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# The Plea and the Pioneers in Virginia

By FREDERICK ARTHUR HODGE

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OLD SYCAMORE CHURCH

See page 83

# The Plea and the Pioneers in Virginia

A History of the Rise and Early Progress of the  
disciples of Christ in Virginia, with  
Biographical Sketches of the  
Pioneer Preachers

BY  
FREDERICK ARTHUR HODGE

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## Dedication

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To the descendants of the Virginia pioneer preachers, whose lives were given to the restoration of the Christianity of Christ and his Apostles in both doctrine and practice, this volume is respectfully dedicated.

"I sent you to reap that whereon ye have not labored; others have labored, and ye are entered into their labor."—John 4:38.





## PREFACE

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In the crowning religious reformation, which had for its object the restoration of the primitive Christianity of Apostolic times, Virginia took no secondary part. Her pioneers were in the front ranks of the movement, and never did men contend more earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints than did they.

Our object in presenting this little volume to the public is threefold. First: The reformation in Pennsylvania and that part of Old Virginia now known as West Virginia has been set forth in Richardson's "Memoirs of A. Campbell"; Haley's "Dawn of the Reformation" performs a similar work for Missouri; the reformation in Ohio has been depicted in Hayden's "Early History of Disciples in Western Reserve"; the pioneer history of the movement in Kentucky is derived from the biographies of John Smith and Jacob Creath; Virginia alone, of all the States that took a prominent part in the restoration of primitive Christianity, has up to this time had no written record of her pioneer reformers. Our second reason is: That the younger generation about to become the pillars in the churches of Christ know little if anything of the lives of those grand old men, their forefathers, who fought so nobly the good fight of faith; nor can they justly appreciate the necessity of standing firm on the bedrock principles of the Old Jerusalem Gospel. Third: Doctrinal points are more easily understood when their application is in the concrete than when it is abstract. Our history as a people is the story of our plea in the concrete.

During the year 1901 the author embodied some of the material found in this work in a series of essays,

which were published in the *Christian Guide*. Owing to the interest manifested in these essays, and at the request of several Virginia Disciples, he has ventured to put this material into a more connected and permanent form. From the "Sketches of Deceased Virginia Ministers," published in the *Christian Examiner* of 1870 and 1871, by Elder Peter Ainslie, also from "Sketches of our Pioneers," by F. D. Power, the author has drawn much information found in the second part of this work, one or two sketches having been copied nearly verbatim from Bro. Ainslie's. The sources of information from which the first part of the work is drawn are mainly the "*Millennial Harbingers*," "*Christian Baptists*," and Richardson's "*Memoirs of A. Campbell*." We take this opportunity of acknowledging our indebtedness to the works named.

To a large number of friends and brethren who have rendered valuable assistance in gathering the material, we are deeply indebted.

We wish also to acknowledge our indebtedness to Bro. F. D. Power, D. D., of Washington, D. C., for the able address which appears as our Introductory Chapter; also to Bro. O. B. Sears, Ph. D., of Farmville, Va., who has rendered valuable assistance as literary critic.

Hoping that this volume may make us value more fully the labors of our forefathers, and bring us to a clearer knowledge of God's will as revealed in his word, we send it forth on its mission.

F. A. HODGE.

*Virginia Christian College, Lynchburg, Va., May 10th, 1905.*

# CONTENTS

---

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY	
History and Doctrine of the Disciples of Christ.....	9

---

## PART I.

### CHAPTER I.

The Dawn of the Reformation.....	29
----------------------------------	----

### CHAPTER II.

The Campbell and Semple Controversy.....	35
--	----

### CHAPTER III.

Mr. Campbell in Richmond.....	50
-------------------------------	----

### CHAPTER IV.

Publication of Decrees.....	66
-----------------------------	----

### CHAPTER V.

Thomas Campbell's Visit to Eastern Virginia. ....	73
---	----

### CHAPTER VI.

The Dover Decree.....	84
-----------------------	----

### CHAPTER VII.

Organization and Progress.....	95
--------------------------------	----

### CHAPTER VIII.

Defection of Dr. Thomas.....	109
------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER IX.

Charlottesville and the Shenandoah.....	118
---	-----

## CHAPTER X.

Jeter and Lard Controversy. ....	127
----------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XI.

Helps and Hindrances.....	137
---------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XII.

Our Status in this State.....	152
-------------------------------	-----

---

 PART II.

## LIVES OF THE PIONEERS:

George W. Abell.....	163
Elder Peter Ainslie.....	173
Elder Atkinson. ....	184
Elder James M. Bagby.....	189
Dr. Chester Bullard.....	200
Reuben Lindsay Coleman.....	206
Benjamin Creel.....	211
Elder John Curtis.....	217
Elder John Dangerfield.....	220
Dr. John Du Val.....	225
James W. Goss.....	232
Thomas M. Henley.....	243
John G. Parrish.....	254
Silas Shelburn.....	265
Charles Talley.....	269
A. B. Walthall.....	273
Matthew Webber.....	276
Unbiographed. ....	274

## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

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### History and Doctrines of the Disciples of Christ.\*

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FREDERICK D. POWER.

We Americans owe our national privileges, our civil liberties and our world influence to the Bible. Youngest of religious bodies that have sought America's good, and distinctively American in its origin, is the body of believers known as the Disciples of Christ. The various schools of Christians, according to the figures of Dr. H. K. Carroll, rank numerically as follows: Roman Catholic, Methodist Episcopal, Baptist South, Baptist South (colored), Methodist Episcopal South, Disciples of Christ; that is, the Disciples are sixth in rank, while in 1890 they had the eighth place; and the increase of the Disciples in the decade from 1890 to 1900 was 84 per cent., or over 8 per cent. per annum. These are the census figures. In any showing, then, of our American religious forces this people must have consideration. "That this religious reformation has very seriously influenced the theological and ecclesiastical developments of the last half century, and won for itself a significant place in the religious

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\* Address delivered in Festival Hall, World's Fair Grounds, St. Louis, on "Disciples of Christ Day" at the World's Fair, October 30, 1904, following the great international convention of the Disciples.

movements of the age, and affected all churches, no one can deny," says a writer in the *New York Independent*.

The origin of the Disciples as a distinct body dates back to the early part of the last century. In different parts of the United States simultaneously arose teachers among the religious denominations who pleaded for the Bible alone, without human addition in the form of creeds or formulas of faith, and for the union of Christians of every name upon the basis of the Apostles' teaching. This movement assumed most notable proportions in Western Virginia and Pennsylvania, and in Kentucky. In 1823 Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, W. Va., began to set forth with great vigor and learning, in a periodical entitled the *Christian Baptist*, the plea for the restoration of the simple Gospel, the order of things as under the Apostles. It was not a reformation that was sought, but a restoration; not the organization of a new sect, or the reformation of an old one, but a return to Jerusalem, a renewal of the ancient landmarks of the Christian religion, a restoration to men of Apostolic Christianity in doctrine, ordinances and fruits.

Alexander Campbell was a native of Ireland, and educated in the University of Glasgow. In 1807 Thomas Campbell, his father, came to America, and the son followed him two years later. Thomas Campbell was a regular minister among the Seceders, and, as such, assigned to the Presbytery of Chartiers, in Washington County, Pa. His view of union, however, and of the sufficiency of the Bible as a religious guide,

caused his withdrawal from that connection. In August, 1809, he formed "The Christian Association of Washington," and in September of the same year issued his celebrated "Declaration and Address." This paper deplored the tendencies of party spirit among Christians and the enforcement of human interpretations of God's Word in place of the pure doctrine of Christ, and pleaded for the restoration of simple, original, evangelical Christianity as exhibited upon the sacred page, without attempting to inculcate anything of human authority, of private opinion, or invention of men, as having any place in the constitution, faith or worship of the Christian Church; or anything as a matter of Christian faith or duty for which there cannot be expressly produced a "Thus saith the Lord," either in express terms or approved precedent. Commencing with the admitted truth that the Gospel was designed to reconcile and unite men to God and each other, the address proceeded to consider the sad divisions that existed, and their baleful effects in the angry contentions, enmities, excommunications and persecutions which they engendered, and set forth the object of the association "*to come firmly and fairly to original ground, and take up things just as the Apostles left them,*" that, "*disentangled from the accruing embarrassments of intervening ages,*" they might "*stand upon the same ground on which the church stood at the beginning.*"

The proposition was, to begin anew—to begin at the beginning, to ascend at once to the pure fountain of truth, disregarding all decrees of popes, councils,

synods and assemblies, traditions, perversions and corruptions; to work not a reformation of the church, as sought by Luther, Calvin and Wesley, but its complete restoration at once to its original purity and perfectness. The conclusion was that Christian union could result from nothing short of the destruction of human creeds and confessions of faith, inasmuch as human creeds and confessions of faith had destroyed Christian union.

The principles of this address were cordially endorsed by Alexander Campbell, and in the following year, 1810, he began publicly to urge them. May 4, 1811, the first organization was made at Brush Run, Pa., with thirty members. In June of the following year, Alexander Campbell, in examining the question of infant baptism, and abandoning all uninspired authorities, and appealing to the Scriptures with critical search for the significance of words rendered from the original Greek, "baptize" and "baptism," became satisfied that they could mean only immerse and immersion, and accordingly he and his father were immersed. From that hour Thomas Campbell gave way to his son, and Alexander Campbell became the master spirit of the movement. In 1813 the Brush Run Church united with the Redstone Baptist Association, and ten years after with the Mahoning Association. At this time, 1823, Mr. Campbell began the publication of the *Christian Baptist*, in which his teaching was set forth, and began to attract universal attention. Opposition was aroused, and his views denounced as heterodox, but great numbers accepted



them. Many new churches were organized under his preaching and that of Walter Scott, an evangelist of the Mahoning Association, until the Baptists became alarmed, and began to declare non-fellowship with those who pleaded for the Bible alone, thus forcing these brethren to organize themselves into separate communities.

This was in 1827. From this time we may date the rise of the people known as Disciples of Christ as a distinct organization.

To understand this movement we must know something of the religious conditions of the time. The Church was sorely divided. Human creeds were authoritative and binding. Sectarianism was rife everywhere. Party lines were rigidly drawn. Christian union was ridiculed. Sects were pronounced essential to the purity, health and vigor of the body of Christ. True religion was lost sight of in contentions over rival dogmas, and human opinions and speculations were preached rather than the Gospel. Total hereditary depravity and unconditional election and reprobation were commonly taught. The regeneration of the sinner was therefore a miracle, and could come only through special and direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Every case of conversion was a distinct act of direct and irresistible grace, and supernatural voices, dreams, visions or trances were to attest the fact of acceptance with God. So the Word of God was a dead letter. The Bible with the multitude was a sealed book, its teachings confused, its dispensations not

understood, its word not rightly divided, its commandments made of none effect by human tradition. The privilege of private interpretation was withheld from the people, and the clergy alone were supposed to hold the key of Divine knowledge. Sunday-schools and missionary societies were regarded by many as heretical. Unbelief was widespread. "The Age of Reason" had not long been published, lotteries were chartered to build churches, men and women were bought and sold, the stocks, the pillory, the whipping-post and the branding-iron, and the imprisonment of the poor debtor, were still known in America; the moral tone of the people was low, intemperance was general, and amid the feuds and bickerings of sects and schisms the Church was as barren as she was belligerent.

In such a state of religious society the Campbells and their helpers began the advocacy of a return to the ancient order of things as revealed in the New Testament. The principle they inscribed upon their banners was "Faith in Jesus as the true Messiah, and obedience to Him as our Law-giver and King the only test of Christian character, and the only bond of Christian union, communion and co-operation, irrespective of all creeds, opinions, commandments and traditions of men." The spirit of liberty was the spirit of the movement. American in origin and genius, born when the clang of the old Liberty Bell, "proclaiming liberty throughout the land to all inhabitants thereof," and the thunder of the guns at Lexington and Yorktown still reverberated in the ears of the nations, and standing for the commonwealth

of faith, it lifted a banner which symbolized in religion what the stars and stripes symbolized in government—liberty and union—liberty in Christ, union under Christ.

This was but one of a great number of movements on the part of godly men, deploring the evils that existed, and anxious for a restoration of Christianity on its original basis—the Haldanes in Scotland, O’Kelly and others in Virginia and North Carolina, B. W. Stone and his coadjutors in Kentucky, Walter Scott and others in Ohio, Bullard in the mountains of Western Virginia—ministers of different denominations, unknown to each other, pleading for the Bible alone, without any addition in the form of creeds or confessions of faith. When Campbell, in 1823, began to plead for the original gospel and primitive order, and the union upon the Apostles of all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ, these workers began to touch hands and blend together in one great common purpose and service. The most notable of these movements, that of Alexander Campbell in Western Virginia and Pennsylvania, and that of Barton W. Stone in Kentucky, were united in 1831. For the next thirty-five years Campbell was the foremost figure in this movement. Of his published writings there are sixty volumes. His great debates with Owen on “The Evidences of Christianity,” with Archbishop Purcell on “The Infallibility of the Church of Rome,” with Rice on “Baptism, Conversion and Creeds as Terms of Communion;” and his “Christian System,” set forth his principles.

In substantial agreement with all evangelical Christians, the Disciples of Christ accept the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; the all-sufficiency of the Bible as a revelation of God's will and a rule of faith and life; the revelation of God in threefold personality of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as set forth by the Apostles; the divine glory of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, His incarnation, doctrine, miracles, death as a sin offering, resurrection, ascension and coronation; the personality of the Holy Spirit and His divine mission to convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment to come, and to comfort and sanctify the people of God; the alienation of man from his Maker, and the necessity of faith, repentance and obedience in order to salvation; the obligation of the Divine ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper; the duty of observing the Lord's day in memory of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; the necessity of holiness on the part of believers; the divine appointment of the Church of Christ, composed of all who by faith and obedience confess His name, with its ministers and services for the edification of the body of Christ and the conversion of the world; the fullness and freeness of the salvation that is in Christ to all who will accept it on the New Testament conditions; the final judgment, with the reward of the righteous and punishment of the wicked. If these things constitute orthodoxy, then the Disciples are orthodox.

The Disciples of Christ, however, have their distinctive position. While in these cardinal and fundamental matters they are in harmony with all evangelical

Christians, and therein rejoice, in other respects they are a peculiar people.

1. In their plea for restoration. Others have sought to reform the Church. The Campbells and their co-workers aimed to restore in faith and spirit and practice the Christianity of Christ and his Apostles as found on the pages of the New Testament. It was not to recast any existing creed, or reform any existing religious body, but to go back of all creeds and councils, all sects and schools since the days of the Apostles, and to take up the work as left by inspired men. For existing evils they claimed the remedy is to return to the beginning and build anew upon the Divine foundation. To believe and to do none other things than those enjoined by our Lord and His Apostles, they felt must be infallibly safe. Whether practical or not, this was their purpose, and for this to-day the Disciples continue to stand. The word of Christ and the body of Christ as in the beginning.

2. In the rejection of human creeds. They claim to stand strictly upon the original Protestant principle—the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, the religion of Protestants. They affirm that the sacred Scriptures as given of God answer all purposes of a rule of faith and practice, and a law for the government of the Church, and that human creeds and confessions of faith spring out of controversy, and instead of being bonds of union, tend to division and strife. Bible names for Bible things. Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.

3. In their emphasis upon the Divine Sonship of Jesus. In place of all human confessions they would exalt that of Peter: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." As the fundamental fact of Holy Scripture, as the central truth of the Christian system, as the essential creed of Christianity, as the one article of faith in order to baptism and Church membership, as the rock truth upon which the Church is founded, and the ultimate creed of the universal Church, they place this statement of the Divinity and Christhood of Jesus. "What think ye of Christ?" the great question. "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God," the great answer. "On this rock I will build my church," the great oracle.

4. In their division of the Word. They believe, that of old, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," yet do not regard the Old and New Testaments as of equally binding authority upon Christians. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." A clear distinction is made between the law and the gospel, the old covenant and the new, and the New Testament, it is claimed, is as perfect a constitution for the worship, government and discipline of the New Testament Church as the Old was for the Old Testament Church. We are not under Moses, but under Christ.

5. In the plea for New Testament names for the Church and the followers of Christ. "The Disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." As the bride



of Christ the Church should wear the name of the bridegroom. Party names perpetuate party strife. Disciples of Christ have been charged with presumption in calling themselves Christians and their churches Christian churches, or churches of Christ. They do not deny that others are Christians, or that other churches are churches of Christ. They do not claim to be the Church of Christ, or even a Church of Christ. They simply desire to be Christians only, and their churches to be only churches of Christ. Hence they repudiate the name "Campbellite." The Church will be one only under the name of Christ. In all the world it is enough to be a Christian. When that which is perfect is come, from turret to foundation stone the work of sectarianism shall pass away, and the spotless bride of Christ shall wear only the name that is above every name.

6. As to the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. Accepting the Divine personality of the Holy Spirit, and holding that in every case regeneration is begun, carried on and perfected through His gracious agency, the Disciples claim the Divine Word is his instrument, the sinner is in no sense passive, regeneration is not a miracle, the gospel is God's power unto salvation to every one that believeth, and men must hear, believe, repent, and obey the gospel to be saved.

7. As to Christian baptism. The Disciples have been charged with making a hobby of this institution—preaching nothing but baptism by immersion, baptism for the remission of sins. This was only incidental to their plea. Recognizing Christ alone as King, His

Word alone as authoritative and binding upon the conscience, and finding, in returning to the order instituted by Him through the Apostles, baptism commanded in order to the remission of sins, and administered by a burial with Christ, a planting in the likeness of His death, they take it up as one of the items of the original, divine system over against all human systems. They never taught such a doctrine as baptismal regeneration. "I have said a thousand times," declared Mr. Campbell in debate with Rice, "that if a person were to be immersed twice seven times in the Jordan for the remission of sins, and for the reception of the Holy Spirit, it would avail nothing more than wetting the face of a babe, *unless his heart is changed by the Word and Spirit of God.*" The Disciples simply insist upon the purpose of baptism as set forth in the divine testimonies: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," "Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." They would give the inspired answers to the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They would demand no other prerequisite to baptism than the confession of the faith of the whole heart in the personal, living Christ. They would teach the believing penitent to seek through obedience the Divine assurance of forgiveness, and in scriptural surrender to the authority of Christ, and not in sensation or vision or special revelations, to find evidence of acceptance with God.



8. As to the Lord's Supper. The Disciples of Christ hold first to the weekly observance of this holy ordinance in all their assemblies. Of the Church at Troas we read: "On the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them," and following this Apostolic model, the Disciples teach that the Lord's Supper should be celebrated by the Lord's people on every Lord's day; and secondly, they emphasize and exalt this institution, not as a sacrament, but as a memorial feast—an act of worship in which all Christians may unite, and from which we have no right to exclude any sincere follower of our common Lord.

9. As to the Lord's day. This with the Disciples is not the Sabbath, but a New Testament institution; not the day set apart in the Decalogue, but the Lord's day—the pearl of days, consecrated by apostolic example, and to be observed in joyous and loving remembrance of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

10. As to the Church. The Disciples believe that the institution built by Christ, set forth by the Apostles on Pentecost under the special guidance of the Holy Spirit, established upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Chief Corner-stone—the Church of Christ is a Divine institution; that sects as branches of the Church are unscriptural and unapostolic; and that the sect name and sect spirit and sect life should in every case give place to the unity of the Spirit, and the union and co-operation that distinguished the Church of the New Testament.

The union of Christians, then, upon the original foundation is the plea of this people. They believe that as in the primitive days there was one spiritual brotherhood, one body, with one Lord, one faith and one baptism, there should be but one to-day; and that as nothing was the basis of that primitive union but the common teaching of Christ and the Apostles, so nothing is essential to the union of Christians to-day but the Apostles' teaching, and nothing essential to the conversion of the world but such a union and co-operation of the people of God.

In making this plea before the world, however, the Disciples contend, not for unity of opinion, but unity of faith. They recognize that this question is to be approached in the spirit of Jesus Christ, not in the spirit of dogmatism or strife; that no process of compulsion can ever bring unity; that no party can ever effect it by lifting up its standard and saying, "We are the people;" that no union will ever stand that is not Christian; that no plan of union can ever succeed that does not respect every man's liberty in Christ Jesus; that no spirit can ever commend itself as the spirit of unity that does not take in all believers, and is not as broadly catholic as the Spirit of the Master on His knees, serving as the High Priest of all the race. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in Thee, that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me."

Alexander Campbell died March 4, 1866. Since then the Disciples of Christ have made their greatest progress. It was predicted when he passed away the movement would disintegrate, and be numbered among the things of the past, seeing that no church could live without a formulated human creed. More rapid and stable than ever before, however, the work has been. The first churches were those of Brush Run and Wellsburg, with less than sixty members, and men are living to-day who joined this movement when there were but a few thousand identified with it. According to statistical tables, in 1903 there were 10,983 churches and 1,220,000 members, with a church property of over twenty millions, and the increase in numbers is over 8 per cent. a year for the last ten years.

The Disciples take large interest in the cause of education. They are a strong temperance people. In Christian Endeavor they rank third among the Protestant churches. Most hopeful, however, is the outlook among them in the work of missions and benevolence. Their Home Missionary Society was organized in 1849, and employs workers in thirty-seven States and Territories. At its Jubilee in Cincinnati, October, 1899, over 15,000 delegates were in attendance, and its great communion service was most memorable. Their Foreign Missionary Society, organized in 1875, is doing work in twelve different foreign lands, among them our new insular possessions. The Christian Woman's Board of Missions, organized and conducted exclusively by the women of the Church, has accomplished a notable service in both the home and

foreign fields in its quarter of a century. The Church Extension Fund of the Disciples in fifteen years has accumulated half a million and aided over 800 churches. Their gifts to missions the past year will aggregate \$700,000. They also have a Board of Ministerial Relief and a General Benevolent Association, and are multiplying their gifts to purposes of charity and educational work. They have missionary societies in almost every State, publish fifty-five journals of various kinds in the interests of the Church, have a growing literature, and an increasing spirit of benevolence and appreciation of the great obligations of stewardship that promises much for the work of future years.

These are some of the direct results of this nineteenth century American religious movement. We would not speak of them boastingly. We might have done far more. We are just beginning to rise to the great height of our responsibility before the world. We are humbled at the thought of our unworthiness. We are hushed at the vision of what is yet to be done.

Great changes have been wrought in the religious world since this plea was introduced. Old doctrines have shifted. Strongholds of error have surrendered to the onward sweep of Christian thought. Creed authority is no longer paramount. Assent to a human system of opinion is not essential as once to admittance to the churches. Men and women who believe on Jesus Christ and obey him are received on their faith, repentance and submission to his authority. Sinners, in many churches, are invited to come forward and

confess Christ simply. The Bible is the great book. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Dreams, visions, sensations, are not relied upon, but the Divine testimony. Vices of sectarianism are deplored; the union sentiment has grown, and union movements like the Young Men's Christian Association, Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, International Sunday-school Lessons, Alliances, Federation and Missionary Conferences have cultivated the spirit of mutual forbearance and co-operation among God's people. The creed of Christianity—the great central truth of the Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus—faith in Him as a Divine person over against faith in the decrees of councils, obedience to Him as King and Lord instead of obedience to human authority, trust in Him and love toward Him, and loyalty to Him as the great bond of fellowship among all the people of God, we see recognized more and more in all lands. There has been a mighty advance. To say that the Campbells and their collaborators have contributed toward these ends is simple justice to the truth of history. It is the Lord's work. If the Disciples have helped in it, they are glad. So the work is done, it matters not who does it. God speed the day when all who love Jesus Christ will stand together, confessing one Lord, proclaiming one faith, practicing one baptism, united in one body, filled with one Spirit, inspired with one hope, serving one God and Father over all.

To a united Church was the grace of Pentecost given. By a united Church was the Roman Empire

in three centuries brought to the foot of the cross. Through the united service of his people, Christ means to make the kingdoms of this world his kingdom. A single drop of water is a weak and powerless thing, but an infinite number of drops, united by the force of attraction, form a stream, and many streams combined form a river, and many rivers pour their water into the mighty ocean, whose proud waves, defying the power of man, none can stay save the Almighty. So resistless would be the power of God's people thus consolidated and hurled against sin. Patience! There is a legend that when Adam and Eve were turned out of Eden, an angel smashed the gates, and the fragments, flying all over the earth, are the precious stones. Patience! In God's good time we shall fit our fragments together, and reconstruct the gates of Paradise.

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THE PLEA AND THE PIONEERS  
IN VIRGINIA

PART I.  
HISTORICAL SKETCH





# THE PLEA AND THE PIONEERS IN VIRGINIA

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## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE DAWN OF THE REFORMATION.

That religious awakening to the lack of authority in God's Word for the religious practices of the day which preceded by several years the inauguration of the current reformation, and found expression in England and Scotland through the efforts of John Glas, Robert Sandeman and the Haldanes, was also early felt in Virginia. In 1771, at a meeting of Meherrin Baptist Church in Lunenburg county, one Jeremiah Walker endeavored to introduce the Philadelphia Confession for adoption by that congregation. This confession of faith had been generally adopted by Baptist congregations throughout the State and country. In this congregation was a young man, James Shelburne, who had already attracted some attention as a fearless speaker. When Walker's proposition was made he arose and opposed the adoption of any human creed, maintaining that the Scriptures were a sufficient rule of faith and practice. This, considered in the light of the times,

was an advanced position to take, and had it been followed to its logical conclusion, must have resulted in a reformation similar to the one inaugurated by the Campbells nearly fifty years later. James Shelburne became a prominent Baptist preacher, and throughout his life earnestly advocated the abolishment of all ecclesiastical authority save that of God's Word. He stood on ground in advance of that taken by his brethren, but he never lived to see the light of the reformation dawn in the Old Dominion.

It was the publication of the *Christian Baptist*, a monthly religious journal started by Mr. Campbell in 1823, that first demonstrated to religious professors and teachers in Eastern Virginia the need of a thorough restitution of the primitive Apostolic Christianity. This publication soon gained a widespread circulation throughout the whole country, but nowhere was its effect more marked than in Eastern Virginia. From its early settlement Virginia was more advanced in education and culture, and, owing to slave labor, there was more time for reading and discussing such periodicals than was at the disposal of those in more recently settled communities.

As Mr. Campbell was at that time a member of the Baptist Church at Wellsburg, Virginia (now West Virginia), which was in full fellowship with the Mahoning Association, the restoration took for a time the form of a reformation in the ranks of the Baptists. This denomination was peculiarly fitted to receive and adopt the principles of the restoration, inasmuch as they alone, of the existing denominations, adhered to

the Scriptural practice of immersion as the only valid baptism. Their church government also, being congregational in form, was such that each congregation could decide for itself on the necessity and merits of the reformation without being hampered by the laws and edicts of ecclesiastical authority. When Mr. Campbell united with the Wellsburg congregation it was with the understanding that nothing should be required of himself or his colleagues but for which a "Thus saith the Lord" could be found. It is a significant fact that in process of time all but three congregations in the Mahoning Association laid aside all their distinctive Baptist views and became congregations of Christians only, wearing no other name and holding to no other tenets than those clearly set forth in the New Testament as adhered to by the early Church of Christ.

As the principles set forth in the *Christian Baptist* were disseminated throughout Eastern Virginia many individuals began to accept and teach them to others. In some cases a majority of members of a congregation became allied with the restoration movement, but on no occasion to our knowledge did they ever attempt the formation of a distinct religious body. They were content to remain in fellowship with the congregations of which they were members so long as their religious liberties were not infringed. Often, however, individuals and sometimes a majority of some congregation were forced to sever their connection with their brethren because of the religious intolerance of the latter.

The first congregation in Eastern Virginia owing its existence to the movement for the restoration of New

Testament Christianity was formed in the lower part of Louisa county in 1826. Elders James M. Bagby and N. H. Turner were forced by their Baptist brethren to take letters of dismission from the Old Fork congregation, of which they were members. They soon gathered about them a small band of devoted followers of the Lord and built a meeting-house about two miles from what is now Bumpass Station, calling it Bethany. The present Bethany meeting-house is about three miles from the original site.

The teaching of Bro. Bagby worked like leaven throughout the community. Uriah Higgason, a talented young man living in an adjacent county, soon adopted the views of the reformers, but, not being molested for a time, remained in full fellowship with his Baptist brethren. At the Goshen Association's annual meeting held at County Line meeting-house, between Caroline and Spottsylvania counties, in 1828, the propriety of the General Association was called in question. The basis of representation of the General Associations in the Southern Missionary Conference of the Baptists is the amount of money contributed yearly to missionary work. Bro. Higgason asserted that this was an unlawful amalgamation of the Church and the world. Although the "popular" cause was represented by three well-known Baptist preachers, J. Fife, Luther Rice, and John Billingsly, so ardent was the desire to lay aside everything that savored of human institutions that Bro. Higgason carried his point by a large majority, and the union between the Goshen Association and the General Association was dissolved.

In the summer of 1826 a Baptist preacher traveling under the auspices of a female missionary society in Richmond, Virginia, when near Natural Bridge, chanced to obtain a few numbers of the *Christian Baptist* and a copy of the "Campbell and McCalla Debate on Baptism." These he read with much surprise at the views presented. On first reading them he resolved to attempt a refutation of the principles so seemingly unorthodox, but after a careful examination he found himself unable to refute or even deny the Scripturalness of the arguments. This was Francis Whitefield Emmons, who was born at Clarendon, Vermont, 1802, and united with the Baptist Church at Swanton at the age of fourteen. After a good preparatory education he was licensed to preach by the Baptist Church at Hamilton. After completing a three years' course in the literary and theological seminary at Hamilton he entered Columbian College, D. C., in 1824. While there he edited for a time the *Columbian Star*. After his missionary work in Virginia before mentioned, he entered Brown University, Providence, R. I., where he graduated. While there he became more and more impressed with the need of such a reformation as that urged by Mr. Campbell, and ordered three complete sets of the *Christian Baptist*, together with the debates and copies of the New Testament, then but recently published by Mr. Campbell. One set of these works was taken by Bro. W. W. Ashley, of Eastport, Maine, who, after reading them, preached and taught the principles of the reformation through Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Several

preachers were convinced through his instrumentality and churches were established according to the primitive order. One of the remaining sets of the same publications was sent by Mr. Emmons to Jonathan Wade, missionary to Burmah, and was read by him and the other missionaries there with profit. E. Kincaid, upon his return to the United States some years later, assured Mr. Emmons "that he had been much interested in the reading, that the work had helped him much, and by directing him to the living Word had enabled him to preach to the Karens the ancient Gospel better than he otherwise would have done." Mr. Emmons was an extensive traveler, and everywhere he went he planted the seed of the reformation. He became a regular correspondent of the *Millennial Harbinger*, and his letters were full of interest.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE CAMPBELL AND SEMPLE CONTROVERSY.

In the summer of 1825 Alexander Campbell visited Eastern Virginia as a Baptist minister and preached the doctrine of the restoration in a number of Baptist Churches in that section. He was well received; the people flocked to hear this new reformer and his views. They began to study the Scriptures with greater earnestness, and many saw the necessity for the restoration and allied themselves with its adherents. The more intelligent and advanced thinkers had profited by careful reading of the *Christian Baptist*, then in its third year, and were therefore better prepared to understand the position taken by its editor. Mr. Campbell formed numerous acquaintances among the Baptist ministry, of whom Robert B. Semple and Andrew Broaddus deserve more than passing notice, as they were leaders in their denomination.

Robert Semple was born of Episcopal parents and early studied law. While trying to convince a farmer of his acquaintance of the errors of the Baptists, he found himself outgeneraled, and immediately set to work to study the Scriptures anew in order to meet the arguments of his opponent. In the course of this study he saw the unscripturalness of affusion and soon afterward united with the Baptist Church. In less than a year he was called to the pastorate of Bruington Church, and was there ordained to the ministry. It was while



attending the Dover Association at Upper Essex Baptist Church, in Essex county, that Bro. Campbell met Robert Semple. Semple saw in Campbell a man of great talent, and resolved to try and win the reformer over to the established customs and usages of the Baptists. To that end, before they parted, Bishop Semple promised soon to begin a letter in the *Christian Baptist* for the purpose of reconciling their differences of opinion. In December of the same year Bishop Semple wrote a letter to that periodical, in which he begins by comparing the preaching of Mr. Campbell, on his late visit to Eastern Virginia, to that of the eloquent Apollos, who was also "mighty in the Scriptures," and inasmuch as Apollos had been taught the way of God more perfectly, and that, too, by a mechanic and his wife, might not he, Semple, "though inferior to Aquila, attempt a reformation in principle of one not only eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures, but deeply learned in all the wisdom of the Greeks and Romans." In the letter that follows this introduction Bishop Semple characterizes Mr. Campbell as substantially a Sandemanian or Haldanian in his views, and, like these sects, lacking in Christian forbearance. "Among the Haldanians," said he "(judging from writings), a gentle spirit is rarely to be found. Harsh and bitter sarcasms are the weapons with which they fight their opponents. This, too, I am the more disposed to think, applies to them as a sect, because I have known some of their party who have appeared, in private conversation, to be mild and gentle indeed, and every way pleasant; but when brought out in writing



or public speaking, seemed to have another kind of temper. If you will bear with me, I will suggest that this seems to be the case with the editor of the *Christian Baptist*. As a man, in private circles, mild, pleasant and affectionate; as a writer, rigid and satirical, beyond all the bounds of Scripture allowance."

Bishop Semple was of a kind, lovable disposition, and the bold, non-compromising stand on the Word of God taken by Mr. Campbell, involving much controversy, seemed to him to cultivate an unchristian spirit in the reformers.

In his reply, Mr. Campbell thanked the Bishop for his admonition and promised to profit by it. Continuing, he disposed of each of the objections offered, in a kind but firm manner. Referring to the charge of Sandemanianism, he said: "I have not, myself, ever read all the works of those men, but I have read more of them than I approve, and more of them than they who impute to me their opinions as heresy." Again he said: "I appropriated one winter season for examining this subject. I assembled all the leading writers of that day on these subjects. I laid before me Robert Sandeman, Harvey, Marshall, Bellamy, Glas, Cudworth, and others of minor fame in this controversy. I not only read but studied and wrote off in miniature their respective views. I had Paul and Peter, James and John, on the same table. I took nothing upon trust. I did not care for the authority, reputation, or standing of one of the systems, a grain of sand. I never weighed the consequences of embracing any one of the systems as affecting my standing

or reputation in the world. Truth (not who says so) was my sole object. I found much entertainment in the investigation, and I will not blush, nor do I fear to say that, in this controversy, Sandeman was like a giant among dwarfs. He was like Samson with the gates and posts of Gaza on his shoulders. I was most prejudiced against him and the most in favor of Harvey when I commenced this course of reading. Yet, I now believe that *not one of them was exactly on the track of the Apostles*. I have also read Fuller's "Strictures on Sandemanianism," which I suppose to be the medium of most of the information possessed on that subject in this country. This is the poorest performance Andrew Fuller ever gave to the world."

Continuing the same thought, he said: "I candidly and unequivocally avow that I do not believe that any one of them had clear and consistent views of the Christian religion as a whole. Some of them, no doubt, had clear and correct views of some of its truths, nay, many of them, but they were impeded in their inquiries by a false philosophy and metaphysics, which fettered their own understanding in some of the plainest things. For instance, with the exception of Fuller and McLean, they all contended for the popish rite of baby baptism or sprinkling." In regard to the lack of forbearance of the above sects alluded to in Bishop Semple's letter, Mr. Campbell wrote: "You seem to think they are defective in forbearance. This may be still true for anything I know; but one thing I do know, that several congregations in this connection are far more forbearing than the Baptists in Virginia; for sev-

eral of them receive unbaptized persons to the Lord's table on the ground of forbearance. I know that we all use this term, forbearance, in a very unwarrantable sense, and that it is difficult to find a term every way appropriate to communicate correct ideas on this subject. To bear with, or allow a brother to exercise his own judgment, is no doubt all that you intend by this term, and this is certainly inculcated in the Apostolic writings. And I am willing to carry this principle to its greatest possible extent, though, as you say, there is and must be a stopping place. So long as any man, woman, or child declares his confidence in Jesus of Nazareth as God's own Son, that he was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; or, in other words, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior of man; and so long as he exhibits a willingness to obey Him in all things according to his knowledge, so long will I receive him as a Christian brother and treat him as such." In these last words is set forth the foundation of the restoration; in faith, unity; in opinions, liberty. Mr. Campbell stood on the only safe ground, that nothing but belief in the Lord, Jesus Christ, and obedience to him, could constitute one a Christian. The Bible furnished the evidence to be believed and man had the will-power to obey.

In July of the year 1826, following this exchange of ideas with Bishop Semple, Mr. Campbell received a letter for publication from Andrew Broaddus under the *nom de plume* "Paulinus." Mr. Broaddus had been for some time a regular reader of the *Christian*

*Baptist*, and now, having made the personal acquaintance of the editor, on Mr. Campbell's Virginia tour, he writes a very interesting letter, in which he says: "I find much to approve, something to doubt, and something, too, from which I must dissent. Possibly, however, my dissension may be owing (in part at least) to the want of a full and correct understanding of your sentiments. I said, 'much to approve'; I might use a stronger term and say, 'much to admire.' With several of your essays, I have been not only pleased, but delighted. Many of your remarks, too, in opposition to the errors and follies too prevalent in the religious world, meet my own views and receive my warm and hearty commendation. In a word, I am greatly pleased with what appears to be your drift and aim, viz., to clear the religion of Jesus of all the adventitious lumber with which it has been encumbered and bring back the Christian Church to its primitive simplicity and beauty."

Mr. Broadus then proceeded to endorse the views of Mr. Campbell in the following particulars: The precedence of the Christian dispensation over the Jewish; the necessity of opposition to all creeds as standards of faith; and the need of reformation in the Baptist Church even, in a measure, to the restoration of the "ancient order of things." On the subject of spiritual regeneration, however, he clung to the theory as set forth by the Baptists. His statement of this position in his letter appears in a somewhat modified form, but when thoroughly sifted, it varied nothing from the popular theory then extant. He called upon Mr. Campbell to

make clear his standing upon this question, as he, Paulinus, believed the editor of the *Christian Baptist* to have been very much misrepresented.

In his answer Mr. Campbell made the following statements relative to his position: "Were it not for the pernicious influence of the theories afloat on this subject, I would assert my concurrence in opinion with you. This may appear a strange saying, but it is in accord with the genius of this work. I am determined, by the grace of God, not to abandon the stand I have taken. I will lay down no new theories in religion, contend for no old theories, nor aid any theories now in existence. For why? Because no theory is the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah. Nor can the preaching or teaching of any theory be the preaching or teaching of the Gospel. And, please mark it well, *no man can be saved by the belief of any theory, true or false; no man will be damned for the disbelief of any theory.*" Continuing, he wrote: "Whatever the Scriptures say, I say. The only question with me is to understand each sentence in the light of its context. And I will not refrain from any inquirer my views of any passage without either theorizing or dogmatizing. *To make new theories is the way to make new divisions; to contend for the old is to keep up the old divisions;* either of which would be in direct opposition to the decisions of the Holy Spirit."

Mr. Campbell had early seen the tendency to speculate on religious matters, and he believed that the silence of the Bible was as much to be respected as its most positive declarations. It contained the Gospel,

and that was sufficient to save the world, if strictly adhered to. Our part was plainly told, and if God saw fit not to reveal all of his own methods and ways of working, then it did not become us to theorize on the subject, much less to bind our theories on the necks of others. He resolved, therefore, to be content with the plain declarations of the Word, and would make no statement beyond it. He neither doubted, denied, nor affirmed the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion. The commandment for man was, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit;" hence, he could only reiterate God's promise of his Spirit to penitent, obedient believers in Christ. To any who might infer from anything he said against these theories that he contended for a religion without the beneficent offices of the Holy Spirit, he wrote: "All whom I baptize, I baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. I pray for the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit to remain with all saints. A religion of which the Holy Spirit is not the author, the subject-matter, and the perfecter, is sheer Deism."

Mr. Campbell's answer to Paulinus caused a great deal of excitement in religious circles in Eastern Virginia. Some boldly took their stand with the great reformer, the clergy hugged the more closely their pet theories on spiritual regeneration and endeavored to force him to the advocacy of some theory of spiritual operations, either old or new, but their efforts were in



vain. He was misrepresented as denying the office and even the existence of the Holy Spirit, and his silence was as grossly misinterpreted as was the silence of the Bible. More was laid to his charge for what he would not say than for anything he did say.

Mr. Broadbuss again wrote a very kind, Christian letter, in which he expressed his sorrow that Mr. Campbell had not given a more direct answer, and doubted the necessity of being so "tremblingly alive to the danger of theory and system as to avoid the direct expression of a sentiment on any proposed subject in religion."

Mr. Campbell replied by stating his willingness to answer any question on the teachings of the Bible, but he stated that religious subjects were of two kinds: one, on which the Bible had nothing to say, and the other on which there was teaching in that sacred book. But, he added, "I am governed more in speaking upon this subject by the following than by all other considerations: *The Apostles preached Christ and not the Holy Spirit*; or rather, they preached the Holy Spirit when they preached Christ. So the Savior instructed and commanded them. They preach the Spirit with most success who say nothing about His work in conversion. So did the Apostles. In all the sermons pronounced by the Apostles to unregenerate persons, of which we have so many samples in the Acts of Apostles, they never once spoke of the work of the Spirit in conversion. Not one example in all the volume, not one model of the discourses we every day hear about the work of the Spirit. The Apostles remembered that the Spirit was

not to speak of Himself, His own office and work, but of Christ. Their good news, therefore, was about Christ crucified."

Following the correspondence between A. Campbell and Mr. Broaddus, the latter had several interviews with Bishop Semple, who thought him too dangerously near the views of the reformers. Mr. Broaddus stood with Mr. Campbell in opposition to creeds, but in his conversation with Mr. Semple he admitted that he could see nothing improper in a written declaration or explanation of our religious sentiments. In this Mr. Broaddus conceded nothing more than any of those more intimately connected with the reformation would have done. In regard to the nullification of the law by the Gospel, Mr. Broaddus also stood on the ground taken by the reformers, and in their friendly interviews Bishop Semple maintained the "perpetual obligation of Old Testament injunctions only in so far as they were of a moral nature," while Mr. Broaddus acknowledged that all such injunctions were sanctioned in the New Testament. Thus, we see, they occupied about the same ground in principle, if not in practice. By some unknown process of reasoning, Bishop Semple became persuaded that he had caused Mr. Broaddus to change his views materially from those he had published in the *Christian Baptist*. Accordingly he remarked in a letter to Silas M. Noel, D. D., of Kentucky, in 1827, that "he (Paulinus) wrote something last year in which he certainly went too far. He is convinced (I am persuaded), and is guarded against our friend Campbell's chimeras." The letter was meant



for a private communication, but Dr. Noel, in an editorial in the (Kentucky) *Baptist Recorder*, could not refrain from using the above quotation as an evidence of the decline of the reformation in Virginia. A correspondent living in Kentucky, and signing himself *Querens*, immediately wrote to the *Christian Baptist*, calling on the Bishop to expose Mr. Campbell's *chimeras*. He referred to the uniformly excellent character borne by Bishop Semple, and presumed that there must be reasons for his statement. If Mr. Campbell was promulgating chimeras, then duty to God and man required that they should be exposed, so that all might be guarded against them. Moreover, Bishop Semple's reputation for piety, learning and talents designated him as the very fittest person for attempting such a refutation.

Paulinus immediately followed the publication of these remarks by a note of explanation, in which he vindicated the Bishop of any wrong motive in what was intended as a private letter to Dr. Noel. He reiterated his own position as identical with that formerly taken by him in the *Christian Baptist*.

In answer to *Querens*, Bishop Semple published a letter in the *Baptist Recorder*, in which he clings to his old hobby that Campbell was a disciple of Sandeman, and as Andrew Fuller had, in his estimation, fully answered these in his "Strictures on Sandemanianism," that he (Semple) would refer *Querens* and all such to Fuller's work as a complete refutation of this system. "If, however," he continues, "I should be induced to become a controversialist, I believe I should as soon

enter the lists with my friend Campbell as any other, for three reasons: One is, on the points on which we differ I am persuaded he is palpably on the wrong side, and it would not be a hard task to make it manifest. A second is, he is so much of a champion that to be beaten by him would not be so discreditable as it might be with some other antagonist. A third is, I think him a generous combatant with one who wishes nothing but fair play."

In Mr. Campbell's answer to this letter he says that if he is in the wrong he is open to conviction; he "most unequivocally and sincerely" renounced each and every one of the systems attributed to him, and used every argument to show that it was the Bishop's duty to give his reasons for opposing the principles of the restoration. "I call upon you," he wrote, "as a man, as a scholar, as a Christian, and as a Christian Bishop, to come forward and make good your assertions against your 'friend Campbell.' My pages are open for you. You shall have line for line, period for period, page for page, with me. I pledge myself to treat you as a gentleman and a Christian ought to do. You will not find an insinuation nor a personality in all I may say of you. I wish to give you a fair specimen of that sort of discussion which I approve, and to show what reason, demonstration, and Scripture declaration can achieve with an able and an honorable opponent. There is no man in America I would rather have for an opponent, if I must have an opponent, than you. Come forward then, Brother Semple; choose the topics, one at a time; numerically arrange your arguments and proofs; make

everything plain and firm; and in good temper, spirit, and affection, show me where I have erred, and if I cannot present reason, Scripture, and good sense to support me, I will yield to your superior discernment, age, and experience, one by one, the points in which we differ. And as this work is generally bound in volumes, your essays, the antidote or the remedy, will descend with the poison to future readers."

After waiting in vain for some months for a reply from Bishop Semple, Mr. Campbell thought it due the cause he advocated to analyze one of the Bishop's letters to Dr. Noel, published in the *Baptist Recorder*, in which the writer had spoken disparagingly of the restoration movement and advocated the use of creeds. "Creeds," said the Bishop, "are good servants but bad masters. Give them too much authority, and they will tyrannize; but let them, as messengers, carry the digested opinions of one set of men to another, and their effect is excellent. The Baptists have been a divided people ever since my knowledge of them, owing (I think) to the want of proper respect for established opinions, customs and regulations, whether written or otherwise."

In his analysis of this letter, Mr. Campbell wrote: "On the supposition that you trace these divisions to the want of sufficient respect for a creed, then you have made a creed to mean 'established opinions, customs and regulations.' Is this the servant? Surely if the opinions, customs and regulations are established, they are, or must be, masters; and we must submit. To this I have no objections, provided the authority that establishes them be paramount to every other.

“But what right has one generation to establish ‘opinions, customs and regulations’ for another? And why should you and I submit to the ‘opinions, customs and regulations’ established by any human authority? If I must examine for myself, what shall I examine? The creed or the Bible? If I must not take the creed upon trust, but if you say I must go to the Bible as well as to the creed, may I not as well go to the Bible at first as at last? Say, Bro. Semple, may I not—ought I not—go to the Bible at first? If I take the creed at all, you will say:—Take the creed in one hand and the Bible in the other. And of what use then is the creed? Why, say you, it will help you to understand the Bible or guide you in the examination of it. If so, then I must make the creed a pair of spectacles instead of a staff, and wear it upon my nose instead of keeping it in my hand. If I must examine the Bible through the creed, then the creed is my eyes; my artificial eyes (for it cannot be my natural eyes), my spectacles. If my spectacles are green glass, the Bible is green; if blue, the Bible is blue; and as is the creed, so is the Bible to me. I am a Calvinist, or an Arminian, or a Fullerite, according to my spectacles or my creed, my ‘established opinions, customs and regulations.’ ”

This is but a sample of the searching analysis given to Bishop Semple’s letter. When the original letter first appeared, a venerable bishop in Kentucky remarked that he regretted to hear such sentiments fall from the lips of any Baptist, especially from the pen of a man renowned for his wisdom, piety and divinity; and that he expected that Mr. Campbell would wound

the writer of them deeply. Even James B. Taylor, in his biography of Robert B. Semple, says: "These letters were too hastily written."

This controversy between Mr. Campbell and Bishop Semple awakened great interest in Eastern Virginia, where Bishop Semple was regarded as the champion of the Baptist cause. His refusal to give his reasons for opposing the reformation was regarded by many as a virtual acknowledgment of the weakness of his position. So rapidly did public interest in the restoration increase that in three months following the analysis of Bishop Semple's letter more than two hundred new subscribers were gained for the *Christian Baptist* in Eastern Virginia. This rapidly increasing circulation, leading to a more widespread dissemination of the principles of the restoration, was the means of firmly establishing it in that section. The interest and excitement were greatly increased when Thomas M. Henley, of Essex county, one of the most earnest and talented Baptist preachers in the State, began to publicly teach the Gospel as advocated by the reformers. By his side stood Dr. John Du Val, of King and Queen county; Peter Ainslie, Dudley Atkinson, M. W. Webber, and John Richards, all fearless proclaimers of the Word of God. These were all men of strong convictions, fearless soldiers of the cross, who cared not a straw for persecution. Their lives constituted a large part of the warp and woof of the restoration in the Tidewater region. May their names ever be cherished by a brotherhood loyal to the principles they fought so hard to establish.

## CHAPTER III.

### MR. CAMPBELL IN RICHMOND.

In the fall of 1829 Mr. Campbell was elected delegate from his district to the Constitutional Convention which convened in Richmond on the fifth day of October of that year. The convention, composed in all of ninety-six delegates, numbered among its members James Madison and James Monroe, Ex-Presidents of the United States, together with Chief-Justice Marshall, John Randolph of Roanoke, Judge Upshur, and others of equal fame. Mr. Campbell was a member of the Judiciary Committee. During the course of the convention he delivered many able speeches, but never did he forget his great calling and mission. Ex-President Madison, in returning to his home from the convention, passed the night at the home of Mr. Edmund Pendleton, in Louisa county, and early the next morning, as he and Mr. Pendleton were walking the piazza, the latter, who was somewhat of an admirer of Mr. Campbell, asked Mr. Madison for his opinion of the Reformer. Mr. Madison, in answer, spoke in very high terms of the ability shown by him in the convention. "But," continued he, "it is as a theologian that Mr. Campbell must be known. It was my pleasure to hear him very often as a preacher of the gospel, and I regard him as the ablest and most original expounder of the Scriptures I have ever heard."



His stay in Richmond contributed in no small degree to promote the cause Mr. Campbell advocated, and led to many warm friendships being formed. Among the many interesting and profitable conversations held with the citizens of Richmond was one with a venerable Jew, Mr. Judah, the ruler of a Synagogue of the Jews in Richmond. He was seventy years old, but in good health and possessed of a vigorous mind and body. Having signified his desire to meet Mr. Campbell, they were invited by a mutual friend, together with a small party, to his home, where a conversation was held, as follows:

After being seated side by side, Mr. Campbell said, "I feel myself particularly happy in being seated by the side of a son of the patriarch Abraham."

JUDAH.—And I am happy in becoming acquainted with one who so ably defended the divine mission of Moses against the infidel Owen.

CAMPBELL.—Have you read the debate with Mr. Owen?

JUDAH.—I have carefully read it all, and have not a single objection to anything in the first volume of it. So far as you argue the authenticity of the Jew's religion, your arguments are substantially such as our Rabbins use; and your stripping the Deists of their natural religion is one of the best things I have read from any Christian. You know I differ from you on the Christian part of your argument; but one thing I will say to you, I have heard some of your lectures on the Christian religion since you came to the city, which, with what I have read from your pen on that subject,

assure me that you teach the religion which Jesus and the Apostles taught, if I know anything of the meaning of what the New Testament says. And, let me add, you are the only Christian preacher I have heard in a long life that does not abuse us poor Jews. I was wont to attend the Christian meetings in Richmond, but was constrained to abandon them because of the insults offered us Jews.

CAMPBELL.—I never can reproach a Jew. We Gentiles are debtors to the seed of Abraham for all that gives us elevation of character, and although the remnant of your people were to be treated as you say the Christian preachers now treat them, and your own Prophets foretold, still, I never will be the person who will speak contumeliously of a Jew as such. For your Fathers' sake I must always respect your nation; and glad would I be if your reproach among the nations was taken away. But there are a few questions which I would wish to propose to you for my own information.

JUDAH.—It will give me pleasure to answer them.

CAMPBELL.—Do you continue to read the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms in your Synagogues, as your people were accustomed to do at, and before, the Christian era?

JUDAH.—In our Synagogues every Sabbath-day the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms are read, and all once through every year—just as you stated in debate with Owen. We have these sacred writings divided into weekly lessons, and so divided as to make, in all, only fifty-two lessons.



CAMPBELL.—You have not much time for “preaching,” then, as we Christians call it.

JUDAH.—No, nor much need of your sort of preaching or expounding. We *hear* Moses and the Prophets. We chant the Psalms of David, and invoke the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But we have no sermons. Sometimes an exhortation is tendered; but it is short, and only occasional. We teach our children the Law, without creed or catechism. We often hear in your Christian Synagogues sermons upon a sentence in Moses or the Prophets, very unlike, however, what Moses or the Prophets taught. Your preachers make all our Scriptures *typical*, and your own too. They often fault our Rabbins, and talk about the traditions of our Elders; but I find that Rabbi Luther, Rabbi Calvin, and Rabbi Wesley, are as venerable as any of our Rabbins, and their traditions as sacred as those of our Elders.

CAMPBELL.—Does your reading of the Law and the Prophets correspond with our version of them?

JUDAH.—Substantially it does; excepting some passages in the Prophets and in the Psalms, and these are not numerous.

CAMPBELL.—What do you mean by *the Spirit of God*?

JUDAH.—We mean not what you mean. You represent the Spirit as a person distinct from the Father. We believe that Jehovah is one Jehovah; that the Spirit is his power, his wisdom, his goodness in operation; but have no idea of a distinct person or being.

CAMPBELL.—I have thought that the distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is a Christian revelation

and not a Jewish, and that some of the criticisms upon *Aleim* and other words and phrases in your writings, applied by our Christian Doctors to this Christian development, were forced and unnatural.

JUDAH.—They are all so. *Aleim*, with us, denotes one Jehovah. “The Lord our God is one Lord.”

CAMPBELL.—As I merely inquire after your views and customs, permit me to inquire, Do you use bread and wine in eating the Passover?

JUDAH.—There have been from time immemorial a loaf of bread and a flagon of wine upon the same table on which the Passover is served; and both are used by us pretty much as Jesus is said to have used them. We give thanks for them, and distribute them among the family which partake of the lamb. We cannot tell how they came to be used; but our fathers have used them as a thank-offering, and we still hold this among our sacred customs.

CAMPBELL.—Do you use immersion in water, as a religious institution, for any purpose?

JUDAH.—It was used in proselyting a Gentile; but since proselytism has ceased this custom has ceased. When any foreigner was added to the congregation, he was first circumcised, then sprinkled with sacrificial blood, and immersed in a running stream, or bath; for we have a tradition that “only by circumcision, sacrifice, and immersion, can a Gentile be received into the congregation;” for it was by circumcision, the blood of sprinkling, and immersion in the Red Sea, or in the cloud and sea, that we were dedicated to the Lord.

CAMPBELL.—Might I request you to state to me your expectations of the Messiah?

JUDAH.—Our people are now very far from agreed upon this subject. I believe that our nation will all be converted in one day—not to Jesus, however; but that the Messiah will come, and all the people shall know him and receive him cordially when he comes. Then “a nation shall be born in a day.” Our people, Mr. Campbell, will never be converted by your missionaries. Those of them who have been said to be converted were hypocrites, and apostatized from us for interest, like your Missionaries,———and———. I agree with Paul in some things; but Paul stole them from the Prophets and pretended to have been inspired. But it is true that “all Israel shall be saved, when the Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and shall turn away impiety from Jacob.” Then, too, shall all the Gentiles acknowledge Him, and never will you convert all the Gentiles to Jesus. You can neither convert the Jews nor the Gentiles to your Messiah; but when the Son of David comes, all nations shall do him homage.

CAMPBELL.—Do you know to what tribe you belong?

JUDAH.—No; the family lineage and the tribes are all lost.

CAMPBELL.—Was it not foretold that the Messiah should be of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David?

JUDAH.—Certainly it was.

CAMPBELL.—Was not this foretold in order to enable you to recognize and prove the pretensions of the Messiah when he came?

JUDAH.—It was.

CAMPBELL.—How, then, can these prophecies be of any use to you when the lineage of families and the tribes were lost? The purpose for which they were given cannot now be accomplished if the Messiah be yet to come!

JUDAH.—I will tell you how I understand this may be accomplished: When the Messiah comes, he will tell every man to what tribe and family he belongs.

CAMPBELL.—But will his assertion of that which you cannot prove but upon his own testimony be a testimony in his favor! Could such an imposition be detected? Is not this to open the door for imposture? If you cannot prove the family and the tribe of every pretender, the prophecies concerning the family and tribe can serve no purpose whatever.

JUDAH.—Mr. Campbell, we do not want proselytes to our religion. I do not talk with you to convert you. We want no converts. Your Master commanded you to make proselytes; but Moses gave us no such commands.

CAMPBELL.—I admit he did not. I do not expect to convert you to the Christian faith; but as you have been so condescending as to answer my questions, I wish, for my own information, to know by what arguments you reject Jesus of Nazareth.

JUDAH.—As a matter of information, but not with a design to convert you, I will continue to answer your questions.

CAMPBELL.—What was the most heinous offence against God which your nation, according to the

tenor of your covenant, or constitution, could commit?

JUDAH.—There were many very heinous offences which we could and did commit.

CAMPBELL.—But was it not treason for your nation, and the most flagrant sin which, under your government, you could be guilty of, to apostatize into idolatry?

JUDAH.—It was. As a *national* sin, it was our greatest sin.

CAMPBELL.—And was it not a sin to be punished with the utmost severity, as Moses declared?

JUDAH.—Most unquestionably; it merited the severest punishment.

CAMPBELL.—And when your nation, as such, fell into this sin, was not the seventy years' captivity in Babylon, together with the destruction of your Temple and city, the punishment inflicted upon you for this sin?

JUDAH.—It was the punishment visited upon us for that sin, and the severest punishment ever inflicted upon our nation for fifteen hundred years.

CAMPBELL.—But a punishment still more severe has since befallen you; and were we to estimate sin by temporal punishments, we would be constrained to think that as your Temple was razed to its foundation, your city laid in ruins, and your nation carried captive into all nations, and banished from your own land for almost *two thousand years*, you must about that time have committed a sin as much more aggravated in its character than simple idolatry as the punishment consequent upon it has been more tremendous in its nature and protracted in its duration

than was the Babylonish captivity with all its concomitants.

JUDAH.—We have committed some great sin, it is true; but what that sin was it is not so easy to determine.

CAMPBELL.—But have you not been led to suspect that as this evil came upon your nation shortly after your rejection and crucifixion of Jesus, that probably it came upon you on that account?

JUDAH.—Josephus said it came upon us for the martyrdom of James the Just; but I profess not to know on what account it came upon us.

CAMPBELL.—Did not Moses say that if you would not obey that Prophet of which he informed you, that such a calamity would befall you?

JUDAH.—Whom do you think that Prophet to have been?

CAMPBELL.—Jesus the Nazarene.

JUDAH.—That cannot be; for Jesus of Nazareth was not raised up like Moses; and the Prophet of whom Moses spoke was to be raised up as Moses was.

CAMPBELL.—And who do you say that Prophet was?

JUDAH.—We believe that Moses was then speaking of Joshua, his successor.

CAMPBELL.—And was Joshua *raised* up like Moses?

JUDAH.—He was a *man* like Moses; but you say Jesus was *God*. And he pretended to be equal with Jehovah.

CAMPBELL.—Jesus professed to be *the Son of God*; and sustained his pretensions by works equal, if not superior,



to those which certified the mission of Moses. And Jesus was raised up, just as Moses was raised, from obscurity, by the mighty power of God. But how can you think that Joshua was regarded in these words of Moses, when he is not named nor alluded to for *ten chapters* afterwards?

JUDAH.—What was more natural than for Moses, in the book of Deuteronomy, when he was delivering his valedictory address to our fathers, than to allude to his successor, and to caution the people on the subject of obedience to his successor?

CAMPBELL.—This he does afterwards; but nothing in the context of the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy will warrant the application of those words to Joshua. Besides, I know not on what authority you could call Joshua a *prophet*. A *prophet like Moses*, Joshua was not; nor, indeed, could any other prophet which God ever sent your people be at all compared to Moses. So illustrious was Moses that it was no disparagement to Jesus to be compared to him. For although he far excelled Moses, yet there were more points of coincidence between him and Moses than between him and any other prophet. Joshua was, as a *leader* to Israel, the successor of Moses; but pray tell me in what respect was he like Moses as a *prophet*?

JUDAH.—I do not expect you, Mr. Campbell, to agree with me on this subject, and you know I told you that I did not aim at proselyting you to my faith.

CAMPBELL.—True, you said so; but I hope you will indulge me a little farther, as I wish to know what

you have to offer against our faith, and what reasons influence you in rejecting Jesus as the Messiah.

JUDAH.—We have many, many reasons; more than I could tell you in a long time.

CAMPBELL.—Pray how do you apply the prophecy of Jacob: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from among his descendants, till Shiloh come; and to him shall the gathering of the people be.”

JUDAH.—I do not read that passage as you do. I read it, “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah till they come to Shiloh; then shall the people assemble to him”—that is, to *Saul*; for it was at Shiloh the people assembled and made Saul king.

CAMPBELL.—But how will this accord with the fact? Was the sceptre in Judah before it was in the family of Saul? This passage intimates that the sceptre should continue in Judah for a long time; but your reading puts it in the family of Saul before it was in the tribe of Judah; for David was not made king until Saul was rejected.

JUDAH.—Judah was prince or chief amongst his brethren from Jacob’s time till Benjamin, in the person of Saul, became chief; and this fact, together with the place, *Shiloh*, where the people assembled to Saul, proves the interpretation.

CAMPBELL.—But doubtless you must confess that the sceptre did not depart from Judah when Saul was made king; for in the person and family of David it continued almost a thousand years after it departed from Benjamin.



JUDAH.—You talk about the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah; I mean, you Christians are always preaching about this Prince of Peace. But show me this peaceful kingdom, and I will renounce my opposition to your Messiah.

CAMPBELL.—Here I admit the force of your objection; and candor compels me to say that there is some strength in this objection. I feel my inability to stand up for the modern Christian profession. But one fact consoles me, viz., Paul, John, Peter and Jude assure us that this state of things would come to pass; therefore it shakes not my faith, for it was foretold. That the Messiah should be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; that he should be led as a lamb to the slaughter; and that in his humiliation his condemnation should be extorted, is not more plainly foretold in Isaiah in the fifty-third chapter of his prophecies than is the apostasy of Christians which we now witness. But this can constitute no objection against the religion, more than that those incidents in the life of the Messiah should be an objection to his divine mission. A reformation has commenced which will never cease till Christians and Christianity be what they once were.

JUDAH.—You apply Isaiah as other Christians; but I apply it to the Jewish nation—and make the term *he* stand for the nation.

CAMPBELL.—But for this arbitrary appropriation of the term *he* no good reason can be adduced. There is one consideration which I beg you to reflect upon. I will suggest it in the form of a query, and will not

farther impose upon your good nature for the present. What proof can any Messiah ever give of his mission more convincing than did Jesus of Nazareth? Tell me what signs or evidences can your Messiah adduce—only mention *one*—that our Messiah has not afforded?

JUDAH.—If all that is testified of Jesus by His historians were true, I would say that the evidence was as satisfactory as necessary. But how will you prove that?

CAMPBELL.—By all the same arguments by which you would impugn their testimony will I impugn that of your own Moses. But you told me that my argument for the divine mission of Moses was irrefragable. My argument for the testimony of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is just the same.

JUDAH.—I read the New Testament more than most of my brethren. I blame you not for your proselyting zeal. Do try and convert your Christians to that book. I respect you as an honest Christian: believe me to be an honest Jew, who cannot believe for the reasons assigned by your Paul in his letter to the Romans. I shall always be glad to see you. But I must await the conversion of my countrymen: for Israel will all be converted in one day.

CAMPBELL.—One word more. How do you Jews expect to obtain the remission of your sins, as you have neither temple, nor altar, nor priest?

JUDAH.—By prayer.

CAMPBELL.—I know of no promise nor institution in your religion which warrants a hope or remission without sacrifice.

JUDAH.—Sacrifice we cannot have; for we have neither temple, nor altar, nor priest: and therefore, if God forgives us not through prayer, forgiveness we cannot gain. But our trust is in Jehovah, whose mercy endureth forever. Farewell.

Mr. Campbell remained in Richmond till the close of the convention, in January, 1830. His stay in Richmond proved to be an important step in the advancement of the restoration. As a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, he obtained a prestige that could not have been gained in any other way. Then, too, owing to the length of his visit, he was enabled to come in touch with many well-known reformers whom he had never before known face to face, and also, by his preaching in the First Baptist Church, he had the opportunity of correctly presenting the fundamental principles of the restoration where his views had been grossly misrepresented. The majority of the people heard him with pleasure and interest, but waited to see whereunto this thing would grow. Several, however, were constitutionally received into the kingdom of Christ. One, a young physician, who had become enlightened as to his duty through reading the *Christian Baptist*, traveled over a hundred miles to hear the great Reformer preach, and was baptized by him. Before returning home Mr. Campbell visited several churches in Caroline, King and Queen and Essex counties. The following account of his visit to the home of Thomas M. Henley, written by Mr. Campbell himself, is interesting:

“I had the pleasure of an interview with the venerable Bishop Semple, on my way from Richmond, as well as with most of my former acquaintance, friends, and brethren in the counties of Louisa, Hanover, King William, King and Queen, Essex, Caroline and Spottsylvania. My interview with none of the Bishops was so interesting as was that with Bishop Semple. From the collision into which we had fallen, through Dr. Noel’s instrumentality, and from the notoriety of the differences existing, our meeting derived additional interest. While I was lecturing in Upper Essex meeting-house, the Bishop arrived nearly two hours before I had finished my address. After an interchange of the most friendly salutations, we repaired together to enjoy the Christian hospitalities of our common friend and brother, Bishop Henley. Many guests accompanied us, and we had quite a little congregation around the social, and, I might add, the Christian fireside.

“After the Bishop and myself had felt the cheering influences of the fire and the inspiring influences of our mutual friends and acquaintance, we got into a four-hours’ very agreeable fireside discussion of many matters and things pertaining to the Christian institution. Not a word was said nor an allusion made to what had formerly transpired between us. All was as though it had never been. And after comparing the grounds and reasons of our respective views and courses in the Christian profession, and after we had united in prayer and praise, we reposed together upon the same couch, until the eyelids of the morning opened upon us, and bade us look to Heaven. We arose. And after we had dressed, and the family and guests had assembled, we repaired to a pond, on which the ice was about an inch thick, not more than one-fourth of a mile from the house; and there, while the sun was lifting his golden locks over the tops of the

trees, and the little congregation standing round the pool, I immersed a disciple from King William into the Christian faith, as they were wont to do before Antichrist was born! We returned to the house, united in worship, breakfasted; and after some friendly conversation, we prepared to depart, each one his own way. Bishop Semple and I, after expressing for each other our mutual good wishes, bade each other adieu—he proceeding to King and Queen, and I to Caroline.

“It would be unbecoming for me, and it is a task for which I was never well qualified, to give any account of the topics, arguments and discussions which filled up the hours we were together. There were a goodly number of very intelligent brethren and sisters present who could do this much better than I. What I admired most of all was the good temper and Christian courtesy of this venerable disciple, who, although unable to rise above all of his early associations and the long received opinions which a long course of reading and teaching had riveted upon his mind, yet he did not lose sight of the meekness and mildness, the candor and complaisance, which the religion of Jesus teaches, and without which, though a man’s head were as clear as an angel’s intellect, his religion is vain.”

## CHAPTER IV.

### PUBLICATION OF DECREES.

It is much to be regretted that such differences crept into the ranks of the Baptists as to force a separation between them and the reformers, and such separation ought to be blotted out to-day by the union of these two great religious bodies, which agree in so many important particulars and disagree in so few and unimportant points. That our forefathers in the reformation were blameless, we would not for a moment assert. But that the leading reformers in Eastern Virginia were conspicuous for their forbearance, cannot be truthfully denied. They endured with patience the misrepresentations and injuries of their opponents, who in their hasty zeal to save what they supposed to be essential Baptist principles from the fiery trial of the Word of Truth, in many instances destroyed by their rashness the fundamental principles so long cherished by the Baptist denomination,—the rights of conscience, church independency and Christian liberality. Had the publication of proscriptional decrees not been resorted to the separation might have been delayed for a time, but owing to the religious feeling of the times it probably would have come sooner or later. In the then existing state of feeling it needed but a gentle zephyr to fan the kindling spark of sectarian and fanatical dogmatism into flame. This came from an unexpected quarter and in an unexpected manner.



The Mahoning Association, of which Mr. Campbell was a member, was an extensive one, embracing a large number of churches in Southeastern Ohio. All of these churches had adopted the principles of the restoration with the exception of three congregations adjoining the district comprised under the Beaver Association. These, taking exceptions to the restoration movement, had left the Mahoning and joined the Beaver Association. Through their influence the Beaver Association was induced to issue a circular anathematizing the Mahoning Association and Mr. Campbell as "disbelieving and denying many of the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures," of which alleged heresies a large number were catalogued. This action of one association excluding another was as unwarrantable as for one Church member to exclude another of equal standing. The document was circulated with the utmost diligence and republished in the leading Baptist papers with commendations. The crisis was now on. Everywhere Baptist churches and associations, unable to refute by logic and Scriptural testimony the doctrine of the reformers, tried the high hand of ecclesiastical authority. The result was that discord and confusion reigned in Baptist circles throughout the country.

The idea of proscriptional decrees soon found root in the hearts of the Eastern Virginia Baptists. This was a summary way of ending the controversy. Abner W. Clopton was one of the leading Baptist preachers in Eastern Virginia. He had at first been pleased with the views advanced by Mr. Campbell, but, like Andrew Broaddus, he had become offended at his

views on "experimental religion," and became one of the most bitter partisans in the Baptist ranks. Many of his associates in the Meherrin Association took sides with the reformers, among whom was Silas Shelburne. He had preached with his father, James Shelburne, till the death of the latter, when he was called to the care of the churches to which his father had ministered. The intolerant spirit of Abner Clopton could not brook the indecisive policy of the Meherrin Association in allowing Brother Shelburne and some of his co-laborers to preach the simple doctrine of the New Testament unadulterated with Baptist dogma. He resolved to imitate the example of the Beaver Association, and accordingly, at the next meeting of the Appomattox Association, of which he was clerk, and the territory of which adjoined that of the Meherrin, he introduced and procured the passage of the Appomattox Decrees. These decrees began with the preamble from the Beaver Anathema, which was followed by the following resolutions:

"1. *Resolved*, That it be recommended to all the churches composing this Association to discountenance the writings of Alexander Campbell.

"2. *Resolved*, That it be recommended to all the churches in this Association not to countenance the new translation of the New Testament.

"3. *Resolved*, That it be recommended to all the churches of this Association not to invite into their pulpits any minister who holds the sentiments expressed in the Beaver Anathema.

"ABNER W. CLOPTON, Clerk."



This last resolution was undoubtedly intended as a blow to Silas Shelburne and his associates, who often preached within the bounds of the Appomattox Association. In a subsequent meeting of the Meherrin Association one of Mr. Clopton's men made an attempt to have the reformers cast out. Failing in this attempt, he declared a non-fellowship from the body, and vacated his seat.

This method of dealing with the reformation by proscribing its advocates was destined to become quite popular among the Eastern Virginia Baptists. In 1830 report was made to Bruington Church, in King and Queen county, that certain persons within the bounds of this Church had been baptized contrary to the usual Baptist custom, *i. e.*, they had been immersed upon the confession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that similar occurrences had taken place in neighboring churches. Bishop Semple, who was pastor of Bruington Church, took matters into his own hands, and appointed a committee to confer with the other churches adjacent to them and recommend to the Church what measures should be taken. Without waiting for the committee to report, the Bishop then went to Andrew Broaddus, and they appointed a day for a conference of the churches affected by this breach of custom.

Eight churches were in attendance at this conference, which was held in the Upper King and Queen meeting-house, December 30 and 31, 1830. The object of the meeting was stated, and a committee of nine was appointed to sit at night and form a report

to be brought forward and considered next day. The report, after a lengthy preamble, which asserted the cause of their distress and conference as being a "system of religion known by the name of Campbellism," introduced resolutions on the following points:

1. That we consider Spiritual regeneration as a fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures;
2. That to maintain baptism to be conversion,—regeneration,—the new birth, etc., is a radical error founded in popery;
3. That to substitute the word reformation for repentance is to do away with one of the main pillars of the Christian religion;
4. To maintain the sufficiency of human nature aided by the mere written word, in salvation, is an attempt to resurrect Pelagianism;
5. It was resolved that when any members of the churches represented maintained any of the above radical errors that the churches be recommended to try and convince them of their errors in love, and if this failed they were to declare non-fellowship with such;
6. It is advised that the churches take decided stand against preachers who perform baptism in this new way, etc.;
7. Persons so baptized should not be received into fellowship, except upon strict examination as to their experience and the motives which led their taking such a step.

In conclusion, the churches were recommended to observe a day of "solemn humiliation, with fasting and prayer, with reference to the state of religion and the distress which has given rise to this meeting."

These decrees were dubbed by Mr. Campbell the Semple and Broaddus Decrees. They received their death blow when they were rejected by Mr. Semple's own Church, Bruington, on March 5, 1831, when brought up for ratification. This was a severe reproach to Bishop Semple. "The very Church," wrote Mr. Campbell, "which, it is said, was so aggrieved at the spread of our views as to justify R. B. Semple and Andrew Broaddus in calling a council to proscribe us; that very Church, which, it is said, the mover of these decrees planted, and in which he has labored for so many years, has done itself the honor to reject the decrees of the elders. Thus has the sceptre departed from Judah and a lawgiver from Dover."

The meeting of the Bruington Church was a large one; every white male member was present except one, who was sick. One was sent for who had applied for a letter twelve months before, and who had lived for two or three years in another county. The decrees were read, and Dr. Du Val proceeded to pick them to pieces. His defence of the reformation was powerful and eloquent; his exposé of the injustice done in the decrees was lucid and convincing. Messrs. Todd, Broaddus and Semple used all their talents, eloquence and authority to induce the Church to receive them and enter them on the Church book. But the Church would not hear them. R. B. Semple then insisted that his "opponents," those who would not vote with him, should take letters of dismission, and join some other Church. But this they would not do. He then

ordered every man's name to be written down and called over, so that each man would answer and record his vote. They continued firm, and gave their vote in writing against the decrees. The Bishop then moved a postponement of the business of the meeting, which was already completed. The brethren voting against the resolutions were immovable. He then proposed to modify the resolutions, but they would not have even a modification of them. Bishop Semple then remarked in the presence of all that if they had put the resolutions on the Church book no split in the Church would have taken place; but now a split must be the consequence. He was informed that if any split occurred, the fault, if any, would be his. The meeting broke up, and so ended the affair. The next day Messrs. Semple and Broaddus preached human inability and sovereign grace to the people, and then invited sinners to come. To crown all, they broke the loaf together, reformers and anti-reformers. The good old Bishop's heart relented—he shed many a tear—and all had a fine time in peace and unity.

## CHAPTER V.

### THOMAS CAMPBELL'S VISIT TO EASTERN VIRGINIA.

In December, 1831, Thomas Campbell, the father of Alexander Campbell, visited Eastern Virginia. His first stop was made at Fredericksburg, where Robert Semple was then acting as pastor of the Baptist Church. In this congregation were many who favored the doctrines of the reformation, and accordingly Father Campbell was asked to preach. The invitation being seconded by Mr. Semple, Mr. Campbell addressed the congregation the following Lord's Day morning and night from Titus 2:11—3:9. At the close of the morning sermon Bishop Semple made a few remarks commending the sermon as the gospel, but desiring some further treatment by Mr. Campbell as to his views of the word "grace" in the text. To this request Mr. Campbell replied that he would speak more to this point at night. Mr. Semple then closed the meeting with a fervent prayer that the blessing of God might accompany the truth that had been delivered, and also for Brother Campbell, that God might spare his life many years and go with him wherever he went and bless him abundantly in his labors.

They then went together to the house of Brother Abner Leitch, where they dined. After dinner Mr. Campbell exhibited to the company some papers that he was bringing before the churches, in which were set

forth the principles of the restoration. After reading, Mr. Semple expressed his approbation of these principles except in one item, viz., that the New Testament as it now stands is sufficient for all purposes of Church discipline. He thought that general principles were inculcated in the New Testament, but that particular rules might be advantageously drawn from them. Nothing but the most friendly feelings prevailed between them.

They left Bro. Leitch's house together to go to Church for the evening meeting. As this was the day on which the Church was to partake of the Lord's Supper, Bishop Semple took George Adams, his leading elder, aside and asked what he thought of the propriety of inviting Mr. Campbell to commune with them. Bro. Adams answered that he thought baptism was the great point which prevented communion with other denominations, and that in this case such objection did not exist. After some further talk Mr. Semple remarked that he had had some conversation with the venerable Bro. Campbell, and was much pleased with him; that he believed him to be a good and pious man, though in error. They went to the table together. Mr. Semple and Mr. Adams presided, and Bro. Campbell was invited and communed with them. After the Supper they parted. Mr. Semple gave to Bro. Campbell his benediction and bade him Godspeed in the work in which he was engaged. Father Campbell resumed his discourse at night, but Mr. Semple's health precluded his being present. Throughout the day Bishop Semple had manifested



the spirit of love, and seemed to desire to live in unity with his brethren. It was the last discourse he was permitted to hear. A severe cold, which he had previously taken, terminated in pleurisy, and in two weeks he was no more. He departed this life on Christmas Day, 1831.

Thomas M. Henley wrote Mr. Semple's obituary for the *Millennial Harbinger*, in which he referred to the love that prevailed during this last public day of his life, and made especial mention of Mr. Semple's communion with Thomas Campbell and his benediction. Upon the publication of this notice Andrew Broaddus wrote to Robert Baylor Semple, son of the deceased, who had been with his father on the occasion mentioned, and represented that a great injustice had been done to the memory of his father in making it appear that he had bidden Godspeed to the reformation. This led to a controversy, which was carried on in the *Religious Herald* and *Millennial Harbinger*. The facts as we have stated them were fully proven by letters from a number of brethren present when they occurred. Justice compels us to say that this action on the part of Mr. Broaddus was below the known standard of his character, and must be viewed in the light of those times. Mr. Broaddus had come to regard the doctrines of the reformation, especially that of regeneration, as subversive of pure Christianity, in fact as heretical, and he could not look complacently upon any step toward fellowship with such a people.

Mr. Semple, on the other hand, had long been openly opposed to the reformation, but in his latter days was



beginning to recognize the good in his self-made opponents and desired to live at peace with all men. The spirit of hostility shown by him at the King and Queen Conference had given place to the desire for peace and unity, and on one occasion he had told certain of his brethren of the Bruington Church that he was pleased that the Church did reject his decrees. At the last Dover Association before his death, in October, 1831, when Andrew Broaddus and others had made a personal attack upon Bro. Henley, Bishop Semple opposed the violent measures introduced, and publicly proposed conciliatory measures. He even characterized Bro. Henley's course toward the Association as magnanimous, and exhorted the brethren to forbearance and long-suffering. During the same Association, in a debate as to the best method of deciding such questions as were then continually arising in the churches, he declared himself as decidedly in favor of deciding by a majority. He said that it had happened to himself occasionally to be in the minority when he was confident that he was right, but he had found by experience that it was always best to yield to the majority. Undoubtedly this was a reference to the King and Queen Decrees which were rejected by Bruington Church. These actions on the part of Bishop Semple show conclusively that his latter days were filled with a desire for harmony and unity. He was not reconciled to what he termed "Campbellism," nor did Bro. Henley nor any other of the reformers endeavor to give such an impression. The love of Christ had simply predominated over sectarian preju-

dice, while in the case of Andrew Broaddus the latter was gaining the victory.

After leaving Fredericksburg, Thomas Campbell preached in Essex county, from whence Robert Y. Henley accompanied him to Richmond. Here he met Andrew Broaddus, and exhibited to him the document before mentioned, setting forth the principles of the restoration. Father Campbell was bringing this document before the churches of Virginia for their assent or dissent, and in order to show more clearly what was contended for by the reformers. Such cries as "baptismal regeneration," "self-salvation," and the implication that the reformers denied the beneficent offices, and even the existence of the Holy Spirit, were current. If the churches could be persuaded to give their assent to certain well-defined articles setting forth principles held by the reformers the threatened breach between them and the Baptists might be avoided. Thomas Campbell was endeavoring to maintain the unity of the Eastern Virginia congregations by bringing them to a better understanding of what was really advocated by the reformers. When the document was presented to Andrew Broaddus he approved of the principles set forth without exception, but later he wrote an admonition in the *Religious Herald* disapproving of them, not for anything they said, but for what they did not say; and to cap the climax, warned the churches against assenting to them. In the same article he says, "That the general principles to which I have alluded are, in the main, good and wholesome principles, as far as they go, I readily allow. They

hold out the Scriptures as the only rule and standard of faith and practice to be imposed on men, discarding all human inventions in religion, and considering prudential regulations as matters of expediency only. We have long avowed these principles, and can see no good reason at this time for a formal recognition of them." The logical contradictions in this are too apparent to need comment.

Thomas Campbell arrived in Richmond on January 5, 1832. A considerable number of members of the First Baptist Church had long been studying the New Testament with diligence and zeal, and had become satisfied that a reform in the Church was necessary. They had for some time striven to set forth the biblical teaching in regard to faith, baptism and the Lord's Supper. The visit of Alexander Campbell in 1829-30 had measurably strengthened their position, but they had always granted to all the right of opinion. The day after his arrival in Richmond, Thomas Campbell visited the pastor of this Church, Elder John Kerr, who, after some friendly conversation, invited him to preach for him that evening. Father Campbell accepted this invitation, and continued for several successive evenings at the request of the pastor. On Sunday evening, January 15, before the night meeting, several members of the Church were at the house of one of the brethren. Elder Campbell's preaching was talked of, and a general desire expressed that he should preach often; and three of the brethren were requested to wait upon the pastor, and ask his permission. They waited upon him that evening and informed him of the

wish of the brethren, that, as he occupied the pulpit but one night in the week, he would give notice for Elder Campbell to preach on the other nights; and that as many persons in the adjoining country were anxious to hear him, and could not unless he preached in the morning, they wished him to preach on the next Lord's Day morning; to all of which Elder Kerr assented. After the services that night he gave notice that the venerable old brother in the pulpit with him would preach every night that week except Friday night, and on that night both would be present, and one or the other would preach. He said nothing about the appointment for the following Sunday morning. It was thought by the members that it had been overlooked and would be announced some night early in the week. On Monday night Bro. Campbell preached. The pastor was not present, and there being several persons from the country at meeting, it was thought a favorable opportunity to spread the information; at the request of several members a deacon of the Church gave the notice that Elder Campbell would preach in that place on the next Sunday morning. Elder Campbell preached on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights, and no difficulty was apprehended about the Sunday morning appointment till Friday night. On that occasion Elder Kerr preached, and after the sermon gave notice that he himself would preach on next Sunday morning. Immediately one of the brethren who had asked for the use of the house for Elder Campbell went up into the pulpit and asked him if he had not

made a mistake in making the appointment for himself. He responded in the negative, remarking at the same time that he had not promised the use of the house. The notice had then been sent to the two daily papers, and the notice of the appointment having been very generally circulated, many of the brethren, upon consultation, decided, if possible, to obtain a place for Elder Campbell to preach. Upon application to the Universalist preacher he very readily consented to give up the use of the Capitol, which had been granted him for that morning by the Governor; and the notices were changed accordingly. Many members of the Church and others attended the services at the Capitol, and nothing more was heard of the matter until the following Sunday morning, when Elder Kerr gave notice that on the following Saturday there would be a Church meeting on business of the highest importance. Inquiry was at once made as to the business, when it was intimated that the meeting at the Capitol had been highly offensive, and that certain members whom others chose to call "Campbellites" would have to withdraw. The three brethren who had asked the use of the house, thinking it best if possible to settle the difference between the pastor and themselves so that the question might come before the Church unconnected with private differences, waited upon him the next morning, but were unable to come to any understanding, he still maintaining that he had made no such promise, and they that he had.

On Saturday night, February 4, the Church convened, and after an address of about two hours from

the pastor he concluded by offering an oral resolution that certain members who were said to have imbibed the sentiments of Alexander Campbell should withdraw. After some discussion an amendment, also oral, was offered by a brother, to this effect: That all those members of the Church who were so dissatisfied with their brethren on account of their opinions as not to be able to live in harmony with them, be allowed to withdraw. The Church soon after adjourned, not having reached any definite conclusion. On Tuesday night, February 14, they again met, when the following preamble and resolution was offered by the pastor in writing:

“Whereas it is evident that a party has arisen in this Church entertaining opinions of Scripture doctrine and Church government materially different from those of the great body of this Church, and all the Regular Baptist churches in Virginia; and whereas, out of these discordant opinions and views a state of feeling has grown very unfavorable to the peace, honor, and piety of the Church: therefore,

“*Resolved*, That this Church earnestly recommend to those who have embraced these new doctrines and opinions to withdraw from us and become a separate people, worshiping God according to their own views of propriety.

“SIMON FRAYSER, Clerk.”

The brother who had offered the amendment of February 4 then offered it in writing. The amendment appeared to be very unpalatable. After much discussion and parliamentary usages never before heard of the amendment was sidetracked without ever



coming to a vote and Elder Kerr's resolution was adopted.

On the Monday or Tuesday night following many of the brethren met together to consult as to what would be the best course to be pursued by them. They knew that about eight members, in whom they had high confidence, were the only persons whom the Church had then determined to get rid of, and being themselves entirely dissatisfied with the proceedings of the majority, and further believing that if these brethren were removed they themselves would have to renounce their belief, or in turn be severally excluded, they determined upon the following preamble and resolution:—

“Whereas a resolution, connected with a preamble, stating that certain members entertaining opinions of Scripture doctrine and Church government materially different from the great body of the First Baptist Church and all the Regular Baptists in Virginia, was, on the 14th of February, 1832, adopted by a majority of said Church; and whereas we are satisfied that the above preamble and resolution are intended to operate upon the opinions we hold, though we have disclaimed, and do disclaim, any opinion not founded upon the New Testament; and whereas they have invited us to withdraw; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That we whose names are hereunto subscribed do withdraw ourselves from the First Baptist Church.”

Appended to this document were the names of sixty-eight members of the Church, including all of the trustees and many other prominent and influential



members. This was accepted by the Church. A subscription list was immediately started by the reformers, and in two days \$2,000 had been subscribed for a new meeting-house. The subscription list soon reached \$5,000, and a lot was purchased on Eleventh Street between Broad and Marshall, and adjoining the City Hall and Capitol. On this site a brick Church, fifty by seventy feet, was erected. From a large sycamore tree which threw its refreshing shade over its entrance this was called Sycamore Church.

Thus began the restoration in Richmond. David S. Burnet came to Richmond soon after this Church was organized. He preached in the County Court-house until the meeting-house was completed and became the first minister of the congregation worshipping in old Sycamore Church. He was succeeded by James Henshall, R. Lindsay Coleman, and others of the sainted dead, whose memory is so carefully treasured in the hearts of our Virginia brotherhood. God has blessed their labors. From that little band of sixty-eight members the Gospel has become the power of God unto the salvation of some twenty-five hundred now living in Richmond, besides the many who have come and gone. From this one Church have sprung six congregations. But like the grain of wheat that dies in the bringing forth more abundant fruit, the Sycamore Church is no more.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE DOVER DECREE.

The events narrated in the last two chapters show that the relations existing in Eastern Virginia between Baptists and those known as reformers were becoming more and more strained. Under the existing conditions it needed but the suggestion to launch the Baptist Churches of that section upon a course that savored strongly of the ancient spirit of Romish bulls and interdicts. This suggestion was given in the fall of 1832, just before the annual meeting of the Dover Association, by Eli Ball, editor of the *Religious Herald*, when he published an editorial in which he advised the necessity of casting out the reformers from the Baptist ranks, at the coming Association. To make the work of ejection doubly sure he advised the packing of the jury for the coming meeting of the Dover Association, and admonished the brethren not to send any one as a messenger of the churches who was suspected of having any attachment to the principles of reform. In order to have everything in readiness, so that the time of the association might not be consumed in consideration of details, or the object sought be endangered by too much open discussion, the Decree was drafted in Richmond by Elder John Kerr, and all the arrangements were made for carrying it into effect before the Association met.

The Dover Association of 1832 met at Four-Mile-Creek Baptist Church, Henrico county.

When the Association convened a committee was appointed, in accordance with the custom of such associations, to receive the letters from the various churches naming their delegates and reporting their general condition. Five of the churches within the bounds of the Association presented a report representing the churches of the Association as in the most distracted and disastrous circumstances, and asking that steps be taken to alleviate the conditions. One member of the committee had the courage to oppose this report before the committee with the six following arguments:—

1. The report represented the churches as in most distracted and disastrous circumstances; whereas the letters from the churches to the Association represented them as in peace and general harmony.

2. But if the letters give a false representation, and they were actually as represented in the report, then the churches themselves, and not the Association, could take the proper steps to obtain peace.

3. That it was expressly contrary to the constitution of the Association to interfere with the internal affairs of the churches.

4. That the member who addressed the committee, though generally acquainted throughout the Association, knew of no person who maintained the things set forth in the report.

5. That until the churches were consulted to know what was their wish in the case, it was premature to take any steps upon the request of five churches who alone wished the Association to take up the subject.

6. That it was unjust to take any final step at the present meeting, because many churches were not represented in it.

Argument was, however, of no avail. The inevitable crisis was at hand. No ecclesiastical committee determined on proscription was ever more influenced by reason or argument than that committee which reported (with their fingers in their ears) in favor of the stoning of Stephen.

The Dover Association convened in October, 1832, just fifty-one years to the month after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis in the same district. In the surrender of the latter political liberty was vouchsafed, in the Dover Association religious liberty expired. Without even the form of a trial, which was granted to Christ and Paul by heathen governors, the Dover Association passed the following Decree:—

“We, therefore, the assembled ministers and delegates of the Dover Association, after much prayerful deliberation, do hereby affectionately recommend to the churches in our connexion to separate from their communion all such persons as are promoting controversy and discord under the specious name of “Reformers.” That the line of distinction may be clearly drawn, so that all who are concerned may understand it, we feel it our duty to declare, that, whereas Peter Ainslie, John Du Val, Matthew W. Webber, Thomas M. Henley, John Richards, and Dudley Atkinson, ministers within the bounds of this Association, have voluntarily assumed the name of “Reformers,” in its party application, by attending a meeting publicly advertised for that party, and by communing with and otherwise promoting the views of the members

of that party, who have been separated from the fellowship and communion of Regular Baptist Churches,—

“*Resolved*, That this Association cannot consistently and conscientiously receive them, nor any other ministers maintaining their views, as members of their body; nor can they in future act in concert with delegates from any Church or churches that may encourage or countenance their ministrations.”

In the preamble to this decree there was no one fact or truth of the Christian religion specified which the above brethren were said to deny—no one error stated which they were said to hold. But they were said to differ “in their views of faith, repentance, regeneration, baptism, the agency of the Holy Spirit, Church government, the Christian ministry, and the whole scheme of Christian benevolence,” from those who issued the decree. Regarding these points of difference, Mr. Campbell replied as follows in the *Harbinger*:

“The excommunicated brethren, with whom we are proud to fraternize, view “sin” as the transgression of the law; “faith,” as the belief of the testimony of God; “repentance,” as sorrow for sin; “regeneration,” as being born again; “baptism,” as an immersion into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, on confession of faith in Jesus, for the remission of sins; “the agency of the Spirit,” as essential to the demonstration of the mission of Jesus, and to our faith in the testimony of God; “Church government,” as the government of the Church by the laws of Jesus, executed by the public servants of the Church; “the Christian ministry,” as the ministers of Jesus Christ, called and sent by his authority; “the whole scheme of Christian benevolence,” as the Church of the living

God. But such it appears are not the views of John Kerr, who, it is published by Eli Ball, had the honor to pen this preamble and decree, nor of those who voted with him in excluding these brethren from what they call the "Kingdom of God."

The die was cast. Henceforth, within the bounds of the Dover Association the so-called "Reformers" were to be separate and distinct from the Baptists. They had preferred forbearance and peace either to separating themselves from their once acknowledged brethren or to separating the minority of any Church from their communion. They were willing, in the cause of peace, to be known as Baptists, but now they were cast out of that communion; they were still, however, members of the Church of Christ, and as disciples of their excommunicated chief they now took upon themselves the simple name of "Christians" in conformity with Acts 11: 26. This indeed was one of the reforms they had urged as Baptists. They did not assume to be only Christians, but forced to cast off their sectarian or divisional name, and taking the Bible as their guidebook, they became Christians only. As Abram, when called of God, became Abraham, Jacob became Israel, and Saul was called Paul, so the "Disciples were called Christians first at Antioch;" and the reformers in Eastern Virginia were called Christians first by the publication of the Dover Decree.

Much, however, as the Dover Decree affected the position of the reformers, in the Baptist denomination its results were even more apparent. The adherents

of the latter had always been the champions of religious liberty, but they now forfeited their right to this title, and discord, ever the result of extreme restriction upon a liberty-loving people, reigned in their ranks. In order to show some of the results of this Decree, as also the spirit of the times that made its promulgation possible, we may well notice two instances out of the many that were directly attributable to this proscription. The first records its effect upon an individual congregation, the second is simply an account of the Dover Association of the following year, 1833.

In the Baptist Church at Petersburg, in 1833, the pastor, Mr. Valentine Mason, offered two resolutions, the first to prevent Alexander Campbell and others (his adherents) from being permitted to preach in that Church; the second, to approve of the Dover Decree. In consequence of these resolutions and the attendant stir over them, three brethren, H. J. Anson, A. Pond, and A. Johnson, fell into disrepute. On March 4 Mr. Mason, the pastor, came to Bro. Anson to have a friendly conversation, in the course of which he acknowledged his wrong in having the resolutions passed, and asked Mr. Anson on what terms he would come back to work in the Church. The reply was, "On the New Testament." This met with the approbation of the pastor, and a Church meeting was called for the following Saturday night, at which the former resolutions were rescinded, not, however, without considerable opposition. Mr. Anson then made an effort to return into



the Church, but this was not effected. On the following Sunday night Mr. Mason announced to his congregation that he would leave that Church and the Baptist denomination, and on the next night would publicly give his reasons for so doing. After he had dismissed some of his members prevailed upon him not to do so for another week, to which he consented. The Church then called a council of ministers, consisting of Messrs. Ball, Kerr and Taylor, Mr. Mason also being present, and a Church meeting was held, Mr. Kerr presiding. The pastoral question was discussed. Mr. Mason stated that he was at a loss how to act in order to unite the Church; that "in attempting to restore to the Church one party, there were others who said they would leave the Church, and thus he was—knowing not what to do—almost crazy." Mr. Kerr then made an apology for his situation. A motion was made to forgive the pastor, which was accordingly done. He was next restored to the pastoral charge of the Church and the following resolutions offered:

"Whereas this Church has been unfortunately thrown into disorder and strife by certain persons who have assumed the name of reformers, and who approve and support the leading sentiments of Alexander Campbell:

*Resolved*, That we, as a Church, cannot retain or receive into our fellowship any such persons, nor will we commune at the Lord's Table with them, nor will we receive into our pulpit any persons who shall privately or publicly approve, countenance, or encourage said sentiments.

*And be it further resolved*, Having suffered sorely the painful effects of Campbellism, and having delibe-

rately and solemnly adopted the above resolution, we hereby pledge ourselves, individually and collectively, to carry it into full operation; and it shall be deemed a forfeiture of our fellowship for any member to move to suspend or rescind it."

Mr. Mason was the first one to address the meeting in favor of the passage of the above resolutions, which would have made Roger Williams blush for shame. He was again satisfied, from what Mr. Kerr had told him, that the Dover Decree was right, and that it was passed by that body constitutionally; and now he was in favor of abiding by it. Mr. Ball next advocated the passage of the resolutions. He spoke much against the *Christian Baptist* and the *Harbinger*; and as for the new translation of the New Testament,—“that black thing,” especially the prefaces to the books (written by Mr. Campbell)—“could you but see it,” (raising his hand and pausing) “Unitarianism!” A member of the church then arose and said he could not vote for the resolution; he had heard Mr. Ainslie preach, and believed that he preached the Gospel; therefore, he was unwilling to become the means of preventing himself and other members from hearing him and such like men preach; at any rate, he wished to hear and judge for himself.

The Moderator (Mr. Kerr) next arose, and highly complimented the member for his candor. He then explained the intention of the resolution to mean the exclusion of all who should be opposed to its adoption, and who would not be satisfied with it after it was adopted. He also advised the members not to read

the *Harbinger*, saying, "It is necessary, however, that I should read it, I being a watchman on the walls of Zion, and therefore I take it regularly." Mr. Ball also remarked, "The *Harbinger* comes to my office as an exchange paper, and I read it because I hate it." These are certainly two unique reasons for reading a religious paper. The resolutions were finally passed, with three dissenting votes, and these three were forthwith dismissed from fellowship.

The second illustration of the results of the Dover proscription is found, as before stated, in the proceedings of the Dover Association of 1833, and bears more of the stamp of the ridiculous than of the harmful. The Association convened at Williamsburg in October. Andrew Broaddus presided, but his situation was a rather unhappy one as Moderator of a vast ecclesiastical body which, like all humanly devised machinery, had no sympathetic feeling, no bowels of mercy. The lion that he had been prodding for several years had at last been roused from its lair, and now this self-styled keeper of the faith found difficulty in restraining the great dogmatic beast. The first item of business was the reading, by request, of the Decree of the previous year, denouncing six of the most worthy men in Virginia, together with all Baptists or churches who would deign to offer them a cup of cold water, or even listen to the Gospel from their lips. Immediately after the reading several speakers arose and gave it as their opinion that, according to the form and spirit of the resolutions, several churches, who, they understood, remonstrated in their letters to this Association against

the unconstitutionality of last year's action, were cut off from the Association and had no right to representation. But as the letters lay unopened at this time upon the table in an undistinguishable mass, it would be difficult to determine which of them should be consigned to the flames, and which of their bearers should be ecclesiastically decapitated. Various suggestions were offered, and in the multitude of counsel there might have been found the desired safety, had not one of the party, who, presumably, had not been present with the lobbyists in their pre-breakfast council, asked whether the Association could attend to any business before the letters were read, as they contained the elements of which the body was to be organized. Both Moderator and moderated were much perplexed. The Chair was disconcerted by such a rational suggestion, and the movers and the moved dismayed. The Moderator seems to have forgotten the plan laid down before breakfast that morning at the Raleigh Tavern, and he unwittingly threw himself between the lines. Thus exposed to opposing fires, nothing but his great tenacity of purpose and the exhibition of much excitement enabled him to decide that, the old Moderator and Clerk being present, the Association could pass resolutions if they desired. Just at this point a lawyer, suspected of heresy, moved that all doubtful letters be laid on the table until the others were read, after which they could have a hearing and their destinies be decided. This was well approved, but the Moderator, in stating it, discovered a new difficulty. He could not see how the body, not now organized, could by motion control its

proceedings subsequent to organization; and he curtailed the resolution accordingly by striking out the last clause, and in this form it was finally carried. The desired end of all this quibbling and squabbling was to obtain parliamentary law that would justify actions which could not be justified by common sense or the Spirit of Christ. About ten churches were eventually excluded from the Association, or turned over to the mercies of inquisitorial special committee torture, at whose hands they could be reinstated to fellowship with the Association by recanting and dismissing the heretics from their midst.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ORGANIZATION AND PROGRESS.

The publication of the Dover Decree gave a forward impetus to the movement for the restoration of the principles and practices of the Apostles, in Eastern Virginia. It was a confession of the inability of Baptists' principles to hold their own members. Bro. Peter Ainslie was employed by the Christian churches of the Tidewater District in the fall of 1832 to act as general evangelist of Eastern Virginia. He was to set the churches in order and organize new congregations wherever possible. Bro. William Bootwright, of Richmond, was appointed to receive contributions both from the churches and from individuals for the support of Bro. Ainslie, who did excellent work in this capacity up to the time of his death, which occurred in 1835. The year 1833 marked a rapid advance in the history of the restoration. New congregations were organized at Culpeper, Fredericksburg, Lower and Upper College Church, in King William county; also one in Mangohick district, one in Essex and one in Caroline county, and a union church from the old Bruington congregation. Several of these were entirely new congregations, while others were formed by expulsion from the Baptists.

At Fredericksburg a party of Calvinists became disaffected at the views held by thirteen of the members of the Baptist Church at that place. They accordingly

drew aloof and declared themselves to be the Church and the others schismatics. They then invited P. Montague, A. W. Clopton, John Kerr and others to come and act as a council to decide matters, and the result was three resolutions, as follows: 1, declaring non-fellowship with Alexander Campbell; 2, declaring non-fellowship with all who held him in fellowship; and, 3, making it unlawful to invite into the pulpit any preacher holding the sentiments advanced by Mr. Campbell. The result was a new congregation of Christians only at Fredericksburg, and by the winter of 1833 they had erected a neat and commodious brick meeting-house on the ground on which the old theatre had stood. This cost \$2,500, and all but \$500 of the amount was raised during that year. This congregation started with fifteen members, and in one year had increased to thirty-six.

In April, 1833, the first general attempt at a co-operative meeting in Eastern Virginia was made. This meeting was held at Acquaintain Church, in King William county, and lasted from Friday till Monday afternoon. About sixteen proclaimers of the Gospel were present, and the greater part of them addressed the assemblage. About seven hundred disciples of Jesus broke bread on the Lord's Day. The scene was very impressive, not to say unusual. They were neither open nor close communionists; they sought not to usurp the authority of the Lord at *his* table, nor did they sit in judgment one on another to decide each other's fitness to partake. The table was the Lord's; Let every man examine *himself*, and so let him eat, and so



let him drink. The simplicity and harmony that prevailed among the disciples on this occasion was marked by all present. They had agreed to walk in the light of God's word and be guided by it alone, thus were untroubled by the thought that some one might stand up in their midst and by Scriptural quotation overthrow some of the foundation stones of their faith. For many years Associations and Conventions of the religious bodies of Eastern Virginia had been the scenes of turmoil and dissent. They had been lorded over by ecclesiastical popes, and their records were filled with by-laws and decrees. The present instance was a notable exception, the beginning of a new order of things. No laws or regulations, constitution or decrees, were enacted. The Bible settled all disputes if any arose. They walked in the freedom of the truth and were free indeed. The right of free speech was granted to all as far as time would permit. In short, the gathering was a practical exhibition of the principles for which the disciples of Christ contended, in doctrine, regulations, unity, peace, hospitality, preaching, decorum, spirituality, forbearance, liberty and love. It was such as might be expected to result from a close study and application of the Word of God. Not that all were perfect, but they had submitted themselves to a perfect system rather than be governed by a human, and therefore an imperfect one.

This meeting, being the first general attempt at co-operation, is worthy of a more extensive notice, but details of it are meagre. The time was occupied mainly with sermons from the various preachers present. The

salvation of souls was not lost sight of, and several made the good confession. One old brother by the name of Short, sixty-five years of age, trembling in limb and with feeble voice, exhorted the brethren in simplicity and godly sincerity. He said he felt for his Baptist brethren, having himself lived so long under the systems of men. He was now resolved to die in the service of his Lord and King. As a result of the meeting, Bro. Peter Ainslie agreed to continue his work as evangelist. Many urgent appeals were received and read from all over the State, asking that the ancient Gospel might be preached in the communities represented. The meeting adjourned to meet in Richmond, in October.

Closely connected with the "Organization and Progress" of the work in the Tidewater district is the history of what is now known as Olive Branch Church. This congregation is one of the oldest in that district, and its origin is so largely due to the actions of the Dover Association of 1833, mentioned in the last chapter, that we record it here.

In 1830 Mrs. Catharine Norville Henley, then living in James City county, after a careful study of the Scriptures, and some conversation with Thomas M. Henley, became convinced of the divine origin of the Christian religion, and desired to be baptized. Her husband, who was a brother of T. M. Henley, and, like him, had been reared an Episcopalian, gave reluctant consent, and wrote for his brother to come and baptize her. Following the baptism, Bro. Thomas Henley conducted prayer-meeting in her home, and her brother, G. B.

Lightfoot, together with E. R. Coke, obeyed Christ. These three began to hold meetings in an unoccupied house, and regularly observed the Lord's Supper. They were soon joined by others, among whom were some Baptists who had settled in the neighborhood and had no church home nearer than Williamsburg. Bro. R. H. Whitaker, Sr., whom A. Campbell called the "*Indefatigable Brother Whitaker*," used to come nearly twenty miles to meet with them. At this time, which was previous to the publication of the Dover Decree, this was a Baptist Church, although held in suspicion by the regular orthodox Baptists.

The passage of the Dover Decree did not suit the liberal views of these disciples of Jesus, but they waited patiently for the proper time to arrive in which to express their disapprobation. Accordingly, in October, 1833, they sent Brethren Robert Morris, Wm. Jones, and John Ratcliffe as messengers to the Association meeting at Williamsburg with the following letter:

*"James City Church to the Dover Association to be held at Zion's Church in the city of Williamsburg on the 24th inst., sendeth Christian salutations.*

"DEAR BRETHREN:—We thank our Heavenly Father that His providential care has been over us through the changing scenes of another year, and that we are once more permitted to correspond with you by letter and delegates. Though we have nothing very remarkable to state, we can say that an unusual degree of love and union exists among us, having gotten over the discord and prejudice which were caused by the proceedings of the last association. We have chosen Brethren

Robert Morris, William M. Jones and John Ratcliffe to sit with you in your deliberations, whom we unanimously instruct to use all the influence which they are capable of using to rescind those resolutions passed by the last Association in relation to the exclusion of Brethren Ainslie, DuVal, Richards, Webber, Henley and Atkinson, the most of whom we are personally acquainted with, and whom we hold near and dear to us, and have often heard them preach, and do not believe THAT THEY TEACH DOCTRINES EITHER DEMORALIZING OR DISORGANIZING; and therefore we pray that you may reconsider the matter. And they are also instructed to cause you, if possible, to revoke the resolution which says "that this Association cannot consistently and conscientiously receive them, nor any other minister maintaining their views, as members of their body; nor can it in the future act in concert with delegates from any church or churches that may encourage or countenance their ministrations." Brethren, we do not think that difference of opinion should be a bar to fellowship; and as to the ministrations of the above named brethren, we trust we shall never in the slightest degree discourage or discountenance, so long as they teach what we have heard from them. We will now close by giving the number, etc.

"May the Lord be with you and direct you by His word in the path of truth unto the end.

"Signed, by order of the Church,

"JOHN RATCLIFFE, Clerk."

This was one of the letters that were laid aside on suspicion at the Dover Association, as mentioned in the last chapter, and when opened and read, the odium of forgery was deliberately cast upon Bro. Ratcliffe. Upon the return and report of the delegates to the

church the letter was compared with that entered upon the church record, and found to be like it in every particular. The congregation, then, by a unanimous vote, declared that the above letter had been written according to the instructions of the church, that it was the church letter, and that, therefore, their delegate could not, in the slightest degree, be charged with forgery or improper conduct in relation thereto.

Bro. George B. Lightfoot then moved "that the Church do now withdraw from the Association." Fourteen members withdrew and six thought it best to remain with the Association. This was the beginning of a growing church. The present Olive Branch meeting-house was built in 1845. Sister Henley continued her earnest labors for this church until her death. She lived to see her husband submit to the yoke of the lowly Nazarene, as also many of her friends.

During the months of September and October, 1833, Bro. D. S. Burnet, who was then preaching at Sycamore Church, Richmond, made a preaching tour through about a dozen of the counties between there and the bay coast. He baptized about sixty penitents and did great good by his simple yet powerful presentation of the Gospel. In Norfolk he preached in the court-house to large audiences, and great interest was manifested, insomuch that the members of the Baptist Church at that place voted down, by a large majority, a series of proscriptive resolutions submitted and pleaded for by their pastor. He arrived at Williamsburg about the time of the session of the Association, and preached in the court-house. At the request

of a number of citizens he preached twice each day throughout the week. Such was the interest that the house at no service could hold all who came. The result of this tour was to correct many of the misrepresentations that had been made concerning the teaching of Mr. Campbell and his co-workers. Bro. Burnet returned to Richmond in due time to be present at the co-operative meeting, along with the Campbells and other leading brethren.

On October 4, 1833, Alexander Campbell, together with his father and son, also Dr. B. F. Hall, Robert Y. Henley, and M. L. Henley, left Bethany on a tour to Eastern Virginia, to be in attendance at the co-operative meeting to be held in Richmond, October 25, 26 and 27. Passing safely over the mountains, they arrived in Fredericksburg Saturday, October 12. Their announcement had not arrived there, and therefore their coming was unexpected. Bro. Ainslie, who happened to be in town, preached to a small audience that night. On Sunday A. Campbell preached in the morning, Thomas Campbell in the afternoon, and Dr. Hall at night. They remained there over Monday and preached to large congregations. One lady was immersed in the Rappahannock river. From Fredericksburg they proceeded to the "Bowling Green," in Caroline county, where they preached in Antioch Church. This congregation was a new one that arose out of the world by the instrumentality of the old Gospel, and never was connected with the Baptists. They then numbered about forty members, and had built a commodious brick meeting-house, thirty-two by forty feet in size, a little



below the present Bowling Green. Bro. Ainslie occasionally preached for them at that time. From here the party proceeded fourteen miles to Newton, King and Queen county, where they preached to an attentive congregation in the yard adjoining the home of Bro. Lee Roy Boulware. A congregation had been recently organized there, and at the time of this visit several had been added and some seven or eight hundred dollars raised for the erection of a meeting-house, which was built the following summer, and was known as Old Horeb. This church prospered until the war broke out, but the house is now gone and but few live to tell of its former days. At the home of Bro. T. M. Henley the brethren next proclaimed the Gospel, and here they tarried three days, preaching also at Rappahannock and Smyrna Churches. At both of these places the brethren had recently erected neat and commodious brick buildings. The party from there pushed on to Richmond, preaching on the way at Aquintain and Bethesda. This latter congregation was formerly a part of the old Black Creek Baptist Church, which had two places of meeting. When they separated they divided the spoils, and this meeting-house became the property of about one hundred Christians constituting Bethesda Church. This was located about ten miles from Richmond, and here the party was joined by Bro. Burnet. They proceeded to the home of Bro. Curtis Carter, some four miles from the city, and the next evening arrived in Richmond.

By previous appointment Bro. A. Campbell preached the night before the convention opened. His thoughts



were introductory to the object of the meeting to be commenced the next day. He spoke of God's communications to men—the variety of messages He had sent—the persons by whom sent—the manner in which He had spoken to men—the intelligibility of His addresses—their suitableness to our condition—and, above all, the profound reverence with which his last communication to men by his *Son* should be regarded.

Next morning the meeting was opened with an address by Father Campbell. Two sermons were preached each day by such able men as Dr. Hall, Dr. DuVal, Brethren Burnet, Ainslie, and Albert Anderson, of Spottsylvania. There were from one to two sessions each day of the brethren representing the different congregations, to hear the history of the progress of the cause in their respective vicinities. Representatives of sixteen congregations were present. These congregations were scattered over a district of country running from Fredericksburg to the Seaboard. The account from these churches was not sufficiently detailed to give a full view of their labors, nor were six or seven churches in the same district which were known to have recently throw off the yoke of human authority heard from at all.

The congregations represented constituted about twelve hundred disciples, and seemed generally awaking to the importance of giving more liberally of their means in order that more laborers might be put into the field to proclaim the ancient gospel. In this region there were about fourteen proclaimers of the Word,

but few of whom spent their entire time in the work. Bro. Ainslie, who, for the past eighteen months, had been the only laborer constantly in the field, found the field too large, and but little could be effected in the way of organization by labors scattered over such a territory.

Bro. D. S. Burnet, whose preaching tour had been productive of so much good, was importuned to take up steady work in the field, but for some reason did not do so.

This meeting was very beneficial in cultivating the spirit of unity and interdependence among the churches. During its progress twenty-five persons were added to the Sycamore Church—sixteen by primary obedience and nine from the Baptist churches of Richmond and vicinity.

After the close of the meeting in Richmond, Father Campbell and Dr. Hall departed for North Carolina. A. Campbell continued preaching in Richmond for a few days, and then started for Amelia county, where was to be held a gathering of the disciples of that district. He stopped first at Deep Run Church, about twelve miles from Richmond, with Bro. DuVal. This Church had long been in a state of fermentation, a majority being in favor of reformation. Mr. Ball was the pastor there, and during the meeting at Richmond he had held a four days' opposition meeting at Deep Run, which passed off without a single convert. Previously to Mr. Campbell's visit to this Church a committee, under the auspices of Mr. Ball, had waited upon all the members who read the *Harbinger*, to lay

before them the danger and iniquity of reading that "pernicious and infidel publication," (the exact words used). Mr. Ball also supplicated and exhorted, and even commanded the Church not to hear Mr. Campbell preach. He said it would hurt his feelings if they went to hear him. Without knowledge of these circumstances, Mr. Campbell preached on I John, 4—"Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits." Mr. Ball's faithful servants obeyed orders and stayed at home, but a good audience was present notwithstanding.

About six months after this the Regulars drew up certain resolutions against the *Harbinger* and requested all members of the Church to sign them. All who refused they turned out of the Church. Thus the majority, who had long refused to take any action against the minority, were turned out by the minority. Aided by Bro. Ainslie, they organized a Christian church of seventeen members, and were soon joined by others.

Bro. Campbell proceeded from Dry Run to the home of Bro. Pascal L. Townes, in Amelia, and from there to Bro. Jeter's, at Paineville, where the meeting was held in an old free church erected by the Church of England in colonial times. This building had been seized after the Revolutionary War by the Commonwealth, and made free for all parties. During the three days' meeting there, four were baptized.

From Amelia they returned to Richmond, visiting on the way several points in Goochland and Powhatan counties. Most of the preaching through this section

was done in private houses or in the open air. On Wednesday morning, November 13, at dawn, they boarded the steamer Patrick Henry and went down the James to Jamestown. While on their way to the steamer they beheld the wonderful meteoric shower of 1833. Writing of this event, Mr. Campbell said: "It literally rained meteors for some hours before day, and about six o'clock in the morning the scene was beautiful and sublime beyond description." Leaving Jamestown they journeyed by land, preaching as they went at Williamsburg, Yorktown and Hampton. At Norfolk the party were joined by Father Campbell and Dr. Hall, who had been making a tour of North Carolina.

The work in Norfolk began in the spring of 1832, when J. R. McCall held a meeting in the Baptist Church, which lasted six weeks and resulted in many conversions. Mr. McCall was in sympathy with the restoration in its attitude against human creeds, but he could not agree with the reformers concerning the operation of the Holy Spirit. While in Norfolk he used the mourners' bench, but, notwithstanding this fact, some branded him as a "Campbellite." He left Virginia soon afterward and went to Mississippi. In the summer of 1833 Dr. Hall proclaimed the Word with general acceptance in the Baptist Church. Bro. Burnet preached a few discourses in the court-house while on his preaching tour in September of the same year, and such was his influence that the members of the Baptist Church voted down the series of resolutions submitted

and pleaded for by their pastor, Mr. Howell, as already mentioned.

When Mr. Campbell and his party arrived in Norfolk they found that Mr. Howell's party had already been at work, and arranged for other meetings in the court-house on Lord's Day. Mr. Campbell spoke in the court-house on Saturday evening. Sunday morning they crossed over to Portsmouth and preached, and in the afternoon again made use of the court-house in Norfolk. The reformation gained many friends and adherents at this time, although some years passed before a distinct work was organized in Norfolk. On Monday morning Mr. Campbell and his party left Virginia for Maryland and the North.

The year 1833 marks the thorough establishment of the restoration in Virginia. Truly it was a fruitful season.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### DEFECTION OF DR. THOMAS.

In the summer of 1834 occurred a schism in the ranks that seemed for a time likely to become a great hindrance to the work. Dr. John Thomas was an Englishman by birth, and had come to this country a few years before. He was well educated, being an M. D., and was also well versed in theology. We will let his own words tell the story of his uniting with the reformers:

“When at sea” (on his way to America, beating on the sands of Sable Island in imminent peril of shipwreck) “and surrounded by the subjects of despair, my vow ascended to Heaven that if ever I was permitted to set foot on *terra firma*, I would not rest until I found the true religion. Circumstances led me to Cincinnati. I set out upon a tour of the religious houses of that city. I went first to the Baptist Church, under the superintendence of W. Lynd. The food was husky; I could by no means swallow it. I next heard Bro. Challen. I shall not attempt to describe the satisfaction I experienced in listening to his address. They said he was a “Campbellite.” I had never heard of such ites as these in England, though I remembered a caution I once received from a Baptist preacher in New York to beware of Campbellism. You know I am of rather an independent turn; in fact, I once belonged to the Independents, and therefore the name had no terrors for me.

“But, thought I, if what I have heard be Campbellism, it is one of the most delightful, scriptural,

intelligible isms I ever heard defended. I determined to hear it again. In the meantime, Bro. Scott encountered me and baptized me, not into your ism, but into Christ, and thus I became a Christian, and found at last the true religion."

Soon afterward Dr. Thomas moved to Philadelphia and began the publication of "*The Apostolic Advocate*," a monthly periodical devoted to the interests of the restoration of primitive Christianity.

He subsequently made a few evangelizing tours in Virginia, and was called to the charge of the Sycamore Church, Richmond, in 1835. Late in the summer of the same year he began to practice and advocate the reimmersion of all who came from the Baptists, and soon had reimmersed three deacons and several members of Sycamore Church. Bro. Albert Anderson, an earnest preacher of primitive Christianity, was also reimmersed. Bro. Campbell clearly demonstrated the uselessness of the act, but owing to the times he declined to enter into a discussion with Dr. Thomas, through their respective papers, on so unimportant a matter. He felt that such a discussion would give too much publicity to the defection, and preferred to put it off for the time.

It was intimated by the Baptists in Richmond that A. Campbell winked at errors in a reformer that would be openly rebuked in an alien. Mr. Campbell then in a lengthy article and kindly manner set forth the errors of Dr. Thomas. In conclusion he said: "There are but few brethren of whose reasonings and views I could speak so freely; whose errors or mistakes—(Oh!



that I had a softer name!)—I could notice with more freedom and more hopes of success. To him I need offer no apology. He is but a stripling in the kingdom, a bold and courageous champion; but, like other young converts of a noble ambition, he aspires to outstrip himself and his years. There are few, perhaps none, who would dare to be more faithful in such a matter than himself, if he were as old as I am and I as young as he." This consideration of his views, however, did not serve to turn Dr. Thomas. He had gained a few followers. He envied Mr. Campbell's position and power, as will be shown more fully in the development of his later actions. He began to drift rapidly into the realm of speculation. He entered upon an investigation of the Scriptures concerning the soul, and soon built up a set of doctrines and speculation that seem at best to be but a species of Sadduceeism revamped. The following brief statement of doctrine will set forth his principal views and better enable us to understand the nature of the schism and later events connected with it. He held to the fundamental doctrines advanced by Mr. Campbell, but added to them the following:

1.—The soul is the breath of life and dies with the body.

2.—In the resurrection, both soul and body will be raised and stand before the judgment seat of Christ; between death and the resurrection the soul sleeps, is not active or conscious.

3.—In the resurrection all arise and judgment is pronounced, the wicked will be totally annihilated, and the righteous remain forever with God. Thus the resurrection and eternal life are for the righteous only.

These views were not set forth in the form of a creed, but were preached by Dr. Thomas and his co-laborers. The above is but a brief statement of them as they are proclaimed by the Doctor's followers, now known as the Christadelphians.

In the fall of 1838 Alexander Campbell visited Charlottesville and Richmond. While he was preaching in these places, Dr. Thomas published and circulated a pamphlet setting forth his speculations. On seeing it, Mr. Campbell immediately started for Painesville, Amelia county, where the Doctor then lived, for the purpose of exposing its sophistries in the presence of the author and his friends. He left it to them to choose the way, and they decided upon a public discussion, which was held in their meeting-house. Before they commenced Mr. Campbell objected to any publication of the conference, on account of the scandal to the cause of reformation which he apprehended from the publication of his exposure of the Doctor's views and arguments, the Doctor being at that time a member of the Christian Church and a leader in the reformation. Mr. Campbell then occupied about ten hours in exposing some of the leading fallacies of Dr. Thomas as set forth in his pamphlet. He regarded the Doctor not only as a brother, but also as a fellow-laborer in the reformation, but so clearly did he show the sophistries of his positions that the brethren, desirous of saving the Doctor from further humiliation, and being fully satisfied with the discussion, interposed and proposed to settle the difference some other way. They proposed reconciliation on

the broad principles of Christian forbearance and forgiveness. Mr. Campbell, believing that they were fully satisfied with the developments made, and that Dr. Thomas was truly humbled and desirous of a restoration of Christian harmony and co-operation, responded that he was ready to hear such propositions as they might deem expedient to offer. It was accordingly left to the brethren to say what ought to be done. A council was organized consisting of twenty-three members, representing both sides. They sat some hours, and finally reported the following resolution, signed by them all:

“We, the undersigned brethren, in free consultation, met at the house of Bro. John Tinsley Jeter, at Paineville, and, after frankly comparing our views, unanimously agreed upon the resolution subjoined, and submitted the same for the consideration of Brethren Campbell and Thomas; and Brother Thomas agreeing to abide by the same, all difficulties were adjusted, and perfect harmony and co-operation mutually agreed upon between them.

“*Resolved*, That whereas certain things believed and propagated by Dr. Thomas in relation to the mortality of man, the resurrection of the dead, and the final destiny of the wicked, having given offence to many brethren, and being likely to produce a division amongst us, and believing the said views to be of no practical benefit, we recommend to Bro. Thomas to discontinue the discussion of the same, unless in his defense when misrepresented.

“Paineville, Amelia Co., Va., November 15, 1838.

Signed by “Council of twenty-three.”

Dr. Thomas promptly asquiesced in this resolution, and a reconciliation between him and Mr. Campbell took place. The following morning Mr. Campbell noticed the much dejected and humbled air of the Doctor, and in most cordial sympathy asked him to draw up such a statement of the affair as would place the whole matter of their interview fairly on record, and without waiting to see it he (Mr. Campbell) would write his publisher to copy it in the *Millennial Harbinger* without note or comment.

Mr. Campbell, being away much of the time, did not see the Doctor's account for some four months. It was a month after the interview before the Doctor published the account in his own paper. During this time he seems to have conferred with flesh and blood. The resolution and preamble were correct, the rest was mainly a defense of the principles he had preached. Thus in the very annunciation of the covenant it was broken. Mr. Campbell decided not to answer this, but to wait for a time to see what the Doctor would do.

Meantime the latter left Virginia and settled in Illinois, where he immediately began again to propagate his views. Mr. Campbell noticed the effect of these views in Virginia through the *Harbinger*, in order to warn the brethren in Illinois. Then the Doctor published with his *Investigator* an extra filled with aspersions and calumnies. He tried to show that every movement of Mr. Campbell's for the past three years was but a settled opposition to his rising claims and merits. The refusal of Mr. Campbell to publish the interview in *Amelia* was, said he, a clear demonstration

of Mr. Campbell's jealousy of his transcendent powers. He impeached Mr. Campbell as aiming at a lordship over the Christian communities, because the latter had warned them against the untaught and skeptical questions advocated by the Doctor.

The following letter, published in the *Harbinger* from Dr. Thomas' home Church in Philadelphia, shows more clearly than anything we can now write the spirit shown by both parties:

“PHILADELPHIA, December 24, 1837.

“*Beloved Brother Campbell:*

“Favor and peace be multiplied to you, through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

“The Church of Christ, meeting at Pear street (formerly Bank street), Philadelphia, having in common with you long mourned over the aberrations and speculative wanderings of the Editor of the *Apostolic Advocate*, have come to the painful yet imperative conclusion that further forbearance, or silence, may be construed into a tacit acknowledgment of those errors which are at once abhorrent to right reason and the testimony of the Living Oracles—as we think you have conclusively shown.

With anxious solicitude have we attended to the progress of this affair. We have desired and hoped that your scriptural admonitions would be heeded by him; that he would stay in his erratic course, nor longer prostitute his fine talents in attempts schismatically to rend the “body of Christ.”

“We have waited in the fond expectation that those whose more immediate duty it would seem to be to act in his case would proclaim to the Disciples and to the world their non-fellowship with such an incorrigible factionist.

"We have waited in vain! And therefore conclude that the congregation with whom he associates justifies and sustains him in his wayward propensities. It becomes, then, the duty of the other congregations in this reformation, which repudiate those abominable and subversive speculations and that bitter spirit with which the *Apostolic Advocate* (or which has at least pervaded the numbers that have fallen under our notice), publicly to disclaim all connexion with him, and those who hold fellowship with him in his pernicious views.

"It is for this purpose we write, by the unanimous appointment of the Church in Philadelphia, to make known to the brethren and to the world, through the *Millennial Harbinger*—

"1st. That we disapprove and disallow all the speculations of Dr. John Thomas, of the *Apostolic Advocate*.

"2d. We approve the course pursued by our Brother Campbell towards the Doctor, and think it has savored much of the meekness and love that ought ever to adorn the Christian character.

"3d. We think no further argument or discussion ought to be held with such a dogmatic and vindictive spirit as Dr. Thomas has evinced towards Brother Campbell while mildly endeavoring to reclaim him.

"4th. We henceforth separate and withdraw from all intercourse of Christian fellowship with Dr. Thomas and those who sustain him until he and they shall publicly renounce and abjure all speculations, and take the Word of God, the Living Oracles, as their only guide; and we pray they may speedily come to reformation and a real knowledge of the truth.

"JAMES HEASLITT,

"J. L. RHEES,

"J. HALL,

"JOHN WINGFIELD,

"J. HARPAM,

ISAAC COLE,

WM. ROWZEE,

THOMAS DAVIS,

OWEN FLANAGAN,

BENJ. ANDREWS."

Dr. Thomas was a writer of ability, and had it not been for his speculative tendency would have been a strong proclaimer of the Word. His principal works were "Anatolia," "Elpis Israel," and "Eureka; An Exposition of the Apocalypse."

His views gained but few adherents. The religious body known as Christadelphians, of which he was the founder, numbered in 1890 but sixty-three organizations, with 1,227 members, scattered over twenty States. Turning, as they do, their attention to speculative theology rather than to the practical phases of the gospel, they can never become a force in the evangelization of the world. The Sycamore Church was many years recovering from the effects of Dr. Thomas's pastorate there. There are a few scattered followers still in Tidewater district.



## CHAPTER IX.

### CHARLOTTESVILLE AND THE SHENANDOAH.

We have traced the fortunes of the restoration during the formative period in the Tidewater district, and now, coming westward to the foot of the Blue Ridge, let us notice the beginning of the work at Charlottesville; from there we will pass over the Blue Ridge into the famous Shenandoah Valley.

In 1831 two Baptist preachers, Porter Cleveland and John Goss, at the instigation of Elder Goss' son, James, who was then attending the University, began a regular monthly preaching service in Charlottesville. They soon organized a Church of thirty-one members. R. L. Coleman, a young man of the county, who was just entering on the work of the ministry, soon came to their aid, and in company with Gilbert Mason, also a young Baptist preacher, held a meeting which doubled the membership of the Church.

Mr. Coleman had heard Alexander Campbell preach in Richmond during the Constitutional Convention in 1830, and was captivated by his views. It will be remembered that Mr. Campbell was at that time a Baptist, but known among them as a reformer. The stigma attached to so-called Campbellism had not yet found expression among these members at Charlottesville, and in May, 1831, Bro. Coleman was ordained pastor of the Church by Elders John Goss and Porter Cleveland. He continued preaching there for

a number of years, often preaching the doctrine, which, if some of his hearers had known was the same as that advocated by Mr. Campbell, would have made him much trouble. Meantime the leaven of the reformation was working. The members saw the need of a return to the old Jerusalem gospel.

In January, 1834, Dr. B. F. Hall went to Charlottesville and preached some fifteen or sixteen sermons in the Baptist Church. He developed the ancient gospel and plead for a return to the primitive order of things. A number of the members had been for some time readers of the *Harbinger*, and were disposed to reform, others who formerly objected to that paper were led to read it, and expressed astonishment at their former unfounded prejudices. A few of the very orthodox were not favorable to the reformers' occupying the house. One acknowledged that he could find no fault with their preaching, another, when urged to point out an idea advanced contrary to the Bible, said, "The Devil preached the truth to the Savior." The result of this meeting was greatly increased light on the Scriptures, and a growing sentiment in the congregation favorable to the restoration.

Late in the year 1835, at a meeting of the Church, Robert Ryland, Professor in the Baptist Seminary and Chaplain to the University of Virginia, denounced the reformers as heretics, and a motion was put for a division of the congregation. The majority of the members being favorable to the reformation, the motion was lost. At a subsequent meeting held January 15, 1836, the same motion was carried by a

majority of one. The Baptists were asked to name one single sentiment or practice held to by the reformers that was not consistent with the Word of God, but they declined to do so, Mr. Ryland stating that the reformation flourished by controversy. By this action between thirty and forty reformers were cut off. Among them were the pastor, Bro. Coleman, also James Goss and one other preacher, probably Porter Cleveland. These soon organized themselves into a Church of Christ, and, as in ancient times, the disciples went everywhere preaching the Word. Associational decrees were passed against them, newspapers proclaimed their heresies, and they were locked out of meeting-houses. Public and private attacks were made and misrepresentations were current, yet the cause so prospered that in nine months three churches had been organized in Albemarle county.

In the year 1840 a great co-operative meeting was held at Charlottesville. About fifteen preachers were present, fifty-six churches were represented, directly or indirectly, and about three thousand members reported. It was early made known that Mr. Campbell was to be present, and brethren came from far and near to hear him. He preached several times during the meeting, and also delivered a lecture before the Charlottesville Lyceum on "Is Moral Philosophy an Inductive Science?" This is one of Mr. Campbell's most famous lectures. At this meeting Dr. Bullard and Mr. Campbell first met and arranged to unite their forces. Dr. Chester Bullard had been baptized in 1831 at Sulphur Springs, Giles county, by Landon

Duncan, who was a member of the Christian Connection. Dr. Bullard was studying medicine at the time, but was much interested in the matter of his salvation, and had long ago come to the conclusion that he ought to be immersed, but could find no one to perform that ordinance except the Baptists, who would only immerse into the Baptist Church. This he was unwilling to submit to, as he could not approve of many of their tenets sufficiently to unite with them. He also dissented to some of the views advanced by Landon Duncan, but the latter willingly immersed him. On the evening of his baptism Dr. Bullard delivered his first discourse, and by degrees gave more and more of his time to preaching the Word. He presented simple views of the Gospel, declaring that salvation was for whosoever wills, and showing that faith comes by hearing and that he that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

About two years after his baptism he organized his first Church near the source of the Catawba. Because they gave allegiance to no sect these people were called "Bullardites." The Doctor used to tell of an old German brother who in his public prayers besought the Lord to open the eyes of the Methodists, "dot dey might all come over and jine Bullard!" In 1839 Dr. Bullard happened to take up and read Campbell's "Extra on Remission" at the house of his brother-in-law. Up to this time he had been strongly prejudiced against Campbell. He was at once surprised and delighted with the view of the Gospel as set forth in the Extra, and hunted out the back numbers of the *Harbinger*. He found as he read that Mr. Campbell's

views of the Gospel were as clear as a crystal, and very different from the slanderous misrepresentations circulated by press and pulpit concerning him. He immediately began to circulate these writings, and preached with great success the reformatory principles that he had before set forth, but now with greater clearness. Happy in finding himself associated with a host of fellow-laborers in the same cause, and hearing that Mr. Campbell was to visit Charlottesville, he determined to see him and unite their forces. The mutual fellowship and esteem there begun was ever after kept up.

Closely connected with this account of Dr. Bullard's work, and also forming a fitting introduction to the work in the Shenandoah Valley, is the beautiful story of the White Pilgrim.

Living at Winchester, in the Shenandoah Valley, in the early part of last century, was one Joseph Thomas, better known as the "White Pilgrim." In person he was tall, straight as an Indian, with fair skin, gray eyes, beautiful nose and mouth, a lofty forehead, long chestnut locks, parted over the middle of the head and falling upon his shoulders. He travelled much on foot and wore a long white robe, from which he derived his name. Few who heard him ever forgot the wild beauty and sublimity of his eloquence. Early in life Thomas had been associated with O'Kelley in the Christian Connection, but afterward he became convinced that immersion is the scriptural baptism, and was immersed in Philadelphia by Elder Plummer, of whom we shall speak further in this chapter.

While making a tour through Southwestern Virginia Joseph Thomas met with Landon Duncan, and

after some conversation between them Mr. Duncan adopted the views of the Christian Connection and was immersed by the White Pilgrim.

In 1808 a few persons in the lower end of the Shenandoah Valley met at Strasburg and organized themselves as a Church of Christ, agreeing to wear the name Christian, and no other. They also expressed themselves in opposition to human creeds, agreeing to be guided by the Bible alone. This, however, was but the faint flickering of the light so soon to burn. This organization was an expression of the ideas advanced by James O'Kelley in the infancy of the Christian Connection.

Mr. O'Kelley had been a Methodist, but was rapidly undergoing a change of views. He was then living in North Carolina. An earnest and able preacher, he was strongly opposed to the unscriptural creeds and divisions in the Church. Thus his movement partook somewhat of the nature of that of Mr. Campbell, but was not carried so far as the latter. Mr. O'Kelley visited the Valley in 1808, and preached for the Church above mentioned. At this time O'Kelley was accustomed to immerse when requested to do so, but he favored pouring. In 1809 Frederick Plummer visited the Church and was well received. He was the first to assert in that community that neither sprinkling nor pouring was the one baptism mentioned in the Scriptures. The meetings were held at four different points, all within five miles of Strasburg, as there was no settled place for worship.

In the year 1821 Robert Ferguson, then a young man, settled among this people, and continued his



labors among them for twenty-five years. The year that he settled there a meeting of the congregation was held in Strasburg to consider means for the extension of the work, and as an outgrowth of this meeting a few years later a meeting-house was erected at Walnut Springs, this being more centrally located for the membership. The building of this meeting-house was the beginning of a forward movement in the Valley. As yet they knew nothing of the movement with which Mr. Campbell was connected. The work instituted by Mr. Kelley was a reaching out after the truth, and consequently along the same lines as that of Mr. Campbell, but many of these old Christian (Connection) churches have since drifted off into sectarianism. This Church continued in the teachings of O'Kelley until about 1835, when Bro. Ferguson found out that in following out the original trend taken by O'Kelley he was working on the same ground with a larger, more widespread movement under the leadership of Mr. Campbell. The whole church of some fifty members, who had thus been prepared, were now taught the principles of the Word of God in their fullness, and all became more earnest in the proclamation of the "faith once delivered to the saints." In September, 1835, Bro. James Henshall, of Baltimore, accompanied by Bro. Charles Farquharson, started on a preaching tour of Western Maryland. They stopped at Hagerstown one night and went to hear Bro. Samuel K. Hoshour preach in the town hall.

Bro. Hoshour, who afterward became one of the foremost pioneer preachers of Indiana, had formerly



attended a theological institute at New Market, in the Valley of Virginia, in order to fit himself for the ministry of the Lutheran Church. In 1831 he had taken charge of a church of that denomination in Hagerstown. The year 1834 saw a revival of religious interest in the Beaver Creek region, near Hagerstown. A preacher appeared in the place who called himself simply a "Christian" or a "disciple of Christ." He established a church. Hoshour was called upon by his brethren to refute this new doctrine, especially that in regard to immersion. In his investigation, preparatory to the debate, he became convinced of the superior authority for immersion as baptism. He became a reader of the *Harbinger*. He had seen a copy of the *Christian Baptist* some years before, and was much impressed with the views there advanced. In the early spring of 1835 Bro. Hoshour was immersed, but owing to the aggressiveness of his former brethren, churches and school-houses closed their doors against him and he was denied a hearing. In order to support himself and family he began teaching school at New Market, in the Valley of Virginia. From here he used to go out and preach at points within reach, but his scanty means hindered him from devoting much of his time to the work. It was while on a short tour to his old home in Hagerstown, Maryland, that Bro. Henshall met and heard him preach.

We have digressed to show how the upper part of the Valley was prepared for future victories in the cause of truth by this eminent preacher; let us now return to the work at Walnut Springs. Bro. Henshall proceeded

to this place from Hagerstown, in order to attend a co-operative meeting of the disciples at Walnut Springs. He preached at several points along the way, and at Williamsport was met by Bro. Ferguson. They had known each other for some five years. This co-operative meeting was the first one held in the Valley, and was more of a general assembly of the scattered disciples for the purpose of hearing the Word preached than a co-operation on the business matters of the kingdom. The preaching that ensued during the meeting resulted in five souls' obeying the Gospel. The people saw more clearly the necessity of organizing themselves into congregations and meeting every Lord's Day to break the loaf. Growth, however, was very slow, owing to the isolated condition of the work. Bro. Ferguson was the only preacher located in the Valley for more than ten years after this time. The proclaimers in Tidewater District rarely ever crossed the Blue Ridge, and the Valley of Virginia had to contend with conditions not found in other sections of Virginia. Between 1845 and 1850 James Cowgill and George W. Abell began to preach there, and the work began to grow under their labors.

We have now practically covered the pioneer history of the work in Eastern Virginia. It was a period of controversy, persecution, decrees and schisms. From 1840 the churches settled down to a more healthy growth. The animosity aroused between the Baptists and the reformers greatly subsided and the spirituality of the churches increased. We have yet to notice in the remaining chapters some of the later developments and hindrances to the work thus inaugurated.

## CHAPTER X.

### JETER AND LARD CONTROVERSY.

In 1855 Dr. Jeremiah B. Jeter, a leading Baptist of Eastern Virginia, published a book entitled "Campbellism Examined." This work was followed a year later by "Campbellism Re-examined," from the same author. These books were vigorously circulated, and the friends of the restoration appealed to Mr. Campbell for such a reply as would vindicate the movement from the false charges and lack of logic and Scripture shown in the above-named works. At that time Mr. Campbell was heavily burdened with work. Besides being the active president of Bethany College and editor of the *Millennial Harbinger*, he was almost daily the recipient of requests for lectures and addresses, and in addition to this, like the Apostle Paul, he had upon him "the care of all the churches." It was, therefore, impossible, without superhuman efforts, for him to give the time necessary to the work of a reply. Bethany College had, however, produced many defenders of the faith who were equal to the task, and from these Mr. Campbell selected Moses E. Lard, a comparatively young man, to write a review of Dr. Jeter's books. The delay occasioned before the choice was made gave ample time for Dr. Jeter's books to do the work they had been written to accomplish. They had been read and accepted by many as a true representation of the positions assumed by the reformers. The objections urged

against the restoration by Dr. Jeter are of the variety that are standard to-day. In order to show the able refutation made by Bro. Lard, and at the same time give to our readers some of the ever current objections to the movement with which we stand identified, and the answers to such, we will introduce quotations from each work on the same topics.

#### ON THE NEED OF A REFORMATION.

JETER:—"That a reformation was needed by the Christian sects of that time, none who possess a tolerable acquaintance with their condition and the claims of the Gospel will deny. Indeed, what Church, or member of a Church, does not, in some respects and in some degree, need reformation? There was needed then, as at all times, an increase of religious knowledge in the churches; but more than this, an increase of piety. The reformation demanded by the times was in spirit and practice, rather than doctrine."

LARD:—"Well may Mr. Jeter admit that a 'reformation' was needed by the 'Christian sects' of that time; and yet he does not blush to sneer at the man who aspired to the honor of effecting it. As to whether the reformation demanded was a reformation 'in spirit and practice rather than doctrine,' we shall leave those best acquainted with the wretched state of doctrine at the time to decide.

"But Mr. Campbell never proposed a reformation of 'Christian sects' as such. He proposed that all sincere and pious Christians should abandon these 'sects,' and, uniting upon the great foundation upon which, as upon a rock, Christ said he would build his Church, form themselves into a Church of Christ, and not into a sect. A 'Christian sect' we pronounce simply an impossible thing. Sects there may be, innumerable;

but *Christian*, as *sects*, they can never be. A Church of Christ is not a sect, in any legitimate sense of the term. As soon as a body of believers, claiming to be a Church of Christ, becomes a sect, it ceases to be a Church of Christ. Sect and Christian are terms denoting incompatible ideas. Christians there may be in all the sects, as we believe there are; but, in them though there may be, yet of them, if Christians, clearly they are not. Mr. Campbell's proposition never looked to the reformation of sects as such. A sect reformed would still be a sect; and sect and Christian are not convertible terms. Sectarianism originates, and necessarily, in the Church, but has its consummation out of it. Hence, Paul, in addressing the Church at Corinth, says, 'There must be also heresies (sectarianism) among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest.' But here is something which seems never to have struck the mind of Mr. Jeter. With the Apostle, sectarianism originated with the bad, and the good were excluded; but with Mr. Jeter it includes the good, and the bad are excluded. How shall we account for the difference? As soon, however, as the 'heretic' (the sectarian) is discovered in the Church, he is by the apostle's direction, to be admonished a first and second time, and then, if he repent not, to be rejected. Now, we request to be informed by Mr. Jeter how, according to this rule, a 'Christian sect' can exclude her 'sectarians' and still remain a sect? Heresy and sectarianism are identical, being both represented by the same term in the same sense in the original; and that which they represent has its origin in the flesh. Hence the same Apostle, in enumerating the works of the flesh, mentions, among other things, strife, sedition, heresy (sectarianism). Heresy or sectarianism, we are taught by the Apostle Peter, is introduced into the Church by

‘false teachers,’ and is ‘damnable’; and yet Mr. Jeter, with true foster-father tenderness, can talk of ‘Christian sects.’”

#### ON THE EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR BAPTISM.

JETER:—“Philip did not baptize the Ethiopian eunuch, who requested baptism, until he had catechised him. True, the evangelist propounded but one question to the candidate; or, at least, in the concise narrative furnished by Luke, only one is recorded,—that, under the circumstances, being deemed sufficient. This example, so far from restricting pastors or churches to this brief and single question,—a question never, so far as we are informed, proposed to any other applicant for the ordinance in apostolic times—fairly authorizes them to make such inquiries as the intelligence, known characters, and circumstances of the candidates may appear to require.”

LARD:—“That is, one question put by an inspired teacher authorizes uninspired ‘pastors or churches’ to put, if they see fit, a thousand, or to require a candidate for baptism to relate a Christian experience. When the Holy Word of God can be thus scandalously perverted by its professed friends merely to serve a purpose, for consistency’s sake let the clamor of Christians against infidel injustice be hushed forever.

“But, gentle reader, will you turn to the eighth chapter of the Acts, and read from the twenty-ninth verse to the close of the chapter? You will observe that, on approaching the eunuch, Philip says to him, ‘Understandest thou what thou readest?’ But this is not the ‘one question’ to which Mr. Jeter refers; therefore read on. You are through? Now say whether you have found even one question put by Philip to the eunuch before he would baptize him. No. Such a question is not in the passage. Philip



states the condition on which the eunuch might be baptized, but he propounds to him no question. But Mr. Jeter, in his blind zeal to find an example which would justify him in catechising candidates for baptism, confounds a condition with a question; or, if he has not done this, then he is guilty of inventing for the Bible what it does not contain."

ON THE POWER THAT PRODUCES CONVERSION.

JETER:—"If all the converting power of the Spirit is in the arguments addressed by him in words to the mind, then it follows that every minister of the Word must be successful in converting souls to Christ in proportion to the distinctness with which he presents the arguments of the Spirit to the minds of his hearers. The same measure of power must, under similar circumstances, produce similar results. But does this conclusion agree with the experience and observation of Christian ministers?"

LARD:—"We reply, if the power be uniform, and the circumstances precisely similar, then the results will be so too. Now, we maintain that the converting power is in the Truth, and, hence, that the power is uniform. But are the circumstances precisely similar? Mr. Jeter knew that they are not, and yet he has the front to put the case as against us. But are the circumstances so far similar as to justify the expectation of even nearly similar results? They are not. But, on the contrary, they are so very dissimilar as to justify the expectation of the most dissimilar results. This is the conclusion which agrees with the experience and observation of Christian ministers.

"Audiences vary in ways which are almost infinite; each one of which will serve to prevent a uniform result from preaching. No two can be found commanding precisely the same amount of intellect; and then



in point of cultivation they differ most widely. These two circumstances of themselves are enough to account for the most dissimilar results. But, in addition to these, prejudices innumerable, and as various as numerous, have to be encountered. The resistance met with by the truth from all these sources is such as to cause us rather to wonder that the results are so nearly uniform as they are than to expect them to be completely so.

“In further proof of his objection, Mr. Jeter presented the following so-called ‘fact’:

JETER:—“But I need not appeal in this argument to unquestionable evidence. Christ was an unrivalled preacher of the Gospel. Jno. 7: 46: ‘Never man spake as he did.’ . . . But what was the result of his ministry? It was unsuccessful: not wholly so;—but it produced no such results as from his pre-eminent qualifications might have been expected; no great moral resolution, and no extensive revival of true religion.”

LARD:—“Christ’s ministry, then, was unsuccessful; only it was not wholly so. Be it so then. But was it unsuccessful because of any want of power in the Truth? If so, Mr. Jeter has not shown it. No. It was unsuccessful, as far as it was so at all, because of the deliberate resistance offered to the Truth by the Jews. This is the reason why it was unsuccessful. Upon various occasions, and in different language, did the Savior account for his lack of success. Now, to what causes did he attribute it? Among others, we mention the following:—

“1. ‘This people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them.’

"2. 'Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?'

"3. 'How can ye believe, who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?'

"4. 'Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.'

"But, among all the causes assigned by the Savior, did he ever once mention a want of power in the Truth? Whether then is it safer to ascribe his want of success to the causes which he himself mentions, or to such as he never even once alludes to?

"But how does Mr. Jeter account for the Savior's want of success? '*The converting power of the Spirit,*' is his own language, '*was not present,—was withheld in wisdom and righteous judgment.*' We blush for the pen that drew this libel upon the divine character. In charity, let us hope its author penned it in haste, under the influence of some dreadful pressure, without stopping to reflect on his deed. 'The converting power of the Spirit was withheld,' hence conversion was impossible; and yet the Savior said to the multitude, 'Ye will not come to me that ye might have life,' when he perfectly knew that they came not, not because they would not, but because they could not! The converting power of the Spirit was withheld, hence conversion could not be; and yet the unconverted were, by the high decree of Heaven, doomed to perdition for refusing to be what they could not be! What is this but to tender to man a religion which he cannot accept, and then to damn him for rejecting it? And all this is coolly charged to the account of '*wisdom and righteous judgment*'!"

## ON BAPTISM FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.

JETER:—"Objection First.—Baptism, according to the ancient Gospel, is not the figure or formal acknowledgment of the remission of sins, but the indispensable, and, it would seem, the *only*, condition of obtaining it. . . . Is this scheme of forgiveness scriptural? Is baptism, like repentance and faith, an indispensable condition of the remission of sins? Let the reader notice,—first, that this scheme of remission flatly contradicts plain and numerous Scripture testimonies."

LARD:—"Candidly, we are not seldom at a loss to know how to characterize some of Mr. Jeter's assertions without transcending the limits which courtesy imposes. To call this assertion a downright falsehood would be too harsh, and to call it the truth would be a falsehood. Nameless, then, we let it stand. Mr. Campbell maintains (and Mr. Jeter is perfectly acquainted with the fact) that there are three conditions on which remission of sins depends—to wit: belief, repentance, and baptism. Wherefore, then, the preceding false and slanderous assertion?"

JETER:—"Objection Fourth.—That salvation may be entirely beyond the reach of the most humble, obedient, and faithful servants of Christ. Let me suppose a case. Fidelis, after a careful examination of the subject, became a convert to Christianity. Deeply conscious of his guilt and unworthiness, he cordially embraced Christ as his Prophet, Priest, and King, consecrating to him, in the unfeigned purpose of his heart, his body, soul, and spirit. Enraptured with the Savior's charms, he rejoiced in his word and worshiped from day to day. Having settled his views on the subject of baptism, he designed at his earliest opportunity to take on him the badge of discipleship in baptism. But, by order of Tyrannus, an inveterate

enemy of Christ, he was arrested and cast into prison for his ardent zeal and dauntless testimony in the Redeemer's cause. To him baptism is now impossible. And poor Fidelis cannot enjoy the remission of his sins."

LARD:—"But what of the case of poor Fidelis? First. The case is purely imaginary, and is hence no ground of argument except with a man who prefers the vagaries of his fancy to the Word of God.

"Second. But did 'poor Fidelis' enjoy, while evincing his 'ardent zeal' and bearing his 'dauntless testimony' and rejoicing in the Savior's worship 'from day to day,' no opportunity to be baptized? Rather let it be said of him, that, by neglecting his duty during this time, he proved himself a disobedient wretch, who, if cast into prison, deserved to suffer the whole consequence of his folly. Clearly he was not taught by a man who practised after the Apostle's example, else the same hour of the night in which he heard the Truth and believed it he would have been baptized; what then would have signified his imprisonment?

"Third. Or did he neglect his duty because taught, as Mr. Jeter teaches, that baptism is not essential to remission? If so, let him be condemned for preferring the counsels of wicked men to the counsels of God, and hold the presumptuous preacher responsible for the lie that led him astray. But, if he had not the opportunity to be baptized, then it was not his duty. It is no more man's duty to be baptized, where baptism is impossible, than it is to believe where belief is impossible. It is not what men cannot do, but what they can do, and have the opportunity of doing, that God requires at their hands. Where there is no ability there is no responsibility."

The foregoing extracts do not properly set forth the works in question. They are too brief. Sufficient extracts have been made, however, to demonstrate two things: First, that Mr. Jeter's ideas of what he termed "Campbellism" were not the ideas advanced by Mr. Campbell, but those which were imputed to him by his enemies. Hence many of the views he assailed were never held by Mr. Campbell or any of his co-laborers. Second, that Mr. Lard's "Review" was clear and logical, but there was in it a spirit of invective which, whatever the justification it might have had in the light of those times, we would not wish reproduced in this our day.

It is a matter greatly to be regretted that Mr. Jeter made such an unprovoked attack, and especially at just the time when these two religious bodies were drawing closer together. There had been much talk of a new translation of the Scriptures, and in the providence of God, Baptists and disciples were called together to consider the work. Just at that time "Campbellism Examined" appeared. All the old party dogmatism and prejudices in both ranks were aroused. The work of reconciliation was thrust aside for a time, to be begun anew when the feelings of both had subsided.

## CHAPTER XI.

### HELPS AND HINDRANCES.

The design of this little volume is to set forth the work of the pioneers, those grand old men who counted no sacrifice too dear in the cause of their Savior. We have now passed the period of their work, and they are resting from their labors. Before we draw the veil that hides them from sight but not from memory, let us take a brief glance at the fortunes of the work they were instrumental in establishing.

The restoration movement in Virginia suffered from two great backsets. The first was Dr. Jeter's books, mentioned in our last chapter. The second one was the war between the States.

Our reader might not at first be able to understand how the work could have suffered from the first cause mentioned when these books were so ably refuted by Mr. Lard. This will be clear, however, when it is remembered that nearly two years passed between the publication of Mr. Jeter and the review of it by Bro. Lard. This gave ample time for the former to do its work. It was accepted by many as a true relation of the principles of the reformation, and their minds were prejudiced against the movement to such an extent that they never read the refutation when it finally appeared. We are very prone to form adverse views to any movement upon the published statements of its enemies. Many have been turned against the Christian

religion by reading Mr. Paine's "Age of Reason," who have never read any of the numerous refutations of that work, nor studied the evidences for the divine foundation of this religion. It was many years before prejudice in the public mind in Virginia could be overcome, and to this day there remain in the minds of some false ideas concerning the movement with which we stand identified, which, from their nature, are plainly attributable to "Campbellism Examined." Even Dr. Jeter himself confessed at a general convention of the Disciples, held in Seventh-Street Christian Church, Richmond, in 1876, that if the Disciples had stood fifty years ago where they stood then, and the Baptists the same, there would never have been any split, and many things in "Campbellism Examined" would never have been written. The change alluded to had taken place in Dr. Jeter's views concerning the Disciples rather than in them. The second cause from which we suffered was, as before stated, the war. This, indeed, caused all religious bodies to suffer. The country was impoverished for years, and had to deal with the vexatious problems of political and social as well as religious reformation. But the movement for the restoration of the primitive Christianity of Christ and His Apostles suffered more than others because it was not so well nor so thoroughly established as the older religious bodies. It had withstood the shock of many theological battles, never faltering, but now it must give up devoted followers to the demands of the more dreaded foe,—war. Years must be taken from the proclamation of the truth and given to test the rights



of States. The will of God, but freshly learned and understood, must be driven from the mind by the awful pictures of unholy war. Churches were closed up but to be broken open and polluted or riddled with shot and shell. The beautiful groves that are ever to be seen around the country meeting-house in Virginia were often made the burial-ground for the soldier dead.

A skirmish occurred in the church-yard of Olive Branch Church, James City county. The remains of five Federal soldiers are buried there, and a bullet may still be seen imbedded in the door. This church was robbed of its doors and windows and set on fire, burning a large hole in the floor before it was extinguished by the neighbors. The communion set was also stolen by a Federal soldier. A few years after the war he returned it, with a note saying his conscience condemned him.

In the desperate battles of Fredericksburg and the Wilderness the meeting-house at the former place was torn and shattered with shot and shell, the membership was scattered, and the church left completely disorganized. In the terrible bombardment of December, 1863, for twelve hours a deluge of shot and shell was poured upon the streets and houses of Fredericksburg. The inhabitants fled for their lives from this leaden hail that was beating their homes to pieces, and the town was virtually left to the ravages of war. Amid these scenes the old Fredericksburg Christian Church met its doom. After being badly damaged, the building was turned into a hospital for the wounded Federals. The large windows were torn out, the floors stained

with blood, the benches made into coffins, and fences and all other available material burned for firewood. The communion service also was carried off, and for thirty-five years, so completely was the work demoralized, this "house of the Lord" was left unto its people desolate, the eyesore and common property of the town and a disgrace to the cause for which it was dedicated. It has since been remodeled, and during the past year the United States Government has paid indemnity for the damage done to the building.

But while the work of desolation and destruction went on there were those who could not be turned from the preaching of the Gospel. The following incident is related of Bro. Abell:

While Lee's army lay on one side of the Rapidan, watching Grant's on the other side, George Washington Abell was vigorously attacking Satan's host with the sword of the Spirit. A goodly number of South Carolina's gallant sons surrendered to Prince Messiah. As Bro. Abell descended into the water, preparatory to the burial of the slain ones, he touchingly alluded to the fact that these individuals, following the example of the banner State, had nobly seceded from Satan's kingdom and rallied to the banner of the Cross. Then solemnly immersing them, and raising them up again, he invoked Heaven's richest benediction upon them, and sent them back to camp.

At the sacking of Richmond the office where the *Christian Intelligencer* was published was burned and all the records of former years destroyed. This left the Virginia Disciples without a medium of communi-

cation for a few years, but finally this paper was succeeded by the *Christian Examiner*.

Much has been said about the dissension between Baptists and Disciples in this volume, and no more fitting close can be given it than a brief account of the historic conference of representatives of these two bodies in Richmond in April, 1866, for the purpose of considering the differences between the two bodies, and, if possible, effecting a union of them. There were sixteen representatives from each Church. Among the Baptists were such men as Jeter, Poindexter, Burrows and Broaddus, and among the Disciples were Pendleton, Goss, Henley, Ainslie, Walthall, Du Val, Hopson and Shelburne. According to the plan mapped out, the Baptists were to submit a statement of their belief, to which the disciples were to respond, and the Baptists to furnish a final rejoinder. These documents we give in full.

#### DECLARATION OF BELIEF SUBMITTED BY BAPTISTS.

We utterly repudiate all creeds or confessions of faith as of binding force upon the consciences or conduct of men; yet we deem it essential that churches should, in some form, state distinctly and unequivocally their understanding of the fundamental doctrines and duties taught in the Word of God, in order to union among themselves, and that they may be understood by others. We therefore offer to the Convention the following as such a statement of the views of the Baptist denomination regarding the subjects embraced therein:

Art. 1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the

only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience.

Art. 2. Agreement in the belief of the fundamental facts and doctrines of the New Testament is essential to Christian union.

Art. 3. There is one God, the Maker, Preserver, and Ruler of all things, having in and of himself all perfection, and being infinite in them all. He is revealed to us as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

Art. 4. God originally created man in his own image, free from sin, but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the commandment of God and fell from his original holiness and righteousness, whereby his posterity inherit a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and his law, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

Art. 5. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the divinely appointed and only Mediator between God and man. He perfectly fulfilled the law; suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners; was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended to his Father; at whose right hand he ever liveth to make intercession for his people.

Art. 6. Regeneration is a change of heart, wrought through the truth by the Holy Spirit, who quickeneth the dead in trespasses and sins, enlightening their minds spiritually to undertsand, and savingly to believe the Word of God, so that they love and practice holiness.

Art. 7. Repentance is that change of mind and heart in which the sinner, being made sensible of the evil and pollution of sin, turns from it with godly sorrow and abhorrence.

Art. 8. Faith is a sincere belief of the Gospel, in the exercise of which we heartily receive and rest upon the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Art. 9. Justification is that act of God in which he pardons and accepts the believer as righteous, through faith in the atonement of Christ, and not on account of the performance of any duty.

Art. 10. Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified by God's Word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive, and is carried forward through the supply of divine strength unto eternal life.

Art. 11. A visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers associated in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, subject only to the authority of Christ, governed by His laws, and observing His ordinances with the officers of His appointment, to wit: the pastors, or bishops, or elders and deacons.

Art. 12. Ministers of the Gospel are called of God and set apart by the churches to their office. It is their duty to labor to secure a continual increase of knowledge and fitness for their work, and to devote themselves earnestly to it, and it is the duty of the churches to support them while thus engaged.

Art. 13. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem his faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior, and the remission of sins through that faith. It is prerequisite to Church membership, and to a participation of the Lord's Supper. To this ordinance it is the duty of every believer to submit.

Art. 14. The Lord's Supper is an institution of Jesus Christ, in which, by partaking of bread and wine as emblems of his body and blood, we commemorate His dying love; and only members of the Church in good standing are entitled to receive it.

Art. 15. The first day of the week is the Lord's Day, and it is to be kept sacred to religious purposes by abstaining from all secular labor and recreation, by the assembling of the Churches for worship, and by diligence in the exercises of private devotion.

Art. 16. It is the duty of Christians and Christian Churches to labor for the propagation of the Gospel throughout the world, and in doing so, they may unite in missionary and other associations, provided that such associations shall have no ecclesiastical authority.

Art. 17. There will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust.

Art. 18. God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when every one shall receive according to his deed; the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, the righteous into life eternal.

#### RESPONSE BY THE DISCIPLES.

##### PREAMBLE.

We agree in utter repudiation of creeds. But we dissent from the position that churches state their understanding of fundamental doctrines, etc., in order to union among themselves, etc.

Article 1. Agreed.

Art. 2. Substitute "truths" for "doctrines," and "Gospel" for "New Testament."

Art. 3. Substitute: "The Holy Scriptures reveal the divinity, and personality, and unity, of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

Art. 4. Substitute: "That sin having entered into the world by one man, in whom all have sinned, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men; man is therefore by nature sinful, and by transgression a sinner, and thus, dead in trespasses and sins."



Art. 5. Agreed.

Art. 6. Regeneration, as used in the Scriptures, is a process which includes a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, through the truth, and a birth of water in an immersion into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Art. 7. Agreed.

Art. 8. Agreed.

Art. 9. Substitute: "Justification is an act of God pardoning the sinner and treating him as righteous, through faith in the atonement of Christ.

Art. 10. Substitute: "Sanctification is a separation to the service of God, in which the children of God perfect holiness, through the Word and Spirit dwelling in them."

Art. 11. Agreed, with "immersed" for "baptized," and erase "visible."

Art. 12. Accept, with the omission "called of God," because equivocal, and as a very incomplete statement of duties, etc.

Art. 13. Substitute: Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a penitent believer, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, for the remission of sins; and is a prerequisite to Church membership, and to a participation of the Lord's Supper.

Art. 14. Agreed.

Art. 15. Altered. The first day of the week is the Lord's Day, and should be sacredly devoted to religious culture, in assembling the churches for celebrating the Lord's Supper, and in other acts of public worship, and in diligence in private devotion.

Art. 16. Agreed.

Art. 17. Agreed.

Art. 18. Agreed.



## BAPTIST REJOINDER.

Art. 1. Adhered to; adding "written or unwritten" after form.

Art. 2. Accept "truths" for "doctrines," but adhere to "New Testament."

Art. 3. We prefer ours.

Art. 4. Adhered to.

Art. 6. Adhered to.

Art. 9. Substitute for our article and yours: Justification is that act of God in which he pardons and accepts as righteous every man immediately upon the exercise of faith in the atonement of Christ.

Art. 10. Adhered to.

Art. 11. Accept your amendments.

Art. 12. We propose, "moved by the Spirit," or "called of God."

Art. 13. Adhered to; inserting (after your example), "penitent" before "believer."

Art. 15. Adhered to; with explanation by the president, that "we would not bar churches from weekly communion."

It will be seen that eighteen articles were presented; eight of which were accepted by the Disciples without any change whatever; seven others accepted with some verbal changes, and leaving only three in which there was not substantial agreement. These three were articles, 9, 6 and 13, respectively, treating of the doctrines of justification, regeneration and Christian baptism. The Baptists held justification to be an act of God irrespective of any works on the part of man. The disciples simply struck out the clause pertaining to works. On the doctrine of regeneration, the Baptists taught that it was a spiritual change wrought in the

heart, while the disciples taught that it comprised both change of heart and a birth of water. As to baptism, the Baptists taught that it was to be performed on account of, or as a sign or emblem of, the remission of sins, while the disciples taught that it was to be performed for the remission of sins.

When the articles, together with the Baptist rejoinder, were read before the Convention, the gifted and far-seeing Jas. W. Goss (disciple) arose and said:

“Mr. President, the differences existing between us are apparent to all. Are they sufficient, in your estimation, to prevent fellowship, ecclesiastical or otherwise?”

PRESIDENT.—“Well, we have approximated so closely to each other that we think we can get nearer together upon mutual explanation.”

MR. GOSS.—“Mr. President, my question is not answered. If we cannot subscribe to that document, and I tell you frankly that we cannot, will you have church fellowship with us? We have expressed ourselves plainly. We think you understand us. We think we understand you. Are these differences great enough, in your judgment, to prevent ecclesiastical union?”

Several speeches were made at this point. Mr. James D. Coleman (disciple) expressed himself as being highly gratified at the meeting; glad to find that the differences were so few, and that upon explanation even these had dwindled into insignificance. Mr. Shaver (Baptist) thought that the differences were far wider and greater than any of the speeches on either side indicated; hoped that the proceedings would be published—

was not willing to trust to treacherous memory, especially since it had been stated on that floor before the adjournment of the Convention that the differences had dwindled into insignificance.

Dr. Poindexter (Baptist) and W. K. Pendleton (disciple) engaged in some metaphysical rencounters, after which Dr. Hopson (disciple) said:

“Mr. President, you invited us here for a friendly talk with reference to union. We both belong to the same great family of immersionists; we both baptize the same character. We differ, not with regard to what God does nor what the sinner must do. We both teach that men must believe, repent and be baptized. We differ as to the time God passes an executive act in His own mind. Will you take the responsibility of saying that while we have invited these people to meet us in friendly, social talk with reference to union, and though we agree in nearly all of the eighteen articles submitted, we will not have church fellowship with them?”

Mr. John Hart (Baptist) rose and said:

“Mr. President, I do not agree with Dr. Hopson that we both baptize the same character. You baptize the penitent believer; we baptize the penitent, *pardoned, justified* believer. It is time for Bro. Goss's question to be answered. As for myself and church, we are not willing to have church fellowship with them so long as these differences exist.”

Mr. Goss then said:

“Mr. President, Bro. Hart has fairly and justly stated the differences between us on this question. We both baptize the penitent believer. Here we begin to

differ. We baptize the penitent believer; you baptize the penitent, *pardoned, justified* believer. But there is a practical difference. I beg leave to illustrate: A young man comes to you, sir, and tells you that he believes in Jesus and repents of his sins, but that he has no assurance of pardon. He remembers that Jesus said, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved'; and he wishes you to baptize him, that he may claim that promise. You, sir, cannot baptize him. He comes to me, tells me that he believes in Jesus and wishes to put himself under Christ's government and care. I say to him, 'Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins'."

He took his seat. Silence reigned for a minute. To this speech there was no reply. There could be none. All felt its power. A motion to publish the minutes of the meeting was offered and discussed, and then the Convention adjourned.

It was thought advisable not to publish the minutes of the Convention, but a copy was placed with one member of each party in the Convention, and these brethren were instructed not to publish the minutes unless they should hereafter, on account of some necessity not now perceived, jointly agree that the publication of said minutes would do good. At the same time an *address*, which had been reported by a committee in an imperfect state, was referred to a committee for revision and publication. As it set forth the spirit of the Convention and received the endorsement of both parties, we append it.

*Address of the Convention of Baptists and Disciples  
held in Richmond April 24, 25, 26 and 28, 1866,  
to the Churches of these two bodies in the State of  
Virginia.*

DEAR BRETHEN:—We have met in this Convention, not as delegates appointed to transact business for you, but as a voluntary convention of professed Christian men, earnestly desirous to promote the cause of Bible truth, and to bring nearer to each other the divided forces of our Lord's great army.

It had been hoped by many that the influence of time, and the more thorough study of the divine Word, had brought us so near to each other in mind and heart, and in the interpretation of the Scriptures, as to make it manifest that we could jointly recommend to our churches in Virginia a more intimate ecclesiastical co-operation than has heretofore existed, hoping that fraternal, mutual courtesies would sooner or later lead to a cordial ecclesiastical union of the two bodies.

With a view fully to ascertain each other's views of the teachings of the Bible, we have for four days met for conversation and kind discussion of the questions deemed necessary to be discussed on the occasion. We have frequently united in appealing to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that he would by the Holy Spirit lead us to right conclusions in the premises. During our entire session there has prevailed as much of Christian courtesy and brotherly kindness as we have ever seen manifested in a body of thirty men engaged in the discussion of questions involving Christian fellowship. But, after all, we have reached the conclusion deliberately, however reluctantly, that the time has not yet come when the Baptists and Disciples are, on both sides prepared, with a prospect of perfect harmony, to commit themselves to any degree of co-operation beyond such courtesies and

personal kindnesses as members of churches of different denominations may individually choose to engage in.

We would express, however, with much gratitude to our common Father, the gratification we have felt, and still feel, in having developed by this interview an agreement of views as to the great facts, and truths, and duties of the Gospel, far more extensive and practically identical than many of our brethren had supposed to exist; and we would earnestly recommend to the brethren of the two bodies in the State of Virginia to cultivate the spirit of fraternal kindness and Christian courtesy toward each other—to keep in mind the prayer of our Lord that all his people might be one; and while they cultivate the spirit of peace, to refrain as far as possible from everything that would tend to alienate from each other those who, in regard to so many precious and important truths taught in the Word of God, give the same interpretation, and in regard to so many Christian practices are of one mind.

Signed by the direction of the Convention.

W. F. BROADDUS,  
J. W. GOSS.

April 27, 1866.

Thus passed into history the memorable congress of Baptists and Disciples. If it fell short of the accomplishment of its greatest object, it was not an entire failure. Some prejudices that had long kept these two great bodies of God's people apart were swept away. The very fact of their meeting together in such an assembly was in itself a triumph. We hope and pray that the day may not be far distant when they shall be united on the Apostles' testimony, and plead with their united strength the Gospel of a risen Savior in its pristine purity and primitive simplicity.



## CHAPTER XII.

### OUR STATUS IN THIS STATE.

The following address on "Our Status in This State" was delivered before the Christian Ministerial Association of Virginia by Dr. Bullard at the session held in Lynchburg in May, 1879. It presents a review of the work throughout the State by one intimately acquainted with the work in its pioneer days, and forms a fitting chapter with which to close the first part of this work.

The Christian Church is a child of stern necessity, the offspring of moral law as inviolate as the physical law which is now pressing the flowers to fruitage. Those of us who came first were compelled to read, compelled to think, and compelled to pray with deep-felt groans known only to ourselves and to God. We had power to resist neither our convictions nor the utterance of them. Hence, under God, that body called "The Disciples," or "Christian Church." Now it is a small matter that we can say that it is larger than any other church for its years; that its teachings, once deemed soul-damning, are echoed from most every pulpit. This would not prove it the offspring of God. To settle this question we must see whether those who have fled from other churches to us for refuge have found themselves nearer to God; more in earnest to know and do his will; fed on more spiritual food; improved in liberality and piety. Do we constitute a soul-saving organization? Seventy winters have cooled the blood of some of us. We have come here to



consider and to realize what we are, what we have done, what we are doing. That which I have to present, however, will deal largely with the past, and must partake, in a measure, of the nature of personal reminiscences.

I turn first to Tidewater, the orient of our movement, and ask what has she done with her means and opportunities, with a large instalment of members from the Baptist churches, her clever resident preachers—Hensley, Ainslie, Duval, Curtis, Dangerfield, and pretty early Henshall and others; to say nothing of Burnett, and the frequent presence of the Campbells, the synonym of victory? We cannot overpraise the heroic conscientiousness, zeal, and perseverance of these men, which, in some instances, greatly exceeded their prudence, temperance and charity. It was neither wise, kind nor just to trace the lineage of the churches around us to the “Mother of Harlots.” And did not some of our old brethren deem it hardly prudent to express the conviction that honest unimmersed persons would be saved?—while some of them sympathized with Dr. Thomas in the sentiment that Baptist immersions were invalid. But those were the days of conflict. What a joy it must have been to some of them to discover that we had not monopolized all the fruits of the Spirit! Such discoveries are helpful to the soul. If, then, when the battle waned, our Tidewater brethren could have retained their original zeal and concentrated it on Sunday-schools, evangelizing, and training young men for elders, truly able to feed the flock of God, who could estimate the results? Not that she has been behind other districts in these labors of love, for, though lying pretty much upon her oars for some time, with few Sunday-schools, with sparse monthly preachings, content to share with all the other districts in the State in one evangelist, yet, since the war, with half her former means, she has more than

doubled her former zeal! In two years after the war hundreds were converted, of whom three young men—Trible, Dunn and Ainslie,—with two former converts, Wynne and Power, were educated for the work whereunto God had called them. Not all of these, however, were educated by the churches. New churches were planted and Sunday-schools started into new life. Thus much for Tidewater, with her thunders checked mid-valley. The banner district in the work for educating young men for the ministry, yet her flag floats at half-mast, in mourning, we hope, that she has done no more. She does not support even one elder in every church; and what bread of life is she sending to the destitute?

If Richmond desires a personal notice, I have only to say that in the year 1835, from the most auspicious beginnings, her lamp was almost extinct; while now she is a power greater than some whole districts.

Piedmont, not so early in the field, was, with the exception of less foreign aid and a powerful Pedo-Baptist resistance, not behind Tidewater in men and means, comparing territory. Hear these names—Bagby, Webber, Higgason, Pendletons, Hunter; last, but not least, Coleman and Goss, each, in his way, the peer of the best preachers of the day. What an auspicious dawn at Gilboa! Nor has she disappointed hope. And Charlottesville, without rebuffs, would to-day have numbered five hundred members, covering Albemarle with her satellites. She had Coleman, Goss and Poin-dexter, and early the only religious paper in the town. But, oh, what a blunder to have Dr. Thomas, at the organization of the church, to insult the Episcopalians in their own home, kindly tendered for our use! The animus of this visit of his, together with his trailing *Advocate*, threw a pall over the church not lifted for twenty years. Even A. Campbell, who, in 1840, spoke to the great congregation as I thought I never heard

any one speak, could not remove the blighting mildew. The brethren at Charlottesville are good men, true men; have done as nearly what they could as any others, and God will not forget their patience and labors of love. I expect even before I die to hear of the development of her latent strength. How bright was the rising of Scottsville. When first I knew her she had only eight members. There was no promise of any more. And then, in a short time, I saw a great church, in a good house of worship, reaching out her helping hands into Buckingham and Fluvanna. Since that time the town has gone down, the railroad having robbed it of its trade from the Valley; and Barclay, Trice, Tyler, Staples, Spencer, and that mother in Israel, Sister Staples, and many others have gone over the river. When I think of those dear brethren, I think of the exhortation, "Cast not away thy confidence which hath great recompense of reward." Still, there is left a nucleus, a seed pit, that may yet gladden the whole land. But why should I individualize the churches of Piedmont? I have selected those which had most to bear to illustrate the vitality of Christianity.

No point of our endeavors presented a finer prospect of success than Southeastern Virginia. Silas Shelburne, in his acknowledged purity, integrity, good sense and piety, borrowed a lustre from his father. Confided in by the whole Meherrin Association, their last appeal in Bible exegesis, in his mental maturity, we cannot fail to appreciate his strength. And then in Lunenburg, Pettie, Wilson and Barnes; in Nottoway, James Jeter, suave, genial, gentlemanly, sensible, while ardent, a good speaker, though so modest I never heard him but once, and then by a surprise; in Amelia, Townes, Young C. Day and T. E. Jeter, and though not then a preacher, Walthall, whom we all know so well, and what his influence must have been (he diffused the *Christian Baptist* in 1824-5, and was the first elder in

Paineville in 1830); in Powhatan the saintly Wren. What prevented the conquest of the whole land? Mainly, if not simply, Dr. John Thomas, whose advent into this district was signalized by his refusing to pray with a pious Methodist family with whom he first found shelter in Lunenburg, because his host had not been baptized! Before he left there were very few who wanted to be baptized, though he had fine success in diffusing his incendiary views in the churches. His partisans increased with his every visit until, in 1840, a mere handful still affiliated with Shelburne and Pettie, for Campbell's and Thomas' reconciliation had gone for nothing. Do not for a moment imagine that Thomas' friends were worthless. In all the country no better men could be found than many who supported him with all their strength. Here please make a note, and tell me what ought to be done with good men whose heads are full of nonsense, while their hearts and lives are right? The cause did indeed seem dead in Southeastern Virginia. But "God had not cast away His people whom he foreknew." In 1841 what seemed to be the cold cheek of death began to glow, and in five years a thousand were added to the Church, new churches were established, new houses were built, old ones repaired, Sunday-schools sprang up, the people began to sing and weep and pray. In 1869 I found them still a live people. As an evidence, they educated Bro. James Wilson, of whom they were so early and sadly bereaved. I am hoping to hear of more being schooled, and of an able resident teacher in every church.

Following the course of the sun, we come to Southern Piedmont, where forty-odd years ago we find one good Disciple, John T. Wooten, a native of Prince Edward county, where he heard Jacob Creath, on a visit from Kentucky to his relatives, and where he probably heard the powerful sermon of old Bro. Ainslie, at Sandy River,

in the Baptist Church so long under the care of the estimable Daniel Witt. If it had occurred to Bro. Wooten, he no doubt would have employed a preacher (for he was able to do so) to preach to his neighbors. But those were not the days for this sort of enterprise, nor was it believed that money had much to do with religion. And so this most worthy and sensible brother was induced to do what he could in private conversations. Thus he secured Doyle and Shelton; subsequently, Reuben Short, living forty miles west on the crest of the Blue Ridge. He was once a primitive Baptist preacher. This is the man so eloquently alluded to by Dr. Duval in Richmond, where he said: "We have gems from the mountains and pearls from the ocean." But of Bro. Short it must be said that, with all his brains and zeal, he was wont, like a boatman, to land his hearers on the bank opposite that on which he fixed his eyes.

When I first visited Henry county, two, besides myself, broke the loaf. To blunt whatever of hope attached to South Piedmont (I regret so frequently to mention his name), Dr. Thomas came along with his *Advocate*, happily read by few, but as well calculated as any document could be to prejudice our cause, and nowhere did I find more jealous ears than those I first addressed in Henry county. Subsequently a rich harvest was gathered in that and adjacent counties. And if our brethren there could realize that their soil is still comparatively virgin, and would multiply by ten their missionary, Sunday-school and educational zeal, it would soon be seen that South Piedmont is as much our best field for Christian enterprise as it is for fine tobacco. God help our dear brethren to preempt the land before others lay warrant upon it. They have done well in securing Bro. Stone.

The lower Valley of Virginia was a good field, considerably occupied by the Christian Connection and other independent thinkers. Bro. Ferguson, of the Christian Connection, a strong man in his prime, was as early as 1840 preaching what we call "The Ancient Gospel." His sons were very clever, and if they had known the beauty of serving God with the whole heart we might have had in reality what we have in story, "The Happy Valley." And if that grape-vine man, *alias* Doctor, imported from Eastern Virginia, had been a good hand with the vine in God's husbandry, and a good Doctor of souls, how the solitary places would have rejoiced. But our Valley brethren have had their reverses, too. What must have been their heart-wealth to present their present spiritual status? I have never lost sight of them for more than forty years, nor lost faith in their sturdy race.

And now we go up—ascending—whether morally or not, to Southwest Virginia, the field of most meagre promise and agency. The people are Scotch-Irish. Presbyterian, Lutheran and Methodist—Pedo-Baptist; a good people, but given to have both ears on one side of the head; having always been proof against Baptist aggression. The agent essaying our interest, a poor, ignorant boy, deprived by his father's fallen fortunes of a proper education, knowing nothing of the Church established in the West, and then struggling into being in Tidewater Virginia. He was, therefore, without the help of precedent or sympathy. The Baptists would not baptize him unless he would unite with them. He was finally baptized by Landon Duncan, of the Christian Connection, under special stipulations. This was the faint rushlight attempting the narrow path in the surrounding gloom. For a long while there was no foreign help, and it was not until many churches were established that Bro. Duncan gave in his adhesion. So there was no Achan in the camp. If



none to aid, then none to help us to ruin. The *Apostolic Advocate* was indeed subscribed for, but some officious person, when its drift was seen, had it stopped, and the subscribers went to the postoffice for naught. A truer set of men than our preachers, taking them in the aggregate, could nowhere have been found, while those not so true were not very strong, and those who came for mischief made short visits. I cannot say we have not had some false doctrine, for the youth who first opened his mouth to plead for the "Ancient Order of Things" did all a man could do to make his brethren stingy; so that even to this day some of them can sit in tolerable comfort under a Gospel that costs them not a cent. I do not think they would let their preachers maul their rails and plow their fields for nothing; this is looked upon as harder work than preaching; but there can be no doubt that from the Blue Ridge and the Alleghanies to Tennessee and Kentucky not one-twentieth of the Master's checks have been honored. I am happy to say that the father of this mischief, as I have heard him say, is heartily penitent for having shorn his brethren of half their triumphs and of half the blessedness of being Christians; and that he realizes a considerable alleviation of pain in seeing an effort to educate a young brother, as also in a little branch of "The Christian Woman's Board of Missions," with an animus which, could it pervade the Church, would justify its being called Christian. Evangelizing efforts, still feeble, are on the rise. Any Eastern brother disposed to look askance upon us should know that we are doing fifty times as much as in our first years. What then may be expected of us in our next fifty years? The same man who made the stingy Christians set the example, which he had inherited, of family prayers once a day, and had his own trouble to reform



his brethren to prayers night and morning. I will say nothing of the capabilities of the men he set to feed the flock of God. But I can say with heartfelt emotion, he is conscious of his shortcomings, and earnestly desirous to see himself and brethren set right before the world, the whole Church of God and its glorious Head, well knowing that the crucial test as to whether the Christian Church in Virginia is of divine parentage is holiness of heart, the fruits of the spirit, and, with all the might, working for God and not for party.

# THE PLEA AND THE PIONEERS IN VIRGINIA

## PART II.

### LIVES OF THE PIONEERS

Containing Brief Biographical Sketches of  
the following Preachers:

GEORGE W. ABELL,	DR. JOHN DU VAL,
ELDER PETER AINSLIE,	JAMES W. GOSS,
ELDER DUDLEY ATKINSON,	THOMAS M. HENLEY,
ELDER JAMES M. BAGBY,	JOHN G. PARRISH,
DR. CHESTER BULLARD,	SILAS SHELBURNE,
REUBEN LINDSAY COLEMAN,	CHARLES TALLEY,
BENJAMIN CREEL,	A. B. WALTHALL,
ELDER JOHN CURTIS,	MATTHEW WEBBER,
ELDER JOHN DANGERFIELD,	Unbiographed.



## LIVES OF THE PIONEERS

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### GEORGE WASHINGTON ABELL.

The subject of this sketch was not one of the early pioneers, but it was his lot to ably second the work they had begun. He was born on the 11th of December, 1818, in Albemarle county, two miles west of the University of Virginia, where his father and mother resided for fifty years. His father, John S. Abell, was a Baptist minister, and his mother a member of that denomination, and both, by precept and example, early impressed him with religious reverence. He was taught to read and reverence the Holy Scriptures, and to offer up regularly his evening prayer. It was not then the custom, as now, to advance children in the knowledge of the Word, the plan of Salvation, or the obedience of Faith; consequently, very little, if anything, in that direction was taught him. This arose, not from any lack of interest in his religious welfare, but from their lack of knowledge in the plan of Salvation, and the false ideas then prevalent concerning election, irresistible grace, and a divine influence in conversion.

George began to attend school when about seven years old, and had to walk two miles, both morning and evening. He attended country schools only five or six years, when he left school to become clerk in a store at Charlottesville; a position which was soon

exchanged for that of an assistant in the post-office of that town. But he soon left this and entered a classical school, taught by a Mr. Powers. Here he advanced rapidly in his studies, and soon his whole character underwent a change. He was respected by all who knew him for his high moral character, and also for his veneration for his pious father and his love for his Christlike mother. When about sixteen years of age he became deeply concerned about his salvation, and was not long in reaching a determination in the matter. He approached his elder brother on the subject, informing him of his faith in Christ and his determination to be baptized. This gave much joy to his parents and brother. He was baptized forthwith by his father, near Charlottesville, and united with the Baptist Church of that town. He resolved to sacrifice all for Christ by preparing himself for the Christian ministry. He commenced at once to exhort and pray in prayer-meetings. He was regarded as a prodigy of learning, and was encouraged by every laudable means to carry out his determination to preach the Gospel.

His progress in the classical school of Mr. Powers made him well prepared to enter the University of Virginia, which he did when he was about twenty years old. Here he showed the same marked determination that had characterized his previous course. He was a hard student, and carried it to such an extent that his health became impaired. He seemed for a time to sacrifice everything for his studies; even his religious duties were neglected, and he

partly, if not entirely, abandoned his high purpose of consecrating himself to the Gospel ministry. For a time he thought of entering the political arena, and after gaining a position of influence he would turn all to the advancement of the cause of Christ. For this end he studied day and night, even trespassing upon the Lord's Day, denying himself relief or rest until his health was crushed and his mind trembled beneath the pressure. But there is a superior and superintending Power, with sleepless eyes, ever watching the affairs of his children. They may propose, but he disposes,

“And works his gracious will.”

He mercifully laid the hand of affliction upon this young man, and for many long months his friends despaired of his life. But the same Power that had brought him so low raised him up, chastened, refined, purified, and with all the devotion and zeal of his conversion to God.

After his recovery Bro. Abell began to study the Scriptures with renewed earnestness, and on one occasion, in conversation with Bro. Samuel Teel, an old schoolmate and a disciple of Christ, their talk turned upon the remission of sins and its kindred subjects. They then and there entered into an agreement that they both should study these subjects as if they had never studied them before, and the one who was convinced he was wrong should own it and act accordingly. They had frequent interviews after this compact, and talked freely together upon the

differences between them, and in course of time Bro. Abell began to feel that he was standing upon rather a shaky foundation.

Brother Abell was regarded at this time as rather a bright star in the Baptist ecclesiastical heavens. He was learned above most young men, zealous and devoted, had a strong will, bent upon success, and of such independence of spirit that he read every book worthy of being read; and would go and hear any one preach who could impart to him any information.

One Lord's Day evening, in 1840 or '41, he was in Charlottesville, and desired to hear a discourse before returning home. It being inclement weather, no other church was open but the disciples', and he concluded to go and hear Bro. R. L. Coleman. There was nothing in the congregation to inspire the preacher to an extra effort until this young man entered and took a seat in the rear. Immediately Brother Coleman was inspired with the hope of doing this young Baptist preacher some good. As soon as he arose to speak all saw that he was about to give them something rich in thought and comforting to the heart. It has been said that he delivered one of the finest sermons of his life upon that occasion. His sermon was based on Rom. 10: 6-11, the arrangement was well made, and the arguments powerful and unanswerable. He closed with a very instructive appeal in favor of the old Gospel. Bro. Abell went there to hear with candor, and his attention was secured from the first to the last; and so absorbed was his mind with what he had heard, that in walking home he took no notice of the path he trod.



The next day he sought an interview with Bro. Coleman, in which he informed him of the effect of his discourse; how it absorbed his thoughts and enlightened his mind, especially upon that part of the Christian system concerning the plan of salvation, and closed the interview by saying, "I cannot remain with the Baptists, with my present views, and shall, with the help of the Lord, be at the Christian Church next Lord's Day and unite with you on the Bible alone."

His determination was carried out on the following Lord's Day, much to the astonishment of his parents and his Baptist brethren. This strange act on the part of George W. Abell must be explained, so as not be creditable to the disciples. So it was soon circulated far and near that George W. Abell was deranged. And to such votaries of sectarianism there could be no other explanation. Former bosom companions treated him with coldness, but he was at all times the same sweet-tempered and quiet-minded Christian young man, and bore meekly their taunts and ridicule. To cap the climax of religious prejudice and bigotry, the Baptist Church of Charlottesville acted against him as they would have acted against a drunkard or a debauchee, and upon their Church record is found these words: "George W. Abell; excluded February 26, 1842." And for what was he excluded? There it stands recorded,—a pure, holy, and godly man!—one that believed in Christ with all his heart, had repented of his sins and been baptized in the name of Jesus by his father, John S.

Abell, and from the day of his baptism to the day of his death was an ornament to the religion of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Brother Abell now continued his studies at the University, taking a very extensive course of study, and finally graduating in every school except in the school of Chemistry. Brother Abell was now free from the University; but he was in appearance nearly a physical wreck. He desired to preach, but he had doubts as to whether he could become a preacher or not. On this point he consulted his friend James W. Goss, who in turn told Bro. Abell some of his own early difficulties in that line; and seeing that their experiences were similar, he gathered courage and determined to die in the harness.

He began preaching around Charlottesville, and soon took a trip through Tidewater district in company with Bro. Goss. From this time his former Baptist brethren ceased in a large measure their persecution. They were now satisfied that his convictions were deeply founded, and that they could not move him by their sarcasm, ridicule, or pseudo-arguments. He became more cheerful at this relief and began to use to the best effect his superior educational advantages.

In 1845 Bro. Abell was married to Miss Mary Ann Nalley, of Nelson county. He had baptized her the previous year, and at the time of their marriage he was twenty-seven and she nineteen years old. During the next five years he taught school and preached as he had opportunity; but other duties hung heavy

on his hands, for he desired to give his whole time to the proclamation of God's Word. Through the influence of Brethren Coleman and Goss, at the annual meeting of the Disciples, held in Richmond in the fall of 1849, Bro. Abell was appointed State Evangelist, and entered upon his duties in February, 1850.

He now commenced the labor that gave him a name long to be remembered among Virginia disciples, and from that day to the day of his death he was wholly devoted to his high and holy calling. In the small space at our disposal it would be impossible to give anything like a connected account of his labors. This has already been done in a separate volume by Bro. Peter Ainslie, to whom we are much indebted for the material found in this sketch.

On the 11th of November, 1867, Bro. Abell was riding horseback before daybreak to join his family, with whom he was to move to Tazewell county, when his horse fell with him. Bro. Abell's right leg was broken between the knee and the ankle. As the horse rose, he rose on him, and rode five miles to Dr. Anderson's, who set it, and putting him in his own carriage, sent him home. He got home about dark, and rested tolerably well that night. The next day he insisted on starting, as they had their goods already packed. His wife and family tried to dissuade him from going, but he thought he could undergo the trip. They were on the road in all about three weeks. They rested at Snowville, Pulaski county. On Lord's Day after their arrival Bro. Abell had himself propped up between a table and a chair, and in that situation he preached to the people. He

always looked upon the body as only the house—the tent—in which the “I”—the real self—was to sojourn, and he could endure heat, cold, pain, labor, all things, so that it but helped him in his chosen work. An acquaintance of his once charged him rather warmly with spending too much time away from his family; to which he promptly gave the characteristic reply: “The Devil told me so before, but I did not believe him.”

In 1869 Bro. Abell held a debate with Mr. Gilbert, of the M. E. Church, South, at Newport, Giles county, Virginia. Three days were spent on the Action of Baptism, and then they adjourned to meet a week or two later and discuss Infant Baptism. In the intermission between the debates Bro. Abell preached at Pembroke, only a few miles distant, and baptized one hundred persons; a goodly number of whom were Methodists. Major Samuel Lybrook, the president moderator of the debate, was among the number who obeyed the Lord, and this brother is still an active elder of the Pembroke congregation. No further comment upon the result of the debate is needed than the above stated results. Mr. Gilbert, who was a shrewd debater of twenty-five years’ experience, became irritable the last day of the debate, perhaps owing to the fact that on that morning Bro. Abell had baptized three more of his Methodist brethren.

The last year of his life Bro. Abell moved to Tennessee. In his *farewell address* to the Virginia disciples he wrote:

"The prime of my life has been spent among you; for nearly one quarter of a century I have been your servant. I have grown gray in that service: the manner in which I performed it, God, men, and angels are witnesses of. I need not appeal to you in regard to it. I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God; I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you; I have coveted no man's gold, no man's silver, no man's apparel, no man's wisdom, might, eloquence, influence, power, honor. I have sought humbly, unpretendingly, zealously, to do the will of God, to glorify His name in the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints. To accomplish this, I have exposed myself to winter's storm and summer's heat; traveled through rain, hail, and snow, by day and by night. I have been a stranger at home; so much so, that for a season it will seem strange to my wife and children for me to remain with them. But—and it makes my heart sad when I pen it, and the tears in my eyes obscure my writing—I know, in regard to many of you among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, *I shall see your faces no more.*

"Farewell! my dear brethren and sisters, farewell. Farewell! to the rich; farewell! to the poor; farewell! to the learned; farewell! to the ignorant; farewell! to the white; farewell! to the colored; farewell! Christians; farewell! sinners; to one and all, a long, a last, *Farewell!!!* God bless you all for time and eternity. In the morning of the first resurrection, may we all arise in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and thus be 'forever with the Lord.'

"G. W. ABELL."

It was indeed a last farewell. This godly man contracted pneumonia, and passed away on the last day of the year 1874, in Murfreesboro, Tenn. His latest breath was a prayer and benediction. The eighth article of his will reads as follows:

“As I have spent the prime of my life in laboring in the cause of Christ, and thereby neglected the worldly interest of my family, I commit and commend them to the protection and guardianship of the brotherhood of Virginia, for whom I have so long and, as they know, so faithfully labored, hoping and praying that, under the blessing and providence of God, they may assist them in what they may need. And to secure this, that a copy of this Eighth Article of my will be sent to the Chairman of the first State Convention, after my death, to be read before that body.”

## ELDER PETER AINSLIE.

Virginia has been honored with three preachers of the Gospel, all of whom have borne the same name. The Peter Ainslie of to-day, who preaches in Baltimore, being a worthy son and grandson of the other two. It is of the grandfather, Peter Ainslie, that we write this sketch. He was born at a small village, seven miles west of Edinburgh, Scotland, November 27, 1788. Six months after his birth his father died, and soon after his brother, thus leaving his mother, sister and himself to battle with the world. He was forced to stay at home much with his mother, who was not strong, and this gave him but little time for school. He could read well at seven, and used to read much in the New Testament at home. He was soon obliged to relinquish school altogether, but after a lapse of eight years a Sunday school was established in the village, which enabled him to pick up many things that had hitherto been beyond his reach, owing to his lack of schooling. The superintendent, who was a near relative of his mother's, took a deep interest in him and enabled him to advance rapidly in his studies, especially in the Word of God. We shall now quote from a manuscript written by Grandfather Ainslie himself, concerning his life.

“In my fourteenth year, though not a member of the Church, I had a great desire to go as a missionary to the heathen, and, stranger still, my superintendent was in favor of such a move, but my mother, with better judgment, would not consent. In my fifteenth



year I united with the Church of Scotland. I now applied myself to the close study of the Word of God. I soon saw that the church I had joined and the Word of God were not in harmony. But it was the church of my dear mother—what I was to do I could not determine. I was satisfied that the church was wrong, but what church was right I could not decide. For some time I remained in this uncertain state of mind, though I had determined to break my connection with the church as soon as I could find a church acting in accordance with the Scriptures.

“I felt the consequences of such a move, and nothing affected me more than to sever church membership with my dear and beloved mother; and while I write these words, memory carries me back to those days of mental solicitude. During my religious struggles and in the midst of my unhappiness, an additional weight fell upon me in the death of my pious and God-loving mother.” \* \* \*

“My sister married soon after this, and moved away. I was now alone, yet not alone, for I doubled my diligence in committing the Scriptures to memory and reading every religious book I could, until my twentieth year, when my attention was called to the subjects, mode and design of baptism, and after reading, thinking and praying about the matter for six months, my mind was made up; but again, in one sense, I was alone. What to do I knew not. I knew no one who believed in immersion or any church that practiced it. I commenced to talk to the members of my church upon the subject, but I met little favor from them, though there were two who were ready to look prayerfully into the matter, and as soon as they were convinced of the importance of being immersed we looked about to find a Baptist minister, and on the 19th of March, 1809, we three were immersed by James Haldane. We asked to remain in the church

of our parents, but were refused; consequently we united with the church of Mr. Haldane." \* \*

"I was now twenty-one years old, and I had a great desire to preach the Gospel of Christ. I had been for some time taking a part in our prayer-meetings by reading, prayer and exhortation. Occasionally our pastor would call upon me to take a more public part, but I or the church never regarded it as preaching. Soon, however, I was ordained to the ministry, and on the 4th day of July, in the evening, 1809, I presented myself for the first time before the people as a preacher of the Gospel. I need not say anything about my feelings upon this occasion; I was in earnest, and felt the responsibility of the step; and if I ever felt my dependence upon the sustaining hand of God, I did that evening. Being now more determined than ever to devote my life to the ministry of the Word, and having the unanimous approbation of the church, and a favorable Providence to indicate the way, I moved to Edinburgh, where my church and educational advantages would be increased. My move was easily accomplished. In Edinburgh my most sanguine desires were fully realized. I remained there the whole of 1810. I had a desire to visit the United States of America, and after talking much with the brethren, especially with Mr. Haldane, about such a move, it was agreed that I should go under the auspices of the church, and that Mr. Haldane should give me such books as I needed. One day, while walking on the wharf, I saw a ship from Philadelphia about to sail on her return voyage, and I determined to go on her if the Lord would permit. I soon made every necessary arrangement—the church was called together, fasting, and by prayer and laying on of the hands of the presbytery, I was sent away. On the first of April, 1811, I went aboard the ship *Union*, bound for Philadelphia. Many brethren came down to the wharf to see me

off, and pronounced the blessing of God on my head. It was certainly to me an affecting separation. To go forever from the home of my birth—the resting-place of my fathers and mothers—from friends and brethren in Christ, whom I should never see in the flesh again, is an event in life never forgotten.”

Passing over his account of the voyage, we again quote from Mr. Ainslie’s manuscript:

“On the 18th of May we were fastened to the wharf in Philadelphia. Here, again, I was a stranger in a strange land, and among a strange people. No one can enter into the feelings of one in a strange land far distant from his own happy home but one who has experienced the transition. But the Christian, even in such a situation, can gather consolation from the fact that the same God who watched over him in by-gone days in his far distant earthly home is the same who will guard him in a strange land. The Lord has never forsaken me. I reported myself to the pastor of a Baptist Church, who kindly cared for me as far as I wished. I remained in the city three weeks, and as soon as I had recovered from the peculiar fatigue of the voyage, and the church was satisfied that I was a brother in Christ, I was invited to preach, which I did on several occasions. I then went to Baltimore, where I found brethren more of my way of thinking. I therefore concluded to make that my home. Here I met with many warm friends and brethren in the Lord, among them my dear brother Wm. Carman, a man of God and a friend to humanity. He mightily helped me by securing employment for me, by which I was able to replenish my almost exhausted funds. He sent me to Richmond, Virginia, to attend to some business for him, and as soon as I got through I returned to Baltimore and remained there all the winter. In the spring I went to Richmond again. I spent the whole of 1812 in the latter city and Baltimore.

"On the 5th of October, 1812, I was married to Miss Deborah McDonald, in Baltimore, Md. Her parents were from Scotland, though she was born in Maryland. She was a member of the church in Baltimore to which I had attached myself. This church numbered about twenty members. The church was not in full fellowship with the Baptist churches of the city, though she was regarded with some favor by them. The members were spoken of by our Baptist brethren as Scotch Baptists, Glassites, or Sandemanians.

"What distinguished this little band of Christians from our regular Baptist brethren consisted in this:

"1st. They believed that the Holy Scriptures were an all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, without such helps as creeds and confessions of faith drawn up by men.

"2nd. They believed that faith was the belief of the divine record or testimony, and that the Holy Spirit convinced the world of sin through that record or testimony.

"3rd. They attended to the weekly administration of the Lord's Supper and the weekly collection for the poor saints.

"4th. They had a plurality of elders, and they believed in the necessity of the presence of at least two elders in every case of discipline.

"I continued in Baltimore, attending to my secular affairs, and preaching on every Lord's Day whenever I could, until January, 1815, when I moved to Richmond, Va. Here I engaged in secular business, with great success; but I never forgot the great object I had in view in leaving my native land. I preached whenever and wherever I could. But in Richmond I labored under one great difficulty in preaching, viz., though I essayed to unite with the Baptists, my views met with little or no favor among them. However, after a while I was identified with them; but I was

never regarded as sound in the doctrines of the Baptist Church, consequently no favorable opportunity was presented for me to engage actively in the work that pressed heavily upon my heart. I desired most earnestly to be free from secular business, and to be where I could preach the truth as it is revealed in God's Word. At last, as I thought, an opportunity presented itself. I felt that the Lord had answered my prayer. Business became dull in the fall of 1818, and I had made some money, which I had invested in property in Richmond, and a farm containing 300 acres in Hanover county was offered for sale, which I bought for \$2,100. This proved to be a bad purchase. However, I remained upon it until 1820, when I disposed of it at a sacrifice.

"During my stay there I devoted much of my time to the ministry of the Word. The rest of my time was taken up in attending to my property in Richmond and farming. But I learned by experience that I was never cut out for a farmer. I was now more determined than ever to devote more of my time to preaching. But I could not do this and live in the city of Richmond, and knowing that my fellow-countryman, James Fife, had a farm in the county of Gloucester, containing about six hundred acres of land, I effected a trade of my real estate in Richmond for this farm and seven slaves.

"So in March, 1821, I moved with my family to Gloucester county. As soon as I could do so, I arranged my farming operations, and preaching became my chief business. I preached in the counties of Gloucester, Mathews, Middlesex and King and Queen.

"In Gloucester and Mathews the Baptists were few and weak, the Methodists having largely the ascendancy. Many were the jeering remarks of our Methodist friends when I boldly presented in their midst the mode and importance of immersion. I, being a

Scotchman, they spoke of me as the 'Scotch Dipper.' But none of these things move me. Though they thus spoke, they never treated me with personal indignity or discourtesy." \* \* \*

"I was called to the charge of the Baptist Church in Mathews, and though I preached every Lord's Day, I had no other regular preaching place for some time. For some two or three years my labors indicated no immediate results in additions to the churches, though I was gratified in witnessing much improvement in the religious zeal of the members of the churches and a greater disposition to study the Scriptures.

"In 1825 there was a great and general revival of religion in this section, in which I engaged most heartily. A Church was organized near my residence, of materials collected during this revival, called Ebenezer, for which I became pastor." \* \* \*

"I continued through 1825 and 1826 to preach as heretofore, and in the spring of 1827 I extended my labors to York county, and in the summer of this year a great work of grace commenced at Grafton, in that county, and large numbers united with all the Baptist churches of that section. I was called to take charge of the Grafton Church, which I accepted, and in the fall of that year I engaged an overseer for my farm in Gloucester and moved with my wife and children to Yorktown, carrying with us two servant women and their children."

Here ends the consecutive sketch of Elder Peter Ainslie, as written by himself. This brings us down to the close of the year 1827. It was about this time that the views of Mr. Campbell were first being preached in Eastern Virginia, and Bro. Ainslie, being a pupil of James Haldane, of Scotland, was already well prepared to receive the views advocated by Mr. Campbell. At this



period, however, Bro. Ainslie did not fully agree with the view of baptism for the remission of sins, as advocated by Alexander Campbell. Peter Ainslie contended that it was the answer of a good conscience, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and he was slow to accept of and preach baptism in order to remission. This tardiness on his part caused those who readily embraced the cause of reformation to look upon him as doubtful, while the regular Baptists gathered much hope from the same cause. His influence and power among the Baptists of his community and in the churches where he preached, caused the leaders of that denomination to fear the consequences should he declare himself fully in harmony with Mr. Campbell.

After settling at Yorktown, Bro. Ainslie became very popular as a preacher and was greeted with large audiences wherever he preached. He schooled the churches in the Word of God, and gradually, as he studied and preached the Word, he led them along with him to a safer mold of doctrine than that set forth by the regular Baptists. He was still a Baptist preacher, and had not yet accepted all the views of the reformers.

While living at this place, a Baptist minister, of the prejudiced, sectarian type, by the name of G. L. Corbin, wrote a pamphlet entitled "The Cat Let Out of the Bag, or Peter Ainslie Unmasked." If he thought to gain any glory, even in the Baptists ranks, by such procedure, he was mistaken. The whole affair was so weak, imbecile and suicidal that they were all ashamed of it, and advised Elder Ainslie not to publish a reply, though he had written one with that object. The reply,



in order to be effectual, had to make damaging developments against Mr. Corbin, which would have injured the Baptist cause. This Mr. Ainslie had no disposition to do, for he loved the Baptists and had many warm friends among them. Mr. Corbin was subsequently excluded from the ministry.

Shortly after moving to York, Elder Ainslie bought a farm hard by Grafton Church, and moved upon it, but soon afterward returned to his farm in Gloucester. Soon after his return his self-denying wife was taken sick, and after lingering for months on a bed of pain, passed away. She left seven children, two having died.

As soon as arrangements could be made he left home for a meeting in the upper part of Hanover county. Here he met with Andrew Broaddus. One night all the preachers, with others, lodged with a Baptist brother named Norment. This was prearranged in order to bring Elders Broaddus and Ainslie together in lengthy conversation on the questions that were then agitating all the Baptist churches in Virginia. The Baptists hoped for great results from this conversation, as Mr. Broaddus was a gifted conversationalist and a close reasoner. As soon as the conventionalities of society would permit, the conversation commenced, and continued until the short hours of the coming day. It was listened to with profound attention throughout by all except a self-conceited and excitable Baptist preacher, who would throw out his imbecile ejaculations, much to the annoyance of the gentlemanly Broaddus. As a result of the conversation neither party was convinced, but many present were induced to make

a more thorough examination of the grounds of their faith.

At the Dover Association of 1832, Bro. Ainslie was one of the six ministers ecclesiastically beheaded. The conversation with Andrew Broaddus, related above, was to sound him, and if possible save him to the ranks of the regulars. When the Dover Association was convened Mr. Ainslie was named on the committee to report upon the course the Baptists were to adopt in regard to "Campbellism." This was another effort to win him at the last moment over to their side, and at the same time give an appearance of representing the reformers on the committee. Bro. Ainslie did not attend any of their meetings, and they showed the real spirit which led them to name him as a committee-man when they placed his name on the decree as one of those withdrawn from.

In 1834 he married Miss Matilda Gregory, of King William county, and soon after settled in that county. He was at that time acting in the capacity of the first general evangelist of Tidewater district, having a field extending from the Blue Ridge to the blue sea. His eldest daughter had married Bro. Jos. Bohannon, and he had placed the rest of his children in a good boarding-school, intending to give them a good education. Directly after his second marriage, however, he again gathered his children around him in his new home. The joys of this reunited family were short-lived. Bro. Ainslie owned a negro man whose wife was owned in King and Queen and was about to be sold. The slave appealed to Bro. Ainslie to go over and buy her. Ac-

cordingly they got into a boat to cross the Mattaponi river. It was in February, and the river was just breaking up after a heavy freeze. The boat was caught between two large cakes of ice and crushed, and they were precipitated into the river. Persons on the shore saw them, but were powerless to save them. Again and again they tried to climb up on the sheets of ice, but in the struggle the rotten ice would break beneath their weight. At last they sank beneath the icy waters. The body of Bro. Ainslie was not found until six weeks later.

## ELDER DUDLEY ATKINSON.

Bro. Atkinson was born in Essex county, Virginia, February 26, 1784. As a child he was regarded as an excellent boy and was very devoted to his parents. He ever preferred to walk by the admonitions of a loving mother rather than to enter into the wildness of his schoolmates. There was something in his personality, even as a child, that made people respect and esteem him. There is an idea prevalent in the world to-day that a man to be a successful preacher must first sow his wild oats—enter into all kinds of evil—then he will be better enabled to reach sinners. Such was not the case with Dudley Atkinson, nor is it ever true. A pure mind, untainted by sin, ever has more power to lead others to God than one that has tasted the depths of sin.

From childhood he was religiously inclined. He loved good books, and was particularly fond of listening to the old Christians relate their experiences. They had mixed up with their piety much superstition, and could tell of sights, sounds, and wonderful experiences. He became deeply interested in these matters. The influence of such things coming from good people was fraught with evil. Their piety had an influence that could not be gainsaid.

At the age of twenty-four he reluctantly left home to teach a school offered him in the upper part of King William county. Though a full-grown man and surrounded by friends, such was his feeling for his aged

parents that he had little pleasure in his new surroundings. While separated from them he often visited them and provided for their wants in many ways. As long as they lived he acted toward them the part of a dutiful son, and to his latest hour he cherished their memory with a son's warmest love.

During the summer of 1808 he became acquainted with Miss Wealthy Ann Pollard, whom he married on December 22, of that year. She was given to him of the Lord. Husband and wife could not have been better suited to each other.

His experience as a teacher but better prepared him for the study of the Word of God. In vain he searched it to find the counterpart of the "Christian experiences" that he had so often listened to, but no such thing was taught in the Word. To be sure, there were many passages difficult of interpretation, but as far as the question "What must I do to be saved?" was concerned, the teaching was clear and easily understood. He believed with all his heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and able and willing to save him both from his sins and from the punishment of sin. He sincerely repented, and decided to leave the life and course of sin to walk in that of righteousness, and with no other experience than this he approached the beloved Robert B. Semple and asked to be baptized. This was done, and he became a member of the Upper College Baptist Church (now called Cattail) in King William county. He was very retiring in his manners, and never forced himself upon the notice of anyone, but opportunities were not long in developing to prove his usefulness.

Baptist ministers were not very plentiful then, and through the influence of Bishop Semple he was soon made "a licentiate."

There were in the churches of that day, as also now, those who considered their views as a test of membership and ministerial qualifications. With this class sights, sounds and dreams were regarded as tests of conversion, and to oppose them as such subjected the unfortunate one to the severest censure. Unfortunately, or fortunately, Elder Atkinson never saw a sight or heard a sound which he could not explain on natural principles. The class before referred to took this as evidence that there was something about him not entirely Baptist. When the *Christian Baptist* first made its appearance in the neighborhood the sight-seers and sound-hearers raised a lamentation, which spread far and wide. Its writings, they said, were infidelity disguised, diabolical in origin and purpose, and its editor was a stranger to grace and the regenerating influence of the Holy Ghost. To some, however, this little monthly brought clear rays of light on many a darkened passage and doctrine. Among these was Dudley Atkinson. He sought not to offend the prejudices of his hearers, but preached through Christ the remission of sins and the power of the Holy Spirit through the truth. More of his brethren were offended at what they thought he believed and did not preach than anything he did preach. Very soon religious prejudice reached its climax in the publication of the Dover Decree, and Elder Atkinson was one of those ostracized by good but erring brethren.

The year following this he was ordained to the work of the ministry by Elders Thomas M. Henley and John Du Val. From that day to the end of his life he labored faithfully to advance the kingdom of Christ in the hearts of men. He was not fitted, even in his prime, for the life of a pioneer. He loved home and its associations too tenderly, and his whole nature shrank from rough contact with the world at large. In his own church, whenever the day of meeting came, he was always to be found bearing his part in building up her waste places. He continued to preach at the Upper College for years, but the infirmities consequent upon a not very rugged constitution forced him to discontinue his monthly visits. He finally moved his membership to Corinth Church, nearer his home, and to her interest and welfare contributed the latter years of his life.

As a preacher, no one could listen to him without having his heart warmed. He was a man of love. His subjects for preaching were those of love, forbearance, kindness, gentleness, goodness, and he exalted all the virtues of the Spirit. He never voluntarily engaged in polemics, but if forced into it he was found well posted and strong in facts and arguments, while at the same time he was as gentle as his heart was good. He would not intentionally wound the feelings of any one, and if he was in conversation with one who did not respect his convictions or feelings, he would close the conversation and withdraw. Being a man of sound judgment and of mild and gentle manners, his society was sought by the good of all churches, and his visits at the



bedside of the sick or to the chamber of sorrow were highly prized. He was often afflicted himself and often bowed down with melancholy as a consequence of his poor health. During these visitations the world was to him a blank, his life a failure, and his former usefulness a myth. While in such a state of mind, his dear wife was the only one who could cheer him up or arrest his thoughts. She was a woman devoted to the Lord, possessed of a vivacious mind, and always cheerful. She died but a short time before he passed away. After her death, he, being well stricken in years, sought the seclusion his surviving children were glad to give him, among whom, during the war, and in the arms of a beloved daughter, he closed his eyes upon earth and all its cares for a resting place with God.

## ELDER JAMES M. BAGBY.

This devoted child of God was born in Louisa county, Virginia, March 27, 1800. His father, James Bagby, was in straitened circumstances, consequently he could not give his children the early educational advantages that he desired. But, though his father as well as himself had to labor day by day, his education was not neglected. His mother was a woman of strong mind and great determination of character, and she not only taught him to read and write, but instilled into his character those principles of manly virtue and integrity which are only to be obtained in the college of a mother's love. The nursery where a sensible and loving mother presides is, after all, the school where the truly good and great are made. Impressions are made there which are never after erased, nor can they be. As imperishable as the mother love which prompted them are those gentle words which in the nursery fell from a mother's lips. Memories of later events may perish, but they remain.

This boy—James—was the constant object of his mother's care. Thus he grew up knowing nothing of the wiles of the evil one, nor of the power he exerted over the young and thoughtless. It is not to be wondered at that, naturally desiring youthful society, he formed unfortunate associations; and the consequences of such associations were marked with waywardness and, to some extent, dissipation. During

this period of his life he was sent away to school, accompanied by the prayers of loved ones, from which school he usually returned at the close of each week. The Baptist brethren had a prayer-meeting at private houses in the neighborhood of the school every Friday afternoon. On one of these occasions he attended, but gave no attention to the exhortations nor to the exercises, but acted with wanton levity, and was more disposed to mock than attend to the religious exercises.

From the meeting he started for home, and the journey gave him an opportunity to think—to think of that of which he had just been guilty at the prayer-meeting—of his nursery training, and of a vow he had made during a recent illness; and being belated by engrossed thought he was obliged to stop at a neighbor's house for the night. That night his sense of sinfulness drove sleep from his eyes, and before he left there in the morning the truth of God, with its blessed promises and awful threats, impressed him with a consciousness of his guilty and accountable state. On his way home every step but increased his alarm and conviction. He determined to go and see an old negro, who was a Baptist and regarded as an earnest Christian, and unbosom his state to him, but from him he could learn nothing. This rather increased his agony than removed it. On Tuesday morning following he returned to school, and on entering the room his teacher was so struck with his changed and melancholy appearance that he enquired concerning his health and that of his dear ones at home. James then related to him

how he had scoffed at religion at the prayer-meeting; how he had broken a solemn vow made to God while upon a sick bed, and trampled upon a mother's heart. His mental agony was intense. He had no pleasure in his studies that day, and in the afternoon his teacher accompanied him to the house of a very well-read Baptist family named Diggs. The object of the visit was explained, and they listened to his tale of sorrow and anguish, which he related with great minuteness. No sooner had he got through than Mrs. Diggs exclaimed: "Mr. Bagby, you must be converted." He, knowing the lady well, and having great confidence in her intelligence and goodness of heart, received great comfort from this announcement, and was soon composed. His teacher had much conversation with him during the week, and on the Lord's Day following there was a meeting at Fork meeting-house, at which Elder B. Watkins preached. After preaching Mr. Bagby walked forward and related his experience. He was cordially received, and some time afterward was baptized by Elder Timothy Swift, and united with Hopeful Church, in Hanover county.

Although his conversion was sudden and unexpected, and as some thought mysterious, there was nothing about it that was unaccountable from a perfectly natural standpoint. A more excitable temperament than Bro. Bagby's might have imagined heavenly voices and other wonderful accompaniments, such as were commonly supposed to be a part of conversion, in that day. His deep anxiety and depression arose

from not knowing his own condition, or understanding what God would have him do under the circumstances. His relief after leaving the home of Mrs. Diggs was occasioned by the assurance of that good woman that he was converted. Of the process of conversion he was as ignorant as she was, and rejoiced that the supposed mysterious process had been working out in his being through the divine election and grace of God. Had he been acquainted with God's plan of salvation or had one to guide him aright, as he guided others in later years, he might have been saved much anxiety and deed despair. However,

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform,"

and it is indeed a mystery how that sometimes, when the blind lead the blind, God keeps them both from falling into the ditch. In Bro. Bagby's case the results were apparent, hence we will say nothing further as to the means.

Bro. Bagby was an exceedingly conscientious man, and in after years, when his mind was much better informed as to God's will, he looked back upon those ill-informed days of seeking after God and became dissatisfied with his baptism. He had based his hope of pardon upon his feelings rather than upon his faith and obedience. He had been baptized as a sign of the remission of his sins, having already felt the burden lifted from his heart, rather than *for* the remission of his sins. Bro. Bagby was not one to give to baptism an undue prominence, neither was he one to wrest it from its scriptural place as the culminating act of

regeneration; but had he been scripturally baptized? To be right before God was his highest aspiration, and if he could be right, he was determined to be so at any cost. Hence, after much reading, thought, prayer and conversation with his friends, he was rebaptized. Had Bro. Bagby lived in the age in which we live he would no doubt have spared himself this repetition. As it was, sectarianism had clouded nearly all the teachings and practices of the Bible, and to conform to the Word of God was a praiseworthy motive. As to the validity of the former action, he had believed with all his heart, had become deeply penitent, and in baptism he had been buried with Christ, and had arisen to walk in newness of life. Because he thought his sins were forgiven before he was baptized, in no wise changed or invalidated his act of obedience.

Bro. Bagby never insisted that others under similar circumstances should be rebaptized. With him it was purely a personal matter, not a doctrine. In 1850 Dr. Du Val refused to admit, without rebaptism, a lady who had been immersed by a preacher who had himself simply been sprinkled. Bro. Bagby wrote an article on this point, which was published in the *Christian Intelligencer* and copied in the *Harbinger*. He closes this article as follows:

“But regarding this question still as one of opinion and not of faith, I conclude, as at present advised, that by assuming a positive answer to the question with which we set out, and acting accordingly, we might keep out of the Church of Christ some of his saved ones. For himself hath said—and blessed be his name—‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.’”

In the summer of 1827 Bro. Bagby immersed into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit several persons residing in the vicinity of Fork Church. These desired to be received into the above mentioned (Baptist) church. It became a question with the church as to whether they should be received into fellowship or not. The formula used by Bro. Bagby in their baptism was, "I immerse thee into the name," etc., instead of, "I baptize thee in," etc. At this rate the name *Baptist* would soon be a thing of the past, and the dignity of the church could not overlook, much less accept, such a change. There was one old negro who was very anxious to be taken into fellowship with these brethren and thus become a full-fledged Baptist; so they finally agreed to hear his experience, and if acceptable they would rebaptize him. On the first Lord's Day in June, 1829, he related his experience, and was accordingly rebaptized by Timothy T. Swift. The poor negro had been disappointed so often that when he finally felt the opprobrious epithets of his fellowmen washed away he could no longer contain himself, but, as he came up out of the water, joyfully shouted, "I ain't no Campbellite now!"

We cite this to show the difference between a rebaptism which, as in the case of Bro. Bagby, however unnecessary, was the result of a conscientious mind, and that of one which was required simply to build up and sustain sectarian interests. The former was unnecessary but no mockery, the latter was both unnecessary and a mockery. Bro. Bagby never re-



quired it in others as a term of admission into the kingdom.

We will now return to Bro. Bagby's career after first uniting with Hopeful Church. He was considered quite an acquisition. He was zealous and determined in his religious positions, and a good speaker, being possessed of a natural eloquence, and an easy, graceful manner that gave a polish to all his talks. He had a very sharp, piercing eye, that made opponents shrink before him. It is not surprising that with these attainments, combined with a good English education, he was soon regarded as one destined to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. His brethren, who loved him and clustered about him their best hopes, manifested their confidence in him by having him ordained to the ministry in Hopeful Church. Up to this time he had accepted most of the Calvinistic extravagances of Baptist theology. Dreams, visions, sounds and other fanatical experiences related by zealous converts soon made his thoughtful mind turn to the Bible for their counterpart, but there he found none. About this time the *Christian Baptist* fell into his hands, and he became a regular reader of it. This stimulated him to a more complete study of God's Word, and soon he began to plead for a return to the Christianity of the New Testament. Few now living can appreciate the cost of such a course. His brethren of yesterday became his avowed enemies. As they could bring no charge against his moral character they were forced, against their will, and much to their chagrin, to give him an honorable dismissal from the

Church. In order to cover his pathway with thorns, at a church meeting a committee of two were appointed to demand his license to preach. This he refused to surrender upon a demand, though he was willing to listen to the committee if they were bearers of a request. This was too humiliating for a powerful denomination to be held in abeyance by a young man standing virtually alone in the midst of his enemies. Soon after this he applied for license to solemnize the rite of marriage. One of his former brethren was a member of the court, and saw that if he retired from the bench the court could not proceed. This was done, but the spectators saw through the move and soon had another magistrate in place, and the application was granted. The meeting-houses were now closed against him and every effort resorted to to prevent him from having a hearing; but so much the more did his congregation increase and his popularity extend. Another of his former brethren, who was very active in throwing every difficulty in his pathway, in a year or two aspired to political promotion; and as Bro. Bagby had become a power in the county, wishing to secure his influence, he wrote him an apology for his religious intolerance. This was too much for Bro. Bagby. He could see how a religionist could be blinded by prejudice so as to resort to intolerance and act very unworthily. With this view he bore with patience the many hard things that were said and done against him; but when a man could set aside for political promotion, that which he had already told

him was the conscientious religious conviction of his heart, his confidence in him was gone.

The author has often heard it related by the friends and descendants of Bro. Bagby that at one time religious intolerance rose to such a height that his opponents threatened to burn him at the stake. Whether or not this threat was actually made, it is certain that only the laws of the land ever kept many of our forefathers from personal violence, so deep-seated was the religious intolerance of that day.

Soon after his separation from the Baptists, he, with others from several churches, and some who had been recently baptized upon a confession of their faith in Christ, built a meeting-house in the lower end of Lousia county, which they named Bethany. This, we understand, was the first meeting-house built by our brethren in Eastern Virginia. Mention of this has already been made in the first chapter of this work. Bro. Bagby was chosen their regular evangelist, which position he faithfully occupied until the day of his death.

Much has already been said of the conscientiousness of this earnest man. He owned several slaves, but would not permit his children to have a piano, for which his slaves would have to toil, bearing the burden and heat of many days. Although he often preached showing the utter abrogation of the Law, yet he always refused to have his picture taken because of the second commandment: "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything in heaven or earth." These little incidents show how truly he

sought to serve God. While we regard them as vagaries, we cannot but admire the motive that prompted him to forsake all that was vain and worldly in order fully to serve Christ.

He was married to Miss Catherine Turner Cocke in 1826, and in her found a true partner in all his sorrows and joys. They had four children, three daughters and one son. Bro. Bagby died in 1856, surrounded by his family. His work will ever live.

Bro. Peter Ainslie (Second), in writing a sketch of him in the *Christian Examiner*, in 1871, said: "He was a good and laborious man, in fact he worked beyond his strength. He was a self-sacrificing man. He would work all the week, in winter's cold and summer's heat, and preach on Lord's Day for churches which never considered properly that the laborer was worthy of his hire. Many a night, after working hard from early morn until late dewy eve, tired and worn by fatigue, he would have to sit up studying, in order to preach the coming day to those who at that very moment were reposing in their downy beds. Brethren, these things ought not to have been, nor ought they now to exist. Some time last year, I visited the late home of our departed brother, and enjoyed the hospitality of our widowed sister and two of her children; but my enjoyment was to some extent blighted, as I could see from where I sat the waving boughs that overshadowed the resting place of the sainted dead. And when at night we were about to retire, the very same New Testament, well worn, and bearing the

evidences upon its pages that it had been closely read, was put into my hands, I felt not only that I was handling the Word of God, but also a sacred memento of my brother's fidelity. Faithful man of God—

“ ‘Tossed no more on life's rough billow,  
All the storms of sorrow fled  
Death hath found a quiet pillow  
For the aged Christian's head.  
Peaceful slumbers  
Guarding now his lowly bed.’ ”

## DR. CHESTER BULLARD.

Dr. Chester Bullard was the child of Baptist parents. His early childhood was spent in Montgomery county, in Southwest Virginia, near the source of the Roanoke river, about three miles from Christiansburg. This section was rife with irreligion, there being but three professing Christians among the four hundred inhabitants of Christiansburg. In the midst of such society it was the constant prayer of Bro. Bullard's parents that he might be led to Christ, and the family altar was never neglected. How much better would be the condition of our children under the superior advantages of this later age if we never let the fires on the family altar die out. As Chester Bullard grew up into manhood he showed a remarkable interest in matters of religion, and finally began to experience much distress of mind concerning his salvation. He had been taught the prevailing doctrine of spiritual regeneration, with all the attending phenomena of signs and visions, and earnestly did he seek for that feeling of assurance that his sins were pardoned.

About this time the Methodists made their appearance in the community, and Bro. Bullard early became a seeker at the mourners' bench. He finally professed conversion, but could not subscribe to many of the doctrines of that body, so he remained unconnected with any religious body. He was now seventeen years of age and began to study the Bible with renewed vigor, and devoted much time to this pursuit. He

was possessed of an independent mind, a deep love of God, and an earnest desire to learn his will, and with these qualifications he soon saw that after faith in Christ and repentance from sin, baptism was required.

About this time his eldest brother happened to be travelling in Pennsylvania, and, after supper at a public house, found, upon retiring to his room from the uncongenial company at the inn, a number of the *Christian Baptist* lying on the table. He read this before retiring, and was so much pleased with it that he advised his brother-in-law upon his return to Montgomery county, Va., to subscribe for it, telling him that the editor was a half century ahead of his age. This advice was taken, and the last number of the *Christian Baptist* and the first of the *Millennial Harbinger* were duly received, but for lack of interest in the matters treated most of the numbers were thrown aside unread.

During that year (1831) Mr. Bullard, who had studied medicine a little, decided to complete his studies with Dr. D. J. Chapman, near the Sulphur Springs, in Giles county. Here, where the Sinking Creek flows for four miles under Thomas mountain and empties itself beneath the cliffs into New River, he took up the study of medicine. But religious matters were uppermost in his mind. He had decided to be immersed, but could find no one to immerse him except the Baptists, and if immersed by them he would have to unite with that denomination, as they baptized into the Baptist Church. This he was unwilling to submit to, as he could not approve of many



of their tenets sufficiently to unite with them. During this period of his isolation Landon Duncan, being tax assessor for the county, happened to be in the neighborhood on official business. Since his baptism by the "White Pilgrim," Duncan had become something of a preacher. On this visit he met Dr. Bullard, and the two soon fell into a conversation on the matters of religion, uppermost in both minds. Mr. Bullard freely communicated his views and wishes, and, although he frankly expressed his dissent from some of the views held by Mr. Duncan, the latter agreed to baptize him. This was done without delay, and Bro. Bullard now felt himself qualified by obedience to proclaim the simple gospel of a risen Christ.

After his baptism Chester Bullard at once began to labor in the word and doctrine, delivering his first discourse on the evening of the day in which he was baptized. He avoided the speculative doctrines of the day, such as that concerning the atonement, with which Landon Duncan and the Christian Connection were much occupied. On the contrary, he presented simple views of the Gospel, showing that faith comes not as a gift of the Holy Spirit, but by hearing the Word of God; and that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Two years of hard labor passed before a single soul made the good confession and was baptized for the remission of sins. The seed he had been diligently sowing had taken root, and now the harvest time was near at hand. In a short time a small band had been gathered and formed themselves into a Church of Christ. This congregation met near

the source of the Catawba. By degrees those who were members of the Christian Connection, including Landon Duncan, gave in their adhesion to the new "Bullardite" movement, as it was called, and one James Redpath and others began to aid in the public ministry. From 1835 to 1840 a number of churches were organized throughout that section.

In 1839 Dr. Bullard happened, while at the home of his brother-in-law, to pick up a copy of the *Harbinger*, which turned out to be Mr. Campbell's "Extra on Remission." Up to this time he had shared the common prejudice against what was termed "Campbellism." He was now surprised and delighted with the new views this Extra gave of the Gospel, and immediately sought out all the back numbers of the *Harbinger*. He was overjoyed to find how clear and consistent were Mr. Campbell's views, and how different they were from the slanderous misrepresentations that had been circulated through pulpit and press. He immediately began to circulate these writings, and preached with greater clearness than before the faith once delivered to the saints; being strengthened by the thought that he was not alone in the work he had already been doing in a small way, but surrounded by a host of brethren, all laboring in the same cause. Hearing that Mr. Campbell was to visit Charlottesville in 1840, Dr. Bullard decided to meet him. They met and had many lengthy interviews during the few days of Mr. Campbell's visit, and formed an acquaintance and mutual admiration that continued through life.

On a notable occasion the Methodists chose one of their preachers, T. J. Stone, to represent them in a debate with Dr. Bullard on the subject of baptism. The debate was to be held in a grove at a place some distance from Dr. Bullard's home, and he had to start the day before to get there. Late in the afternoon of the first day's journey the Doctor fell in with the preacher who was to be his opponent of the following day. Mr. Stone had been studying the Campbell and Rice Debate in search of argument to sustain his side of the question. As they rode along together their talk turned on the debate to be held the next day, and Bro. Bullard noticed rather a lack of confidence in the language of his opponent. The wily Doctor adjusted the conversation so that he might find out the cause of this, and soon came to the conclusion that his opponent had but little relish for the affair, and, in short, in his research his confidence in affusion had been upset. Bro. Bullard finally said, "Bro. Stone, you better let me baptize you to-morrow instead of debating." Mr. Stone answered that if it were not for one or two objections, he would.

That night they spent at Mr. Stone's home, and the quick-witted Doctor soon perceived that one of the greatest objections was Stone's wife. Accordingly he gave her much attention, and the three searched the Scriptures till the small hours of the night.

A large crowd was assembled next day to hear the debate. Bro. Bullard announced that there would be no debate, but that he would preach that morning and Bro. Stone in the afternoon, also that there would

be an immersion directly after the morning services. Much to the surprise of all, both Bro. Stone and his wife presented themselves for baptism when the invitation was given. This couple are still living, having preached the Old Jerusalem gospel for many years in Virginia.\*

Dr. Bullard travelled all over Virginia preaching, baptized thousands, and organized a great number of churches. For many years he was the only real preacher of the reformation in Southwestern Virginia. He was an earnest man, a strong preacher, an exhorter of great force and an untiring worker. He lived to see much fruit of his early labors and enjoyed the honor, esteem and love of all who knew him.

\*Bro. Stone has passed away since this was written.

## REUBEN LINDSAY COLEMAN.

Reuben Lindsay Coleman was born May 13, 1807, near Scottsville, Va. His parents were Baptists, and he was early of a religious turn of mind. The story of his conversion is not unlike that of Dr. Bullard. When only nine years of age the death of his mother produced a profound religious impression and led him to much reflection and prayer. At the death of his eldest brother, when Reuben was sixteen years old, these early impressions were so deepened that he resolved to become a Christian. Here arose a new difficulty. He knew not how to enter upon the Christian life. The prevailing theology of that day taught that he must wait for the Spirit to give evidence of pardon, that this must be sought with prayer; that he must become dejected and downcast until such time as that the Spirit should bring to him the joys of salvation. To attain this end he attended a meeting in the Methodist Church near his home, and sought peace at the mourners' bench. Many prayers were offered for him, but he failed to find the peace he sought. Bro. Coleman was not of an emotional nature, to be easily misled by his feelings. When he sought for a sign of forgiveness, he looked for something more than that which found its genesis in the excitement of the hour, and would not be deceived. He sought a change of heart when a change of heart would have been the worst thing that could come to him. He already loved the Lord and hated sin; had his heart

(i. e., affections) been changed, he would not love the Lord but would love sin. He had both believed and repented but knew it not, because of the cloud superstition had cast over his mind. Many there be who seek a change of heart when their heart is already changed. They look for some inward spiritual testimony when the best testimony that could be offered is their own obedience. For three years Bro. Coleman applied himself to the study of his Bible with such earnestness that his health finally gave way. Realizing that he was a sinner that desired salvation, and that Christ came to save such, he asked himself: "Why am I not saved? Christ needs not to be made willing by the intercession of prayers, for 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' I love God and the people of God. I pray to God and desire to serve him, yet have no assurance that my sins are forgiven." He saw that both God and himself being willing, nothing remained but for him to become an obedient servant of the kingdom. He determined to offer himself for baptism. This he did to the Baptist Church, and though he could give no experience of acceptance with God, they regarded his experience as an evidence of the working of the Spirit of God, and declared him a fit subject to receive God's appointed ordinance. No sooner did he arise from the waters of obedience and the bath of regeneration than he felt that evidence he had so long sought in vain. His faith was now made perfect in obedience. The dark clouds that had bothered him passed away. He knew he was saved because the Spirit witnessed with his spirit

that he was a child of God. It was a part of the testimony of the Spirit that "Whosoever believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," and again the same Spirit testified, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." This was the "witness of the Spirit," and the witness of *his* spirit was that it had become subject and obedient to the Spirit of God. The Spirit bore witness with his spirit that he was a child of God when his life testified with the Word of God. In both was the Spirit bearing witness.

Soon after his baptism Bro. Coleman began to accompany Gilbert Mason on his preaching tours. Mr. Mason was a young Baptist preacher, and after much urging he induced his companion to take a text and deliver a sermon. Soon after this the two were urged to hold a series of meetings at Charlottesville, which they did, and organized a Church of about sixty members. This was probably about the year 1831.

Mr. Coleman early became a reader of the *Christian Baptist*, and during the Constitutional Convention in 1830 he heard for the first time the principles of the reformation advocated by Alexander Campbell, in Richmond. On this occasion Mr. Campbell discoursed for three hours on the relation of the Jewish and Christian Covenants. Mr. Campbell was at that time connected with the Baptist Church. Mr. Coleman embraced the views set forth, and became one of the most zealous fellow-workers of this prince of reformers.



Soon after the meeting at Charlottesville, Bro. Coleman was ordained pastor of the church there by Elders John Goss and Porter Cleveland. This was in May, 1831, and he continued to serve this church for many years. Late in the year 1835 the church was divided by a minority, who tried to exclude the majority, as related in the Ninth Chapter of our Historical Sketch, and Bro. Coleman continued with the main body of the church. These threw aside sectarian practices and reorganized themselves as a Church of Christ. The same year, in company with Bro. James W. Goss, he began the publication of the *Christian Publisher*, the first paper published by the reformation in Eastern Virginia.

Bro. Coleman soon came to be looked upon as one of the leading reformers of his State, and often accompanied Mr. Campbell on his preaching tours. On one occasion, when the two were on a visit to Philadelphia, Mr. Campbell announced that Bro. Coleman was present and would speak alternately with him during the evenings of the week. Accordingly Mr. Coleman spoke the next evening, but feeling that the people would rather hear Mr. Campbell he next day took the train for home, and left Mr. Campbell, as he said, "to alternate with himself."

No better description of Bro. Coleman can be given than the following from the pen of Mr. Campbell in the *Harbinger* of 1845:

"His eloquence is truly evangelical. It is the eloquence of good sense, of refined sentiment, of deep feeling, and of impassioned earnestness. He has been

so much in communion with apostles and prophets, so long and so intimately conversant with their writings, as to have caught their spirit and acquired their solemn and impressive manner of presenting the Will of God and its sovereign claims upon the affection and the acquiescence of all his hearers."

The above description gives a vivid picture of the impression produced by this Gospel preacher. He reminded his hearers of one of the old prophets. An ungodly man once said that he would go farther to hear Lindsay Coleman say "O Lord!" than to listen to a sermon by any other preacher that ever lived.

Bro. Coleman was one of the representatives chosen by the disciples to represent them at the Union Conference in Richmond, in 1866, and took an important part in that conference. He was the lifelong friend and co-laborer of Geo. W. Abell, who was led to the clear light of the Gospel through the preaching of Bro. Coleman, as related in the life of Bro. Abell. He died in Florida, April 21, 1880.

## BENJAMIN CREEL.

“Parson Creel,” as he was familiarly called, was born in Fauquier county, Va., in 1803. He was the son of George and Mary Creel. His mother, Mary Ball, was a relative of the mother of President Washington. He was twice married, the first time to Mary Ellen Carpenter when he was twenty-seven years of age. He was the father of twelve children, all by his first marriage, and lived to see his children’s children unto the fifth generation.

Bro. Creel was a close student of the Bible, even in his boyhood, and professed religion at an early age, uniting with the Baptist Church.

He had only three months’ schooling, but acquired a good knowledge of grammar and the fundamentals of education by close application to his books at home, and during the long winter evenings he stored away in his mind many useful facts, by the light of the pine knot. When quite a young man he felt called to the ministry, and was encouraged by Joseph A. Mansfield, a Baptist preacher, who then had the care of Good Hope Baptist Church, in Madison county. During his ministry as a Baptist he built up Priddy’s Creek and Earlsyville Churches, in Albemarle county, organized Spring Hill Church, and served Liberty Church, in Greene county, for twenty years.

“Parson Creel” was a man that would attract attention in any company of men. He was not considered a handsome man, but his fine, intelligent black eyes

seemed to partake of every varying emotion of the mind, and their brilliancy lighted up his otherwise plain features. His mouth indicated firmness, but the pleasant humor lurking around it relieved the general harshness of his mobile face. His dress was of plain homespun; indeed, anything else would not have been in keeping with his plain, open nature. Truth, honor, firmness, and great will power were characteristics that enabled him to surmount the difficulties that lie in the path of every life. He was candid even to bluntness, and possessed an intuition that enabled him to read people at a glance. He scorned a hypocrite or a dissembler. Dr. Jennings, a zealous Methodist of Greene county, said that "Mr. Creel was a man who was neither ashamed nor afraid to express his sentiments under any and all circumstances."

Bro. Creel was a tinner by trade, and also worked as a shoemaker, a blacksmith and a farmer, raising his large family by manual labor, as the churches for which he labored paid him little or nothing. He acquired considerable property by his first wife, but did not spend much time in efforts to augment it, so his financial career was not a great success. He preferred to labor in the Master's vineyard without money and without price. He often preached in private homes or in the woods, and often rode many miles in bad weather to marry couples, receiving for such service, "I thank you."

Some interesting anecdotes are told of this quaint preacher. On one occasion in the Blue Ridge, after uniting a couple in marriage, he was requested to ar-

range the waiters and show them how to walk to the table. He stepped right off, saying as he did so, "Follow me!" which they did.

For many years Benjamin Creel led a quiet, simple life, discharging his duties as pastor of several Baptist churches, and at intervals working at his trade. But uneventful as this period may have seemed, it was fraught with great responsibility. He had installed himself tutor of an especially rich mind, and every moment that could be taken from his other duties found him poring over his books. He had surrounded himself with a few well-chosen volumes on many subjects, but his especial delight was in ancient histories and books bearing upon Biblical history. The Bible was the supreme work, and the final decision upon any question must be derived from it if within its scope.

Thus the years passed, and the great epoch of his life approached with a rapidity that no human power could stay.

It was in the year 1859 that A. B. Walthall and George W. Abell came to Stanardsville, Greene county, and preached the Old Jerusalem Gospel. They were scoffed at and derided. But in spite of the opprobrium, over twenty souls were baptized by them. The sectarians hurled their shafts of ridicule, and sinners vied with them in seeing which could heap the greatest insults on the little band of disciples of their much persecuted master. Finally it was whispered that Bro. Creel was showing great interest in the meeting. Since it began he had been a regular attendant. Some of his Baptist brethren misjudged his motive when they

said among themselves, "Now we'll get the truth about these heretics." But they saw their mistake when, in reply to their interrogations, he said, "Those brethren are preaching the Bible as I understand it." In that moment they forgot what their dear old pastor had done for them during his years of faithful service. They felt that he was disgracing himself and his churches. The entire county was in a turmoil. Some refused to believe that a man of Mr. Creel's sense and stability of character would countenance such impostors.

While matters stood thus, Bros. Walthall and Abell closed the meeting at Stanardsville. The following Lord's day was Bro. Creel's appointment at Liberty (Baptist) Church, in the mountains, on Middle river. Brethren Walthall and Abell also were there. The emblems of the Lord's body and blood were spread upon His table. Little did that large audience know of the sacrifice Parson Creel had decided to make. Standing by the table of his Lord, he addressed his "dear brethren and sisters," and told them that for twenty years he had believed and taught the same doctrine that Walthall and Abell were teaching, and asked if there was any reason why he should refuse to fellowship them at the Lord's table.

The awful silence that pervaded the old church was ominous. It was the supreme moment of his life, and he knew it. He had put his hand to the plow and did not look back, although he read his sentence in the sea of faces before him. The tension of that silence could last but a moment. In the wild confusion and general

excitement that followed, he stood, tall, grand, imposing, and immovable, as if chiseled from the granite rock. Perhaps his calm self-possession saved the disgrace of a riot in the house of God

Above the low, angry murmurings of the swaying crowd arose loud, angry denunciations and false accusations. He realized his position, and his very bearing was as oil upon the troubled waters; but his Baptist brethren were determined upon the proscription of this "new-born Campbellite."

He was arraigned before Pleasant Grove Church and his course denounced. Bible in hand, he calmly made his defence, dealing sledgehammer blows from the Word of Truth. Every proposition he laid down he asked them, "Is that right, or is it not? If not, speak out." But they could make no reply. He stood upon the bedrock of truth. They could separate him from their fellowship, but they could not separate him from the truth. In his preaching or his views there was little if any change. Bro. Abell wrote of him:

"Bro. Creel is indeed and in truth a Nathanael of a man, an Israelite in whom there is no guile. Nor does he put on his silk or kid or velvet gloves to do his work, nor has he learned to 'daub with untempered mortar,' but with merciless hands he raises the ponderous sledge, which falls with mighty force upon the stones of error, which crumble beneath the mighty blow. Bro. Creel is among the very few men with whom I have met who, unaided by any earthly guide, but directed by the light of heaven, discovered from the Word of God that baptism to the believing penitent is 'for the remission of sins.' This doctrine for a



number of years he preached among the Baptist fraternity, where he would have been now, with many other faithful, honest-hearted men, if he, with them, had only been permitted untrammelled to declare the 'whole counsel of God' as proclaimed by the Apostles and evangelists."

Many members of the Baptist churches in the section where he preached followed Bro. Creel, and Rochelle Church, in Madison county, was soon organized with twenty-three members. While they were building a place of worship he preached in private houses. He served this church as pastor until he was eighty years old, when he resigned as pastor, but continued to preach occasionally for six or seven years longer, and after that conducted several funerals.

Bro. Creel was a very witty man, and never to be surpassed in a joke. Often, after preaching, some of his Baptist brethren would tell him that he had preached a "good Campbellite sermon." His answer was, "I preach the Bible; I don't know what Campbellites are."

The evening of his life was spent peacefully and happily in the bosom of his family and in visiting among his children and grandchildren.

He died in 1899 at the ripe age of ninety-six years and three days. His work lives and will live for years to come.

## ELDER JOHN CURTIS.

Elder John Curtis, son of Edmund and Ann Curtis, was born in York county, Virginia, May 15, 1801. As a boy he was not fond of books, and although possessed of some property, his early education was neglected. As a young man he was active and gay, mingled much in society, and was fond of outdoor sports, especially the fox hunt and the deer chase. But though essentially a man of the world, he enjoyed the respect and esteem of all who knew him. On the 18th of December, 1823, he married Miss Virginia E. Goodwin, and by the uniting of their means and property they had enough to keep them from fear of want. They loved company and the pleasures of social life, and having the means to gratify their desires, they indulged themselves. He was possessed of a fine, manly form and gentlemanly bearing, a typical Virginia gentleman, and she was considered beautiful; hence their home was very popular.

In July, 1827, Elder Peter Ainslie began a protracted meeting at Grafton Church. People came from far and near to hear the word of life. The whole church continued in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. Those who had left their first love returned, and all the members were alive to their opportunities. The immediate results of the meeting were the confession and baptism of fifty-two willing souls, Bro. Curtis being one of the number.

From the day when Bro. Curtis united with Grafton Church the change in him was noticed by all, and his brethren looked up to him as a leader. His soul longed for the fullness of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, and he saw the barrenness of his life. He longed for knowledge, and applied himself to the improvement of his education, studying the Bible meantime. He soon began to pray in public, then to read, and finally to speak. His speech, as he often said, was "of his own ignorance, and of the love of God that passeth all understanding." In 1829 he was made a deacon, and in 1830 was ordained a minister of the Gospel. He was a devout man and full of faith, loving God and fearing no man. In the pulpit he never toned down the Word to suit the delinquencies of his hearers, but shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God. He was a strong man, fluent in speech and untiring in the work of the Lord. He always commanded good audiences and close attention at his home church, and when visiting other churches his hearers never went away unsatisfied or disappointed. Had he improved his early advantages in educating himself few men would have surpassed him in the pulpit. None could more thoroughly realize the result of this early neglect than did he, and he made every effort to atone for it. He was gifted in polemics, and in the course of his latter years held two debates upon religious subjects. In the first of these he gained much for the cause of truth. In the midst of the last debate he passed from this world. He had long been a sufferer from heart disease, especially if

he exerted himself. On this account many of his friends were opposed to his engaging in the debate. But the advocacy of the truth was dearer to him than life and health. He commenced his first speech in this debate in Grafton pulpit, and after speaking a short time stopped, took his seat, and in a few minutes breathed his last. This took place on the 29th day of October, 1844.

## ELDER JOHN DANGERFIELD.

This pioneer preacher was a native of Essex county, Virginia. He was born in the year 1800, in the vicinity of Tappahannock, and remained in the county during his minority. His father was a man of means, and he was given a liberal education and admitted to practice at the bar. Being a young man of good education, pleasing address, a thorough gentleman, and handsome in personal appearance, he was naturally a favorite, and regarded as a prize by the fair daughters of Essex. But, with all these social qualifications, Mr. Dangerfield was noted for his sobriety and the care with which he chose his associations. The fast young man and the gentleman of pleasure were not numbered among his intimates; hence that class regarded him as proud and exclusive.

In 1820 he married Miss Judith Braxton, a highly accomplished young lady, and a descendant of Carter Braxton, whose name is immortalized as one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. After his marriage Mr. Dangerfield moved to King and Queen county, where he acquired a considerable law practice in the courts of the adjacent counties. In 1825 he became interested in his soul's welfare, and obeyed the Lord in baptism, uniting with the Glebe Landing Baptist Church. After this the practice of law lost whatever charms it may have had for him before, and he soon after decided to enter the ministry. As a lawyer, he had persistently

refused to undertake all cases of doubtful propriety. This course had lost him many a plump fee, but secured for him a clear conscience and the confidence of honest and good men. The joys that he became a partaker of when he put on Christ he desired to impart to others, so he gradually withdrew from his law practice. He moved to Mathews county and taught school, occasionally conducting a case before the county court. Here his work in the church was so highly valued, that they soon extended to him a call to become its pastor. The invitation was accepted, and he soon had the confidence and esteem of the whole community. Through his ministry the Church took on new life and numbers were added to the saved. He was a thorough Bible student and fond of the old landmarks of the primitive Gospel. His mottoes were, "How readest thou?" "What saith the Word?" "To the law and the testimony."

There were certain members of this Baptist Church who loved the landmarks of Baptism better than those of the pure Gospel. They worshipped with the face turned toward Philadelphia, instead of toward Jerusalem. The Philadelphia Confession was of more authority to them than the teaching of Christ and his Apostles. This spirit was the cause of internal dissensions, as many of the members showed much zeal in opposing a restoration of the ancient order of things. They either could not or would not see the scripturalness of the plea that Bro. Dangerfield was presenting, and misrepresented the teaching of their pastor and his fellow-reformers. As in ancient times, they stopped

up their ears and filled the air with theological bone-dust. In these latter days they try to tell us that we have changed much and have returned to an evangelical faith. Little do they realize that what their forefathers knew as "Campbellism" was not the sentiments or views of Mr. Campbell, but it was the views imputed to him and his co-laborers by their enemies.

In 1833, the year after the Dover Decree was passed, the Dover Association met at Williamsburg. Here a great effort was made to have the Decree of the previous year either modified or rescinded. Some peculiar measures were adopted by the authorities to maintain their control of matters, for a fuller account of which see Chapter VI. of our Historical Sketch. The Mathews Church, being under the pastoral care of Elder Dangerfield, was looked upon with suspicion and her letter laid aside unread until the Association could be formed from the orthodox members present. After her letter was opened and found to remonstrate, with others, against the Decree, a committee, composed of Dr. Jeter, S. Jones and Mr. Northam, was appointed to visit the Church. Had the Association lived up to the letter of their Decree, they would have been obliged to exclude the Mathews Church from membership in the Association, as Bro. Dangerfield had been preaching the doctrine of the reformation, and the members were not, as a whole, opposed to it. The committee above named visited them and preached for several days, and, all things considered, had a good meeting. But the chief



object of their visit, namely, to save Elder Dangerfield and his adherents, as also the church house, was a failure. A large majority of the congregation were in sympathy with the views of their pastor. Accordingly, they let matters stand without taking any decisive steps until 1835, when another committee, consisting of Messrs. Todd, Ball, Goodall and Northam, met with the Church and continued in a meeting for several days. At this meeting, by diverse means, members whose claims to church membership consisted only in having their names on the church book were present. At a certain time, when it chanced that a majority of these disaffected ones were present, a resolution was introduced and passed excluding all the members who had avowed the sentiments of Mr. Campbell, and among the excluded was Bro. Dangerfield, the minister of the Church. This sharp action, which would have done credit to the shrewdness of a ward politician, left the meeting-house in the hands of the self-styled orthodox.

It did not, however, hinder the work of reformation. The excluded members soon organized themselves into a congregation and began meeting in the court-house. Shortly after this they built the meeting-house known by the name of Ephesus. Brother Dangerfield continued preaching for them for many years with much success and acceptance. All who knew him loved, respected and revered him. He lost his beloved wife during these troublous times.

Brother Dangerfield came to an untimely end by being thrown from his sulky against a tree, while on his way from the courthouse to his home.

He was a good preacher. His language was as pure and chaste as his thoughts were holy and good. His preaching was argumentative—always clear and easily comprehended. He was regarded as a holy man and a standard-bearer of the Cross throughout his community.

## DR. JOHN DU VAL.

Dr. Du Val was the fifth child of William and Mary Du Val, and was born in Gloucester county, Virginia, May 21, 1795. His ancestors on his father's side were Huguenots, and on his mother's side English. Both his parents were Episcopalians. At one time his father had large possessions, but he became involved, and was deprived of the means to educate his youngest children to the same extent he had the older ones. John, however, was sent to the University of Pennsylvania, and was graduated M. D. His father and mother died before he was nineteen, and in the year 1814 he was called into the army, where he served for six months in the ranks.

On November 14, 1819, he was married by Elder R. B. Semple to Miss Mary Ann Pendleton, of King and Queen county. They were both of a religious disposition, but knew not what God required of them. They felt it their duty to love and serve God, but how to become his child they knew not. This was often the subject of their conversation, but, as they were young, they concluded not to be in any haste about the matter. The death of their children caused them to decide to serve the Lord, but now the old question "how?" came back with all its force. They studied the Scriptures, and even prayed for help from God, and, after many doubts and fears, resolved to unite with the people of God. On November 28, 1824, they were both baptized by Elder Wm. Todd, and

united with the Lower King and Queen Baptist Church. Brother Du Val soon began to exercise his gifts as a speaker in the church. He was regarded as a promising man in the church, as a chosen vessel who would one day proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. What constituted a "call to preach" was much discussed in those days. Dr. Du Val gave his opinion on this question in the following well chosen words: "I would say that a Gospel call is four-fold, to wit: Regeneration, inclination, approbation of God's word, and the voice of the people of God."

After passing an examination, he was on the first Lord's Day in October, 1827, ordained to the ministry by prayer, fasting, and the laying on of hands. He rapidly became very popular as a preacher. About this time, Bishop Semple, who was then minister of Bruington Church, one of the largest, most influential, and wealthy Baptist churches in Eastern Virginia, resigned to go to Washington. Brother Du Val was called to take charge of this church and accepted.

Brother Du Val was just becoming interested in the movement headed by Mr. Campbell when he took charge of the Bruington Church. His preaching rapidly became more scriptural. Some of the members became loud in their denunciation of what they termed "reform principles." On one occasion, after he had clearly presented the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion as being performed through the Word, he called on an old brother, Josiah Ryland, Sr., to pray. The old man prayed that the church might be delivered from such heresy as had been preached from the pulpit that day.

Such a church as Bruington could not long endure the teaching of Dr. Du Val. It was a leading church and was looked up to by all the churches in the Dover Association, and could not well listen to and support as minister one who was noted as a leading reformer. Brother Du Val was ordered to appear before the church to answer the following charges:

1. Innovation.
2. The denial of the influence of the Holy Spirit in conversion.
3. Baptism for the remission of sins.

Bishop Semple presided. The chief speakers on the part of the Baptists were Andrew Broaddus, Josiah Ryland, and A. Brown. Dr. Du Val stood alone for a restoration of the ancient Gospel. When the debate, or trial, was over and the vote of the Church taken, the Doctor was found guilty of the charges, by a majority of one. It was Mr. Semple's personal influence that gained for his party the victory.

Immediately following this, Mr. Semple returned from Washington, and resumed charge of Bruington Church. Brother Du Val continued preaching to the disciples at Mangohick and at other points. In 1830 Bishop Semple and Andrew Broaddus called a convention of eight churches and adopted what was afterward known as the Semple and Broaddus Decrees. In bringing these decrees before Bruington Church for their acceptance, as related in Chapter IV. of our Historical Sketch, Dr. Du Val was the main speaker in opposition to them, and they were rejected. This was their deathblow and a severe rebuke to Bishop Semple.

Brother Du Val used often to preach in the private home of a Mr. Valentine. On one occasion, he had gone thither to conduct a funeral, and during his stay eight confessed Christ. Notice was given out that they would be baptized in what was known as "Campbell's Pond" on a certain day and hour. At the appointed time a large congregation had assembled to witness the ceremony. All the candidates were present, but Dr. Du Val did not appear, and no one could account for his absence. The brethren present were anxious that the baptism take place. R. B. Semple had preached at the Church that day, and had gone to dine with a Baptist brother near by. One of their number was selected to go and see if Bishop Semple would come and perform the ceremony. Accordingly, the Bishop was informed of the difficulty, and as extra inducement, was told that only eight were to be baptized. The amiable Bishop seemed pleased at the request, and smilingly answered: "Only eight?—just the number saved in the Ark. Now they want to be saved, as the Apostle Peter said, by baptism. Go? Yes; and if you had a hundred I would go and baptize them. Come, Bro. Elliot, (the name of his host,) let us start and tarry not."

He was soon there, and performed the ceremony as the Apostles of old, without ever asking a single question of any of them, he having been informed that all had made the good confession.

From the day he bade adieu to Bruington Church to the time of his death, Brother Du Val's life became one long day of labor. He had regular appointments

for every Lord's Day, besides attending to many protracted meetings, when in his power to do so. Added to this, he had a medical practice seldom equalled in his section. He was a man of untiring energy and an excellent speaker. He was gifted in oratory, and could easily bring his audience either to laughter or to tears, as he willed.

He was particularly happy in speaking of the baptism of Jesus—the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove—the interview Jesus had with Moses and Elijah—the lamentation of Jesus over Jerusalem—Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane—his death upon the Cross—his resurrection, and such like themes. About 1831 or 1832 he commenced holding meetings in an old house on the farm of Brother Philip B. Pendleton, and when the weather would permit, they had meetings in a grove close by. From these meetings in a short time sprang Smyrna Church, and for this church Bro. Du Val continued to labor for many years. During his later life he preached for Rappahannock and Acquinton Churches also, and was largely instrumental in building Jerusalem Church, which he also named.

In the fall of 1832 he lost his wife. In the family register, in his own handwriting, are these words: "Mary Ann DuVal, died about 8 o'clock, P. M., Saturday, 17th November, 1832, in the full triumph of faith and 'assurance of hope' in her final acceptance with God. Thanks to his unspeakable kindness in granting her this victory. Amen." She left three children—two daughters and one son; the latter, Dr. P. P. Du Val, is still living in Richmond, Virginia,



and finds time amid his professional duties, as did his father, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.\*

Brother Du Val was married again in December, 1834, to Miss Mildred R. Downer, of Caroline county. She was an accomplished woman and a great help to him in his later life.

In 1850 he became involved in a difficulty with the elders of Smyrna Church. A lady who had been immersed by an unimmersed minister of the Methodist Church desired to unite with Smyrna congregation. Brother Du Val claimed that she had not been scripturally baptized, inasmuch as he who had administered the rite had not been qualified by immersion to perform it upon another. The elders of Smyrna disagreed with him in the matter. Bro. Du Val wrote an article for the *Harbinger*, asking Bro. W. K. Pendleton for his opinion. The opinion of the latter was unfavorable to the position taken by Dr. Du Val, but did not change him. In 1853 he sold his place in King and Queen and moved to Petersburg. Here at his own cost he established a place for preaching, but not succeeding so well as he expected he finally sold this meeting-house and extended his field of labor to the counties of Prince Edward, Lunenburg, Charlotte, and Amelia, all in the Southeastern part of the State. In this field he labored incessantly till the end of his life.

In the summer of 1859 he was called on to mourn the loss of his second wife, who left two daughters. Three

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\*Since this account was written Dr. P. P. Du Val has passed to his reward.

years after her death he wrote of her: "The many years of happiness which she most richly contributed to my mind and heart, are still deeply engraven on my memory."

Brother Du Val was in feeble health for some time preceding his last illness. He was taken sick with congestion of the lungs on the fourth of December, 1863, and continued to fail till the twenty-fourth, when he breathed his last. His last words were, "I am blind—I cannot see." And who shall say that the dazzling light of the city of God was not shining on the dying eyes of the faithful soldier of the Cross, so as to blind his natural eyes with its intense brightness, while his eye of faith looked with undimmed lustre upon the "Resurrection and the Life."

## JAMES W. GOSS.

The subject of this sketch was born in Albemarle county, Virginia, December 29, 1812. He was the third child, but the first son, of Elder John Goss, and his mother's maiden name was Jane Walker. His father was a pious man, a minister in the Baptist church. He lived to a good old age, and was gathered home only after he had witnessed the rising usefulness of his son James.

The early education of James was under the immediate supervision of his father. While James was receiving knowledge concerning the use of the English language he was also receiving the gentler lessons of Christian faith and love for Him who took little children in His arms and blessed them. He was finally sent to a classical school in the neighborhood for a year or two, but this plan was superseded by the employment of a teacher in the family. In this way the children received that most essential part of all education, home influences. After some years of this home education, James was sent to Charlottesville, where he had increased facilities for the development of his inquisitive mind, thus acquiring those qualities which afterward distinguished him. It was during this period of his life that he determined to study medicine. He commenced this study under a preceptor, and in due time entered the University of Virginia. God, however, had mapped out his life differently. He had always been religiously inclined. His daily prayers were not allowed to be

crowded out by his studies. His belief in God was co-etaneous with the recollection of his father. It was not strange, therefore, that in the sixteenth year of his age, while at home from college, he made the good confession and was buried with his Lord in baptism. He was baptized by Elder Gilbert Mason, a young Baptist minister previously mentioned in the sketch of R. L. Coleman. Mr. Mason was at this time making his home with Elder Goss, where he was prosecuting his studies and preaching under the fostering care of that good man. If all young preachers were to do this, thus following the Scriptural examples of Timothy, Silas, and others, it might be the means of saving them from many perplexities and bitter regrets in after life. Bro. Goss connected himself with the Priddy's Creek Baptist Church, of which his father was minister; and, though very retiring, and modest to a fault, the brethren soon took notice of his deep-toned piety and unwavering fidelity, and induced him to take part in the prayer-meetings. At the opening of the next session of the University he returned to Charlottesville. Finding no Baptist Church there, and but a handful of members, he and a younger brother in the faith began holding weekly prayer-meetings. These were first held in private houses, but as the attendance increased a hall was rented for the purpose. At these meetings James was the chief speaker, and soon overcame his diffidence. It was not long till some began to show an interest in their soul's salvation, several professed the power of the truth, and Elder John Goss was sent for to baptize them. He and Porter Cleveland, a Baptist preacher

of that section, soon established a regular monthly meeting at Charlottesville, and in August, 1831, a church was organized with thirty-one members. This membership was soon doubled by a meeting held by Gilbert Mason and R. L. Coleman, and in May, 1831, R. L. Coleman was ordained as minister by Elders Porter Cleveland and John Goss. The demands of the cause, the anxious solicitude of his fellow-citizens, and his sense of duty soon called James Goss forth to a more active religious life. On the 22nd day of February, 1832, he was licensed by the Church at Charlottesville to preach, and was publicly ordained on the 7th day of August of the same year, it being the twentieth year of his age. Elder Welch, a traveling agent for the Sunday-school Union, assisted in the services. His field of usefulness was now enlarged, and repeated demands on his time were made by churches in the neighboring country. His modest and retiring disposition only led him to be the more sought after, and he soon found himself not only the right-hand supporter of Bro. Coleman at Charlottesville, but also rather a leader in the evangelistic efforts in the county.

Bro. Goss was married on the 29th of September, 1835, to Miss Jane Ashley Grigsby, the only daughter of Joseph and Mary Ashley Grigsby, of Rockbridge county, Virginia. The youthful Goss now settled in Charlottesville with the loving wife of his choice, who in that endearing relationship was in every respect the solace of his heart.

Much depends upon the choice of a wife, and especially of a preacher's wife. A preacher's wife is not a

private woman; she is obliged to be known personally, intellectually, socially and religiously; she must soon learn to pass unheeded the expressions of admiration of friends and the condemnation of enemies. If not, her life will be embittered by melancholy and chagrin on the one side, or disgusted by the absence of a meek and gentle spirit on the other. In the language of common parlance, Sister Goss seems to have been born a preacher's wife! Gentle as the dew, diffusing an easy grace and dignity throughout her household, and as firm as the granite of her Piedmont home, she imparted an impetus to the already deep piety of her husband, and added zeal to the cause that was so dear to his soul.

After his marriage Bro. Goss settled in Charlottesville and started an apothecary store in connection with Dr. John W. Field. His place was always filled at church, and he never suffered his business to interfere with his religious engagements. As time rolled on he gathered strength from his experience, and increased in favor with the brethren of his faith and order, while persons of the world pressed to hear him because of his pulpit eloquence. An educated Roman Catholic lady once remarked that while she had no special partiality for Mr. Goss' religious faith, she regarded it a privilege to listen to his chaste and eloquent pulpit exercises. This was the general feeling of his religious opponents.

When we consider the order of his mind, the deep-toned piety and veneration in which he held the Word of God, we are not surprised that he was early a reader of the published works of Mr. Campbell. In these writings he found a counterpart to his own religious

training in mind and heart. The truth was dearer to him than the cherished love of fond brethren. To know the truth and to obey it was his highest aspiration, hence he read with prayerful care these works, and compared every position and proof text with the Scriptures. His wife was not a stranger to his researches, his anxieties of mind, or the workings of his own heart during that period. Her loving heart and quick intuition threw many a cheering beam upon his otherwise checkered pathway. Before him, in the near distance, as through a glass darkly, he could see fields of living light, but at the same time, through dimmed and unfaithful lenses made by the hands of human nature, he could see smiles of cheer turned to scowling frowns, and, in place of the hand of affection, the back of scorn. The two had to be weighed in the balances of responsibility to God. Jerusalem or Geneva—the “Word of the Lord” of the former, or the Calvinistic frigidity of the latter, was the question. If he chose the latter, the smiles of affection would continue to greet him on the streets and in the pulpits; but if the former, fields of living light would disclose to him beauteous flowers bordering his pathway to the right hand of God. No sooner were they placed in the balances than the choice was made. On the next Lord’s day thereafter he preached “the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem,” and for many Lord’s days subsequently. Many a heart responded to the mind-enlightening and soul-confirming doctrine thus developed, but the prejudices of others were as deeply seated and the hostility as great as at any time or place since the Dover Decree was passed.



Some of the more intelligent and influential of the Baptists of Charlottesville conscientiously regarded the views advanced by Bro. Goss as erroneous, but they wished to act with Christian moderation towards their gifted but "erring" brother, and suggested many expedients for his reclamation. Among them was the policy of placing him in charge of a metropolitan church, while there were others, of little minds and less hearts, who advocated immediate excision. But he, unseduced by the kind compliments of the former, and unmoved by the manifest dislike of the latter, determined to follow out the conscientious convictions of his own mind and heart, regardless of the ecclesiastical consequences. So, on the 15th of January, 1836, the church, after some days consumed in discussing the questions at issue and the policy of excision, decided, by a majority of *one*, to separate from the disciples of Christ. The number thus separated were between thirty and forty. The prominent actors on the part of the Baptists, as to preachers, were Elder Robert Ryland, then chaplain at the University of Virginia, and Mr. Wm. P. Farish, at that time a licentiate, and subsequently an ordained Baptist minister. On the part of the disciples were Elders R. L. Coleman and James W. Goss.

Soon after the separation from the Baptist Church the disciples organized a church of Christ, and Elder R. L. Coleman became its minister. Although Bro. Coleman was a few years older than James Goss, they were both young men, and the unity of their work and interests induced a lifelong friendship. Together they started a monthly periodical in Charlottesville, devoted

to the cause of reformation. The first number was published in November, 1836, but, although James Goss' name appeared as one of the editors in the prospectus, he declined acting as such until 1840. In 1843 he became sole editor, and published the paper for two years under the name of *The Christian Intelligencer*, when, moving to Orange, he ceased to be its editor. This was the first periodical published by the disciples in what now constitutes the State of Virginia.

James W. Goss for many years would accept of no remuneration for his services in the preaching of the Gospel. To say that our forefathers made no mistakes in their efforts to restore the ancient Gospel, the ancient order of things in the churches, would be to say they were infallible. This mistake, however, was a natural one. It has been common in all countries, with all denominations, in their efforts to introduce and establish their respective pleas. Were it not for this self-sacrifice of our forefathers we should not now be the strong people that we are. However, the sooner and more thoroughly we understand that the "laborer is worthy of his hire," and appreciate the labors of our forefathers as a gift from the heart to a great cause instead of a matter of necessity, the sooner shall we enter into the fullness of things that God has prepared for us. No religious body can ever amount to much that depends on the self-sacrifice of its preachers alone. In order to enable him the better to prosecute his work in the ministry, James Goss became financially interested in a drug store in Richmond. Failure followed through the dishonesty of an employee, and he surrendered all

his property to liquidate the debts of the firm. This misfortune created in the breasts of his friends and brethren a mingling of pleasure and sadness; sadness because of his loss, but pleasure as they saw the development of a resignation to his loss, and a quiet determination to look unto the hills from whence was to come his help.

James W. Goss was a remarkable man. No earthly misfortune could crush his spirit. Though this dark wave swept his fortune from his hand in a moment, his conscious rectitude gave him a firm step and a determined security that called forth the admiration of his fellows. Misfortunes do not spring up out of the ground; they are frequently in mercy sent. "Thy judgments are a great deep," saith the sweet singer of Israel, and in these judgments, though dark and frowning, God hides a smiling face. The loss of Elder Goss' fortune caused him to change many of the currents of his thoughts. It gave a deeper impress to his piety and threw him more into the arms of his loving Heavenly Father. He saw and realized how evanescent are all things here below—that change, fluctuation and uncertainty were enstamped upon all earthly things, and that there is nothing sure on earth but the Word of God and its fruits, which live and abide forever. He resolved to devote more of his time to the work of the ministry, but he could not do this without receiving some remuneration. He now devoted more of his time than ever before to the preaching of the Gospel, and received a meagre remuneration, too meagre almost to be mentioned. This was not because he was not worthy

of better consideration—far from it; for every church that engaged his ministry regarded it a great and a rich treat to have the scintillations of his well-stored mind and the fruits of his developed piety.

While Elder Goss made frequent preaching tours in different portions of the State, and at times remained from home for weeks, he preached regularly at different times for the congregations at Charlottesville, Free Union, in Albemarle; Gordonsville, Macedonia, in Orange; Louisa Court House, Berea in Spottsylvania, and Antioch in Caroline.

His home was at Charlottesville from the time he left his father's house for school in his boyhood, until December, 1845, except two years spent at Somerset, in Orange county. In the year 1845 he moved into the neighborhood of Orange Springs, where he remained until November, 1851, when he moved to a farm near Gordonsville, and established a female school there the following year. In 1856 he purchased a farm in Albemarle county, and in the same year he moved to his new home and established his school there. This school was known by the name of "The Piedmont Female Academy." Few teachers have ever made such a deep and pleasant impression upon their pupils, and fewer still whose memories are so sacredly embalmed. James Goss left the imprint of his deep piety and exalted faith upon all the young ladies of his school, and in their lives and the lives of their children he will ever live. "The good and efficient never die."

In August, 1867, he moved to Hopkinsville, Ky., to take charge of a female school in that town. The re-

sult of this move we will quote from a sketch of his life, written by Elder Peter Ainslie, in the *Christian Examiner*.

“In making this move, though he was actuated by the best of motives, he did wrong. We all saw it, and those of us who knew his constitution saw it more plainly than others. He was of that peculiar make that tended to plethora, and consequently to paralysis. He needed much out-door exercise; this he could have at his Piedmont home every morning and evening, attending to his crops and cattle, but in Hopkinsville not so. His school-room and the narrow confines of a town lot were the area of his locomotion, except occasionally, urged by necessity, he would extend his exercises. He needed exercise that would not be for the sake of exercise, but for other motives, which would cause him to forget himself by being engrossed in pleasant objects. This he could not find in Hopkinsville, but it could be found upon his farm. As we all feared, he was stricken with partial paralysis, March 20, 1869, but remained in Kentucky, at his post, until July, 1870, when, on visiting his home in Albemarle, Va., and finding his health declining, he did not return to Kentucky, but wrote to the stockholders of the Southern Kentucky Female Institute severing his connection with that institution. This was received by them with much regret, and they tendered to him the expression of their greatest confidence and warmest sympathies.

“By 1870 he had accumulated considerable property. Some of his means he had invested in slaves, which of course were swept from him by the war; but he had bought a large and beautiful farm, upon which he had built a showy, comfortable, and spacious house, with all the necessary out-houses, including a well-arranged school-house.

"He not only contributed freely his money to the Church for all local expenses and for the support of the evangelists, but his house was always a home for his brethren, and especially a retreat for the preachers. When the duties of his farm or those of his school-room called him, he would leave the preacher surrounded with a choice selection of books, or there upon the table were pen, ink and paper, so he could be profitably employed. I have myself many pleasant associations connected with the room he called his office; and on one occasion, years ago, in one of my preaching tours, I was taken very ill at his house, and was sick a long time, and I received every attention which could be bestowed. I shall ever remember him and his loved partner with gratitude. His house was the preacher's home.

"After returning home, his health continued to decline, until the 26th day of November, 1870, in the 58th year of his age, he breathed out this life in the arms of Him in whom he trusted, surrounded by his heart-stricken family and sorrowing friends."

He was buried on his farm at Piedmont, about twelve miles from Charlottesville. The inscription on his tombstone reads: "Erected by the Churches of Louisa and Macedonia, which were mainly established and built by him."



## ELDER THOMAS M. HENLEY.

Thomas M. Henley was born in Williamsburg, Virginia, January 6, 1783. His parents were Methodists, but his father, Leonard Henley, was of Episcopal parentage, the family being one of the old aristocratic families of Eastern Virginia. Bro. Henley spent his minority in the town of his birth, and at the age of twenty-three married Miss Sally Yates, a near relative of Bishop Yates, of the Episcopal Church.

Soon after his marriage he moved to Tappahannock, Essex county, Virginia, and engaged with others in opening a coach establishment. His associates in this business were men of the world, so he had much to contend with; but, being a man of strict integrity and resolute purpose, he was not to be turned from the path of rectitude and duty. Although he had not espoused the Christian religion, he had been taught its moral principles in his boyhood and would not now depart from them. He feared no man's frown, yielded to no one's flattery, nor followed in the wake of any popular current. Hence, his associates never succeeded in leading him in paths of worldly pleasure. Though a stranger in his new home, he soon gained many friends by the course of his life. Yet, the confidence of men, or the esteem of the world, could not supply food for the longings of the soul. The story of his conversion we give as nearly as possible in his own words, as supplied by his son, Robert Y. Henley, and published in the *Christian Examiner* in 1870: "I had a pious mother



who taught me to believe in the Lord, to love Him, and to pray to Him, and though my associates were irreligious and I was immersed in the cares and anxieties of the world, and that mother long since gone from earth, her instructions were not forgotten. In 1810 I became deeply concerned upon the subject of religion, and resolved by God's help that I would become a Christian. I read the Bible, attended meetings, conversed with religious men and women, prayed and agonized, and yet I could not obtain what was called an evidence of pardon—life was a burden, the future was all darkness, and hope seemed to be displaced by despair. What more to do I knew not, and in this state of mind I resolved to die seeking the Lord, and vowed that I would neither eat nor drink until I found peace with God. I gave up my business, withdrew from society, and retired to my room, and devoted myself to prayer and reading the Bible; but the Bible to me was a sealed book. I earnestly desired to see its beauties and receive its consolations, but not one comfort could I receive. My mental anguish and fasting entirely prostrated me. My good wife was greatly distressed and plead with me to partake of refreshment. I refused. She called in my family physician. When he came in I was on my knees in prayer. I was so weak that I was unable to rise without assistance. Doctor tried to engage me in conversation, but I was too weak and in too much distress of mind to respond to his kindness. He prepared water and milk for me. I refused to drink. He and my kind and affectionate wife appealed to me and urged me for her sake and the

sake of my little children to yield. I put the glass to my mouth several times before I could drink. Unthis treatment I regained my strength, but my anguish was greater. I resolved that I would read the Scriptures more closely. I began to think that something was wrong, and that the error was in me, either in the mode of my seeking or my earnestness. That I was in earnest and desired salvation with all my heart I knew. Then where was the mistake? I came to the conclusion that I had mistaken the mode, and that the views of the pious as to seeking religion were a delusion. But how to read the Scriptures so as to enlighten my mind upon the subject which at that time mostly interested me was an important question. 'What must I do to be saved?' was the question I knew must be answered somewhere in the Bible, but where? Not in the Old Testament, because that belonged to the Old Dispensation. Then the answer must be in the New. Such a conclusion gave me comfort. I began to search forthwith. My faith in God's Word was very strong, and I determined to read with order and ponder upon what I read. There were many passages which were full of comfort to the man who had passed from darkness to light, but I could not apply them to myself, because I was still in darkness. I then gathered such passages as were suited to my case, and just as soon as I did so my mind became more calm. During this search I read the following passages: 'God so loved the world,' etc; 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' I spoke out to myself, 'I do believe with all my heart—I will be baptized in the name of the Lord

Jesus.' God is faithful to his promises. My joy was unspeakable. My sorrow and anguish were gone. I found in the Word of God that joy which I had for months been seeking. I was a happy man—there was joy in believing. I hastened to my chamber with a happy heart and joyous countenance, but, before I could speak, my dear wife arose and fell upon my neck and wept for joy, saying, 'I know you are happy.' Yes, it was a happy meeting. I immediately applied to a Baptist minister to immerse me. I went to the church and told them, I had no Christian experience to relate; I believed in the Lord Jesus; that He had commanded me to be baptized and had promised that I should be saved. And upon this confession I was baptized."

Because of his union with the Baptists his father disinherited him. In the course of time, however, nearly the whole family came into the churches of Christ. The case of Father Henley is one of those cases which furnish an illustration of the evil consequences of the false teaching of that day. Nor is this teaching yet abrogated. Soon after Bro. Henley's baptism he began to pray in public, and when he had given the church evidence of his desire and determination to preach, he was ordained to the ministry. In 1812 his wife died, leaving three children, Leonard, Robert and Mary.

In 1813 he married Miss Elizabeth Temple. He continued to preach, and was regarded as a man of strong and vigorous mind and great determination of character. He loved the Baptist Church, and would do

anything to enhance her honor. He was fond of advocating and defending the doctrines of the church, and would buy and read every work written in behalf of her cause.

About the year 1824 the Methodists commenced to preach upon baptism in his neighborhood, and as that subject had not often been presented to the public in a bold and fearless manner, and as he feared no evil consequences from open investigation, and being determined to meet the issue, he purchased the *Debate between Campbell and McCalla* and read it carefully. He was pleased with it, and determined to have an interview with Mr. Campbell. In 1818 Father Henley was chosen pastor of Upper Essex Baptist Church, and as the Dover Association was to meet with that church in 1825, he wrote to Mr. Campbell and invited him to attend. He did attend. At this Association were the master spirits of the Baptist churches. Here it was that Mr. Campbell first met Robert Y. Semple and Andrew Broaddus. Mr. Campbell presented his views of the restoration of the primitive order of things. There was great diversity of opinion as to the soundness of his views, yet there was no open opposition to them. Mr. Henley was among those who were willing to "prove all things, hold fast that which is good." Accordingly he gave his subscription to Mr. Campbell for the *Christian Baptist*. Upon his return home Mr. Campbell appointed Mr. Henley agent, but he objected to the appointment because he was not satisfied as to the soundness of the views advanced. He ordered copies of all the back numbers of the

*Christian Baptist*, together with all of Mr. Campbell's publications on matters of religion, in order that he might give his views a fair examination. He soon became convinced that many of his former views were wrong, and that Mr. Campbell was echoing the truths taught by Christ and the Apostles.

Thomas Henley was a fearless man, and no sooner had he become convinced that he had not preached the whole truth as it is in Christ Jesus than he openly proclaimed the principle of restoration. This caused certain members of the church to raise a spirit of opposition against him, which soon expressed itself as follows:

In April, 1828, at the monthly meeting of Salem Church, of which Andrew Broaddus was pastor, the following resolution was adopted and sent to Bro. Henley:

“Resolved, That this Church disapproves of certain views and sentiments advanced by elder Henley as contrary to the Spirit of the Gospel, particularly that sentiment which considers a sinner as repenting and believing in Christ with a saving faith before he receives any influence from the Holy Spirit, and that this resolution, with their Christian love to Bro. Henley, be made known to him.

“By order of the Church.

“IRA WHITE, S. C. Clerk.”

Bro. Henley sent a reply to the church denying that he had used any such language, or advanced any such sentiment; but stating, furthermore, that he had “searched the New Testament, and could not find therein *any express language where God had ever given his Holy Spirit to any sinner previous to his believing in*

*Him,*” and promised, upon their pointing him to such, that he would publicly recall any such statements said to have been uttered by him. He received for answer: “We decline your invitation to bring forward *express language,*” etc. “On this point our minds, we trust, have long been fixed, viz., that no unregenerate sinner repents and believes with a saving faith, without the enlightening and quickening influence of God’s Holy Spirit.”

Information of his “heresy” was soon brought before the Upper Essex Baptist Church, of which he was pastor. He was tried, *Andrew Broaddus present*, and the pastoral charge dissolved by a majority of *one!* The doctrine that was so obnoxious to the non-reformers was then discussed. He was then *unanimously invited to “preach” to them.* No comment on the foregoing trial is necessary, as the chief instigator is named and the final result fully vindicated Bro. Henley.

A second time he was drawn before the church and was “counted blameless.” A resolution was then drawn up by a member of the church, though it was in reality the production of several public teachers. He met them and discussed its charges. A committee of six public teachers was appointed to assist in the trial on July 4, 1829. Before the trial took place the church authorized Dr. A. Somervail to propose to Bro. Henley a letter of dismission without going into trial of the charges. He refused unless the church would also acquit him of the charges and all moral impropriety, and also told them that he could not take a letter in *full fellowship* owing to the attitude of certain members



toward him, one of whom said he would never be reconciled to him (Henley) while his soul was in his body unless Bro. Henley would confess that he had treated Bishop Semple amiss. The only question put to the church was, "*Was there any moral impropriety against Thomas M. Henley?*" The whole church present voted *there was none*, except the above mentioned individual, and Dr. Somervail wrote the letter as follows:

"The Upper Essex Church, after due deliberation, hereby give *Bro. Henley* a letter of dismissal from his Church, not in full fellowship: but only they disapprove of the doctrine he chooses to preach. They have no complaint for immorality, or any other fault, but his doctrine alone.

"By order of the Church.

"THOMAS WRIGHT, JR., Clerk."

According to these proceedings it is obvious that he could unite with any church he chose to, or preach for any church that was satisfied with the doctrine he proclaimed.

He united with Acquaintain Church, King William county, and in October, 1831, was sent from this church as messenger to the Dover Association. Ascertaining that a few of the priesthood had determined to make him the bone of a personal controversy and thus involve the church to which he belonged, he went to the Moderator, *Bishop Semple*, on the day of his arrival, and withdrew himself as a messenger, hoping thereby to forestall the introduction of personalities into the Association. Philip T. Montague and Andrew Broaddus, aided by George Wright and George Schools, unwilling



to let slip a chance for wounding the feelings and destroying the character of Mr. Henley, changed a question on general principles that was before the Association into a personal attack. Montague and Wright asserted that he had been excluded from the Upper Essex Church, to which he formerly belonged. Broaddus asserted that although he was not excluded in form, yet he was persuaded the church so intended it, and labored hard to make the impression upon the Association that such was the fact.

Bro. Henley asked leave of the Association to correct this misrepresentation, but was refused the privilege of testifying. It was a scheme laid by Andrew Broaddus and his co-laborers to injure the character of Mr. Henley, and he immediately published in the *Harbinger* such documentary evidence as was necessary to expose the unprincipled perpetrators.

It was at this same Association that the Dover Decree was passed, as related in a former chapter of this work.

In 1834 Mr. Henley moved to Hillsboro, King and Queen county, and devoted the rest of his life to the cause of restoration of the ancient order of things. He went everywhere preaching the Word until disease caused him to limit his tours and remain more at home. His pen became more active, and he wrote for every paper in the reformation. He was confined to his house for many months, but whenever his health and the weather would permit, he was seen at the Smyrna Church on Lord's Day, bowing in humble reverence to the Lord his God, and partaking of the emblems of his

body and blood. As the wasting hand of disease rested more heavily upon him his mind and spirit rose to their highest point of activity, and many of the best productions of his pen were detailed while unable to sit up, and committed to the paper by his son, Robert. Among these were several letters to his friend and former co-worker, Andrew Broaddus, and one to Bro. Campbell from the "Banks of Jordan." He loved Mr. Broaddus, and loved him to the last. He was very anxious to see him before he fell asleep, and wrote to him by special messenger, inviting him to visit him, but that coveted pleasure was never realized.

He quietly breathed his last on March 6, 1846. His wife survived him for several years, and was buried by the side of her sainted husband, at Hillsboro.

As a writer Bro. Henley was full but concise, his points were well taken, and his proofs clear and conclusive. Writing was his forte. His letters, essays and rejoinders to opponents were unanswerable. He was untiring in his energies in collecting statements of facts, conversations, transactions, writings of friends and opponents, and everything that passed under his eye; consequently it was hazardous to call in question any statement or argument from his pen. As a preacher he was plain and direct in language, even to bluntness, and sometimes gave unintentional offence even to his best friends. He condemned errors in both doctrine and life in the strongest language. His language on such occasions was unstudied, spontaneous, and the outpouring of an honest heart. He was not so strong a

speaker as he was a writer, his pulpit work being impaired by an unharmonious voice and the absence of exhortational gifts.

His son, Robert Y. Henley, accompanied Mr. Campbell, when the latter returned from the Constitutional Convention in 1830, to his home in Bethany. There he attended Buffalo Seminary, which school Mr. Campbell had been running for over ten years. After a few years he married one of Mr. Campbell's daughters. He became a worthy successor of his father in the cause of reformation.

## ELDER JNO. G. PARRISH.

This sketch is taken *in toto* from the *Christian Examiner* of November, 1871:

Many could be named in the literary, scientific and artistic world who had to surmount the barriers erected by poverty. Nor is the Church exempt in this particular. Without calling up the names of those whom we know only from the pages of history, we can speak of the eloquent Magoon, a Baptist minister, who is known to many of us, and who is not ashamed to speak, upon the platform, of his trowel and mortar, and the days of his poverty. Even the venerable Dr. Jeter has not forgotten his early struggles for an education, and his youthfully ardent wish for extensive usefulness. The sainted T. M. Henley, by untiring application, from the days of his full manhood to the day of his death, learned to wield a pen, the fruits of which were cheerfully read by the lovers of a pure Christianity, and dreaded by the advocates of untaught questions. Nor was his co-laborer, the late Elder Peter Ainslie, more fortunate in early life. His youthful struggles after knowledge were hindered by poverty; but in after time, became equally distinguished in the pulpit. And last, but not least, we can associate with these the name of Elder John G. Parrish, the subject of this brief sketch, of whom we will now speak.

His grandfather came from England with his parent when a youth, and settled in Gloucester county, Va., and became a successful farmer in that county. His father became a sea captain, and in a storm met with a watery grave, leaving his son John a small boy. John G. Parrish was born in Fredericksburg, Va., December 23, 1817. The circumstances connected

with his early childhood were those common to children, except a most inquisitive mind and unflagging will: these marked him as a promising boy. By his own application to books he had made considerable progress in his primary studies before he was sent to school. Very soon, however, in these early struggles, a favorable opportunity presented itself, and he entered the school of Mr. John Goodrich, where he advanced in his studies with much gratification to his teacher and friends. He continued at school until he was fourteen or fifteen years of age, and another opportune occasion having offered itself to his energetic and busy mind, he entered the store of the late Samuel Phillips, who was at that time engaged in a large shipping and commission business in Fredericksburg. Here he learned much of the ways of the world and the intricacies of mercantile life. During this time he kept up a course of study. His busy mind was never at rest. He did not while his time away by loitering, nor by smoking costly segars, nor in frequenting saloons for pleasure. He felt, even at that early day, that there was a destiny before him. Hence he was called "the student clerk." A book or a newspaper, whenever he was not engaged in his regular business, was in his hands. He was trusted beyond his years. He had many friends of the better sort. He was baptized in Fredericksburg in 1838, consequently in the twenty-first year of his age. His conversion was regarded as a promising acquisition to the church. On the 4th of December, 1839, he was married to Miss Elizabeth S. Bunbury, by Rev. Mr. T. B. Morgan, of the Methodist Church. About this time he commenced merchandizing in Fredericksburg. He did quite a large business, but he did not lay up much of the fruits of his labors—first, because of his liberality and humane feelings, both of which he possessed to too great an extent for his own prosperity; and secondly, because his mind

and heart were bent on devoting himself to the ministry. Money-making and the ministry seldom prosper with the same individual at the same time. But of this we will speak as we advance. He was at this period devoting his talents to the upbuilding of the church in Fredericksburg, by religious visits whenever he could during the week, and exhorting in the church on Lord's days and once a week in prayer-meetings.

The wheel of time rolled on, and his religious labors increased, and his gifts as a speaker were more and more effective, and appreciated by the Church and aliens: so much so, that he began to be regarded as a preacher. He moved from Fredericksburg to the Bowling Green, in Caroline county, in the summer of 1845. It seems he was in co-partnership with W. F. Cheek, under the firm of Cheek & Parrish, when he left Fredericksburg. He went into mercantile business at Bowling Green, and continued in it until 1849. He was regularly ordained to the ministry, in old Antioch, in 1847 or '48, and from the best information, Brethren Goss and Coleman officiated upon the occasion. Much of his time was now devoted to the ministry of the Word. He would take long trips from home, and more frequently than otherwise at his own charges; and his business at home suffered much for the want of his personal attention. His own horse was in requisition, rivers were crossed, other expenses incurred, his business at home neglected, and his talents and time employed in preaching to rich churches by their own invitations; and some of the members, who had an abundance of this world's goods, when asked to assist in raising a small sum for him, would open their eyes in astonishment, and exclaim, "Why, Bro. Parrish has a store!" *Poor little shriveled-up souls!*—and if it would not be regarded profane, I would say that such souls *were too small and covetous for the grace of God to find them.* If this is wicked, please pardon the

thought, and attribute it to holy indignation and contempt.

In him we see a young devoted brother, in love with the cause committed to his trust, earnestly praying and laboring for the religious health of the Church, the conversion of the world; sacrificing the comforts of home, and his own business, by which his equally self-sacrificing wife and children are to get their daily bread; leaving all to respond to the apparently earnest solicitation to visit and preach for them, having to return home with the overheard exclamation, "Why, Bro. Parrish has a store!" And this is the kind of means he has to pay his expenses back to his distant home! Brethren, pardon me—no, I will not write it—for if I were, this ink would turn red and the lurid flames of indignation would curl in consuming heat around some poor covetous heart. Thank the Lord we have not many such in the churches. But the few who remain, if they do not repent and turn to the Lord and plead for mercy, will be bound with the chains of Rhodomanthus to heaps of heated gold.

No preacher can preach with efficiency while engaged in secular affairs; or if he succeeds as a preacher, his secular interest will suffer. This was the case with the profits arising from the store of Bro. Parrish. His want of success in business did not arise from the absence of capacity, nor from inattention when at home, but because he had to be so often from home and his business, preaching the Gospel and building up the churches. He, seeing the state of his affairs, commenced to close up his business. This he did with honor, and saved something, but nothing compared with what he ought to have realized.

He had now a growing family, and was determined that his children should be educated. But situated as he was, he could not accomplish so desirable an object; and after much thought, he determined to go



to California, and try the fortunes of that distant State. This he did in March, 1849.

There was a native determination and vim in his character that marked him as a man of power; there was no indolence nor muteness in him; if he had a question before him, he gave it the powers of his strong mind, and as soon as he reached a conclusion, he spoke it out with plainness, or, if it required action, he was equal to the task. He was a man of the right stamp. It is said that "circumstances make men," and no doubt they have much to do with them; but the man who has the inherent seeds of advancement in him is no Micawber, "waiting for something to turn up," but elbows obstacles out of his way, and passes on with determination. He being just such a man, and having the education of his children in view, and seeing this could not be accomplished if he remained in Virginia, made provision for his family, then committed them to the Lord, and in March, 1849, left for California. When he reached there, he found himself in a strange land, among strangers. He engaged immediately in business. He visited the gold mines, and worked in them for a short time, but his business chiefly was in more congenial localities. After being there a month or two he found a few brethren, some in organized churches, but the most of them without congregational advantages. He commenced to labor among them by organizing several churches and preaching regularly, not only to churches, but in regions beyond. He was not only popular as a preacher, but as a man, so much so that without any effort on his part the people elected him to the Legislature. This was not what he wished, nor would he consent to accept such honor until after much persuasion. This, however, while it to some extent interfered with his business arrangements, presented a wider and more faithful field of religious usefulness. He had access to ears which,

perhaps, otherwise would never have heard the ancient Gospel. He made use of all these advantages to enlighten the minds and convert his fellow-citizens. Nor were his labors in vain. He became an instrument in the hands of the Lord in turning many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.

If he had confined himself exclusively to money-making, he would have realized to a great extent his hopes, but when he saw the people anxious to hear the Gospel, the chief object of his life would cause him to devote some of his time to the ministry. He accumulated considerable, and invested it in property, which he thought would in a short time pay him a fine profit.

During his stay in California he wrote a series of very interesting letters, which were published in the *Christian Intelligencer*. They gave not only the results of his religious labors, but many interesting incidents of California life. Those letters were well written, and were the first evidences of his capacity as a writer.

He remained in California until the spring of 1852, when he returned home to the joy of his loving wife and fond children. In a short time after his return he engaged actively in the ministry. He not only preached regularly for several churches, but his voice was heard at many protracted meetings in other fields. Nor was his pen idle; the readers of the *Intelligencer* were favored with many rich articles upon religious subjects. During this time the Lord afflicted him in the loss of his dear wife; she who had been his comfort, and the one who had cared for the family during those two long years he was in California. She left him and her dear children for that brighter land on 28th of May, 1855. She is not dead, but sleepeth. Peaceful be her slumbers, and angels guard her resting place.

He continued to labor for the cause until the spring of 1856, when he returned to California, to dispose of

his property, and make a final settlement of all his affairs in that section. He reached there in safety, but did not find his investments as profitable as he had wished. He had fondly hoped, as he once expressed himself to me, that he would realize enough to secure ample means for himself and family during life. But how uncertain are the things of earth! He remained there one year, preached much, and baptized a great number of men and women, and also engaged in new secular schemes, but his efforts in these were not very profitable. We have, in this third attempt, an evidence that secular business and preaching cannot both at the same time be successful. Inspired wisdom has settled this beyond all question, and it is only to suffer defeat for us to try to harmonize them. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." If he had confined himself to money-making, and hardened his heart to the promptings of Divine grace, and said to his conscience, "Peace, be still," his talents and energy would have filled his pockets with the riches of that gold region. But would that have been right in the sight of God and good men? No, no. Nevertheless, with all his adverses, he realized some of the fruits of his secular labors, and returned to his native State in 1857, and made arrangements for the education of his children. In fact some of them had already entered upon their academic and collegiate studies. When we consider this brother, in the prime of his manhood, with not only native talents, but much acquired learning and untiring energies—one who had devoted himself to the prosperity of the cause of saving souls, thus struggling to educate his children and support his family—we ask why are such embarrassments in the way of his san-

guine desires? Was it his fault, or that of those who had reaped the benefits of his labors? Or rather would you not ask, Is it not a small thing, as he had labored much for our spiritual good, that we should see to his temporal good?

Brethren, there is a fault somewhere. Jno. G. Parrish was fitted by nature and education to occupy a high position, at the bar, in medicine, or in any other secular business! But, no, he gave his all to the good of his fellow beings; and when he asked for bread he was given a stone. But you say he never made his wants or desires known. Shame upon you for having such a thought! Did you not reap his spiritual things? Was he making money while he was preaching for you! Were not your secular affairs going on while he was laboring for you? Could he live upon the wind and the smiles of fond brethren and sisters? You have not the time to attend protracted meetings—say ten, twenty and fifty miles from home? If so, how could he? My dear brethren, the laborer is worthy of his hire.

After his return from California he devoted himself exclusively to preaching and to the health of the churches. He commenced to edit the *Christian Intelligencer* in 1859. When the war was forced upon us, every department of business, of domestic comfort, and of religious work, were thrown into confusion, but he continued to edit the paper, frequently at his own expense (and the expense of Bro. Clemmitt, the publisher), and to preach to sinners, and exhort the brethren and sisters to be faithful to the Lord and to the good of their fellow-citizens.

In 1860 he was married, by Elder R. L. Coleman, to Miss Susan G. Farrar, a devoted Christian and one eminently qualified to be a preacher's wife, and to take charge of orphan children; but she was of a weak constitution, and the war coming on, with all of its

fatalities, her frail physique gave way to the onus of its increased and increasing burdens, and she lingered in a decline until September 17, 1868, when, in the blissful hope of a better world, she breathed her last in the arms of Jesus, leaving four little children to realize the loss of a mother's love and care.

During the war he was chaplain, and ranked as major; he did good service to the cause of religion throughout the war, and from the hardships of camp life contracted a disease from which he never recovered, and which ultimately terminated his earthly existence.

In 1860, while engaged in his study, one of his little children, while kneeling, committing herself to the care of the Lord before retiring to bed, caught fire; he, hearing her screams, rushed into the nursery and found her in flames; and he, in attempting to extinguish the fire, was very much burnt. She was so much burnt that she died in twelve hours after, to her own relief and that of the sympathizing family. This affliction, with the circumstances connected therewith, caused him much anguish of mind, and, in speaking of it, he often exclaimed: "How mysterious are the ways of Providence; the judgments of God are a great deep—who can understand His ways."

After the war, he found his finances in a depreciated condition, but that same determined will which marked his early life had not forsaken him, nor had his love for God and His cause lessened in the least; so he adjusted his finances as well as he could, and commenced to visit the churches to see his brethren and give them the comforts of the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel, and to warn sinners of the wrath of a merciful God. His visits were cordially received, and crowned with the most gracious results.

The desire of his heart was to be useful—to build up the cause in Virginia and to bring the brotherhood

nearer together and give them a means of communicating with one another; so, in 1868, in connection with Bro. Hopson, he commenced to publish the *Christian Examiner*, which he edited with ability and prudence up to his death.

There are many developments of moral character, of mental endowments, and Christian fortitude, interspersed in the life of Bro. Parrish, which would be interesting and profitable to the patient reader, but such is the rage for short articles, brief sketches, and small books, that we must forego the pleasure of recording them. But we must be allowed to speak of his death, and some few qualities of his mind and sanctified soul, before we close. During the war, as we have said, he contracted a disease which, as a hidden gangrene, preyed upon his physical man and gave him much pain. At first, to look at him, his physical man indicated health, while he was suffering much; but as he never wished to obtrude his cares or his sufferings upon others, the looker-on little knew the pain within. But after a while the wasting hand of disease began to show itself in his sunken features and emaciated frame. His voice, which had thrilled many an audience in clear accents, began to sound heavy, and to show that it was painful for him to speak. His step indicated weakness, and his general appearance the presence of much suffering. And, strange to say, he seldom spoke of himself, either by way of complaint or solicitude. He continued to preach until he could hold out no longer, and most reluctantly discontinued his ministrations. For some time he attended Church and worshiped in silence, but after awhile he had to deny himself that gratification. Weaker and weaker he became, until he was confined to his room, thence to his bed. He came down to this stage so gradually, that he hardly realized his own situation. During all this time he wrote for the



*Christian Examiner*, and when he could no longer write, his daughter Lucie and his sons wrote by his dictation. His mind was clear to the last, and his faith increased as he neared the turbid waters of death. He spoke of his sufferings as divine blessings, and, in gratitude, spoke of the kindness of God in bringing him down so gently to the parting hour. In the midst of loving friends and endeared children, he most quietly breathed his last on Lord's day morning, at ten o'clock, the 30th of July, 1871.

Thus lived and passed away one who loved the truth and its author from a pure heart. He was a disciple in deed and in truth. He was never willing to make any compromise with error, and was unalterably opposed to every form of sectarianism over the mind of man. He believed in, advocated and defended to his latest breath, a pure Christianity in definition, doctrine, and practice. In connection with Dr. Broadus, one among the last acts of his life was to revise and prepare for publication the proceedings of the conference between the Disciples and Baptists in 1866.

He was neither an abstractionist nor a sentimentalist, but a man of faith—faith in God in all he did, commanded and promised. Hence he never gave any credence to modern dreams, visions, and other vagaries, as evidences of divine grace. He lived by faith, and died in the faith. The Word of God, to him, was “more precious than gold, yea than much fine gold; sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.” This was fully exemplified in his self-denial and devotion to the cause of God, when, with his talents, he could have been pecuniarily a successful man. But he has gone

“Where neither gloom nor sorrow shades the mind;  
Where joys ne'er fade, nor the soul's power decay;  
But youth and spring eternal bloom.”



## SILAS SHELburn.

Silas Shelburn, "the 'Raccoon' John Smith" of Virginia, was born June 4, 1790. He was the son of James Shelburn, a Baptist minister, who, as related in Chapter I. of our Historical Sketch, had, at a meeting of Meherrin Baptist Church, opposed the adoption of Philadelphia Confession or any other creed, maintaining that the Word of God is all-sufficient.

Sometime between the years 1810 and 1815 Silas Shelburn began to accompany his father on his preaching tours. In one of the first meetings they held together several persons presented themselves for baptism and Church membership. Father Shelburn said, "Let the candidates be examined to see if their Christian experiences are satisfactory," when his son, Silas, spoke up and said, "Father, that is not in accord with the Scriptures; that is not the way the Apostles did. How can these men, who have been sinners all their lives, and who have never lived a Christian life, give a Christian experience? You might as well require every young couple who comes to you to be married to give a married experience before you perform the marriage ceremony." "Go on, Silas, and do right," said the old man, and from that time forth they baptized believing penitents on their confession that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

Silas continued with his father until the death of the latter, in 1820. Shortly before his death James Shelburn addressed himself to his son in the following

impressive manner: "Oh, my son, the Church lies heavy, very heavy, on my mind. I fear that a cold and trying time is approaching, and that many will be seeking a more fashionable religion. Watch over their souls, as one who must give an account unto God, and keep yourself unspotted from the world. Do not aspire after men of great swelling words, but study the Scriptures, preaching the Gospel in its simplicity; be meek, lowly and unassuming in your manners, with all holy conversation, as becometh the Gospel of Christ. Never aim at things too deep, and incomprehensible for mortals to know, remembering that there is as much made plain as it is the will of our Heavenly Father we should know; for 'secret things belong to God, and things that are revealed belong to us.' Throughout life, whatever difficulties you may have to encounter, never return railing for railing, but contrariwise, in doing which you will overcome ten where you will one by any other method."

Under the guidance of such a father, it was but natural that Silas Shelburn should have loved the truth above everything. He now gave up everything else and devoted his entire time to the ministry. He early became a reader of the *Christian Baptist*, and adopted many reform measures, among which was the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. He was then preaching for the Baptist churches left vacant by the death of his father. Abner Clopton, a leading Baptist preacher of the Meherrin Association, endeavored to have Bro. Shelburn disfellowshipped by the publication of proscriptional decrees, as related in

Chapter IV. of our Historical Sketch. In this he failed, and the lack of success of the attempt caused Bro. Shelburn to remain in the Baptist ranks until long after most of his reform brethren in Virginia had thrown off the denominational yoke. Ultimately all the group of churches for which he preached became simply churches of Christ.

Silas Shelburn traveled all over Virginia, doing the work of an evangelist. No record of his work or life can be written. He brought many souls into the Kingdom of God. The remainder of this sketch will be devoted to illustrations from his life that bring out his quaint, humorous, yet frank and brave character.

He was uneducated, but few could get the marrow and fatness of Scripture as he could. It used to be customary at the yearly State meeting to devote one session to the preachers. After each speech time was given for criticism of the speaker. On one occasion while this was going on Bro. Shelburn, growing weary of such exercises, started to leave old Sycamore Church, Richmond. As he was nearing the door, one of the preaching brethren said: "I see old Bro. Shelburn going out, and before he goes I want to say to him that I do wish he would stop saying 'agin' for 'against' and 'gwine' for 'going.' The old man without hesitation replied, "Well, if that's all you've got agin me I'm gwine along." A young preacher who had rather an exalted opinion of his powers, after preaching in the presence of Bro. Shelburn, asked him what he thought of the sermon. "Wall, brother," said the old man, "there's a pint down on the Eastern Shore they call

‘Pint No Pint.’ You were as near there to-day as you’ll ever get.” Another preacher who had gone rather deeply into some metaphysical speculation in a sermon, to which Silas Shelburn had listened, asked him what he thought of his metaphysics. The reply was, “Metaphysics? Wall I didn’t know what kind of physic it was, but it made me mighty sick.” Some one asked him at a meeting where he preached in the presence of Alexander Campbell if he was not afraid to preach before Mr. Campbell. “No,” he answered, “I have preached before God Almighty many a time, and I don’t know why I should be afraid to preach before Alexander Campbell!” Present one day at a baptizing in old Sycamore Church, Richmond, as the pastor, Bro. W. J. Pettigrew, withdrew to the dressing-room, old Bro. Shelburn slowly arose from the front bench, where, as was his custom, he had stretched himself, and amid the dead silence which prevailed, turning his beaming countenance toward the congregation, said, “Brethren, sing a song while Brother Pettigrew gets his breeches on.” There was rather a sensation as they raised the hymn:

“How happy are they who their Savior obey.”

He died September 7, 1871. Three of his children and three grandchildren have been preachers of the Gospel.

## ELDER CHAS. TALLEY.

Chas. Talley, or Father Talley, as he was familiarly called, was the son of William and Christian Talley. He was born near Old Church, Hanover county, Virginia, in October, 1765. His parents were respected people moving in humble life, his mother being a devoted member of the Methodist Church. She was a woman of prayer, and early taught her son Charles to believe in the existence of God—that he could see all he did, hear all he said, and would hold him accountable for both in the day of judgment. Father Talley's father died soon after his birth. He lived with his mother until he was sixteen years old. An incident occurred during this time which showed that he was a youth of determination of character. In the war of the Revolution the English took from his mother her only horse, and he, at the age of thirteen, had the courage to take from them a valuable horse in full view of their encampment. The quickness of his movements and his size so astonished the enemy that before they could realize the object he had in view he had made good his escape with the horse and brought him home in triumph. At the age of sixteen he went to learn a trade, and served five years' apprenticeship. He worked at his trade for some years, and was esteemed a good workman. He was always moral, truthful and upright, but there was in him a fondness for dancing, and he had made arrangements to organize a dancing school; but the influence of his mother had

made such an impression upon his mind that he felt ill at ease in such an undertaking. The impropriety of a dancing school, like David's sin, was ever before him; and to the surprise of his acquaintance, he abandoned the idea, made a public profession of his faith in Jesus, and united with the Methodist Church. Now his religious usefulness began. His mother had taught him to read, write, and cipher as far as the rule of three. This was, as a general rule at that day, the highest education attained among the poor. He became a public advocate of the Christian religion. He became an independent preacher, and went everywhere preaching the Word, visiting many sections of the State and bringing many into the fold of the church. But his mind was not at rest, for he could plainly see the defects of Methodism. He loved the Methodist Church, he loved her members; it was the church dear to his mother, and all his early religious associations were connected with her. What to do or how to act, gave him much concern. But he prayed and searched for the truth. About this time, O'Kelley, of North Carolina, made his attempt to effect a reform in the Methodist Church. Those who united with this move were known as "O'Kelleyites." Father Talley united with them, and continued to preach; still he did not feel satisfied that this was what the New Testament taught. This was in 1800, and on the 18th of January of that year he married Ann W. Mills, a widow, whose maiden name was Starke. She was a lady of high respectability. By this marriage he had two children, a son and a daughter.

His son became a physician and a useful member of the Church his father afterward founded. Father Talley's wife died, and on January 11, 1804, he married Elizabeth Crutchfield, a lady of honorable family and high respectability. By this marriage he had two sons, both of whom died young. Father Talley was determined to know the truth, so he continued the study of the Word of God. He became convinced that sprinkling is not baptism, and one of the great principles of his life was to follow the convictions of his soul in all matters. Here was a test of his faith. He reasoned thus: "If immersion is baptism, I must be immersed; it is equally so for all others;"—and as he could not remain in full fellowship with the Methodist Church, even under the reformation of O'Kelley, and preach his convictions, that fellowship must be severed. He was immersed and united with the Baptist Church. He entered upon his work with renewed zeal, and soon built up one of the largest churches in the Baptist denomination in Hanover county. He was opposed to all human creeds. Though he labored with great energy and success he was not considered a sound Baptist minister. But that did not deter him from searching the Word of God, and preaching what he learned. He saw that the Baptist Church, in some respects, did not preach the whole truth, as it was taught in the New Testament. That the primitive Church met on *every* first day of the week to break bread, was to him as plainly taught as that "Remember the Sabbath Day" meant *every* Sabbath Day. About this time the *Christian Baptist* made its appearance.



As he read it, new light began to break in upon his mind. He was confirmed in the opinions he had already gathered from his search of God's Word, and had developed to him equally important truths, facts and commands, with their antecedents and consequents. Without conferring with flesh and blood, he came out fully for the primitive order of things. New light gave him new energy, and having God's Word to guide him, he trusted more to the Holy Spirit for success. He soon had established and built up the largest Christian Church in that section, which became known as Bethesda Church. Nearly all of his former members—both Baptists and Methodists—united with him in his new work. He continued to preach for them with both approbation and success till the day of his death, and lead many to Christ through his earnest words and godlike example. He fell asleep on the 15th day of April, 1847, in the eighty-first year of his age, at his residence, about three miles from his natal place.

## ELDER A. B. WALTHALL.

Careful search has failed to elicit very much direct information concerning the life and labors of Bro. Walthall. He was born in Amelia county, between 1800 and 1805, and when a young man became interested in religious matters. Silas Shelburn was at that time preaching through Amelia as a Baptist. Bro. Walthall got hold of the *Christian Baptist* about the time it was first published, and as the teaching set forth appealed to his sound common sense, he began to circulate the paper among his friends throughout the county. In 1830 he was the leading elder in the Church at Paineville, and often led the meetings of the Church. He soon recognized his calling, and entered upon the proclamation of the Gospel as a life work. He was zealous and ambitious for the truth, and his labors covered such an extensive territory, that it would be difficult indeed to give any definite account of his work. He was the lifelong friend and preaching companion of Geo. W. Abell, and together they visited nearly every section of Eastern Virginia.

A few little incidents that occurred in the experience of these brethren are worthy of note, as they bring out something of their characteristics.

On one occasion Bro. Abell was to baptize the sister of a Methodist woman. On arriving at the stream, in company with Bro. Walthall, they heard the woman mentioned venting her religious wrath in a tirade of

abuse on Bro. Abell and his religion. When they started for the water the ireful lady ran up and tried to tear the candidate loose from Bro. Abell's grasp, but her husband released her hold. But no sooner had he let her go than she snatched up a stone and, throwing it with all her strength, struck Bro. Abell on the heel ere he reached the water's edge. Returning from the baptism, Bro. Walthall was just behind the enraged lady, when she declared that Bro. Abell had baptized a great sinner; "for," said she, "that girl has no more religion than I have—and everybody knows that I have none." "That," said Bro. Walthall, "is quite evident, madam." After it was all over, Bro. Walthall remarked to Bro. Abell, "So the serpent bruised your heel; but I think you wounded his head." Relaxing into a smile, the latter replied, "I am satisfied with the issue."

At another time they were conducting a meeting together amid much opposition. Brother Abell, as his manner was, had spoken freely of the Devil's work in vilely slandering the children of God, and in putting obstacles in the way of the returning prodigal.

One night they lodged in the hotel owned by an afflicted brother, whose son-in-law was the active manager. After retiring they were aroused by the noise of a terrible fracas below. Profane utterances, angry threats, mingled shrieks and cries of men and women, all betokened perilous times for the proclaimers of the Truth. The two brethren were up and dressed in a few moments, and Bro. Abell started down. Bro. Walthall called his attention to the danger, and the

prompt answer was, "I am going to meet it." They both went down, and when they entered the room below, the afflicted brother, who earlier in life had been remarkably active, was on the scene, and bounding from man to man, he soon cleared the room of the dastardly set. The Devil had determined to avenge himself upon the preachers by an effort to break up the meeting; but he signally failed, for the meeting continued several days and was quite a success.

Bro. Walthall lost a son during the war. He was killed at the battle of Cedar Creek. This was a hard blow to the father, who set great hopes upon his son, but that abiding faith which he had used to comfort others in the hour of trial now sustained him. He was drawn closer to the Saviour by his affliction, and continued to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. He died about the year 1880.

We regret that this account of the life of this good man is so meagre in details.

## MATTHEW WEBBER.

The details concerning the life of the subject of this sketch are few. He was born during the first decade of the last century. His father, William Webber, was a dissenter from the Church of England, at a time when it was perilous to preach any other doctrine than that authorized by the English laws. He was twice committed to prison and once publicly whipped for preaching Baptist doctrine. When in jail he continued to preach through prison bars, and refused liberty on the terms of discontinuing his proclamation of what he deemed the truth. It is not strange that the son of such a father should be a fearless advocate of the Gospel. Matthew Webber early united with the Baptist Church. He was an earnest student of the Bible, and his active mind questioned many of the religious practices of that day, unable to find their counterpart in God's Word. He read the *Christian Baptist* and proclaimed the principles of the restoration, then but just inaugurated. He was a Baptist preacher, but in favor of reformation. By his side stood Peter Ainslie, Thomas M. Henley, Dudley Atkinson and Dr. Du Val.

He was one of the six who were excluded from the Baptist ranks by the Dover Decree. When Matthew Webber's father, years before, was imprisoned, his Baptist brethren were indignant at such proscription. They stood for religious freedom. But their children would keep the people from listening to the Gospel from the lips of Matthew Webber, his son.

Bro. Webber was naturally eloquent and a fine debater. He preached for several years at the old Temperance meeting-house, in Hanover county, also in a grove in the lower corner of Louisa county. He also traveled much as an evangelist through the Tidewater district.

On one occasion a man met him in the road while on his way to preach, and with a vindictiveness characteristic of the times, said, "Campbellite! Campbellite!" Bro. Webber replied, as calmly as if nothing had been said, "Better be a Campbellite than no light at all."

Bro. Webber was married three times. He was kind and indulgent to his family, and a good friend and neighbor.

He moved to West Tennessee in 1837, and accumulated considerable property, but lost nearly everything during the war. His son, Thomas Morton Webber, was killed in the war.

Bro. Webber was a man of fine business ability, and after the war again accumulated a large estate. At one time he owned over 800 sheep and cattle. He died at the age of eighty-six, near Memphis, respected and loved by all who knew him.

## UNBIOGRAPHED.

We bring this volume to a close, not from any lack of able men of whom to write. Eastern Virginia gave a host of able preachers to the Brotherhood, besides those who spent their lives within her borders. In fact, no other State can boast of as many able men given to the current reformation as the Old Dominion. There was Samuel Rogers, born in Charlotte county, in 1789. Virginia gave him to her daughters, Missouri and Kentucky. Then there were the Creaths. Jacob Creath, Sr., was first ordained to preach in old Round-about Meeting-House, Louisa county, Virginia, in 1798. Henry Clay pronounced him "the finest orator that Kentucky has ever produced." His nephew, Jacob Creath, Jr., was born in Mecklenburg county, Virginia, in 1799, and was baptized by James Shelburn, the father of Silas Shelburn, in 1817. He was another gift to Kentucky. Then there was Aylette Raines, who was born near Fredericksburg, in 1797. There, too, was John O'Kane, born in Culpeper county, in 1802, Virginia's gift to Indiana. T. M. Allen was a Virginian by birth; Barton Warren Stone spent his early years and did some of his first preaching in Virginia; John T. Johnson and Winthrop Hopson were worthy sons of Virginia parents; and last, but not least, that cultered man of God, W. K. Pendleton, was a Virginian of Virginians. The foregoing list is far from complete. We have not undertaken to



biograph them, because most of their labors were performed elsewhere, but Virginia is proud of the record of her sons in the Gospel.

There is still a group of pioneers, who labored all their lives in Eastern Virginia, the record of whose triumphs in the Gospel would be equally as interesting as those which have been given, but lack of definite records of their work forces us to pass them with the simple mention of their names: James Henshall, Robert Y. Henley, Peter Ainslie (Second), Cephas Shelburn, James A. Cowgill, John Richards, Hunter, and Hugart.

Truly, "Others have labored, and ye have entered into their labors."









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