchman & Observer, dated Sept. 5th, 1846; in Davidson, op. cit., p. 189.

> "That we had a revival of the spirit and power of Christianity among us, I did, do, and ever shall believe;. . . but we sadly mismanaged it; we have dashed it down and broken it to pieces. . . We have not acted as wise master-builders who have no need to be ashamed." 1

4. Publications.

In addition to his pastoral and ministerial work Rice also was the author of several published works. The first of these was "An Essay on Baptism" which was published in 1789. This appeared in pamphlet form and was probably the first pamphlet to be written or printed in Kentucky. In 1791 he published "A Lecture on the Divine Decrees", and in 1792 "Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Polity", which title expresses quite clearly his attitude toward the slave traffic. The sermon which he delivered before the Kentucky Synod in 1803 was published by synod at the request of its members. In 1805, following the "New Light Schism" he published "An Epistle to the Christians of Kentucky". Altogether Rice was the author of seven published works.[2]

5. Conclusion.

In 1816 his long and fruitful ministry was brought to a close. The following notice of his death appears in the minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery for September 1, 1816:

> "This pby. record with heartfelt emotions of sorrow the departure of our venerable aged & beloved father in the

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1. Bishop, "The Memoirs of Rev. David Rice"; in Foster, op. cit., p. 264.
2. Bishop, op. cit., p. 113.

> ministry the Rev. DAVID RICE. He was the first moderator of this pby. which met in this place on the 17th day of Octr 1786 and of which he has since been a constant and faithful member until his entrance into rest, which was on the 18th day of June, 1816." [1]

And thus the presbytery paid sincere tribute to its first moderator, the "father" of Presbyterianism in Kentucky, the Rev. David Rice.

We are told concerning Rice's personality that as a preacher "his natural manner was solemn and impressive. . . In society he was dignified and grave. His person was slender, but tall and active, and even at the age of seventy, he exhibited an astonishing degree of alertness." [2] In his relations with his fellowmen Rice exhibited the true spirit of Christianity. The troubles which appeared in the synod as a result of the revival grieved him, and though he did not waver in his stand yet he used his influence in an attempt to bring about a satisfactory and peaceful agreement between the contending parties. The following passage from his "Epistle to the Christians of Kentucky" published just after the "New Light Schism" gives us a clear picture of the Christian spirit of the man:

> "Perhaps one cause for our unhappy divisions was the want of mutual acquaintance and confidence. . . Had we been better acquainted, and more united, we should probably have made one exertion to promote religion and one exertion to prevent or cure what was amiss and hurtful to the cause." [3]

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1. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 244.
2. Davidson, op. cit., p. 71.
3. Bishop, op. cit., p. 381.

B. James McGready.

The one man whose name is inseparably associated with the Kentucky Revival is James McGready. He was born in Pennsylvania, but when he was still quite young his parents moved to Guilford County, North Carolina. McGready returned to his native state to study for the ministry in John McMillan's Log College. Upon the completion of his studies he was licensed to preach by the Redstone Presbytery.

1. Experiences in Pennsylvania and the Carolinas as a Minister.

One day after he had been in the ministry for a while he happened to overhear two of his friends discussing him. They were quite free in giving expression to their views concerning his religious character. According to them McGready was but a "mere formalist, a stranger to regenerating grace".[1] Because of his friends' evaluation of his religious character McGready was led to make a thorough self-examination. He was in earnest and prayed over the matter. Soon after the occurrence of this incident McGready had the religious experience which his friends had said he needed. This experience revolutionized his life; thenceforth he made it his mission "to arouse false professors, to awaken a dead church, to warn sinners and to lead them to seek the new spiritual life which he himself had found."[2]

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1. Howard and Hubbert, op. cit., p. 451.
2. Ibid., p. 452.

McGready left his charge in the Redstone Presbytery and went to the Carolinas to take up his labors. Deeply affected by his own experience it was natural for him to dwell upon the necessity of the new birth, and the "importance of knowing the time when and the place where the conversion had occurred."[1] He preached for conversions and was so successful in his work that a revival was soon begun. He was so earnest in his exhortations and denunciations that he was accused of "running people distracted and of diverting them from their occupations."[2] Violent opposition to him and to his preaching soon developed. Partly because of the threats of those who opposed his work, and partly because some of his Carolina converts had moved across the mountains into Kentucky McGready left his pastorate and settled in Logan County, Kentucky, in 1796. Here he became the pastor of three frontier congregations.

2. Association with the Revival Movement.

It was under McGready's persuasive preaching that the great western revival movement had its beginning. It is said of his preaching that he would so "array hell before the wicked that they would tremble and quake."[3] One of his sermons which has been selected as typical of his style is on the text: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."[4] Concerning the death of this fool and his after-death experiences McGready says:

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1. Davenport, op. cit., p. 67.
2. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 327.
3. Davenport, op. cit., p. 67.
4. Psalm 53:1.

> "He died accursed of God. . . When the fiends of hell dragged him into the eternal gulf, he roared and screamed and yelled like a devil. . . When he surveys his life and reflects on the many offers of salvation he refused, . . . he is constrained to confess he is emphatically a fool - a damned fool - for he is damned to hell forever and ever." 1

The revival which attended his efforts is evidence that McGready's type of preaching was rewarded with results; many sincere and lasting conversions were made, but on the other hand it is little wonder that the people were frequently thrown into a frenzy of excitement after listening for hours at a time to this kind of preaching.

In 1801, when many were openly opposing the physical "accidentials" of the revival, and when others were led to doubt the authenticity of the movement itself because of these "accidentials" McGready made his stand publically, and in no uncertain terms, in his "Vindication of the Exercises of the Revival".

3. The Cumberland Presbyterian Schism.

Quite naturally McGready played a leading part in the controversy between the synod and the Cumberland Presbytery. His sympathies were all on the side of the presbytery. He was one of the men who "interposed to prevent" the examination of the men whom the Commission of Synod wished to examine.

When the presbytery was dissolved McGready and his associates formed themselves into a council. This council made

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1. McGready, Posthumous Works, pp. 1, 228, 229; in Cleveland, op. cit., p. 45.

some conciliatory gestures to which the synod ignored. The next step was the organization, by some of these council members, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. McGready and the Hodges were not willing to take this step so they resumed their relations with synod on such terms "as were agreeable to them and to it".[1]

4. Conclusion.

McGready remained in the church as an active member of the Transylvania Presbytery until the formation of the Muhlenburg Presbytery at which time he became a member of the new presbytery. In 1813, while he was serving as pastor at Sharon church in Logan County, he was appointed by the General Assembly to carry on missionary work for a period of three months within the bounds of his home presbytery. Again in 1814, McGready was one of fifty ministers who were chosen by the Assembly to carry on missionary work within its limits. This time he was commissioned to labor for a period of three months "within the bounds of the Presbytery of West Tennessee".[2]

McGready died in Henderson County, Kentucky, at the age of fifty-four. The notice of his death which appeared in the "Chillocothe Recorder" for January 30th, 1818, contained the following passage which gives us an insight into his character and work:

"He ought to be imitated in his regard for the honor of God,

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1. Foster, op. cit., p. 288.
2. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 31st, 1814, p. 564.

> and the salvation of souls, his vigorous and zealous exertions to promote these grand objects, his fidelity in declaring the whole counsel of God." 1

A knowledge of McGready's distinctive traits, and of his conversion experience gives a better understanding of the character of the revival which grew out of his preaching. His own conversion experience was so real to him that he clung to the idea that everyone should be as fully aware of the exact moment in which he was converted as he himself was. Barton W. Stone, a fellow revival leader, who had been one of McGready's Carolina converts, says of him:

> "His person was not presupposing, nor his appearance interesting, except his remarkable gravity and small piercing eyes. . . Everything appeared by him forgotten but the salvation of souls. Such earnestness, such zeal, such powerful persuasion. . . I had never before witnessed." 2

It is little wonder that the people who came under the influence of such a preacher were immediately and definitely impressed with the need of the soul's salvation.

C. Barton W. Stone.

Although Stone was the leader in the so-called "New Light Schism", yet it does not seem inconsistent with the purpose of our study to include his name among those who have been selected for special consideration. Any study of the relationship which existed between the revival and the Presbyterian Church would be incomplete if it were to fail to take into account the schisms

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1. Bishop, op. cit., p. 213.
2. Quoted by Cleveland, op. cit., p. 39.

which the church experienced during this period because of the revival. In order to have an understanding of the permanent divisions which occurred in the church it is necessary to know something of the personalities back of them. Stone was the most influential member of the group which separated themselves from the Presbyterian Church and continued their religious activities under the name of "Christians".[1]

1. Early Life.

Barton W. Stone was born in Maryland in 1772. When he was about sixteen years old he entered Guilford Academy and studied there under Dr. David Caldwell. A great interest was being shown in religious matters by the students at the time of Stone's coming to the Academy. This unusual interest was due, in part at least, to the preaching of James McGready. In time Stone himself came under the influence of McGready's preaching.

Stone was received by the Presbytery of Orange as a candidate for the ministry in 1793. He completed his course of study under the direction of William Hodge and passed the prescribed examinations, but he decided to give up the idea of entering into the ministry. He taught school for a while in a Methodist Academy, but the desire to be a preacher returned so he resigned his position and was licensed to preach by the Orange Presbytery.

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1. The term "Christian" throughout this study refers to the denomination which grew out of the "New Light Schism".

2. Kentucky Ministry.

a. Call and Ordination.

Stone first went to Kentucky in 1796, but after spending a short time there he returned east for a visit. In 1798 he received a call from the combined congregations of Cane Ridge and Concord, the two congregations over which he had ministered during his first brief stay in Kentucky. He accepted this call, and in April, 1798, he was received under the care of the Transylvania Presbytery. Six months later he was ordained as a minister in the Presbyterian Church. At the time of his ordination he was called upon to give response to "those questions appointed to be put to candidates previous to their ordination".[1] According to Stone's own testimony, when he was asked: "Do you receive and adopt the Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Bible?" he answered audibly enough for everyone present to hear, "I do as far as I see it consistent with the word of God."[2] Robert Marshall, the presiding "bishop" did then "by prayer & with laying on of the hands of the pby. according to the apostolic example, solemnly ordain and set apart Mr. Barton Stone to the sacred office of the gospel ministry."[3]

b. The Cane Ridge Meeting.

During the first part of Stone's ministry the spiritual

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1. Minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery, Oct. 4th, 1798; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 181.
2. James B. Finley, Autobiography, pp. 39,40; in Fortune, op. cit., p. 33.
3. Minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery, Oct. 4th, 1798; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 181.

life of the members of his congregations was at a low ebb. Stone was deeply concerned over this indifference to spiritual things on the part of his church members and determining to do something about it he paid a visit to the revival meetings which were being held in Logan County to see what help he could get toward the solution of his problem. He was convinced that the revival was the work of God, and seeing in it the answer to his own perplexing problem he began to work toward that end in his own parish. His efforts were rewarded almost immediately; under his leadership a revival similar to the one which he had just witnessed in Logan County began. The climax of this phase of the revival and of the entire western revival movement, was reached in the famous Cane Ridge Service.

3. Ecclesiastical Discord.

An important and far-reaching result of the Cane Ridge meeting was the "ecclesiastical revolt" which grew out of it. Stone, though a Presbyterian, was harassed by certain aspects of Calvinism, and although he admitted that "thousands of precious saints" adhered to the system, yet he felt that it was among the "most discouraging hindrances to sinners from seeking the kingdom of God."[1] He felt that there were definite points of conflict between the Confession of Faith and the Word of God as contained in the Bible. Some of his associates in the Presbyterian ministry

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1. J. R. Rogers, The Cane Ridge Meeting-House, p. 118; in Jennings, A Short History of the Disciples of Christ, p. 51.

agreed with him on this point; accordingly they declared their independence from any man-made creed. Because Stone and his associates refused to withdraw from the position which they had taken in regard to some of the teachings of the Calvanistic system, and because they refused to subscribe to the Confession of Faith, they were deposed by the Synod of Kentucky "from all the functions of the Gospel ministry."[1]

After the schism occurred this group of men labored toward the establishment of a new church. They, wishing to minimize the spirit of denominationalism, termed themselves Christians. Though four of the five founders soon deserted the movement the new denomination experienced a rapid growth. In 1815 Stone himself was compelled to teach school in order to earn a livelihood. About 1820 he organized a church in Georgetown which started with six or seven members, but soon had an enrollment of more than two hundred.[2]

In 1832 the movement of which Stone was the leader joined forces with the followers of Alexander Campbell. The group which was thus formed by the union of these two movements is usually referred to by the term Christian, the name for which Stone and his followers contended.

4. Conclusion.

Barton W. Stone died at Hannibal, Missouri, in 1844, and

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1. Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky, Friday, Oct. 13th, 1808; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 372.
2. Cf. Fortune, op. cit., p. 57.

was buried at Cane Ridge. The marble monument which marks his grave bears this inscription:

> "The Church of Christ at Cane Ridge
> and other generous friends in Kentucky
> have caused this monument to be erected
> as a tribute of affection and gratitude
> to
>
> Barton W. Stone
>
> Minister of the Gospel of Christ and
> the distinguished reformer of the
> nineteenth century.
> Born Dec. 24, 1772.
> Died Nov. 9, 1844.
> His remains lie here.
> This monument erected 1847." [1]

As for Stone's personal characteristics: it is said that in appearance he was "grave, meek, plain, and humble."[2]

He brought an immense amount of criticism upon himself because of the course of action which he followed concerning his relationship with the Presbyterian Church; probably he did act unwisely, but in all fairness it must be admitted that he acted in good faith. That he was firm in his convictions is demonstrated by the fact that he was the only one of the five who precipitated the "New Light Schism" who remained loyal to the movement that grew out of it. The question may well be raised as to whether he always interpreted the Bible correctly, but the fact remains that regardless of whatever personal losses might be involved he did strive to be true to the Word of God as he saw it.

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1. Fortune, op. cit., p. 32.
2. H. Leo Boles, Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers, p. 29.

D. Richard McNemar.

1. Licensure and Ordination.

Richard McNemar, John Dunlavy and Andrew Steel applied to the Transylvania Presbytery as candidates for the ministry. They took the usual examinations of candidates and passed them to the satisfaction of the members of presbytery. They were then given the liberty to "exhort publicly", but certain limitations were imposed upon them. They were forbidden to exhort oftener than once every fortnight, and they were likewise directed that their exhortations were not to exceed three-quarters of an hour in length.[1]

In January, 1797, McNemar and Dunlavy came before presbytery to take their examinations for licensure. Their examinations were sustained by presbytery and they "having adopted the Confession of Faith & satisfactorily answered the questions appointed to be put to candidates to be licensed"[2] were thereby licensed "to preach the gospel of Christ as probationers."[3]

In April, 1798, McNemar was called to minister to the Cabin Creek congregation. The Cabin Creek Church was located north of the Ohio River near Maysville, Ohio. In August of the same year he was ordained into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church.

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1. Cf. Minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery, Oct. 9th, 1795; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 161.
2. Ibid., Jan. 4th, 1797, pp. 166, 167.
3. Ibid., p. 167.

2. Personal Traits.

A knowledge of McNemar's personal traits is of great aid toward the understanding of his relationship to the revival movement. He was tall, erect, and heavy-set. He was quite active and was inclined to be enthusiastic over whatever he happened to be engaged in doing. For example, we are told that he spoke and sang with "all his heart."[1] Since he possessed the above characteristics it is not surprising that he was a popular declamatory preacher. It is thus apparent that he displayed most of the traits essential to successful revival preaching. It is not surprising that he was one of the better known of the leaders who were associated with the western revival movement.

3. The Shaker Convert and Apologist.

McNemar was one of the five original members of the "New Light Schism", and is said to have been the one who was directly responsible for the formation of the Springfield Presbytery which these five men organized after their suspension by synod. He continued to be active in the new movement until 1805 at which time the Shakers made "an easy conquest of him."[2] Two of his associates in the Stone movement, Matthew Houston and John Dunlavy, were won over at the same time. Their whole-hearted defection to Shakerism was demonstrated by their adoption of one of its principal tenets, celibacy. In accordance with this doctrine they put away their

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1. Davidson, op. cit., p. 220.
2. Ibid., p. 220.

wives and acknowledged marriage as a sin.[1]

McNemar, who soon became one of the outstanding leaders of the society, wrote a book entitled "The Kentucky Revival", in which he set himself forth as the "apologist and defender"[2] of the movement by proving to his own satisfaction at least, that the revival had reached its completed state of perfection in the new sect. In his book he likens himself to the Prodigal Son who has just returned to his Father's house, Shakerism.

> "Now, if ever; I have just returned from feeding the swine, confessed my sins, been completely stripped, and clad with a suit completely new. The door has been opened into my Father's house, and I have entered, to go out no more." 3

A summary vindication of his newly adopted "belief is given in doggeral form at the end of the book. In this he displays his attitude toward his former associates in the Presbyterian Church and his later companions in the Christian Church in positive, but quite uncomplimentary terms. From this attempted verse a fair estimate of his character, as made known through his attitude can be gained. A few lines from this poem go as follows:

> Five preachers formed a body, in eighteen hundred three,
> From Antichrist's false systems to set the people free;
> His doctrine and his worship in pieces they did tear,
> But ere the scene was ended the men became a snare.
>
> The long expected kingdom at length began to spring,
> Which to many has appeared a strange mysterious thing:
> But we'll trace it through that summer, the hottest scene of all,
> And try to find its fruit in the next ensuing fall." 4.

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1. Cf. Fortune, op. cit., p. 53.
2. Jennings, op. cit., p. 55.
3. McNemar, "The Kentucky Revival"; in Davidson, op. cit., p. 104.
4. Ibid., P. 221.

E. Hodge and Lyle.

1. William Hodge.

William Hodge, a native of North Carolina was licensed to preach in 1790. In 1800, when the Logan County revival was at its height, he was called to succeed Rev. William McGee by the Shiloh congregation of Sumner County, Tennessee, a part of the Cumberland country. Under his preaching a "split" occurred in his church between the "revivalists" and the "anti-revivalists". The latter group took matters into their own hands and closed the doors of the church against him. He appealed to presbytery and the case was decided in his favor.

In 1806, the year in which the Cumberland Presbytery was dissolved, Hodge, a member of that presbytery, was suspended by the synod from the ministry for insubordination because he refused to use his authority in silencing "certain young men licensed by Cumberland Presbytery."[1]

On December 6, 1809, just two months after McGready had been accepted back into the church, Hodge publicly professed his sorrow for his "past irregularities", declared his determination to submit to the "authority and discipline of our church", and agreed to accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith as it stands. Thus having met the requirements created by synod for his reinstatement he was duly restored to his place in the ministry of the church.

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1. Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky, Oct. 25th, 1806; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 350.

Hodge was one of the ministers who was appointed by the Assembly in 1814 to do special missionary work. He was chosen to labor for two months,

> ". . . within the limits of the Presbytery of Muhlenburgh, in the counties of Robertson, Montgomery, Tennessee, and Christian, Kentucky." 1

William Hodge resigned his charge in 1818, and died a year or two later.

2. John Lyle.

John Lyle is remembered in connection with the Kentucky revival movement for at least two reasons; first, because of his diary in which he recorded many incidents attending the revival; second, because of the part which he played in helping to check the abuses of the revival movement. Some of the best first hand descriptions that we possess of the great revival meetings are to be found in his diary.

Lyle's opposition to the excesses which attended the movement was due to the things which he witnessed at the revival meetings. Since he was interested in keeping an accurate record of what occurred he was probably more alert to the dangers which accompanied the extravagances of the frontier awakening than were most of the leaders.

In September, 1801, Lyle exhorted briefly, but "powerfully", against the noise and the "false exercises" which had be-

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 31st, 1814, p. 564.

come associated with the movement, but it was 1803 before the abuses were opposed with any marked degree of success. Successful opposition to the excesses of the revival seems to have been officially launched by Lyle in a service held at the Walnut Hill Church in July, 1803. At this service he preached a sermon on I Corinthians 14:33-40; his text was taken from the thirty-third verse: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." We are informed that this sermon "had a happy effect". It was at least a factor in hastening the impending schisms.

In 1809 the former members of the Cumberland Presbytery who had organized themselves into a council appealed to the General Assembly for redress. The Assembly also had before it the minutes of the synod which related to the matter as well as a letter from that body. Lyle, who is called by the Cumberland Presbyterian historians "the old enemy of the revival"[1], was the bearer of synod's letter to the Assembly. It is claimed that it was chiefly through his efforts that the Assembly voted to approve the course of action which the synod had followed in its dealings with the Cumberland Presbytery.

Lyle was one of the ministers who were chosen in 1814 by the Assembly to carry on prescribed missionary activities. He was appointed to work for four months "in the counties of Bourbon, Harrison, Nicholas, and Fayette, Kentucky." He was directed to pay "particular attention to the blacks."[2]

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1. Howard and Hubbert, op. cit., p. 465 and Foster, op.cit., p. 266.
2. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 31st, 1814, p.564.

F. Conclusion.

This is but a very incomplete list of the names of those who were associated with the revival movement. Many more could well be included, but in so much as the ones who have been singled out for special attention were among the outstanding leaders of the movement in its different phases it would add but little to the purpose of our study to dwell longer upon this particular aspect of the Great Western Revival.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RESULTS OF THE REVIVAL

UPON THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Due to the peculiar relationship which existed between the Western Revival and the Presbyterian Church it necessarily followed that as the policies of the church were instrumental in shaping the course of the revival so too, the revival exerted a lasting influence upon the history of American Presbyterianism. It is impossible to determine the exact extent of the influence of the revival upon Presbyterianism in the United States, but it is not difficult to discover and trace certain important and far-reaching results which the revival had upon the organized life of the church.

While it is evident that the revival made a definite impression upon the career of Presbyterianism in this country, yet the value of its contributions to the general course of Presbyterian history is not easy to determine. It is not, however, our purpose in this chapter to attempt to evaluate the effects which the revival had upon the church, but rather to point out and classify these effects, and in so far as possible, to discover and analyze the causes for them.

A. Schisms Occurring within the Presbyterian Church as a Result of the Revival.

> "Two schisms occurred in the Presbyterian Church in the early years of the nineteenth century, the first centering in the Cumberland region. . . the second centering in north central

Kentucky. . ." 1

It has been indicated earlier in our study that these schisms were a direct outgrowth of the revival. Something has also been said concerning the causes for them, but thus far they have been treated only in their relationship to other phases of the movement. Since these divisions which occurred in the church were far-reaching in their influence, not only upon the Presbyterian Church, but upon the whole of American Protestantism as well, it is essential to the development of our study that they be treated more fully than has been done thus far.

1. Causes of the Schisms.

There were three general and closely related causes for the serious schisms which occurred in the church as a result of the revival: first, they were brought about largely through the attitude of the church toward the extravagances and disorders which attended the Western Revival movement; second, the insistence of the Presbyterian Church that the educational standards for its ministry be maintained regardless of existing conditions; third, the strict adherence of the Presbyterian Church to its traditional doctrinal and credal standards.

a. The Excesses of the Western Revival.

(1) The Attitude of the Church Toward the Excesses which Attended the Great Awakening.

The Presbyterian Church was disturbed over some of the

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1. Sweet, Story of Religions in America, p. 335.

so-called "bodily effects" which attended the Great Awakening in the 1740's. The Rev. James Davenport, a Presbyterian minister, had the ability to, and did play on the emotions of his listeners to such an extent that his preaching soon produced some of the results which were to characterize the Kentucky revival about sixty years later. It is said that Davenport encouraged "his hearers to give the most unrestrained vent both to their distress and joy, by violent outcries."[1] It is not surprising that this type of preaching caused his "elder and more judicious" Presbyterian brethren to regard his efforts with misgivings. They remonstrated against his conduct and attitude, and cautioned him of the likely consequences of these proceedings, but he was deaf to their pleas. The preachers who "raised a warning voice" against the extravagances which were being practiced were denounced by many as enemies of the revival. In 1744, after the spirit of discord and contention had arisen within the church due to the excesses, Davenport "published a humble confession and recantation" concerning his conduct in the revival movement.

Because of the turn which the revival had taken in the Presbyterian Church under the leadership of Davenport congregations were broken and scattered, societies were formed upon fanatical principles, and many people became disgusted with what went under the name of religion.[2]

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1. Reverend Samuel Miller, Letter IV; in Sprague, op. cit., p. 255.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 257.

(2) The Causes of the Excesses which Attended the Western Revival.

The extravagances which attended the Great Western Revival made it necessary for the church once more to take a stand concerning revival excesses. Due to the various factors which contributed to the development of the frontier awakening it was marred by irregularities growing out of emotional disorders.

The environment in which the settlers lived was one of the factors contributing to the abuses which attended the Western Revival. They were not able to make many social contacts, and thus they were not in position to come into touch with either the thinking or the happenings of the world. For this reason their minds were quite apt to be dominated by whatever ideas they chanced to meet. A second circumstance which helped to determine their reactions to the revival was that their's was a country in which the traditional social conventions were largely ignored. Then too, since it was necessary for them to be constantly on the alert against the many dangers which attended frontier life there had developed within them a ready response to a given stimulus. It is little wonder that these "warm and sanguine" people coming out of their wilderness background formed such excellent material for a revival crowd.

Many of these settlers were in a "state of high expectancy" when they reached the camp ground.

> "For weeks and months they had been looking forward to this great event and as a consequence their nerves were

keyed to the limit." [1]

Immediately upon their arrival they became part of a huge crowd which was constituted for the most part of people with like expectancies. This great assemblage would remain for days at a time under the influence of an intensely emotional type of preaching. The settlers who before their arrival had been prepared for the service in a peculiar way by their environment, were thus placed under the constant influence of at least two additional psychological factors; the continual exhortations of the preachers, and the powerful influence of the crowd. It is hard to overestimate the influence which the crowd exerts upon the individual at times like this. The members of a crowd tend to be "more suggestible", and "more primitive in their reactions than they would be by themselves." [2] (In this instance it must be remembered that we are dealing with people whose reactions were ordinarily of a primitive nature.) Even in the usual crowd the "higher and more complex faculties" are weakened by the "influence of large numbers of like-minded fellows, and the more fundamental and simple reactions, no longer inhibited, have their own way." [3] Since the "rational inhibitions" of the frontiersmen had for the most part already been removed by their environment they were even more susceptible to the influence of the crowd than the average individual. Even a day or two spent on the camp-meeting ground was enough to bring on not

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1. Mode, op. cit., p. 54.
2. James Bissett Pratt, The Religious Consciousness, p. 173.
3. Ibid., p. 173.

only physical weariness, but emotional fatigue as well, "for excited emotions are soon exhausted."[1]

Undue emotional strain, resulting in emotional exhaustion; fear of hell; and the influence of the crowd - with these and many other elements entering into the revival picture it is not to be wondered that emotional disorders were exceedingly common, especially among people who had already been "conditioned" by their environment. Nor is it difficult to understand how these emotional disorders resulted in "deplorable" irregularities. Following the example of the revivalists of Davenport's type many of the frontier preachers not only failed to attempt to put a stop to the extravagances which attended their services, but they went so far as to encourage them, claiming for them the distinction of being a part of God's "wonderful work", and a necessary accompaniment of the conversion experience. Ministers like McGready, whose sincerity cannot be questioned, set themselves up as vindicators of the revival movement in its entirity. Due to the opposition which was aroused by the excesses which attended the movement the "revivalists" felt called upon to defend, not only the movement itself, but these disorders which were bringing criticism upon it. McGready contributed his part to this defensive campaign in 1801 by delivering a public "Vindication of the Exercises of the Revival".

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1. W. S. Bruce, The Psychology of Christian Life and Behaviour, p. 129.

(3) The Attitude of the Church Concerning the Excesses of the Western Revival.

It was not to be expected that the irregularities which attended the Western Revival could go on unchallenged by the more conservative Presbyterian ministers. The revival movement was practically unopposed in the beginning, though we are told that the Rev. James Balch, a member of the Transylvania Presbytery, visited Gaspar River with the purpose of putting a stop to the "disorderly and fanatical proceedings." He was successful in organizing a group who were in agreement with him in opposing the revival, and for a while it seemed as if the whole movement was about to be extinguished.

But the revival withstood the opposition and the irregulatities which accompanied it increased as the movement gained momentum. In 1801 Lyle exhorted against the "noise and false exercises" which by that time had become almost inseparably associated with the movement and again in 1803 he preached a sermon against the "torrent of abuses" which had swept across the country as a part of the frontier awakening. At this meeting "Father" Rice joined Lyle in raising his voice in protest against these irregularities.[1]

The effects of their efforts were two-fold: first, they were successful, to a certain extent, in checking the excesses; second, the breach between the "revivalists" and the "anti-revival-

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1. Cf. Davidson, op. cit., p. 160-162.

ists" was widened so that in the following year they "separated completely in the open schism of Stone and Marshall."[1]

> "The historians of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. . . have been sometimes wont to contend that the disorder and super-emotionalism which defile the record of these early days, were the output of the Cane Ridge quarter of Kentucky and should not be charged against the settlement in the southwest." 2

It is true that these disorders and emotional displays probably reached their height in the Cane Ridge section, yet the records show quite clearly that the Logan County revival was attended by sights similar to those which characterized the movement as it appeared under the leadership of Stone and his associates.

Although it is difficult to determine the exact extent to which these excesses contributed to the schisms which occurred in the Presbyterian Church, yet it is unquestionably true that they were, in part, responsible for the permanent divisions which took place in western Presbyterianism during the early years of the nineteenth century.

b. The Educational Standards of the Church.

> "The method resorted to in securing preachers to meet the increasing demands of the revival, and to provide missionary pastors for the multiplying congregations, was a still more serious cause for offense." 3

With the progression of the revival whole communities sought to be supplied with ministers or missionaries. This in-

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1. Davidson, op. cit., p. 162.
2. Davenport, op. cit., p. 74.
3. Howard and Hubbert, op. cit., pp. 455-456.

creased demand for ministers greatly exceeded the trained supply. It is said that there were not enough ministers to answer "one in ten of the calls that thus came to them."[1] Because of this situation the Presbytery of Transylvania appointed four laymen, Ewing, Anderson, King, and McClain to "the business of exhortation & catechising". In the following year, 1802, the presbytery licensed three of these men to "exhort & catechise in our vacancies." Five members of presbytery, three ministers and two elders, objected to the licensing of these men saying:

> "Their trials on this occasion consisted only in one short sermon & an examination on experimental religion & divinity, being destitute of classical learning, & they discovered no such extraordinary talents as to justify such measures."[2]

Soon after its organization the Cumberland Presbytery ordained these men into the ministry. They also proceeded to license other men who did not measure up to the educational requirements of the Presbyterian Church. "When once this door was opened, it was found difficult to close it,"[3] and at almost every meeting of presbytery candidate after candidate of this type was either licensed or ordained.

Whether it was contemplating following its own example which it had set in 1801, or because it was alarmed over the situation which was rapidly developing within the Cumberland Presbytery, the Presbytery of Transylvania, in 1804, appointed David Rice

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1. Howard and Hubbert, op. cit., p. 456.
2. Minutes of the Transylvania Presbytery, Oct. 7th, 1802; in Sweet, p. 189.
3. Miller, op. cit., p. 258.

to inquire of the General Assembly concerning this matter. The Assembly's reply to this inquiry was quite definite and to the point. They made it clear that where the local situation seemed to be such as to make it necessary for the regular ministers to have help in the carrying on of their work that "certain assistants" might be usefully employed by presbytery. However, great caution was to be exercised lest these men thus employed should possess an 'indiscreet zeal' which might "impel them to extravagances which may prove dishonorable and injurious to religion". If men were to be used by presbytery in this capacity their duties were to be "clearly pointed out to them, and circumscribed within precise limits", and they were not to be thought of as "standing officers" of the presbytery, but could be appointed or removed "at the discretion of the presbytery." If any of these men were found to possess the qualities necessary for a successful minister they could upon the acquirement of the "requisite qualifications for preaching the gospel" be admitted "according to the regular course" to the ministry.[1] Therefore according to the Assembly's decision the Transylvania Presbytery had not necessarily acted unwisely in appointing the three men who lacked a "liberal education" to "catechize and exhort", but by the same decision it flatly condemned the practice of the Cumberland Presbytery in licensing and ordaining such men, for no one could properly be considered a member of presbytery who had not been admitted to the ministry according

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 25th, 1804, p. 301.

to the regularly prescribed course.

If the presbytery had been as careful as it might have been in the selection of the unlettered men whom it licensed and ordained the schism which grew out of this practice might have been avoided, but because of the extravagances in which many of them indulged a natural reaction "against the ordination of uneducated men set in among the brethren of the Synod of Kentucky."[1]

c. The Doctrinal and Credal Standards of the Church.

The doctrines advanced by the revivalists constituted a deeper cause of opposition than either the excesses of the revival or the licensing and ordaining of men into the ministry who had not attained to the traditional standard of literary qualification. The Westminster Confession, to which the Presbyterian Church demands that its ministers subscribe, holds them "to a very definite credal statement, and any deviation from it is easily detected."[2] When divergences from the Confession are discovered and acted upon controversies usually result. During the course of the revival there were marked deviations from the Confessional standards of the church on the part of many of the revival preachers.

The causes of these deflections from the Presbyterian standards on the part of a group of the revivalists are not hard to discover. Stone, for example, had been troubled over certain

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1. Hays, op. cit., p. 147.
2. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 82.

doctrines fundamental to the Calvanistic system, election and predestination, from the beginning of his ministry, and it is very likely that other ministers harbored similar doubts concerning points in the creed of Presbyterianism. It seemed to the revival preachers that the very purpose of the revival would be contradicted if they did not emphasize in their preaching that God loves the "whole world", and that every sinner has the ability to accept the means of salvation which God, in His infinite love for humanity, has provided and made accessible for each individual who will but believe and obey. This teaching seemed to some of the "staunchest" Presbyterians to be a denial of the "certainty and definiteness" of God's eternal decrees as taught in chapter three of the Confession of Faith.[1] This refusal of the revivalists to accept and preach the "fatalistic" tendencies which they felt to be incorporated in the Presbyterian system of doctrine might possibly be considered as an "implied heresy", but the second one which logically grew out of and accompanied the first might well be thought of as a "positive heresy". Many of the revival ministers in subscribing to the Westminster Confession declared their adherence to it "except so much as seemed to affirm this doctrine of fatality."[2] It became the practice of the Cumberland Presbytery to require of the candidates who appeared before them for licensure and ordination that they adopt the Confession of Faith, with the

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1. The Confession of Faith, Ch. III, Of God's Eternal Decree, p. 20-25.
2. Hays, op. cit., p. 147.

exception of the "'idea of fatality' as it seemed to be taught in that book."[1] In fact, they adopted the same attitude toward it as expressed by Stone when he subscribed to it only as far as he saw it to be consistent with the word of God, for they began to require of their candidates that they subscribe to it only as far as they thought it to correspond with the Scriptures. The more conservative Presbyterian leaders would not admit that the idea of fatalism was taught in the Confession, and so they were unwilling to grant ordination to the candidates who accepted it with reservations.

The Synodical Commission appointed to confer with the members of the Cumberland Presbytery discovered "among other irregularities" which were practiced in the licensing and ordaining of men to preach the Gospel that "only a partial adoption of the Confession of Faith" was required. They inquired into the reason why the presbytery required its candidates to adopt the Confession of Faith "so far only as they in reason think it corresponds with the Scriptures." McGready replied for the presbytery that they could not "in conscience feel themselves bound any farther than they believed it corresponds with the Scriptures."[2] Therefore the commission decided that it was impossible for any one to be sure just what the men who had been licensed and ordained under such a system did believe, and that for that reason the

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1. Howard and Hubbert, Op. cit., p. 456.
2. Minutes of the Kentucky Synod, Dec. 5th, 1805; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 338.

commission resolved to examine them and to pronounce on their qualifications for the gospel ministry.

From the constitutional standpoint alone there can be no question as to which party was in the right concerning the adoption of the Confession, for the form of Government of the church does not allow for reservations on the part of the candidate when he is asked:

> "Do you sincerely receive and adopt the confession of faith of this church as containing the system of doctrine in the Holy Scriptures?" 1

Each of these three factors contributed toward the schisms which occurred in Western Presbyterianism, but the third, the doctrinal differences which were brought to light through the medium of the revival, proved to be the one "irreconcilable difference" between the opposing parties. It is entirely probable that the other difficulties might have been adjusted, but since Presbyterianism is held to a very definite credal statement this last point of difference could not be adjusted unless one of the groups involved in the controversy would reverse its stand. Due to the nature of the problem it is difficult to see how a compromise, satisfactory and acceptable to the parties involved, could have been made.

2. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

We have already touched upon the denominational move-

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1. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, p. 306.

ments which grew out of the schisms which developed in Western Presbyterianism as a result of the revival, but in this chapter these new denominations will be dealt with more at length. It is not our purpose to go back and trace the different causes underlying each one of the schisms, but rather to follow the development of the movements which came out of the different schisms.

a. The Founding and Growth of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Church was a direct outgrowth of the Cumberland Presbytery which had been dissolved by the Kentucky Synod in 1806. After the commission, which had been appointed by synod to investigate the affairs of the Cumberland Presbytery, had finished its work the revivalist members of the dissolved presbytery formed themselves into a council. The purpose of this council was to assure united and uniform action for their cause.

In May, 1807, the council sent a letter to the General Assembly. In this letter they told why they had been led to license men who did not possess the required educational qualifications, and also explained that the exception had been permitted concerning the adoption of the Confession of Faith because of "the concise manner in which the highly mysterious doctrine of divine decrees is therein expressed, which was thought led to fatality."[1]

The Assembly answered this appeal by pointing to the

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1. Howard and Hubbert, op. cit., p. 462.

fact that their conduct in licensing and ordaining persons who did not possess the qualifications "required by the Book of Discipline", and that their not demanding an "explicit adoption of the Confession of Faith" were the causes of the evils which they were experiencing. The Assembly also pointed out to the members of the council the dangers into which the course of action they had instigated was almost certain to lead. Assembly stated that it was not within their jurisdiction to take any official action concerning the appeal which the members of the council had made, but that their case would have to be reviewed by synod; they were referred to synod's decision with regard to their case.[1]

At the same time the Assembly sent a letter to the Kentucky Synod in which they referred to the "questionable regularity" of synod's actions in their relations with the dissolved presbytery and with those of its members whom they had seen fit to depose. It was hoped by the Assembly that by the use of discretion the Cumberland Presbytery might be re-established, and that those of its former members and licentiates who had been deprived of their rightful offices by the action of synod might be restored to their places of "ministerial usefulness" without "sacrificing either the doctrines or government of our Church."[2]

Following the Assembly's suggestion the synod did review its action, but the letter it sent the Assembly concerning the

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., June 1st, 1807, p. 392.
2. Minutes of the General Assembly - Letter to the Synod of Kentucky, June 1st, 1807, op. cit., p. 389, 390.

matter indicates quite clearly that its members had no intention of withdrawing from the stand which they had taken in relation to the dissolved presbytery or its deposed ministers and licentiates. Synod's argument concerning the action which they had taken was based upon one statement contained within the Book of Discipline:

> "The Synod have power to redress whatever hath been done by Presbyteries contrary to order." 1

In 1808 three members of the council, McAdow, McGee, and Hodge, addressed a second petition to the Assembly. The Assembly refused a second time to hear their appeal because it had not come up through the regularly constituted channels.

In an effort to secure reconciliation the members of the council next appealed to the Transylvania Presbytery to act as mediator in the case. The Transylvania Presbytery refused to act in this capacity as long as those who made the appeal were willing to countenance "an equivocal" adoption of the Confession of Faith. They stated that a union in "truth and reality" was not possible as long as one group demanded adoption of the whole Confession while the other required it to be adopted only in part. It was quite evident that no relief was to be gained from this source as long as neither group was willing to "give in" to the other. Accordingly, in 1809, the council dispatched another petition to the Assembly "praying for redress". The Assembly also had before it at

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1. Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky - Letter to the General Assembly, Oct. 27, 1807; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 365.

this time both the minutes of the Kentucky Synod and a letter from that body explaining its proceedings. Lyle presented the cause of the synod so successfully that the Assembly voted unanimously to sustain the action which synod had taken concerning the Cumberland Presbytery. This unanimous endorsal of the measures adopted by the synod together with this third refusal on the part of the Assembly to extend to the council the relief which it sought made impossible any hope of reconciliation.

Therefore the revivalists formed the independent Cumberland Presbytery in February, 1810. The three original members of this presbytery were Finis Ewing, Samuel King, and Samuel McAdow. The first official act of the new organization was the ordination of Ephriam McLean. In the autumn of 1810 William McGee became a member of the Cumberland Presbytery. It continued to grow until in October, 1813:

> ". . . three and a half years after its organization, the Presbytery had so increased in numbers, and in extent of the territory occupied, as to make its division into three Presbyteries and the formation of a Synod necessary. The Synod was named the Cumberland Synod, and was made up of the Presbyteries of Nashville, Logan and Elk. . . The formation of the Synod was the final act of separation."[1]

b. The Doctrine and Polity of the Cumberland Church.

The Westminster Confession continued to be the creed of the Cumberland Church until 1814, and those who were licensed or ordained were required to "receive and adopt" it "except the idea

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1. Sweet, The Story of Religions in America, p. 337.

of fatality which seems to be taught under the mysterious doctrine of predestination."[1] The Confession was revised in 1814 and differed from the Westminster Confession in that it "was designed to be a popular statement of doctrine emphasizing human responsibility."[2] The Cumberland Presbyterian Church has always been completely Presbyterian in its polity.

c. Union with the Presbyterian Church.

In 1903, after the "mother" church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, had revised its Confession of Faith the General Assemblies of both churches appointed committees to consider the matter of union. A basis of union was formulated which was ratified by the presbyteries of both churches. Considerable opposition to the proposed plan of union arose within the Cumberland Church, and when the union was consummated in 1906 a minority group, determining to continue "and perpetuate the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church,"[3] organized and declared itself to be the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The General Assembly of the newly organized Cumberland Church held its first meeting in Dickson County, Tennessee, "the birthplace of the denomination."

3. The Christian Church.

While the Cumberland Presbyterian controversy was taking place in southern Kentucky and northern Tennessee, a second con-

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1. Howard and Hubbert, op. cit., p. 470.
2. Religious Bodies: 1926, p. 1140.
3. Ibid., p. 1148.

troversy, which centered around doctrinal questions and the adoption of confessions developed into the so-called "New Light Schism".

a. Schism in the Synod.

In 1803 a motion came before the Kentucky Synod calling for the examination of two members of the Washington Presbytery, Richard McNemar and John Thompson, who had "been condemned by their presbytery for holding unorthodox views."[1] While the motion was being considered a paper was presented to the synod by Messrs. Marshall, Stone, McNemar, Thompson, and Dunlavy, protesting against the proceedings of the Washington Presbytery in condemning McNemar and Thompson. In this protest they declared that the minutes of the presbytery gave a "distorted and false" representation of McNemar's sentiments. In it they also claimed the privilege of "interpreting the Scriptures by itself according to Section 9 Chapter 1st of the confession of faith";[2] ("The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself.") They maintained that the doctrines of grace are "darkened by some expressions" in the Confession, and complained that when they attempted to "obviate these difficulties" they were charged with departing from the standards of the church. Since they could not "in conscience acknowledge" the Confession of Faith they bade adieu to the synod:

> "Until through the providence of God it seem good to your Rev'd Body to adopt a more liberal plan respecting human creeds and confessions." [3]

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1. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 94.
2. Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky, Sept. 10, 1803; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 318.
3. Ibid., p. 318.

Since committees appointed by synod in an effort to bring about a reconciliation with the five protestants failed in their task synod moved to "suspend Messrs. Marshall, Dunlavy, McNemar, Stone, and Thompson from the exercises of all functions of the gospel ministry, until sorrow and repentance for the above schism be manifested."[1]

b. The Springfield Presbytery.

Protesting that they did not wish to leave the Presbyterian Church they organized themselves into a new presbytery which they called the "Springfield Presbytery." Concerning this organization Stone wrote:

> "Under the name of Springfield Presbytery we went forward preaching and constituting churches; but we had not worn our name more than a year before we saw it savored of a party spirit. With the man-made creeds we threw it overboard, and took the name Christian - the name given to the disciples by divine appointment first at Antioch." 2

On June 28, 1804, "The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery" was issued. This curious document, drawn up in the legal language of a will, mentions the disposition of eleven items. It reads in part as follows:

> "We will, that our name of distinction, with its Reverent title, be forgotten, that there is but one Lord over God's heritage, and his name one."
>
> "We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven. . ."
>
> "We will, that preachers and people, cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance, pray more and dispute less;. . ."
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> "We will, that the Synod of Kentucky examine every member,
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> . . . . . .

1. Minutes of the Synod of Kentucky, Sept. 13, 1803; in Sweet, The Presbyterians, pp. 322, 323.
2. Rogers, The Cane Ridge Meeting House, p. 172; in Jennings, pp. 52-3.

> who may be suspected of having departed from the Confession of Faith, and suspend every heretic immediately; in order that the oppressed may go free, and taste the sweets of gospel liberty." [1]

c. Development of the Christian Church.

The new movement experienced a rapid growth; the seceding ministers had carried most of the members of their former congregations with them into the new church. The name Christian which was adopted by the members of the movement in 1804, probably was responsible in part for the early success of the new denomination. The unwillingness to subscribe to any man-made creed was also a factor contributing to the ready support which it found. Concerning this very point the church experienced its first serious difficulty, for the refusal to adopt a creed made the Christians an easy "prey to strange doctrines." [2] Quite a few of the members of the new church including three of its preachers, Houston, McNemar, and Dunlavy, were soon won over to Shakerism.

Because of the "havoc wrought by the Shakers", and because of the controversy over baptism which stirred the Christians, two original members of the movement, Marshall and Thompson, were convinced that the adoption of a simple doctrinal statement of "a few fundamental truths" was essential. A meeting was called to consider this question, but it was decided by the majority "to abide by the principle that the Bible should be their guide in religion." [3] As a result of this decision Marshall and Thompson both returned to the Presbyterian Church.

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1. The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery; in Fortune, op. cit., pp. 48, 49.
2. Ibid., p. 53.
3. Ibid., p. 53.

One of the most important events in the history of the Christian Church in Kentucky was their union with the Disciples.[1] The Disciples were the members of the movement which had been inaugurated by Alexander Campbell. This union between the Kentucky branches of the two organizations was perfected on New Year's Day, 1832, at Lexington. The united body became known as either Disciples or Christians, "with preference for Christians as the years passed."[2]

The movements originally sponsored by Campbell and Stone have experienced both unions and schisms; during their comparatively short history their paths have crossed, mingled, and divided until today it is practically impossible to trace the exact development of any one of them without accounting for the others out of which it has grown, or which have grown out of it. Three of these groups which exist at the present time are commonly known as: first, the Christians; second, the Disciples; and third, the Churches of Christ.

4. The Shakers. (The United Society of Believers.)

When one considers the excesses which attended the western revival one is not surprised to discover that some of those who strongly favored and encouraged emotional extremes were in the end won over to the cause of the Shakers.

Shakerism began in England; Jane Wardley was probably the founder of the movement, but Ann Lee was its first outstanding leader. She claimed that the Holy or Mother Spirit was manifested through her as the Father Spirit had been manifested through Jesus.

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1. Cf. Fortune, op. cit., p. 114.
2. Ibid., p. 132.

She was also convinced that the "undirected use of the sexual relation" was the root of evil in the world; for this reason the Shakers adopted celibacy as one of their original tenets.

In 1774 Ann Lee with eight followers migrated to America and established a community in New York. "Mother Ann" died in 1784 but the work was carried on by her followers. Because of the missionary efforts of the group a large body of believers was soon scattered throughout New York and New England. The accounts of the western revival came as good news to the Shakers. Three of their missionaries set out for the West on January 1, 1805. Among the converts which these missionaries made were Richard McNemar and John Dunlavy, two of the founders of the Christian Church.

The fundamental principles of Shakerism, in addition to the one already mentioned, are "peace or nonresistance, brotherhood, and community of goods."[1] They claimed new revelations which were superior to the old ones recorded in the Bible, and according to Stone's testimony they also claimed the power to perform miracles.[2] Since it was well adapted to catch the attention of those who were carried away with the emotional excesses of the revival the Shaker movement succeeded in winning away many of the Christian's new converts.

Unlike the Cumberland Presbyterians and the Christians the Shakers were not a product of the revival, rather they were opportunists who took advantage of the situation created by the revival to win converts for themselves. Unlike the other two groups they did not make serious in-roads into any other group; rather they

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1. Religious Bodies, op. cit., p. 444.
2. Cf. Jennings, op. cit., p. 54.

acted as a reservoir which received, and welcomed the more fanatical element produced by and partially responsible for the extravagances which attended the revival movement.

5. Conclusion.

Due to the disputes within the church concerning the excesses of the revival; because of disagreements over the educational requirements which the church demanded of its ministry; on account of the controversy relating to the doctrinal and credal standards of the church; and as a consequence of the ecclesiastical differences growing out of these, divisions were brought about in Western Presbyterianism. These divisions proved to be detrimental to its immediate interests at least, for as a result of serious schisms the potential influence of Western Presbyterianism was greatly curtailed. The Presbyterian Church did add large numbers to its membership as a result of the revival, but it failed to benefit by the movement when considered from the point of membership alone to the same extent as the Methodists and Baptists.

B. The Effects of the Revival upon the Organized Activities of the Presbyterian Church.

The Great Revival was largely a product of the missionary and educational endeavors of the Presbyterian Church, and even though it was the cause of schisms which resulted in the loss of many members for Western Presbyterianism, yet at the same time the frontier revival proved to be a fruitful result of the organized efforts of the church, for it in turn influenced the development of the Presbyterian Church's missionary and educational labors. We will first consider the relationship of the revival to the missionary work of

the church, then we will consider it in its relationship to the church's educational program.

1. Relationship of the Revival to the Presbyterian Home Missions Movement.

a. The Revival as a Product of the Missionary Activities of the Church.

Although it was frequently slow in meeting the demands, the Presbyterian Church was keenly aware of her responsibilities towards her frontier members. As early as 1722 the Synod of Philadelphia sent three ministers to carry on missionary work among the settlers in Virginia. All during the eighteenth century the church continued to appoint ministers to labor as missionaries for specified periods of time on designated fields. Whenever it was possible students and licentiates were also sent to the frontier settlements to engage in missionary activities.

In 1768 the Synod appointed a committee to prepare a plan for missions among the Indians. The Synod had the welfare of both the Indians and the whites living on the frontier in mind for they proposed to send out workers:

> ". . . to relieve the unhappy lot of many in various parts of our land who are brought up in ignorance; who on account of their poverty and scattered habitations are unable without some assistance to support the gospel ministry among them." 1

It was not possible to work out these missionary projects at that time because of the hostile attitude of many of the Indians and because of the approaching war.

During the last half of the eighteenth century many

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1. Quoted by Thompson, op. cit., p. 91.

Presbyterian ministers followed the advancing tide of settlers south into the Carolinas. Others crossed over the mountains to the west and labored among the settlers in western Pennsylvania and Ohio, and still others went down into the valley of Virginia to work among the Scotch-Irish who had settled there.

Beginning in 1789, the year of the first General Assembly, the church was better prepared to go about the great task which lay before it. At this first meeting of the Assembly a committee appointed to devise means to carry the missionary work of the church to the frontiers recommended that at the next meeting two members "well qualified" be employed "in missions on our frontiers". The different presbyteries were also ordered to raise contributions to support the missionary work of the church. In 1790, following the committee's recommendation, two missionaries, Nathan Ker and Joshua Hart, were appointed to labor in the frontier settlements of New York and Pennsylvania. At each following meeting of the Assembly reports were received concerning the missionary work which had been accomplished during the past year and missionaries were appointed for the coming year. As a result of these missionary efforts froniter congregations were established and the work and influence of the church was greatly extended. Thus it was largely through the untiring efforts of faithful Presbyterian missionaries that the way was prepared for the Great Western Revival.

b. The Revival as an Impulse to the Home Missionary Activities of the Church.

"The revivals which had begun in Kentucky in the last days of the eighteenth century, and were sweeping over the frontier, . . . impressed the Church with the need of more aggressive

missionary work." 1

The minutes of the Assembly are witness to growing interest in the missionary enterprise. With the passing of the years the Assembly's interest and participation in the missionary phase of its work increased. In 1800 the Assembly reported:

> "The success of the missionary labours is greatly on the increase. . . Some hundreds of people have, in a short space of time, been received into the communion of the church. . . Only ten years have elapsed since the first missionaries were sent out by the Assembly. Since that period some thousands of families have settled on the frontier, who are rapidly forming in societies in order to have the gospel preached and its ordinances statedly administered among them. Now is the time they need assistance. Their eyes are turned, and their applications addressed to this Assembly, as an instrument in the hands of the divine Redeemer to afford them the necessary assistance." 2

(1) The Standing Committee of Missions.

The same Assembly made plans for the establishment of a permanent fund to carry on the church's missionary endeavors. The fully organized home missionary labors of the Presbyterian Church dates from 1802. In that year, the same year in which the Synod of Kentucky was formed, a Standing Committee of Missions was appointed by the Assembly. It was the duty of this committee to direct [illegible] all of the missionary endeavors of the Assembly. This great forward step which was taken by the Assembly in order that it might be better able to administer the work which it was undertaking, was necessitated by the increasing need for laborers on the frontier due to the great revival.

In spite of the progressive efforts of the church to keep up with its missionary obligations still it is not surprising that

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1. Hanzsche, op. cit., pp. 130, 131.
2. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 26th, 1800, p. 209.

in 1803 the Synod of Kentucky felt compelled to ask the Assembly for aid in conducting needed mission activities.

> "On motion, it was agreed, that the request be granted, and that that part of the country be considered under the care of the General Assembly in missionary concerns." 1

(2) The Western Missionary Society.

The revival of missionary interest was quite general. The Synod of Pittsburgh, at its first meeting, 1802, resolved itself into the Western Missionary Society. The purpose of the society was:

> "To diffuse the knowledge of the gospel among the inhabitants of the new settlements, the Indian tribes, and, if need be, among some of the interior inhabitants where they are not able to support the gospel." 2

The establishment of the Western Missionary Society marked the beginning of a series of missionary efforts which finally resulted in the organization of the Board of Foreign Missions by the General Assembly in 1837.

(3) The Board of Missions.

The Presbyterian Church had always been interested in the missionary enterprise but as the following figures show, this interest was unusually great during the opening years of the century. In 1803, one year after the establishment of the Standing Committee of Missions, the Assembly sent out five missionaries; in 1807 fifteen were appointed; forty in 1811; forty-six in 1813; and in 1814 fifty-one ministers were commissioned to serve as missionaries in the different frontier settlements. At least thirteen, or over

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 28th, 1803, p.280.
2. Quoted by Speer, op. cit., p. 79.

one-fourth of these fifty-one missionaries who were appointed in 1814, were assigned to labor in Kentucky and Tennessee.

By 1816 the missionary activities of the church had grown so that the Committee felt called upon to recommend "a change of style, and enlargement of the powers of the Standing Committee of Missions."[1] The Committee then recommended that the "style" be changed for that of the Board of Missions; that its membership be increased; and that its powers be enlarged so that it might have the authority to appoint missionaries.

c. Conclusion.

It is a great temptation to claim more than one can prove concerning the relationship which existed between the Great Western Revival and the home missionary movement within the Presbyterian Church, but it is quite evident that each had a tremendous influence upon the other. Obviously the systematic efforts which the church adopted "towards supplying the destitute portions of our country with the preaching of the gospel"[2] were largely instrumental in bringing about the western revival. It is likewise certain that the revival impressed the church with the necessity for a still more aggressive program, and as a consequence the Assembly organized agencies in order to be better prepared to meet the increased demands for missionaries which were pouring in from the frontier sections of the country.

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 27th, 1816, p. 633.
2. Quoted by Speer, op. cit., p. 76.

2. The Revival in its Relationship to the Educational Program of the Presbyterian Church.

a. The Educational Background of the Presbyterian Ministers who Participated in the Revival.

In relation to the missionary endeavors in which the church engaged on the frontier the question naturally arises, "How, and where, did these frontier preachers receive their preparation?" This question is especially appropriate when we recall the fact that the church refused to lower its educational standards to meet the frontier situation.

The history of American Presbyterianism's organized educational efforts goes back to the days of William Tennent, the "father" of Presbyterian education in this country. About 1720 Tennent founded his Log College in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. When Tennent died in 1745 his school was closed, but it had served its purpose so well that the Synod of New York took immediate steps to perpetuate it. Under the care of the synod it was reopened in Elizabeth, New Jersey, in 1746, and was moved to Princeton in 1753. Many of the early Presbyterian ministers who settled in the west, as John McMillan, David Rice, Samuel Doak, and numerous others, were graduates of Princeton College.[1]

Two other famous Presbyterian "Log Colleges" of the early days were the ones founded by John McMillan and Thaddeus Dod in western Pennsylvania. Some of the men who prepared for the ministry under McMillan's guidance afterward became his associates in the first western presbytery, Redstone. One of the best known among the men who were trained by McMillan, and one in whom we are greatly

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1. Cf. Sweet, The Presbyterians, p. 70.

interested in our present study, was James McGready. In 1791 McMillan and others opened an academy at Canonsburg, which was re-chartered in 1802 as Jefferson College.

Hampden-Sidney Academy was established by the Hanover Presbytery in 1776 in Prince Edward County, Virginia. Liberty Hall was established in the same year in which Hampden-Sidney was founded. The influence which these two Virginia institutions exerted upon the Western Revival is indicated in the following statement by Davidson:

> "Of the clergy who entered Kentucky during the last ten years of the century, several belonged to that noble band of youths whose hearts God had touched in the blessed revival of 1787-88, which commenced in Hampden-Sydney College, and extended to Liberty Hall." 1

Due to this revival which visited these two institutions the Synod of Virginia added a theological department to the latter.

Many other examples of pioneer Presbyterian educational institutions founded for the education of its ministry might be included with the few already mentioned, but enough have been considered to serve our present purpose, for from those which we have already noted it is easy to be seen that these early Presbyterian educational establishments were closely related to the revival in that they trained many of the men who were responsible for, and participated in the revival. It was from these and similar schools that influential Presbyterian ministers were sent to the frontier to carry on their missionary labors. Thus they were instrumental in determining the course of American Presbyterianism.

b. The Increased Demand for Ministers Created by the Revival.

The Great Revival naturally created an immense demand

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1. Davidson, op. cit., p. 104.

for ministers. Thousands of new members were received into the communion of the church as a result of the revival, and consequently many new congregations were formed. It was like-wise to be expected that most of these congregations would be in the frontier settlements where there had been but few before the coming of the spiritual awakening. Year after year calls came to the church for more ministers. The church tried to meet these demands but the supply of trained men failed to keep abreast of the demand. Thus the revival created a peculiar situation within the Presbyterian Church in respect to its ministry.

(1) Problems Involved in Meeting This Demand.

The early presbyteries received many calls for ministers from the frontier settlements. The problem which the church was called upon to solve in relation to these calls was this: should the requirement of the church that all its candidates for the ministry have a liberal education be either temporarily or permanently set aside in order that the church might be able to respond to these many calls? or should the church continue to insist upon an educated ministry under all circumstances? The church decided in favor of the latter course of action and continued to keep rigidly to its standards of an educated ministry regardless of the existing conditions. As a result of this policy the Presbyterian Church was responsible for sending "the first body of college-trained men" to the frontier.

The solution of this problem naturally raised another one; how was the church going to educate enough men for the ministry to satisfy the increased demand? There was but one answer to this question; by increasing its educational facilities.

(2) The Enlarged Educational Facilities of the Church Brought about by the Increased Demand for Ministers.

In 1809 the General Assembly heard a report from one of its committees concerning the establishment of a theological school. This committee recommended that the church either establish one "great school" in some convenient location within its bounds, or that it found two such schools, one in the northern part of the country and the other in the southern, or else that such schools be established according to synods, one in each synod. The following year a detailed report prepared by the same committee was read before the Assembly. The way in which the frontier influenced this contemplated move of the church is clearly seen by the first resolution of this report which read as follows:

> "Resolved, That the state of our churches, the loud and affecting calls of destitute frontier settlements, and the laudable exertions of various Christian denominations around us, all demand that the collected wisdom, piety, and zeal of the Presbyterian Church be, without delay, called into action, for furnishing the church with a large supply of able and faithful ministers." 1

In the same Assembly's letter to the members of the church the following reasons, among others, are given why this proposed action on the part of the Assembly should have the backing of the church as a whole:

> "Consider the pressing class of large and flourishing churches, who solicit in vain for ministers to break to them the bread of life. Consider the loud and affecting cries of many destitute settlements, which know nothing of those precious privileges with which you are surrounded. Consider. . . the interests of religion, for which you profess to feel. . ." 2

The idea met with general approval, and in 1812 Princeton

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 30th, 1810, p.454.
2. Ibid., p. 459.

Theological Seminary, the first seminary to be established by the Presbyterian Church in America, was opened. When the seminary was first opened the General Assembly risked electing only one professor, Dr. Archibald Alexander, to its faculty, but in 1813 Dr. Samuel Miller was chosen to assist Dr. Alexander in the work. Princeton Seminary opened in 1812 with three students but by the next May its student body had increased from three to fourteen.

Other Presbyterian seminaries established during the first few decades of the century were: Auburn, 1821; Union, Richmond, Virginia, founded by the Presbytery of Hanover in 1821; Maryville, Tennessee, 1821; and Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, 1828.

In addition to the colleges and the seminary which the church controlled it was soon apparent:

> "In many cases young men of piety and promise who were looking forward to the ministry would need help to enable them to take the long and expensive training which the Church required of her ministers. Hence arose the demand for a Board of Education."[1]

As early as 1771 the Synod proposed to support young men "of piety and parts at learning" who desired to enter the ministry so that the many vacancies might be supplied with ministers. This action anticipated the Board of Education which was established in 1819 for the purpose of assisting the presbyteries in educating "pious youth for the gospel ministry, both in their academical and theological course."[2]

C. Conclusion.

> "Unlike the still small voice, or the softly flowing waters of Siloa, the Great Revival of 1800 rather resembled the whirlwind, the earthquake, the impetuous torrent, whose track

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1. Thompson, op. cit., p. 282.
2. Constitution of the Board of Education, Article VI, section 2, Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., June 2d, 1819, p. 715.

was marked by violence and desolation." 1

The above description is not completely adequate, but it does present a vivid picture of that phase of the revival which we considered in the first part of this chapter. It was due to the fact that the movement did rush on like an "impetuous torrent" that the church out of which it had come was rent asunder by irreconcilable divisions. Differences among the revival leaders, which under normal conditions might have been righted, developed into serious schisms which greatly influenced the destiny of Western Presbyterianism. Had the following timely admonition of the General Assembly to the contending parties in the "New Light Schism" been heeded the course of Presbyterianism in the West would have been materially altered.

> "We beseech you brethren, yet, receive one another in the spirit of love and forbearance. Remember how divisions and contests between men, engaged in the same glorious cause, will wound the hearts of sincere Christians. . .; remember how apt they are to embitter the meek spirit of the gospel, and to quench the zeal of genuine piety, in the unholy passions of strife and contention; remember, we entreat you for the love of Christ, how the adversary will blaspheme and rejoice, and the Redeemer be wounded in the house of his friends." 2

But under the influence of the excitement which attended the revival "Christian charity" was cast aside and the differences which had sprung up among its leaders were permitted to develop into insurmountable barriers which permanently separated those workers who should have continued to labor side by side in the advancement of the cause.

Without the revival the extravagances which served to separate its leaders would never have existed, but as to whether the

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1. Davidson, op. cit., p. 223.
2. Pastoral Letter, Minutes of the General Assembly, op. cit., May 29th, 1804, p. 314.

differences of opinion concerning the standards of an educated ministry and the contentions relating to the doctrinal and credal statements would have developed independently of the revival is open to question. This one thing is evident; all of the differences which had either been lying dormant under the surface, or which were brought into being by the movement itself, were fanned by the intenseness of the revival spirit into "flames of discord" which rent the church. It was because of the two great schisms, the Cumberland, and the Christian, that Dr. Alexander was led many years later to say:

> "The truth is - and it should not be concealed - that the general result of this great excitement was an almost total desolation of the Presbyterian churches in Kentucky and Tennessee." 1

Even though it is generally agreed that the revival movement was, in part at least, detrimental to Presbyterian interests in the West, yet Dr. Alexander's statement is, in spite of his proven integrity and the authority with which he speaks, evidently overdrawn. It is also misleading in that it calls attention to only one of the effects of the revival upon the church in the West.

Just as the revival was, to a great extent, a fruit of the missionary and educational efforts of the church, so it in turn gave added impulse to these two movements, and since the church refused to lower its standards concerning an educated ministry, there was but one thing for it to do; enlarge its educational facilities. It cannot be determined with any great degree of certainty as to just how far the western phase of the revival was responsible for the

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1. In a letter to the Editor of the "Watchman and Observer", dated Sept. 5th, 1846; in Davidson, op. cit., p. 189.

multiplied missionary and educational activities of the church which resulted in the establishment of the Board of Missions in 1816, the Board of Education in 1819, and the founding of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1812. But the accounts of the Assembly together with the obviously increased missionary and educational efforts of the church witness to the fact that the movement acted as a powerful stimulus in spurring the church on to new and greater achievements in the missionary and educational fields.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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It has been the purpose of this study to examine the Kentucky Revival of 1800 from the Presbyterian standpoint in order to discover and trace the influence of Presbyterianism upon the revival and also the effects of the revival movement upon the Presbyterian Church. This examination has disclosed the fact that a close relationship existed between the two, and that due to the nature of this relationship each necessarily exerted a definite influence upon the other.

A careful investigation of the relationship which existed between the Kentucky Revival and the Presbyterian Church has revealed the following facts: The Great Revival visited the different sections of our country when it was most desperately needed. It succeeded in meeting this need in a very real way. The traditional policies and practices of the church relating to its educational and missionary activities as well as to its educational and credal standards and its insistence upon the maintainance of "law and order" within the church were instrumental in determining the essential quality of the relationship which bound the two together. The church was largely responsible for the existence and course of the revival, but on the other hand the frontier revival exerted a great influence upon the interests of American Presbyterianism. It served to confirm the importance which the church placed upon its frontier work, and at the same time it had a definite effect upon the power and influence of the church in the West. The Kentucky Revival was responsible for the extension of the educational and missionary programs and facilities of American Presbyterianism.

In view of these facts which have been revealed through

the medium of our study we are led to draw the following conclusions concerning its place and importance: In discovering the nature and extent of the relationship which existed between the Kentucky Revival and the Presbyterian Church we have been brought into a deeper consciousness of the contributions which the church made through the agency of the revival to American Protestantism and to American civilization by acting as an uplifting influence upon the religious and moral life of the nation. Other contributions of Presbyterianism to the development of American Christianity which cannot be separated from those just referred to, and which are distinctive to the Presbyterian Church, lay in its strict adherence to its traditional educational and credal standards, and in the unfaltering stand which it took concerning the less desirable practices which were associated with the revival movement.

We have observed how the church's stand in relation to these particular problems led to divisions which greatly decreased its influence along the frontier sections of the country. Nevertheless, in spite of the immediate losses which the church suffered because of these divisions it is evident that "in the long run" the position of the church, and thus the position of American Christianity, was strengthened through its adherence to certain of its fundamental principles. By refusing to conform to the demands which were made upon it during the period of extreme excitement it added a much needed "steadying" influence to frontier religious thought and practice.

The greatest benefit gained from this study is that it has enabled us to arrive at a clearer conception of the situation in which we find ourselves at present. There are striking similarities

between the general social and religious conditions of contemporary America and those which existed in this country at the close of the eighteenth century. We have been given a better understanding of the part which a great revival movement played in the development of our national and religious life at that time, and we are therefore brought to the conclusion that what has been done can be done again, and that a similar revival could bring about a like change in contemporary life and thought. Our study has also led to a deeper appreciation of the "permanent deposits" which Presbyterianism has left among the religious and social characteristics of our land, and of the debt of gratitude which present day America owes to the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

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