

BRIEF  
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES  
OF SOME OF THE  
EARLY MINISTERS  
OF THE  
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

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## PREFACE.

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THE fruits of Christianity constitute its excellency. It is the developments and ameliorating influences of religion that give character and importance to its claims upon the confidence and consideration of man. The tree that produces no good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. That system of religion that does not improve the intellectual and moral condition of its subjects, is without intrinsic merit—it has no recommending qualities, and as a consequence, the intelligent mind, in its pursuit of happiness; turns from it to something that promises positive good in this life, and salvation in the life to come. That the Christian Religion *is* a positive benefit; that it does better the condition of man; that it does elevate him in the scale of moral and intellectual being, may be regarded as axiomatic truths. If, however, evidence be necessary to illustrate this, the lives of the good and the useful of every age may be presented; for their pious walk, holy conversation, “work and labor of love,” is Christianity in its practical developments.

In the following “Biographical Sketches” we have our holy religion exemplified. The characters of twenty-one ministers of the gospel are introduced. They were in some respects peculiar men—raised up in the providence of God, it may be, for a special and an important purpose. Some of

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them were the instruments in the organization of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. They lived to see the vine which, in the hands of God, they planted, spreading its branches "far and wide," and the precious seed of truth which they had sown yielding a most bountiful harvest. Having finished their work, they were gathered unto their fathers, to be followed by others no less consecrated to the great work of saving souls. In the perusal of the following pages, the reader will discover interesting portraitures, drawn by a faithful hand—portraitures of the Fathers and their immediate successors in the ministry of our beloved Church. He will learn something of their early history, their incipient efforts in the ministry, their pious walk, their extensive labors, and their triumphant death. He will see what animated them in their progress through a world of suffering—how they endured hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ—what enabled them to resist temptation, to overcome difficulties, and to brave persecutions. He will see in the lives of these worthies the great truths of our holy religion elucidated, not merely in the morality of their actions, but in the purity of their principles. Finally, he will see them *witnessing a good profession*, and in the darkest hour of trial bearing their testimony to the truth of Christianity, living by faith upon the Son of God, and dying in the triumphant assurances of his salvation. These things being true, we trust that this volume may receive a hearty welcome into hundreds and thousands of Christian families, and that it may be read with profit by them all, and that it may prove a blessing to the Church and the world.

J. C. PROVINE.

NASHVILLE, APRIL, 1867.

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## BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

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REV. JAMES M'GREADY.\*

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1788—1817.

REV. JAMES MCGREADY was of Scotch-Irish descent, and was born in Pennsylvania. When he was quite young, his father moved from Pennsylvania, and settled in Guilford county, North Carolina. Here young McGready passed his early years. He is represented to have been of a thoughtful and serious habit of mind, and otherwise promising, whilst still a youth. An uncle, who was on a visit to his father's family, from Pennsylvania, thought that a boy of such habits and promise ought to be educated for the ministry, and prevailed on his parents to allow their son to accompany him to Pennsylvania, with a view to the accomplishment of that object. The more reliable tradition is, that about the time of his commencing his studies preparatory to the work of the ministry, he was convinced by a sermon

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\* Annals of the American Pulpit, Smith's History of the Cumberland Presbyterians, Foote's Sketches of North Carolina.

of a Rev. Mr. Smith, of the unsoundness of his previous religious hopes. Smith, in his history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, says that his awakening to a true sense of his spiritual state was attributable to a conversation of two friends, overheard by Mr. McGready, in which they expressed their fears that he was not a truly converted man. Foote, in his Sketches of North Carolina, confirms the latter account. Whatever may have been the means of his awakening, he became an earnest inquirer, and soon, without doubt, a true Christian.

In the fall of 1785, Mr. Smith, who, according to the first tradition, was the means of his awakening, opened a school for the purpose of assisting young men in preparing for the ministry, and young McGready immediately became one of his pupils. He remained here for some time, and then entered a school recently opened by Rev. Dr. McMillan, with whom he had spent some time after his arrival with his uncle from North Carolina. Dr. McMillan's school grew into what is now Jefferson College.

The subject of this sketch having completed his literary and theological course of studies, was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Redstone, on the 13th of August, 1788, when he was about thirty years of age. In the autumn or winter following, he returned to North Carolina, and on his way spent some time with Dr. John Blair Smith, at Hampden Sidney College, in Virginia. Dr. Smith had been extensively connected with a powerful revival of religion, which occurred in his neighborhood about



that time, and the mind of Mr. McGready seems to have been deeply affected by what he saw and heard of the manifestations of Divine grace in that revival.

On his arrival in North Carolina, he found the churches in a low state. A great spiritual dearth prevailed, and his preaching was the means of awakening increased interest on the subject of religion. From one of my authorities we have the following: "His labors at an academy under the care of Dr. Caldwell, were instrumental in producing a revival of religion, in which ten or twelve young men were brought into the fold, all of whom became ministers of the gospel, and some of them were subsequently his fellow-laborers in the far West."

About the year 1790 Mr. McGready married, and became the pastor of a congregation in Orange county.- "Here he labored with his wonted zeal, and often with great success." His zeal provoked opposition. The cry was raised against him that he was running the people distracted, diverting their attention from their necessary avocations, and creating unnecessary alarm in the minds of those who were decent and orderly in their lives. "A letter was written to him in *blood*, requiring him to leave the country at the peril of his life; and a number of wicked men and women of the baser sort, on a certain occasion during the week, assembled in his church, tore down the seats, set fire to the pulpit, and burnt it to ashes." On the following Sabbath, when the congregation met for worship, a scene

of confusion and desolation presented itself. He, however, proceeded with the service, using a very appropriate and solemn psalm, and delivering a sermon from the following text: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate."

In 1796 Mr. McGready left North Carolina for Kentucky. After spending a few months in East Tennessee, he reached his destination, and took the pastoral charge of three congregations in Logan county — Gaspar River, Red River, and Muddy River. These congregations were small, and in a low state of religious interest. There were among them, however, some living and earnest Christians. He made great efforts to arouse his people to a proper sense of their spiritual condition, as well as for the conversion of sinners. In order to effect his object more fully, he presented to the members of his congregations for their approval and signatures, the following preamble and covenant:

"When we consider the word and promises of a compassionate God to the poor lost family of Adam, we find the strongest encouragement for Christians to pray in faith—to ask in the name of Jesus for the conversion of their fellow-men. None ever went to Christ when on earth, with the case of their friends, that were denied, and, although the days of

his humiliation are ended, yet, for the encouragement of his people, he has left it on record, that where two or three agree upon earth to ask in prayer, *believing*, it shall be done. Again, *whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* With these promises before us, we feel encouraged to unite our supplications to a prayer-hearing God for the outpouring of his Spirit, that his people may be quickened and comforted, and that our children, and sinners generally, may be converted. Therefore, we bind ourselves to observe the third Saturday of each month, for one year, as a day of fasting and prayer for the conversion of sinners in Logan county, and throughout the world. We also engage to spend one half hour every Saturday evening, beginning at the setting of the sun, and one half hour every Sabbath morning, from the rising of the sun, pleading with God to revive his work."

To this covenant he and they affixed their names. The writer recollects to have heard the late Dr. Alfred M. Bryan state that his father, and perhaps his mother, were subscribers, among others. In May, 1797, the first signs of promise appeared, in the conversion of a female member of one of his congregations, who had been in the communion of the Church for some time. These favorable indications continued through the summer, but were followed by a temporary reaction through the fall and winter. The following summer the work developed itself more powerfully. On Monday of

the sacramental meeting, at Gaspar River Meeting-house, the Spirit of God was poured out abundantly; the congregation became intensely interested on the subject of religion, and during the following week, almost entirely neglected their secular affairs, so great was their solicitude to secure the salvation of their own souls and the souls of others. This was the commencement of the great revival of 1800. For several subsequent years, a history of Mr. McGready would be a history of the revival. He was its leading spirit—I speak of him as a subordinate agent, of course—its most earnest advocate, and powerful promoter.

When the difficulties began to develop themselves, which resulted in the organization of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Mr. McGready for a time took a decided stand, as we would have expected, with the revival party. As these difficulties progressed, however, and became more serious than he expected, he faltered. It is, perhaps, not a matter of surprise. He was a Calvinist of the old school. He had received his early theological impressions, and his impressions of ecclesiastical order, from Dr. McMillan and old Red Stone Presbytery, types of the sternest Presbyterianism. He had no idea, it is supposed, when the troubles commenced, that they would become so complicated and embarrassing. Another consideration may be added. Although a man of great power in the pulpit, he was not a man for ecclesiastical conflict. He was not adapted to the leadership of a party. In

December of 1805 he was cited, with Revs. Messrs. William Hodge, William McGee, Samuel McAdow, and John Rankin, to appear before the next meeting of Kentucky Synod, to account for their conduct in not submitting the *young men* for reëxamination to the Commission of the Synod. The history of the Commission is known. He succeeded by some means in making his peace with the Synod, and with the Transylvania Presbytery, which he seems to have attended in 1809, for the first time after his citation by the Commission of Synod.

Shortly after Mr. McGready's defection from the Council out of which the Cumberland Presbytery of 1810 grew, he left Logan county, and settled in Henderson county, Kentucky, where he remained until his death, which occurred in February, 1817.

Of his latter years, not much is known. It is known, however, that he continued his ministerial work, with his usual fidelity. But from some cause his labors were not as successful as they had formerly been. This was perhaps partly attributable to such a failure of physical strength and animation as declining age naturally brings. His friends, too, thought that the former unction of his ministry was wanting. It is recorded that in the fall of 1816, a few months before his death, he attended a Cumberland Presbyterian camp-meeting near Evansville, Indiana, where he preached with great power and success. At the close of a very impressive sermon on "The character, history, and end of the fool," he came out of the pulpit, called together the

anxious, and prayed for them with great fervency. When he closed, he arose from his knees, and exclaimed with a loud voice, "O blessed be God! I this day feel the same holy fire that filled my soul sixteen years ago, during the glorious revival of 1800."

Mr. McGready was an unusual man. God had evidently endowed him, and raised him up, and given him a spiritual training for a special work. He had great physical strength, and a voice like thunder. In these respects, he was precisely fitted for the field of labor to which Providence assigned him. His early religious experience was well calculated to awaken distrust of the religion of many around him. He had himself built for a time upon a false foundation, and it was very natural that he should fear that others would fall into the same fatal error. He was accordingly terrible upon hypocrites, deceivers, and the self-deceived. Such could hardly stand before his searching and scathing denunciations. And the history of the Church in his time, and the history of his own labors, show very clearly that such a man was greatly needed. Boanerges, sons of thunder, men of a deep and earnest spiritual experience, were the proper ministry for arousing formalists and double-minded Christians, and driving them from their refuges of lies. The Western country, too, in the close of the last, and the commencement of the present century, was filled with open infidelity. Vice was rampant. A bold front was needed to meet them. Mr.

McGready's experience, too, was calculated to give him low views of himself. The result was, that notwithstanding his great success as a minister, he was remarkable for his humility. The following is from a sketch of his character, furnished by a ministerial friend :

“From the conduct and conversation of Mr. McGready, there is abundant evidence to believe that he was not only a subject of Divine grace and unfeigned piety, but that he was favored with great nearness to God, and intimate communion with him. Like Enoch, he walked with God ; like Jacob, he wrestled with God, by fervent, persevering supplications for a blessing on himself and others, and prevailed ; like Elijah, he was very jealous for the Lord of hosts, and regarded his kingdom as the great end of his existence on earth, to which all other designs ought to be subordinate ; like Job, he deeply abhorred himself, repenting as it were in dust and ashes, when he was enabled to behold the purity of God, and his own want of conformity to his holy nature ; like the apostle Paul, he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord ; and like him, he felt great delight in preaching to his fellow-men the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was remarkably plain in his dress and manners, but very familiar, communicative, and interesting in his conversation. He possessed a sound understanding, and a moderate share of human learning. The style of his sermons was not polished, but perspicuous and

pointed, and his manner of address was unusually solemn and impressive. As a preacher, he was highly esteemed by the humble followers of the Lamb, who relished the precious truths which he clearly exhibited to their view; but he was hated, and sometimes bitterly reproached and persecuted, not only by the openly vicious and profane, but by many nominal Christians, or formal professors, who could not bear his heart-searching and penetrating addresses, and the indignation of the Almighty against the ungodly, which, as a son of thunder, he clearly presented to the view of their guilty minds from the awful denunciations of the word of truth."

A few of the old people still survive who sometimes heard Mr. McGready in the revival of 1800. They speak even now of his preaching with enthusiasm. They give wonderful accounts of his power in the pulpit, not only in preaching, but in prayer. I have several times heard a very reliable old gentleman, who claimed Mr. McGready as his spiritual father, relate the following circumstance: "On a certain occasion, he was preaching to a large congregation in the woods. A very dark and threatening cloud arose. A storm seemed ready to burst upon them. They had no shelter. The preacher was delivering his message with great earnestness and fervency. Seeing the storm approach, he stopped in the midst of his discourse, and addressed a prayer to God that the storm might be restrained or turned aside. The cloud separated, passing to the right and left, and leaving the congregation



undisturbed." All this might have occurred, had no prayer been offered by the preacher. Still the narrator, and no doubt many of the people at the time, believed that God averted the storm in answer to the prayer.

I heard Mr. McGready preach once. I was very young — I suppose in my fourteenth or fifteenth year. The occasion was a funeral-sermon upon the death of his brother, who had lived and died a member of Shiloh congregation in Tennessee. He stood at the foot of a tree in a grove, as the house could not contain the congregation. I have a very distinct recollection of his appearance and manner. He was not boisterous, but rather chaste, solemn, and impressive. Solemnity was most conspicuous in his manner, and he shed tears very freely. It was a solemn day. I suppose it was his last visit to Shiloh, and perhaps to Tennessee.

His sermons were published in two volumes some years after his death, by Rev. James Smith, then of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. They are good sermons. I have now in my possession one of his manuscript sermons. It is closely and very fully written out, but from age is scarcely legible.

## REV. WILLIAM M'GEE.\*

1795—1817.

REV. WILLIAM MCGEE was born in Guilford county, North Carolina, in 1768 or 1769. His father was a merchant, and originally a member of the Church of England. His mother was a Presbyterian. After their marriage, however, the father joined the Presbyterian Church, and, with his wife, became a member of a congregation under the care of Rev. David Caldwell. They had five children, of whom William was the youngest. The father died when the son was quite young; but the mother, being an efficient and pious woman, took care of his morals and education. He was kept at school from the time he was ten years old until he was near twenty. He obtained his education, it is supposed, mainly, if not entirely, under the instruction of Dr. Caldwell, pastor of the congregation to which the family belonged.

From the pious instructions which he received, both at home and at school, his mind became early

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\* Funeral Sermon, by Rev. Robert Donnell; Foote's Sketches of North Carolina; Smith's and Davidson's Histories.

impressed with the necessity of religion. An older brother also in the meantime professed religion, and took pains to direct his mind to that subject. His impressions became very deep. His mind was thoroughly aroused. Says his brother:\* "His distress was unspeakable, under a conscious sense of the frowns of an angry God which hung over him. This may seem strange to some, when they are informed of the manner of his life prior to this time. I do not believe he ever drank a pint of ardent spirits, or swore a profane oath, in his life. He was the most moral youth I ever saw. It might truly be said of him, as Paul said of himself, 'As touching the law, he was blameless.'"

Notwithstanding his morality, his distress of mind continued for some time. His experience of the bitterness of sin seems to have been very deep.

It is not known at what time he professed religion; nor have we any means of knowing when he was received as a candidate for the ministry, or licensed. In the first public or written notice which we have of him, he appears to be a licentiate, under the care of the Orange Presbytery, in North Carolina. In a record of the proceedings of the Synod of the Carolinas, held at New Providence, in October, 1795, we have the following:

"It appearing to Synod that an ordained missionary was required in the Western Territory, and it being stated that Mr. William McGee, of Orange

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\* The late Rev. John McGee.

Presbytery, was willing to take an appointment for that purpose, ordered, that the Presbytery be directed, and they are hereby directed, to ordain Mr. McGee as soon as may be convenient, agreeably to the permission granted to this Synod, in such cases, by the General Assembly at their sessions of last May."

Either before or after his ordination, which is supposed to have taken place in the latter part of 1795, or early in 1796, in conformity with the preceding order of the Synod, Mr. McGee is said to have traveled and preached in Guilford, Orange, and the adjacent counties, with approbation, for some time. He then moved to Holston, and took charge of a congregation, which he served one or two years. He then came to Cumberland, and took charge of a congregation, which was afterward greatly distinguished—the congregation of Shiloh, in what is now Sumner county. The old meeting-house in which he preached stood about a mile from where Gallatin now stands. Here he labored two or three years. Some of the members of the congregation were dissatisfied with the earnest and searching manner in which he held forth, and urged the necessity of a spiritual birth, and wished him to change his mode of preaching. He gave them to understand that he could not do so with a good conscience. The dissatisfaction, however, became so great, that he asked an honorable dismissal as a condition of his leaving them and settling elsewhere. The condition was complied with, and he relin-

quished the charge of the congregation. It is proper, in justice to the memory of all concerned in this unpleasant transaction, to state that the leading persons who opposed Mr. McGee at this time were sympathizers with the Rev. Thomas Craighead, who afterward became distinguished for his opposition to the revival in this country, in 1800, and some of the following years. The congregation was at length divided. A part followed Mr. Craighead, and a part (and much the larger part) remained with Mr. Hodge, the successor of Mr. McGee.

After leaving Shiloh, Mr. McGee settled on Drake's Creek, in the lower end of Sumner county, and took charge of the Beech and Ridge congregations. Whilst he was ministering to these, the Great Western Revival extended into Tennessee. It is understood that he, with his brother, Rev. John McGee, of the Methodist Church, assisted Mr. McGready at the sacramental meeting at Red River Meeting-house, in June, 1800, where the revival first developed itself in full power. At this meeting there seems to have been an extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit of God. "On Monday"—of the meeting—"many had such clear and heart-piercing views of their sinfulness, and the danger to which they were exposed, that they fell prostrate on the floor, and their cries filled the house. In all quarters, those who had been the most outbreaking sinners were to be seen lying on the floor unable to help themselves, and anxiously inquiring what they

should do to be saved. In a word, persons of all classes, and of all ages, were to be seen in agonies, and heard crying for redemption in the blood of the Lamb. Twelve precious souls, during the occasion, professed to have passed from death unto life; and many left the place pungently convicted of their sin and danger."

Mr. McGee entered earnestly into the spirit of the revival, and is said to have been "particularly active and useful." In July of 1800 a camp-meeting—the first, it is said, which was ever held in Christendom—was held at Gaspar River Church. "A vast concourse of people flocked to the meeting, from the distance of twenty, thirty, fifty, and even a hundred miles. The ministers who occupied the pulpit on that occasion were James McGready, William McGee, and William Hodge." In September of 1800 Mr. McGready assisted Mr. McGee in holding a camp-meeting at the Ridge Meeting-house, and on the following week Messrs. McGready and McGee assisted Mr. Hodge in a similar meeting at Shiloh. Multitudes attended both meetings, and great effects were produced.

When the difficulties arose in the Transylvania Presbytery, in regard to the licensure and ordination of what were called the "young men," Mr. McGee took a decided stand in favor of the measure. It is not proposed to enter here into a discussion of those old and troublesome questions, but it is plain that the favorers of this were the revivalists, and its opposers the anti-revivalists, of the Presbyterian

Church at that time. This is so, or both history and tradition are at fault.

When the Commission of the Synod of Kentucky met in December of 1805, for the purpose of adjudicating upon the proceedings of the Cumberland Presbytery, and demanded a surrender of the "young men" for reëxamination, Mr. McGee, with the other older members of the Presbytery, resisted the demand. In consequence of this refusal, and the proclamation of common fame that he with others *held doctrines contrary to the Confession of Faith—that they, in effect, denied the doctrine of Election, and held that a certain sufficiency of grace was given to every man, which, if improved, would be increased until he arrived at true conversion*, they were cited to appear at the next annual meeting of the Synod to answer for contumacy, and to these doctrinal charges. "Messrs. Hodge, Rankin, and McGee handed in a written refusal to obey the citation, on the ground of its unconstitutionality."

After the meeting of this Commission of Kentucky Synod, we hear no more of Mr. McGee until the 4th day of October, 1809, when what is known in Cumberland Presbyterian History as the Council, met at Shiloh. Messrs. Finis Ewing, Samuel King, and William McGee were present—a number of ordained ministers sufficient for constituting a Presbytery. Mr. McGee, however, informed the Council that he was not satisfied of the propriety of constituting a Presbytery at that time. He was a cautious, and, without doubt, a very conscientious man.

Having been identified with the Presbyterian Church from principle, and from infancy, it is no wonder that he hesitated. His difficulties, however, are said to have been theological, rather than constitutional. He had not yet found solid ground between Calvinism and Arminianism.

Mr. Davidson, in his history of the Presbyterian Church in Kentucky, says that in April, 1810, the Presbytery of Transylvania "being made aware of Mr. McGee's distressed state of mind, addressed him an affectionate letter, inviting him to a friendly conference at their next session. Receiving no reply, they repeated the invitation in October; but all their well-meant endeavors were fruitless, for in the fall he joined the independent body." This independent body was the Cumberland Presbytery, which had been constituted in the preceding February. I suppose the "distressed state of mind" to which the historian refers arose from Mr. McGee's theological troubles, from which he seems to have been relieved without the expense and fatigue of a journey to Kentucky.

I recollect very well the accounts given in my early boyhood of his own narrative of his deliverance from these troubles. My recollection is, that the narrative was given at a camp-meeting at Sugg's Creek, in Wilson county, Tennessee. He was silent and thoughtful during the meeting, until the afternoon of Sabbath. After the administration of the sacrament, he called the congregation to the stand, gave them a history of his doubts, fears, and hesi-



tation, which had previously held him back from identifying himself with the new Cumberland Presbytery; his present entire satisfaction that theologically they occupied the true scriptural ground; and that their ecclesiastical course was right, being a necessity imposed upon them. He seemed to be a new man. Many had entertained fears for a while that his usefulness was at an end. The joy was great, and the general impression was overwhelming. He was a great favorite with the common people. The understanding is, that he had not preached from the time the Cumberland Presbytery was organized, in February, up to this time, a space of several months.

Some time after these occurrences, Mr. McGee moved, and settled near the Three Forks of Duck River. There he remained till his death. Mr. Smith, in his history of the Cumberland Presbyterians, says his death occurred in 1814. Rev. Robert Donnell delivered a sermon upon the occasion of his death, at the Beech Meeting-house, in the fall of 1817. My impression at the time was that his death was a recent occurrence. If so, I suppose it took place rather in 1817. The testimony is that he died in the faith and hope of the gospel. On his death-bed, he is said to have repeated almost constantly the following passage of Scripture: "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" This was no doubt an expression of the experience of much of his life.

The following sketch of his character is from the pen of the late Rev. Robert Donnell :

“He was a man of deep, penetrating, clear thought, and would not affirm what he did not know; and what he knew, he could say, or make known to others. He has often remarked to me, that he had heard others say that they knew, but could not communicate; but when he knew, he could always communicate. In conversation, he would often recur to the doctrine of Election and Reprobation, which many would say they understood, and would try to explain, but could not. His belief was, that they did not understand it; otherwise they could explain it. Mr. McGee was profound. He thought soberly, deliberated carefully, and executed promptly. He was extremely cautious until he knew what to do; but when questions were settled, the man of energy appeared.

“It would be vain and useless for me to attempt a eulogy, and therefore I shall conclude by saying, his head was clear, his heart was warm, his language plain; whilst his figures were bold and striking, his arguments were unanswerable, and his applications were as the application of Nathan to David—‘Thou art the man!’ His moral character was irreproachable, and his piety undisputed. His seals to his ministry were numerous, and some of them yet live to be his organs in the churches; and by them, ‘he being dead, yet speaketh.’”

Mr. McGee was, no doubt, an earnest and spiritual preacher. Some anecdotes were told of him which

were characteristic. He and another minister, who was not distinguished for spirituality, preached occasionally to the same congregation, which was without a regular pastor. A lady in the congregation became serious on the subject of religion, and applied to the other minister for counsel and guidance. He labored with her for some time, but her mind was not satisfied. She was in the dark, and could find no relief. When he seemed likely to fail entirely, he told her to go to Mr. McGee—that he was a better guide in difficult spiritual cases than himself. She applied to Mr. McGee, was indeed relieved, and became a sincere Christian. She was accustomed to narrate her experience in this respect with great interest.

Again, at a certain large meeting, an old lady had, as she seemed to think, a revelation that Mr. McGee was, under Divine appointment, to perform a particular service. She was, of course, very eager to find him, that she might communicate the revelation, and set him upon the appointed work. When she found him, and made known the object of her mission, his only reply was: “Well, sister, if the Lord did really intend that I should perform this service, why might he not as well have made the revelation to me as to you?” This reply, made in a quiet but dry manner, discouraged the visionary, and she left him.

Mr. Donnell speaks of the boldness of his figures. One of his illustrations is remembered yet. He was preaching at Brown’s Ferry, where we now have

New Hope Church. The river was, of course, near at hand. He was preaching upon the necessity of combining faith and works. He pointed to the river. "A boatman," says he, "undertakes to cross the river. He uses but one oar. His boat will turn around, but go down the stream. The result is inevitable. But he plies both oars steadily and earnestly. He conquers the current, and makes the desired landing." It will be readily seen that such an illustration, under such circumstances, would be striking.

I recollect something of Mr. McGee's personal appearance and manner of preaching. His complexion was fair, and his hair of a sandy color. He was rather inclined to be corpulent, and I think a stranger would have judged that there was an appearance of indolence in his habits. His eye was dark and piercing, but rather small. He had a good voice, strong and melodious, and well adapted to addressing a crowd. I know the understanding among the old people was, that he preached with great power the experimental and practical truths of the gospel. Thirty years ago, the Christian men and women of this country always mentioned his name with interest. They regarded his memory as a precious legacy to the Church.

Early in life Mr. McGee was married, in North Carolina, to Miss Anna King, sister of the late Rev. Samuel King. His wife survived him, and after his death moved to Missouri, where she died some years ago. They had several children. One son,

John McGee, became a candidate for the ministry, and was, perhaps, licensed. He settled in Western Tennessee, in the opening of that country, but soon left for Missouri. From some cause, he did not succeed in the ministry.

## REV. FINIS EWING.\*

1803—1841.

FINIS EWING was born on the 10th of July, 1773, in Bedford county, Virginia. His father and an uncle had settled there on their emigration from Ireland to this country, a number of years previous to the American Revolution. The two brothers seem to have ranked among the most respectable and prosperous farmers of the county. The older of the two, Robert Ewing, was for many years Clerk of Bedford County Court, and an elder in the Presbyterian Church. He married Miss Mary Baker. They had twelve children—nine sons and three daughters. The subject of this sketch was their twelfth and last child, and from his being the last, his parents gave him the fanciful name of Finis—the end.

Both the parents are said to have been pious, and to have trained their children in an exemplary manner. The subsequent lives of the children gave evidence of their correct training. All the sons who lived to maturity became prominent, engaged

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\* Life and Times of Ewing, by Dr. Cossitt. Smith's History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

deeply in the business of the world, but still, I believe, maintained Christian characters.

Of Mr. Ewing's early history but little is known. He seems to have been fond of books, and acquired what was considered in his day a respectable education. He studied Latin somewhat extensively, and Greek to some extent, together with some of the more common branches of science. Where he obtained his education, is a matter of some doubt—perhaps at Spring Hill Seminary, in Davidson county, Tennessee, under the instruction of Rev. Mr. Brooks. His parents had died in Virginia, and the family had moved and settled in Davidson county, near Spring Hill. Nashville, the county seat of Davidson county, and now the capital of the State, was then a poor village, hardly worth notice. The country was new, and had just passed through the horrors of an Indian war.

On the 15th of January, 1798, Mr. Ewing was united in matrimony with Peggy Davidson, daughter of Gen. William Davidson, formerly of North Carolina. Gen. Davidson was one of the heroes of the Revolution, and lost his life on the Catawba River, in endeavoring to oppose the advance of the British army under Lord Cornwallis. The Legislature of North Carolina consecrated his name, by giving it to one of the first counties organized in the Cumberland country. At the time of their marriage, Mr. Ewing, says his biographer, was in his twenty-first year, and his wife in her nineteenth.

Soon after their marriage, they both joined the

Presbyterian Church, in their neighborhood, under the pastoral ministrations of Rev. Thomas Craighhead. It seems, however, that at this time neither of them had any spiritual knowledge of religion.

After the birth of their first child, they removed from Davidson county, and settled in Logan county, Kentucky, about eight miles from Russellville, near the old Red River Meeting-house. Mr. McGready ministered to the congregation here. His ministrations were very different from those of Mr. Craighhead. Mr. McGready was a preacher of great earnestness and power. They heard the new preacher with interest, and the result was that both soon became uneasy in relation to their spiritual condition. After some time spent in inquiry, prayer, and deep anxiety of mind, one morning, while engaged in family prayer, Mr. Ewing received an evidence of his acceptance. He was filled with peace and joy in believing. This he considered his conversion, and from this point he regarded his spiritual life to have begun. In a few days his wife was relieved in a similar manner.

A new path of duty was now opened up, in the providence of God, before Mr. Ewing. A history of the difficult times upon which we enter at this point has been written more than once. It is not the purpose of the writer of the present sketch to dwell upon them. Let it suffice to be said, that from the extensive spread of the revival, and the enlargement and multiplication of congregations, a great want of ministerial labor soon began to be



felt. Another thing is to be said, which may as well be said plainly: A considerable portion of the Presbyterian ministry were not adapted in their spirit and habits to the wants of the people. This statement is not made for the purpose of stirring up an old strife, which was certainly bitter enough in its day; but for the purpose of presenting those facts with which history should always deal. The prevailing religious preference, in the West, was Presbyterian. Presbyterian agencies were mainly employed in the revival. The new congregations wished chiefly to become and to remain Presbyterians; but there were not Presbyterian ministers enough, who sympathized with the new condition of things, to supply them with the word and ordinances.

In this exigency, one of the oldest ministers in Kentucky, Rev. David Rice, advised the encouragement of a few young men of promise and unquestionable piety, to direct their attention to the work of the ministry, with such literary qualifications as they might have been able to acquire. Mr. Ewing was one of the young men so encouraged. In the fall of 1801 he, together with Alexander Anderson and Samuel King, presented himself before the Transylvania Presbytery, with a written discourse. The other two were similarly prepared. They were permitted to read their discourses privately to Mr. Rice. Mr. Anderson was received as a candidate for the ministry; Mr. Ewing and Mr. King were encouraged, but not received as candidates. In the

fall, however, of 1802, the three were licensed as probationers for the holy ministry.

At the sessions of the Presbytery in October, 1803, petitions were presented from the congregations of Spring Creek, McAdow, and Clarksville, for the ordination of Mr. Ewing. The Presbytery accordingly met on Friday before the third Sabbath in the following month, for his ordination, and he was duly set apart to the whole work of the ministry, Rev. William McGee preaching the ordination sermon, and Rev. James McGready presiding and giving the charge.

In December, 1805, the celebrated Commission of the Synod of Kentucky met at Gaspar Meeting-house, in Logan county, Kentucky, for the purpose of *conferring with the members of Cumberland Presbytery*, which had in the meantime been formed from a part of Transylvania Presbytery, *and adjudicating upon their Presbyterial proceedings*. The result of the conference and adjudication was, that all the "young men," as they were then called, from Mr. Ewing down to those who had been most recently licensed, were declared to have been irregularly ordained to the ministry, and were *solemnly prohibited from exhorting, preaching, and administering the ordinances, in consequence of any authority which they had received from the Cumberland Presbytery, until they submitted to the jurisdiction of the Commission, and underwent the requisite examination*. The Presbytery had declined the jurisdiction of the Commission, for the very best of reasons, that a Presbytery alone has the right to

“examine and license candidates for the holy ministry; to ordain, install, remove, and judge ministers.” The act of the Commission of Synod was an act of great ecclesiastical violence, and it is not a matter of surprise that it defeated its own end. The young men exhorted, preached, and administered the ordinances, as before. A council was formed for mutual conference and encouragement, but no Presbyterial business was transacted. During the four years of the continuance of the council, it is not too much to say, that Mr. Ewing was its guiding and controlling spirit.

On the 4th day of February, 1810, the Cumberland Presbytery, which had been dissolved in 1806, by the Synod of Kentucky, was reorganized as an independent Presbytery, by Revs. Messrs. Finis Ewing, Samuel King, and Samuel McAdow. This act was performed at the house of Mr. McAdow, in Dixon county, Tennessee. I have seen the house, and, I believe, I preached in it once in my early ministry. From this important transaction originated the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. There is no probability that the actors anticipated such results as have followed. Still, it is not the first time, in the providence of God, in which a little fire has kindled a great matter. Nor is it the first time in which men who have been traduced, oppressed, and outlawed, have been made the instruments of a great and good work.

The new Presbytery proceeded immediately to the ordination of Mr. Ephraim McLean, who had

accompanied Mr. Ewing to Tennessee. Of his feelings in connection with the ordination, Mr. Ewing gives the following account: "During the whole preceding transactions," says he, "I felt an indescribable awe, solemnity, and even timidity. My judgment was clear, that it was duty to constitute the Presbytery; but I feared that I had no immediate, special, and overpowering evidence, direct from God, that we were about to do right. But being appointed to preside in the ordination, it became my duty to pray. I distinctly recollect, that with one hand on the head of the preacher, and the other lifted to heaven, upon the utterance of the first sentence, the immediate presence and power of God were most sensibly felt by me, and I believe by all engaged in the transaction; and such were my feelings, that every doubt concerning the propriety of what we had done was entirely banished."

Mr. Ewing and his fellow-laborers had now commenced a stormy career. It was to be expected that they would have their share of misunderstanding on the part of the public, of misrepresentation and abuse. Nor was it unnatural that the Presbyterian Church especially should misunderstand them. It would be too much to say, that all who questioned their motives and criticised their course, were wholly selfish and dishonest. There was an earnest conflict; the opposition was persistent and violent; but these good men held on their way.

In October, 1813, Cumberland Synod was consti-

tuted. At the first sessions of the Synod a committee was appointed to prepare a Confession of Faith, Catechism, and Discipline. The committee consisted of Revs. Messrs. William McGee, Finis Ewing, Robert Donnell, and Thomas Calhoon. The committee divided itself into two sections: the one consisting of Messrs. McGee and Donnell; the other, of Messrs. Ewing and Calhoon. From some cause, but it is supposed, mainly from the self-distrust and diffidence of Mr. McGee, his section of the committee accomplished but little. Mr. Calhoon was a young man, and the principal labor of the other section devolved upon Mr. Ewing. I have myself heard Mr. Calhoon speak of the intense interest and prayerful spirit with which Mr. Ewing carried forward that work.

Some time previous to the war of 1812, Mr. Ewing was invited to join a military expedition to the north of the Ohio River, against the Indians, in the capacity of chaplain. He accepted the invitation, with the understanding that he was to be permitted to carry his rifle, and act in the twofold capacity of chaplain and common soldier. There was something belligerent in his composition.

In May of 1820 Mr. Ewing moved from Kentucky, and settled in Cooper county, Missouri. He soon organized a congregation in what was then the "far West," and called it New Lebanon. His congregation in Kentucky had been "Lebanon" congregation. While here, he established a Theological School, in which he gave gratuitous instruction, and

to a considerable extent, gratuitous support to a number of candidates for the ministry. This was the first movement toward a Theological School in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and, I suppose, west of the Mississippi River.

In the fall of 1825 Mr. Ewing attended the meeting of the Cumberland Synod, at Princeton, Kentucky. He opened the meeting with a sermon from the heroic language of the Apostle to the elders of the Ephesian Church: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." It was an exceedingly impressive sermon. The old courthouse was densely filled with ministers, and delegates to the Synod, and citizens. Certainly there were but few who did not feel that the preacher entered into the spirit of his text.

At this meeting of the Synod incipient measures were adopted for the establishment of Cumberland College. It was intended to be called Cumberland Presbyterian College, but the "Presbyterian" was stricken off by the delegation appointed by the Synod to the Legislature of Kentucky, for the purpose of procuring a charter. The change was made from considerations of policy, and was perhaps the first error which was committed in the management of that ill-fated institution.

At these sessions of the Synod another subject of deep interest to the Church was discussed for the

first time. This was the formation of a General Assembly. In this discussion Mr. Ewing took, of course, a prominent part. Two plans were before the Synod. One was for the division of the Synod, and the formation of a General Assembly after the manner of the Presbyterian Church. The other was for the formation of what was called a "delegated Synod"—a Synod not composed of all the ordained ministers in the Church, but of a few delegates from each Presbytery, after the manner of the present General Assembly. Had this plan been adopted, there would have been Church Sessions, Presbyteries, a delegated Synod or General Assembly. The present Synods would never have existed. Mr. Ewing took a decided stand in favor of a delegated Synod. He seemed to have matured the subject, and certainly understood it well. I went myself to the Synod in favor of the other plan, but his arguments seemed to me conclusive and overwhelming. I yielded to them, and have believed from that to the present day, that for the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at least, a delegated Synod would have been preferable to a General Assembly.

Mr. Ewing attended the General Assembly at Princeton, Kentucky, in 1830. He also opened that meeting with the customary sermon. It was a good sermon, but not equal to the one of 1825. He was five years older. This may have been one of the reasons. I believe he never attended another Assembly.

In 1836 Mr. Ewing took up his residence in Lexington, Missouri. He there organized a considerable congregation, to which he ministered till his death. The immediate occasion of his settlement in Lexington seems to have been, that he had been appointed by the United States' Government Register of the Land Office. No doubt some good men thought that he ought not to have encumbered himself with such an office. Still even *good men* ought to consider, that the very highest authority has said that "the laborer is worthy of his hire." The writer of this sketch is one of the last men to encourage the mingling of ministerial and secular pursuits. But Mr. Ewing was now an old man. He had given the labors of his life to the service of the Church, and his compensation had, I suppose, been meager. If the laborer does not receive his hire from the proper source, is he culpable if he accepts it from other sources which are neither unlawful nor dishonorable? The culpability in these cases is not in the earnest and faithful minister, but in the churches.

It is said that Mr. Ewing kept up his habits of study, and improved intellectually while he lived. He died July 4, 1841, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. Says his biographer: "His death was calm and peaceful. His hopes were in heaven. He left the world trusting in the merits of that Saviour whom he loved, and whom he had served."

Mr. Ewing had thirteen children—seven sons and six daughters. Of his sons who lived to maturity,



the most, if not all, have become prominent men. His eldest son, now deceased, was for some time a United States' Senator from Illinois. As far as the writer knows, his children who still live are members and supporters of that Church which their father had so prominent and active an agency in establishing and rearing up to its present respectability and usefulness.

He left a handsome bequest to the Lexington Presbytery, of which he was a member at the time of his death, and also a bequest of three hundred dollars to Cumberland College. This latter bequest his biographer has omitted to mention. It was made, however, and duly paid over to the Cumberland College Association.

At some period in Mr. Ewing's life, but the precise period is not known, his mind became exercised on the subject of slavery. In 1835 he published a sermon in the Cumberland Presbyterian Pulpit, in which he took strong ground against at least some of the evils of slavery. The public mind was not so easily inflamed on the subject at that time as it has been since, and he expressed himself, to what has since been denominated a slave-holding Church, with great freedom. In the progress of the sermon he gives the following as his own experience and purposes in relation to his slaves :

“Lest some of my readers,” says he, “should say, ‘Physician, heal thyself,’ I think it proper to state in this place, that after a *long, painful, and prayerful* investigation of the subject, I have determined

not to *hold*, nor to *give*, nor to *sell*, nor to *buy* any slave for life, mainly from the influence of that passage of God's word which says, 'Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal.' "

The result of his experience and resolution was, that at his death all his servants were emancipated.

In 1814 Mr. Ewing published a Sermon on National Affairs. This sermon was delivered soon after the fall of Bonaparte, and published by request.

In 1827 he published a "Series of Lectures on the most important subjects in Divinity." This work reached a second or third edition, enlarged. It was one of the fruits of his Theological School.

In addition to these, he furnished sermons from time to time for the Cumberland Presbyterian Pulpit, published years ago in Nashville—A Sermon on Faith, published in 1833; A Sermon on the Atonement, published in 1834; A Sermon on the Duty of the Church, published in 1835; A Sermon on Christian Union, published in 1835; A Sermon on the Reason why the Prayers of the Church are not Answered, published in 1835.

Also, a short time after the reorganization of the Cumberland Presbytery, in 1810, a Pastoral Letter was addressed by the West Tennessee Presbytery to the Churches under its care, warning them against the ministers of the Cumberland Presbytery. To this letter an anonymous reply was published. It was supposed to have been written by Mr. Ewing. The reply was a strong, and very

severe production. The severity was provoked, and at least partially justified, by the character of the Pastoral Letter.

A few remarks upon some of the personal characteristics of Mr. Ewing, will close this brief sketch. And

First. He was unquestionably a man of a high order of talents. The immense work which he performed, and the great personal influence which he exercised over the men of his time, afford ample proof of this. Although he wrote and published to some extent, as we have seen, yet his greatest power was exhibited in the pulpit, and in the judicatures of the Church. As a preacher he was not eloquent, in the popular acceptance of the term; but he was argumentative, impressive, forcible, and when fully aroused, overwhelming. He never resorted to rhetorical arts, or to empty declamation. He sought the judgment and the heart of those whom he addressed. It was sometimes said that he was fond of politics. He would have distinguished himself as a politician, had he devoted himself to those pursuits.

Secondly. Boldness was a prominent characteristic. In the pursuit of truth, and in search for the path of duty, he "conferred not with flesh and blood." He may not always have reached both truth and duty; but if he did not, his failure arose from no shrinking produced by fear. His relation to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church would of course render him prominent in defending both its

doctrines and measures. When called out in this way, he shrank from no responsibility. Whilst, however, all this is true, he was no blustering, intermeddling disorganizer. He never threw down the gauntlet; but when it was thrown down, and he thought it necessary, he took it up. He was a man of war, but his wars were always defensive, not offensive. I believe this statement is true of him universally, in every controversy of his life.

Thirdly. Mr. Ewing was a good man, a Christian. If I had no other evidence of this but his private letters to his friends and brethren, published by his biographer, these would satisfy me on this subject. These letters were written under the impulse of circumstances, with no expectation of their being seen by other eyes than the eyes of those to whom they were addressed. They express the feelings of a man who loved and feared God, and whose soul was deeply interested for the salvation of his fellow-men. But in addition to these, we have the testimony of a long and consecrated life. Imperfections there may have been in that life; otherwise, it would have been a superhuman life. Still, making every allowance for human frailty, we look upon it as a life consecrated to God and the great interests of humanity. These are the fruits of a spiritual tree.

Fourthly. His patriotism is not to be overlooked in an estimate of his character. He was a descendant of Virginia, one of the first, if not the very first, of the Colonies in which the fires of the Revo-

lution were kindled. The labors, the struggles, and the sacrifices of that Revolution were fresh events in the memory of the generation in which he passed his childhood and youth. That they should have made a deep impression upon his mind, is not surprising. He loved America and her institutions. He was an uncompromising enemy of tyrants and tyranny. His first published sermon was upon the inestimable value of civil and religious freedom. His intimate acquaintances knew well how deeply the sentiments of the sermon had taken hold upon his mind. He never lost his interest in the subject.

Fifthly. It may be remarked in conclusion, that the temperament, habits, and general character of Mr. Ewing fitted him for the position which, in the providence of God, he was called to occupy. He was constituted for a leader, and the men with whom he was associated needed a leader. He occupied his space, and occupied it well. He never faltered in the management of the high trust providentially committed to him. His published sermons, up to his old age, show clearly enough that the purity and prosperity of the Church, especially of the Cumberland Presbyterian branch of the Church, together with the salvation of the world, were the great objects of his thoughts, labors, and prayers.

## REV. SAMUEL KING.\*

1804—1842.

ROBERT KING, the father of Rev. Samuel King, was an early settler in North Carolina, and served his country for some time as a captain of volunteers in the war of the revolution. In this position he acquitted himself with honor to himself and the country. He and his family were members of the Presbyterian Church, and highly respected in the community in which they lived.

Samuel King was born in Iredell county, North Carolina, on the 19th of April, 1775. About the year 1791 Mr. King moved to what was then called the "Cumberland Country," and settled in what is now Sumner county, Tennessee. The old gentleman became an elder, and his family members of Shiloh congregation. This congregation was successively for a number of years under the pastoral care of Rev. William McGee and Rev. William Hodge. Mr. McGee was the son-in-law of old Mr. King. An Indian war was then raging in Tennessee. It is said that Samuel King took an active part

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\*Ladies' Pearl, April, 1859: article by Rev. J. B. Logan. Smith's History.

in repelling the murderous invasions of the Indians. In the year 1795 Mr. King was married to Miss Anna Dixon, of Sumner county. Rev. William Hodge performed the marriage ceremony. Miss Dixon's father had been killed by the Indians. The writer has passed the spot where this murder took place a hundred times. Shortly after his marriage, Mr. King moved to Wilson county, and settled near the Big Spring.

At the time of his marriage, he was a regular member of Shiloh congregation; and feeling it his duty, now that he had become the head of a family, to erect the family altar, and hold family prayers, he did so. He had not, however, kept up the practice of family prayer long, before he became convinced that his religious hope was without foundation. Of course from this time forward the wants of his own soul formed a prominent part of his petitions when bowed at the family altar.

On one of these occasions, while engaged in family worship, he obtained such a discovery, and felt so deeply overwhelmed with a sense of his lost condition, that he ceased praying for others, and for all things else than himself, and continued on his knees to pour out his soul to God for mercy and pardon, until God heard his prayer, and sent peace to his mind. His joy, and his views of the atonement of Christ, and of the Divine goodness were such, that his wife, who at that time had not professed religion, said, "She thought he never would get done saying glory to God."

He soon began to feel great anxiety for his unconverted friends and neighbors, and such was his burden of heart on this subject, that at prayer-meetings, and other social meetings, he was strongly urged by his feelings to get up and talk to the people. When he first commenced these exercises, such were the unction and power attending his words, that many were cut to the heart, fell down, and cried for mercy on the spot.

When Rev. David Rice, the oldest Presbyterian minister in Kentucky, seeing the destitute condition of the congregations in Tennessee, recommended that pious and promising young men should be sought out, and encouraged to exercise their gifts publicly, and prepare themselves for the work of the ministry, Mr. King was one of the first selected. It was not contemplated that these men should go through the ordinary process of education required in the Presbyterian Church, preparatory to licensure and ordination. The wants of the Church and the circumstances of the country forbade it. Their cases were to be regarded as exceptions to the general rule. He seems, however, to have turned his attention to the work with great hesitation and reluctance. He was uneducated, in the technical sense of the term, had a family, and was poor. The way before him seemed very dark. He felt like the call was from God, but still did not know how he could fulfill its requisitions. He had a brother, a well-educated and most estimable man. There was an old tradition amongst his friends,



that in his struggles and misgivings in those days, he sometimes prayed that God would call his brother to the work of the ministry, and excuse him. Still, the great Head of the Church made his own choice, and the suppliant for indulgence was not excused.

The revival ministers, as they were called, encouraged three young men, Alexander Anderson, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King, to prepare written discourses, and to present themselves before the Transylvania Presbytery, at its sessions, in October, 1801. At this Presbytery Mr. Anderson was received as a candidate by a majority of one vote; the others, by a majority of one vote, were rejected as candidates, but continued as catechists. In the fall of 1802 they were all licensed as probationers for the holy ministry.

At the sessions of the Synod of Kentucky, in 1802, Transylvania Presbytery was divided, and Cumberland Presbytery was formed, including the Green River and Cumberland countries. By this Presbytery Mr. King was set apart to the whole work of the ministry in June, 1804.

He was of course one of the ministers who were called before the Commission of the Synod of Kentucky, in December of 1805, and proscribed by that body. It is known that the proscribed ministers formed themselves into a Council, which met from time to time, with a view to adopting measures for the promotion of the interests of religion within the bounds of their operations, and keeping the congregations together. These congregations had

grown up out of the great revival which had overspread the country. The Council held their last meeting at Shiloh, on the 4th day of October, 1809. Their last hope of a reconciliation with the Church of their fathers had been extinguished, except upon such conditions as seemed to be out of the question, and the subject of organizing an independent Presbytery was agitated. It had been seriously considered before. Two of the members of the Council, however, withdrew; a third hesitated, and Messrs. Ewing and King only were left. Three ministers were considered necessary to the constitution of a Presbytery. They had not the requisite number, and action was postponed. In February of 1810, Messrs. Ewing and King visited Mr. McAdow. They agreed to organize, or rather to reorganize, the old Cumberland Presbytery, which had been dissolved by the Synod of Kentucky. On the 4th day of February, 1810, this important step was taken. It has made the names of Ewing, King, and McAdow, household words in every Cumberland Presbyterian family.

About the year 1812 Mr. King moved from Wilson county, and settled near the Three Forks of Duck River. He remained here until the fall of 1824 or '25, when he moved to Missouri and settled in Clay county. The whole country was new; it had been but recently purchased from the Indians, and the settlements were sparse. In the fall of 1833 he moved again, and settled on the south side of the Missouri River, in Johnson county. Here

he resided till his death. This occurred in the fall of 1842. A few weeks before his death, he was attacked with the common fever of the country, while attending a camp-meeting some distance from home. We have the following account of his last sermon, and the attack of fever which followed it. Says the writer:

“I heard him preach his last sermon, and shall never forget it. I remember how he looked as well as if the things had occurred but a week ago. The sermon was preached at Independence Camp-ground, Jackson county, Missouri, about four miles south of the city of Independence.

“The camp-meeting was in progress. Saturday morning, between ten and eleven o'clock, Father King walked from the camp to the stand, ascended the steps, hymn-book and Bible in hand, and after sitting in a thoughtful, and apparently prayerful mood, a few moments, the congregation being collected and seated, the venerable preacher arose slowly, and placing the Bible upon the hand-board, he opened his hymn-book, and read in that solemn and affecting manner, which thousands may remember, but none can imitate, the beautiful hymn beginning:

‘O Lord, revive thy work  
In Zion’s gloomy hour.’

“After singing came the prayer, and O, how fervent! What earnestness! What awfully solemn pleading with Jehovah for a visitation of his Spirit, a revival of his work! The prayer being ended, the text was announced: ‘O Lord, revive thy work in the

midst of the years ; in the midst of the years make known ; in wrath remember mercy.' The leading points in the sermon were—

“1. The necessity of a revival.

“2. The means by which a revival could be obtained.

“3. An exhortation to the Church, urging the members to an immediate use of those means, and encouraging them to expect a gracious revival on that occasion.

“The sermon was closed by repeating, most devoutly, the prayer of the text. Such was Father King's last sermon. Its effect upon the congregation was manifested by profound attention on the part of the congregation, and the silent tear, and occasional hearty amen of the more deeply pious members of the Church. I did not know that he was unwell before preaching, but remember that he complained soon after the sermon was closed. He went to the ~~tent~~, ~~fever~~ ~~arose~~; the Sabbath came, and many were the inquiries for Father King, but he was unable to leave his bed. The meeting progressed, but the voice of the venerable man of God was heard no more from that sacred stand. At the close of the meeting, he was conveyed to his home in Johnson county, a distance of fifty-five or sixty miles, and in the course of two or three weeks, he laid aside his mantle on earth for a bright robe in heaven.”\*

It seems that his illness at first was not violent or

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\* Ladies' Pearl, May, 1859.

threatening. On the morning of the day on which he died, he arose as usual, and although feeble, was able to walk about the house. Shortly after he arose, however, he was seized with violent pains, and before noon was a corpse. He was perfectly rational to the last, and his dying words were, "Peace, peace, peace."

The fathers of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church were all laborers, but Mr. King was one of the most laborious among them. As a specimen of his labors, the following may be mentioned. In May, 1834, the General Assembly appointed him, with Messrs. McAdow and Ewing, to visit the churches throughout all the length and breadth of the West and South. From the age and infirmities of these men, the appointment might have been considered rather nominal than otherwise. With Mr. King, however, it was not so. Mr. McAdow was really too infirm, and Mr. Ewing could not leave home. Consequently the whole labor of the appointment, if fulfilled, fell upon Mr. King. It has been said that as far as he was concerned, the appointment was not nominal. His family were then in Missouri. After making suitable arrangements for leaving them as comfortable as possible in that new country, when the appointed time arrived for his departure, he gathered his family around him and commended them to the care of God in solemn prayer, and then set out on his journey in his sixtieth year, on horseback, accompanied by his eldest son, Rev. Robert D. King.

In this tour he traveled through the States of Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky, and perhaps touched upon some of the more Northern or Eastern States. He was absent from his home and family twenty months. His son, Judge King, says in reference to the occurrence, "God, in his mercy, vouchsafed to keep us all free from harm, and, after the lapse of twenty months, to bring us together again in the flesh." Says my authority: "No accident had befallen his family. No evil had come nigh their dwelling. The guardian angel had spread his broad wings over them, and the everlasting arms were underneath them." In the course of this tour, as I have mentioned, Mr. King met the General Assembly, which held its sessions in 1835, at Princeton, Kentucky. He was elected, I believe, unanimously, the Moderator of the Assembly, after having preached the opening sermon, by the request of Dr. Cossitt, Moderator of the Assembly of 1834.

Mr. King is said to have been the first minister of the gospel who ever preached to the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians, in their present locality. An incident of great interest is related, which is said to have occurred while he was preaching for the first time to the Choctaws. His son, Judge King, relates it. "While he was addressing a large crowd of the Indians about salvation through Jesus Christ, and communicating to them by means of an interpreter, the interpreter became so convinced

of sin, and so overwhelmed by a sense of his guilt in the sight of God, and of his dangerous condition, that he could proceed no farther, but fell upon his knees, and began to cry aloud for mercy. The preacher paused for a moment. He knew not how to proceed, or what to do. Although he could not speak one word to them in their own tongue, yet he saw that many of them were in tears, and from their sobs and cries, he knew they were praying for mercy. At length the thought occurred to his mind, that although they could not understand him, nor he them, yet God could hear and understand both; and as the most of his congregation seemed engaged in prayer, he would close the sermon, and kneel down and for a few moments join his Red brethren in prayer. After a short season, and before he arose from his knees, God poured light and comfort into the heart of the interpreter, and he and many others were made happy in the love of Christ."

The labors of Mr. King laid the foundation for the missions which were afterward established among the Choctaws. The mother of Rev. Israel Fulsom, a native minister, was one of the first converts. She is said to have been the first female Choctaw converted to Christianity, and the first to adopt the costume and usages of the whites. At the commencement of the late unhappy war, there were nearly a thousand members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church among the Choctaws. As one fruit of all this, we have now eleven young

Choctaw students in Cumberland University, and seven or eight Choctaw young ladies in Cumberland Female College.

Mr. King spent most of his ministerial life in traveling, and in general labors among the churches. He considered that he could be more useful in that way than in a settled pastorate. There were many circumstances connected with the condition of the Church to encourage such a mode of life, and make it useful. On his part, it was no doubt a wise selection. He was faithful in his attendance upon the judicatures of the Church. Seldom was he absent from the point to which duty called. He belonged to a generation of earnest and faithful men.

I have some personal recollections of Mr. King, which are very interesting to myself. The first time that I recollect to have heard him preach was at Fall Creek, at a camp-meeting, in May, 1819. Fall Creek is in the lower end of Wilson county, Tennessee. The meeting was, on many accounts which need not be mentioned here, an unusually interesting one. He may have preached on Saturday, but if he did, I have no recollection of the sermon. But he preached on Sunday, from John xvii. 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." The sermon was a strong argument, and a powerful appeal for the truth of the Christian revelation. I had just become a candidate for the ministry, and the discussion was new to me. The



sermon was well adapted to the great crowd who were in attendance, and the impression made was certainly very deep. I heard him preach the same sermon in September following at the Big Spring. It was still a good and great sermon, but was not delivered with so much unction and power as before.

I heard him again, I think, in the fall of 1821. It was at a meeting held at John McLin's, in Sumner county. He reached there on Sunday morning, on his way to Synod. The text was Romans i. 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel," including the whole verse. A temporary pulpit and seats had been prepared in the yard. The congregation was large. It was the neighborhood in which Mr. King had been chiefly raised. He was surrounded by a few of his old friends and relatives, and many of their children. The appearance and manner of the preacher were the very expression of solemnity. The sermon was powerful. His voice seemed to shake the assembly. When he was about closing, he turned to those who were sitting in the pulpit behind him, and asked *if they had any mourners there*. There had been no movement of that kind, however, at the meeting, and the call was omitted.

Mr. King was a member of the first Synod that I ever attended. It was held at the Beech Meeting-house, in Sumner county. I think he did not preach on the occasion. He attended the Synod also of 1825, held at Princeton, Kentucky. This

meeting of the Synod is memorable on two accounts. The subject of the division of the Synod, and the organization of a General Assembly, was first discussed there; and the resolution was passed establishing Cumberland College. Upon the establishment of the College, although it was an experiment, there was general unanimity. In regard to the establishment of a General Assembly, as it now exists in the Church, there was a decided difference of opinion. Mr. King was in favor of a General Assembly. Mr. Ewing was present, and was very earnest and very able in his opposition. He favored what was then called a "delegated Synod." The discussion was warm and earnest. Rev. William Barnett was Moderator. Somehow in the heat of that or some other discussion, he and Mr. King came into collision. They were both lion-like men. Neither had ever learned to yield with a good grace. Short words ensued. The occurrence threw a temporary cloud over the meeting. John Barnett wept like a child. The cloud passed off, however, and harmony of feeling was restored. The favorers of a General Assembly were more numerous, and continued to be so until the discussion ended in the organization of this judicature of the Church.

I have mentioned that Mr. King was Moderator of the General Assembly of 1835. He governed the Assembly with energy. Some of the members thought he was arbitrary. He governed, however, in his own way. He had a strong will, and was accustomed to prompt and quiet obedience. The

old men were generally vigorous governors. It is no disparagement to them to say that they ruled with a rod of iron. Such an administration was necessary to their times, and God in his providence adapted them to their times. At the close of the Assembly, he visited me at my own home. There he showed himself the kind and gentle father.

Mr. King was a religious man at home. He had a time set apart for private devotion. A portion of each day was spent in this exercise. His son says, "From my earliest recollection, it was his constant custom to read a portion of Scripture, without note or comment, sing a hymn, in which his family joined, and then to lead them in family prayer. Morning and evening he did so, omitting no part of the service, and having every member of the family present. No ordinary circumstance was allowed to interfere with this usage."

He was a poor man, raised a large family, and spent the most of his ministerial life in countries which were new. Of course, from the latter circumstance, it would be supposed that he received but little remuneration for his ministerial labor. Still he faltered not, and whilst he believed and taught that it was the duty of the Church to support the gospel, his own motto was, "To preach, pay or no pay." This was the theory and the practice, too, of other fathers as well as him.

He was the father of ten children—five sons and five daughters. His oldest daughter professed reli-

gion at seven years of age, and died in her thirteenth year, in the triumphs of faith. According to the account of her brother, who witnessed the scene, "She rejoiced and praised God aloud, until articulation was hushed in death." Two of his other daughters lived to maturity, and one of them became the wife of Rev. Daniel Patten, of Missouri. Of the history of the two others, the writer has no knowledge. Three of the sons entered the ministry, and are now active and laborious in their profession. They are laboring in Texas. One of them, and the one, too, from whom many of the facts contained in this sketch have been derived, fell a victim to the guerrillas of the cruel war through which we have just passed.

In person, Mr. King was tall and strongly built. His aspect was serious, approaching to severity. His voice was strong, and well adapted to preaching in the open air, to which men of his day were much accustomed. Before I knew him, he had lost two of his front teeth. This of course increased the labor of preaching. It did not, however, injure his articulation. This was sufficiently clear and distinct. His person and manner inspired respect; he would have been observed in any crowd as a man who was concerned with serious things. He belonged to a past age. In the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at least, it was an age of giants, in their way.

A sermon was delivered at the General Assembly succeeding his death, as a memorial of Mr. King,

by Rev. Robert Donnell. The Assembly met that year at Owensboro, Kentucky. The sermon was delivered on Sabbath to a crowded audience. Many who still live will recollect the occurrence.

## REV. DAVID FOSTER.

1810—1833.

DAVID FOSTER was born on the 4th of May, 1780, in Rowan county, North Carolina. His parents were William and Nancy Foster. They were poor, but respectable, and distinguished for their earnest piety. His father and mother were careful to instruct him in the principles and precepts of our holy religion. Their labor seems not to have been in vain, for when a boy, he was remarkable for his morality and seriousness of deportment, and for his respect to the worship of God. His deportment was so exemplary, that when quite young, he was admitted to the communion of the Presbyterian Church, in a congregation under the pastoral care of Dr. McCorele.

In the fall of 1797, William Foster removed to Tennessee, and settled in Sumner county, within the bounds of Shiloh congregation. This congregation was then under the pastoral care of Rev. William McGee. In the following year the parents and the son presented their certificates of Church-membership to Mr. McGee, and applied for membership in his congregation. They were all

examined on the subject of experimental religion, and the parents were received, but David was discouraged, and admonished to examine the ground of his hopes more carefully. This circumstance made a deep impression upon his mind, and he immediately commenced a course of prayer and self-examination. The result was, a conviction that he was destitute of religion. He, however, became a penitent, and soon found the pearl of great price. He is said to have experienced the great change at home, in that still and quiet way which is pleasing to many, and which is perhaps the most promising of permanent results.

When the revival of 1800 commenced, under the ministrations of Mr. McGready and others, he immediately fell in with it, and became one of its most active promoters. From his zeal, and promise otherwise, he was encouraged to direct his attention to the work of the ministry, and was accordingly licensed to preach the gospel by the original Cumberland Presbytery, on the 2d of October, 1805, at Old Red River Meeting-house. For some time previous to his licensure, he had been authorized to travel in the character of an exhorter, for the purpose of supplying, as well as possible, some of the scattered and destitute congregations.

Mr. Foster was of course one of the "young men" who were called before the Commission of the Synod of Kentucky, in December of 1805. He shared with the others the proscription by that body. He still, however, continued his probationary labor,

under the direction of the Council, the organization of which followed the dissolution of the Cumberland Presbytery. Some of his most useful and effective services were rendered during those years of darkness and trouble.

In the summer of 1806 he was married to Miss Ann Beard, of Sumner county. His wife outlived him, and during her whole married life was "a help-meet" to him in the highest sense in which a wife could be such to a Christian minister. She was deeply and devotedly pious; and although a woman of modest and retiring habits, it was sometimes said that under the influence of high religious excitement she surpassed her husband in exhortation. In the quietude of home, it would be difficult to conceive of a higher degree of diligence, self-denial, and devotion to the interests of a family, than an observer would have found in her.

After Mr. Foster's marriage, he procured a home for his family near his father's, in Sumner county, but spent the most of his time in traveling and preaching, as before. Indeed, this was the only means of supplying the destitute portions of the Church, which would otherwise have been entirely without the means of grace.

In the fall of 1808 he moved to Wilson county, and settled in Sugg's Creek congregation. On the 27th of July, 1810, he was set apart to the whole work of the ministry at Sugg's Creek Meeting-house, and installed the regular pastor of that congregation. He also preached regularly during his



whole pastorate in his regular congregation, to Stoner's Creek congregation, and to Fall Creek congregation, until 1824. A large proportion, however, of every summer and fall season, was appropriated to attending camp-meetings in different, and especially remote, parts of the Presbytery to which he belonged. This was the custom of pastors in those days. At the fall session of the Nashville Presbytery, in 1824, he was released from his connection with the Fall Creek congregation, the Presbytery having been divided, and this congregation having fallen within the bounds of the new Presbytery. As specimens of the labors performed by Mr. Foster in remote parts of his Presbytery, I quote the following:

Minutes of the Fall Sessions of the Nashville Presbytery, 1814. — "Ordered that Revs. David Foster, Robert Guthrie, Benjamin Lockhart, and Samuel McSpadden, attend the sacramental meetings appointed in White and Warren counties; also the meeting in Sequatchie Valley." These meetings were from fifty to a hundred miles from the homes of Messrs. Foster and Guthrie, and they both had large and dependent families.

Minutes of the Spring Sessions of the Nashville Presbytery, 1815.—"The Presbytery revived the itinerant plan of preaching, and directed David Foster to ride and preach in the eastern bounds of the Presbytery, embracing what was formerly called the Upper Circuit, and to extend his labors into East Tennessee."

Minutes of the Spring Sessions of the Nashville Presbytery, 1819.—“The Board of Female Missions petitioned the Presbytery for a Missionary for two months, or more: the petition was granted, and Mr. David Foster was appointed.”

Minutes of the Spring Sessions of the Nashville Presbytery, 1820.—“Ordered that David Foster ride twice round the Tennessee Circuit, before our next Presbytery.” A large portion of this circuit was a hundred miles from Mr. Foster’s home. These are presented as specimens of what was expected of him and such men in their day. And those of us who have any recollection of the usages of those days, will readily suppose that all such orders were fulfilled, as no indulgence was tolerated, except from considerations strictly providential.

The subject of slavery was not agitated in Mr. Foster’s days. At least, if there was agitation, it was not such as it has been since; but both he and his wife were antislavery in their feelings. From this, and perhaps other considerations, in the fall of 1827 he moved to Illinois, and made a temporary settlement in Sangamon county. In 1829 he made what he considered a permanent settlement, in Macon county. Here he organized two or three congregations, which he ultimately left in a promising condition.

I have mentioned Mr. Foster’s antislavery feelings. He was a moderate and good man, and would never have been a violent proscriptionist. He loved the Church, and loved all its good men, whatever

their relations to property and to general society might be. In illustration of his views on the subject of slavery, I mention the following incident in his history. Some time after he settled in Wilson county, from considerations which I do not now recollect, he was induced to buy a negro man. The negro had but one arm, but would otherwise have been considered valuable. The purchase was made, however, with the distinct understanding, that when the negro's services should have been considered a fair equivalent to the purchase-money, he was to have his freedom. The pledge of the buyer was redeemed, and at the expiration of four or five years the negro was made free. The laws of Tennessee at that time gave the privilege to the master of emancipating his slaves. The arrangement, however, proved unfortunate for the negro. He was inefficient when left to himself; his family were worthless. He fell into difficulties, and died in the midst of them. I do not mention this circumstance as an illustration of what may be expected in the case of colored men thrown upon their own resources, but simply as a historical fact connected with the life of a good man. Mr. Foster intended to give to his *servant what was just and equal*.

A year or two after Mr. Foster's last settlement in Macon county, he entered into the service of the American Tract Society. It seems that one of his objects in undertaking this agency was to enable him to preach more extensively. The country was new—his congregations had been but recently

organized. He derived from that source, therefore, a very slender support. He expected the customary compensation from the Tract Society, and, in addition to the circulation of books, to be able in some degree to supply the destitutions of the country with the means of grace. On the 7th of May, 1833, he visited St. Louis, to obtain an additional supply of books for his agency. The next day, on his return homeward, he was attacked with the cholera, and on the 9th of May, 1833, about seventeen miles north-east of Edwardsville, closed his mortal career. The following extract of a letter from a respected brother in the ministry to the afflicted and bereaved family, contains some particulars respecting his death :

“My dear Friend:—It becomes my painful duty to communicate to you heavy tidings. I saw your father last Wednesday, on his return from St. Louis. He was apparently in good health. He proceeded about five miles that afternoon toward home. Thursday morning he traveled about twelve miles, was unwell, but still proceeded about two miles farther, when he stopped. His complaint soon discovered itself to be malignant cholera. There was no physician nearer than ten or twelve miles. A man was dispatched to obtain medical aid, and in the meantime camphor, opium, calomel, and warm bathing were resorted to by those about him, but all to no purpose. The cramp came on very soon in his feet, hands, legs, and body. He suffered severely about six hours, when death came to

relieve him from pain, and remove his soul to the bosom of that God and Saviour in whom he believed, whom he loved and preached to a fallen world. He expressed a wish to see me. A man came to let me know. He came in the night. I arrived at the place at seven o'clock on Friday morning. I found the lifeless clay, but the lovely spirit had taken its flight from our sinful world. He died about nine o'clock on Thursday evening.

“Brother Foster spoke but little, but expressed himself resigned to the Divine will. His confidence in God, and his hope of future felicity, were firm and unwavering. His wish was to have been at home; but as the Lord had ordained otherwise, he was submissive. He retained his senses perfectly to the last, and in the closing scene was entirely calm, and for some time appeared to be sinking into a quiet sleep. Not a feature was discomposed.”

Mr. Foster was the friend and counselor, and, in many respects, the guide of my early ministry. My recollections of him and his sainted wife are very tender and very sacred. Still I do not suppose that my estimate of his character is extravagant. I intend that my record shall be faithful. As a preacher, though not *the* leading man, he was one of the leading men of his time in the portion of the Church in which he labored. His preaching was unequal. Sometimes his manner was smooth, unembarrassed, entirely free; at other times, he *labored* in the expression of his thoughts, his manner was cramped, and he seemed dull. When

in his better moods, he was exceedingly tender and impressive, and occasionally overwhelming. In the summer of 1817 he preached at the former residence of his father-in-law, my own grandfather. There was no house of worship in the neighborhood then, and private houses were used for the purpose. The congregation was large, and the preaching was powerful. A favorite young lady of the neighborhood was deeply convicted. It was a rare occurrence. In the course of a few months this young lady, with some of her associates, professed religion at a camp-meeting a few miles distant. It was the commencement of a revival in the vicinity. A house of worship was soon built; camp-meetings were introduced; a Church was organized, which still exists. It is not a large, but a model congregation.

He once preached at Smyrna, in Rutherford county, upon the occasion of a Presbyterian camp-meeting. His text was, "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." The sermon made an unusual impression. He sometimes spoke of it afterward himself. The old people remembered it a long time. It was a terrible appeal to the judgments and hearts of unconverted men.

In one of his camp-meeting excursions, he attended a meeting in Overton county. Old Mr. McDonald, father of the Rev. Philip McDonald, one of the brightest lights of the early Cumberland Presbyterian Church, lived in the neighborhood. The son had finished his brilliant career, but the father had

lived to be an old sinner. Mr. Foster preached on a favorite text: "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." At the close of the sermon the old man was among the mourners. In giving an account of his experience afterward, he described his feelings as being awful. "But," said he, using his Scotch-Irish brogue, "I thought I would cast mysel' on that stone." The old man obtained a good hope.

I once heard him at Wells' Creek, at a camp-meeting, upon the benevolence of God. At that time I was unacquainted with Dr. Paley's argument on that subject. Mr. Foster's argument was constructed very much after the manner of Paley's. The whole discussion was new to me, and seemed at the time the most interesting one which I had ever heard.

Mr. Foster's pastorate at Sugg's Creek was his principal work. He had a most interesting and devoted congregation. The Board of Elders consisted of Hugh Telford, James Law, John Roach, and John Currey. They were a noble band. I hardly expect ever to see another such generation of men. Whilst they did not neglect their worldly interests, religion was with them the absorbing interest. They confided in their preacher, and cooperated with him. On one occasion, at the commencement of their camp-meeting, on Friday, Mr. Foster preached rather a searching sermon upon the address of Eliphaz to Job: "Are the consolations

of God small with thee? Is there any secret thing with thee?" After the sermon, some of the older brethren were discussing its merits. One or two novel, but rather striking points, had been presented. Brother Roach was called on for his opinion in regard to them, but somehow he had missed them. The brethren rather chided him for hearing so inattentively, since a preacher might advance unsound opinions and he would not notice them. "Aye," said he, "but I never think it necessary to watch Davy, for I take it for granted that he is always right."

I have mentioned that Mr. Foster was sometimes embarrassed and dull in his delivery. On some occasions this defect was striking, and rather painful. I was once conversing about it with old John Currey. He remarked to me, that he could always tell on Sunday morning, before preaching, whether Davy would have *liberty* in preaching that day. Said he, "I always pray for him on Sunday morning, and if I have an *evidence* that my prayers are answered, I take it for granted that he will have liberty." These are specimens of the interest which these good people felt in their preacher, and of the confidence which they reposed in him.

In his private relations, Mr. Foster was one of the best of men. His religion was strictly practical. He believed in Divine direction, and made every thing a subject of prayer. If he plowed or sowed his field, he prayed for the blessing of God upon his labors. If he started upon a journey, he prayed for guidance and protection and for the safe keeping of



those at home. He lived in the fear of God, and looked for a reward in heaven. I conclude this sketch with some characteristics, written by myself, and published in the *Revivalist* shortly after his death.

“1. He was a *good* man. His qualities, though not of the most shining, were nevertheless of the most scriptural and useful kind. He always praised and cultivated the virtues of the heart more than those of the head. However, with regard to the latter, he was by no means indifferent.” He loved knowledge, and sought it for its own sake, as well as a means of usefulness. “The writer of this article knew him well. He has been in habits of closest personal intimacy with him, has seen him in his family, and also before the people, and in the judicatories of the Church; and has always found him the same. In principle and in practice he was an upright, conscientious, and *good* man.”

“2. He was a plain, honest, and practical preacher. He hated pomp and show in the pulpit, as well as elsewhere. His sermons were of the practical and useful kind. A favorite topic with him was experimental religion. Sometimes in his pulpit exhibitions his manner was rather feeble, and his mind seemed not with interest to pursue his subject; but at others he appeared to have the tenderness of the sweet singer of Israel, and the strength of Samson. Every thing melted and trembled around him. Many will regard him in heaven as their spiritual father, guide, and friend.

“3. He was an industrious preacher”—industrious in the preparation of his sermons, as well as in his more general ministerial labors. “He labored in the preparation of his sermons. He considered it a shame to impose words upon his hearers instead of thoughts. He studied his sermons well. He prayed for Divine assistance, and expected it; but was not willing to serve God and the souls of men with that which cost him nothing. *He studied to show himself approved unto God—a workman rightly dividing the word of truth. He gave himself to reading as much as possible.* He was industrious in the discharge of all his ministerial duties. He lived a life of labor and effort. He preached regularly, and with great punctuality, to the several congregations of which he had the oversight on the Sabbath, and again and again on other occasions, improving every opportunity of doing good. He was *instant in season and out of season*, reproofing, exhorting, admonishing, and encouraging, as necessity might require. Although poor, he spent much time in riding and preaching to the needy and destitute.”

“4. He was enlarged and liberal in his feelings. He considered the *world* as the field. He felt, and longed, and prayed, for the conversion of the nations.

“Who does not love to cherish the memory of such a man? He has finished his work; he has borne his testimony; his sun has gone down, but *long, long* will he live in the hearts of many. He had recently settled in a destitute frontier. Much

was expected from his labors, and much did they seem to be needed; but how little does man know! In the midst of usefulness, surrounded by pressing calls for the bread of life, he is cut off in a day, and the fond hopes of many are disappointed. But it is right. The Lord hath done it, and who will murmur? He fell where every man should fall—at *his post*. He did not desert it, terrified by the raging pestilence. Trusting in God, at whose bidding the shafts of disease and death were flying around him, he went forward. God was well pleased, and took him to himself."

Mr. Foster left six children—three sons and three daughters. Two of his sons and two of his daughters died several years ago. One of his deceased daughters became the wife of Rev. Daniel Traughber, of Illinois, and lived some years after her marriage. His oldest son, and one of the daughters, still live. The son lives on Sugg's Creek, where the father spent the best years of his ministry; the daughter somewhere in Illinois.

Mr. Foster published a sermon in the Cumberland Presbyterian Pulpit, for August, 1823, on "The Redeemer's Kingdom."

## REV. THOMAS CALHOON.\*

1810—1855.

THOMAS CALHOON was born in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, May 31, 1782. His parents, Samuel and Nancy Calhoon, were members of the Presbyterian Church, and were strict and thoughtful in the government of their children. He says himself of his father's family: "The children were taught to repeat the catechism every Sabbath evening. The Sabbath was observed with great particularity. No fruit was allowed to be gathered on the Lord's day; all was gathered on Saturday evening. This religious training has been of singular service to me through life."

The grandfather and grandmother of Mr. Calhoon emigrated from Ireland, and settled in Pennsylvania. They were there converted, under the preaching of Mr. Whitefield. From Pennsylvania they moved to North Carolina, and settled in Mecklenburg county. The old man, the grandfather, having been blind for a number of years, was led by the hand, on a certain occasion, to hear Mr.

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\* Manuscripts of Rev. D. Lowry, B. W. McDonnold, D.D., and Letter of Col. Smith.

**McGready.** Whilst the sermon was in progress he became much excited, and declared that he was hearing another Whitefield. Mr. Calhoun says: "My old grandfather would call me into his room every day, and make me read a chapter in the Bible." The old couple would sing,

"Begone, unbelief, my Saviour is near," etc.

The grandfather, who was mighty in prayer, would then pray. "These influences, says he, "threw around me many restraints." His first religious impressions, however, seem to have been produced by the agency of his mother, when he was still very young. His father was from home, and the mother conducted family prayers. From some cause, the occurrence brought unusually serious thoughts to his mind. Some time, and it seems not long, after this, a minister who had married a relative visited the neighborhood and preached. At the close of his sermon, he invited all the young relatives of his wife to meet him at a particular house in the evening. All assembled, trembling, however, with fear of the preacher. The good minister took his seat in the room, and called up the children one by one, and gave them a tender religious talk; and said he, sixty years afterward, "if there was a dry cheek in the house, it is not now recollected." Such an occurrence could hardly fail of making a salutary impression. In those days of his early boyhood, he was accustomed to retire often for secret prayer. To use his own language, he thought that "this

was all that anybody could do, and that it was the way to become good." It is not strange that a child should have reasoned thus. Older people have reasoned thus, both before and since his time.

In the fall of 1800 Mr. Calhoon's father moved with his family from North Carolina to Tennessee, and stopped first at Haysboro, a small village a few miles above Nashville. Here the family were under the ministry of Rev. Thomas Craighead. Mr. Craighead was an opposer of the revival, and of course there was but little religious interest in the congregation. In the spring of 1801 Thomas Calhoon came up to Wilson county, and with the help of a negro man that he brought with him, cleared some land, and made a crop near the Big Spring. In August of 1801 a camp-meeting was held at the Old Ridge Meeting-house, in Sumner county. The family were to attend the meeting. I have before me a manuscript written, it would seem, some time before his death, in his own hand-writing, but now much mutilated, giving a very minute account of this meeting, and of his experience in it. He seems to have been with his father's family, in Davidson county, at the time. I take my sketch of the meeting, and of the religious interest excited in his mind, from this manuscript. Says the subject of the present sketch :

"My early religious training threw around me a strong moral influence. My first serious impressions relative to the importance and necessity of religion were produced by a prayer of my mother,

in the family, in the absence of my father. I remember she prayed most fervently and devotedly for her children. The same year my father emigrated to Tennessee, there was a camp-meeting at what was called the Ridge Meeting-house, in Sumner county. It was usual for families, on such occasions, to go fifty miles or more in wagons, and remain on the ground four days and nights. My father took his family to that meeting. I was then in my eighteenth year. The day before we set out, there was a dancing party in the neighborhood, and my sister and myself were invited to attend. Such parties were common in that day, and it was not thought wrong to attend them. Our preacher in North Carolina was in the habit of being present at such parties, particularly when they took place at weddings. Just before we were ready to set out to the party, my mother observed to me that we were going to the camp-meeting the next day, and it would not look well to go to the ball that evening. I paused for a moment, and then replied that I agreed with her. We declined going, and I never attended a dancing party afterward.

“Our own family, with several other young people, started on Friday morning for the camp-meeting, and I suppose a company of young persons never felt more careless and playful on arriving at such a place. We stopped about a hundred yards from the pulpit, where the religious exercises were going on. Many sinners were on their knees, crying for mercy. I had never before heard such cries. A

trembling at once seized my whole frame, so that it was with some difficulty I walked to the ground where they lay. Shortly after taking my seat, a sermon was delivered which seemed greatly to increase the work of my conviction. My sisters were weeping, and in much distress. There was a great *shaking in the valley of dry bones*. Several ministers from Kentucky were present. All seemed to partake of the excitement of the occasion. In the meantime, however, my own feelings had subsided, and my heart rose in opposition to the work. My first thought then was, to go into the congregation and bring my sisters away; but I had not courage to undertake it. I urged my mother to interfere; but when she went to them, instead of complying with my request, she began to pray for them. This increased my opposition. I was furious. I would have put an end to the whole affair, if I could have done it. My corrupt nature seemed to have entire control. Some friend asked me to go into the crowd where my sisters were. I refused absolutely. I thought they had hopelessly disgraced themselves. My feelings were indescribable. In process of time, however, the evident distress of my sisters, their tears and cries for mercy, overcame me in some degree; and a friend prevailed on me to go into the crowd where they were. William McGee and Samuel King were talking to them. Just as I took my seat, a proposition for prayer was made, but I refused to go upon my knees. Prayer was soon proposed again, and I bowed on one knee, but



rose before the prayer was ended. Prayer was called for a third time, when I fell among the slain, overwhelmed with a sense of my sinfulness and rebellion against God. From that time to the close of the meeting no external object engaged my attention. The salvation of my soul was the engrossing concern. It pleased God to give me such a view of the spirituality of the divine law, of the justice and holiness of its requirements, and of the depth of my own depravity, that my heart sunk within me. I felt that there was not another sinner on earth who had sinned against so much light and knowledge. I was ready to despair, and continued in this state of mind until the meeting closed. I thought I could see in the plan of the gospel ground of hope for other sinners, but could not understand how a just and holy God could pardon and save such a rebel as myself. I was overwhelmed with a sense of my deeply rooted depravity, and the displeasure of Almighty God.

“The meeting closed on Tuesday morning. I was so overcome by my feelings, that my physical strength in a measure gave way. A sense of guilt, and of the probability of damnation, was like a mountain upon my heart. I had to be hauled home in the wagon. On reaching home, and looking at the house, I felt that I could never enter the door; that I was unworthy of a shelter or a place among Christian people. I walked to the grove, to make an undisturbed effort with God for mercy, if indeed any mercy remained for me; but my heart appeared

to grow harder and still harder, until it seemed that nothing short of Omnipotence could move it. I made my way back to the yard fence, and from there was conveyed into the house. A dreary night followed; my distress was indescribable. The next evening Mr. Craighead preached at my father's house, but the sermon afforded me no relief. Three or four weeks after this time, there was to be a camp-meeting at the Big Spring, in Wilson county—the neighborhood in which I have since lived for many years. In the intermediate time, I occasionally had some gleams of hope that God would bestow mercy at last. Still my bodily strength was very much reduced, and I was scarcely able for my customary duties on the farm. I visited Mr. Craighead, that he might instruct me in what I should do to be saved. He was very kind—encouraged me to hope; but my heart was not relieved. About this time I had a dream. I dreamed that God had pardoned my sins, and that I was a Christian. I awoke in great agitation, and for a moment could hardly realize that my experience was but a dream. During that moment I had some enjoyment; but as soon as reason resumed the throne, and reflection took place, all my fancied hopes fled. I felt myself an unpardoned sinner still.

“During the three weeks which intervened between the meetings at the Ridge and at the Big Spring, I do not recollect that there was ever a smile upon my countenance. It was a matter of great astonishment to me to see professors of

religion jest and laugh, whilst I, with thousands of others around them, was on the road to hell. The time of the meeting at the Big Spring arrived, and I reached there on Friday, with a heavy heart. The word was preached, but my unbelief and hardness of heart brought me to the brink of despair. I retired for the night under a deep impression that the day of God's merciful visitation had closed upon me; that I was a sinner undone for ever. My brother, older than myself, prayed with me and for me that night, though not a professor of religion himself. I arose in the morning and retired to the grove. I felt heavily burdened with the thought that my case, if not already decided against me, was to be decided for heaven or for hell that day. I spent several hours in earnest prayer, without any results except a deeper experience of my utter helplessness, and the impossibility of salvation in any other method than through the abounding grace of God. About nine o'clock in the morning I started back to where the congregation was assembling. About three hundred yards before I reached the place, I suddenly stopped. I hardly know why, but I stopped, looked up and around me with amazement. The glory of God appeared in every thing, and the very leaves of the trees seemed to be tinged with a Saviour's blood. I did not think at first of claiming this as a religious experience, but soon found that I was involuntarily ascribing glory to God for his unbounded goodness and mercy to helpless and perishing sinners. My burden of guilt and condemnation was gone,

and hope soon sprang up in my mind that I had received the blessing which I had been so long seeking. Under this impression I turned to meet my brother, who I supposed was coming behind; but the thought immediately came into my mind that I ought to be well satisfied in regard to this matter before I disclosed my feelings to any person. I turned again, and started for the congregation, with a fixed purpose of keeping these things a profound secret until the meeting would close, thinking that I would be able after such an interval to settle the question of my conversion in favor of or against myself infallibly. When I reached the congregation, I was astonished to see the people so little impressed with a sense of the awful presence of Almighty God. I took my seat, and Mr. McGready rose in the pulpit. His appearance was fearfully solemn. A profound silence prevailed. He delivered one of his most impressive and stirring sermons. It was wholly experimental. He took the sinner up in his enmity against God and his hardness of heart. He followed him through all the steps of the process of his return to God. He pointed out many of the stratagems used by Satan in so critical a time, for the purpose of misleading and destroying. He finally brought the thoroughly subjugated sinner to the foot of the cross, and to the point of accepting and trusting in Christ, as his only hope of salvation. When he came to this point, I involuntarily spoke out in the congregation and said, 'If this is religion, I have experienced

it.' So unexpected an occurrence produced an extraordinary excitement in the congregation. Many sinners wept aloud; others fell to the ground and cried for mercy."

I make no apology for introducing so long and so minute an account of a very interesting religious experience. It is a specimen of what a great many of the good men felt and suffered, who afterward became the fathers and founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Somewhere about the time of his profession of religion at the Big Spring, his father moved with his family from Haysboro, and settled in that neighborhood. Shortly after his profession, his mind began to be exercised on the subject of preaching. As his religious experience presents us with a terrible spiritual struggle, in his call to the ministry we meet with much of the same kind. He was powerfully converted, and powerfully called to the great work of his life. He had been raised a Presbyterian, and with the highest degree of respect for Presbyterian usages. His education was very limited; so much so, that he thought the work of the ministry out of the question with him. He struggled against his feelings which seemed to point in that direction. I have some statements before me in manuscript; and I have often heard him express some of his early feelings on this subject. He at first thought of exhorting, but could not admit the idea of preaching. "The thought," says he, "of standing as a mouth for God, was on my mind day

and night. I trembled in prospect of the responsibility. I spent nearly the third of a year in the woods. My agitation was so great that I became incapable of physical labor." At length, however, he yielded so far as to make an experiment. At the little log meeting-house near his father's, after a terrible spiritual struggle, he arose in the presence of the old people and said: "I will do what I can; and if I cannot utter a word, I will at least *raise my hand on the Lord's side.*"

Under the influence of Mr. King, he attended the meeting of the Cumberland Presbytery, held at old Red River Meeting-house, in 1803. At the second session of this Presbytery he was licensed as an exhorter. This meeting was held at Shiloh, in 1804. It is not known at what time he was licensed to preach. He is represented, however, as a licensed preacher at the time of the meeting of the Commission of the Kentucky Synod. This meeting occurred in December of 1805. He was evidently ordained soon after the constitution of the Cumberland Presbytery as an independent organization, in 1810. There was a large number of young men who had acquired experience, and even reputation, as preachers, that had not been ordained up to that time. Some of them had not even been licensed to preach. The Council, as it was called, did not feel itself at liberty to license and ordain.

When Mr. Calhoon was licensed as an exhorter, he set off at once upon a circuit with David Foster, who was, by a year or two, his senior in the work.

We have the following account from himself, of his feelings when he was leaving home :

“My oldest brother,” says he, “was settling a place near my father’s. I went to tell him farewell, and found him splitting rails. I looked at him, and said in my heart, What an easy time you have! I felt like I would be willing to be obligated to make a hundred rails a day for life, in preference to the work in which I was then engaging. I left my father’s house in tears, shuddering at the thought of what might be the consequences of an undertaking of such vast moment.”

He was, however, now fairly committed to an experiment in the work. They were out about three months. Foster preached, and he followed every day with an exhortation. They had almost daily indications that the Spirit of God was with them. After preaching and dinner, their custom was to retire to the woods for reading, study, and prayer. They tolerated no levity in themselves. This is his own account. Although young men, they never allowed any thing to prevent their holding family prayers where they lodged.

After they had been out about three months, they came to the neighborhood of Franklin, Tennessee. They held meeting according to appointment, and went home with a friend. Something went wrong with him; his doubts and discouragements in regard to his course revived. He spent nearly the whole night in prayer, and in the morning determined to return home, marry, and bury

himself in seclusion. The Providence and Spirit of God, however, ruled otherwise. He continued in the work.

Some time after this, Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Chapman made an excursion through what is now Rutherford county. They preached on Stewart's Creek, and went as far as Cane Ridge. There they met two Baptist ministers. One of them preached a sermon in which he took stringent ground in favor of the doctrine of predestination. His text was, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The division was, the gift, the purchase, and the conquest. God gave some to his Son from eternity. Christ bought these with a price. He then finding them in fetters, rescued them. The illustration was taken from the purchase of a hand-cuffed negro in South Carolina. Mr. Calhoun did not relish the theology of the sermon, and immediately took ground in conflict with it. The meeting resulted well. That evening there was a powerful movement among the people, and many professions of religion occurred. He calls this his first theological battle. About the same time he assisted Rev. William Hodge in holding three camp-meetings in succession. He loved Mr. Hodge as what he calls "a gracious old man." They lodged one night with Dr. Yandle, on Goose Creek. The Doctor remonstrated with him, and urged him to greater moderation in public speaking. He said, "If you continue your present course, you will be dead in less than three years." Mr. Calhoun remarks,



in giving an account of this conversation, "He has been dead twenty-five years, and I still live."

At an early time he and James B. Porter, Finis Ewing, and Ephraim McLean visited Livingston county, in Kentucky, and held a meeting at old Mr. Wheeler's. The record is, that the meeting was interesting. He was greatly embarrassed in his feelings, in having to preach before Ewing. He preached, however, with some freedom, from a favorite text: "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." From this meeting he and Porter went to Piney Fork, and preached two or three days.

About the same time he formed a circuit extending through White and Warren counties, of his own State. The country was new, and as rough as it could well be. He had the usual adventures of an itinerant preacher of early times. One of these may be mentioned. After preaching on a certain occasion, he stayed all night with a prominent man. In the evening several gentlemen came in on business. Their business detained them also through the night. Their hospitable host sent off and got a jug of whisky. All drank freely but the preacher. They ridiculed Saint Paul. One insisted that the apostle was drunk when he left his cloak at Troas. By bed-time they were in a poor condition for prayers. Still Mr. Calhoon proposed prayers. The old lady and four daughters came in. Some of the men were on the floor drunk. No one kneeled with him except the old lady. The next morning

the gentleman of the house proposed prayers himself. No one, however, kneeled with him, and yet, says he, "I lived to see all those young ladies members of the Church."

On the 16th of February, 1809, Mr. Calhoon was married to Miss Mary R. Johnson. He settled near his father, in the neighborhood of the Big Spring. In a short time he built the house in which he lived till he died, and which still stands, a monument of the olden time.

In the fall of 1810 he received a call to the pastorate of Cedar Creek Big Spring congregation. I have the original call before me. It is dated October 6, A.D. 1810, and signed in behalf of the congregation by Andrew Foster and John Calhoon, as trustees. The call is for one-third of his time, and the promise is, in order that he "may be measurably free from worldly cares and avocations," to pay him the "sum of forty-eight dollars and twenty-five cents, in regular yearly payments, for the one-third part of his labors, during the time of his being and continuing the regular pastor of this Church." Some of our present pastors would think this a small allowance for one-third of their ministerial and pastoral labors. They would be correct, too: God "hath ordained that they that preach the gospel, should live of the gospel." It was a small allowance for the times in which the transaction occurred; but the transaction itself is illustrative of the spirit of those times. Neither the congregations nor the preachers thought of what would now be a

remunerative consideration for ministerial labor. The doctrine of the fathers was, to preach, *with* or *without* pay, and it was very easy for the congregations to imbibe the same spirit.

In the spring of 1819 he was called to the care of Smyrna congregation, in Jackson county. He engaged to give them one-fourth of his time. Smyrna was forty miles from his home, but he kept up his connection with that Church twenty-four years. It was at length dissolved on account of his advancing age and increasing infirmities. Col. Smith, a leading elder in the Church, says: "He was very punctual in meeting his appointments; there were many revivals of religion during his pastorate; many were brought into the Church; he was beloved by all who knew him." The attachment of the congregation was so great, that he made two or three applications for a dissolution of his connection with them, before they would consent. Mr. Calhoon himself says that, during his connection with Smyrna congregation, he never missed but one appointment, and on that occasion went half way, and was stopped by unusual weather.

Some time after the organization of the Church, he and Robert Donnell made a tour through East Tennessee. They were the first Cumberland Presbyterians who visited that country. They went as far as Maryville, and preached for Dr. Isaac Anderson, who, although an uncompromising Hopkinsonian, received them kindly. In this excursion they became acquainted with Col. Campbell, of Camp-

bell's Station, who afterward moved to Wilson county, and joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

After this, he made a tour by himself through the more recently settled portions of East Tennessee. In this excursion he preached at Calhoon, a place named by the Indians for himself; at the house of a prominent Indian named Renfro, and at Pumpkintown, now Athens. He crossed Little Tennessee, and preached again at Campbell's Station. Thence he made his way through Kingston and the Wilderness, across Spencer's Hill, toward home. This excursion was undertaken at the urgent solicitation of John Miller, who was not then a professor of religion. Miller made the most of his appointments before him.

In 1813 Mr. Calhoon, in connection with Finis Ewing, William McGee, and Robert Donnell, was appointed by the Cumberland Synod to frame a Confession of Faith for the use of the Church. In that work he labored in conjunction with Mr. Ewing, but he himself ascribed the framing of the Confession and Book of Discipline mainly to Mr. Ewing.

In 1829 the first General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church held its sessions at Princeton, Kentucky. Mr. Calhoon was the Moderator of that Assembly.

In 1845 the Board of Missions was established at Lebanon. He was the first President of the Board, and held the position till his death.

In his latter years Mr. Calhoon's health failed by degrees. In 1855, on the 13th day of April, he closed his active and stirring life, in his quiet home. His wife had died several years before. A brother minister had visited him a short time previous to his death, and was in the act of bidding him farewell. The dying preacher supposed it would be their last meeting on earth: he aroused himself from great prostration, pointed upward to heaven, and said, "We will meet there."

Mr. Calhoon left behind him four sons. One of these, Thomas P. Calhoon, had been in the ministry several years. In the fall of 1857 he moved to St. Cloud, Minnesota, and in the course of the winter of 1859 he was thrown from a bridge, and mortally wounded. He was a young man of promise. The other sons still live, and two of them are members of the Church.

I have a great many personal recollections of Mr. Calhoon. Some of these I could not overlook in such a sketch as this. His name was a household word in my father's family when I was growing up. I heard him preach in my early boyhood. He preached upon *the balm, and the physician of Gilead*, on Monday evening of the camp-meeting at which I professed religion, and but a few hours before that event of so great interest to myself. He was a member of the first Presbytery that I ever attended; he afterward officiated at the licensure of Robert Baker and myself. When I was ordained, although not then a member of the Presbytery, he was

present, and was one of those who laid hands upon my head. I knew him onward to his death. I never considered myself a personal favorite with him, though I claimed him as a friend. Our habits of mind were different; yet I honored him, and still honor his memory.

In the summer of 1818 occurred the first camp-meeting which was ever held at the Dry Fork. The Dry Fork congregation was an offshoot of the old Shiloh congregation, of the Presbyterian Church. This latter congregation had been greatly favored in the revival of the early part of the century. The camp-meeting which I now mention was attended by Thomas Calhoon, Alexander Chapman, David Foster, David McLin, and other ministers. McLin, Chapman, and Calhoon preached on the Sabbath. Calhoon occupied the popular hour. The congregation was very large. He preached from a text in the 111th Psalm: "His work is honorable and glorious." He frequently preached from that text in those days. His object was to vindicate the Divine administration from the charge of being concerned actively, or by connivance, in the introduction of sin into the world. The controversy with the mother Church was still fresh in the minds of men. A great many of the good people of Shiloh were present. Some complained of the sermon, but it was a powerful effort in support of the doctrines of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

At the meeting of the Nashville Presbytery in the spring of 1819, great discouragement was felt, from

the fact that so few young men were coming forward into the ministry, and a day was appointed for fasting and prayer that God would call men to the work. The fast-day occurred in the following May. A camp-meeting was held at Fall Creek, including the fast, which occurred on Monday of the meeting. The people fasted and prayed, and Mr. Calhoon preached from the Saviour's command to his disciples: "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." It was a day of great interest. Two young men, Robert Baker and Robert S. Donnell, were called out, and devoted themselves to the work. They afterward became honored and useful ministers.

In the spring of 1820 Mr. Calhoon made a tour round what was afterward called the Tennessee Circuit. That section of country had been but recently transferred from the Logan to the Nashville Presbytery, and it was thought proper to render special attention to it. Mr. Calhoon was sent, because he was considered one of the best preachers in the Presbytery. Foster had preceded him. The old counselors encouraged me to go with him as a sort of an assistant. I was then a candidate for the ministry. The first appointment was in the neighborhood of Nashville, at the house of Mr. Castleman. The next was on Harpeth, near the mouth of Dog Creek. From thence we went to old Mr. Mabin's—he lived at the head of a little branch of Yellow Creek; from thence to John

Hutchison's; from thence to the neighborhood of William Clements, a man of great importance to the Church in his time—he was an educated Scotchman, and a ruling elder; from thence we went to Frank Smith's. John L. Smith was then an irreligious young man. Mr. Calhoon preached every day until we reached Reynoldsburg, on the bank of Tennessee River. His sermons were very strong, and highly popular. Several times he lectured on one of Dr. Watts' hymns, which he used in the worship :

“O, if my soul were formed for woe,  
How would I vent my sighs!  
Repentance should like rivers flow  
From both my weeping eyes.”

The object of the lecture was to show that the poet could not possibly have implied any apprehension that his soul was *created* for the suffering of woe or damnation. His labors were useful and honorable to the Church. I made, however, but little improvement myself. I was constantly under an oppressive and embarrassing sense of the superior greatness of my mentor.

In 1821 the first camp-meeting was held on West Harpeth. Mr. Calhoon and John L. Dillard were the preachers. Robert Baker and myself were, as licentiates, to assist. Mr. Calhoon managed the meeting. On Sabbath he preached a favorite sermon, from the passage in the Lord's Prayer, “Deliver us from evil.” In the evening he directed



me to prepare to preach the next morning before breakfast. I arose early, and went off to the woods to make my preparation, but remained out rather too long. On my return, he met me with such a reproof as was characteristic of the times. It was too severe. But the *boys* in those days thought of nothing but unquestioning submission. From West Harpeth he, and Baker, and myself, went to Wells' Creek. The Wells' Creek meeting possesses some historical interest, from its being the occasion upon which Dr. Cossitt first became acquainted with Cumberland Presbyterians. He was brought and introduced there by Mr. Clements. Mr. Calhoon treated him with great respect, and he preached once at the meeting whilst he was still an Episcopalian. The next meeting was at Richland. Here James McKee, an obscure boy, professed religion. He afterward entered the ministry, and became very promising, but died young, at 'Trenton, Tennessee.

I might multiply these recollections much farther, but restrain myself. I dwell upon them with a melancholy interest. Mr. Calhoon was one of the most useful men of his time in the Church. His influence was not so extensive as that of Ewing, or King, or Robert Donnell; but where it prevailed, it was equally controlling. He was *a* great man, if not *the* great man of the country in which he lived. Personally, he was a man of expressive appearance; about six feet high. His form was athletic; his bearing that of a gentleman; his eyes were dark and

piercing; his countenance, always solemn, sometimes in the pulpit was fearful. His voice was strong, but unlike any other voice that I ever heard. He was mighty in prayer. While he was yet a young man, a wicked fellow wanted to bet that he could out-pray Dr. Blackburn. This was a high encomium, as Dr. Blackburn could pray three-quarters of an hour, and be interesting throughout. Mr. Calhoon's prayers were not only interesting—they were sometimes overpowering. We have the following from a living witness: "On a certain occasion, a young man was to be set apart to the whole work of the ministry. Mr. Calhoon offered the ordaining prayer. The congregation was very large, and scattered over a large space. They were very thoughtless, and many of them engaged in conversation. As the prayer progressed, seriousness arose. Those nearest the preacher began to weep, and drop upon their knees. Others followed the example. The influence spread; and before the prayer was closed, the whole vast congregation, far and near, were on their knees, and weeping in sympathy with the good man who was leading them to the throne of grace."

His manner in the pulpit was impassioned, often powerful. On one occasion, a young man came to a meeting where he was to preach with the avowed intention of producing disturbance. He arose once while the sermon was in progress, with a view of carrying out his purpose, but the piercing eye and awful manner of the preacher were resistless. The young man fell a convicted sinner. He professed

religion, and became a useful Cumberland Presbyterian minister.

Mr. Calhoon says himself, that for years after he took charge of the Big Spring congregation, he scarcely ever preached to them without indications of deep feeling on the part of the people. On almost any ordinary occasion he could have had mourners, if he had called for them. It was a sort of continued revival.

I heard him once, at a camp-meeting at the Ridge Meeting-house, preach on this text: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." He read the first part of the text, and then proceeded to tell the young men how to be worldly and wicked in good earnest. Everybody was astounded that he should have turned out to preaching, as it seemed, for the devil. After spending some time in this strain, and putting expectation on tip-toe, he paused, and with a changed countenance, and an awful manner, proceeded to read the remaining part of his text: "but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." The transition was terrible. It seemed hardly possible for a human heart to support itself. He frequently preached on that text, and usually with great effect. But few men could have sustained themselves through such an effort. There was something of the dramatic in it; but I suppose he never failed.

In the judicatures of the Church he was always in his place, unless there was a *real* providential hindrance. His own statement is, that he "never for any sort of circumstance omitted family religion in his whole life." He was always in earnest. I certainly never knew a more earnest man.

A word should in justice be added in regard to his secular life. We have seen that a great proportion of his time must have been given to the Church. He never traded—I mean, he never traded for purposes of gain; he never went in debt; still he educated his children well, and then left them sufficient property for an advantageous entrance upon the career of life. Altogether, he was an unusual man: he belonged to a past age. "There were giants" in that age.

## REV. ROBERT DONNELL.\*

1811—1855.

THE parents of Robert Donnell were of Scotch descent, but their ancestors had settled in Ireland previous to the year 1688. The family being Presbyterians, participated in the conflict between James the Second and William of Orange. This was a conflict not merely of persons but of principles—between Protestantism and the Papacy—for the ascendancy in England, Scotland, and Ireland. The family subsequently emigrated to this country, and settled in North Carolina.

Robert Donnell was the son of William and Mary Bell Donnell, who were married about the year 1760, and settled in Guilford county, where their son Robert was born, in April, 1784. The day of the month is not known, owing to the destruction of the family records by the Indians, in the removal of the family to the West. William Donnell, the father, was a soldier of the Revolution, and shared in the battle at Guilford Court-house, in 1781.

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\* Sketch of the Life, etc., of Rev. Robert Donnell, by Rev. G. W. Mitchell. Manuscript by Rev. Dr. Cossitt. Life and Times of Ewing.

The Donnell family seem to have been originally Seceders, but some time previous to 1794 joined the Presbyterian Church. It also seems likely that William and Mary Bell Donnell were members of Dr. Caldwell's congregation, as Dr. Caldwell is represented as having baptized their son Robert in his infancy.

In October, 1789, William Donnell started with his family for what was then called the Cumberland Country, expecting to join another emigrating party near Abingdon, Virginia. It seems, however, that they were too late to effect the junction, and remained in the neighborhood of Abingdon until the following year, when with other emigrants they made their way to what is now Sumner county, Tennessee, and settled at Bell's Fort, on Drake's Creek, near where the little town of Hendersonville now stands. Some time in 1792 the family moved, and settled in Wilson county, on Spring Creek, about eight miles from what is now Lebanon. Here Robert Donnell grew up to his manhood. In the manuscript which is one of my guides in this sketch, it is stated that the whole of his school education consisted of what he acquired in nine months, and that he acquired this before he was thirteen years of age. The account is not improbable, owing to the condition of the country at that time. Flavel's "Husbandry Spiritualized," his father's Bible, and Russell's "Seven Sermons," were his text-books in learning to read, and these were packed over the Cumberland Mountains when the family came to Tennessee.

When Robert Donnell was thirteen years of age, his father died, and the management of the farm and family interests, as well as the care of his mother and two sisters, devolved on him. The testimony is that he was faithful to his important trust, doing every thing which could have been expected of an affectionate brother and a dutiful son to promote their interest and happiness.

At the age of sixteen he planned and constructed a horse-mill for grinding corn, which proved a great convenience to the neighborhood, as mills were then very scarce. The writer of this sketch, too, once heard a gentleman, who grew up in the same neighborhood with Mr. Donnell, remark that it was understood that Robert Donnell could split more rails in a day than any man in the country around. Those who have known him personally will hardly question the truth of the statement, as he must have been a man of great physical power in his early life. It is said, also, that in those days of dram-drinking, he took a stand against the practice, and argued strenuously for entire abstinence from all intoxicating liquors. It will be observed that there were then no temperance societies, that he himself had not reached maturity, had not yet become a member of the Church, and that the practice of drinking spirits was not only tolerated, but approved generally by good people. It was an early development of the practical good sense which characterized him throughout a long and useful life.

In the year 1800, when he was in his seventeenth year, Mr. Donnell professed religion. His own account of his religious experience, communicated to his wife, is substantially the following: "I had been," said he, "for some time in great distress of soul on account of my sins, and after having spent several hours late one afternoon in the secret grove, seeking rest and finding none, I returned to my mother's house; and just as I was setting my feet on the threshold, I was enabled to put the rope around my own neck, to prostrate myself before the cross divested of all self-dependence, and to rely alone upon the merits of Jesus Christ." This account is characteristic. He soon became an efficient helper in holding prayer-meetings, and in otherwise promoting the interests of religion in his neighborhood. He would often exhort his friends and neighbors "with melting heart and streaming eyes" "to flee the wrath to come."

He seems to have entertained the idea from very early life that he was to be a preacher of the gospel—even before he professed religion. Such cases are not uncommon. The impressions are probably derived from outward circumstances: they may, too, be specially providential, directing the youthful mind into the channel in which the Spirit of God intends to lead it. Why should it not be so? At least, in process of time, after he professed religion, he felt that he was called of God to preach the Gospel of Christ to a perishing world, and in 1806 presented himself before what was then called the Council,



for advice and instruction on that subject. The Council did not feel at liberty to transact Presbyterial business, but advised him to labor in a more public capacity than that in which he had been laboring, as an exhorter and catechist. With this authority he entered upon his work, and soon became practically and really an efficient preacher, although he had received no formal license.

In 1809 he penetrated into Northern Alabama, and commenced the work of collecting, and, as far as he felt himself authorized, of organizing congregations in what was then a new, but rapidly opening country. He was in this country when he received intelligence of the reorganization of the Cumberland Presbytery, in 1810. The following is his own account of his labors, fears, and hopes:

“I was traveling,” says he, “in Alabama Territory when I heard of the constitution of the first Cumberland Presbytery, by Messrs. McAdow, Ewing, and King. If I ever was free from sectarian feelings, it was at that period. I often thought, For what am I laboring? I am connected with no constituted Church, and know not that I ever shall be. For what, then, do I labor, if I cannot build up a Church? The reply was, Only for the glory of God, and the salvation of precious souls. But what will become of the few so strongly united in the bonds of love? This could only be solved by the great Head of the Church. Of Him I often sought for an answer, and I am persuaded he did answer; as, some time before the Presbytery was

constituted, I became quite calm on the subject, under the firm persuasion that the Lord would open a way for us. I was in this frame when the intelligence reached me which caused me to feel truly thankful to God who had thus opened a door for a feeble handful of his followers to become more extensively useful."\*

The date of Mr. Donnell's licensure is not known. At the first meeting of the Cumberland Presbytery, after its constitution on the 4th of February, 1810, his name appears on the record as a candidate for the ministry. This meeting was held at the Ridge Meeting-house, in the following month, March, 1810. In October of the following year, 1811, he was set apart to the whole work of the ministry.

On the 17th of March, 1817, he was married to Miss Ann E. Smith, daughter of Col. James Webb Smith, of Jackson county, Tennessee. Several children were the fruit of this marriage, all of whom died in infancy, except the eldest son, James W. S. Donnell, who still survives.

Previous to his marriage Mr. Donnell labored chiefly as an itinerant minister. He traveled extensively, especially over the southern portion of the Church, and I suppose the labors of no man in any of the denominations have been more signally blessed. He possessed vigorous health, a fine constitution, and in all his labors a feeling was manifest that he belonged to God.

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\* Life and Times of Ewing.

After his marriage he settled first in Madison county, Alabama, where he lived about two years, and then removed to the adjoining county of Limestone, and settled about ten miles from Athens. He now became a farmer, but still continued, I suppose, the most active and laborious minister in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Many congregations were collected through his agency in Tennessee and Alabama. A number of these are still flourishing, yielding fruit from the precious seed sown by his ministry.

While he resided in Limestone his wife died. She seems to have been a most estimable and pious lady. The record is that she died full of faith and hope. Her death occurred on the 3d of November, 1828.

The General Assembly of 1831 appointed, in conformity with several petitions from that country, five missionaries to Western Pennsylvania, of whom Mr. Donnell was one. Their mission was eminently successful, his labors with the others being greatly blessed.

On the 21st of June, 1832, he was married a second time, to Miss Clara W. Lindley, daughter of Rev. Jacob Lindley, of Pennsylvania. Miss Lindley had, however, been some time in the South, engaged as an instructress. In 1835 Mr. Donnell settled his white family in the village of Mooresville, a few miles from his farm. After about two years he returned to his former home. During these years, from the period of his first settlement

in Madison county, his labors were chiefly confined to the counties of Madison and Limestone.

Some time about the year 1830 he commenced a series of efforts in the city of Nashville. The result was, the introduction of Cumberland Presbyterianism into that city. As fruits of the seed thus sown, two houses of worship have been built, and two respectable congregations collected.

In 1845 he went to Memphis, for the purpose of organizing a congregation, and aiding in building a house of worship. After spending some months there, and accomplishing the object of his visit, he returned home, and in a short time was called to the pastorate of the congregation of Lebanon, Tennessee, as the successor of Rev. George Donnell, who had recently died in that place. He remained in Lebanon until February, 1849, when he moved to Athens, Alabama, which became, as he expected, his last earthly home. He had now passed half through the seventh decade of life—a period when serious men begin to think seriously of *setting their house in order*. He built a comfortable mansion, rather than otherwise, as a home for his family, and from this mansion he entered into his rest.

On the second Sabbath in August, 1853, he preached at the camp-meeting at Bethlehem, near Huntsville, to an immense congregation. In order to being heard by the multitude present, great physical effort was necessary. He endeavored to accommodate himself to the circumstances, and in his extraordinary exertions laid the foundation for

a protracted illness, which resulted in death. Still, although partially prostrated, he continued to labor as he could.

On the second Sabbath in October of the same year he preached twice in Athens, the place of his residence. His text for the morning was 2 Peter i. 13-15. It was called by many of those who heard it his own funeral-sermon. Still he labored on. On the first Sabbath in November he preached the dedication-sermon of a new church in Huntsville, and on the third Sabbath in the same month attended the funeral of three aged Christians a few miles from his residence. His text for the occasion was, "These all died in faith." This was his last sermon. He lingered to the 24th of May, 1855, when he died. The circumstances of his affliction and death were such as would have been expected from such a life. His pastor gives the following account, which deserves a permanent record :

"During all his afflictions, religion was his theme. He admonished all who visited him in regard to that subject. During his whole confinement he manifested, in a preëminent degree, the graces of a Christian. He made no complaint of his lot. Daily would he express his gratitude for kind attentions, and the comforts with which he was surrounded. He was ever calm, submissive, happy, and frequently in ecstasies of joy. His mind seemed never to be in the least beclouded, but was always rational. His conversations were often intensely interesting, and many might be

related of a thrilling character. He often said: 'Heaven is not far off; it is'—pointing with his finger—'just there.' Again, he would say: 'I do not know, but it seems to me that the soul might be so filled with the presence and glory of God that it would just leap out, and leave the body a lifeless lump. I feel sometimes like I am almost carried away.'

"On one occasion last winter he had a hemorrhage, and was for some minutes in a state of suspended animation; yet he said, 'I was perfectly conscious of all that was going on. I could see my lifeless body lying there, while my soul seemed like the bird just let loose from its cage, which, instead of at once flying away, was circling 'round and round its former habitation; and I thought, If this is death, how pleasant a thing it is to die!'

"On the morning before his death he was asked by a brother what were his prospects now, when so near the end of his course. To which he replied, 'That business has long since been settled with me, and it is too late now to call it in question. I can say, Whether I live, I live unto the Lord; or whether I die, I die unto the Lord. Whether I live, therefore, or die, I am the Lord's.'

"The day before his death he sunk into a profound and sweet sleep, from which he only awoke when aroused by some one. In the latter part of the night his wife aroused him, and offered him some medicine. He replied in a soft and beseeching tone, 'Please do not make me take it; do not

trouble me now, for I never felt better in my life,' and immediately fell asleep again, and spoke no more, nor awoke, until he awoke to the glorious realities of heavenly bliss."

Thus he came to his grave in a "good old age," like a ripe shock of corn gathered in its season. He died in his seventy-second year.

Mr. Donnell left but one child, James W. S. Donnell, who still lives a respected planter in Alabama. His widow also still lives, an honor to the memory of both a sainted husband and a sainted father.

The funeral services took place on the Sabbath after his death, in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Athens. They were attended by a large congregation, by the ministry generally of the town and surrounding country, and the venerable Dr. Lindley, the father of Mrs. Donnell. The second chapter of first Thessalonians was read; the beautiful hymn was sung, of which the first stanza is,

"How blest the righteous when he dies!  
When sinks a weary soul to rest,  
How mildly beam the closing eyes,  
How gently heaves the expiring breast!"

A sermon was then delivered by Rev. George W. Mitchell, pastor of the congregation, from Rom. xiv. 8. The whole occasion is represented to have been, as we would have expected it to be, deeply interesting and impressive. At the close of the sermon the hymn was sung, commencing with the stanza,

“And let this feeble body fail,  
And let it faint and die,  
My soul shall quit this mournful vale,  
And soar to worlds on high.”

Prayer was then offered by Rev. Mr. Finley, of the Methodist Church.

Some time subsequent to his death the members of the Tennessee Presbytery erected a beautiful monument to the memory of Mr. Donnell.

At the time of his death he was the oldest Vice-President of the American Tract Society. He had been for years a devoted friend and promoter of the interests of the American Bible Society. His views upon the Temperance question have already been noticed. He was a temperance man in principle and practice before there was a temperance society.

Mr. Donnell was unquestionably one of the most laborious and useful ministers that ever labored in this country. Says the writer of the sketch to which I am indebted for most of the facts mentioned here:

“He was, perhaps, instrumental in the conversion of as many sinners, organized as many churches, assisted in building as many houses of worship, and brought as many young men into the ministry, as any cotemporary minister of his own, or any other denomination of Christians.”

This is no doubt a faithful testimony.

After his first marriage, Mr. Donnell was considered rather wealthy. In the management of his



business, however, he never lost sight of the great end of providential blessings of every kind. These blessings made "his house the abode of peace, cheerfulness, and contentment. There hospitality dwelt unrestrained as if in her native home. The humble poor no less than the opulent were welcome visitors at his house, and sharers of his friendship."

Mr. Donnell published two sermons—one in 1833, occasioned by the death of Rev. William McGee: the sermon was, however, first delivered in 1817; the other in 1835, upon the Christian Profession. He also published in the latter part of his life a small volume under the modest title of "Thoughts." The pulpit was his stronghold: he never wrote much. Raised, and spending the first years of his ministry in the wilderness, he was trained to action rather than to the use of the pen.

Mr. Donnell's personal and family religion were of the most exemplary kind. Mrs. Donnell says, that during her whole married life of twenty-three years, she never saw her husband manifest or betray in any single instance a spirit or temper inconsistent with the Christian character, or do what she considered a wrong or inconsistent thing. He evidently lived in great watchfulness, and in the habit of daily prayer. He uniformly kept up domestic worship morning and evening. The account we have is, that he was unusually punctual in this respect. On such occasions he brought all his family around him, including his servants. These were not allowed to leave the house in the

morning for their daily toil until after family prayers. The dining-room was used for the purpose, and it came to be considered rather a sacred place in the estimation of the negroes. On a certain occasion, when the white family were absent, some young men came in, and one of them taking the liberty of crossing the room in the manner of a person dancing, an old female servant felt so much scandalized at the unseemly levity of the young man, and the desecration of the place, that she exclaimed, "I shall tell my master as soon as he comes home about your dancing in his *religious* dining-room."

It was his custom also in the morning at the breakfast-table, immediately after the blessing, to repeat a passage of scripture, and to require the same of all present, even his visitors. On a certain occasion he observed his wife to be in some trouble about some domestic matters, in which she supposed she had failed to come up to his views or taste. The next morning his passage for the breakfast-table was, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." He emphasized the pronoun "*thou*." Of course she was at once relieved from all anxiety in regard to the matter which had troubled her. This is given as an illustration of the kindness and tact with which he administered his household affairs.

Mr. Donnell preached the opening sermon at the meeting of the first General Assembly. The meeting was held at Princeton, Kentucky, in 1829. His

text for the occasion was 1 Kings iii. 5-9. The subject was Solomon's *choice of wisdom and understanding, that he might be able to judge the people of God, and go out and in before them in a becoming manner.* The sermon was characteristic. Of course the General Assembly was Solomon, a little child, placed in the midst of a large people, acknowledging its insufficiency for the great work before it, and asking wisdom, and strength, and grace from God. In 1837 he was Moderator of the General Assembly. Its sessions were also held in Princeton that year.

From the time of Mr. Donnell's maturity in the ministry, he was regarded as the leader of the Southern portion of the Church. No other man contributed so much toward directing its theological inquiries or its practical policy. For thirty years he was the highest authority in these matters. He was a great natural man. Furthermore, by extraordinary application and industry in his early ministry, he had made himself a respectable scholar. It used to be said that he carried his English Grammar and other elementary books in his saddlebags on his circuits, and studied them on horseback between his appointments. I expect what was said was true, as it was the custom of those days. He possessed fine administrative abilities, and could not well have been otherwise than a leader. At the same time it is to be remarked that no man seemed less anxious to be a leader. If he was ambitious, the world never knew it.

Personally, he was a man to be observed any-

where. His figure was commanding. He was something over six feet in height. His usual weight in later life was about two hundred and twenty. He was always neatly dressed—stood erect in the pulpit, delivering his message in an unusually solemn and impressive manner. He never descended to what is called the arts of elocution. Nature had done enough for him in this respect. His voice was like the voice of a trumpet: he never lacked words, and notwithstanding the defects of his early education, his words were always well selected. His thoughts were very clear, and his method of utterance unusually distinct. No man needed misunderstand him. Above all, there were a spirituality and an unction in his pulpit performances which subdued, while his mind and manner led. I have heard him often when he seemed to be absolutely overwhelming. He was not always so, it is true, but was always interesting. Mr. Donnell belonged to a race of men that has passed away. We may not see their *like* soon again. I never expect to see it myself. Let their memory be cherished. It is a sacred legacy to the Church. Their mantle has fallen: let us see to it that such a mantle be never desecrated; that it be worn by men at least worthy of them, if not their equals.

I saw Mr. Donnell for the first time in my early boyhood. He called at my grandfather's, with whom I then lived. He was accompanied by his mother, an aged lady of serious and quiet appearance. They had been on a visit to one of his

sisters. But one thing occurred in this visit which made any impression on my mind. My grandfather had a large family Bible which he had packed over the mountains from Virginia to this country. This, with the Hymn-book, Confession of Faith, and the Travels of True Godliness, made up the principal part of his library. Mr. Donnell, in walking over the house, found the Confession of Faith, and made some jocular remark about it. The controversy was then raging which gave rise to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. My grandfather replied in an equally jocular, but characteristic manner, that the Confession of Faith was a very good book, but that Mr. Donnell and his party were trying to disembowel it, and that such treatment was very cruel. This occurred whilst the revival party were struggling in the capacity of a Council.

In 1817 he delivered the sermon occasioned by the death of Mr. McGee, at a camp-meeting at the Beech Meeting-house, in Sumner county. Mr. McGee had once lived in that neighborhood, and been pastor of the congregation. My recollection is that it was an exceedingly tender occasion. The preacher himself wept freely, and but few eyes in the great congregation were dry. I was then a very young Christian.

In 1820 he preached at the same Beech Camp-ground. It was late in October, and the weather was unusually cold for the season. He was then in the prime of life, and was certainly a noble specimen of humanity. He preached in the open air. It

was cold; there was no shelter, and snow was falling during most of the time of the sermon. But the large concourse of people kept their places, and heard apparently with intense interest. The text was, "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." I had been licensed to preach but a few days before, and was, perhaps, in a good frame of mind for hearing. It is certain that I never heard a sermon with more intellectual interest. "Sin has reigned unto death"—in throwing darkness into the understanding; in perverting the judgment; in controlling the will; in impairing the memory; in depraving the affections; in subjecting the body to the power of disease and death. *Grace reigns* in enlightening the understanding; in correcting the errors of the judgment; in persuading and enabling the will; in rendering the memory more tenacious of what is good; in renewing the affections; and finally, in restoring the body to life and immortality in the resurrection of the just. This is an outline of the sermon which was delivered that cold day. My recollection of it is distinct and vivid after the expiration of forty-six years. It was almost the only sermon of another that I ever tried to make my own, and to use as such.

In 1823 the Cumberland Synod met at Russellville, Kentucky. At the close of the sessions of the Synod, a camp-meeting was held at a place about four miles from town. I believe the name of

the place was Moriah. Mr. Donnell preached on Saturday evening. The text was, "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say." The sermon consisted of an exposition and vindication of the doctrines of his Church. On one topic he gave a direction to my thoughts which they have still kept. I had entertained a confused notion that regeneration was a sort of physical change. The sermon of that evening relieved my mind on that subject. It seems to me *now* that he was very distinct and satisfactory, and the wonder is, that with the means of information which Cumberland Presbyterians then had, he could have been so much so. The next day he preached the funeral-sermon of Judge Ewing.\* It was a massive discourse.

It has been stated already that he preached the opening sermon of the first General Assembly. In 1843 he delivered a sermon at the General Assembly at Owensboro, Kentucky, upon the life, character, and death of Rev. Samuel King. In his latter years he showed in his performances in the pulpit something of the effects of age. He was always heard, however, with interest. He continued to preach, too, while he had physical strength for his work. Both nature and grace had formed and fitted him for the pulpit. It was his forte and his throne. He loved its labors, and would have stood in the front rank of preachers in any Christian communion.

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\*An uncle of the later Judge Ephraim M. Ewing.

## REV. ROBERT GUTHRIE.

1820—1842.

ROBERT GUTHRIE was born near the city of Baltimore, on the 12th of November, 1770. While he was still a boy, his father moved to North Carolina, and settled near Hillsboro. He used to relate to his children, that he heard the sound of the cannon on the memorable day of the battle at Guilford Court-house. Of course he was in his eleventh year. It is supposed that his parents were members of the Presbyterian Church. It is at least evident that he was reared under a Presbyterian influence.

In 1791 he was united in marriage with Mary Smith, of Orange county, North Carolina. It would be difficult to conceive of a more congenial union. It lasted about fifty years, attended by all the trials incident to the settlement of a new country, and the rearing and education of a large family; but the writer believes it was a union of more than ordinary interest and affection. The wife was "a helpmeet" in the scriptural sense of the expression.

In 1792 Mr. Guthrie left North Carolina for the West, and spent one year in East Tennessee, near Jonesboro. The next year he left East Tennessee, and after spending some time in the neighborhood



in which Gallatin, Middle Tennessee, now stands, settled finally on the Ridge, near the Old Ridge Meeting-house. One of his sons has now in his possession a letter of dismissal and recommendation granted to Mr. Guthrie and his wife by the session of the Presbyterian congregation of which they were members in North Carolina, and signed by the pastor, Rev. James Bowman. It appears from this letter that both he and his wife were members of the Presbyterian Church previous to their settlement in the West. Subsequent examination, however, satisfied them that they were destitute of religion. Soon after their settlement in this country, the great religious movement began to develop itself which resulted in the revival of 1800. Mr. Guthrie was attracted to one of Mr. McGready's early meetings, and there became convinced, for the first time, that he had never experienced a change of heart. With Luther we recollect that "justification by faith" was the great truth which instrumentally wrought the Reformation. This truth seems first to have been deeply wrought into the Reformer's own heart. Its out-working shook the papal throne. With Mr. McGready and his fellow-laborers the new birth, as a deep and powerful experience, seems to have occupied a similar place. In the preaching which preceded and attended the revival it overshadowed all other truths. The new birth, as an earnest reality, was emphatically *the* doctrine of the revival. Mr. Guthrie returned home from this meeting, and some time afterward expe-

rienced the change which he felt to be necessary, or at least received the evidence of it, while engaged in family prayer. It is believed that both he and his wife made their second profession of religion previous to the full development of the revival, and of course were among its first-fruits. As we would suppose, he entered heartily into the new and great work. He was, however, no enthusiast. In what he did, he followed the convictions of a sober, thoughtful, yet decided mind.

It is not known at what time Mr. Guthrie began to exercise his gifts as a public speaker, but we find from the record that he was a licensed exhorter and candidate for the ministry in 1805, at the time of the meeting of the Commission of Kentucky Synod, and that he was included in the sweeping resolution of that body which prohibited the "young men" who had been before the Commission "from exhorting, preaching, and administering the ordinances, in consequence of any authority which they had obtained from Cumberland Presbytery."

The action of the Synod's Commission resulted in the formation of what, in Cumberland Presbyterian history, is known as the "Council." After the organization, or rather the reorganization, of the Cumberland Presbytery, in 1810, he was licensed and ordained by the Nashville Presbytery. In addition to the parts of trial which had preceded, at the meeting of the Nashville Presbytery, at New Hope, March 30, 1814, having been examined on "English Grammar and Divinity," in connection

with Ezekiel Cloyd he received licensure. At this same Presbytery it was "ordered that Messrs. Guthrie and Cloyd ride each three months on the upper circuit." It will be recollected that "Messrs. Guthrie and Cloyd" were at that time poor men, and had large families dependent upon them for support, and that the upper circuit was at least a hundred miles from their homes. Upon the minutes of the fall session of the Presbytery, in the same year, we find the following resolution: "Resolved, that all the licentiates under our care prepare to stand an examination from time to time on such branches of science as Presbytery may direct." In conformity with this resolution, Mr. Guthrie was ordered to prepare for an examination on Natural and Moral Philosophy at the next regular meeting of the Presbytery. At the same time he was furnished, from the Presbyterial library, with "Ferguson's Astronomy and the Plates," for additional study.

The next particular notice of him which we find in the Presbyterial records is an order upon the fall minutes of 1819 for his ordination. He was accordingly ordained the following spring, at Stoner's Creek, April 6, 1820, Rev. Thomas Calhoun preaching the ordination-sermon, and Rev. David Foster presiding and giving the charge. The record is that he was previously examined "on experimental religion, his internal call to the work of the ministry, his knowledge of Natural and Revealed Theology, of Philosophy, Astronomy, Geography, English Grammar, and Ecclesiastical History; also

as to his knowledge of the Constitution and Rules of the Church, and the principles of its Government."

It will be perceived from this brief sketch, that previous to his entrance upon the work of the ministry, he had charge of a family. It had grown to some size. He was the father of several children. He had commenced the world with but limited means, and had added but little to the original stock. He was a poor man, and his education was limited. He nevertheless labored to prepare himself for ordination in conformity not only with the letter, but the spirit, of our form of Church-government. If the record has been faithful, and his examinations were not a mockery, his preparation was very respectable. The writer has heard him speak more than once of his trials in this respect. He was compelled to labor closely for the support of his family; and when at his daily toil, his custom was to carry his English Grammar in his pocket, and improve the intervals which might occur, in preparing for his examinations before the Presbytery. In the summer, while his horse rested from the plow, he would snatch the moments for necessary study. In the next generation these things will seem almost fabulous, but they were the works of a generation of men who have just passed before us. Men who are now beckoned to the halls of our Colleges, instructed gratuitously, and in many instances greatly favored otherwise; men at whose feet the treasures of knowledge are poured

in profusion, can never appreciate fully the trials and the necessary self-denial of their fathers.

But while the young minister is laboring to fulfill his obligations to his Presbytery, he must also labor to fulfill his mission to the people. Mr. Guthrie was a laborious preacher. A portion of his early ministry was employed upon the circuit. The necessities, however, of a large family required his attention at home; his preaching was therefore mainly local. A portion of each summer and fall was devoted to attending camp-meetings. This was expected of all the preachers. It was additional to their ordinary local preaching. In this latter service, too, he was indefatigable, considering his circumstances. The writer has a personal knowledge of his having ministered for a long time to two congregations, at a distance of ten and fifteen miles from home. In preaching to the nearest congregation, he usually went and preached and returned the same day. It will be recollected that this occurred after a week of hard work upon the farm. To the neighborhood of the other congregation he usually went on Saturday evening, returning on Sabbath evening after preaching. This was considered necessary, and was perhaps unavoidable, in order to meet his obligations at home.

It may not be improper to say something here of his compensation for his pulpit services. It will present an illustration of his patient self-denial, as well as of the habits of the times. Of the liberality of one of the congregations we are not so well

informed; but in the other there lived two men—one a member of the Church, the other a man of the world—whose regular contribution was a silver dollar each a year. It is believed that this was his entire salary from that congregation. This, however, was considered as certain as if it had been annually collected by law. The time, too, when the contribution would be made was generally known in the family of the preacher, and was considered a matter of sufficient interest to be made the subject of a family talk. These worthy men were far richer than the preacher, but they seemed to think themselves doing well, and the preacher seemed to think them doing well, when they contributed annually each a silver dollar. The other congregation was a little more numerous, and perhaps their measure, according to the degree in which *God had prospered them*, was a little larger. They were good people, but poor, and unable to contribute much. The preacher was, therefore, but poorly compensated.

In 1831 Mr. Guthrie moved to the State of Missouri, and settled near Keytesville. In the course of the next year he joined the McGee Presbytery, the sessions of which he afterward attended as long as he was able. He had, however, become enfeebled by age and previous exertion, and was not able to preach much. Although a talented man, his lungs were never strong. In the new country in which he now lived his house became the home of the wayfaring minister, and a sanctuary in which himself, when able, and others ministered the word of life. In

1836 he assisted in organizing a Church in Keytesville, which was named, by his request, Ebenezer.

In September, 1843, he closed his earthly career. In relation to the occurrence I quote from a letter of his youngest son, Rev. A. W. Guthrie, who was with him at the time:

“After an absence of several weeks, I returned home late in the evening, and learned that father had had two chills. This was a little alarming, from the fact that he was advanced in life, and his constitution was becoming infirm and his strength declining. I spent most of the next day with him. This day he had no chill, sat up most of the time, was able to walk about the house, conversed as usual on ordinary topics, spoke of the crops, which by the blessing of Providence were likely to be very good, although at one time he had almost despaired of a crop in consequence of the wet weather. He enlarged on the sinfulness of distrusting the good providence of God. None of us thought of any immediate danger. If he did himself, he did not mention it. He, however, remarked that, according to the course of nature, his time was near—that he felt that he could not live long—that he was ready at any time to depart and be with Christ; expressed a firm assurance of acceptance with God through a Redeemer’s blood.

“I left in the evening, and returned next morning at the time the chill was expected. Found him sitting up, and his mind in the same composed and happy frame as on the day before; stayed with him

till the hour had passed at which the chill was expected, supposed it would not return, and left. In about an hour a messenger came for me. I returned, and found him in a hopeless state of congestion. He did not speak after my return, seemed to suffer very much, and in about an hour expired."

Thus died a good man, near the close of his seventy-third year. It may with great truthfulness be said that, as he died full of years, so he died full of faith. His last conversation was upon "the sinfulness of distrusting God," and an expression of his remaining confidence "of acceptance through a Redeemer's blood." In his life, to those who knew him most intimately, he presented, as nearly as we could expect here, a realization of what was doubtless Solomon's idea of a perfect and an upright man; but in his death we have, if possible, a still sweeter realization of the *peaceful end* of such a man: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

This brief sketch may be closed with some general remarks upon the character of Mr. Guthrie. If biography is worth any thing, it is in presenting to us such characteristics as are worthy of imitation.

We find, then, in him, a specimen of the class of men who founded the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. They were laborious, patient, self-denying, prayerful men. In the three first of these characteristics history is doing them justice. In the last they were known, and could only be known, to



those in intimate relations with them. But they were eminently men of prayer. Those of us who in age have followed close upon their footsteps, have had many proofs of this. Mr. Guthrie was a man of prayer; and when I say this, I do not mean that he was so in the ordinary sense of that expression, but that he was deeply imbued with the spirit of prayer. It was his daily life. The writer speaks thus from personal knowledge. A stranger would soon have felt in his presence that there was a spiritual atmosphere around him. He was not noisy, or obtrusive; but calm, thoughtful, serious. I was an inmate in his family some time, and had a close acquaintance with him for many years; and although he was habitually cheerful, I do not know that I ever heard him say, or knew him do, a foolish thing. In this respect I have always considered him a model, far above many who attracted more attention and excited more interest in his time. And I confess that in this respect, as well as in many others, his memory commands a degree of respect with me which the memory of many of his cotemporaries, who made much more noise in the Church, has failed to command. I remember him as a kind, cheerful, (but at the same time thoughtful,) and serious old man—as a man conscientious in his intercourse with men, and in fulfilling his obligations to God. He loved and feared God, and loved those in like manner who loved him.

Again: I have known no man who realized in the government and management of his family more

fully my idea of the patriarchal manner than he. He raised a large family. There was no apparent effort in the exercise of authority, yet the authority of the father was complete. In the course of our acquaintance of many years, I never saw it treated with disrespect. When the writer was an inmate of his family four of his sons were grown, and the oldest, who afterward became a prominent preacher, Rev. James S. Guthrie, was preparing for the ministry. The three others, with myself, had but recently professed religion. The religious exercises of the family were regularly kept up. At night the "boys," as we were called, officiated alternately—in the morning the patriarch himself was leader. On Sunday evening, if we were not at *meeting*, there was a theological examination, generally founded on the Catechism. I recollect, on two occasions I was assisted in answering difficult questions by a whisper from the *old lady*. One of the questions was: "Why can there be but one God?" I was a young theologian, and hesitated. She was sitting at my elbow, and whispered in my ear, "Because one fills immensity." The other question was upon a matter of history, and ignorance was a little more inexcusable—still I was ignorant: "Who was the father of Moses and Aaron?" I could not answer; but Mother Guthrie relieved me again by whispering, "Amram." This mode of religious administration will assist us in understanding why two of those sons became prominent and effective ministers of the gospel as well as acute and prac-

tical theologians, whilst the other two, though not ministers, are nevertheless pillars in the house of God. A third son also entered the ministry, and still lives an efficient and laborious preacher. He was, however, but a lad when the things occurred of which I write. Of the elder brothers who entered the ministry one preceded, and the other has since followed, the father to the grave. It is pleasant to believe that many works will follow them both. They made their mark in their day.

Still again: the case of Mr. Guthrie, like many others which history *ought to record*, presents great encouragement to pioneer labor in the ministry. The congregations to which he ministered in Tennessee were small, and scarcely organized. It is believed that he did not receive twenty dollars a year for his services; yet he *cast his bread upon the waters*. In one of these congregations, a few years after he left it, there was a powerful revival of religion. It is still small, however, but for years past has paid two hundred dollars annually for half the time of a young preacher. Of the congregation which he organized in Missouri, and which at first was composed chiefly of his own family, it is said that "it now has a respectable membership, and a house of worship creditable to any people." It is thus that the hardy pioneer clears the ground, breaks it up, sows the seed from which others may have the honor and the joy of reaping. This would seem a very unequal distribution of things, were there no future reward to be measured out to him

whose patient and self-denying labors and sufferings God alone can appreciate. How many are now laboring in different parts of the great West and South-west as pioneers? Let them not be discouraged, but still hold on to their self-denying work. God watches the seed which they are sowing in perhaps poorly prepared soil, and will cause it to spring up in an abundant harvest when they themselves are in the grave. Let them remember, too, that the day is coming which will reveal the full value of their works, and bring them an adequate reward. Scores of noiseless, unpretending ministers, are performing a work upon the frontiers of our vast country which God will acknowledge. Hold on, valued brethren! He that appointeth you, and in his providence assigns you your field of labor, has said, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

I feel inclined to give expression to another thought which this brief notice suggests. Mr. Guthrie raised five sons: three of these entered the ministry. Two of them have finished a useful work; the other is still a laboring minister. Two sons of his oldest daughter and child are likewise now respected and useful preachers. These may all be supposed to have received their first impressions from a common source—I mean such impressions as tuition, discipline, counsel, and example, are calculated to make. A great many families grow up in the Church. Some of them are numerous. The

sons of these families are promising, and apparently pious, but they turn their attention to other pursuits. Is there not a reason? And may not the reason in many cases be found in the character of our family religion? I am far from believing that this is the only reason. Surrounding circumstances may be so unfavorable as to counteract the influence of precept, counsel, and example at home. Still I press the question which I have propounded: Are we not to find in many cases the reasons for the fact that the sons of the Church are not brought more directly forward to her assistance, in the character of the religion of our own firesides? It is true that God calls men to this work; but he may have a reason when he calls. *God knew Abraham, that he would command his children and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment,* and therefore God made each of his sons a great nation. Do such providences teach nothing? A great many families of promising sons afford the Church no ministerial strength. May not a reason be, that the subject of religion is not properly presented at home? Are the obligations of these sons to God and to the Church explained and enforced? God calls men from sin to holiness by the use of means. Why should he not use means in calling them to the work of the ministry? If ministers and Christian friends should from the pulpit and in social and domestic intercourse inculcate a worldly spirit, and direct attention to worldly pursuits as the great business of life, it is very plain that but

few men would become Christians. Is it not as plain, that if parents and Christian friends encourage a worldly spirit and worldly pursuits in the young men of the Church, very few of them will ever seek the self-denying work of the ministry? I know one of the largest and most influential congregations in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church; it has been organized more than thirty years, has enjoyed revival after revival, has done much, even nobly, in promoting the interests of the Church and the general kingdom of Christ, and still has never furnished a single candidate for the ministry. Is there not a reason? We do not believe that God calls men irresistibly to Christ: why should we believe that he calls them irresistibly to the ministry? He does not do it. I conclude by stating, and pressing—if I could but press it—what is with me a full conviction, that if we had more families really, practically, and intelligently pious, we should find more young men consecrating themselves to the self-denying but noble work of the Christian ministry. God accepted Samuel at the hands of his mother, and made him a Prophet and a Judge in Israel. God also accepted Samuel Davies at the hands of a pious mother, and made him the greatest of American preachers. Why should he not accept such offerings at the hands of Christian parents now, and honor their children by making them useful ministers of his most precious word?

## REV. JOHN PROVINE.\*

1820—1855.

REV. JOHN PROVINE was born in North Carolina, on the 30th of March, 1784. In 1789 his father moved with his family and settled in Garrard county, Kentucky. The father and mother were both Presbyterians, as the ancestors of the family had been for many generations. His father was an elder in the old Paint Lick congregation of Garrard county. When young John was about eight years of age, his father died from the kick of a horse. Of that afflicting occurrence he gives us the following account in his autobiography, written a short time previous to his death :

“Though it occurred many years ago, and I was quite young, yet I distinctly remember the scene of my father’s death—how he talked to the family about religion. When the elders of the Church came to bid him a last farewell, he solemnly gave his family in charge to them, bidding them visit the fatherless and widow, see to it that his children were trained up in the fear of God. The children

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\* Autobiography published in Cumberland Presbyterian Missionary. Manuscript letter of Rev. J. C. Provine.

consisted of three sons and four daughters, and I being the youngest, as was the custom of the Church then, was set apart for the ministry. I remember to have heard my father, in his last counsel given to my mother, say to her, 'You must try and educate our son John for the ministry.' The impression then made on my mind has been as lasting as my years."

His mother, in conformity with the dying father's injunction, sent him to a Latin school in the neighborhood, and while he was pursuing his studies, often took occasion to impress on his young mind the necessity of personal religion, especially in her Sabbath evening conversations with her children. He says himself, and no doubt truthfully, "The influences of those fireside talks, the kind admonitions, and gentle warnings that fell from a mother's lips, sunk deep into my heart, and I doubt not contributed in a great degree to preparing the way for the Holy Spirit to do its work."

Notwithstanding these advantages, years passed, and a deep and long struggle was undergone before he experienced that great change which is the first and greatest of all qualifications for the Christian ministry. At a camp-meeting at Cane Ridge—the year is not given—a sister professed religion. The occurrence made a deep impression upon his mind, but he resisted it. At a meeting at Silver Creek, one of the elders of the congregation in which he was raised made a personal appeal to him on the subject of religion. He fell and lay deprived of



consciousness for some time. When consciousness returned, he arose with a resolution formed that he would seek the Saviour until he found him. Twelve months, however, were spent in fruitless endeavors to bring himself up to what he considered a proper state of mind and heart for the reception of the mercy of the gospel. Finally, at a prayer-meeting held by one of the elders of the congregation at his mother's house, while the honest man was presenting the promises of the gospel in his artless manner, the subject of this sketch was enabled to claim and appropriate those promises, and, according to his own account, before he was conscious of what he was doing, he was on his feet praising God.

“That night,” says he, “I shall never forget; the circumstances are as fresh in my memory as though they had transpired but yesterday. I have forgotten the day of the week, month, and even of the year, but the time when I experienced the full flow of the Christian's hope will be fresh as long as memory retains any thing of the past, for that scene does not grow old with my years.”

Mr. Provine now entered upon his preparation for the ministry more earnestly. He attached himself to a Latin school which was taught by Rev. Samuel Finley. A fellow-student and class-mate was Mr. N. H. Hall, who afterward became Rev. Dr. Hall, of Lexington, Kentucky. He and his friend, Mr. Hall, attended the sessions of the Kentucky Synod, at Danville, in the progress of which

five ministers, who became leaders of the New Lights, as they were then called, seceded from the Synod. Amongst these was the pastor of his own congregation, Rev. Samuel Houston, who afterward joined the Shakers. Houston persuaded the two young men to leave Mr. Finley's school and enter a school taught by the celebrated Barton W. Stone, in Bourbon county. Here they studied the Greek Grammar and Greek Testament. Mr. Stone was very assiduous in laboring to indoctrinate them into his new theology. Mr. Provine became troubled. The theology of his teacher was in conflict with his Christian experience. When at last he was relieved from these troubles, he left the school, and entered another. Here the doctrine of election and reprobation met him. His theological troubles were renewed. They were of a different kind from the former, but very embarrassing. Mr. Finley advised him to join the Presbytery, and take a regular theological course, that in this way his difficulties might be removed. He declined doing so, however, and resolved to come to Tennessee, and acquaint himself with the views of the people, who afterward became the Cumberland Presbyterians. Mr. Finley advised him, if he could not see his way clear, to embrace the Calvinistic doctrines, to unite with the Methodists, and enter the ministry among them. The result of all was what might have been expected of a conscientious and distrustful man. I give the result in his own words: "Being so much harassed in mind as to what truth

was, and finding so much corruption in my heart, I began to feel much discouraged about trying to preach, and finally concluded to abandon all thought on the subject."

Soon after Mr. Provine abandoned his purpose of entering the ministry, he was married to Miss Jane Calhoon, sister of the late Rev. Thomas Calhoon. His marriage occurred on the first day of October, 1807. He joined the Big Spring congregation, in the bounds of which he lived. Still he was not at rest. He was appointed a ruling elder in the congregation, and was frequently sent as a representative to the Presbytery. At the meetings of the Presbyteries in those days, it was customary to have a sermon on a call to the ministry. He was often very unhappy, and at length yielded to persuasion, and made a tour on the circuit with the late Rev. John Barnett. The result, however, was very unsatisfactory to himself. He made up his mind again to abandon all thoughts of entering the ministry, and so reported to Mr. Barnett. The reply was characteristic: "If your conscience can rest easy in view of such a trial as you have made, I would have no such conscience." He went home, however, considering his purpose settled. Soon after he reached home, he was laid upon a bed of sickness, which confined him near three months.

"During my sickness," says he, "I experienced much mental agony in view of the wants of a perishing world, and the great need of some to break to them the bread of life. On my bed of

affliction I covenanted with God that I would be his obedient servant in all things, and if he would spare my life, I would do my duty. Being restored to health, I started with Rev. J. L. Dillard on a circuit, and with much fear and trembling gave myself up to the guidance of God, and did what I could to point sinners the way to heaven."

He joined the Nashville Presbytery, as a candidate for the ministry, at its fall meeting in 1814. The meeting was held at Big Spring. The ministers present were David Foster, Hugh Kirkpatrick, Thomas Calhoon, and David McLin. At the next meeting of the Presbytery, which was held at Smith's Fork in the spring of 1815, he read a discourse from John v. 40, which was "sustained as popular preparatory to licensure." Messrs. Kirkpatrick, Calhoon, Foster, and McLin, were appointed a Committee on Examination. The Committee reported that they "had examined Mr. Provine on the Latin and Greek languages, English Grammar, and Divinity." He was accordingly licensed on the 11th day of May, 1815.

On the 14th of October, 1820, he was ordained at the Beech Meeting-house, in Sumner county. Rev. Samuel McSpadden preached the ordination-sermon, and Rev. Thomas Calhoon presided and gave the charge.

Mr. Provine's ministry was confined to Middle Tennessee. His preaching was plain, practical, and forcible. He had a good voice, a dark eye, a very unassuming, but altogether an acceptable manner.

His great want was self-confidence. Some men have a great deal too much of this, but he had too little. Still he was an earnest and useful preacher, and a most lovely man.

The first time I recollect to have heard him preach was at the Ridge Meeting-house, in the edge of Robertson county. It was about a year after I professed religion, and I was then teaching my first school in the neighborhood. The text was, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." He was certainly much in the Spirit, and the sermon was very impressive. He spent the night at the house of Rev. Robert Guthrie, a patriarch in his time, with whom I was boarding. He conducted family prayers at night. I recollect distinctly one petition in his prayer: "O Lord, we ask not for riches, nor honor, nor even for long life, but we pray that we may be *useful* while we live." If I had ever heard such a petition before, it had made no impression upon my mind. But it then made an impression which is vivid now.

I have another anecdote to relate, which is too interesting to be overlooked. In the summer of 1820 Mr. Provine traveled and preached on what was called the Nashville Circuit. A few years later, in the course of my own ministry in Western Tennessee, a pious old lady gave me a history of an occurrence which took place in the summer of 1820, in connection with Mr. Provine's ministry of

that year on the circuit. One of his places of preaching was the house of William Orr, on West Harpeth, a few miles from Franklin. There was a very general religious interest in the country at the time. The old lady, with her husband and family, lived then near Franklin, and she and her husband were members of the Presbyterian Church. They had known something of Mr. Provine in his early life in Kentucky. They learned that he was to preach at Mr. Orr's on a particular day, and the mother and several of the children made arrangements to go and hear him. When they were about leaving home, the old lady addressed her children, according to her own account, somewhat thus: "Now, my children, you have heard a great deal of Cumberland Presbyterians, and some of the things which you have heard have been unfavorable. I do not know any thing about them myself, but I knew Johnny Provine when he was a boy, and I believe when you hear him preach, you will hear what he thinks, at least, to be the truth. He was a good boy, and I have no doubt he is a good man."

They went to meeting, and although it was a week-day, the house was crowded. Mr. Provine preached from the following text: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." He said afterward that he was very much in the Spirit. The sermon was very impressive. At its close, all the old lady's children that she brought with her were among the

mourners. The whole family of children were soon brought into the Church, and some of them now live burning and shining lights. The example of Mrs. Moore might be a valuable lesson to many parents.

In the year 1880 Mr. Provine lost his wife. He calls this, in the style of the antiquated theology, *a great crook in his lot*. His house was veiled in mourning. On the 24th of January, 1833, he was again married, to Miss Catharine Ralston. He says, no doubt truthfully, that he *sought and consummated this marriage with a religious motive*.

In 1836 a small speck appeared on his left temple. It soon developed itself into an incurable cancer. Every effort was made for its removal, but in vain. It was the appointed shaft of death. His bodily sufferings were very great. For years the invincible destroyer was engaged at his unceasing work. Nor was the afflicted minister free from the buffetings of Satan. Yet God delivered him, and enabled him, in his own expressive language, "while looking back through this long fight of affliction, to sing of mercy and judgment."

His affliction continued nineteen years. He died July 30, 1855, in his seventy-second year, with unshaken confidence in those precious truths which he had often preached, and which had been his support through so long and painful an affliction. He lies in the same grave-yard with his brother-in-law, Rev. Thomas Calhoun. It is, on many accounts, a sacred spot. Mr. Provine had six children—five

sons and a daughter—all of his first family. Two of his sons, says my informant, are in heaven. Two are ruling elders in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church; one is a respected minister, Rev. J. C. Provine, of Nashville, Tennessee.

I saw Mr. Provine for the last time a few weeks before his death. He had been able to attend church at the Big Spring. I went with him to his home, and spent a few hours there. His whole conversation seemed to run in one channel. His mind was evidently engrossed with the prospect of the great event which was just before him. He was an honest, earnest, Christian man, examining always with care the ground on which he stood. The result of his self-examination was the unfaltering faith in which he died.



## REV. JAMES JOHNSON.\*

1822—1837.

JAMES JOHNSON was born on the 15th of June, 1785, in Prince Edward county, Virginia. In 1790 his father emigrated to Kentucky, and settled in Scott county. Subsequently, however, he moved to Barren county, and became the owner of the land upon which Glasgow now stands. In 1802 James Johnson, the son, left his father's house for the purpose of seeking his fortune in the wide world. He was then seventeen years of age. His leaving home does not seem to have been produced by any domestic difficulties or dissatisfaction, but from an anxious desire to take his part in the stirring scenes of life. The country was new, and there were many openings to active and aspiring young men. He made his way to Louisville, then a mere trading village and military post. He there became acquainted with General Clarke, whose confidence he seems to have soon acquired. He was sent by General Clarke on several perilous missions through the North-western Territory, then inhabited

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\* Manuscripts of Dr. J. M. Johnson, Hon. J. L. Johnson, and Minutes of Logan Presbytery.

by Indians, with a few French settlements interspersed. In one of these agencies he landed his canoe at the mouth of Hurricane Creek, in what is now Crittenden county, Kentucky, and made his way to Centerville, then the seat of justice of Livingston county. Here he became acquainted with John Gray, then a prominent citizen of Lower Kentucky, and Mr. Woods, afterward of the house of Yeatman and Woods, of Nashville. He engaged himself as a clerk in the store of Mr. Woods. He continued in this position, however, but a short time, as we find that when he was but about eighteen years of age, through the influence of several prominent men, he was appointed sheriff of Livingston county. He held this office six years, and at the expiration of that time commenced the study of medicine with Dr. Stewart, who is represented to have been a physician of eminence and ability. He is said also to have enjoyed the friendship and esteem of Drs. Griffin and Delany, both, like himself, Virginians, and both men of education and refinement.

In 1806 Mr. Johnson was married to Miss Jane Leeper, of Livingston county. In process of time, he commenced the practice of medicine. The country was new, and thinly settled: he was a popular physician, and of course his practice was very laborious.

In 1808 he made profession of religion, and joined the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. About a year afterward his wife also professed religion, and

seems to have become an unusually pious woman. I have in my possession a long and interesting account of her Christian profession, her life, and her death. She was awakened to the necessity of religion by the death of a younger sister. Says the writer: "On the fourth day of July, in the town of Salem, whilst the large majority of its citizens were engaged in the usual manner of celebrating the anniversary of American Independence in a public dinner, ball, and similar amusements, Mrs. Johnson now awakened to a sense of the danger of living without God in the world, as also of the depravity of her nature and corruption of her heart, in her garden was engaged at a throne of divine grace for that mercy and grace which she felt she so greatly needed. Whilst thus engaged, her mind was relieved: God shed abroad his love in her heart. She lived in the faithful discharge of religious duties. In the absence of her husband, she made it a matter of conscience to convene her children and servants for family prayer."

Such a wife could not be otherwise than a great helper to a good man.

In the war of 1812 he entered the public service as a volunteer, and was made assistant surgeon of his regiment. He also served in the campaign of General Hopkins against the North-western Indians. Finis Ewing was a chaplain in this expedition, or rather, served in the two-fold capacity of a private soldier and chaplain. The times were trying.

On the 11th day of December, 1818, Dr. Johnson

lost his excellent wife. Her death seems to have been an unusual Christian triumph. Having joined her friends in a sweet song, she exhorted all around her to seek the salvation of their souls. Her friends thought that supernatural strength had been imparted to her. After addressing her relatives very earnestly for two, or two and a half hours, says my authority, "She ceased not to praise God, and express her views of heaven, which appeared just in prospect, in such language as the following: 'What is this I see—is it Pisgah's view? No, it is heaven itself! Glory, glory, glory!'" Such a death as this was well calculated to make an impression upon the mind of the surviving husband. He had already turned his attention to the Christian ministry. The circumstances were well calculated to strengthen his purposes in that direction. On the 8th day of April, 1818, he was received as a candidate for the ministry by the Logan Presbytery. Its sessions were held at Lebanon Academy, in Christian county, Kentucky. The first text assigned him for a trial sermon was Eph. ii. 8. At the fall sessions of the same Presbytery in 1819, on the 18th day of November, at Antioch Meeting-house, in Christian county, he and Woods M. Hamilton, John M. Berry, William C. Lang, and Joseph McDowell, were licensed. The text of Mr. Johnson's popular discourse, preparatory to licensure, was John iii. 16. On the 2d day of April, 1822, he and Woods M. Hamilton were set apart to the whole work of the ministry by the Logan Presby-

tery, at Rose Creek Meeting-house, in Hopkins county. Rev. Aaron Shelby preached the ordination-sermon, and Rev. John Barnett presided and gave the charge.

When Mr. Johnson was licensed, he was directed to spend two months of the time intervening between that and the next Presbytery on the Christian and Montgomery Districts as a missionary, and at the spring sessions of the Presbytery, in 1820, he was directed to spend the whole of his time on the Christian District. The record is that all these appointments were fulfilled. It will be recollected that at this time Dr. Johnson had a family of several motherless children.

After Dr. Johnson's ordination, according to the custom of those days, his missionary services were sometimes called into requisition. I quote from one of the manuscripts in my possession: "When ordered by his Presbytery to travel as a missionary through Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, or Arkansas, he went cheerfully to the work, carrying a bell and hobble for his horse, preaching in the wilderness, under the shade of a tree, often to half-a-dozen of poor hunters; still, however, erecting the standard of the cross whenever and wherever the opportunity offered itself. He was a zealous man in every thing he undertook; he never yielded to discouragements; dashed all obstacles aside, and moved directly on to the accomplishment of his purposes. His greatest efficiency was in exhortation and prayer. His sermons, however, were

always good—sometimes excellent. In private life, he was kind and exemplary. He loved the Church, loved the ministry, loved the brethren. In his temperament he was cheerful, and always hopeful.”

In 1820 or 1821 Dr. Johnson was married a second time, to Mrs. Louisa Harman, of Tennessee. Mrs. Harman's family name was Brigham. Some of her brothers and their families were amongst my earliest acquaintances and friends after I entered the ministry. I recollect them with deep interest.

After the death of his second wife, he was married again, to a Mrs. Jarratt, of Livingston county, Kentucky. He survived this marriage, however, but a few weeks. His last affliction was of short duration. On the 18th day of December, 1837, his laborious and active life came to an end. I recollect it was said at the time that his death was rather a triumphant scene. My informant says: “His mind was perfectly composed; his trust in the Saviour of the world was unflinching. He died exhorting his children to meet him in heaven.”

My personal knowledge of Dr. Johnson was limited to seven or eight of the last years of his life. The most of that time we were co-presbyters. He was genial, cheerful, and social in his habits. If he had dark days, I never happened to meet him in one of them. He had a very interesting family growing up around him. The most of them have since become honored men and women. His home was the abode of hospitality. It is intimated in one of

the manuscripts which I have used, and I know it to have been true, that there was always a special welcome to the ministerial brother. He kept up the practice of medicine to some extent, I suppose, from the time he entered the profession to his death.

He had a large family, and received but little remuneration for his ministerial labor. Still he maintained the character of an earnest and laborious preacher. His son says: "He never passed a Sabbath without religious exercises of some kind." When I knew him, the prospects of the Church were dark in the section of country in which he lived. We had discouragements. For some years three of us constituted the whole available strength of the Presbytery. Still he never faltered in his fidelity to the Church, or to his ministerial vocation.

Dr. Johnson had mingled more with men of the world than most ministers. His habits of life as a physician kept him in constant contact with such men. Such relations to society are not always the most useful to the ministry. They sometimes become a snare. Still, to a thoughtful and dignified man, they open new avenues to usefulness. Men of the world are better understood by those who mingle with them. They can be approached more advantageously by such men. The subject of this sketch never lost by his contact with men. It increased, rather than diminished, his influence over them. They thought the more of Christianity from

the exemplification of it which they found in him. He was a gentleman, as well as a Christian and a Christian minister.

He was free from professional envy. Whilst he did not make the highest ministerial pretensions, he certainly never looked with a spirit of rivalry upon those who may have stood somewhat above him in public estimation. He would rather have strengthened than weakened the influence of such men.

He was a bold and fearless expounder of his religious opinions. He had been trained in a hardy and rugged school. It gave him independence. Some of his neighbors were unbelievers, and bitter opposers. He never turned his course to avoid them. He gave them his mind plainly—they understood him. The line between them was distinctly marked—he met them with no spirit of compromise. His son says: “He never feared the face of man.” I expect this is true. If he had seen an honest and upright man oppressed, he would have resisted the oppressor, if he had stood alone in his resistance. Such men are invaluable in any community.

Dr. Johnson left ten children. Some of these still live: Dr. John M. Johnson, of Atlanta, Georgia; Hon. James L. Johnson, of Owensboro, Kentucky; and Major-General R. W. Johnson, of the U. S. Army—are three of them. Alfred B. Johnson, his youngest son, graduated at Cumberland College in 1848, studied law, and settled in Owensboro, Ken-



tucky. He was an earnest member of the Church, became a ruling elder in his congregation, was a delegate to the General Assembly in 1857, but died in early life. He was a young man of fine promise.

## FRANCEWAY RANNA COSSITT, D.D.

1822—1863.

FRANCEWAY RANNA COSSITT was born at Claremont, New Hampshire, April 24, 1790. His family were Episcopalians. His maternal grandfather and an uncle were in succession pastors of the Episcopalian congregation at Claremont. I have received the impression from himself, that whilst his family were perhaps not bigoted, they were decided in their ecclesiastical preferences. They were of those who had sympathized with the king in his conflicts with the parliament—a series of conflicts which resulted in the overthrow and death of the king, and the establishment of Cromwell in the Protectorate. Of course his ancestors could hardly have been genuine Puritans.

At the age of fourteen Mr. Cossitt commenced his preparation for college, and after the usual embarrassments and delays in such cases, entered Middlebury College, in Vermont. In 1813 he graduated. His standing was high in a large class. After leaving college he spent two years in teaching, at Morristown, in New Jersey. It was customary, in those days, for men, after having completed their collegiate studies, to spend some time in teaching

before entering upon the study of those things relating more immediately to their chosen profession. From Morristown he went to North Carolina, and took charge of Vine Hill Academy, on Roanoke River.

From North Carolina he returned to New England deeply impressed with the necessity of personal religion. What particular circumstance awakened his attention to that subject is not now known to his friends. After using the ordinary means, and passing through many discouragements, his mind at length found relief. In his own self-distrusting account of this occurrence, he says: "If I ever embraced Jesus Christ as he is offered in the gospel, it was near the bank of the Connecticut River. I had tied my horse to a sappling in a thicket, whither I had retired to pray for mercy." In such a manner a man of his temperament was more likely to settle the great question to his satisfaction. The pressure of a crowd who are encouraging and exhorting may be the best for some, but it is not the best for all.

Mr. Cossitt's original purpose was to engage in the legal profession, but with his spiritual change came a change of purpose. He resolved to devote himself to the Christian ministry. He studied theology at New Haven, in what has since become the General Episcopal Seminary of New York—the institution having been removed. Bishop Brownell, of Connecticut, gave him license as a "lay reader" in the Episcopal Church.

He then directed his course to Tennessee, and established a school at a little place on Cumberland River, called in its day New York, a few miles below Clarksville. A number of his Carolina friends had moved and settled there. They were wealthy, and desired to educate their children. With a view to this object, they urged his settlement among them. In addition, the opening and improving condition of the country presented a fine prospect to men engaged in the work of education. His school became in process of time, amongst other things, a sort of theological seminary. A number of young men preparing for the ministry resorted thither for the purpose of receiving instruction.

While he was engaged at New York I first became acquainted with Mr. Cossitt. In the fall of 1821 he came to a camp-meeting held on Wells's Creek, in Stewart county. He was accompanied to the meeting by William Clements, an educated gentleman and an elder in the Church, who had previously become acquainted with him. An introduction by such a man as Mr. Clements was a recommendation. They arrived at the meeting on Saturday. The ministers in attendance, besides myself, were Thomas Calhoun, Robert Baker, and Robert S. Donnell. Mr. Cossitt preached on Saturday evening, although still an Episcopalian. His text was, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." The sermon was a respectable

**argument** in support of the truth of the Christian Scriptures. This was his introduction to Cumberland Presbyterians. Mr. Calhoun was the manager of the meeting, and treated him with great attention and respect.

In 1822 he was set apart to the whole work of the ministry in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and became a member of the Anderson Presbytery. On the 19th of February, of the same year, he was married to Miss Lucinda Blair, of Montgomery county, a lady of unusual personal attractions. Her father was a prominent member of the Church. Of course Mr. Cossitt was now fairly identified with the Cumberland Presbyterians.

Shortly after his marriage he issued a prospectus with a view to the publication of a paper, which he proposed to call the Western Star. For some reason the publication was never commenced. I suppose the reason to have been an insufficiency of encouragement on the score of patronage. The movement was in advance of the times. After spending two or three years at New York, he moved to Elkton, Kentucky, and established a school there. His associations at Elkton were unusually pleasant. He always spoke of them with interest.

At the sessions of the Cumberland Synod at Princeton, in 1825, the plan of Cumberland College was projected, and commissioners were appointed to examine particular points, and make the location. Another set of commissioners was

appointed to procure a charter for the proposed Institution from the Legislature of Kentucky. It was to have been called the *Cumberland Presbyterian College*. The gentlemen who visited the Legislature for the purpose of procuring a charter, were advised to drop the "Presbyterian" from the proposed name, as it might arouse sectarian opposition among the members and their friends, and thus cause the application to be rejected. Accordingly the application was made for a charter of Cumberland College. The change was displeasing to some leading members of the Church, and was perhaps the first step in producing a series of embarrassments which in process of time became very numerous and great—so much so that in a few years the existence of the Institution was placed in jeopardy.

Princeton and Elkton were rivals in their efforts for the location. The Institution was located in the vicinity of Princeton; a farm was bought about a mile from the town. It was to be a manual labor school, and arrangements were made accordingly. Mr. Cossitt was chosen President, and opened the College for the reception of students in March, 1826.

Cumberland College was an experiment. The country was comparatively new. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church had been chiefly devoted to the more immediate work of saving sinners, and collecting congregations. The itinerant plan of preaching, and yearly camp-meetings, constituted a large part of their machinery. The establishment

of denominational schools and of colleges had been overlooked. The lessons necessary to conducting such enterprises with success had to be learned from experience. A practical man would have expected blunders and a probable failure. Again, the plan of the Institution was a novelty. It was a generous conception. Almost any reasoner would have decided that it was suitable to the wants and genius of a plain, practical people. It looked to the education of young men, and especially of young men preparing for the ministry, who had not the means of supporting themselves at more expensive institutions of learning. Rugged young men, who had been first trained at the plow, and who had vigor of body, were to be converted into scholars, and statesmen, and pulpit orators. This was the theory, and it was a theory worthy of a trial. The students were to occupy dormitories provided for them, to use straw-beds, and furniture of the plainest and cheapest kind, and to board at a common boarding-house. The fare was to be healthful, but plain and cheap. All luxuries were proscribed. The students were to work two hours each day except the Sabbath, and to pay sixty dollars a year into the College treasury.

Upon the opening of the College, Mr. Cossitt collected around him some of the best young men in the land. A large log-building was constructed for College purposes, and the students who were educated there during ten of the first years of the Institution "rubbed their backs against *wooden*

walls." Notwithstanding what would now be considered the grimness and severity of the system, the number of the students was large. In the spring and summer of 1830 it reached one hundred and twenty-five.

At the meeting of the General Assembly in 1830 it was thought necessary to raise the charges in money from sixty to eighty dollars. Experience had shown that the expenditures of the establishment were greater than its friends had anticipated. This circumstance operated unfavorably, of course, upon the patronage of the Institution; still its patronage was respectable. Pecuniary difficulties, however, rather increased than diminished. Money had been borrowed to pay for the farm, and other debts had been contracted, and the interest was an eating cancer.

In 1831 the General Assembly leased the College to Rev. John Barnett and Rev. Aaron Shelby for a term of years. The pecuniary difficulties of the Institution had become very great. The Church had become in some degree alienated; confidence in the final success of the enterprise was failing. Messrs. Barnett and Shelby were to have all the proceeds of the College after paying the necessary expenditures—to support a sufficient number of instructors, to keep up the boarding-house, and pay the debts of the College. They were considered men of great energy and perseverance, of respectable financial ability, and devoted friends of the Church. Mr. Shelby continued his connection



with the Institution till the summer or fall of 1833, when he sold his interest to Mr. Harvey Young. In the summer of 1834 Mr. Young died, and the entire management of the financial affairs of the College fell into the hands of Mr. Barnett. In the summer of 1834 the cholera visited the town. A number of persons fell victims to the terrible disease. The College, however, did not disband. But the cholera was followed by a malignant fever, which extended to the College community, and spread over the country. The condition of things became so bad at the College, that a temporary suspension of operations was found absolutely necessary. The manager of the farm and boarding-house died; one of the professors was finally prostrated, one of the students died, and a number in addition were sick. It was a terrible blow upon the Institution. It rallied, however, and the fall session commenced with favorable prospects. Still there were financial troubles. The Church, too, began to complain of Mr. Barnett. Some thought he managed badly; others thought he managed wholly with a view to his own selfish ends; others went so far as to impeach his integrity as a man of business and a Christian. A change became necessary.

Accordingly, at the General Assembly in 1837, which met at Princeton, Cumberland College Association was formed. Mr. Barnett's interest was transferred to the Association. It was a joint-stock company. It was pledged to carry on the

operations of the Institution under the direction and control of the General Assembly. A number of the most respectable and wealthy citizens of Princeton and the neighborhood entered into the Association. Prospects seemed to brighten, and hope was restored once more. The Association entered upon their work with vigor and energy. Still, after a temporary revival of interest and confidence, another cloud arose. An impression was made upon the minds of those in the neighborhood of the College that the Church had deserted it, and that neither contributions nor patronage were to be expected from that quarter. It was believed that busy persons, with selfish designs, contributed to that impression. The subject of transferring the Institution to the control of the Episcopalians of Kentucky was seriously considered. How far Episcopalians of Kentucky may have been answerable themselves for the state of feeling which existed, the writer has no means of knowing, but some of Dr. Cossitt's friends thought that they were not inactive. It was natural enough that they should have felt an interest in a measure which would have contributed greatly to their success and establishment in Lower Kentucky.

The result of this condition of things was a great effort on the part of Dr. Cossitt to arouse the Church once more to an interest in behalf of the College. He and Rev. F. C. Usher, who was connected with him in the department of instruction, published a circular letter, in which earnest

appeals were made to the ministers and members of the Church. I append also a private letter, written about the same time, and on the same subject, to one of the fathers of the Church. I suppose he may have written twenty or thirty such letters.

“CUMBERLAND COLLEGE, Feb. 3, 1840.

“DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—By this time probably you have received a printed circular signed by myself and Brother Usher. By that you will see that we are in trouble—I have not dared to show how much. To tell you that mine are days of sadness, and nights of waking—to say that my eyes stream with tears, and my heart bleeds with agony, would be to tell you of what your knowledge of me, and your perusal of the circular, must already have informed you. I will not attempt to describe the shame, mortification, and anguish of spirit which I feel; but will devote this sheet to the reasons why I thus feel at present. Surely I may be permitted to show the wounds of my spirit to sympathizing brethren.

“I have devoted the best years of my life to the College. I have done it for the Church. The Church must and will sustain it, in justice to herself, if not to me. For all that I have done, sacrificed, and suffered, I ask nothing for myself—not even thanks; but I ask that she may not suffer the fruits of her own labors, as well as mine, to go to swell the triumphs of another denomination, and to fix the indelible stain of ignorance, supine-

ness, and covetousness upon our names and memories.

“When I compare what other denominations are doing in behalf of ministerial education with what we are doing, I must confess I am alarmed, not that I envy or wish to impede their success, but because I tremble for our own. I have at great pains obtained the following statistics, which may be relied on as correct: The Episcopalians have seven colleges and four theological seminaries in the United States. The Presbyterians have fifty colleges and nine theological seminaries. The Congregationalists, nine colleges and five theological seminaries. The Methodists, eight colleges. The Baptists, seven colleges and five theological seminaries. The Catholics, six colleges and five theological seminaries. There are forty-nine colleges and twelve theological seminaries West of the Alleghany Mountains, and I believe every one of them much better endowed than our own; yet but very few of them hold an equal standing. Thirty-seven colleges and ten theological seminaries have been established since ours, and nearly all the colleges and twelve theological seminaries, on the West of the Alleghanies. And now, my brother, shall the only Cumberland Presbyterian College pass to another denomination? The whole world would cry out, ‘Shame! shame!’ Our very name would become a by-word and a reproach for ages to come. I am not a prophet, but, my dear brother, permit me to make a prediction. This College may die,

or go into other hands, but its epitaph will be written in the everlasting disgrace of that body which founded, but did not appreciate and sustain it. It is better for us to hear this plain, but unpleasant truth, now while the remedy is in our power, than for posterity to hear it when the time has passed for effacing the stain from the escutcheon of the Church of their ancestors. Should the Church in future ages mourn over the supineness and negligence of the present generation of ministers and members of our branch? Should future generations of men regard us as too weak to appreciate the blessings and manifold mercies wherewith an indulgent Heaven has favored us, or too covetous to extend and perpetuate them as a rich legacy to our spiritual descendants, whose reputation would be most likely to suffer? The name and memory of him whose afflicted heart now communes with you in these lines, will probably be overlooked in the crowd of those more conspicuous; or if remembered at all, will at least be known as an advocate for education. Should posterity fix the broad seal of condemnation on our Church for suffering our College to pass into other hands for the want of aid, who, I ask, will bear this load of censure? Rely upon this fact: the more conspicuous any one may have been in founding and building up the Church, the more conspicuous must he be in the history of the loss of the College to that Church of which he was a minister. Do you think I fear for my own reputation, in such an

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event? How is it possible to entertain such a fear? I can fear nothing, while faithful records are preserved. The body proposing to take the College would, I doubt not, render it a splendid Institution in a very few years. They say so, and it is known that they are fully able. Their colleges are all splendid—some of them the most so in the world. Did I wish to get myself a great name as the founder of a splendid College, at the expense of duty, conscience, and the interests of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, together with the reputation of its ministers and members, the readiest way to accomplish this end would be to let the Episcopalians have it. But Providence has cast my lot with you; my sympathies are with you, and I wish to live and die a member of your Church, which has adopted me as a son, and honored me as a minister. I trust I feel for the honor of the Church. And while my heart is torn with agony under existing prospects, permit me, with humble deference, to say my heart assures me we all ought to raise our voices and wield our pens; we ought to sound the tocsin of alarm; stir up every minister and member; traverse the whole length and breadth of our bounds; visit every Church and every family from the palace to the cot, and invite and urge all to contribute to a fund for the education of a future ministry. I verily believe our doctrines are the truth as taught in the word of God. I also believe they are taught in the writings of the fathers of the Christian Church, up to the

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time of Augustine, who was the first teacher of the system now called Calvinism. The doctrines of our Church are much older than the Westminster Confession, and just as old as the Bible. This I have intended to show at some time in a little book on the subject. Now if our doctrines are the truth, ought we not to give the world the benefit of them? And how can we do this without some men at least of extensive learning? Believe me, if any Church under heaven needs an educated ministry, that Church is our own. If so many colleges and theological seminaries are employed in educating men to disseminate error, ought we not to have one employed in the cause of God's own truth? Resolve upon it, and it shall be so. I, for one, have embarked in the cause of education, as auxiliary to the diffusion of the gospel. I have had many discouragements, and have often been censured and condemned. I may be again, but hope is still my anchor. I have put my hand to the plow—I cannot turn back. It is true, at the beginning I did not count the cost in regard to my sufferings in feeling, but be them what they may, I am now prepared to endure them until every prospect has vanished, and hope's last lingering ray has given place to the gloom of utter despair.

“You are at liberty to show this to as many brethren as you judge to be faithful and true. Let me hear from you, if you please, as soon as possible. Could you not write something, and publish it in the paper, in favor of sustaining the College? And

I hope you will come up to the next Assembly determined to sustain it, and prepared for prompt and efficient measures.

“In great affliction, but with hope for my consolation, I remain yours in Christ,

“F. R. COSSITT.”

These efforts were continued to the meeting of the General Assembly, which occurred in May following. Its sessions were held at Elkton, Kentucky. When the Assembly met, it appeared that the Church had been fully awakened to the importance and danger of the crisis. A magnificent scheme was formed. If it had been carried into effective operation, it would have relieved the College from debt, and rendered it permanent, if not prosperous. It was proposed to raise one hundred thousand dollars for educational purposes. Fifty-five thousand dollars of that sum was to serve as a perpetual endowment of Cumberland College; thirty thousand was to be used in Pennsylvania, in the endowment of a college there; and the remaining fifteen thousand dollars was to constitute a sort of floating capital, to be used as circumstances might suggest. Several of the most popular young men in the Church were engaged as agents; the people were not illiberal in their subscriptions, and every thing seemed to promise well. Dr. Cossitt confidently believed that the College would be endowed, and that the most liberal provision would be made for the education of candidates for the ministry. This last was always



a controlling thought with him, as it has been with all the earnest educators in our Church. This thought originated the impulse which led to the establishment of Cumberland College at first, and afterward to the establishment of Cumberland University. As an evidence that he was sanguine in his hopes, I offer the following extract from a letter written to myself a few weeks before the meeting of the Assembly in 1840. He had received the impressions from his correspondence which developed themselves at the Assembly. The letter indicates great hopefulness :

“PRINCETON, April 8, 1840.

“DEAR BROTHER BEARD:—It is now near midnight, I suppose. I have been in bed, but cannot sleep, and have arisen to write a few lines to you. I suppose you have received my printed circular, also the first number of the Banner of Peace. You will see our prospects, in part only, of the endowment of the College. I tell you it *will* be endowed. If for years ‘we have sat down by the rivers of Babylon and wept when we remembered Zion,’ the redeeming spirit which is abroad leads us to say, now ‘is our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.’ Even I, who have been so long brooding over my hard fortune, like one shorn of his strength and bereft of his energies, feel my native energies rising within me, and the promptings to action, which I could scarcely suppress, if I would. Our Church is to awake from her apathy,

depend upon it. 'The Lord hath not forgotten to be gracious—he will not always chide.' An impetus is to be given to ministerial education. Were you here, you could judge of the signs of the times as well as I—especially after reading the many letters which I have received. I and my family have written during the winter about fifty letters, in some respects like the one I sent you some short time since, notwithstanding my labors are much more arduous in College than when you were here. You would be astonished at the amount of labor of all kinds I now perform. I am astonished at it myself. I am complaining of a cold, but Mrs. Cossitt says mental efforts agree with my health.

"I am writing, and expect to write, much on the subject of ministerial education. I hope to give the subject some of my best strokes before I have done with it. Brother Usher is doing well. Mr. P. is too fractious; but we have harmony in the Faculty. I have given him some plain and faithful talks, by which Brother Usher thinks he has profited. \* \* \* Good-night.

"F. R. COSSITT."

I present an extract from another letter, received ten months after the action of the Assembly in 1840:

"PRINCETON, March 27, 1841.

"BELOVED BROTHER:— \* \* \* Your letter convinces me that you are somewhat behind the times with respect to the present feelings and sentiments

of the Church. Perhaps you are yet incredulous. I do not know that I ought to wonder at it, considering the past. I for years was just where you are. But I tell you, the Church is getting awake on two important subjects—The means of education for candidates for the ministry; and, The means of support for laborious ministers, together with a general plan of operations. I am sure I could convince you of this in a short conversation. Do not smile, and say, ‘Brother Cossitt is sanguine.’ Let me smile, rather, and say, ‘Brother Beard is *skeptical*.’ Trust me, for once: I cannot be mistaken. \* \* \*

With some, learning is *useful*, NECESSARY, or INDISPENSABLE; with others, it is popular and praiseworthy. The people are almost universally in favor of it, as you know. Who shall dare to oppose it? I tell you, the day for *open* opposition has passed. \* \* \*

The spirit of the age is onward; and this spirit has at last entered our Church. I could, if time and paper would allow, give you many evidences. \* \* \*

The College *will* be endowed. We cannot doubt it. You must give up your incredulity—you will be compelled to yield it. \* \* \*

I am overwhelmed with cares and business. My labors in the College are not at all lessened. \* \* \*

Sometimes I think I have business enough for two or three men. I have to write much, while others sleep. But they say I fatten on it. I feel that I can do much with a prospect of success, but very little without it. I do hope and pray that I may never again sink into that state of listlessness and

despondency in which I was for some years of our acquaintance. Yours in the gospel,

“F. R. COSSITT.”

It will be perceived that this letter was written but a few weeks before the meeting of the General Assembly of 1841. At that Assembly things seemed to be going forward smoothly. The friends of the College were still hopeful, and even buoyant. I have letters in my possession, written by Dr. Cossitt several months after the Assembly of 1841, in which the same hopeful and confident spirit is expressed. My persistent incredulity had been almost overcome. The reader will then judge of the revulsion which the public mind must have experienced when it was announced at the General Assembly of 1842 that Cumberland College was still hopelessly in debt, that its property was under execution, and liable to be placed under the sheriff's hammer any day. None but those, however, who knew Dr. Cossitt intimately can appreciate the shock which his feelings must have suffered as the true condition of things became known, and its inevitable results were developed. The writer makes this statement with a full knowledge of many, if not of most, of the circumstances connected with the dark cloud which spread itself over the prospects of the College. And however Dr. Cossitt may have felt compelled to follow the lead of a train of circumstances which he could not control, the troubles of Cumberland College, of which we now speak,

threw a shadow over his path which continued to his dying day. The happiest hours of his life were those in which he was struggling—often against fearful odds—for the prosperity, or to maintain the existence, of the Institution. It was, from its inception, a darling enterprise—it was that through which he became known to the world. It was the enterprise through which he expected his name to be handed down to posterity, if it should reach posterity at all. It was an enterprise of his own selection. His Banner of Peace was pressed upon him by the force of circumstances. He felt that his work in the College was the great work of his life. This is evident from his private and most earnest letters.

As we would have expected, when the condition of the College became known to the Assembly, the revulsion of feeling and the disappointment were so great that steps were immediately taken toward the removal of the Institution. A commission of gentlemen, all prominent members of the Church, was appointed to consider the matter, and take some action upon it. The commission met in Nashville, on the first day of the following July, 1842, and determined to establish Cumberland College at Lebanon, Tennessee. Dr. Cossitt was elected to the presidency of the new College, and accepted the appointment, and of course the Commencement of the College at Princeton, in 1842, terminated his connection with that Institution. The friends of the old Institution, however, rallied, sold

its useless property, paid its debts, and continued its operations with respectable success, and, I trust I may be allowed to say, with usefulness, for a number of years.

But the question will naturally present itself to my reader, What was the cause of all the troubles in Cumberland College, and especially of those which developed themselves so disastrously in 1842? It is not my purpose to enter into an investigation of this subject. I have often thought and said, that if the history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church should ever be written, the history of the old College would constitute its darkest chapter. I have no disposition to extend this chapter farther than I have already done. But a few words may, and perhaps should, be added in justice to the living, and to the memory of the dead. And first, Mr. Barnett was not the cause of the trouble. It was once fashionable to ascribe at least a great deal of it to him. But there were troubles and discouragements before he and Shelby became connected with it. There were troubles after it fell into the hands of the Association. These troubles culminated in 1842, five years after Mr. Barnett's connection with the Institution had ceased. Furthermore, before his connection with the College, he was a successful farmer in the country, was understood to be very practical and skillful in the management of his business, and had acquired a respectable property. When he left the Institution, he was an insolvent debtor. He was never able to extricate himself

from his financial difficulties, and died under the cloud which those difficulties brought over him. He spent his last years under a deep impression that he had been injured and cruelly mistreated by the Church. Under that impression his spirits were at length broken, and he sunk in sorrow to the grave. Mr. Young, who was connected with him for some time, had prospered in his quiet home, and was making a good living for his family. After an experiment of a year at the College, he left them in a great measure penniless. Mr. Barnett and Dr. Cossitt did not always agree in judgment; they became at length estranged in feeling, but they were both honest; they meant well, and were both unyielding in their devotion to the Church. I knew those good men well; they served their generation, and their estrangements have been forgotten in the quietude of the grave.

Secondly. The people of Princeton were not the cause. The Church sometimes complained that they did not feel as much interest in the College as they ought to feel. This may have been true to some extent. There are men in every community who would sell any public enterprise for a mess of pottage, if they could appropriate the price to the satisfying of their own hunger. Still the people of Princeton would have kept up the College, if they could have done it. They have given the best possible evidence of this for twenty-five years past. They are not more selfish or sectarian than other people.

Thirdly. Dr. Cossitt was not the cause. He never controlled the financial affairs of the College. Furthermore, the number of young men of very high order that he kept around him in the College, and their high regard for him as a man and as an instructor, furnish sufficient evidence of the influence which he was capable of exerting upon the youthful and aspiring mind. He labored with great earnestness, and a portion of the time, at least, with great self-denial, in trying to support the Institution. It was opened in 1826, and it was understood at the General Assembly in 1829, three years afterward, that the financial difficulties had commenced, and that the existence of the College was already in peril. From that time to 1842 the struggle was continued and unremitting between hope and despair, and the wonder is, that a man with feeble health and sensitive feelings should have lived and labored so long under such circumstances.

Beyond these negatives I shall not go, farther than to say that there was unquestionably a combination of causes which operated in producing the results that we have been considering. The enterprise was new. As it has been already said, it was an experiment. Its partial failure can be accounted for without bringing reproach upon the Church or any of its individual members. Still Cumberland College, although it has now ceased to exist, fulfilled a useful and an honored mission. It has a noble record. Its alumni are known, and their power is felt in high places. Notwithstanding



its financial troubles, and its partial failure in 1842, and its entire failure since, no member of the Church needs be ashamed of its contributions to the educational interests of the country. I must be allowed to include in these statements its whole history, from 1826 to its final failure. Trace the footsteps of its sons, and you will find the most of those who survive where *men* are wont to be.

In 1829 Mr. Cossitt made an excursion through some of the Middle and Southern States. He spent some time in Washington City, and while there published and circulated a pamphlet, setting forth the character and claims of the College. He preached in several of the churches of the city, and received some donations. He preached also in Baltimore and Philadelphia, receiving very respectful attention in both cities. In Baltimore especially, his preaching seems to have made considerable impression. He brought one young man from Baltimore, and two or three from Eastern Virginia, to the Institution. Two of these young men remained until they graduated. They became useful and honored men.

Early in 1830 the leading men connected with the College commenced the publication of the Religious and Literary Intelligencer, at Princeton. It was the first periodical of the Church. Mr. Cossitt was identified with it for a few months, and a principal contributor to its columns. The Assembly of 1830, however, transferred the editorial control of the paper to Rev. David Lowry. It

afterward became the Revivalist, and finally the Cumberland Presbyterian, in Nashville.

In 1833 Mr. Cossitt lost his wife and the mother of his children. She endured a long illness, and died in the triumphs of faith. On the 19th of January, 1834, he was married a second time, to Miss Matilda Edwards, of Elkton, Kentucky. The respected widow still lives. In 1839 he received the Doctorate of Divinity from Middlebury College, and also from the Trustees of Cumberland College, with which he was then connected.

In March, 1840, he commenced the publication of the *Banner of Peace*. It was at first a monthly periodical. He continued it a year under this form. In December of 1841 the publication was renewed. It was changed, however, from a monthly to a small weekly. The following letter will serve as an illustration of the feelings with which he undertook the publication of a weekly paper. It brings us back once more into the region of trouble:

“PRINCETON, June 5, 1841.

“DEAR BROTHER:—I received your letter, but could not find time to answer it before the General Assembly. I now write in haste, on another subject.

“You have probably heard of the proceedings of the late Assembly. While I rejoice at what that body did for the College, I mourn over the loss of a weekly paper. I was strongly solicited to undertake a weekly on a plan similar to the one I am

about to propose; but not knowing what arrangements I could make at home, I declined, and concluded to continue my little monthly. I could doubtless obtain a large list of subscribers.

“But, Brother Beard, shall it be said that the Cumberland Presbyterian Church *has* not supported, and cannot support, one weekly paper? Shall truth and falsehood be so blended together and presented to the public, as to make the following impression: that a patriotic individual, at great personal sacrifices, sustained a respectable weekly at Nashville, for the benefit of a Church which had not the gratitude, nor the liberality, nor the justice to sustain his laudable efforts, until he finally became the victim of his own zeal for the cause of the Church, and of the indifference of the Church to her own welfare; and that now three little pitiful monthlies have sprung up, each struggling for a bare existence, and contending for a moiety of that poor patronage which was so grudgingly bestowed upon, or rather withheld from, the late *Cumberland Presbyterian*?

“I have no desire to be an editor. It is not consonant with my interest or inclination. But I *cannot*, I CANNOT, I CANNOT let things continue in their present situation, without an honest effort, at least, to better them. When I left the Assembly, I thought I could *bear the reproach and live*; but when questioned on my way, and after my return home, by our own members, those of other churches, and people of the world, and after hearing their remarks, etc., etc., I do feel myself destitute of that moral

courage, or rather indifference to the respectability of the Church, which will enable me to bear the cross, despising the shame of a policy which must and will be regarded by very many as groveling, niggardly, and ridiculous, and which is calculated to discourage our friends and rejoice our enemies.

“What must be done? Who will make the sacrifice, and get up a weekly paper for the edification and comfort of the whole Church, and the propagation of our excellent doctrines abroad? Any one who will do it shall have all the assistance I can afford. I feel much like shrinking from the task, and would rather bid God speed to another than undertake it myself.

“But I do feel I shall have to try it, because no other will. I give you my plan. Brother McPherson, you know, writes well, and has had some experience as an editor. I shall associate him with me, and commence a weekly paper as soon as we can get one thousand advance-paying subscribers, which will about cover expenses, we working for nothing and finding ourselves. We will associate with us as editors (they consenting,) Brothers Ewing, Donnell, Beard, Burrow, Reed, and Anderson, who will incur no pecuniary liabilities, and have no profits, (there cannot be much, if any,) give us the influence of their names, the benefit of their counsel, the assistance of their patronage, and write for the paper as much as time and other circumstances will permit. It is important that

the Church should be united. By having these prominent men associated, even though some of them do not write much, they will be more free to make suggestions, give counsel, and guard us against faults and errors. Most men feel to shrink from reproofing a brother. Associate editors will feel it a duty, if we err; and we will feel bound to receive admonitions with docility and thankfulness. The contributions of each for the paper will be signed by his initials, unless he direct otherwise. Their names will give us influence—they and their friends will afford to us patronage.

“We will be able to publish Brother Donnell's new lectures entire, (which he is now preparing, and which would twice fill a monthly,) Ewing's revised and much enlarged lectures, and, I hope, many things worthy of perusal and preservation, from the pens of other editors. We will issue our prospectus as soon as we obtain the consent of the above-named to become associate editors. There is now in the Church manuscript enough to fill all the three proposed, monthlies, for the present year—verily, much more. Your humble servant wishes to say a few things on some theological subjects—if for nothing else, just to let folks know that his head contains something more than the adventures of ‘INEBRIATES,’ and ‘DANCING MANIACS.’ Please to consent to my proposition, and return me a speedy answer, that I may issue our prospectus before I go to the East to lay in a stock of books. Excuse all

mistakes. Love to Sister Beard and children.  
Wife and daughter join me.

“Yours, in the best bonds,  
“F. R. COSSITT.”

Early in the year 1843 Dr. Cossitt moved to Lebanon, and took charge of Cumberland College at that place. In a short time the Institution became what is now Cumberland University. He continued in the presidency of the College till the fall of 1844, when he resigned, and was succeeded by Rev. T. C. Anderson. He now gave himself up to the management of his paper, enlarging, and otherwise improving it, as he was able. He continued the publication of the Banner of Peace to the close of 1849. His editorial valedictory is contained in the number of the 24th December, 1849. The paper was transferred to Rev. W. D. Chadick and Mr. W. L. Berry. Mr. Chadick assumed control of the editorial department. After the expiration of eighteen years, it will doubtless be a matter of interest to many of the old readers of the Banner to read again the valedictory of its first editor. I therefore embody it in this sketch:

#### “OUR FAREWELL.

“Our labors as editor of the Banner of Peace are now concluded. This is the last number which will be issued under our supervision. The paper has been transferred to others, who have assumed

the labors and responsibilities of conducting it according to our contract with its patrons. The 27th number will be issued in a few weeks, perhaps during the first week in January. This short delay is occasioned by the intervening holidays and late changes. The proprietor of the Religious Ark is about to remove to Lebanon; and the list of that paper will be added to the list of the Banner. The skill, industry, and experience of Mr. Berry, as a printer, are well known and appreciated.

“It is expected that Rev. David Lowry will remove to Lebanon, and become associated with Rev. Wm. D. Chadick, as pastor of the Church in this place, and that these two brethren will henceforth conduct the Banner of Peace. With this expectation, we have transferred to Brother Chadick the editorial honors and pecuniary responsibilities of the paper, with full confidence that he and his associate will be able to conduct it with an ability which will do credit to themselves, and confer lasting benefits on the Church. We commend the Banner of Peace and its editors to all our friends, and hope they will lend their influence and aid in extending its circulation throughout the length and breadth of our beloved Zion. We believe it is destined for good. God has blessed it, and will yet bless it. Let it go forth, preaching peace on earth and good-will toward men.

“In bidding our readers farewell, we have many favors to acknowledge—many blessed memories to treasure up, as a fund for future consolation to a

heart that can never cease to be grateful. And to correspondents we would say, if we no more exchange thoughts and tokens of affection on earth, we may address the same Divine throne in each other's behalf, and when life's labors are over, greet each other in a purer, holier clime. We think we have honestly labored for the welfare of our patrons, the Church, and the community. So far as we may have succeeded, we would take no glory to ourselves; so far as we may have failed, we crave charity and forgiveness. Peaceful be our parting. Could the richest heavenly blessings accompany the word, we would feel less regret than we now do in saying farewell.

“F. R. COSSITT.”

In 1853 Dr. Cossitt published his *Life and Times of Finis Ewing*. The literary execution of this work would be creditable to any denomination of Christians.

In the same year he was elected by the Trustees Professor of Systematic Theology in Cumberland University. This appointment he declined, on account of his age and increasing infirmities.

The last decade of his life he devoted to the management of his own domestic concerns, and no doubt to a more earnest and prayerful preparation for that great change which for years had seemed to be at the door. He had seen his family melt away around him. In addition to the wife of his youth, he had buried a daughter at Princeton. Two



others, both young wives, and one of them a young mother, had been taken from him after he came to Lebanon. He had committed to the grave also in Lebanon, an only son and a son-in-law. He had drunk deeply of the cup of sorrow. He had lived an active and laborious life; he had served his generation. The evening of his life was what we would desire after the day which had preceded. It had been in many respects a cloudy day, but its close was calm. In the quietude of his own pleasant home he found time and opportunity for rest, for intellectual refreshment, for meditation and prayer. His sun went gently down.

A few weeks before his death he became unusually ill. For more than two weeks he was closely confined. He endured his affliction as we would have expected, like a Christian; and on the morning of the third of February, 1863, between four and five o'clock, without a struggle, and without a groan, he sunk into the arms of death. Not a muscle of the face was changed in the conflict with the last enemy.

At the spring meeting of the Lebanon Presbytery, in 1863, the following minute was adopted, expressive of the feelings of the Presbytery in relation to the death of Dr. Cossitt:

“The Committee appointed to draft a minute in relation to the death of Dr. Cossitt, beg leave to make the following report:

“Dr. Cossitt had been for more than forty years a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

A large portion of that time he had occupied conspicuous positions in the Church. He was especially a pioneer in the work of liberal education among us. The Church always regarded him as one of her ablest and most useful ministers. His pious and consecrated life as a Christian and Christian minister was an illustration of the purity and power of our holy religion, to which we expect always to look back with pleasure, and we hope with profit. He has finished his work. On the 3d day of February, 1863, after an illness of about twenty days, he died quietly and peacefully, and in full hope of the resurrection of the just. His health had been feeble for many years—so much so that for years past he had seldom met with us in the judicatories of the Church. He bore his last, as all his previous afflictions, with the patience and gentleness of a Christian. In view of so solemn and impressive a dispensation, the following resolutions are presented to the Presbytery for adoption :

“*Resolved*, That we hereby express our deep sense of the great worth of Dr. Cossitt, and of the bereavement of the Church in his death.

“*Resolved*, That whilst we feel an unfeigned sympathy with his surviving family and friends, and the Church at large, we will still submit with quietude and humility to the will of Him who orders all such dispensations aright.

“*Resolved*, That we feel ourselves called upon, and that we will endeavor to obey the call, to consecrate ourselves as presbyters, and as Christian ministers,

more fully to the great work which God in his providence has committed to us, seeing that we too may soon be called hence, as our fathers and brethren have been before us."

The Middle Tennessee Synod bore a similar testimony to the worth of Dr. Cossitt, which we find in the following extract from their Minutes:

"Rev. Franceway R. Cossitt, D. D., was raised and entered the ministry in another Church. Near forty years ago he attached himself to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He often remarked that he was led to this step by a full conviction of the truth of its doctrines, and especially by his sympathy with the earnest and devout spirit manifested by its ministry and membership, in promoting the great objects of the organization of a Church in this world—the glory of God and the salvation of men. He was a pioneer in the work of education among us. His connection with Cumberland College, Cumberland University, and the Banner of Peace, gave him the means of great influence and usefulness in the Church. The committee take great pleasure in bearing their testimony to the fidelity with which he used these means. For some years before his death he had been unable for active service. He bore repeated attacks of sickness, and the gradual decline of life, with great patience, and died full of hope and faith. May his mantle fall upon many of those who are following in his footsteps!"

My acquaintance with Dr. Cossitt was very inti-

mate during thirty-three years. I knew him better than most men in the Church knew him. Two years and a half he was my instructor. Six years we were colleagues in the department of instruction in Cumberland College. I was his confidant when he was laboring under the sickening and blighting influence of disappointed hope. In the early operations of Cumberland College he had great difficulty in governing the students. Vicious young men had to be dismissed, and sometimes expelled. He showed me a letter once, while I was a student, in which his life was threatened. I learned from him that such letters were not uncommon. Whilst these troubles existed within, there were dark clouds over the prospects of the Institution. He felt that the Church was tired of it, and sometimes was almost ready to feel that they were tired of him. It was a pioneer work.

After our separation at Cumberland College we were constant correspondents, until I became his neighbor a second time, in 1854. We did not always agree in matters of Church policy, and once or twice in the course of his life an estrangement seemed to be threatened. It is a reflection, however, in which I certainly take great interest now, that what might have been almost expected from the frailty of human nature, and the stormy scenes of more than thirty years, never occurred. I have letters in my possession, containing expressions to myself, and in relation to myself, which delicacy would forbid my making public. He was a great

and good man, and has gone to his rest. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church owes his memory a debt of gratitude, especially as an educator, which it will never be able to pay.

In concluding this sketch, I cannot express myself more appropriately than in an outline of the character of Dr. Cossitt which has already been given to the public. I present its substance here :

“In contemplating the prominent characteristics of Dr. Cossitt, we consider him—

“1. As an educator. Although a minister of religion, he was chiefly known as an instructor. The providence of God threw him amongst us for the fulfillment of a great mission in this respect. The character of his pupils is the best illustration of the character of the teacher. His principal work as an instructor was performed at Cumberland College. During seventeen years he labored in that Institution under disadvantages which could hardly be appreciated now. It was literally for several years a ‘log college’—as rough in its exterior as an ordinary barn. Its interior fitness was by no means superior to its outward appearance. The dormitories of the students were coarse cabins, furnished with straw-beds. Other means of comfort were of a similar kind. There was an indifferent library. No apparatus was used for some years. Still, under all these disadvantages, and scores of others which might be mentioned, he collected around him, from year to year, some of the best young men in the land. I take it upon myself, too,

to say that a collection of nobler men, or more generous scholars, have left no institution of learning in the South-west, than Cumberland College sent forth in those days. Many of them have passed away, but they have left their mark upon the age in which they lived. Others still survive, stirring actors in the conflict of life. In the pulpit and at the bar their voice is heard; at the bedside of the sick and dying their kind ministrations are imparted; and—it is a tender thought—on the field of battle their blood has been shed.

“2. As a Christian minister. Although disease had enfeebled him for many years before his death, and old age came upon him prematurely, in which he was able to render but little active service, his early ministrations were effective and popular. They were attended with frequent revivals of religion, and many of the old people of Kentucky still speak of his labors forty years ago with interest and delight. He was not eloquent, in the popular sense of the term. His manner was calm and quiet; but when he was aroused, it was earnest and impressive. His preaching in Baltimore and Philadelphia, in his visit to these cities in 1829, was spoken of in very high terms. He would have been a more popular preacher farther North than in this country.

“3. As a public journalist, he was kind, respectful, and dignified. He engaged in no petty strifes—he indulged in no personal abuse. He was no mere sectarian tool. His paper was the *Banner of Peace*, as well as the *Cumberland Presbyterian Advocate*.

Whilst he was not backward in defending the doctrines and order of his own Church, he provoked no quarrels. He sought to promote peace; he endeavored to allay strife, both in his own Communion and between his own Communion and others. He maintained his opinions with no intolerant or arrogant spirit.

“4. Dr. Cossitt was a catholic Christian. Whilst his fidelity and earnest devotion to the Church of his adoption were unquestionable, he was not a narrow-minded bigot. His incessant labors, his editorials in the *Banner of Peace*, and especially his ‘*Life and Times of Finis Ewing*,’ are monuments of his fidelity to Cumberland Presbyterians. His whole life was an illustration of his catholic spirit.

“5. In his intercourse with society he was, in a very high sense of the expression, a Christian gentleman. No man ever witnessed in him a rude act, or heard a rude or uncivil expression from his lips. He respected the feelings of others, and labored to promote the happiness of all around him. There might be differences of opinion between him and his brethren, or his neighbors; but on his part, at least, they were attended by no unkind feelings or harsh words. There was charity enough to cover a multitude of sins, if there were sins to be covered. He was a chastened, thoughtful, and courteous Christian minister.”

Dr. Cossitt's youngest daughter survives him. At his death, she and a granddaughter were his only living descendants.

## REV. EZEKIEL CLOYD.\*

1822—1851.

EZEKIEL CLOYD was born on the 12th of February, 1760. His parents are supposed to have lived at the time in Montgomery county, Virginia. He was the son of John and Margaret Cloyd. His mother's name before her marriage was Scott. His parents emigrated from Ireland and settled in Virginia in 1758. They were, however, of Scotch origin. The name seems to have been originally Clyde. Of course the family were thoroughly Scotch. The parents were both members of the Presbyterian Church. I have in my possession the mother's certificate of Church-membership in Ireland. It is dated August 14, 1758, and given to Margaret Clyde, *alias* Scott.

In 1789 the parents of Mr. Cloyd, and himself with them, moved from Virginia to North Carolina. Some time previous to this removal he was married to Miss Rebecca Williamson. I have before me three certificates given by his friends and neighbors of Montgomery county, Virginia, upon the

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\* Manuscript of Rev. J. L. Alexander. Records of Nashville Presbytery.



occasion of his removal to North Carolina. They all represent him as a "well-behaved person," a "good member of society," and one of them as a "patriot."

About the year 1800 he left North Carolina, and settled in Tennessee, it is supposed at the place where he spent the most of his remaining years, in the lower end of Wilson county.

In the year 1800 he professed religion at Shiloh Meeting-house, in Sumner county. He received his first deep religious impressions under the preaching of Rev. James McGready. One of the Virginia certificates, however, represents him and his wife as members of the Church in that State. Whatever may be true in this respect, it is certain that he made a profession of religion at Shiloh, and considered himself to have been converted there.

On his return home from the meeting at Shiloh, he immediately commenced the exercise of family prayers, which he kept up with strict punctuality for fifty years.

It was customary in those days for zealous and active men to be employed, whilst still private members of the Church, in holding prayer-meetings, and in exhortation. In this way Mr. Cloyd commenced his public labors. He was always unusually gifted and effective in exhortation and prayer.

At what time he was received as a candidate for the ministry it is not known, but he was pro-

bably received by the Cumberland Presbytery before its division. The first Presbyterial notice of him which we have been able to find, is a notice of his licensure, at the spring meeting of the Nashville Presbytery in 1814. The following is the record: "Mr. Ezekiel Cloyd delivered a written discourse from the second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, 8th chapter and 9th verse, which was sustained as a popular discourse, preparatory to his licensure." It will be seen that the record is very full. Those good old men were in the habit of doing their business carefully. There is an additional record of the same day, Wednesday, March 30, 1814: "Presbytery examined Messrs. Robert Guthrie and Ezekiel Cloyd on Divinity and English Grammar, which were sustained, and having obtained a good report of their moral character, Presbytery licensed them to preach the gospel in the bounds of this Presbytery, or wherever God in his providence may cast their lots." This meeting of the Presbytery was held at New Hope.

At an intermediate Presbytery held in July of 1822, at Sugg's Creek Meeting-house, Mr. Cloyd, in connection with James S. Guthrie, and the writer, then a very young man, was ordained. The transaction was a very impressive one, at least to myself. A camp-meeting was held at the same time, and a number of persons professed religion.

Previous to his ordination his wife, who had

been in feeble health for a number of years, died. After a widowhood of some time, he married Mrs. Nancy White, of Wilson county. Mrs. White was the widow of Rev. John White, a Methodist minister. She was a woman of great worth, and contributed much to the comfort and happiness of his latter days. My correspondent says that "in the latter part of his life he was subject to much bodily infirmity and mental affliction, yet he staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." He died in Lebanon, in August, 1851. Mrs. Cloyd, his second wife, died also in Lebanon, April 17, 1854.

The whole ministry of Mr. Cloyd extended through a space of near forty years. He was always a zealous and earnest man. He made no pretensions to a high order of ability, or attainments; he rather underrated himself in these respects; but he was a useful man, and left a precious record behind him. He was especially effective in exhortation, and in his labors with mourners. After his ordination, although advanced in life, he traveled as a circuit-rider for a number of years. For a short time he served as pastor of Stoner's Creek congregation, in the bounds of which he spent the most of his life. Indeed, he was one of the fathers of the congregation, and preached to them occasionally during his whole ministry. His son-in-law, Benjamin Alexander, an elder in the congregation, who has been curious in recording such things, has a record of two hundred and

ninety-two sermons preached by Mr. Cloyd to that congregation.

His example and presence were a standing reproof of wickedness and vice of every kind. On one occasion he was greatly troubled at what seemed to be the prospect of the introduction of dancing-parties into the neighborhood. An appointment was made, as he learned, for such a party at the house of an acquaintance on a particular evening. He determined upon an effort to arrest the progress of the evil in its commencement, remembering the wise injunction, "*Obsta principüs: Resist wrong in its earliest stages.*" He went to the house about the time he supposed the dancing would commence, knocked at the door, and was ushered into the room. Of course the company were somewhat startled at such a movement. Without taking his seat, he at once proposed singing and prayer, gave out a hymn, and a negro of the neighborhood, who had some connection with the occasion, joined him in singing. The rest of the company, however, were too much taken by surprise to participate, even if they had been disposed otherwise to do so. After singing and prayer, he delivered an earnest exhortation, and left the company. The effort was successful. Some of the young gentlemen were very much incensed—threatened violence—but the dancing-parties died out. It is worthy of remark, too, that the negro who shared in the singing afterward professed religion, and lived and died an unusually consistent Christian.

Mr. Cloyd raised a large family. As far as I

know, they all became members of the Church. His youngest son is now an elder in the congregation which his father contributed so much toward building up. His youngest daughter is the wife of Rev. John Beard, of Kansas.\* His grandson is now pastor of Stoner's Creek congregation.

Mr. Cloyd was a farmer as well as preacher. According to the custom of the times in which he lived, he labored on his farm during the week, and performed his ministerial service on the Sabbath. The principal portion of this service was a work of love. He received scarcely any pecuniary compensation. Still he lived comfortably, and was always able to minister a generous hospitality to his friends, especially to his brethren of the ministry. His house was a home to such. It is pleasant to remark, too, that the same "house of cedar" still stands, a monument of patriarchal simplicity and economy.

The personal appearance and bearing of Mr. Cloyd were those of an unaffected gentleman of the old school. His dress was always neat, and his manners, without the slightest parade or pretension, were affable and kind. It is cheerful to linger amidst the recollections of such a man.

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\* 1862.

## REV. JAMES SMITH GUTHRIE.

1822—1855.

JAMES SMITH GUTHRIE was born May 12, 1793, either in Orange county, North Carolina, or on Holston River, in what is now East Tennessee. His father was in an unsettled state at that time, and the family record is lost. It is consequently not known whether James was born in North Carolina or Tennessee. He was the eldest son of Rev. Robert Guthrie. In his baptism he received the name of James, simply, but after he grew to manhood, and before he became known to the public, he added the name of Smith to the original, to distinguish himself from a cousin who lived near his father, and whose name was also James Guthrie. He derived his middle name from his mother's family. Her family name was Smith.

Mr. Guthrie was not only the eldest son, but the oldest of five brothers, two of whom, in addition to himself, entered the ministry. He was born purblind, and was considered in his early life rather a dull boy. His dullness, however, was evidently apparent only, as his subsequent life proved; and the appearance no doubt arose in a measure from his

near-sightedness, which gave him an awkward and dull aspect, especially in his early life. He was remarkable for morality and industry. Indeed, industry was a distinguishing characteristic through his whole life. After he grew up to manhood, and before he entered the ministry, he performed more farm-labor than any ordinary man.

When about seventeen years of age he became concerned on the subject of religion. His convictions were deep, and his distress of mind was great. This distress continued three or four years, almost without intermission. It is said by a correspondent, that often during the time, "the dead hours of night witnessed his supplications for mercy." When at meetings where any interest was excited he was a habitual mourner, and, as a general thing, was first and last at the "mourner's bench," or rather, in the mourner's place—the mourner's bench had not been introduced in those days. An anecdote is told of him in connection with these scenes. He was in attendance at a camp-meeting, and as usual was a mourner. He was dressed in clothing of rather a light color. While the meeting was in progress it rained, and the seats and ground were all rendered very unsuitable for clothing of such a color; but he was still a mourner, and down upon the bare earth. His friends remonstrated, and tried to induce him to change his position, telling him among other things that unless he did he would *ruin his clothes*. His reply was characteristic: "I would rather ruin my clothes than ruin my soul."

In the year 1816 Mr. Guthrie went to live with old William Foster, in the character of a cropper. Mr. Foster was a religious patriarch in those days. His house was the abode of a consecrated piety. There was no house of worship in the neighborhood, and Mr. Foster's house was used for that purpose. When the preachers passed through the country they preached there. Every influence was salutary. In the course of that year Mr. Guthrie professed religion. On a Sabbath evening, while the family were engaged in singing, he obtained the first evidence of his acceptance. He believed, however, that he had experienced a change some time before, while engaged in secret prayer.

After such an experience of conviction, and such a spiritual struggle, there could be no doubt of the stand which he would take on the subject of religion. It was very bold and decided. He joined the "Old Ridge congregation," and soon commenced the exercise of public prayer and exhortation. His mind seemed at once to turn to the ministry. He spent some time (the writer does not know how long) under the instruction of Rev. Hugh Kirkpatrick. His early education had been defective, but no man ever made a more diligent use of time. The public impression was, however, that he was a *poor prospect for the ministry*. He was near-sighted, his education was indifferent, his whole exterior was rather unimposing and unimpressive; but he was zealous, and no one doubted his piety. We have another anecdote of him while he was in the stage



of his progress which I am now describing. A union meeting was held at Shiloh in 1817, under the superintendence of Rev. William Hodge, pastor of the congregation. Rev. Dr. Blackburn, of the Presbyterian Church; Rev. James Gwynn, of the Methodist Church; and two or three Cumberland Presbyterian ministers, were in attendance. William Barnett preached on Monday night, on the Shortness of Time, and there was a good deal of interest. Several mourners presented themselves at the close of the sermon. James Guthrie was then a zealous exhorter, and of course was among the mourners trying to instruct and encourage them. Some one called the attention of Dr. Blackburn to him, and remarked that "the Cumberland Presbyterians were trying to make a preacher out of that young man." The Doctor, with many others, thought that it was a hopeless case. Said he, "I would as soon think of making a preacher out of any stump in the yard." His incredulity was excusable, but time proved that he was greatly mistaken. A few years after that occurrence James S. Guthrie preached in the same house, and to the same people, with an acceptance and power seldom equaled there.

In the spring of 1818 Mr. Guthrie was received as a candidate for the ministry by the Nashville Presbytery. The meeting was held at old Mother Landsden's, on Bradley's Creek, in Wilson county, Tennessee. He had attended the preceding meeting of the Presbytery, and laid his case before them. He was not discouraged by the Presbytery, but still

was not received as a candidate. Presbyteries were thoughtful and careful in their action in those days. But on application at this Presbytery, he was received. On the 14th of October, 1819, he was licensed at Big Spring, and "ordered to ride all his time on the Upper Circuit," until the next meeting of the Presbytery. At the next meeting of the Presbytery, in April, 1820, he is again "ordered to ride the Upper Circuit." At the meeting of the Presbytery in October, 1821, it was "ordered that James S. Guthrie spend the whole of his time on the Hiwassee Circuit, until the next meeting of the Presbytery." The Hiwassee Circuit had been formed by an extension of what had been called the Upper Circuit. These circuits lay in the mountain region between East and Middle Tennessee. It was a rough region, but his labors were greatly blessed.

In July, 1822, in connection with the writer and Mr. Ezekiel Cloyd, Mr. Guthrie was set apart to the whole work of the gospel ministry. This occurred at an intermediate meeting of the Nashville Presbytery. The meeting was held at Sugg's Creek. Immediately after ordination, as Mr. Guthrie and myself were single men, we were sent off to attend the more remote camp-meetings. We held camp-meetings at West Harpeth, Wells's Creek, and Richland, and sacramental-meetings at Adley Alexander's, on the North Fork of Forked Deer, and also on Clear Creek, in Carroll county. Western Tennessee was then a new country. At the meeting on Forked Deer we had the assistance of Mr.

Francis Johnson. In a history in manuscript of the Nashville Presbytery, I find the following in relation to the fall meeting of 1822: "James S. Guthrie and Richard Beard were sent to the more distant parts of the Presbytery, to plant new societies, and water those already planted." Mr. Guthrie went into East Tennessee.

From this time to 1826 he labored as an itinerant preacher in Tennessee. His labors were divided between the three divisions of the State. In the fall of 1826 he went to Alabama, and about a year from that time, in the fall of 1827, he was married to Miss Lethe Burns, of Alabama.

He remained in Alabama some years; then moved to the northern part of Mississippi, and finally to Texas. Soon after he reached Texas his wife died. He continued to devote himself to the work of the ministry, sometimes as a pastor, but more generally as an evangelist. Whilst the Religious Ark was published at Memphis, he is said to have been a frequent contributor to its columns. The writer thinks also that he projected, if he did not carry into partial execution, after he reached Texas, a monthly publication, designed for his own control. It was filled, or intended to be filled, chiefly with sermons—a sort of monthly preacher.

Some years before his death he had an attack of severe sickness, which resulted in the formation of an abscess on his side, accompanied by a distressing cough. Under the influence of these afflictions he wasted away. About a year before his death he

attended the meetings of his Presbytery and Synod. From the Synod he was not able to return home, but remained with his friends and brethren until the time came for his removal by death. Some time before his death he wrote, or rather dictated, as the writer supposes from the hand-writing, a short letter to Rev. David Lowry, from which the following extract is taken :

“Such have been my afflictions since 1853, that I have been unable to write or preach any of consequence. I have a running abscess in my side, accompanied by a constant cough, which renders my life a burden, and yet I cannot die. I have no hope of being better in this life, but, thank God! heaven is a healthy clime. O for patience to wait, and willingness to suffer, ‘till my change come.’ Dear brother, pray for me and mine! The idea of lingering out an unpleasant existence here, unable to do any good, is gloomy indeed; but I must bear it as best I can.”

In his last letter to his brother, Robert W. Guthrie, of Tennessee, he says :

“You need not write any more. Farewell, till I meet you in heaven!”

These extracts indicate the feelings of a good man under great and protracted sufferings, and in the prospect of death.

Mr. Guthrie left four children—a son and three daughters. They are said to be all members of the Church. It is understood, too, that he left a considerable amount of manuscript, which might be of

some interest to posterity if it could be collected and published. He was a strong, if not a polished writer. He published two sermons in the Cumberland Presbyterian Pulpit—the first, in the number for March, 1833, on the Obligations of Christians; the second, in the number for August, 1833, on Looking to Christ. This latter sermon was made a subject of severe animadversion by Rev. Finis Ewing. The position was impliedly taken in the sermon that the suffering and death of Christ upon the cross were not necessary to the atonement, but that Christ could have suffered sufficiently otherwise to accomplish the object. Mr. Ewing thought the position very objectionable, and assailed it with severity.

I have a great many personal recollections of Mr. Guthrie which are very interesting to myself, whatever they might be to others. I should be ashamed if they were not interesting to myself. He was several years older than myself, but we were school-fellows together, in my father's old-fashioned school at the Ridge school-house. He was the first person who ever made a direct and personal appeal to me on the subject of religion, after I began to approach maturity. He was with me when I engaged earnestly in the work of seeking my salvation, and I suppose did not leave me many minutes at a time during the whole struggle. He first encouraged me to look to the ministry, and was my companion in my first attendance at the Presbytery. After he was licensed, and whilst I was still a candidate for

the ministry, I traveled with him once round what was called the Upper Circuit. We were ordained at the same time, and immediately sent off together to attend some remote meetings. He was on many accounts a remarkable man—an excellent preacher, never below mediocrity, and often far, very far above it. He was sometimes austere, sometimes even rough in his manners. His reproofs, when he administered them, were often terrible. His passions were strong, and his prejudices were almost invincible. In one of my last conversations with him, he remarked to me in reference to a minister who stood high in the Church, and had done so for many years, that “he had no confidence in him, and never had any.” Still, no man was kinder and gentler in his treatment of those in whom his confidence was entire.

When he first attended the Cumberland Synod, he went there under the impression that there were two or three men belonging to the body who were disposed to dictate to it, and rather act the part of “lords over God’s heritage.” His impressions were strengthened by what he thought he saw, and he had the boldness at once to throw himself in their way. They thought it an unpardonable assurance in him to take such a stand, but he took and held it. They were good men—rugged like himself, but good men. They respected him, but felt his weight while they lived. The meeting of the Synod to which I allude was held at the Beech Meeting-house, in Sumner county.

In 1827 Mr. Guthrie was Moderator of the Synod. This was previous to the organization of the General Assembly, and the position was of course considered an important one. I suppose the appointment had never before been conferred on so young a man. He was also a delegate to the first General Assembly, which held its sessions at Princeton, in 1829.

A more distinct notice of a few of the characteristics of Mr. Guthrie, will bring this sketch to a close. It may be remarked, too, that this part of my task is not difficult—I mean that the *notice* of them will not be difficult, however I may fail in setting them forth in a suitable manner. His characteristics were distinctly marked. The most casual observer would detect them. Their outlines could hardly be mistaken.

1. In a letter from a friend, to which I am indebted for a number of the facts heretofore stated, it is mentioned that “he was remarkable, even in early life, for *fixedness of purpose.*” This trait of character he carried through life. If he took a stand upon any question, he was immovable. This may sometimes be a vice, as well as a virtue. If he formed a prejudice against a brother, it could hardly be eradicated. I have already alluded to this subject. Still, in all his prejudices he was honest. If he believed a brother upright and conscientious, he stood by him, whether the many or the few stood with him. If he made up his mind to pursue a particular course, he pursued it, whatever difficulties

and obstructions might be in his way. Had it not been for this characteristic, deeply rooted, he could never have reached the ministry—at least, he could not have reached the eminence which he did reach. One or two anecdotes will afford some illustration.

Some time rather early in his ministry, he was traveling in East Tennessee, as an evangelist. He had an appointment in some one of the towns for a particular night. When he reached the place, he learned that another meeting was in progress, and he received the impression that some pains had been taken to supersede him in his appointment. The worship was to be held in the court-house. As soon as the house was lighted, he walked in and took his seat on the judge's bench, laid out his books, and thus gave a significant notice of his purpose. After a while the representative of the other meeting came in and took his seat near him. Mr. Guthrie spoke to the stranger, and told him that he himself had an appointment for that hour, and expected to fulfill it. Whether right or wrong, he executed his purpose. He thought he was right. He thought, furthermore, that it was the intention of the other parties to do him wrong.

The writer witnessed a similar occurrence when once in his company. In a town in Western Tennessee, three ministers had appointments for preaching at the same hour. Mr. Guthrie was one of the three. There was but one house of worship, and the people would hear but two sermons in succession. From some cause, the first place was



yielded to one of the others; he, however, asserted and maintained his right to the second. Of course the third brother was excluded.

In making an estimate of such developments of character, we must take into account the circumstances which surround the actors. Forty years ago young Cumberland Presbyterian ministers were considered rather a small matter, and it was considered no great breach of propriety to set them aside when the convenience of others required it. Mr. Guthrie, however, had energy enough to maintain his own rights, when he considered them invaded or threatened.

2. The boldness with which he defined and carried out his theological opinions, and his opinions in regard to Church-order, deserves to be noticed. This sometimes led him to extremes. When he assumed a position, he had no dread of carrying it to its ultimatum. In his early ministry he took and pressed the position that "mercy is not an attribute of God." It has already been mentioned, that in 1833, in a published sermon, he impliedly denied that the "sufferings of Christ upon the cross were necessary to the atonement." It is easy for a man accustomed to theological difficulties to account for his taking both positions. They were the results of correct principles carried to extremes. Mr. Ewing assailed the latter position with considerable severity, in a sermon subsequently published.

In the General Assembly of 1846 he took a violent stand in opposition to our sending delegates to

the "World's Christian Convention," which was appointed to be held, in the course of the following autumn, in London. We thought his opposition the opposition of an extremist; but he sincerely looked upon the whole matter as a great humbug. It must be confessed, too, that time has done something toward vindicating his opinions on that subject. At least, it was soon found that the doors of Exeter Hall were too narrow for the admittance of *Southern* Christians.

3. The characteristics of his preaching were earnestness, originality, and power. The earnestness and fervency of his early ministrations were remarkable. He felt deeply, and his whole soul was expressed in his public addresses. Many will carry the impressions received from his powerful appeals into eternity. Such a manner rendered him eminently useful. His bold and independent originality was unusual. As a model, he acknowledged the authority of no mortal man. He thought, spoke, and acted for himself. The last sermon which the writer ever heard him deliver was preached at the Assembly of 1846. Years and disease had taken something from him, but there was still a remnant of his former self. A great many of his early sermons were very powerful. On many occasions he excelled himself. There is a tradition of his preaching a sermon at a camp-meeting held by another denomination of Christians, near Jackson, in Western Tennessee. The account is that the meeting seemed to drag

heavily. Some of the outsiders made application at some time near its close, to those who managed the meeting, that Mr. Guthrie, who was present, might be permitted to preach. The request was granted, not with very great apparent cheerfulness, but still it was granted. He preached on Monday, from the passage in Zachariah, "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain," etc. The sermon was represented as one of extraordinary interest and power. For years there were references to it in that country. Many similar occurrences might be mentioned. Another is remembered. It has been stated that in the fall after ordination, Mr. Guthrie and the writer, with the assistance of Francis Johnson, held a sacramental-meeting at Adley Alexander's, in the Western District. On Sunday he preached from James's description of "Pure Religion." It was a very strong and impressive sermon. At some distance behind the preacher's stand, a man sat by himself on a stump. The truth reached his heart. He wept freely. He had been raised by Christian parents—had married and become the head of a family. He had wandered far from the home and from the ways of his fathers. In a few years that man professed religion, entered the ministry, and is now an old and much-respected preacher.

4. Mr. Guthrie's exterior was rough, but as years multiplied and he developed himself, it became impressive. His deportment was thoughtful and serious—a striking rebuke to the unseasonable

levity sometimes found among good men. His kindness to young men entering the ministry in whom he had confidence was very great. If there was a want of confidence, however, he showed but little favor. Of his kindness and sympathy the writer speaks from experience. Often when he would have sunk under the discouragements and trials of an early ministry, the words of encouragement, and the undoubted sympathy of the friend of his youth, kept him up. Others no doubt had a similar experience. These are pleasant recollections. Perhaps they ought to be cherished with more tenderness than we often feel for them.

I have said that his exterior was rough. Sometimes in the pulpit, to a stranger, it was at first unpromising. I am furnished with the following anecdote: In one of the years while he was living in Alabama, he had made an excursion of some extent into Tennessee and Kentucky, and perhaps farther northward. On his return home he called at Winchester, Tennessee, and found a sacramental-meeting in progress. The evening after his arrival, by invitation, he occupied the pulpit. His clothes had become more than threadbare—they needed patching. He was a stranger in Winchester. When he commenced the service, the elders and leading men hung down their heads. They thought the prospect hopeless. But before the sermon closed, their heads were up, and they were drinking in the word of life. All were delighted with the sermon. The next morning a rally was made, a new suit

was furnished to the stranger, and he left with the benedictions of the congregation.

5. Mr. Guthrie's piety was deep, sincere, and earnest. It had a rugged nature to subdue, but the subjugation was effected. He felt himself from the beginning to be a consecrated man. His *call* to the ministry was of the old-fashioned kind. It stirred up the very depths of his soul. "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" "My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war!" Such exclamations were common with him in his early struggles for the salvation of his friends, and of others around him; and no one who heard them doubted that they expressed the feelings of his inmost heart. His respected father once remarked of him in the early part of his work, that "James seemed to him more like a soul maturing for glory than any thing else." His devotion in those days was ardent and intense.

6. His preaching was distinguished by plainness and boldness. If sin in any particular form needed reprehension in his estimation, it received what he considered its due without measure or mercy. He made no compromise with it. Such a manner would of course arouse opposition. He would have enemies. Still, if such persons became his enemies

for *the truth's sake*, it was a small matter with him : he went forward in his fearless course. He was one of the men for his times. God will always have such.

7. Perhaps I ought to add, as I am writing history, and not discussing opinions, that although Mr. Guthrie never owned a slave, except for a few years after his marriage, and I suppose never preached what is called a political sermon in his life, still he was intensely southern and democratic in his social and political sympathies. Some of his friends thought him too much so. In these, however, as in other things, he thought for himself. God, in his good providence, took him away before those principles and their opposites developed themselves in so fearful and violent a form as they have since done. He has met men from all parts of the land, and of all sorts of social and political sympathies in heaven—I mean, of course, such sympathies and opinions as are common among us. It is good to think that there is a land in which the sword will never be drawn, the arm of violence will never be lifted, and the tongue of vituperation will be stilled for ever.

## REV. ALEXANDER DOWNEY.\*

1823—1838.

ALEXANDER DOWNEY was born in the upper part of Kentucky, it is believed, in 1798. He was a cabinet-maker by trade. He professed religion in the vicinity of Russellville, Kentucky, in the winter of 1817.

The next year he was received as a candidate for the ministry, under the care of the Logan Presbytery. He was licensed to preach in the fall of 1820, at the same time with Revs. Hiram McDaniel and James Y. Barnett, who have passed away, and Hiram A. Hunter, who still survives. The Presbytery held its sessions at the time at Old Red River Meeting-house. Rev. William Harris propounded the constitutional questions, and offered the prayer. He was ordained in Russellville, in 1822 or 1823. Rev. William Barnett performed the ordination services.

Mr. Downey was married to Ann P. Taylor, in Ohio county, Kentucky. The time of his marriage, however, is not known to the writer. The mar-

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\* Manuscript letter of Rev. Hiram A. Hunter.

riage service was performed by his friend and fellow-laborer, Rev. Hiram A. Hunter.

He spent his early ministerial life in Kentucky, but died in Belleville, Indiana, in 1837 or 1838. His death is represented as a most triumphant one.

Says the contributor to whom I am indebted for most of these facts :

“When I visited him two weeks before his death, he recounted some of the fruits of his ministerial labor. About one hundred persons had professed religion at his own meetings. He had a presentiment that he would die in two weeks from the night which I spent with him, requested me to preach his funeral-sermon, and appointed the time and place for the service. At his request, the citizens of the village were invited in that night, and I preached to them. When the sermon was closed, he asked to be propped up in his bed, and in that position exhorted the congregation to prepare to meet him in heaven. The whole assembly were bathed in tears. He told them that he would die in two weeks from that time, that death to him was no terror, that he was rather pleased with the prospect, since it would introduce him into heaven.”

Whatever we may think of presentiments, Mr. Downey died two weeks from the interesting night here described. He died, as we would suppose, in the full hope of a glorious immortality. Says the respected authority already quoted :



“He was a *good* man, much devoted to his work, and few men have done more for the Church and the world than he did.”

Mr. Downey entered the ministry about the same time with the writer, but in a different part of the Church. My acquaintance with him was of a public kind altogether. I met him several times at the meetings of the Old Cumberland Synod—but I believe nowhere else. He had the reputation of being an earnest, warm-hearted, and efficient man. His countenance was pale, and not very expressive. He had the appearance of a man of feeble health. I imagine his health was feeble. This, in connection with his earnest and devoted labors, will probably account for his death when he should have been in the prime of life. Indeed, in his day men were not taught to take care of themselves. They hardly thought it a duty.

Mr. Downey was a revivalist in his time—not, however, in the sense in which that term is now used. It has become at present rather technical. But he had revivals on his circuits, and wherever he labored. He expected them as common results. Doubtless his *record is on high*. It is good to go back and make an estimate, if we can, of the labors of such a man.

With but a limited education, with but few personal advantages, in his sphere he made his impression upon society. May not that impression have been far deeper and more permanent than the impression of many who have occupied higher

places? A man who in heaven wears a crown of rejoicing containing so many stars, deserves to be remembered on earth.

Mr. Downey, at his death, left a widow, but no children.

## REV. ROBERT BAKER.\*

1823—1845.

ROBERT BAKER was born in Orange county, North Carolina, on the 28th of December, 1795. His parents were James and Sarah Baker. In 1799 they moved from North Carolina to Tennessee, and settled first in Sumner county. After remaining in Sumner a year, they moved again, and settled permanently in Wilson county, in the neighborhood of the Big Spring.

Mr. and Mrs. Baker, the father and mother, were members of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina. In the revival of 1800, however, they became unsettled in their religious hopes. After a long and careful course of self-examination and prayer, "the Lord was pleased," says my authority, "to open their eyes to a brighter and better light." They became the steadfast friends of the revival, and entered fully into its spirit. The father was an elder in the Presbyterian Church whilst the Old Cumberland Presbytery was in existence. After

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\* Watchman and Evangelist; Minutes of Nashville and Lebanon Presbyteries; Manuscript Letters of Rev. J. C. Provine and Thomas Hamilton, Esq.

the organization of the Independent Cumberland Presbytery in 1810, he and his family became Cumberland Presbyterians. The Big Spring congregation was for many years one of the leading congregations of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and James Baker continued a ruling elder in it till his removal, in his old age, to Western Tennessee.

The parents of Mr. Baker were unusually pious persons. They raised their children with great care. They dedicated them to God in baptism, and believed in the promise which was made *to them and to their children*. We have a striking illustration of their faith in an incident which occurred in the early life of the son. When he was six or seven years old, he had the misfortune to get a substance of some kind lodged in his windpipe. His friends at the house were alarmed, of course, and thought his life to be in danger. The boy was himself alarmed. In this state of mind he went to his father, who was at work in the field, told him what had happened, and that he feared he would die, and that he did not feel prepared for death. He asked his father to pray for him. They kneeled down together in the field, and the father committed the son to God. At the same time the mother at the house was engaged in a similar manner. The parents retired to bed that night with full confidence that all would be well with their son. When they awoke in the morning they found him entirely relieved. They regarded the whole matter as a very special providence, and from that time seemed to feel that their son belonged

to God. This anecdote is worth something, inasmuch as it illustrates the views of our fathers on the subject of prayer. They believed in the efficacy of prayer. A volume might be filled with illustrations of this truth.

At a very early age Robert Baker became seriously concerned on the subject of religion. He was a regular attendant upon the means of grace, and was for years an earnest inquirer. When about eighteen years of age he volunteered for a campaign against the Creek Indians. Of this portion of his life all that is known is, that he was faithful in the discharge of his duties, and secured the confidence and esteem of both the officers and private soldiers with whom he was connected. Amidst all the temptations of a soldier's life his religious impressions remained. Soon after his return home, these impressions were rendered deeper by the exhortations of a sister, who urged him in her dying moments to prepare to meet her in heaven. At a camp-meeting at the Big Spring he was in deep distress. His distress continued through the meeting, and at its close he went home with a heavy heart. He spent the day of his return from the meeting in earnest prayer for the salvation of his soul. About dark his parents, who had become uneasy about him, started to the grove where he had passed the time to look after him. In the meantime his mind had become relieved, and he met them in their search with the glad intelligence. I suppose his profession of religion to have been

made in 1817, or in 1818, when he was of course in his twenty-second or twenty-third year.

Mr. Baker's mind was turned toward the work of the ministry soon after he professed religion. He endeavored, however, to suppress the thought. His health was frail, and the work seemed above his strength. A minister's life at that time, too, was considered a hard life. It involved much labor and self-denial, and presented no prospect of earthly compensation. He shrunk from its trials and its responsibilities. At the meeting of the Nashville Presbytery in the spring of 1819, the great destitution of ministerial laborers in the bounds of the Presbytery was seriously considered, and a day of fasting and prayer was appointed in view of that destitution. The congregations were recommended to pray for an increase of ministers, and the preachers were to preach upon a call to the ministry. On the fast-day, Thomas Calhoun preached at Fall Creek, upon a call to the work. The sermon was delivered on Monday of a camp-meeting. It was a powerful effort, and made a deep impression. Robert Baker and another young man acknowledged their spiritual struggles on the subject, and, it was understood, gave themselves up to God that day for the work of the ministry.

At the fall meeting of the Presbytery of that year, on the 14th day of October, at the Big Spring Meeting-house, he was received as a candidate for the ministry. The text for his first trial sermon was Heb. ii. 3. The text assigned at the next Pres-

bytery was Rom. vi. 23. At the following meeting of the Presbytery Mr. Baker, in conjunction with the writer, was licensed. This occurred at the Beech Meeting-house, in Sumner county, in October, 1822. Rev. Thomas Calhoun officiated. At this meeting of the Presbytery he was assigned for the whole of his time to the Nashville Circuit. This circuit extended through the most cultivated portion of Middle Tennessee. At the next meeting of the Presbytery he was assigned to the same work. At the fall meeting of the Presbytery in 1821 he was still continued, in conjunction with William Etherly, upon the Nashville Circuit. In the course of his first year's labor, he received what was considered a striking testimonial of his popularity as a preacher. Some of the ladies of the circuit combined, and presented him with a *cloth suit*. Other circuit-riders considered themselves highly favored to be supplied with socks, and very common clothes—such as the ladies made themselves. A present of a cloth suit was a new thing under the sun. It was, however, well deserved on this occasion. His labors had been very useful, and he was greatly beloved.

In the fall of 1822 the Lebanon Presbytery was organized. It had been stricken off from the Nashville Presbytery by the preceding Synod. Mr. Baker lived within the bounds of the new Presbytery, and of course was transferred to its care.

At the meeting of the Lebanon Presbytery in 1823, he was set apart to the whole work of the ministry.

In the spring of 1823, in company with Abner W. Lansden, a licentiate of the Lebanon Presbytery, he was sent to East Tennessee. "Amiable, conciliatory, easy, and agreeable in his manners, sedate, deeply pious, affectionate, and sympathetic, he was a model missionary. Possessing respectable talents, a voice combining with the volume of the trumpet the soft melody of the lute, and a sympathy of soul that wooed his audience in the tenderest strains of the gospel, he was such a preacher as we are apt to imagine the beloved disciple was, who reclined upon his Master's bosom."\* He labored in East Tennessee for twelve months, in conjunction with Mr. Lansden and others. In the winter months, however, his health suffered, and at the spring session of the Presbytery in 1824, he was assigned to the Lebanon Circuit, that he might be in the vicinity of his home in the event of his being unable to prosecute his labors from a farther failure of health.

In the fall or winter of 1825 Mr. Baker's father moved to Western Tennessee, and settled in Carroll county, first on Clear Creek, and afterward in the neighborhood of what is now McLemoresville. Robert Baker moved with him, and became a member of the Hopewell Presbytery. From that time his labors were confined chiefly to Western Tennessee. He attended the last meeting of the Cumberland Synod. Its sessions were held at Franklin,

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\* Life of George Donnell.



Tennessee, in the fall of 1828. The following spring he was a member of the first General Assembly. Its sessions were held at Princeton, Kentucky, in May, 1829. He was also a member of the General Assembly of 1838, which met at Lebanon, Tennessee. It must not be inferred from the mention of these particulars that he was ever remiss in his attendance upon the judicatures of the Church. He was punctual in the discharge of these as well as other duties. He was trained in a school in which punctuality was required.

In the early part of the summer of 1829, Mr. Baker was married to a young lady, a member of the Church, and of very respectable family. In a few months, however, it was developed that he had bestowed his affections upon a very unworthy object. A separation was the result. His feelings and his happiness had been cruelly trifled with. It was a dark cloud over the path of a good man. He felt it to be a terrible blow. I performed the marriage service myself, and became fully acquainted with the feelings of the sufferer. Let the curtain of oblivion, however, drop upon a scene which was at the time so full of sadness and disappointment. In process of time, I believe in the winter of 1829 and 1830, he was divorced from his wife by the action of the Legislature of Tennessee.

On the 27th of December, 1831, he was married a second time, to Miss Sarah C. Hamilton, of Carroll county. He settled immediately in the neighborhood of his father-in-law, and remained there

until his death. In the meantime he became the pastor of the Shiloh congregation, in the bounds of which his father-in-law's family had lived from the time of its organization. Here he labored as long as he had strength for any public service. I suppose the pastoral connection was dissolved by his death.

From the time Mr. Baker entered the ministry his health was feeble. His friends thought that he could not bear the labors and hardships of the service many years. He was himself under the impression that his race would be short. Still, he held up against encroaching infirmities until 1845. I spent two days at his camp-meeting in the fall of 1844. I had not seen him for years. His health and strength seemed at least equal to what I would have expected. Still he was very feeble. In the course of that winter he failed rapidly. Some time before his death his brother-in-law, who lived some miles distant, removed him to his own house, hoping that the change would afford some recreation and relief. The invalid soon, however, became worse; his family were sent for; he declined rapidly, and on the sixth day of March, 1845, he breathed his last. My informant says that "while he retained the proper exercise of his mind, all was peace and comfort." His remains were borne to what had been his home, on the day following his death, and on the next day were buried in the burying-ground at Shiloh. On the day of the burial, whilst the religious service connected with the occasion was

conducted in the church by Rev. A. E. Cooper, his wife fainted. With considerable difficulty she was relieved of the affection, and revived. She witnessed the burial, and was taken to her home in a carriage by some friends. When she reached the house, seeming to be overpowered by a sense of her desolation, she fainted again, and never revived. She had appeared previously to be in perfect health, and to bear her bereavement with unusual presence of mind. Thus died a good man, and certainly a most devoted wife. Six fatherless and motherless children were left behind. Two of them have since died. The others, with one exception, are members of the Church. It was said at the time that Mr. Baker's friends, and the members of his congregation, were unusually kind and liberal in making provision for his children.

I append the following account from a respected minister, an eye-witness of the last hours of Mr. Baker, and of the melancholy circumstances which followed. The circumstances were so remarkable and afflicting, that a more detailed statement of them will be interesting :

"It was my privilege," says my correspondent, "to meet with Rev. Robert Baker frequently during his last illness. I had just entered the ministry. Being inexperienced, and subject to many discouragements, I esteemed it indeed a great privilege to be welcomed to his hospitable home, and there to have the benefit of his counsel and instruction. I found his home a resting-place and a quiet retreat

for the young preacher, and that there was no one to whom he could go with more reliable assurances of sympathy and kindness. He talked to me frequently of the trials of his early ministry. Often have I listened for hours at the recital of his sufferings, both physical and mental. He was indeed a man of many sorrows. A few of his intimate friends knew something of these; but the world will never know what he suffered, for the reason that the history of his sufferings never will, never can be written. Yet in the midst of all, be it said, that he was the same patient, self-poised Christian philosopher, never murmuring, or repining, or at any time evincing a spirit of insubordination to the Divine will. His lamp was at all times *trimmed and burning*, and doubtless at any hour during the last few years of his life he could, in its full spirit, have adopted the language of the great apostle of the Gentiles, 'I am *now ready* to be offered.'

"I was present and witnessed the closing scene of his earthly pilgrimage. He was at the house of his brother-in-law, near McLemoresville, in Western Tennessee. He had been declining for some time previous to his removal there. His death, which soon occurred, was therefore no matter of surprise, either to his relatives around him, or to his friends more remote. In his last hours he was calm and self-possessed. His arrangements had all been made, and he only awaited the call of his Master. His wife and children had been previously committed to that God who has promised to be a friend to the

fatherless and the widow. With an unshaken confidence in the faithfulness of Him who thus promises, he closed his eyes in death. The scene was indeed impressive, especially to the writer, who had never witnessed such an occurrence before.

“There was a circumstance connected with the death of this great and good man of a very remarkable character. While he was breathing his last in the presence of a concourse of weeping friends and relatives, the writer, with others present, observed that his wife, an excellent Christian lady, sat by the bedside apparently unmoved. She looked steadfastly into the face of her dying husband without shedding a tear or *heaving a sigh*. No satisfactory explanation could be given at the time of what seemed so strange, and, we may say, so unnatural. In the course of the proceedings, however, of the funeral solemnities, the mystery was explained. While listening to the funeral-sermon of her deceased husband in the Shiloh church, where he had so often ministered himself, she fainted and fell on the floor. She seemed to be lifeless for a time. But the attention of friends and attending physicians restored her to consciousness, and when the burial was over, she was able to ride in a carriage to her lonely and desolate home, which was but a few hundred yards distant from the church. Having walked into the house, at the suggestion of her friends she lay down on a convenient bed to rest. She asked her sister for some water. In less time than would be requisite for writing this

sentence, the water was brought to her couch, but, lo! *she was not there. The spirit had departed: Mrs. Baker had joined her sainted husband in a better world.* Several physicians were called in with the utmost dispatch. They labored to a late hour in the evening to restore animation and consciousness, but their labors were unavailing. Death had done its work. *She had gone to heaven, and would not return.*

“The physicians present decided that her death was the result of excessive grief, which could not find expression—that if she could have given vent to her feelings by shedding tears, and other customary means, she might have lived.”

Robert Baker belonged to what might be termed the third generation of Cumberland Presbyterian preachers. He was brought into the ministry by the fathers of the Church, and trained in their school. He had imbibed much of their spirit: from the time he entered the ministry he felt himself to be a consecrated man. He never, during his subsequent life, lost a sense of the holy obligations which the vows of his early manhood had imposed upon him. If a man could inherit religion, he would certainly have been one of the heirs. His father and mother were Christians of the old school, which flourished fifty years ago. Religion with them was an earnest matter—it was a business of life. He was brought up under the ministrations of Thomas Calhoon. The impressions made by Mr. Calhoon were deep and abiding. Mr. Baker was always a favorite with Mr. Calhoon, and if the sen-

timent had been reciprocated, it would not have been a matter of surprise, nor would the character of the teacher have been likely to impair that of the disciple.

Mr. Baker had many natural endowments which were favorable to the ministerial work. His mind, though not cultivated in the schools, was active and vigorous. What he read he understood, and retained in memory. He could use his acquisitions, too, with great readiness and freedom. He had an excellent spirit—he was kind, conciliating, unselfish—everybody loved him. His manner in the pulpit was natural and agreeable; it was more than agreeable—it was pleasing. His voice was unusually good. He delivered his sermons with an earnestness and a holy unction which seldom failed to make an impression.

I recollect the time of his first visit to Shiloh, where he ultimately settled, and was buried. It was upon the occasion of a camp-meeting. He had been unwell, but reached there on Saturday evening. He preached on Sabbath from the apostolic injunction, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownelves; know ye not your ownelves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." It was a sacramental-sermon. It became a favorite sermon with him afterward. On that occasion it made a fine impression. He preached again on Monday, from the first Psalm. There were two good old men present, who had recently settled in the neighborhood with their families. They had

been members of another Church, in Kentucky, and had been in the habit of hearing good preachers from their youth. They were captivated, however, with the preaching which they heard in the wilderness. They expressed earnest wishes that their old friends in Kentucky could be there, to hear what they were hearing. I need hardly add that these two old men with their families became members of Shiloh congregation. The old men have passed away, but their descendants are still there, earnest and laborious members of the Church.

At a certain time, whilst Mr. Baker and myself were coöperating in Western Tennessee, we were directed to hold a two-days' meeting in Huntingdon. No congregation had been organized in the place. There was no house of worship, and the community were thought to be rather impracticable on the subject of religion. The meeting was appointed, and the time came. We preached in the court-house. The attendance was fair. The next day we preached in the court-house in like manner. The congregation was large. We felt serious in prospect of the responsibility. I recollect on our way to the meeting on Sabbath morning, I repeated to him the words of Abishai to Joab, when they were about entering into battle with the enemies of Israel: "Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God; and let the Lord do that which is good in his sight." I preached that morning as well as I could. Mr. Baker followed. He preached from a



passage in the Lord's Prayer: "But deliver us from evil." He denounced what were said to be the evils and vices of the place, and especially of the young men, with great boldness and severity. It was an earnest and terrible philippic. The people listened with respectful and profound attention. Of course some curiosity was excited to know how the last sermon would be received. In a few days the question was settled. The young men, instead of becoming offended, were so much pleased with the boldness and fidelity of the preacher, that they made him a present of a suit of fine clothes. Public attention was turned to the subject of religion to an extent to which it had never been turned before. Beyond that immediate result, we cannot tell what the more remote results may have been. One of those young men is now my neighbor, and a respected member of the Church.

Mr. Baker and myself were intimately connected a number of years in Western Tennessee in the work of the ministry. I knew him well. A small volume might be filled with incidents. The country was new. We were young men. The members of the Presbytery were nearly all young. The work imposed a heavy responsibility. Still, from the harvest which has been reaped, we may diffidently infer that some good seed was sown.

In the winter of 1829 and 1830 John C. Smith and James McKee died. They were both members of the Presbytery—men of promise, and greatly beloved. We were desired by their friends to

deliver sermons as memorials of the deceased. The sermons were to be delivered together. We preached at Huntingdon, Trenton, Sandy Meeting-house, and Shiloh. It was a melancholy series of services. They related to the dead. With them, too, our coöperative labors came practically to a close. In a few days after the meeting at Shiloh we separated. He remained in Tennessee, and continued a faithful, laborious, and honored preacher and pastor. I went to Kentucky, and entered upon a course which, in the providence of God, has led to what was certainly not of my own devising. God rules as he will.

## REV. HIRAM M'DANIEL.\*

1824—1850.

HIRAM McDANIEL was born August 13, 1785, in Caswell county, North Carolina. His parents were William and Jane McDaniel. His father was a plain, unpretending man, a farmer, and a member of the Methodist Church. His mother, it seems, was not a professor of religion. They raised seven children, of whom Hiram was the fourth in age. His constitution was delicate from childhood; he was regarded with great tenderness by his parents, and was thought to possess promising talents. Under such impressions in relation to his promise, and taking into consideration also his delicate health, they determined to give him a liberal education. He was accordingly sent to one of the best schools in the country, and made rapid progress in the study of the ordinary branches of science, and also in Mathematics. His father and his teacher united in urging him to study the languages. He commenced the study of Latin, but made up his mind that he would never enter one of the learned

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\* Manuscript of Miss Jane McDaniel. Minutes of Logan and Anderson Presbyteries.

professions, and that therefore such a course of studies would be useless. Of course he abandoned the course of education which had been urged upon him—a step which he regretted as long as he lived.

Soon after he left school, he engaged as a clerk with a Mr. McCain, a merchant who had some reputation as a book-keeper. It seems that one object of young Mr. McDaniel in this engagement was to acquire a knowledge of book-keeping. He remained in the employment of Mr. McCain until he was about twenty-one. He and his father then made a journey to Kentucky, with a view of buying land, and ultimately settling in that country. He remained in Kentucky, and his father returned to North Carolina, intending to move his family to the West. Something, however, occurred to derange the plan, and the father and family still remained in Carolina. Mr. McDaniel then took charge of a school, in what at that time was Centerville, the county-seat of Livingston county. After teaching a while, he again engaged as a clerk in a store.

On the second of April, 1807, he was married to Miss Catharine Leeper, of Livingston county. Soon after his marriage, the merchant with whom he was engaged dying, he purchased a farm and commenced the business of farming. He soon found himself, however, but poorly adapted to the drudgery of a farm, from his feeble health; and having no assistance, he moved back to Centerville, and engaged in merchandising, at the same time keeping a small tavern, mainly for the accommoda-

tion of travelers, as Centerville was situated on the great road leading from Kentucky and Tennessee to the North-west, and the tide of emigration in that direction was just setting in.

In process of time the seat of justice was removed from Centerville to Salem, and Mr. McDaniel fell back to the business of farming, with the assistance of some negroes that he acquired, perhaps through his wife. About this time Mr. McGready began to preach at what was afterward called "Livingston Church." A small congregation of Presbyterians had been organized there, of which old Mr. Leeper was a leading member and an elder. Mr. McDaniel and his wife became deeply concerned on the subject of religion, and in a short time the wife made profession of religion and joined the Presbyterian Church. Mr. McDaniel himself seems to have been a *seeker* a number of years, and to have professed religion at a Cumberland Presbyterian camp-meeting at Bethlehem, in Caldwell county—a place which God still honors with his presence and grace. Some time previous to his profession of religion, he commenced the practice of family prayer, which he kept up to his death. Very soon after he professed religion his mind began to be exercised on the subject of the ministry. But he had a family, was comparatively poor, and his education did not fill up the measure which he himself had prescribed as a necessary ministerial qualification. He endeavored, of course, to quiet his feelings and excuse himself from the work. He felt, however, that the

vows of God were upon him; and after much hesitation, and seeking private counsel from his brethren, he placed himself, as a candidate for the ministry, under the care of the Logan Presbytery. This occurred on the 18th of November, 1819. The sessions of the Presbytery were held at Antioch, in Christian county, Kentucky. By the same Presbytery, at Red River Meeting-house, in Logan county, Kentucky, he was licensed on the 12th day of October, 1820. The discourse which he read was from Phil. ii. 12, 13. At the spring sessions of the Presbytery in 1821, he "was ordered to ride as a missionary in the Christian District. At the fall sessions he was ordered, in conjunction with James Y. Barnett," to ride as a missionary in the same district. In 1822 the Anderson Presbytery was constituted, and Mr. McDaniel, living within its bounds, was transferred to that Presbytery. At Henderson, Kentucky, on the 7th of April, 1824, he was ordained by the Anderson Presbytery. Rev. David Lowry preached the ordination-sermon, and Rev. John Barnett presided and gave the charge.

The winter after he was licensed, Mr. McDaniel visited his father, in North Carolina. He spent most of the winter there, and preached a great deal from house to house. His ministry seems to have been abundantly blessed. A good work commenced at his first appointment, and continued through the winter. My informant says, "He had reason to believe that there were many seals to his ministry," and that "numbers during the winter found peace

and joy in believing." He often alluded to this winter as the most happy period of his life. On his return from North Carolina, he preached and attended camp-meetings according to the custom of his fellow-ministers, as he was able.

Two or three years after his licensure, he went as a missionary to Arkansas, and spent a winter there. According to his journal, he visited nearly all the white settlements in the territory, often preaching three times a day. The country was new; his hearers frequently attended preaching with their guns in their hands, and in their buckskin hunting-shirts. The winter was mild for some time, and traveling was agreeable, but suddenly a violent change occurred. He was compelled to cross the Arkansas River. There was no boat sufficient to convey his horse. He crossed, however, by some means, and swam his horse. When he reached the opposite bank the horse was covered with ice. He mounted and set off for his appointment, but soon found that the horse had the blind-staggers. Of course he stopped, and in a few minutes the horse fell in the road and died. He started for his destination with his saddle, saddle-bags, and bridle upon his shoulder. He soon, however, met with a stranger who assisted him forward. He reached his appointment; the people made up twenty-five dollars and bought him a pony, with which he was enabled to consummate his mission.

On his return from Arkansas he found his last negro man declining with the consumption. The

man died, and Mr. McDaniel sold his farm in discouragement, intending to move to Mississippi. It seems that a rich relative had urged him to such a removal. He went so far in his preparation that he engaged a steam-boat to convey his family, but a reverse awaited him; the removal was declined; he engaged temporarily in teaching, and had charge for a few months of the Preparatory Department of Cumberland College.

The year in which he was ordained he paid a second visit to his parents, and spent some time with them. His preaching was acceptable, and a number of his relatives professed religion in connection with his ministerial labors, and amongst them his youngest sister.

Some time after this visit, his father purchased a farm for him in North Carolina, and three Presbyterian congregations agreed to employ him as their pastor, assuring him of a competent support; but yielding to other influences, he remained in Kentucky. He made a temporary settlement in Trigg county. Whilst there he engaged in the service of the American Sunday-school Union. In this service he continued three years. One of those years his family spent at Cumberland College, in charge of the boarding-house. This was the collegiate year which closed in September, 1831. In the latter part of his year at the College, he lost a negro boy under very afflicting circumstances. The poor fellow was carelessly playing about the mill while it was in operation, became entangled somehow in



the machinery, and was crushed to death. The family felt it very seriously, as one of a series of adverse providences which seemed to be following them. From the College he moved again to Trigg county.

About this time Mr. McDaniel became involved in some difficulties with two or three of his ministerial brethren. A recital of these would be needless and painful. They grew up in some way from the connection of the parties with Cumberland College. The men concerned were all good men, but they misunderstood one another. There was an estrangement of feeling which continued, I suppose, during life, but the worthy men have passed away, and see things now in a different light. It is pleasant to believe, to be assured, that there is an oblivion of all such animosities in heaven.

Some years before his death he sold his farm in Trigg county, and settled in Todd, a few miles below Elkton. He had by this time become so enfeebled by age and infirmities, that he was able to preach but little. He had a pleasant home and lived quietly, preaching when he was able, and otherwise contributing to the interests of the Church in his neighborhood.

In 1848 he had an apoplectic stroke. He had been standing in the sun superintending some domestic matter. Returning to the house and being assisted to bed, he was confined several days. In about two weeks, however, he was restored to his usual health. While confined with his temporary

illness, he expressed a wish to live a while longer, that he might preach a sermon which he had prepared on the call of Abraham "to go out to a place which he should afterward receive for an inheritance." He did survive, and it seems was enabled to preach the sermon. One of his last sermons was upon the "Trials of the Christian;" the text, "And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitations." About three weeks before his death, he preached in his own neighborhood, upon the "Beauties and Glories of Heaven." It seemed from the sermon as though he had received a foretaste. Thus says my informant.

Some time previous to his death, notwithstanding his infirmities, he took charge of McAdoo congregation. For this service he was to receive a small salary. In August of his last year he conducted their camp-meeting, and in its progress preached a sermon on the subject of "Faith." It seems to have been a spiritual and effective sermon. On the 26th of November following, 1850, he closed his earthly career. His death was sudden, and of course there were but few circumstances of interest connected with it. We judge of his Christian and ministerial character from his life.

In person, Mr. McDaniel was rather below the medium height. Until late in life his frame was slender; as he approached old age, however, there was a slight tendency to corpulency. His complexion was fair, his hair sandy; his eyes were blue. His carriage and bearing were those of a well-bred

gentleman. His wife survived him nearly ten years, and died May 23, 1860. He left six children, all of whom are members of the Church.

My personal acquaintance with Mr. McDaniel extended through a number of years, but it was never intimate. I heard him preach a few times, and occasionally shared the hospitalities of his house. He was a good preacher—not noisy, rather otherwise, but distinct, sensible, and practical. His voice was weak, and his manner deliberate. From these circumstances he was not so well adapted to great popular occasions as some others. The truth is, he was underrated by the Church, as all men of his manner of preaching were in his day. He would have been more popular, and human judgment would have decided more useful, in the Presbyterian Church. Still, God in his providence cast his lot with us: we know that his providence never makes a mistake. He filled up the measure, and accomplished the work, which God appointed. It was creditable to him that, in the midst of many and protracted trials, he was contented with his lot, and devoted to the work which a wise Providence had assigned him.

I have said that *he was not so well adapted to popular occasions as some others*. Still, some of his sermons attracted a large share of public attention. They were supposed to be favorite sermons with himself, were frequently repeated, and became extensively known through the country in which he lived. One of these sermons was upon Naaman, the Syrian

captain, and the Israelitish maid: "Wash and be clean." Another was upon the parable of the *Prodigal Son*; and still another was upon the parable of the *Sower and his Seed*. He seemed to have a genius, as he certainly had a taste, for such subjects. The first time I ever heard of him was in connection with a sermon upon the first-mentioned of these subjects, "Wash and be clean." The sermon was delivered soon after his licensure, when he was on his way to North Carolina, upon the occasion of his first visit to that country. He was spoken of as a methodical and correct young preacher. I suppose he preached the sermon occasionally as long as he lived.

He had a great fund of anecdotes for material in conversation, and was consequently a very agreeable companion. For every possible occasion an anecdote seemed to be at hand. They were always innocent, but sometimes very amusing. The wonder was, that with so large and helpless a family as he had through the greater portion of his ministerial life, and the trials which he was called to endure in the loss of property and otherwise, he could keep his spirits up so well, and be so uniformly cheerful and hopeful. He never allowed himself to be worn out and crushed with anxiety in relation to the future of life. It was a happy temperament. A good Providence knows what we need for bearing the burdens of life, and it is not too much to believe that he often endows by nature, and surely trains us by his grace, for the support of those burdens.

## REV. GEORGE DONNELL.\*

1825—1845.

GEORGE DONNELL was born on the 9th of August, 1801, in Guilford county, North Carolina. He was the son of George and Isabella Donnell. The maiden name of his mother was Kerr. George Donnell, senior, the father, was a ruling elder in Alamance congregation, which was under the pastoral care of Rev. David Caldwell, D.D. Dr. Caldwell was for near sixty years pastor of Alamance congregation. George was the third son and seventh child of a family of twelve children. His parents were of Scotch-Irish descent. He was baptized in his infancy by Dr. Caldwell.

In the fall of 1804 George Donnell, senior, with his family, moved from North Carolina, and settled in Spring Creek congregation, in Wilson county, Tennessee. The Spring Creek congregation was then, and for many years continued to be, under the pastoral care of Rev. Samuel Donnell.

Nothing seems to have occurred in the boyhood and early youth of George Donnell to indicate that

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\* President Anderson's Life of Rev. George Donnell. Banner of Peace.

he would ever arrive at distinction. His parents attended church with punctuality, and took their children with them. This was a Presbyterian usage in those days. They otherwise instructed and trained their children with care.

When the son was six years of age the mother died. Such a loss is almost always irreparable, and young George seems to have felt the blow in his case very sensibly. After two years of widowhood his father married a second time, but the affections and respect of the son had lost their natural object. Still, he is represented as having been obedient and respectful to his second mother.

He acquired his early education at the school of Rev. Samuel Donnell, pastor of the congregation. In this school he is said to have acquired rapidly the rudiments of an English education. He was also a fine companion, "prominent in every sport, expert at every game, full of hilarity, humor, and wit; ever pleasant and affectionate, the favorite of all his companions." One of his companions says of him, that he "was a warm-hearted, manly, honorable boy; mischievous and wild, but he never did a mean thing; was never profane; and always abhorred a lie."

His father was a farmer; but as the son grew up he exhibited some mechanical tact, and was accordingly placed under the care of a wheelwright in the neighborhood, for the purpose of learning the trade of wheel-making. This, by the way, was a very important business at that time, when all families

manufactured their own clothing. About this time, too, he received his first abiding religious impressions. The immediate occasion, however, of those impressions is not known. But his convictions were deep and earnest. They impaired his health, depressed his spirits, and changed his former buoyancy and liveliness into thoughtfulness, melancholy, and gloominess.

At a camp-meeting at Sugg's Creek, in Wilson county, Tennessee, held in August of 1819, he professed religion. He had had a long and painful struggle of mind. His friends had feared derangement. The struggle was succeeded by corresponding peace and joy. "The height of his joy was proportionate to the depth of his despair. His convictions had been agonizing—his transport was rapturous; darkness had long enveloped his mind—the light of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus, shone upon his heart. Though prostrate upon the ground, he seemed to be at the gate of heaven."

By permission of his father, he attached himself to Bethesda congregation, which had originated in a secession of some persons who favored the old revival of 1800, from the Spring Creek congregation, of which his father was an elder.

He immediately became very active and efficient in his neighborhood in promoting prayer-meetings, in exhortation, and in various ways endeavoring to promote the salvation of his friends and neighbors. He was an excellent singer, and became at once altogether useful.

On the 5th of April, 1821, Mr. Donnell was received as a candidate for the ministry by the Nashville Presbytery. The sessions of the Presbytery were held at Moriah Meeting-house, in Wilson county. Soon after becoming a candidate for the ministry he reëntered the school of his uncle, Rev. Samuel Donnell, where he studied those branches of science required by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church preparatory to licensure and ordination. While at school he kept up prayer-meetings one or more nights in every week; prayed, exhorted, and labored otherwise for the promotion of religion in the neighborhood. In the fall of 1821 he accompanied some old ministers to what was called the "Mountain District," to aid them in holding camp-meetings. The following winter was passed at school.

In October, 1822, he was licensed to preach at Bethesda Meeting-house, by the Lebanon Presbytery, which had previously been stricken off from the Nashville Presbytery. He was appointed to ride the Lebanon Circuit, in conjunction with Rev. Robert Baker. His labors were greatly blessed. The next twelve months he spent on the Overton Circuit—"the Mountain District."

In the spring of 1824 he was sent, in company with another licentiate, Samuel M. Aston, to East Tennessee. Here he encountered Old School theologians, of the strictest sort, together with Hopkinsonism in full maturity. He labored principally in East Tennessee for twelve months. A good deal of



opposition, many trials, but great success, attended his labors.

At the spring sessions of the Presbytery in 1825, at Big Spring Meeting-house, in Wilson county, Mr. Donnell, in company with Abner W. Lansden and Samuel M. Aston, was set apart to the whole work of the ministry, Rev. Samuel McSpadden preaching the ordination-sermon, and Rev. Thomas Calhoun presiding and giving the charge. The following year he spent in East Tennessee. Shortly after the spring sessions of the Presbytery in 1826, by the appointment of the Synod, he visited the Charity Hall Missionary School, located among the Choc-taws, then residing in Mississippi. His colleague in that visit was Rev. David Foster. Mr. Foster was much the older minister of the two, and was considered the principal in the appointment. The following year was also spent in East Tennessee.

Early in the summer of 1827 Mr. Donnell was married to Miss Elizabeth E. McMurray, eldest daughter of Mr. David McMurray, of Big Spring congregation. The union was in all respects a suitable and happy one.

About the beginning of the year 1829 he commenced his labors in Lebanon. His work here proved to be the great work of his life. When he commenced his labors there was but one house of worship in the place—that belonged to the Method-ists. There was also a regularly organized Methodist Society. There was no other organized Christian

congregation in the place. He commenced his labors in the court-house. He encountered the usual discouragements, embarrassments, and opposition, from wicked men and sectarian influence, but at length succeeded in collecting and organizing a congregation of seven members—all of these were females. A house of worship was also built in due time. The congregation increased from year to year, gracious revivals were enjoyed, and the good man saw *the pleasure of the Lord prosper in his hands*. At the time of his death, it was the largest and most influential congregation in the denomination to which it belonged.

In the year 1820 Mr. Donnell commenced preaching to the New Hope congregation, situated about nine miles from Lebanon. He labored here a number of years, in connection with his labors in the Lebanon congregation.

The General Assembly of 1838 was dissolved according to order, and another Assembly appointed to meet in 1840. Of course there was no Assembly in 1839. In the intermediate time between the two Assemblies, however, it appeared that the Cumberland Presbyterian, the weekly organ of the Church, was about to be suspended. The result was, the meeting of a convention in Nashville, in May of 1839, for the purpose of considering the question of a Church paper. A plan was adopted for the publication of a paper, and Mr. Donnell was assigned prospectively to the editorial department. For reasons which need not be mentioned here, the

plan was not carried into execution, and the paper was not published.

He continued his labors in the Lebanon congregation up to 1845. His health, however, had become impaired, by insensible degrees, until the early part of that year, when, after severe labor at a protracted meeting in Columbia, and a fatiguing ride home, he was prostrated. At first no serious apprehensions were felt, but his disease soon developed itself in a threatening form. After lingering for some time, on Saturday night, March 22, 1845, he closed his earthly career. His afflictions were borne with patience and quietness. His mind was at peace, "occasionally rising to a rapturous transport that made him long to soar away to visions of God." On the following day, "Sabbath, Dr. Cossitt preached a funeral-sermon to a Church and community overwhelmed with grief; and on Monday his remains were committed to the silent tomb, there to repose till the dead in Christ shall arise to appear with him in glory."

The following is the testimonial of the session of the congregation to the worth of their departed pastor. The preamble and resolutions were adopted on the 25th of March, three days after his death:

"Whereas, it hath pleased Almighty God, since the last meeting of the session, to remove from earth to heaven our much-beloved pastor, Rev. George Donnell; to this inscrutable decree of Providence we mournfully bow with Christian submission, knowing that the great Head of the Church can do

no wrong. Yet, as the session of the Lebanon Church, of which he was the spiritual father, we cannot refrain from placing upon the records of our Church an expression of our estimation, as well as that of the members whom we represent, of the great, if not irreparable loss, which we have sustained in this afflictive dispensation of Providence.

“He whose death we now so deeply deplore was the founder of our Church in this place, and has sustained to it the endearing relation of pastor since its organization in the year 1830. By him its members, every one, were received into the Church, and all of its elders ordained. By his fostering care, and efficient instrumentality under God, it has grown up from infancy to its present size and condition. He has watched over its growth and progress with a solicitude and interest which could only be equaled by that of a good and tender father toward his children. During the fifteen years he has occupied the pastoral relation to our Church, he has been the first and only choice of its members. At no time would they have willingly submitted to a change. He was indeed a good shepherd, loved by his flock, and respected by all. As a minister, he was able, zealous, and devoted, occupying his position upon the walls of Zion with dignity, efficiency, and untiring perseverance. As a Christian, he was ever seeking to do good, pouring the balm of consolation into every wounded heart, and illustrating by his walk and conversation the beauties of the Christian character. As a member of society,

he was lovely and pleasant; his life was blameless, and his conduct beyond reproach. This session do therefore resolve—

“First. That in the death of the lamented Donnell, the widow has lost a husband, the orphans a father, society one of its most valuable and exemplary members, the Church one of the best of pastors, the ministry one of its brightest ornaments, and the Christian cause one of its most efficient champions and vigilant watchmen.

“Secondly. That a copy of this preamble and these resolutions be furnished by the clerk to the widow of the deceased, and to the editor of the Banner of Peace for publication.”

[A copy from the Minutes.]

Dr. Cossitt thus testifies, in the Banner of Peace, of March 28, 1845:

“It becomes our duty in this number to communicate to the Church and public an event which will fill many hearts with mourning and many eyes with tears. Rev. George Donnell, pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Lebanon, has rested from his labors. \* \* \* The Church for whose interests he has devoted the best years of his life, which has flourished almost beyond example under his pastoral labors, and for which he seemed only to live and labor, will no more hear his instructive voice. The unconverted will no more hear his affectionate warnings, nor the mourning penitent enjoy his faithful guidance to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. The

people of Lebanon will no more have the benefit of his fervent pleadings in their behalf, nor will his closet longer be a Bethel sacred to the remembrance of their spiritual interests and the conversion of the world. The bower of prayer near his country residence will no longer witness his heart's agony and his spirit's groanings for those who despise God's law. \* \* \*

“During his sickness he seemed entirely to trust his all with the Saviour whom he loved, and most strikingly exemplified the power of sustaining grace under the severest trials. The blessed gospel which he preached to others was his consolation when earthly comforts failed, and at times filled him with exceeding great joy and rapturous emotion. He expressed his resignation to the Divine will, whether to live or to die.

“When we remember his career of surpassing usefulness, the confidence with which all who knew him regarded him, the tender affection with which his people loved him—when we reflect that he had arrived only to his forty-fourth year, and was filling one of the most important stations in his own Church, or perhaps of any other in the South-west, it seems to be a mysterious providence which has removed him. Well are we assured that our loss is his gain. But we are led to inquire, Why was such a father called from a most interesting family, when his continuance with them seemed to mortal minds so necessary and desirable? Why was a pastor so able, faithful, and successful, called from so wide a

field of usefulness? Why was the Presbytery and Church to which he belonged deprived of a counselor so valuable—one whose mind was sufficiently capacious to pass beyond mere local interests, comprehend all the parts of a great whole, and regard with equal interest all members of our body? Why was this community to lose one of its brightest ornaments, and this generation a burning and shining light?"

The following is an extract from the records of the Chapman Presbytery, which met in April, 1845:

"Whereas, it hath pleased the great Head of the Church, since our last session of Presbytery, to remove from earth to his rest in heaven our much-esteemed brother, George Donnell; to this most afflicting and inscrutable stroke of Divine Providence we mournfully bow with trembling submission, knowing that the Judge of all the earth will do right. \* \* \*

"The deceased was, in all the relations of life, most eminently qualified to impart comfort, and to aid those with whom he stood connected; able in counsel, eloquent in the pulpit, animating in the social circle, and soothing in the chambers of sorrow and affliction. Truly, he was a 'good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord' through his agency and indefatigable labors.

"*Resolved*, That this Presbytery most tenderly sympathize with the widow of the deceased in her

irreparable loss, and her children, who have lost a most tender and kind father.

*“And be it farther resolved, That this Presbytery, in the death of this esteemed brother, has lost one of its ablest counselors, the Church at Lebanon a faithful pastor, society one of its brightest ornaments, and the world a brilliant example of religion and patriotism.”*

As a farther testimony of their regard for their late pastor, the congregation at Lebanon erected to his memory a beautiful monument, which still covers his remains in the quiet cemetery of the town. On the face of the monument is a suitable inscription.

In 1849 Mrs. Donnell herself died, and was laid by the side of her husband. On the side of the monument next to her resting-place, in addition to the ordinary inscription, we find the following:

*“They were lovely and pleasant in their lives; and in death they are not divided.”*

Mr. Donnell left five children. One of them died soon after his mother; the others still live, and are all members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The eldest, David M. Donnell, has been for some years President of Cumberland Female College, at McMinnville, Tennessee.

Mr. Donnell published two sermons in the Cumberland Presbyterian Pulpit: one in 1833, upon *“The Gospel Feast;”* the second in 1834, upon *“The Nativity of Christ.”*

Of his personal appearance and habits, his biographer gives the following sketch:



“In person he was of about medium stature, slender, and slightly stooped; his head rather under medium size; his hair black and glossy; face rather small and pointed; features delicate; complexion ruddy; eyes clear blue, and ever lighted up with a mild luster; general expression pleasant, but not striking. His bearing modest, retiring, and unpretentious. In society he was easy, affable, and agreeable. Ever cheerful, and abounding in humor and wit, he was the life and soul of the social circle, without seeming to be conscious of his influence. To the young and the old, the gay and the gloomy, he was alike companionable. In the palace of the wealthy, or the cottage of the poor, he was alike at home. His social powers were unsurpassed, and yet he never made an effort to be interesting, or to engross attention.

“In the pulpit, to a stranger, his appearance was not commanding or prepossessing, yet his voice was mellow, and its tones peculiarly tender; and when he commenced speaking, he invariably attracted attention, and as he advanced, he held it enchained. Through the first few sentences his manner was subdued, but soon the heart warmed, and the fire burned, and then, though not vehement or boisterous, his earnestness grew into an agony of spirit while he wrestled for souls, and though he shed not a tear, yet his eyes seemed as liquid as if dissolving in tenderness and sympathy. Or if he discoursed of heaven, or the glories of the Saviour, his whole countenance lighted up with a brilliancy that

seemed to be the reflection of the glory he was contemplating. He conquered and subdued, not by the force of popular eloquence, but by a happy mingling of persuasive tenderness and constraining earnestness: He penetrated the hearts of his audience and subdued them, ere they were aware of his design.

“In the preparation of his discourses, he reflected more than he read—relied more upon evolving thoughts from the depths of his own creative mind than upon culling and collecting ideas from books. He kept a good library, and read much when he had leisure; but when he engaged in framing a sermon, he made but little use of books. He used a text as a nucleus around which he grouped his own thoughts, gathered from reflection, experience, and observation. He relied more upon the preparation of the heart, and the elevation of his spirit and feelings to the proper degree of interest and solicitude, than upon the matter of his sermon. And yet his discourses were always fresh and interesting; they came welling up from the inner fountains of thought and feeling, the gushings of a warm heart dissolving with sympathy for souls.”

I may add to the preceding personal sketch that the printed sermons of Mr. Donnell are not fair specimens of his abilities and effectiveness as a preacher. He was a natural as well as a practiced preacher, but not a practiced writer; and even if he had been a writer of sermons, there were an aptness, and a facility, and a directness in his style

in the pulpit which could never have been represented in print. This is the case with all natural preachers: they can preach better than they can write.

This naturalness of which I have spoken developed itself largely, too, in what might be called *tact*. Mr. Donnell had a great deal of pulpit tact. It showed itself in his style of expression, in his prayers, in his addresses to serious persons, in his selection of songs in a revival. The right word always seemed to be in the right place, the right song was sung at the right time, the right illustration came up precisely where it was needed.

In short, he presented both publicly and privately such a character and such habits of life and labor as we love to contemplate. We linger upon such memories with delight, and should cherish them as an imperishable treasure to the Church.

This brief sketch must not be concluded without two or three practical remarks which it suggests. And,

First. We see what an amount of good can be accomplished by a man of ordinary abilities and ordinary attainments, devoted to a single object. Five years were spent in missionary labor. No doubt during all that time he was receiving souls for his hire. It has been said, however, that his great work was his work in Lebanon. In the course of the fifteen years of his pastorate there, according to the record, he added two hundred and thirty-six members to his congregation. The session say that "its members, every one, were received into

the Church, and all of its elders were ordained by him." The most, if not all, of those members and elders, if not his spiritual children, acknowledged his aid and guidance in the great work of their personal salvation. It should be added, too, that many of these additions were from the most intelligent and influential portion of the community. These were no ordinary results. Few men can show such a record.

Secondly. When Mr. Donnell commenced his labors in Lebanon, he had not even the nucleus of an organized congregation as a basis. He did not, he could not, build upon another man's foundation, because no foundation had been laid. There was material, but nothing more. Still he went to work upon that material; he soon collected and organized a congregation of seven members, all of them being females. To a man of the world this would have seemed a small beginning. Yet earnestness, perseverance, fidelity, and the grace of God carried him forward, and this unpromising beginning became the nucleus of one of the largest and most respectable congregations in the land. There are scores of young men in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church who are *standing all the day idle, because no man hath hired them*. Why do they not thus go into the vineyard and seek their own hire? The field is wide; openings are numerous; the Lord of the harvest will employ them, and give them wages if they will enter earnestly into the work. Why do they not make the experiment?

Thirdly. The labors and success of Mr. Donnell

are an illustration of the importance of the pastoral work as a means of doing good. One who is truly a pastor will live with his people; will see them at their homes; will visit their sick; will bury their dead; will be their counselor and friend in all the exigencies of life. Such a pastorate by an earnest and faithful man will not fail of success. It may be added, too, that such a pastorate is the main reliance of a Christian congregation. It is especially so of a congregation of Presbyterians. Nothing else will serve as a substitute. Mr. Donnell was an earnest and devoted pastor. The impressions which he made still remain. Since his death the congregation have had the services of the best and the ablest men in the Church, and yet after the expiration of near twenty years, when the old members speak of a man after their own heart, they always speak of George Donnell.

Fourthly. I cannot close without an additional remark. The interesting case which we have been considering illustrates another principle. When Mr. Donnell commenced his labors in Lebanon, he had no assurance of a temporal support, or even, I suppose, of the smallest compensation. Yet he entered upon the work; God opened the hearts of the people, and the laborer received even his temporal hire. We have proof enough that in similar circumstances this will always be so. If an earnest and faithful man of respectable ability will give himself up to God and the people, he will receive his reward. *The mouth of the ox that treadeth out the*

*corn will not be muzzled.* Let our young men who are doing nothing, and waiting for *assurances*, make the experiment. "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

## REV. FRANCIS JOHNSTON.

1825—1856.

FRANCIS JOHNSTON was born in Iredell county, North Carolina, September 12, 1790. His parents were moral and upright persons, and his mother was, at the time of his birth, a member of Bethany congregation of the Presbyterian Church. The congregation was under the care of Rev. Dr. Hall. Dr. Hall baptized the subject of this sketch.

About the year 1795 Mr. Johnston's parents moved to what was then called West Tennessee, and settled in Sumner county. The county was then a wilderness, in more senses than one. It was very-sparsely populated, and almost wholly destitute of the means of grace. Mrs. Johnston, the mother, however, soon united herself with Shiloh congregation, then under the care of Rev. William McGee. Mr. McGee was succeeded by Rev. William Hodge. The first camp-meeting that ever was held in Sumner county, was held at Blythe's place, on Desha's Creek, in the bounds of Shiloh congregation. This meeting occurred in the spring of 1800. Mr. Johnston attended the meeting with his father's family. He was then in his tenth year. He

tells us, in a sketch of his own life, that although so young, "he was old enough to feel that he ought to have religion."

In 1803, in his thirteenth year, he professed religion at home, under the guidance of his mother and a sister younger than himself, who had made a profession a short time before. He joined the Shiloh congregation in connection with his mother and sister. His father, in a year or two, in like manner united himself with the same congregation.

From 1806 to 1810 his mind was variously exercised on the subject of preaching the gospel. He laid his case before Mr. Hodge, but was not much encouraged. Mr. Hodge, however, advised him to travel on the circuit a while, with one of the circuit-riders, and make an experiment of his ability to teach. He accordingly spent a month with Rev. David Foster, and also a month with Rev. James Farr on the circuit, but with little satisfaction to himself. His education was indifferent, and his father was poor. He thought that a minister ought to be an educated man. In 1808 or 1809 a good school was opened in an adjoining neighborhood. He determined, notwithstanding his poverty, to avail himself of its advantages, entered, and attended a few days; but his father fell sick, and he was obliged to desist. Upon the recovery of his father, having become discouraged in regard to the matter of an education, he resolved to learn the blacksmith's trade, and devote himself to the business for life. He learned the trade in his father's



shop, and commenced business, but still felt doubtful whether he ought not to preach.

To add to his embarrassments, on the 24th of September, 1812, he married Miss Katy Foster, sister of Rev. David Foster. The marriage seemed untimely; still, his wife was a most estimable woman, and throughout life was an earnest helper in every good work. To embarrass himself still farther, in December of the same year he joined the army as a volunteer for twelve months—a strange race for a man to run who was feeling all the while that he ought to preach the gospel. The reader will recollect, however, that Mr. Johnston's entrance into the army was early in the last war of this country with Great Britain, when the pressure of public sentiment upon young men was very powerful. He served six months of his term, and then hired a substitute. In 1813 he bought a little farm, and determined to devote himself to farming and his trade, and to renounce all thoughts of the ministry. His own record is the following:

“I went in debt for my farm, commenced farming, and determined to look no higher than to the position of a private Christian. But this was not to be my lot. Adverse providences met me on every corner. My former impressions returned. I found farming a slow way of making money. I commenced the blacksmith's business again, and promised the Lord that if he would give me the means of putting me out of debt, I would try to do what I believed to be his will. I labored hard,

made money, and paid my debts; but still there were many difficulties in my way. My wife was weakly, and a family of children was growing up around me, to be raised and educated. We were poor. I was ignorant, and opposed by friends and neighbors. This was hard to bear. I had one friend, however, who never forsook me: that friend was my wife. Though she sometimes felt that her lot was hard—and so it was—yet she murmured not, but bore all patiently.”

After all these difficulties and struggles, in 1818 Mr. Johnston attended a meeting of the Nashville Presbytery, and disclosed his feelings on the subject of preaching. The Presbytery did not receive him as a candidate for the ministry at that time, but advised him to exhort in prayer-meetings, and from some text of Scripture of his own selection to write a sermon for a subsequent meeting of the Presbytery, as a specimen of his ability to sermonize. He went home discouraged, of course. The next Presbytery he did not attend; but in the fall of 1819 he presented himself again before the Presbytery. He also brought his written discourse, and was received as a candidate on the 14th day of October. The session of the Presbytery was held at Big Spring Meeting-house.

On the 5th day of April, 1821, he was licensed to preach the gospel at Moriah Meeting-house, in Wilson county, Tennessee. The following summer he spent on the Overton Circuit. In the fall minutes of the Nashville Presbytery for 1821 I also find the fol-

lowing order: "That Francis Johnston and Robert Tate spend each half of his time on the Overton Circuit." The Overton Circuit was about four weeks in length, and lay from fifty to a hundred and fifty miles from Mr. Johnston's home. He left behind him, when from home, a weakly wife and several little children to be cared for.

In 1823 the subject of his ordination was agitated, but he begged longer time, from a consciousness that he could not fulfill the requirements of the discipline. In the spring of 1825 the subject was brought up again, and he was ordered to prepare for ordination at the fall meeting. In order to enable him to make preparation, a wealthy member of the Church, in whose neighborhood there was a good school, offered him gratuitous boarding. The school was twenty or twenty-five miles from his home. He, however, accepted the offer, and spent the summer in study. He saw his family but three times from the first of May to the first of October. On the 10th of October of that year, 1825, he was set apart to the whole work of the ministry, at the Beech Meeting-house.

From 1825 to 1837 he was the stated supply of Dry Fork and Mount Moriah congregations. He performed all the labors of a pastor in these congregations, in the meantime traveling annually, according to his own record, from three to four months, attending camp-meetings and protracted meetings.

In November of 1839 Mr. Johnston moved from Dry Fork, the neighborhood in which he had been

raised and had hitherto lived, to Simpson county, Kentucky. From that time he became a member of the Logan Presbytery. His labors were still abundant, various, and useful. He had temporary connection with several congregations, the nature and length of which are, however, unknown to the writer. On the 16th of December, 1856, after a painful illness of two weeks, he died at the house of his son-in-law, Thomas Dickson Beard, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. His death was what might have been expected from the fidelity and devotion of his life—calm, quiet, and peaceful.

Mr. Johnston was not a great preacher—he made no such pretensions; but he was what was far better—a spiritual and useful preacher. His forte was in exhortation, and in the application of his sermons. In these he sometimes wholly surpassed himself. He had an iron-like bodily frame, and a voice like a trumpet, and when properly aroused, he was powerful. Sinners whom stronger men, intellectually, could not reach, often trembled beneath his terrible appeals. At a camp-meeting, among mourners, when the interest was beginning to flag, he excelled in arousing his fellow-Christians and mourners themselves to additional efforts. Often, in his earlier years, at least, he would thus labor through a whole night, and sometimes nights in succession, stirring up and kindling afresh the embers which were likely to die out.

I have spoken of what we called his exhortations at the close of his sermons. I recollect particularly

one instance. In 1822 Rev. James S. Guthrie and myself, assisted by Brother Johnston, held the first sacramental-meeting that ever was held by Cumberland Presbyterians in what is now Western Tennessee. The meeting was held on Forked Deer, in a bottom near Adley Alexander's. We had no camps, no shelter; a few logs, however, for seats, and a coarsely constructed pulpit. The meeting was held about two months after the ordination of myself and Guthrie. Mr. Johnston was still a licentiate. We were all young men. The meeting was interesting from the beginning. When Monday came around, a brother of another denomination called in and preached. But little impression, however, seemed to be made. Mr. Johnston followed. He appeared to be, as we familiarly said in those days, *in the brush* for a while, but in the closing up of his sermon he became exceedingly aroused, the fetters fell off, and his appeals were stirring and effective in a very high degree. At the close, a few young persons of precious memory assembled around the pulpit as mourners. The most of them professed religion that day. It may be remarked, too, by the way, that these were the first professions ever made under Cumberland Presbyterian ministrations in a section of the country where the membership is, I believe, now numbered by thousands. I have witnessed many seasons of religious interest, but recollect few days of my life with greater pleasure than the Monday of that meeting. It was a day to be remembered.

Mr. Johnston is one of the men upon whose early career the writer looks with a tender personal interest. May not such an interest be indulged? He was my senior by a number of years, was the head of a family when I was but a boy; still, we grew up in the same neighborhood, were struggling in our preparations for the ministry about the same time, plowed several years in adjoining fields, often meeting at the partition fence and talking our troubles over; met once a week at prayer-meeting where one or both tried to exhort, suffered the same discouragements—even persecutions—from heartless, unappreciating neighbors and friends; with our own hands assisted in building the first meeting-house which was ever built in the neighborhood in which we lived—a very common log building, which still stands, a venerable landmark of former times. Many things conspire to create such an interest as I have suggested. I mention one more. I have always looked upon Mr. Johnston as a *true man*. Our habits of mind were very different. After a few years of our early ministry we pursued very different courses; still I think to the last meeting in life—and I recollect that meeting well—he was the same man that he was when we labored in our little prayer-meetings together. With many painful experiences of a different kind, I linger with a hallowed pleasure upon the memory of such a man.

Mr. Johnston had two sons who entered the ministry. Both were promising—the elder unusually so. The other died young. Both, however,

preceded him to the grave. His widow survived him several years, shedding around her the sanctifying influence of an old age made honorable by a life of devoted, but unostentatious, piety and consecration to God.

The life of Francis Johnston suggests some practical thoughts which are too important to be overlooked in a work intended for usefulness.

We learn from his case, as well as from many others, something of the difficulty of our older men in reaching the ministry. Mr. Johnston thought an education important as a preparation for this work, but we had no colleges, no academies, or high-schools. The means of an education were not within his reach. I know what his sentiments were, however, for I have heard him express them a score of times. He thought preachers, if possible, ought to be educated men.

When the subject of ordination was pressed upon him, it was a matter of conscience with him to be as well prepared for it as possible. Instead of quarreling with the Book of Discipline and his Presbytery for requiring too much, he applied himself in such a way as few men would have done in order to meet these requisitions. At thirty-five years of age he left his family for five months, seeing them but three times in the course of those months, and *went to school*, for the purpose of enabling himself, as far as possible, to come up to the standard of order prescribed by the Church which he honored and loved. This seemed to indicate the spirit of an earnest man.

He commenced the ministry poor and encumbered with a family. He labored upon his farm; he labored in his shop—its traces still remain—but still he labored for God and the Church, spending, for years in succession, annually three or four months outside of his more immediate ministerial charge. He was a *hard-working* man everywhere. Many will rise up in heaven and call him *blessed*. It may be observed, too, that for his ministerial labors there was hardly a show of compensation. There is scarcely a probability that for thirty-five years' service he received as many hundred dollars.

He made no great pretensions to ability. His endowments were moderate; he was not ambitious; he never aspired to leadership in the Church—not even in his own Presbytery—but he was useful. I know of no one occupying a similar position in the Church who has been more so.



## REV. JOHN MORGAN.\*

1828—1841.

JOHN MORGAN was born May 4, 1806, in Virginia, near Richmond. His parents were John and Sarah Niblet Morgan. He was of Welsh extraction. His mother and the mother of the late President Harrison were cousins, and Mr. Morgan's name was really John Harrison Morgan, but from some cause unknown to the writer, his middle name was dropped in early life, and he was distinguished by his first name only. His educational advantages were very limited, but though seldom attending school, he was a diligent student, studied alone, sometimes taught, and by these means became a respectable scholar. He was, in the most practical sense of the expression, "a self-made man."

Some time in his early life his parents moved to Alabama, and settled in Madison county. But little is known of his boyhood. On the fourth Sabbath in September, 1823, he professed religion, being then in his eighteenth year. This is supposed to have occurred in Alabama. He was licensed to

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\* Manuscripts of Rev. A. Freeman, Rev. Isaac Hague, Mrs. J. R. Brown, Diary.

preach on the first of October, 1827, and set apart to the whole work of the ministry first of April, 1828. He was introduced into the ministry by the Tennessee Presbytery.

The first year of Mr. Morgan's ministerial life he spent as an itinerant preacher. His circuit extended through the counties of Limestone and Madison, Alabama, and Franklin and Lincoln counties, Tennessee. According to his own account, it was more than four hundred miles long, and his custom was to preach every day, and sometimes twice, and even thrice a day. Under such exhausting labors, as it would be supposed, his health soon began to fail, and it was found necessary for him to contract his labors. He was therefore directed to divide his time between Athens and Mooresville, Alabama. Here he labored for three years. "During this time," says he, "we experienced many gracious and powerful seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and witnessed the happy conversion of many precious souls to God." In the course of the first year after his ordination he administered the ordinance of baptism to two hundred and fifty adult persons. This is an indication of the extraordinary success of his early labors.

When he commenced preaching in Athens, there were but three members of the Church in town. At the expiration of his three years the membership numbered near two hundred, and a good house of worship, a brick building, had been erected. His health was still poor, and as he felt that he

could be at least temporarily spared from Alabama, he determined to travel to some extent, through the more northern and eastern States, for the two-fold purpose of improving his health, and adding to his stock of knowledge.

In the spring of 1831 the call came from Pennsylvania for a visit from some Cumberland Presbyterian preachers to that country. Messrs. Donnell, Chapman, Burrow, Bryan, and Morgan were appointed by the General Assembly of that year to visit Pennsylvania, in conformity with the call. In the latter part of May, Messrs. Morgan and Bryan started for Western Pennsylvania. After attending a meeting in Nashville, of ten days' continuance, which was held in the Market-house, they went to Gallatin, where they remained and preached several days, including the Sabbath. Mr. Morgan's remark is, that there was "some seriousness." From Gallatin they went to Scottsville, Kentucky, and on through the towns which lay in their way, preaching at night and on the Sabbath, as opportunity presented itself. At Bardstown, Kentucky, they held a four-days' meeting, where "much seriousness was manifested." There they visited the Catholic College, Cathedral, and Nunnery—"finely constructed establishments indeed," says Mr. Morgan in his diary, "and well calculated to deceive and ruin souls." From Bardstown they passed through Lexington, Paris, and on to Washington, where they spent the night and preached. From Washington they went to Maysville, where

they preached and spent the night. From Maysville they crossed the river, and for the first time in their lives stood upon "free soil." They shaped their course to Wheeling, preaching in the towns on the road. On the 15th day of July they reached Washington, Pennsylvania. Much curiosity existed to hear a Cumberland Presbyterian preach. Mr. Bryan was sick, and Mr. Morgan preached several times in the Methodist Church to large and attentive congregations.

Mr. Morgan, in connection with the other missionaries, who had all met according to appointment in Western Pennsylvania, attended a number of meetings in the course of the summer and fall, all of which were greatly blessed. Hundreds of persons professed religion, and a number of congregations were organized. The first congregation was organized on the 18th of August. In a few weeks a camp-meeting was held within its bounds, which appears to have been remarkably successful.

In the winter of 1831 and 1832 Mr. Morgan returned to Alabama. He visited Princeton, Kentucky, on his way southward, where he left Mr. John G. Biddle, one of the recent Pennsylvania converts. Mr. Biddle's attention had been turned to the ministry, and he came to Kentucky and entered Cumberland College, with a view to a preparation for that work. Mr. Morgan remained in the South until the spring, and then returned to Pennsylvania.

In the fall of 1832 he took charge of Washington and Bethel congregations. He continued here to

the spring of 1834, when he settled in Uniontown, and took charge of the congregation in that place. Here he continued till his death. A considerable portion of the time of his connection with the Uniontown congregation, he was also connected with Madison College, as Professor of Moral and Intellectual Science. Madison College was at that time under the control of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. In the course of his connection with the Institution he instructed eighteen or twenty young men in theology. He was a member of the General Assembly of 1840, which held its sessions in Elkton, Kentucky, and contributed very greatly by his influence toward the formation of a gigantic scheme for the resuscitation of Cumberland College, the prospects of which had become clouded. The plan, if carried out, would have revived the Institution and placed it on a permanent basis. It was, however, never carried out. He was also a member of the Assembly of 1841, which met at Owensboro, Kentucky. He is said to have delivered his last sermon in March, several months preceding his death, from the text, "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain." He was fully sensible of his decline, and said through the spring and summer that he would "go with the falling of the leaves." After a tedious illness, he closed his earthly career on Sabbath night, October 17, 1841, in the thirty-sixth year of his age, and the fourteenth of his ministry. From a respected correspondent I have the following in relation to his death :

“I was present with him when he died. He was perfectly calm, and seemed entirely conscious and resigned. I recollect that he took leave of Mrs. Morgan with every mark of affection, but his voice was gone. I could hear nothing but ‘Margaret’ and ‘farewell.’ The effort exhausted him, and he soon breathed his last.”

From another correspondent I have an account of an interview, which preceded his death a few days. Says the writer:

“Several of us were on the eve of starting to Synod, which was appointed to meet in Greenfield, Washington county. We called to see our esteemed counselor and friend, now rapidly declining. We supposed it might be our last opportunity of seeing him and hearing words from his lips in this life. He now could no more go with us, and lead us to Presbyteries and Synods, and sit as chief among counselors. Some standing at the head of his bed, some at the side, and some leaning on the foot-railing, he said, ‘Dear brethren, I can go with you no more to Synod. I should like to go. You have been very kind to me, but we have met, I expect, for the last time. Go, and the Lord be with you! Do the best you can till we meet in the General Assembly and Church of the first-born.’ One after another passed out of the room, but still one remained seated near him, held by a ligament which I could not describe. My feelings were tender, and the inquiry of my heart was, ‘How can I leave my spiritual guide, father, brother, friend?’

While I was thus seated, he fixed his eyes on me and said, 'For some days past the Lord has given me such views of eternity that my mind has been carried away. So delighted and charmed, and even overwhelmed, have I been with these bright visions, that I have felt my strength failing under them, and have been compelled to withdraw my mind from them. O the charming scenes which the Lord has set before me!' These were his last words to me. I arose; we took each other by the hand. It was the last farewell."

I make the following extract from the Union Evangelist of November 3, 1841:

"That faithful man of God, Rev. John Morgan, the respected and beloved pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian congregation in Uniontown, since the spring of 1834, was called from the field of his earthly labors on Sabbath night, October 17, 1841, in the thirty-sixth year of his age, and in the fourteenth of his ministry. \* \* \* In connection with others, he received an appointment from the General Assembly of our Church, convened in Princeton, Kentucky, in May, 1831, to visit some parts of Pennsylvania and New York, and on the 15th of July following he arrived in Washington, Pennsylvania. He was incessant in labors here, and in a section of country south of this; also at other points, as Pittsburg, Waynesburg, Jefferson, and Wheeling, up to the early part of December, when he returned South, and passing through Marietta and Athens, Ohio, labored successfully at these and other places,

which he again visited on his return from Alabama. He reëntered the field of labor in Pennsylvania in June, 1832. The ensuing fall he took charge of Washington and Bethel congregations. In the spring of 1834 he resigned his charge here, and settled in Uniontown congregation, where he continued to labor as long as he had strength to preach. He had popular and useful talents, and was a man well suited to the condition and wants of the Church. Wherever he passed he left in his track impressions not soon to be obliterated. With a lucid mind, an unquenchable zeal, a warm heart, and a burning eloquence, he passed through the land like a flame of fire. We may say in truth that he lived fast. His labors soon wore out the frail tabernacle of the mind. All who knew him will bear witness to his urbanity and cheerfulness in the social circle. In the pulpit he was plain in his manner, forcible in his illustrations, and powerful in his appeals; bold, energetic, and faithful; *a workman who had no need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*. He loved revivals of religion, and under God was a happy instrument in promoting them, and leading many to turn from their evil ways. Because of this, he suffered much calumny from the wicked.

“The intelligence that such a servant of God, such a soldier of the cross has died on the battle-field, will make the hearts of thousands sad, but we must send forth the unwelcome tidings that Brother Morgan is no more. His congregation has experi-



enced an inexpressible bereavement, our community has lost a valuable citizen, the Church a useful minister, and the cause of education an able advocate. The loss to his family, it were a mockery to attempt to describe. Their grief and mourning, the lamentations of relatives and friends, may be more fitly conceived than expressed. But they sorrow not as those who have no hope. The bereaved family have a better inheritance than silver and gold—the counsels, the example, the prayers of such a husband and father. The widow and her four fatherless children claim, and will doubtless receive, the sympathies and prayers of those who loved the husband and father.

“Though his health had been declining for years, Brother Morgan still continued to labor, even beyond his strength. He had, however, seldom attempted to preach for eighteen or twenty months past. His protracted affliction he bore with patience and resignation. He had his right mind—was collected and calm to the last moment. The writer often heard him say that ‘Christ had been precious to him, and altogether lovely, when preaching salvation through his name. Now he is precious in my affliction; he is my comfort and my consolation. O there is nothing like communion with God! I know in whom I have believed. My trust is firm. I view the approach of death without fear. I feel myself a poor unworthy creature; Christ is my only dependence. The plan of salvation is just such as man needs. O how well

adapted is the Christian's hope to his condition! Nothing else can afford support in affliction, and in the prospect of death.' He sometimes said, when he thought of the Church and of his rising family, he felt a desire to have health again, if it were the Lord's will. The third evening before his death we called to see him, and an aged minister sitting by his side said to him, 'I suppose you remember that our Synod is to meet to-morrow?' 'Yes,' said he, 'I remember it well, but I suppose I shall never meet you again till we meet in the General Assembly and Church of the first-born.' The apostle's language was then quoted, 'For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain.' 'Aye,' said he, 'that is the last text from which I ever preached. Death is a very trying event. It is more than human nature, unsupported, can bear; but human nature, sanctified by Christianity, can bear it. Leaving a rising family is my greatest trial; but the Lord gave them, and if he see fit to call me away, he will take care of them.' "

The remains of Mr. Morgan were committed to the tomb on Tuesday, 19th of October. A large crowd assembled at his residence at ten o'clock. The procession from thence to the church was led by sixteen ministers, and embraced the family and relatives of the deceased, his church and congregation, physicians, lawyers, and citizens generally of the town and vicinity. The church was set off with the habiliments of mourning. The crowd being seated, Rev. J. P. Wethec commenced the

service by reading the ninetieth Psalm; Rev. David Barclay gave out the hymn,

“Why do we mourn departing friends,” etc.,

and led in prayer. Rev. Milton Bird then delivered the funeral-sermon from Phil. i. 21-24.

One authority says, in relation to the funeral-service: “The audience was the largest I ever saw on such an occasion. The people came from far and near, and all seemed to feel that a great and good man had fallen from the walls of Zion.”

I quote again, from the Union Evangelist:

“Since the existence of our Church, it has never been more sorely bereaved than within the present year. Ewing has fallen in Missouri, Cauby in Illinois, and Morgan in Pennsylvania. This last bereavement falls on a part of the Church which seems least able to bear it. Let us lay these dispensations to heart. Has God a controversy with us? If such afflictions produce no deep impression and salutary reformation, we may expect to be visited still more sorely. Let us take words and return to the Lord with supplication and weeping. In our respective places let us devote ourselves to our duties. Though he feed his people with the bread of affliction, and give them tears to drink in large measure, yet God will not give his heritage to reproach.”

Mr. Morgan was on many accounts one of the most interesting young men ever connected with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Says a correspondent: “The personal appearance of John

Morgan was extremely prepossessing and imposing. He was six feet three inches in height, had black hair, large and brilliant black eyes, and a pale or rather sallow complexion. He was born to command, and without assuming any authority, he was *facile princeps* in Presbytery, Synod, or in any assembly into which he might be thrown."

Although raised, I suppose, in common life, his manners were very fine, rather courtly than otherwise. He was a gentleman evidently without any effort. Such a man could not have been an unkind husband or father. He was just the reverse—loving and loved.

He was for some time connected with the Union Evangelist as editor. Some of his editorial productions were worthy of an editor of more experience and higher pretensions as a writer.

It has been already mentioned that he officiated several years as a Professor in Madison College. He possessed great tact in the management of young men. Indeed, he excelled in the management of men generally. I recollect to have heard a prominent lawyer and politician of Kentucky remark, that at the General Assembly of 1840, Mr. Morgan took him into his own garden, and by his controlling influence brought him over to a measure of Church policy in opposition to long-cherished convictions and prejudices—convictions and prejudices which he had considered immovable. Such a man would exert great influence upon the young men of a college.

But the pulpit was Mr. Morgan's forte. There he appeared to greatest advantage. On this subject I quote from a correspondent who was intimate with him, and was capable of forming a correct judgment:

"He was a great preacher—a great pulpit orator. The church in Uniontown was often crowded *on ordinary occasions* to hear him. He always took an interest in his subject. He felt the force of what he preached. The interest which he felt often kindled up his whole countenance into a flame, and his emotions were communicated to every hearer. At such times the pulpit could hardly contain him, and the whole audience were irresistibly borne along on the tide of thought and feeling. Expressions of deep emotion could be heard on every hand.

"My own impression has been that his nervous system was too delicate for his work, and that these overmastering efforts literally wore him out. I have known him to show signs of great prostration after preaching; and when he had delivered some of his best sermons in the morning, he was often unable to get to the church at night. I should have stated that when his emotions were most overpowering, all his action was perfectly natural, and seemed to coincide with his subject and the state of his feelings."

I recollect the first time I ever saw Mr. Morgan. It was at the General Assembly of 1831. I believe he was not a member, but only a visitor

He reached Princeton the evening before the Assembly met, and was appointed to preach that night. We had all heard of him as a young man of fine promise, and of course were anxious to hear him preach. He commenced his sermon with some very felicitous remarks on the subject of being in the neighborhood of a college, and the possibility of his not being able to satisfy so fastidious a taste as might perhaps prevail there. The sermon, however, was good; no one was disappointed. I saw him again at Princeton the following winter, on his way to Alabama. He again attended the Assembly of 1837, at Princeton, as I have already mentioned, and preached an excellent sermon, on Sabbath afternoon, from a passage in the latter part of Revelation. I never met with him after that meeting. At that Assembly he took an active part in the formation of what was for a long time known as "Cumberland College Association." This was an effort made to save the oldest literary institution in the Church.

I give some recollections of Mr. Morgan from another correspondent. The scenes which he described occurred in Pennsylvania:

"I went," says he, "to a camp-meeting on Father N.'s land. There, for the first time, I saw Mr. Morgan. A tall man, of dark complexion, walked into the preacher's stand. Sitting erect, I carefully surveyed the stranger. His hair was jet-black, his face rather long, his forehead lofty, his shoulders were broad; there was an awe-inspiring

power in his countenance—I could not steadily look upon it. I soon learned from the whispers around me that his name was Morgan. He soon arose, and commenced the service of the hour. His manner riveted the attention of all. His text was God's expostulation with his people: 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' In the course of the sermon I observed a man who was somewhat noted for skeptical, or rather speculative, principles on the subject of religion. He sometimes rose and stood, then sat down; thus frequently changing his position. All the while, however, his attention was fixed upon the preacher. He seemed to hear every word, and his countenance indicated an intense spiritual struggle. The speaker reasoned, and described the work of God in restoring to the soul its lost purity. His face shone like the face of Moses when he came down from the mount. At last, with his fist clenched and trembling, he darted his long arm toward the stranger. The latter dropped to his seat as though powerless. He yielded to the overwhelming appeal, and wept like a child. The preacher continued. He dwelt upon the character of the soul made *white as snow or wool*; its exercises here, and its employments in the coming world. Such a description, such words of holy rapture, such bright visions presented of the great white throne and those standing before it, of

redeemed and glorified spirits flying in delightful obedience to the great Creator's will throughout his vast dominions, were quite overpowering. 'O, who would not be a Christian!' was the preacher's concluding interrogatory; and then, with a 'God save you, my dear people!' he left the stand."

We have an account of another camp-meeting, held on Upper Ten-Mile. Mr. Morgan preached on an afternoon of one day of the meeting. He seems to have been dissatisfied with his effort, but was appointed to preach again at night. In the sermon of the afternoon, in describing the vices and follies of the times, he found himself carried off into something of a light manner. He closed abruptly, and left the stand in great affliction. At night his text was, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" The introductory hymn was suited to the text. Says our informant, "He discoursed with such clearness and force upon his momentous theme—the place of the damned, the nature and reality of damnation—that he soon found his way to our feelings. The bottomless pit, the ascending columns of smoke and flame, the groans and cries, and unmitigated agonies of doomed spirits, seemed not only a fearful, but a present reality. He closed his sermon, and in the conclusion, raising his eyes to heaven, he cried out, 'O God! who is exposed to this damnation? Sinner, can you escape? Can you resist? God will overtake you—he will hurry you to your doom! You cannot escape! O, God save you from the



damnation of hell!' It was the most heart-felt and terrific appeal that I ever heard from the mouth of man. And with this he sank down into his seat, crying, 'O God, O Lord Jesus, save this dear people from the damnation of hell!' Nothing, for some minutes, disturbed the awful stillness but sighs, and sobs, and groans."

We have an account of still another camp-meeting, held in Greene county. The concourse of people was very great, especially on the Sabbath. There seemed to be an organized opposition to the meeting, and great efforts were made to break it up. It seems strange that such should have been the case in the quiet land of Pennsylvania, but we suppose the account faithful. Mr. Morgan was appointed to preach on Sabbath night. Great apprehensions were entertained of the rabble. Every thing indicated a gathering storm. Civil officers were rather *with* the rowdies than *against* them. Night came on, however, and the sermon was preached. The text was Moses's invitation to his father-in-law to journey with Israel to the land of promise. It was a memorable night. "More than a hundred persons signified a wish to seek the goodly land." Quiet and order reigned. Victory on the Lord's side seemed complete. The opposition temporarily quailed. But after the service closed at the stand, the rowdies rallied again. At the head of the troop was a large, black negro, called Bob. It was flattering to his vanity to be made a captain, even of such a crowd. They

marched around the camp-ground, whooping and yelling, throwing stones at the camps, and in various ways expressing their fiendish spirit. Mr. Morgan passed out and around, so as to meet them, as they moved with their whisky and bludgeons. Coming near, he walked rapidly forward, and meeting the head of their miserable column, he took hold of Bob, and placing a hand on each shoulder, shook him severely, and said, "Bob, you scoundrel, will you persist in this disturbance?" Bob trembled from head to foot, and begging, said, "Mr. Morgan, forgive me, and I will do so no more." Bob kept his word, and his followers quietly slipped off. The troubles of the meeting came to an end.

When Mr. Morgan professed religion, he was an immersionist in sentiment, and had his baptism deferred for some time because there was no stream in the neighborhood suitable for immersion. He chose also to be baptized by a minister who had himself been immersed, and for this purpose went a considerable distance from home for baptism. He seems to have retained his prejudices on this subject until after he entered the ministry. A ludicrous incident in his own ministerial experience directed his attention to a new aspect of the subject. He was called upon to baptize a large negro man in Alabama. The negro, like himself, was an immersionist, and must needs go *under the water*. The bottom of the creek selected for the administration of the ordinance was very slippery. At the moment of attempting to put the negro under the

water, the administrator lost his foothold upon the bottom, and the negro escaped from his hand, and swam out, half drowned, to the opposite side of the stream. Of course the crowd collected to witness the service made themselves merry at the occurrence. A thoughtful man would have considered the inconvenience and incongruity of a rite which rendered him liable to so much embarrassment. Mr. Morgan reviewed his opinions. The result was a total change, and for some years before his death he refused to baptize by immersion under any circumstances.

Mr. Morgan left a wife and four children. The respected widow still lives. The children are all members of the Church except the youngest. His oldest son married the daughter of his old friend and fellow-laborer, Rev. Dr. A. M. Bryan; his second daughter is the wife of Rev. J. R. Brown, of Cherry Grove, Illinois.

## ALFRED M'GREADY BRYAN, D.D.\*

1829—1861.

ALFRED MCGREADY BRYAN was born in Logan county, Kentucky, on the 19th of August, 1805. His parents were James and Anne Bryan. His father was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. His parents were both devotedly pious. In his later life he spoke more frequently of the piety of his mother; but this may have arisen from his unusually sensitive disposition, which would lead him to cling more tenderly to the recollections of his mother. The writer has heard him state that his parents were of those who signed Mr. McGready's celebrated Preamble and Covenant in 1796. The history of this transaction is familiar. It was one of the precursors of the great revival of 1800.

Of Mr. Bryan's early boyhood little is known, except his religious training. This would be inferred from the character of his parents. He also made frequent allusions to it himself, always with apparent earnest thankfulness to God for such a blessing. When about seventeen years old he professed religion. He had been attending a camp-

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\* Dr. Paxton's Funeral-Sermon. Minutes of Logan Presbytery.

meeting at Red River Meeting-house, not far from his home. On his return home one evening of the meeting, he was telling his mother, with some interest, of those who had professed religion, and of others who were mourners. She turned to him, and with great tenderness inquired, "And what of you, my boy?" The inquiry went like an arrow to his heart. He retired to a secret place, and sought and found peace. He returned to the meeting, which was still in progress, and was encouraged by the ministers to stand up and tell what God had done for his soul. He immediately developed unusual gifts, and his attention was directed to the work of the ministry. On application, he was accordingly received as a candidate for the ministry, by the Logan Presbytery, at Pilot Knob Meeting-house, on the 2d day of April, 1823. He was licensed at the Union Church, in Russellville, April 7, 1825. On the 8th of October, 1829, he was ordained, at Glasgow. His trial-sermon was from St. John i. 29. Rev. Alexander Chapman preached the ordination-sermon, and Rev. William Harris presided and gave the charge.

From the time of his licensure to the spring session of the Presbytery in 1829, Mr. Bryan labored in different parts of Kentucky—all the upper part of which was at that time included within the bounds of the Logan Presbytery. At the spring session of 1829 he was appointed to supply Russellville, Mount Moriah, Red River, and Liberty congregations, until the fall meeting. At this meeting, as it has been stated,

he was ordained. By the Presbytery, in the fall of 1829, he was appointed to what was called the Mercer District, in the upper part of Kentucky. In April, 1830, he is noticed as an advisory member of the Logan Presbytery. It is supposed he had been attached to the Kentucky Presbytery, which was stricken off from the Logan Presbytery about the time of his ordination.

About this time also he took charge of a congregation in Nashville, Tennessee. Here he continued eighteen months or two years. I believe this was the first permanent effort made to establish a Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Nashville. Rev. Robert Donnell had held several meetings there, but his visits were occasional only.

In 1831 Mr. Bryan was appointed, in connection with four others, by the General Assembly, on a mission to Western Pennsylvania. His first sermon in Pennsylvania was delivered in Washington county, it is believed, in the same house in which the stroke of death fell upon him. After laboring as a missionary in Pennsylvania eighteen months, he determined to remain in that State, and took charge of a congregation, the nucleus of which had in the meantime been collected in Pittsburg. His labors in Pittsburg commenced about the close of the year 1832. From that time to his death his history is in a great measure identified with the history of the Pittsburg congregation.

Previous to the time of Mr. Bryan's settlement in Pittsburg, the few Cumberland Presbyterians

who had been collected together occupied a building as a house of worship on First Street, and secured such ministrations as they could. A portion of the year 1832 they had been served by Rev. Samuel S. Sparks, who preached at this point in connection with his charge in Monongahela City. On the arrival of Mr. Bryan, a regular organization was effected. This occurred on the first day of January, 1833. The following is an extract from the records of the session:

“Whereas, the great Head of the Church, who works when, and where, and by whom he pleases, has condescended to bless the labors of the Cumberland Presbyterian missionaries in the city of Pittsburg, it has been thought expedient by the missionaries to constitute a society, especially as a number of respectable citizens have solicited them to do so;

“Therefore, on the first day of January, 1833, Rev. John Morgan and Rev. A. M. Bryan constituted a society, which was on the first day of April following organized by Rev. John Morgan, according to the discipline of the Church, and called the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Pittsburg. Simeon Bulford and James Watt were unanimously chosen and ordained ruling elders.”

The church thus organized was composed of fifteen members. In December, 1833, the first year of their organization, the congregation had completed, and began to occupy, a commodious house of worship, located on the corner of Smithfield Street

and Diamond Alley. Their house soon began to fill with hearers. Early in January, 1834, a series of meetings was commenced which resulted in the addition of more than one hundred persons to the Church. Similar meetings were held in several successive years, and were more or less blessed. These accessions of strength enabled the congregation to pay the debt incurred in building their house. This was finally effected on the fifteenth of February, 1838. The following is the grateful acknowledgment of the trustees, found upon their records:

“The Cumberland Presbyterian Church is now out of debt. May it ever continue to be a fold for Christ's flock; and may He, the Shepherd, watch over it, and make the members of the flock strong in the faith and in every good and perfect work; and may there be daily added to it of such as shall be saved; and to God we will give all the praise! February 15, 1838.”

This building soon proved too small, and early in 1838 (about the time, it would seem, in which they had completed their payment for it) the trustees appointed a committee to look out a lot for a new building. They selected the lot on which their present house of worship stands.

Another revival occurred in the early part of the winter of 1839 and 1840, and continued through the most of the winter. The congregation were then engaged in building their new house. At the spring communion eighty-four persons were received into the communion of the Church. On the 26th



of June, 1842, the new church was dedicated. The cost was about \$15,000.

In 1845 another revival occurred. The Lutheran congregation united with Mr. Bryan in holding a union or joint meeting, which resulted in a number of accessions to each congregation.

In the spring of 1845 the great fire visited Pittsburg. Mr. Bryan lost his family residence; his church, however, escaped, but the debt contracted in its erection had not been all paid. His congregation had suffered from the fire, and of course were partially disabled. In May of that year he was a delegate to the General Assembly, which met at Lebanon, Tennessee. Many will recollect one of his short speeches on the floor of the Assembly, in which he alluded to the late fire in the city of his adoption, and to the terrible perils of his family while it was raging, and expressed his gratitude to God, with tears in his eyes, that although he had lost nearly every thing else, his wife and children had been spared to him. The losses of his congregation from the fire made it necessary for him to apply to his brethren in the South for assistance in paying their debt. Accordingly, on leaving the General Assembly, he spent some time in Middle Tennessee and Kentucky, in endeavoring to raise money for that purpose. It needs hardly be said, that he was met wherever he went with a generous liberality.

In 1848 his congregation was visited with another revival, which resulted in the addition of more than

one hundred to their communion. His pastorate continued happily and usefully to the spring of 1856. In the course of that spring he received a call to the pastorate of the congregation in Memphis, as the successor of the lamented Porter, who had died there the fall before. He accepted the call, but the decision cost him a struggle. The tenderness of his attachment to his people of Pittsburg can readily be appreciated by those who were acquainted with the tenderness of all his sympathies, and the strength of his attachments. On the first of April he was dismissed from his charge. As an illustration of the feelings of his friends whom he left behind, I quote from his funeral-sermon, by Rev. Dr. Paxton. Says the preacher :

“He went regretted by all who knew him. His brethren in the ministry, of all evangelical denominations, were sad to bid him farewell. His uniform courtesy, kindness, and warm, brotherly sympathy, had endeared him to all hearts; and had it not been that he felt the call of duty, they would all have thrown around him the arms of affection, and said, ‘Stay, brother—stay.’”

On his way to Memphis an explosion occurred on board of the steamer. His eldest son, a lovely boy, was scalded to death, and himself and the rest of the family narrowly escaped. This fearful Providence is said to have made a deep impression upon the mind of Mr. Bryan. It was a terrible affliction to his sensitive soul. It staggered him in relation to the propriety of his removal.

He was cordially received at Memphis. His house of worship soon became crowded to excess—so much so, that the necessity of a new building began to be felt.

In the summer of this year, 1856, he was honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the Trustees and Faculty of Cumberland University.

It has been said that Dr. Bryan was well received and popular at Memphis, but it now seems probable that his heart was never there. In February of 1858 he was called to the management of a protracted meeting at Lebanon, which had been commenced with very favorable promise by others. He continued the meeting about three weeks, preaching every night, and delivering a practical lecture every morning. It was a meeting of great interest. Many will recollect it in heaven. He had been often in Lebanon, and had many friends there, but the labors of that meeting greatly increased the interest of the community in himself and in his preaching. The congregation were then without a pastor, and he was twice called, with unusual unanimity, in the course of a few months, to the pastorate. It seemed afterward, however, that his heart was with his former charge of Pittsburg. In the spring of 1859 he was recalled to Pittsburg, and commenced his second series of labors there on the first of April. In his absence the congregation had undergone sore trials, and the wonder is, that it was not broken up. The nature of these trials needs not be mentioned. Even the recollection of them is afflicting. The people ral-

lied, however, around their old pastor, and there was a prospect of extended usefulness; but in the providence of God it appeared that he came back rather to die.

On the third week in January, 1861, he attended the convention for prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit of God in the land. The convention was held in Pittsburg. He took a deep interest in the meeting. At the close of the last session of the convention, which was held in the First Presbyterian Church, he is said to have offered a prayer of unusual earnestness and fervor—so much so, that the remark became general with those who were present, "What a remarkable prayer Brother Bryan offered!" This was his last public service in Pittsburg. The following day, Friday, he started to Van Buren, in Washington county, to administer the Lord's Supper, by appointment of the Presbytery. A minister who was present at the meeting writes that "it was evident in all his preaching and private conversation, that he felt an unusual anxiety for the salvation of sinners. His labors were evidently blessed, and the prospect for doing good was well marked."

On Saturday he preached from Gen. xxxv. 1-3; on Sabbath morning, from 1 Cor. v. 7-8; on Sabbath night, from Luke xiii. 23-24; on Monday, from John iv. 29. Having closed his sermon on Monday, he invited the anxious to the seat prepared for them in order to prayer. To give them time to assemble, he commenced singing the hymn,

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord."

While singing his voice faltered, and he immediately fell back unconscious in his seat. In a few minutes he rallied for a moment, opened his eyes, and said to a lady who stood near, "O sister, I was almost in Paradise!" In another instant all appearance of consciousness departed, and he never spoke again. Having been removed to the house of a friend, he received every attention which Christian kindness and medical skill could bestow, but in vain. The spirit lingered through the night and to the following midday, when it took its departure, and a good man rested from his labors. He died January 22, 1861.

On the 8th of April, 1835, Mr. Bryan was married to Miss Ann Eliza Rahm, of Pittsburg. He left behind him six children, four of whom are members of the Church. His widow still lives respected, with the younger members of the family, in Alleghany City.

The records of the session show that in the course of his pastorate in Pittsburg, about eleven hundred persons were received into the communion of his congregation; and of those, eight or nine hundred were received upon examination. What a testimonial went before him to Heaven!

In relation to the character of Dr. Bryan, I quote from Dr. Paxton's funeral-sermon:

"He combined," says the respected preacher, "all the elements of a useful and effective minister of the New Testament. With a strong practical cast of mind, which made him wise in counsel;

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an energetic executive capacity, which gave him promptness and efficiency in his plans and purposes; a kind, conciliatory address, which won friends, and seldom gave offense; a large heart, which drew out the sympathies of others—he combined all those peculiar gifts which gave force and impressiveness to his pulpit ministrations.

“As a preacher, he had unusual power in addressing unconverted men upon the value of the soul, the danger of their impenitent condition, and the preciousness and freeness of the salvation offered to them in the gospel. A number of things combined to fit him for such moving appeals. He had an awful conviction of the dreadful state of an impenitent sinner. He had a realizing apprehension of the perdition of the ungodly. To this he added a clear view and a precious experience of the Saviour’s atoning work, and of the office of a simple faith in effecting the salvation of a soul. All this gave such deep feeling, and such an unmistakable earnestness to his entreaties, that few sinners could listen to his moving persuasions and go away unconcerned.

“As a preacher, he possessed another quality in an unusual degree—the faculty of bringing out and applying the consolations of the gospel to the distressed and afflicted. In all the sermons which it was my privilege to hear from his lips, this was the distinguishing characteristic. He had searched the Scriptures, and felt the consolations of God in his own soul, and therefore knew how to



apply them with great tenderness and discrimination to the souls of others.

“As a pastor, he had all the qualities of heart and the graces of the Spirit to make him eminently effective. His sympathies were so ready and susceptible, that he was ever prepared to weep with them that wept, and to rejoice with them that rejoiced. In the families of his people his large heart would enter into all their trials, and feel them as if they were his own. At the sick-bed he had the gentleness that soothed the sufferer, and a sweet voice that could speak comfort and inspire hope in the darkest hour. To all this he added those personal qualifications which underlie the outward functions of the ministerial life. He was a godly man, living before his Master's omniscient eye in all honesty and godly sincerity. He was a man of faith—living, working, walking, and preaching by faith; a man of prayer, feeling it his privilege to live in fellowship with God, and in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make his requests known to God.”

For some years previous to Dr. Bryan's death, he was considered one of the most popular and useful preachers in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Without doubt he was justly so considered. He possessed many advantages. Although his education was limited, nature had done much for him. His person was fine. His voice was clear, strong, and musical. He had a ready command of language, and a tender heart, which expressed itself in his

words. He rarely failed of keeping his audience in sympathy with himself. His hearers felt that his gifts were sanctified by grace. He could not have been otherwise than an effective preacher. The great gatherings which attended his ministrations in Pittsburg are an illustration.

In 1843 he was Moderator of the General Assembly. The meeting was held that year at Owensboro. It was rather a stormy Assembly; but the dignity and energy with which he controlled its proceedings, were matter of remark by spectators.

But in the midst of his own family, I suppose, Dr. Bryan appeared to greater advantage than even elsewhere. No man was a gentler husband or a kinder father. A friend, too, found a pleasant shelter under his hospitable roof. The writer spent a few days with him in Pittsburg in the summer of 1851. Soon after I called, as an inducement that I should stay with him, and not at the hotel, he remarked pleasantly that they had "a little chamber on the wall, which was furnished with a bed, and a table, and a chair, and a candlestick, for the use of sojourning prophets." The religious services of the family interested me very much. They were so tender and impressive! Of course I occupied his pulpit on Sabbath. His closing prayer in the morning was a model of its kind. It may seem strange, but a portion of that prayer I still recollect. I could hardly forget a petition so earnestly offered up for "the beloved brother" who had ministered to them that day.

I have many pleasant personal recollections of Dr. Bryan, but I need not record them here. A concluding remark may, however, be made. His example is worth a great deal to the Church. A stranger, a young man partially without experience, he established himself in a great city, and by his own energy and influence brought hundreds into the fold of Christ, collected around him a large congregation, and made himself respected and beloved by all classes of persons, and especially by those who would have been considered his rivals in his work. I say, the example of such a man is a treasure to the Church. It shows us what can be effected by consecrated time and talents. Dr. Bryan labored for no selfish interest. He loved the Church, and labored for its interest. He selected his field, guided no doubt by the providence of God, and devoted himself to it. We have seen the result. Why should not scores of others imitate his example?

I must be indulged in a still farther remark. I have said that Dr. Bryan "loved the Church." He loved its primitive theology, primitive usages, and its old men. Every one acquainted with him knew how sensitive he was in regard to every thing affecting the character of any of these. I once saw him weep like a child, when he felt that the theological reputation of some of the fathers had been assailed. He felt that the character of the fathers, in all its aspects, together with the doctrines and usages formed into a system by them, had been left to us as a sacred legacy.

Dr. Bryan died just at the commencement of our late national troubles. Before I had seen the announcement in the papers, a friend met me on the street and communicated the afflicting intelligence. In the course of our conversation, he remarked, in view of what seemed probably before us, that "it was a good time to die." Dr. Bryan's sympathies were largely extended over both sections of the country. To have witnessed the terrible struggle and sufferings which followed his death, would have been an inexpressible affliction, especially to him. His attachments were strong. Nothing but death could have broken them. A good and wise Providence, in regard perhaps to a tender spirit, removed him before these difficulties were fully developed. He was not allowed to see what he could not prevent, and what he could hardly have borne.

## HERSCHEL S. PORTER, D.D.

1837—1855.

HERSCHEL S. PORTER was the son of Rev. Thomas Porter and Nancy Porter. His mother's family name was Lawrence. His paternal grandfather was Captain William Porter. Captain Porter was a Revolutionary soldier, and carried to his grave a large scar upon his face, left by a wound received from a British sword in the war of the Revolution. The Porter family were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. The family of Dr. Porter's mother were Baptists. His maternal grandfather, Thomas Lawrence, was a deacon in the Baptist Church. He was also a Revolutionary soldier.

Captain Porter moved from Prince Edward county, Virginia, about the year 1794, and settled in what is now Butler county, Kentucky. The maternal grandfather emigrated from the same county in Virginia, but it is not known to the writer at what time. He also settled in Butler county. Rev. Thomas Porter, the father of the subject of this sketch, was raised in Butler county, and spent his life in that portion of Kentucky. Herschel S. Porter was born in Butler county, February 12, 1816.

He commenced going to school when seven years of age. His first instructor was Daniel L. Morrison, a worthy Christian gentleman, and a good instructor. After a while his father moved to Logan county, and taught school himself for two years, and of course the son was one of his pupils. In this school he commenced the study of History and Geography. The custom of boys in those days, at least in that portion of Kentucky, was to labor on the farm in the summer, and attend school in the winter. Young Porter was under the necessity of conforming to this custom. He divided the year between books and the plow. A surviving brother says of him, that "from a child he was a sober, thoughtful, plodding boy, of unbending energy and great fixedness of purpose—so much so, that when he once set his mind upon the accomplishment of an object, he never turned back." He seems to have been chiefly fond of history. An anecdote is told illustrative of this. He and his brother were at work one day in the field. They had both been reading ancient history. The subject of one of Hannibal's great battles came up in conversation. They differed in opinion as to what the facts were according to the history. After discussing the subject for some time, they made a boyish bet, and went to the house to determine the question from the history itself. This incident is of little importance certainly, but it shows that the boy's reading was of a solid kind, and that he was in the habit of thinking of what he read.

Mr. Porter's first Sunday-school instructor was

James Stevenson, a pious man, and an elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Mr. Stevenson had no Sunday-school library. His principal reliance in that way was the Bible. From this he was accustomed to select plain passages, and expound them as well as he could. One of Mr. Stevenson's favorite maxims was, that men should labor for knowledge as the miner digs for his golden treasure. This maxim seems to have made a life-long impression upon the mind of young Porter. After he had reached eminence in the ministry, he was still in the habit of recurring to it as to a principle of which he first began to feel the force in a retired country Sunday-school.

After leaving his father's school, young Porter continued his education under several successive instructors. The principal of them was a Mr. Read, who taught an academy near Russellville. There he studied Latin and the ordinary branches of science. With Rev. Mr. McAllen, an Episcopal minister, and graduate of Dublin University, he studied Greek and Mathematics. His education, as far as instruction received from others was concerned, was finished under the care of John D. Tyler, who taught with great success a select high-school, in Montgomery county, Tennessee. He considered Mr. Read, however, as having contributed more toward his education than any other individual.

In the fall of 1832 young Porter professed religion at a camp-meeting at Rock Spring Meeting-

house, a few miles from Russellville. He had been serious through the meeting, and on Monday evening was deeply engaged in prayer, with a crowd of others, who had been called together to the mourners' benches. It was a time of deep interest. The Spirit of God was poured out in great abundance. Says a friend, in relation to the occasion: "He rose from his knees with a smile upon his countenance, embraced his friends, and although a modest boy, commenced immediately exhorting sinners to turn to God. This was the brightest day in his history."

In April of 1833 Mr. Porter was received as a candidate for the ministry by the Logan Presbytery. In May of 1835 he was licensed to preach, and in September of 1837 was set apart to the whole work of the ministry, at Glasgow, Kentucky, Rev. Granville Mansfield preaching the ordination-sermon, and Rev. William Harris delivering the charge.

After his ordination he spent three or four years as an itinerant preacher in his own State, traveling through Logan, Warren, Barren, Simpson, Monroe, Cumberland, Butler, and Adair counties. He traveled some time in addition as an agent for Cumberland College. He then spent a year in Fayetteville, Tennessee, preaching to the congregation there. After the close of his term of service in Fayetteville, he made quite an extensive Southern tour, passing through most of the Southern States, and preaching with great acceptance wherever he went. He visited New Orleans, spent some time in Alabama, and returned to Kentucky in 1843. At the General



Assembly of that year, which met at Owensboro, Kentucky, the writer of this sketch first became acquainted with him. We were not very remotely related, but had never met before.

From the General Assembly of 1843 he went, in company with Rev. A. M. Bryan, to Western Pennsylvania, and after spending a few months in that country, he was encouraged to undertake the enterprise of collecting a Cumberland Presbyterian congregation in the city of Philadelphia. He accordingly made his first visit to that city in the fall of 1843, and commenced his work. Dr. Bryan is said also to have coöperated with him in his first labors there. He remained in Philadelphia to the spring or summer of 1851. In 1850 he visited the General Assembly, which held its sessions that year in Clarksville, Tennessee, for the purpose of procuring some assistance in paying for a house of worship which had been erected by his congregation in Philadelphia. Leaving the Assembly, he spent some time in Tennessee and Kentucky, and received very liberal contributions in aid of his object. His labors in his new charge were abundant, and his success greater, perhaps, than could have been expected. He collected a respectable congregation around him, and, as already intimated, through his influence a house of worship was built.

While in Philadelphia he delivered two or three courses of scientific lectures, connecting them with his ministerial labors. His object was to set forth the relation of religion to some of the most popular

branches of science. His lectures are said to have excited considerable attention, and were highly complimented by the secular press at the time of their delivery.

In 1851 he left Philadelphia, and in the fall of that year settled in Memphis, Tennessee, in compliance with a call of the congregation there. He continued his labors in Memphis to the fall of 1855. On the 5th of October of that year he died, after an illness of but a few days. He had just passed through the labors of an extensive revival in his congregation, in which near a hundred persons had made profession of religion. The most of the labor of the meeting had been performed by himself. The disease which terminated in his death is supposed to have been induced by his excessive exertion, anxiety, and watchfulness, during a series of services kept up two or three weeks. It may be said with truth, and with emphasis, too, that *he died at his post, and with his armor on*. This last was the most extensive revival which he had ever enjoyed in the progress of his ministry.

The following is the notice of his death contained in the Memphis Eagle and Enquirer of October 6, 1855:

“With feelings of unfeigned grief we record the death of Rev. Herschel S. Porter, pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of this city. He died at his residence on Court street, yesterday morning, at four o'clock, of bilious fever, superinduced and aggravated by his exertions in the recent

most successful revival at his church. Truly it may be said that Dr. Porter died in the service of his Divine Master, with his harness on. He was about thirty-nine years of age, and a native of Butler county, Kentucky. His early opportunities for acquiring an education were limited, and he was emphatically a *self-made* man. Since attaining to his majority he has been a close student, and, notwithstanding his few advantages, he had received the honorary degree of D.D. from the Cumberland University, and that of A.M. from Princeton College, Kentucky. He was devoted to science, and was a proficient in the mind-expanding studies of astronomy and geology. His fame as a revivalist is coëxtensive with the Union. In early life he went to Philadelphia, where he was pastor of a congregation for five years. He has resided in Memphis four years, and has endeared himself to the whole community by his able preaching of the Gospel of Christ, his unaffected piety, and his rare social qualities. His only child, a daughter, died a few weeks ago. He leaves a stricken wife—married in this county—to mourn his early departure to that better land, where we all should strive to follow him, and to which he ever earnestly and eloquently, both by precept and example, pointed the way. When such a man dies, it is like the going out of a great beacon to whose guidance we have been accustomed, and whose place we feel will not easily be supplied."

At the time of Dr. Porter's death, in addition to

his pastorate, he held a connection with the Memphis Medical College, as Professor of Natural History. The following is an extract from a record of the proceedings of the Faculty in relation to his death:

“Whereas, in the dispensation of an inscrutable Providence, our much-beloved friend and colleague, Dr. Herschel S. Porter, Professor of Natural History, etc., has been suddenly removed from us by death, we feel that it is due to his many excellent traits of character to give utterance to our sincere and unfeigned sorrow, not only on account of the loss to our Institution, but to the community at large; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That by the death of Dr. Porter, the Faculty feel that they have lost a member, not only endeared to them by his gentlemanly bearing and Christian deportment, but also important to the Institution as a learned, able, and popular teacher of the natural sciences.

“*Resolved*, That in their opinion, so many excellent qualities are to be found combined in so high a degree in but few individuals as were exhibited in the character of Dr. Porter, as a learned, liberal, and zealous minister of the gospel; as a promoter of science and all useful knowledge; as an advocate of temperance, order, and morality, and as a member of the community, not only social, kind, and benevolent, but always ready to aid in any and every proper movement or enterprise for the good of his fellow-beings.”

Although, as it will be perceived from this sketch, Dr. Porter did not enjoy the advantages of a collegiate education, properly so called, his education was considered equivalent, and accordingly he received the first degree in the arts from Cumberland College in 1841. In 1848 he received the second degree from the same Institution. In 1850 he was honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the Faculty and Trustees of Cumberland University. He was a scholar in the most practical and interesting sense of the word. In 1853 he was Moderator of the General Assembly, and in 1854 was married to Miss Martha A. Persons, of Shelby county, Tennessee.

Dr. Porter published several works—a series of “Astronomical Sermons;” a work on the “Atonement,” and a work upon the “Foreknowledge and Decrees” of God. The first is a duodecimo volume of some four hundred pages; the two others are smaller works. At the time of his death he was engaged in preparing a history of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church—a work to the completion of which his friends were looking forward with deep interest.

A few words may be added presenting an outline of the character of Dr. Porter. I mention, then—

1. His energy and perseverance. I combine these as they were combined in him. A poor boy, with little aid from others, he became, by patience, assiduity, and perseverance, a learned man. I say a *learned man*. He studied the works as well as the

word of God, and from his uncommon proficiency in these, he placed himself in an eminent position of usefulness and respectability in society. His eminence was not the award of mere denominational partiality; it was felt and acknowledged by all classes of cultivated minds. His *Astronomical Sermons*, although every statement in them may not be mathematically correct, and although some of his views may be regarded as rather speculative than otherwise, still indicate a familiarity with the great science upon which they are founded, which is attained by few. And it is true, too, that notwithstanding the Scriptures are not intended to teach us Astronomy and Geology—they have a higher aim—yet, there are both Astronomy and Geology *in the Scriptures*. The teachings of true science and the teachings of revelation never come in conflict with each other. They originate from the same Divine source. And that is a noble mind which earnestly, and in any degree successfully, endeavors to understand their connection.

2. His piety. Without doubt he filled up in a high degree the measure ascribed to Barnabas—he “was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.” It would seem a matter of course that a Christian minister should be a good man. Observation proves, however, that such men are not always good men. But the subject of this sketch was a pious man. He loved and feared God from his youth. Greatly flattered during his ministry, he still lived the life of an humble follower of

Christ. I mention an incident connected with Dr. Porter's childhood. It is related on the best living authority, that when he was baptized in his infancy, the officiating minister\*—one of the holiest of men—made it a subject of special prayer that the child might, at a proper time, be called of God to the ministry of the gospel. The manner of the prayer was so earnest; there was such an expression of faith and power in it, that the narrator, who was present, received an impression from it which remains vivid to this day. It may be remarked, too, that nothing like raving and frantic enthusiasm was connected with the occasion. It was an earnest prayer of an earnest man for an object which lay near his heart. Possibly, I say, *possibly*, we may see the foreshadowings of Dr. Porter's humble piety, and great eminence and usefulness in that consecrating prayer. Why may we not, if it is indeed true that God hears and answers prayer?

3. His devotion to the Church of his fathers and of his own early choice. Other young men who have acquired some eminence have left us. Their reasons are known to themselves. We have no quarrel with them. For myself, I follow some of them with feelings above those of mere kindness. The world is wide enough for us all. But the subject of this sketch, I suppose, never faltered for a moment in his fidelity to the Communion into which he was baptized, and which when a youth of

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\* Rev. Alexander Chapman.

sixteen he chose for his own immediate Christian brotherhood. I recollect to have heard him remark to the members of the Assembly, in 1850, at Clarksville, that although he had been upon the outposts of the Church for some years, he was willing to go still farther out, if necessity required, to take any station, to engage in any service, which the Church might assign. It is very evident that the single purpose of his life was the promotion, as far as he was able, of the great interests of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Still, he was no mere stringent sectarian. He loved his own Church, received its doctrines in good faith, conformed to its order, and labored for its advancement. Still, according to the testimony already given, he was always ready to unite with good and earnest men in any measure for the promotion of the happiness of his race.

4. His modesty and unobtrusiveness were conspicuous. Whilst his pulpit performances were always popular, and his attainments were obviously superior to those of many of his brethren, he never manifested a disposition to present claims to any preference. He had been sixteen years in the ministry before he was a member of the General Assembly; but on the first occasion upon which he was a member, he was elected the Moderator of that body. The dignity and urbanity with which he presided over the Assembly were subjects of remark. He was again a member of the General Assembly in 1855—the last Assembly which met before his death. On that occasion he was appointed to deliver



a sermon in reference to the death of two of the fathers of the Church, which had recently occurred. The sermon was appropriate and impressive. On the same occasion he delivered, by request, a sermon to the young men of Cumberland University. Still, no claims to preëminence were presented.

5. Dr. Porter was, in the most expressive sense of the phrase, a Christian gentleman. His general bearing, his conversation, his whole intercourse with society, indicated his intellectual, social, and moral culture. There was nothing low, coarse, or vulgar in his conversation or deportment. His character, both public and private, was such as one loves to contemplate. His example was a beautiful model. The memory of such men is to be cherished. They are God's noblest gifts to the Church—she should not be unmindful of their value.