

*W. V. Cherry*

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THE PLANTING

OF

Presbyterianism in Kentucky

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

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# Memorial Discourse

ON THE

## PLANTING OF PRESBYTERIANISM

IN KENTUCKY

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

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BY THE

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# The Planting of Presbyterianism in Kentucky One Hundred Years Ago.

BY REV. MOSES D. HOGE, D. D.

*"The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."—Matt. iv. 16.*

Every year that passes marks the termination of a century. But while every hundred years of the world's history must have its concluding year, it does not follow that the last year of a century is one of any special significance. It is often a mere chronological epoch, evoking no memories, awakening no associations, exciting no emotion, commemorating nothing worthy of perpetuation. It is not so with the present year.

Not only does it arrest the attention of this venerable Synod and of the Presbyterian population of this great State, but it is a year which commands the reverential recognition of other Churches than our own, because of its relation to events memorable in their annals.

Notable among these is the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great reformer whose clarion voice awoke the world afresh to the recognition of the doctrine of justification by faith—that article of a standing or a falling Church.

In such commemorations there is a great moral element. It is sometimes good to get free from the narrow environments of the immediate present and ascend some eminence which commands a view of ways long since trodden, and then, from what has been taught by the review, learn to forecast the ever-widening way of the future. It is only by such studies that we can catch the spirit of the great historic eras which have been potent in shaping the institutions of our own times. It is only when we can transport ourselves to the distant past and evoke from its obscurity the forms of those who gave it movement; it is only when we can restore the scenery which surrounded them and acquaint ourselves with the errors which they combated, the difficulties they surmounted, the hardships they endured, and the great purposes which animated them, that we can fully comprehend the character of the men who thus toiled and suffered, or appreciate the



influence of their lives upon their own generation, and trace the effect of their examples and principles upon succeeding generations. When we do this, the dim and shadowy past is irradiated again with its own long-vanished light, and we no longer gaze upon cold and motionless forms ranged upon a flat, dead canvas; but it is a moving panorama that we behold; the figures stand out in bold relief, instinct with life and clothed with their own impressive personality. Thus placing ourselves among them we take a new interest in the men themselves and in the work they achieved, and while we embalm their memories and deeds in grateful recollection, we catch the fire which yet lives in their ashes, and we feel the inspiration which their great examples of devotion to duty enkindle in our hearts. Other men labored, and we are entered into their labors. They were sowers, sometimes weeping as they walked wearily through the furrows, scattering the precious seed, and we are reaping the golden harvest. Some of them lived in the days of persecution and bloody martyrdom, while the deep night of superstition and spiritual gloom shrouded the earth; but God had shined in their hearts to give them the knowledge of His glory, and because of this divine illumination, wherever they went, "the people that sat in darkness saw great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, light sprang up."

I need not remind you that this was the text of the first sermon preached by a Presbyterian minister in Kentucky, and although the time allotted to this service will not permit me to discuss it *in thesi* and at the same time give you a historical sketch of what preceded and accompanied the planting of Presbyterianism in this State, still I do not purpose to use the text as a mere motto; for I trust that the subject-matter of my sermon will be the most appropriate elucidation of this scripture, so far as it has application to the events commemorated by this centennial observance.

This is almost a different world from that in which our ancestors lived a hundred years ago. Then, the map of this country represented the outline of the thirteen old colonies scrambling along the Atlantic slope, with their western boundaries scarcely defined. Then, the vast valley of the Mississippi was scarcely sprinkled by the homes and institutions of civilized men, and beyond it was another realm stretching away toward the horizon, where the setting sun quenches his glowing axle in the bosom of the Pacific, and yet its wide expanse, for the most part, the haunt only of the savage beast or the savage man, with its silence unbroken save by the voice of the storm or the thunder of the cataract. But look now at the last Congressional atlas of the

country and mark the splendid array of confederated States, all of them studded with cities, fair and opulent, streaked with railway lines, three of them stretching from ocean to ocean, and crowded with a population which the swift census can scarcely overtake.

A hundred years ago the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Richmond, and Charleston, were but straggling towns, while Buffalo and Cincinnati and Chicago and San Francisco were not born. Then so slowly did tidings travel, that the rumor of the first battle of the Revolution did not reach Savannah until twenty-two days after it was fought, but now our evening papers contain a resumé of the editorials of the morning dailies of Paris, London, and St. Petersburg, and I, myself, sent a telegram to my family from the capital of the land of the Pharaohs which reached them soon after the click of the wires in Cairo.

In 1783, the French Revolution had not commenced, and the battles of Austerlitz, Borodino, and Waterloo had not been fought.

In 1783, geology with its startling revelations, and chemistry with its untold practical applications, were yet in their infancy, and archaeology, with its confirmation of the truth of Scripture history from Babylonia, Assyria, Phœnicia and Palestine were unknown.

More interesting still to us is it to register the religious progress which has blessed the century whose close we chronicle to-day, and the development of the philanthropic institutions which have grown like nourishing clusters on the vine of Christian love. The organization of Missionary, Bible, and Tract Societies, of Sunday-schools and Young Men's Christian Associations, of asylums for the deaf, dumb, and blind, Magdalen homes, Houses of Refuge, free schools, and prison reforms, and other leaves and fruits of the tree which are for the healing of the nations. And now we find ourselves the citizens of a Republic, which, with all the corruptions which fill patriotic hearts with sorrow and foreboding, we would not exchange for any other form of government on earth, and members of a Church which, notwithstanding its failure to attain to its own ideal conception of what a Church should be, as a part of the mystical body of which Christ is the head, is, nevertheless, because of its scriptural organization, purity of doctrine, conservatism of what is fittest to survive, and aggression upon all that is fittest to perish, entitled to our veneration, love, and undying devotion.

But now the question arises, what were the influences which gave birth to the institutions, civil and religious, which are our heritage? If it be answered, they were the creations of the patriot sages who



framed our constitutions and declarations of right, this does not solve the problem; for the question still recurs, from what sources did they derive the principles which are embodied in these codes and constitutions? Did the masterly State papers—filled with philosophic inductions, with lucid expressions of the profoundest maxims of political wisdom and the unanswerable demonstration of popular right—which attracted the attention and commanded the admiration of the wisest statesmen of England, spring spontaneously from the soil like the giant trees of the American forests? And if not, from what remote fountains did the men who drafted these papers derive their inspiration? All forms of government are *growths*, not original creations perfected at once by the immediate influences which gave them form. They are all but the outward expression of the inward social, civil, and ethical life of the *people* whose traditions and principles are embodied in them. What, then, molded the people and set in train the influences which became the vital forces of their being?

All honor to the patriot soldiers and statesmen of the Revolution, who on the field, in the cabinet, and in the halls of legislation, by their valor, wisdom, and virtue built up the visible structure of our form of government, but the noble constitution which they formed was neither their discovery nor invention. It was the systematic arrangement and putting down upon parchment of the principles which had been throbbing in the bosoms of patriots, and struggling for expression through generations of conflict for the right and true. It was, as has well been said, not the fountain out of which the streams of liberty flowed, but the reservoir into which a thousand little rills had been running until it finally *overflowed* with waters to refresh and fertilize a continent. And if the question once more returns, what were the sources from which these streams originally issued, I would answer, first, the Word of God, from which the true ideal of representative government is derived; and second, the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, which awakened the world afresh to the recognition of the sacredness of the domain of conscience; which proclaimed not only the worth of the soul but the value of the citizen; which kindled human intelligence by bringing it into immediate contact with the Book which has done more than all others to quicken thought and give development to literature, art, and the science of government; which emphasized the great truth, that if rulers had rights they also had duties, and if the ruled had duties they also had rights, that the people were the true source of power, and that all just government rested on the consent of the governed. In a word, it

was the Reformation which unfurled the banner in the eyes of the nation, on one side of which was written: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," and on the other side the inscription, "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God."

And, as the third of the influences which have shaped the institutions of the land, I would mention the peculiar training received by the early emigrants to these shores, and by the patriot soldiers and sages who were most influential in framing our form of government. That training was in the school of conflict. It was the discipline enforced by that sternest of teachers—adversity; that development of the truest and noblest manhood which comes from patient, determined, heroic resistance to civil and religious tyranny.

In Scotland, under the reigns of James and Charles the I. and II., when royal promises were made only to be broken, when solemn oaths were taken only to be violated; when prelacy was enforced on an unwilling people by tyrannical edicts; when courts of high commission were established armed with inquisitorial power; when two thousand ministers were ejected at one time for non-conformity; when householders were required to give bond that their families should not attend the services of the Church endeared to them by all that was most sacred in their convictions, traditions, and memory; when to enforce submission to ecclesiastical tyranny torture was used to extort confession; when prisons were filled with the victims of intolerance; when soldiers were quartered upon the defenseless inhabitants and restrained from no outrage; then was it that these great protests against oppression found voices which will never cease to sound while suns shine and waters flow, and the great heart of humanity thrills in sympathy with the sorrows of those who suffer for conscience sake. Then was it that the independence of the Church was asserted in the memorable words of John Knox: "Take from us the liberty of assemblies and you take from us the Gospel." Then was it that the deputies presenting to the King an address from the assembly in which the independence of the Church from civil power was asserted, and when the Earl of Arran, frowning terribly on all around, cried, "Who dare sign these treasonable articles?" that Andrew Melville stood forth and declared, "I dare," and suiting the action to the word, took the pen from the hand of the Secretary of the Council and signed his name in the presence of the astonished court; the same Melville, who afterwards made an address of his own to the King, which must have sounded strangely in royal ears, "There are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland. There is King Jesus and his Kirk, and King



James, of whose kingdom he is not a king or a lord, but a subject. We will yield you your place and give you all obedience, but again I say you are not the head of the Church. If you seek both kingdoms, you shall lose both." We see the same principle taking its living form when six thousand members of the Scottish Church assembled around old Grey Friars in Edinburgh to adopt the solemn league and covenant, and when, as we have been so eloquently told, the parchment containing the Church's charter and declaration of right was spread out on a tombstone which covered the ashes of one of Caledonia's worthies, and when, amidst the shouts of some, the sobs of others, and the deep emotion of all, it was covered with names, and because a nation was waiting, the parchment was enlarged by the addition of sheet after sheet, that it might make a circuit of the whole land and everywhere receive the signatures of those who were ready humbly to bow the knee before God, and render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, but equally ready to resist unto blood all those who sought to invade the sacred rights of conscience and usurp the authority which belongs alone to the great Lord of conscience.

We cross what a recent writer calls "The Silver Streak," which separates England from France, and we find ourselves in the presence of another great conflict between might and right, more startling in some of its aspects than the one we have just contemplated.

For nearly a hundred years the Protestants of France had enjoyed the protection afforded them by the celebrated edict of Nantes, granted under the reign of Henry the IV.; but in 1685 that edict was revoked, and then from the lurid background there arises upon our vision another of the bloody pictures in the book of crime, in which the massacre of the 70,000 martyrs on St. Bartholomew's day makes the terrible foreground of the picture. I need not recount the horrors of that persecution. Suffice it to say, that although it was at the risk of life that any Huguenot attempted to expatriate himself, yet life was equally risked by remaining at home, while exile offered at least the hope of personal safety and the allurements of freedom to worship God, so that within a few years France lost more than a million of her noblest sons, scattered over the face of the earth—a loss irreparable then, and to be lamented now, when France needs all the conservative elements which true Protestantism secures to a nation.

Once more the scene changes, but the drama is the same. On the northern shores of Ireland the conflict between the ever-antagonistic powers of despotism and liberty is waged again.

The siege of Londonderry helped to change the fortunes of Europe.

During the eight months of its heroic resistance to James II., the king's troops, which strove in vain to force its gates, might otherwise have effected a union with those of Claverhouse in Scotland, and so, in alliance with the French, have successfully withstood the Prince of Orange. But the divided army of James was unequal to the task. The besieged citizens of Londonderry held out to the bitter end—the triumph end. The news reached the Prince at Hampton Court and gave him the assurance that his crown was safe, and William of Orange was proclaimed King of England.

It was from these fields of conflict that our forefathers came to these American shores, with their noblest manhood disciplined and developed by unconquerable courage and endurance. They came, bringing with them principles dear to them by conviction, and made more dear by the sufferings they had undergone to maintain them.

It is true their resistance had been chiefly to ecclesiastical despotism, but the greater includes the less. That the stern and uncompromising advocates of freedom in the Church should also be the zealous defenders of civil liberty in the State is the natural and logical consequence of their faith. It may require generations to work out these problems, but to this issue must it come at last. In course of time the doctrines which prevail on the subject of Church government will inevitably shape popular opinion in regard to civil government. The man who has been accustomed to cringe at the feet of a spiritual master will readily cower under the frown of a temporal despot; and on the other hand, the man who will not brook sacerdotal tyranny in the Church will be the very man who will not submit to civil despotism in the State. And so, when from Scotland, from Holland, from France, and from the north of Ireland our ancestors came, singly or in companies, the stream of emigration sometimes checked but only to gather new force and overleap the barriers which for a time retarded it, and therefore ever-flowing, deepening, and widening as it ran, could it be supposed that, on their settlement in the new world, they could forget the conflicts of the past, or leave behind them the principles for which they had sacrificed all but honor and conscience?

Forget! No more than they could forget their Highland hills and the lakes nestling among them, with a romance in every ripple of their waves; no more than they could forget their heath-clad Grampians and the blue Pentlands on whose summits they had inhaled the fresh air of the morning; no more than they could forget the bloom of the heather and the shrill notes of the pibroch wailing along the desolate moors; no more than they could forget the cottage homes where,



gathered for family worship around the ingle, they listened to warbling "Dundee" and plaintive "Martyrs," and to the tremulous tones,

"When, kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,  
The saint, the father, and the husband prayed."

No; it was only the natural scenery of their native land that they left behind them on emigrating to these shores—only the fields they had tilled and the houses they had inhabited. Their principles they brought with them—to plant them in a richer soil, where they might take deeper root, and attain a more vigorous growth and ripen into more abundant harvests.

As soon as the dispute between the colonies and the mother country commenced, the different branches of the Presbyterian family united with one mind and heart in support of the cause of Independence. The part taken by Presbyterians in that contest was then made a matter of reproach, and it is the recorded testimony of those who were least in sympathy with their principles and conduct, that they were the first to enlist in the conflict and the last to retire from it. A volume might be written illustrative of the influence these men exerted in the revolutionary struggle, but one incident must suffice for all. I quote substantially from the graphic description of the scene by the late Dr. Krebs. However familiar to you it may be, it will bear repetition.

"When the Declaration of Independence was under debate in the Continental Congress, doubts and forebodings were whispered through the hall. The House hesitated, and the destiny of the nation seemed poised as it were upon a single point. It was then that an aged patriarch arose, venerable and stately in form, his head white with the frosts of age. Every eye was fixed upon him as the needle turns and points to the pole. He cast over the assembly a look of inexpressible interest and unconquerable determination, while on his cheek the hue of age was lost in the fire of patriotism which illumined his face. 'There is a tide,' said he, when he saw the house wavering, 'there is a tide in the affairs of men—a nick of time—we perceive it now before us—to hesitate is to consent to our own bondage. That noble instrument upon your table should be subscribed this very morning by every pen in the house. For my own part, of property, I have some; of reputation, more; that reputation is staked, that property is pledged on the issue of this contest, and although these grey hairs must soon descend into the sepulcher, I would infinitely rather they should descend by the hand of the public executioner than desert at this crisis the sacred cause of my country.'"

Who was it uttered this memorable speech, potent to turn the scale of a nation's destiny? It was the venerable John Witherspoon, one of the fathers of the Presbyterian Church in this country—a brave patriot, no less than a Christian gentleman, and an able minister of the Gospel of Christ. Did I not truly say, that when we search for the original sources of the institutions which we most prize, we must turn to other times and to lands beyond the sea?

In these words of Witherspoon do we not distinctly recognize the ring of the brave old times of Melville, three hundred years before, when, in answer to the challenge of the Earl of Arran, "Who dare sign these treasonable articles?" he cried, "I dare." Thank God, the voices of true and brave men of old will ever sound in high and solemn protest in all legislative halls where bad men seek to frame mischief by a law; in all ecclesiastical assemblies where errorists teach for doctrine the commandments of men; on all battle-fields where tyranny attempts to overthrow the liberty which comes to the people, not by the permission of governments, but as the gift of God.

The first Presbyterian minister who preached in America was Francis Makemie, on the eastern shore of Virginia.\* He was a native of Ireland, and came from the province of Ulster in 1680. He encountered much opposition, and was often called to account for venturing to preach in places not specified in the permission which the court had granted him; but he bore his troubles with a fortitude, and often plead his own cause with an ability which commanded the admiration of his enemies. But certain influences were soon at work which were overruled by Providence for the introduction of Presbyterianism in a part of the colony where no religious teaching of any kind had been enjoyed. It was the policy of the House of Burgesses (Williamsburg then being the capital), to devise some means of protecting the settlements on its western border against the depredations of the Indian tribes. It was determined to form a frontier line as far from Williamsburg as possible, along both sides of the Blue Ridge. It was found that the hardy, industrious, enterprising Scotch-Irish furnished the very material out of which to form this living rampart.

\* While reading the proof-sheets of this discourse the essay of Prof. Charles A. Briggs, D. D., of New York, entitled the "Earliest American Presbyterianism," came into my hands.

Dr. Briggs states that the first Presbyterian emigrants were French Huguenots, under the auspices of Admiral Coligni, and that they went to the Carolinas and Florida, before the landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock. He also asserts that the Rev. Francis Doughty, an English Presbyterian Minister, preached to a congregation in Long Island, N. Y., in 1642, that he subsequently labored in eastern Virginia, and Maryland, more than thirty years earlier than Makemie.



Accordingly, those emigrants were encouraged by extensive grants of land to occupy the valley of Virginia. The first regular settlement west of the Blue Ridge was in the county of Frederick. Soon after, another colony was established in Rockbridge county, and another in Augusta. The descendants of these men yet inhabit the valley of Virginia, and among the familiar names are those of Allen, Vance, Glass, White, Russell, Gilkeson, Hoge, Alexander, Craig, Paxton, Blackburn, Preston, Matthews, Lyle, Stuart, Crawford, Caldwell, Campbell, Patton, Moore, Rutherford, Irvine, Tate, Douglas, McCue, McClung, McDowell, and all the rest of the Macs to the end of the alphabet. It was of these brave and hardy men that Washington declared, that if all his plans became overturned and but a single standard left, he would plant it upon the Blue Ridge, and making that his Thermopylæ, would rally around him the patriots of the valley, and there lay the foundation of a new Republic.

But while these colonists were gathering under the shadow of the Blue Ridge, there began to be a new and unexpected development in Eastern Virginia, which is worthy of perpetual remembrance.

A few leaves of Boston's "Fourfold State" fell into the hands of a gentleman in Hanover county. Becoming deeply interested in what he read, he sent to London for a complete copy, and the perusal of that work, together with the Bible, brought him to a saving acquaintance with the truth. Another, a neighbor of his, met with a copy of Luther on the Galatians. He became deeply impressed with the truths so different from those he had been accustomed to hear in the Parish Church. There were two other gentlemen in the same vicinity who had become dissatisfied with the ministrations of the Parish Church; one of them obtained a copy of Whitefield's sermons, which so much pleased him that he invited his neighbors to come and hear them read. They came, and the attendance so rapidly increased that there was no longer room. It soon became necessary to erect what was called a *Reading House*; then another, and another, until four were built, and all were filled. No one had yet ventured to offer a prayer, but the reading of these books had awakened many, and conversions rapidly multiplied. The library of this novel theological school was small indeed—Boston, Luther, Whitefield, and the Bible—but wonderfully good, what there was of it. It did not need a printed catalogue; it did not need a special building to contain it; but it brought souls to Christ. These doings, of course, were contrary to law. The absentees from the Parish Church were warned, threatened, fined, but still went on with their Sunday reading, until the leaders of this new

movement were summoned to Williamsburg, to answer to Governor Gooch in person for their contumacy. On their way to the little old capital they were overtaken by a great thunderstorm, and stopping in a house for shelter one of them picked up a book, without covers or title page, which immediately arrested his attention. The more he read the better he was satisfied. It seemed to contain a systematic and orderly statement of the doctrines he had found scattered through the Word of God—all fortified by Scripture texts. He offered to purchase it, but it was readily given to him. On arriving in Williamsburg Governor Gooch asked them what they called themselves. But as they had attempted no organization, and had adopted no name, they were at a loss what answer to make, when the owner of the book with the Scripture proofs handed it to Governor Gooch and told him that work contained their creed. Governor Gooch, who was of Scotch ancestry and education, taking the book, immediately recognized it as the Confession of Faith, and delighted them with the assurance that as the Church of Scotland was recognized by the English Government, they would be tolerated in their worship—as they were Presbyterians.

This incident should be put upon permanent record. Its significance is found in the fact that intelligent men, sincere inquirers for the truth, from the study of the Bible, and such meager assistance as their little library afforded, had unconsciously been led to the adoption of the doctrines contained in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. To this little band of evangelical Christians came Wm. Robinson, and after him Samuel Davies, who obtained permission from Governor Gooch to preach upon the lands of four persons specified in his license, viz: Morris, Lacy, Rice, and Watkins. I have no time in which to speak of the services, the transcendent talents and successes of Samuel Davies—of the manner in which he plead the cause of religious freedom, and his advocacy of principles, then novel, but which are now the boast and glory of all evangelical denominations in these United States.

But still westward the star of Christian empire takes its way, and to you the story of its progress becomes more and more interesting as your own territory is approached.

"The first explorers of Kentucky," says Davidson, "spread everywhere, on their return, the most glowing accounts of what they had seen—the luxuriousness of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, the undulating face of the country, the vast fields of native clover, the magnificent groves of sugar tree and walnut, the deeply-channelled



rivers sweeping between precipitous cliffs, the verdure of the vegetation, all combining to make it the imperial park of nature, the Tempe of the world. Allured by these glowing descriptions, emigrants flocked to it from every quarter, but principally from Virginia.

When the year 1783 opened with the prospect of peace with Great Britain, emigrants poured into Kentucky by the thousand; but now history must make a pause, for a new era is about to be inaugurated. Most eminent among all those who flocked to this western Garden of the Hesperides was the Rev. David Rice, then pastor of the church at the Peaks of Otter, in Bedford county, Virginia, whose summits command one of the noblest prospects in the world, emblematic of the influence to be exercised, and the far-reaching, widely-extended results which were to follow the arrival of this eminent servant of Christ. His appearance was hailed with joy by the Presbyterian settlers, to many of whom he was known personally, and to all by reputation. The advent of this eminent man marks an era ever to be remembered in the history of the Synod of Kentucky.

I do not mean by this that he was a man of transcendent talents and acquirements, for in both of these characteristics he has been surpassed by members of the Synod, some of whom have gone to their rest,—(I pause for an instant, reverently and lovingly, to lay an *immortelle* on the tomb of Stuart Robinson)—and others of whom yet survive to adorn the spheres in which they move. But, as in the unexplored field, the first furrow which cuts the sod and turns up a new line of color across the surface is more conspicuous than all the parallel ridges of an evenly-plowed field, so it was with David Rice—if not the most gifted, he was the first. He was the Columbus of the ecclesiastical history of Kentucky. It is just one hundred years since he preached in Harrodsburg a sermon on the text which, in honor of his memory, I have chosen as the text of my discourse, representing, as I do, the State from which he came.

If anything more than another can illustrate the change which time has wrought, it is in the geographical boundaries of our States and of the Synods and Presbyteries of our Church. We can now hardly realize the fact that Kentucky was once only the continuation of a county in Virginia, and that it was not entitled even to be called "the county of Kentucky" until 1776; that it was not even a "district" until 1780, and that from this subordinate position it sprang into a sovereign State and member of the Union in 1792. We have another illustration of the astonishing growth of our country and Church, when we remember that in 1789 the Synod of Virginia was composed of

four Presbyteries: First, the Presbytery of Redstone, which covered the settlements of Western Pennsylvania; second, the Presbytery of Hanover, which embraced all of Eastern Virginia; third, Lexington, covering the valley and what is now known as West Virginia; and fourth, the Presbytery of Transylvania, which included the District of Kentucky, and the settlements on Cumberland river, extending into what is now the State of Tennessee.

It was into this vast ecclesiastical domain that Father Rice, in the Providence of God, came, bearing the lamp of life, and near the spot where we now worship the first congregation gathered, to catch the early light which for a hundred years has been brightening and broadening, until now it fills not only the territory occupied by your noble Synod, but illumines the shores of the Pacific.

It is not my province to-day to give you a biographical sketch of this pioneer of Presbyterianism, or of any of the little band who accompanied and succeeded him; but even at this distant period we can not contemplate the work accomplished by these servants of Christ without a new thrill of admiration at the zeal, fortitude, and perseverance with which they fulfilled the great mission entrusted to them. When we say they labored, and we are entered into their labors, we mean much more than that their labors were the illustration of mere activity; they were also the illustration of the privations, the self-denials and sufferings they endured. They illustrated what has been true in all lands and in all times of those who have done the pioneer work of the world—what has been true of all reformers and philanthropists and champions of truth and righteousness.

It has ever been the lot of such men to toil while others rested; to watch while others slept; and often to bear the ridicule and the misrepresentation and the persecution of those whom they sought to save and bless.

"Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes,  
They were souls that stood alone,  
While the men they agonized for,  
Hurled the contumelious stone."

Such has been the cost of inheritance bequeathed to us by those who have maintained the empire of principle in the world in all generations.

And now, having completed our review of the influences which shaped the men whose noble office it was to lay the foundation of the institutions which we most love and cherish—since we know what fire it was which fused the metal, and what forces they were which formed



the molds into which that metal was cast—we can more easily account for much that is characteristic in the spirit, and we can better appreciate the distinctive features of the Church which claims our allegiance and heartfelt homage.

In this discussion I distinctly disavow the purpose of seeking to create the impression, that Presbyterians claim any monopoly of the honor which belongs equally to all patriots and Christians of other churches who labored with them to secure the sacred right of conscience, and the civil liberty we enjoy.

There are men of other lineage and of other faiths than ours, whose names are illustrious in the annals of the country, and dear to our hearts because of their splendid services in the cause of freedom in the Church and in the State. Did time permit, and if this occasion rendered it appropriate, I would pay deserved tributes, and make special acknowledgments of the efficient aid rendered by those who co-operated with our fathers in their conflict for the right and true. So when I refer to what I consider some of the peculiar characteristics of our own Church, which give it a claim upon our love and labor, it is not to disparage others. Nothing is more foreign to my disposition and purpose than to draw invidious comparisons, or to make comments of any kind on the faith and forms of other churches. I desire only to suggest a few of the reasons why we regard our own as worthy of the warmest devotion of its sons. And the light of history has been invoked, that in that light we might more clearly trace the development of its life through ages of conflict and persecution, and that we might the better appreciate some of the characteristics which commend it to our reason and endear it to our hearts.

1. We honor it for the strict conformity of its outward organization to what we understand to be the primitive model of the Church of the Apostles; the parity of its ministry; its representative form of government; the minister to labor in word and doctrine; the ruling elder to co-operate with him in all that pertains to its spiritual control; the deacons to have oversight of its temporal interests; each freely working in his own appropriate sphere, all acting in unison with reference to a common end, all assimilated by a common standard of doctrine and discipline, and compacted into a unity secured by a system of representative Assemblies.

2. We honor it because of the spirituality of its services, and the simplicity of its forms of worship and mode of administering the Divine ordinances.

3. We honor it because of its boldness and fidelity in proclaiming

and defending all the doctrines of God's Word—even those which have always been most uncongenial to the natural heart—doctrines which some suppress, which others qualify, and which others repudiate.

4. We honor it because, in sharp contrast with those systems of faith which enchain and enfeeble the understanding by suppressing free inquiry and committing both thought and conscience to the keeping of spiritual guardians, the tendency of the Presbyterian system has been to encourage investigation, to vindicate the right of private judgment, and to stimulate and develop the intelligence of the people—the demonstration of which is to be found in the splendid literature it has created; in the contributions of its writers to mental, moral, and physical science, and above all to Theology, the queen of all the sciences; so that, wherever our Church has been planted, its fruits have been seen in the school, the academy, the college, and the university, the free press, the free Bible, the free pulpit, and the free people.

5. We honor it because the intelligence of the people, quickened by Calvinistic training, has given rise to the demand for a thoroughly educated ministry, and though not numerically the strongest of the denominations in the land, it contains the largest number of theological seminaries, as well as the most thorough and comprehensive in the course of study required.

6. We honor it because the moral influence of our Church in any community where it has been planted is out of all proportion to its numbers. Its aspect toward fashionable amusements and popular vices may be provokingly stern and forbidding, but there is a force in its rebuke which is felt and acknowledged. Its spirit is always conservative; its influence ever on the side of law and order, and its example one of reverence for lawful authority. Wherever it entrenches itself in any community, it is a barrier against anarchy and misrule, standing equally ready to oppose violence, whether of the magistrate or the mob.

7. We honor it because of its generous and kindly bearing toward all other evangelical Churches. It does not deny the validity of their ordination or sacraments, even when it believes them to be irregular. It can unite cordially with other Christians in the promotion of genuine revivals; can invite them to the communion table and sit down at theirs, laboring with them in every good word and work, and rejoicing in the success of all who are toiling to advance the cause of Christ in the world.



8. We honor our Church because of the noble stand it has always taken in behalf of civil and religious liberty. It would be strange indeed were it otherwise, for the history of Presbyterianism, as we have seen, has been the history of conflict with tyranny in the Church and State from the beginning. Some of us are the descendants of the men who at the foot of the heath-clad Grampians contended for Christ's crown and covenant, or who fought the dragoons of Claverhouse at Bothwell Bridge, or at the siege of Londonderry resisted to the death the army of King James. Those were the days when the Presbyterians of Scotland suffered extremities which no tongue can tell—from hunger, nakedness, and banishment—compelled to hide themselves in damp caves and clefts of the rock, without shelter, fire, food, or clothing; with none to pity or succor them; when fathers were hanged or shot for protecting their children, and children for defending their parents, and husbands for shielding the wives of their bosoms from the violence of the brutal troopers of the royal army.

Others of us can trace our ancestry to the men who were compelled by Bourbon tyranny to flee from their once happy homes in the fertile plains of Languedoc or the delightful valleys of the Loire, and who found an asylum on the high banks of the James in Virginia, or on the low lands of the Santee and Cooper rivers in South Carolina.

There is among my own kindred the old family Bible, which their Huguenot ancestors carried first to Holland and then to Virginia. Its covers are worn; its leaves are yellow and faded; they have often been wet with the salt spray of the sea, and the salt tears of the sorrowing exiles; the names in the family register are growing dim; I trust they are bright in the Book of Life.

Then did the people of God suffer and bleed, both upon the field and the scaffold; and yet, while we read the annals of those days with indignation and bitter tears, we read them also with the most glowing gratitude and admiration at the recollection of the constancy and triumphant heroism of the men who chose to embrace the stake rather than refuse to embrace the cross. From the long night and storm of these persecutions there blazed forth the burning and the shining lights of the world; but now, thank God, here in the goodly land which His providence prepared for them, the descendants of the Covenanters and the Huguenots and the noble martyrs of the North of Ireland are found dwelling together, with none to molest them or make them afraid; and yet ready as ever, I trust, if need be, ready once more to brave and peril all for the testimony of Jesus and for the defense of the faith delivered to the saints.

And now, fathers and brethren of this venerable Synod, these hallowed memories make their own appeal. We can not but highly prize what has been so dearly purchased. If not the lineal descendants of the men of whom I have been speaking, we are the inheritors of their faith. If their blood does not run in our veins, their principles possess our souls. We are now the representatives of the Church which they so nobly represented in their day. Be it ours to conserve, defend, and transmit to those who come after us the institutions which we hold in trust for the generations yet unborn. Let the hallowed recollections of the past stir within us the resolve to make the future fuller of all noble sacrifice and service, so that the evening star of memory may become the morning star of hope, and light the way to new endeavor.

What we now need is a new, sweet, and heavenly unction from on High—the effusion of that quickening grace which will arouse the slumbering energies of our Church and cause every man to do his duty at his post, and by properly plying every instrumentality for good within his reach, thus demonstrate to the world the value of our principles and the efficiency of our organization; that our Church may stand confessed before all men as one of God's chosen instruments in filling the earth with the knowledge of His great salvation, and that because of its influence in all latitudes and in all lands, it may be truly said, "The people that sat in darkness saw great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death light has sprung up."