The PROPHET *of* ZION-PARNASSUS

JAMES F. HURLEY AND
JULIA GOODE EAGAN

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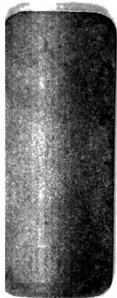

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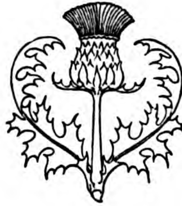
Thyatira Presbyterian Church in 1933. A descendent of Samuel E. McCorkle in the foreground.

The PROPHET *of* ZION-PARNASSUS

SAMUEL EUSEBIUS McCORKLE

by

JAMES F. HURLEY AND
JULIA GOODE EAGAN



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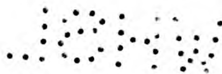

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TO THE
DESCENDANTS OF THE SCOTCH-IRISH
OF
AMERICA
THIS BOOK
IS
ADMIRINGLY DEDICATED

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FOREWORD

THIS BOOK is more than the history of a man. It is the story of a movement of which the man was an important part. Three hundred years ago there began a migration of Scotch Presbyterians to the North of Ireland. In due time they were called the Scotch-Irish. A century later the Scotch-Irish began a great migration to America. At first they settled in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Later the migration continued to Virginia and North Carolina. These Scotch-Irish became the backbone of the Presbyterian Church in America and of the American Revolution. The ancestors of Samuel Eusebius McCorkle were a part of this great movement from Scotland to Ireland and then to America. He was himself a part of the great migration from Pennsylvania to North Carolina. His lifework in North Carolina was linked up with one of the oldest and most interesting Presbyterian churches in the State—Thyatira Church, in Rowan County, whose deed dates back to 1753. He was not only a minister of that historic church and a leader of the Presbyterian forces in North Carolina for many years, but he was one of the leaders of the educational forces of the State. His leadership was shown through the founding of a splendid classical school within the bounds of his own congregation, and in the pre-eminent part which he took in the founding of the State University. He was one of those constructive pioneers who make history.

The authors of this little book have told their story well. They have told it in such a way as to make it of more than local interest. It should be of interest to all Presbyterians

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everywhere and to all who love the State to whose welfare and history Samuel Eusebius McCorkle made such a large contribution.

WALTER L. LINGLE.

Davidson College,
North Carolina.

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AUTHORS' FOREWORD

THIS LITTLE BOOK is dedicated to the descendants of the Scotch-Irish in America—a people who for nearly two centuries have infused into the American blood-stream those principles of integrity, firmness and fidelity for which their forefathers suffered in Ireland and sacrificed on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

The story of the book centres around the figure of Samuel Eusebius McCorkle, pioneer Presbyterian preacher and teacher. Dr. McCorkle is typical of the Scotch-Irish character of the 18th century at its best, and though he played his part in North Carolina in particular, his personality is the prototype of the entire body of the Scotch-Irish in America. These sturdy and upright people struggled on the colonial frontier against the hardships of pioneer life, combined with the prejudices and ignorances of a people in primitive surroundings; yet in the end they were gloriously triumphant because of the steady vision of ultimate religious freedom and political liberty which had guided them and their ancestors for generations.

The conditions and motives which animated Samuel Eusebius McCorkle and his family to become a part of the great Scotch-Irish emigration southward were the same which stirred the hearts and fired the spirits of countless thousands whose descendants are today scattered throughout the length and breadth of these United States.

These conditions and motives, with the changes which they brought about, are considered in the following pages. The sketch is the story of an individual; but of an individ-

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ual silhouetted against the background of a special era and a special circumstance.

The authors hope to leave a clear-cut impression of a great Scotch-Irish pioneer; but in the larger sense, to leave a surer and better understanding of a great religious, political and economic movement.

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CHAPTER I

Why Scotch-Irish?

IN THE year 1755 a family of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians arrived in Rowan County, North Carolina, and settled in the little community of their brethren around Cathey's Meeting House. The group consisted of Alexander McCorkle and his wife, Agnes Montgomery McCorkle, and their several children, of whom their son, Samuel Eusebius, was the eldest. Samuel Eusebius was a little boy nine years old, and had been born back in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, near Harris's Ford, in 1746. It is with the story of this boy and the important part he came to play in the destinies of North Carolina and of the Presbyterian Church that this sketch is concerned. His crossing the Yadkin and entering Rowan County were indeed momentous in the future development of both.

Who were these McCorkles?
Where had they come from?
Why did they come?
What did they hope to gain by coming?
And why were they called SCOTCH-IRISH?

The answer to these questions is like the unraveling of a tangled web, so complex were the motives, so diffuse the causes, and so varied the reasons for each. As individuals they are interesting, but as an integral and specific part of the great Scotch-Irish emigration from Pennsylvania which helped so sturdily to people the wildnerness of

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North Carolina and the Valley of Virginia, they are even more engrossing. And more than that—they claim attention as units in the continuous stream of emigration from the mother country to the Emerald Isle. In order properly to appreciate the significance of their arrival in Rowan County in 1755 it is necessary to glance briefly at a few of the events in the chain of cause and effect which brought about the great exodus from England and Scotland to Ireland; thence to Pennsylvania; thence south to Virginia and the Valley of the Shenandoah; and on to Piedmont North Carolina.

This progressive emigration of the Scotch-Irish to North Carolina must not be confused with the tide of Scotch emigrants direct from Scotland which poured into Wilmington and settled the coastal section after the Battle of Culloden, about 1747. This is as equally interesting, though an entirely different story.

The so called SCOTCH-IRISH were not Irish at all. Scotch-Irish is American in origin and use, and is not known or used in Ireland. It is a geographical, not a racial term. The Scotch-Irish in reality were Scotch Presbyterians from the lowlands of Scotland who settled in Ireland. And why did these forefathers of the McCorkles and other Scotch-Irish in America happen to settle in Ireland? The answer lies one hundred and fifty years back of the time when the McCorkles took up their abode in the Cathey's Meeting House settlement in Rowan County, North Carolina.

To understand the origin of the term Scotch-Irish, we must recall the reign of James I of England, and something of the Tudor dynasty which he succeeded. It is the

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relationship of these Tudor sovereigns to Ireland that interests us.

To begin with, Ireland, during the Tudor period, was far behind England and continental Europe from the standpoint of civilization. It was, of course, a part of the United Kingdom, but the royal power was practically confined to what had become known as "The Pale," a narrow strip of territory which extended some twenty miles around Dublin and a small area around Kilkenny. Except within these narrow limits, the Irish earls were really more powerful than the English crown. Besides, there were a number of free coast cities and many inland towns not an integral part of the kingdom. And there were pseudo-tribes ruled over by Anglo-Norman chiefs. Thus, though the island was nominally a part of England, there was no uniformity of government, and no uniformity of religion, though Catholicism was the accepted religion among the native Irish.

You will recall that Henry VIII had broken with the Pope of Rome, had been declared the Supreme Head of the Church in England, and had made the Anglican Church the established religion throughout his realm. Anglicanism, to the mass of native Irish, became a symbol of conquest and intrusion. During the successive Tudor reigns, Ireland was a constant source of trial and vexation. Particularly in the Province of Ulster, in the north of Ireland, had there been incessant disturbances. During Queen Elizabeth's time the Irish chiefs rebelled, English armies invaded the country and reduced the people to such extent that Queen Elizabeth said that in Ireland there would be nothing but ashes and dead bodies for her to rule over.

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Ulster was devastated, many of the original owners dispossessed, and their lands seized by the English crown.

When James I came to the throne after Elizabeth, a rebellion had just been put down, the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel had left Ireland in what is known as the famous "Flight of the Earls," and an immense amount of Ulster territory had escheated or reverted to the crown. Through these various forfeitures, nearly the whole of six counties in the Province of Ulster, embracing about one-half million acres, were placed at the disposal of King James.

Religion was but one of the causes which dictated England's policy towards her Irish dominion. The questions of civil administration and land tenure were equally as impelling. The spirit of the people was tribal rather than national, and tribal forms of social and political organizations prevailed. There was no machinery of government, and the powers of the Irish chiefs were vague, not explicitly defined like the rights and duties of a feudal lord. Lord Bacon observed that "Ireland was the last European country to pass from tribal status to civil polity." And Ulster was the last of the Irish provinces to be brought under civil jurisprudence. It was in the conflict of England's civil polity with the Irish tribal polity that lay the seat of unrest and disturbance.

James the First was naturally puzzled by the problem which confronted him in regard to this turbulent part of his kingdom. It was out of this extremity that he decided upon the scheme of launching a colony of English Puritans and Scotch Presbyterians in this desolated province, in the hope that, by disseminating the Reformed faith, he would encourage loyalty to himself and secure peace for

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his Irish possessions. This scheme was known as the "Plantation of Ulster."

The scheme adopted for the plantation of Ulster was not the invention of anyone but was the outcome of the statesmanship of the age. Obviously, such a plantation would necessitate the ousting of the native Irish from their lands, and to statesmen of the period it seemed only fittnig that the tribal system of Ireland with its state of chronic disorder should give place to a plantation which would replace savage and barbarous customs with humanity and civility. Such practice was adopted by many European rulers and statesmen, and accepted, in the light of that period, as perfectly honorable and legitimate. Similar plans had been fomented from Norman times, particularly in the reign of Elizabeth, but no success had attended these ventures. It remained for James I to work it out on a truly gigantic scale. The Ulster movement is usually conceded to have been a general forward movement against barbarism, which movement was in no sense confined strictly to Ireland.[1]

The government set about a survey of the Ulster lands escheated or forfeited to the crown, and the procuring of suitable "Undertakers,"—that is, people to colonize the Ulster territory. The city of London became an Undertaker, and the county of Coleraine was allotted to it, to be known thereafter as Londonderry. On their part, the Undertakers were to meet certain stipulations as to building and defensive measures in return for the land granted. The lands had been divided into sections of different mag-

[1]"The Scotch-Irish in America," Henry James Ford.

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nitudes, some 2,000, some 1,500 and some 1,000 acres. The occupants of the largest portions of land were bound within four years to build a castle and bawn, that is, a walled enclosure, with towers at the angles, within which was placed the cattle,—and to plant on their estates 48 able-bodied men 18 years old or upwards, of English or Scotch descent. Requirements varied in proportion to the size of the undertaking.

It was necessary in Ulster to dispose of the warrior class, which were accordingly sent by thousands to Europe, particularly to Sweden. This facilitated the peaceful entrance of the Undertakers. The common people were patient and submissive as the Ulstermen and their followers entered. Besides there was no use to rebel, as they were without arms and munitions.

King James I came to the throne in 1603. Perhaps the average American identifies his reign with the founding of the Jamestown Colony and as giving to us the King James or authorized version of the Bible. This Ulster Plantation, setting in motion as it did this great Scotch-Irish movement, howbeit totally inadvertently, was no less epochal an achievement. At the time of the Ulster Plantation there were already a considerable number of Scots in Ireland. The first list of these new colonists from Scotland is said to include mainly sons and brothers of lairds (lords), sons of ministers, sons of burgesses, and nearly all were from the upper tier of those shires from Edinburgh to Glasgow. The number of Irish Undertakers and followers far exceeded the number of English colonists. The reasons for this include the migratory tendency of the Lowland Scots, and particularly the nearness of Scotland

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to Ireland. At one point the distance was only thirteen miles, and ferries furnished safe and quick transit for the Scotchmen and their belongings. The English, on the other hand, had to encounter the dangers of a longer sea journey in waters infested at the time with reckless pirates.

Certainly the new settlers found no ready-made Utopia. Ulster was covered with woods and marshes and wild beasts abounded in the forbidding district. The country is described as desolate and barbarous. Robert Blair, one of the first Presbyterian ministers in the province, records that "the whole country did lie waste; the English possessing some few towns and castles, making use of small parcels of near adjacent lands; the Irishes straying in the woods, bogs, and such fast places. . . . The wolf and widcairn were great enemies to these first planters; but the long rested land yielded to the laborers such plentiful increase that many followed the first essayers." By 1610 the lands began to be generally occupied, the northeast parts by Presbyterian emigrants from Scotland; the southern and western parts by the English Puritans.

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CHAPTER II

Difficulties in Ireland

JAMES I died in 1625, and was followed by his son, Charles Stuart, Charles I. Thomas Wentworth, Lord Strafford, was made Lord Deputy of Ireland, while Laud was made Archbishop of Canterbury. The keynote of the new regime was complete submission to royal authority and absolute conformity to the established church. When the Ulster Plantation had begun, since Ireland formed a part of the United Kingdom with its State religion established by law, it was already laid off in parishes and bishoprics of the Church of England. As the Presbyterian and Puritan colonists arrived, they were automatically included in some one of the parishes of the Anglican Church. At first the bishops of the established church were tolerant. Presbyterian and Puritan ministers were allowed to use the parish churches of the Church of England, and to follow their own forms and ceremonies. All, however, were under the supervision of the Anglican bishops.

From one cause and another, dissension gradually arose. The bishops withdrew their favor, and oppression of those outside the established church began. Under Archbishop Laud, exactions became insufferable and conditions unbearable. A year after Charles's accession, an attempt was made by 140 Scotch-Irish from Ulster to come to America in a vessel called "The Eagle Wing," but the voyage was unsuccessful.

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Meanwhile, the struggle between Charles I and Parliament had already begun, and in 1641 civil war swept the entire kingdom. In Ireland it began with a sudden rising of the native Irish, and a great slaughter of Protestants took place. Thousands were killed with horrible atrocities, and the Protestants in turn retaliated with devastating reprisals. Ulster bore the brunt of this conflict, its English settlers being the chief victims.

You will recall that Charles I was beheaded by Parliament, and a new government set up known as "The Commonwealth." In defiance of Parliament, both Ireland and Scotland proclaimed Prince Charles, son of the beheaded monarch, as king. Oliver Cromwell now entered Ireland and subdued it with incredible cruelty. During this three-year period of the Commonwealth of England so many Royalists emigrated to America on account of persecution that it has been called the Cavalier Exodus.

The Commonwealth was followed by a six-year period known as The Protectorate, with Oliver Cromwell appointed Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland for life. Cromwell, however, soon died, and his son, Richard, who succeeded him as dictator, was unable to hold the reins of government, and in 1660 Charles II was restored to the throne of England. When Charles died some 25 years later, his brother, James Stuart, James II, came to the throne. James was an avowed Catholic, and he determined once more to make Catholicism the State religion, and in addition his subjects were forced to submit to numbers of unreasonable political abuses. The outcome was that the throne of England was now offered to his son-in-law and daughter, William and

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Mary of Holland. William landed in England with troops, the English army and people went over to him, and James II fled to France.

When this occurred, the Ulster Protestants immediately declared their allegiance to William and Mary, and the Presbyterian ministers took the lead in organizing resistance against the adherents of the deposed King James. Outside of Ulster, Ireland was sympathetic to King James. Their forces moved against the Ulstermen to reduce them to submission, and Londonderry now withstood the famous siege. "The Siege of Londonderry" is particularly interesting to multitudes in the United States whose Scotch-Irish ancestors helped sustain it, and who shared in the joy of victory, but not in its advantages, and who finally became voluntary exiles to the wilds of far away America. The siege lasted for eight weary months,—months of untold starvation and suffering for those English and Scotch-Irish within its walls. It turned the scale in favor of William of Nassau and secured to him the crown of England, and to the country at large the succession of Protestant kings and queens that have filled the throne to this day.

With William and Mary securely on the throne of England, Protestantism was firmly established, but the Anglican Church remained the established church, and in Ireland as formerly, though the Presbyterian Scotch-Irish were allowed to maintain their own ministers, they were still forced to pay their tithes to the Church of England. It was in this year, 1688, that two very famous and far-reaching bills were passed by the English Parliament, the Bill of Rights, providing, in part, that no king could levy taxes without the consent of Parliament, and that in future

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every English sovereign should be a Protestant; and the Toleration Act, giving dissenters the right to worship in public, but forbidding them to hold any civil or military office. In later years the Toleration Act was to affect materially the Scotch-Irish settlers in the Valley of Virginia and the Carolinas. Henry James Ford remarks that "the formative period of Ulster is not seen in its proper setting unless it is viewed as an episode in the wars of religion." We now come to the economic reasons which furthered and produced the great Scotch-Irish emigration to America.

Ulster emigration upon any important scale is to be attributed to economic and not to religious causes, and there is remarkably little of organized exodus on religious grounds from Ulster.

England had always been jealous of colonial industries which were competitive with her own. Lord Strafford had introduced flax into Ulster from Holland, paying for the seed supply out of his own funds, and he had induced expert workmen to come from France and the Low Countries. Yet he had held it reprehensible for the Irish to engage in woolen manufacture because it was so important an English industry. After the Cromwellian wars Irish exports of cattle excited the alarm of English landowners who complained that the competition of Irish pastures was lowering English rents. Laws were enacted prohibiting the importation into England from Ireland of all cattle, sheep and swine, of beef, pork, bacon and mutton and even of butter and cheese. Scotland also subjected Ireland to economic restraints. As an outcome of these and other restrictions, the general poverty abounding in those parts (Ulster) is given as one of the chief reasons for a general

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disposition towards emigration.[2] Anomalous as it may seem, it is yet true that the immediate cause of the second emigration arose out of the fact that the Scotch settlement in Ireland had succeeded too well. Planted by King James to develop the country industrially and establish a strong Protestant civilization, a century later the success of their industrial enterprises was exciting the envy of their competitors in England, while the tenacity with which they held to their religion gave offense to the bishops and clergy of the Established Church. In these two sources, the one economic, the other religious, originated the emigration to America.[3] English commercial interests succeeded in interferring with Irish trade with the American colonies.

Ulster had long been famous for woolen and linen manufacture. Now that the navigation laws restricted her commerce, she turned naturally to manufacturing. The quality of Irish wool was excellent, and woolen cloth made from it won a fine reputation. The Sotch-Irish now looked to the woolen manufacture to establish prosperity. The Irish woolen trade now became so important that it attracted capital and manufacturers from Scotland, England and Continental Europe. King William was urged to hinder exportation of wool from Ireland, except it be imported to England. Heavy duties were imposed, and finally, as the century drew to a close in 1699, Ireland was prohibited from exporting wool to any other country whatever. The linen manufacture in Ireland was endangered, and the hempen manufacture was discouraged until it ceased.

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[2]"The Scotch-Irish in America," Henry James Ford.

[3]"Race Elements in the White Population of North Carolina," R. D. W. Connor.

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The Scotch-Irish is as distinct in race and religious organization from the people of England and Scotland as it was from the Celtic population which it had displaced. Its religion, without being proscribed, was not acknowledged, for Anglicanism was the established church of Ireland, though it numbered few adherents. Economic evils became more pronounced. The navigation acts were so interpreted as to exclude Ireland from all their advantages, and to cut her off from any direct trade with the colonies. Even tobacco growing was forbidden. The Revolution of 1689 in England left them crushed. Ten years later they were hard hit by the law against woolen manufacturing. In the second decade of the 18th century, in the midst of almost hopeless economic depression, great numbers of long-time leases fell in and the landlords insisted upon renewing them at double and even treble the old rents. There were wholesale ejections, and drought, sheep rot, and epidemics of smallpox, added to the unspeakable misery of the Protestant population, whose standard of living had been higher than that of the Catholic Irish.[4]

It is no wonder then, that as alluring reports drifted back from the scattered Scotch-Irish who had settled intermittently in America since 1632, these oppressed Presbyterian Ulstermen looked with more and more longing across the waters of the Atlantic. And now began the great Scotch-Irish exodus! "By 1729," says James Truslow Adams, "perhaps seven or eight thousand had emigrated to America, mostly to Pennsylvania, but in that year six thousand landed at Philadelphia, and two years later Logan wrote

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[4]"Epic of America," James Truslow Adams.

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that it looked as though Ireland were about to dump her entire population on the colony." Bad harvests and increasing industrial pressure lent added impetus to the movement, and it is estimated that for several years the number of Scotch-Irish emigrants was twelve thousand annually.

Before the full tide of the Scotch-Irish emigration began to surge into Pennsylvania, some 20,000 Germans had preceded them. These coming first found ample lands on which to settle near Philadelphia, but as these were taken up or the price advanced the later comers were forced further into the wilderness, and by way of the northern end began to settle in the Valley of Shenandoah.

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CHAPTER III

New Horizons

ALEXANDER McCORKLE and his wife, Agnes Montgomery McCorkle, with perhaps Agnes McCorkle's brother, the Rev. Joseph Montgomery, came over from Ireland with some part of this general influx of Scotch-Irish, certainly some time before 1746, the year in which their son, Samuel Eusebius, was born. Untold hardships accompanied the voyage of these Presbyterians from Ireland. The food was often so rotten as to be uneatable. Delay from calms brought the immediate spectre of death by starvation or thirst. In many instances they fought for the dead bodies of rats and worse. There were also no sanitary arrangements, and the filth and vermin were unbelievable. On one immigrant ship three hundred and fifty passengers died out of four hundred, and these figures can be almost duplicated in many other instances. The mortality was always frightful. Costs were piled up on the immigrants unexpectedly and to such great extent that on landing, when the living would be held accountable for the passage money of the dead, they would often have to sell themselves into bondage, and families would be torn apart and sold to different temporary owners. They were then known as indentured slaves.

Evidently Alexander McCorkle and his wife were possessed of some means, for they settled in Pennsylvania and remained there until their eldest son was nine years old. This son, Samuel Eusebius, was named by his father, and

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it was such a name as might appeal to the old Scotch-Irish Calvinist,—"Samuel" for the prophet of God, and "Eusebius" for the father of ecclesiastical history. The name might have proven a handicap had the boy been born later and under different conditions. But in those days names were names; they were seriously considered and as seriously bestowed.

When Samuel Eusebius was only four years old, he "was put to an English public school," where he showed great aptitude in his studies, and where he continued until his family left Pennsylvania and moved southward.

Just what influenced them to make this move is not definitely known. Perhaps back in Ulster, Alexander McCorkle, like many another Scotch-Irishman, had dreamed of owning in America broad acres of his own. And no doubt by the time of his arrival the best lands in Pennsylvania had been taken up, or the price had advanced beyond his means, or he may have been influenced by the promises held out by the new lands to the south. Whether Alexander McCorkle left Lancaster County intending to come direct to North Carolina, or whether he set out for the Valley of Virginia, then well peopled with his friends and brethren from Ulster, is not ascertained. In either case the way led through the beautiful Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

Alexander McCorkle was a farmer, and to him the acquisition of land was a paramount consideration. As he reached Virginia he must have heard of the great inducements which the colony of Virginia was offering to tempt

[5]"Epic of America," James Truslow Adams.

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immigrants to settle their frontier. Why did Virginia, which was a Royal Province, under the strictest jurisdiction of the Church of England, open her borders so hospitably to these Scotch-Irish Presbyterian dissenters from Ulster? The motive is well defined.

As in the other original colonies, Virginia's rich and prosperous settlements had grown up along the Atlantic seacoast. With their increase in wealth and numbers there was also the increase in danger from Indians beyond the Blue Ridge. Each fringe of new settlers inland, "in the back parts of Virginia," formed a new line of defense. The richer the seaboard became, the greater the necessity of providing a frontier line nearer and nearer the mountains, pushing it finally, if possible, west of the Blue Ridge.

Now these Scotch-Irish emigrants were recognized as brave and sturdy pioneers, and the royal authorities saw it to their advantage not only to allow them to settle within the borders of the Old Dominion, but to proffer them every inducement to do so. Grants of land were tendered the new settlers in return for services as frontiersmen. In the first years of the 18th century, large bodies of land, from 10,000 to 30,000 acres, with exemption from taxes for 20 years on land, were granted to companies settling on the frontiers, on condition that there should be in two years on the land, one able-bodied, well-armed man, ready for defense, for every 500 acres; that these should live in a village of 200 acres area, in the form of a square or parallelogram, laid off in lots near the centre of the tract; and that a fort should be built in the centre of the town. In 1705 it was further enacted that every person coming into the colony of Virginia for the purpose of making a settle-

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ment be entitled to 50 acres of land; families to have 50 acres for each member; no persons possessing less than five tithable servants or slaves to be permitted to take more than 500 acres, and no person whatsoever more than 4,000 acres in one patent.

But despite these generous inducements, the effort to draw colonists for the frontier had not met with the hoped-for success. And now the coming of the Scotch-Irish and German emigrants to Pennsylvania in such large numbers furnished the royal province a new source from which to draw. Opportunity and circumstance seemed at this time particularly to coincide.

For about this time, Governor William Gooch had made extensive provisional grants to three Virginians, on condition that within a given time a certain number of permanent settlers should be located on these grants. The owners of these grants were the Burdens of Rockbridge County; the Beverlys of Augusta County, and the Vanmeters on the Opecquon in Frederick County. It was due to the efforts of these three individuals that the Scotch-Irish and German peoples now flocked into the Old Dominion.

In the methods they used to people their land grants, these colonial Virginians were the forerunners of the modern realtor, and their properties were developed along the lines of the present-day real estate "booms." They centred their exertions upon the newly-arrived immigrants already in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, but they also made overtures to prospective emigrants still in Europe.

Advertisements describing in glowing terms the beauty and fertility of the valley, and offering a home to the poor immigrant on easy terms, flooded Pennsylvania, New Jer-

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sey and Massachusetts, and were sent abroad in quantities to attract the attention of the hard-working tenants in England, Ireland, and Germany, to whom the offer of a farm in fee simple seemed the offer of real wealth.

In 1732 Joist Hite obtained a grant of the Vanmeters, came to Virginia from Pennsylvania with 16 families of Scotch-Irish, and fixed his residence on the Opecquon a few miles south of the present town of Winchester. After this, colonies of Scotch-Irish emigrants continued to pour into Virginia, most of them settling in the fertile valley. These new settlers in Virginia, which was rigidly under the jurisdcition of the Established Church, were Presbyterians, and were spoken of in their new home as Dissenters. At first there were no Presbyterian ministers, but the number of settlers became so large, and their desire for religious ordinances so strong, that the subject was finally brought before the Synod of Philadelphia. You remember that some fifty years before this an appeal had been sent to Ireland from Virginia and the Barbadoes for a Presbyterian minister to be sent; that Francis Makemie had been ordained to come to America, and had been the first minister dissenting from the Church of England that had leave from constituted authorities, to preach in Virginia, and the first, on the Geneva model, that is known to have taken his residence there or in the American colonies; and that his services led the way for the forming of the First Presbytery of Philadelphia in 1706, which has since spread out into the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America.

In response to this later appeal from the new Scotch-Irish settlers in Virginia, the Synod of Philadelphia now be-

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sought Governor Gooch, of Virginia, for the right to supply ministers to these Presbyterian immigrants in the back parts of Virginia. Along the coast, in the older and richer settlements, the inhabitants were for the most part pure English, members of the Established Church, and looking to the Bishop of London for guidance. These newly arrived Scotch-Irish, as they became more permanently settled, began to realize more and more forcibly that the term Established Church was, in Virginia, as it had been in Ireland, not just an empty phrase. Virginia had a STATE RELIGION enforceable and enforced by law. And, moreover, it was a religion with which the overwhelming majority of her people were perfectly satisfied.

The Scotch-Irish, dissenters, even if allowed to have licensed preachers of their own, and meeting houses also, were at a great disadvantage, because, as in Ulster, they not only had voluntarily to support their own denominational minister, but that of the Anglican Church as well. This proved a great hardship and wrought much dissatisfaction. For instance, all parish ministers received by law, not by voluntary subscription, as in the case today in all churches, a stipulated salary, which at that time consisted, with few exceptions, of 16,000 pounds of tobacco and perquisites. These perquisites included the dwelling house and glebe lands and in some parishes likewise, there were "by donation stocks of cattle and Negroes, on the glebes, which are also allowed to the minister for his use and encouragement." A great source of offense to the Scotch-Irish settlers was the fact that only clergy of the Anglican Church could perform marriage services, and any number of like annoying restrictions. For a funeral service the

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parish priest received forty shillings or 400 pounds of tobacco; for a marriage license, 20 shillings or 200 pounds of tobacco; when the bans only were proclaimed, 5 shillings or 50 pounds. These laws and stipulations, which remained in force until the Revolution, were constant grounds for complaint among the clergy, and were particularly obnoxious to dissenting ministers and their growing congregations.

When Governor Gooch received this request from the Synod of Philadelphia, that it be allowed to send ministers into the Valley of Virginia for work among the Scotch-Irish, he evidently believed that these dissenters, even with preachers of their own, would cause no trouble or collision with members or authorities of the Established Church. He thought of them as too far apart to cause trouble—the one on the coast, the other in the then remote "back lands" of the colony. Besides, he felt impelled to make some concessions to these sturdy people who were making a frontier line of defense further back toward the mountains from Williamsburg, the capital. He knew these Scotch-Irish, inured to hardships and combat, would make good citizens and brave soldiers. In his mind, these advantages must have offset the possibilities of future trouble because of religious differences. At any rate he wrote an encouraging reply to the Synod, and said, in part: "You may be assured that no interruption shall be given to any member of your profession who shall come among them so as they conform themselves to the rules prescribed by the Act of Toleration in England, by taking oaths enjoined thereby, and registering the place of their meeting, and behaving themselves peacable toward the government."

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In other words, the dissenting Scotch-Irish, after meeting all requirements as to salary and obligation toward the parish priest, and the Established Church, might then have a minister of their own persuasion, and hold meetings at their own houses other than the parish churches—provided these houses were registered places of meeting.

So it was that multitude of these enterprising men and women were persuaded to leave the borders of the Quaker colony, or to come direct from their mother country, lured by the advantages of land ownership in the southern colonies. The hope of independence cheered their necessity, and the prospect of religious liberty gladdened their hearts.

Gradually, ministers were sent down to the Scotch-Irish from Pennsylvania, and licensed meeting houses were to be found sprinkled here and there through the Valley settlements. It is too long a story to detail the rise of the Reading Houses in Hanover County, the very stronghold of the Established Church, and the spread of the dissenters in that direction. It is sufficient to call attention to the fact that in 1747, one year afer Samuel Eusebius McCorkle was born in Pennsylvania, Samuel Davies came as an ordained evangelist to the Hanover section. After a struggle, and by invoking the famous Act of Toleration, he obtained the licensing of a number of meeting houses. From this time forward until after the Revolution, the differences between the Anglican Church, on the one hand, and the dissenting Scotch-Irish Presbyterian on the other, waxed strong and bitter. The arm of the law was often invoked, and loopholes for intolerance were made by creating different interpretations of the Act of Toleration. When Samuel Davies settled in Hanover County it is said "there were

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not 10 avowed dissenters within one hundred miles of him." Inside of three years he had established seven meeting houses, some of them forty miles apart.

Perhaps Alexander McCorkle and his family had left Pennsylvania with the idea of settling wherever the most land was to be had, and the best, and that, on reaching Virginia, they heard of the wonderful lands to the south in the wilderness of the Carolinas where rich acres were to be had in plenty, and where the mandates of a State religion distasteful to them were less harsh and not so easily enforceable. At any rate, they passed on through Virginia and kept their way into the unknown but promising colony of North Carolina to the south.

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CHAPTER IV

The Promised Land

IT IS quite possible that the McCorkle family had no idea of settling in Virginia in the first place, but set out from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, with the original intention of coming direct to North Carolina. During the thirty years from 1734 to 1765 the chief executives of North Carolina were Gabriel Johnston, who came here from Scotland, and Mathew Rowan and Arthur Dobbs, who were both Scotch-Irish from Ulster. All three of these governors were active in their efforts to induce Scotch and Scotch-Irish emigrants to settle in North Carolina. Through these three men, their relatives, friends, companions and acquaintances in the north of Ireland and the south of Scotland, North Carolina was perhaps better known there than in any other part of the world. Furthermore, we learn that had the McCorkles desired to come direct they would have found the route to follow plainly laid down on the map of that day,—The Great Road from the Yadkin River through Virginia to Philadelphia; from Philadelphia through Lancaster and York in Pennsylvania, to Winchester in Virginia, up the Shenandoah, thence southward across the Dan River to the Moravian settlements on the Yadkin. To Lancaster and York Counties in Pennsylvania, North Carolina owes more of her population than to any other known part of the world.[6]

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[6]"Colonial Records of North Carolina," W. L. Saunders.

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A few years before Alexander McCorkle and his little family made their way through Virginia into the beautiful hills and valleys of Piedmont North Carolina, the king had granted to Lord Granville a large tract of North Carolina territory. No doubt the McCorkles, while still in Pennsylvania, or while journeying through the Valley of Virginia, heard of the remarkable inducements that were being offered by his lordship and his agents for settlements made within his North Carolina grant. In every possible way the advantages of the grant were made known to prospective settlers—the healthfulness of the climate, the fertility of the soil, the low rate of sale. These allurements were effective bait, attracted a great deal of attention, and brought many purchasers, both for residence and for speculation. Every additional settler increased just so much the value of his lordship's acres. English and Irish land companies, too, did much to induce colonization for flax and hemp growing and to carry on the potash trade.

In Pennsylvania the best lands had already been taken up, and what remained commanded a high price, while here in Lord Granville's grant in North Carolina, and in other sections of the province, beautiful fields and pastures unnumbered were to be had almost for the asking. The Rev. Alexander Hewatt, a Presbyterian minister of Charleston, South Carolina, wrote that even so late as the conclusion of the French and Indian War (1763) "large tracts of the best land yet lay waste, which proved a great temptation to the northern colonists to migrate to the South. They came," he said, "driving their cattle, hogs, and horses overland before them. Lands were allotted to them on the frontiers, and most of them being entitled to small tracts,

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such as one, two or three hundred acres, the back settlements by this means soon became the most populous part of the province."

Alexander McCorkle, looking about him on the journey southward, with the practiced and discerning eye of the farmer, for rich lands and fertile acres, saw in the beautiful countryside of Rowan County the fulfillment of his dream—the materialization of his land of promise. And here, in the Cathey's Meeting House neighborhood, with a number of others of the Scotch-Irish faith and blood, he decided to establish once more a home, this time a permanent one, on the wilderness frontier of North Carolina.

It was in the very year, 1755, as Alexander McCorkle began the building of his new log house and the clearing of his acres, that Governor Arthur Dobbs, of North Carolina, set out from New Berne to view his lands and the Western Frontier. A letter written by him and preserved in the North Carolina Colonial Records, gives a graphic picture of the section in which circumstance had now cast the lot of the boy, Samuel Eusebius McCorkle. Leaving Abbott's Creek and approaching the Yadkin, Governor Dobbs declares: "Here the lands begin to improve and . . . all along the Yadkin is very rich, level ground, free from rock and gravel, but all a rich dark red, and some inclining to yellow of the richest loams; here they sow barley, wheat, rye and oats, and have yards to stack it in. The Yadkin here is a large, beautiful river where is a ferry. It is near three hundred yards over; it was at this time fordable, scarce coming to the horses' bellies. At six miles distant, I arrived at Salisbury, the county town of Rowan,

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the town's but just laid out, the court house built and seven or eight log houses erected."

Governor Dobbs viewed some thirty or forty German and Scotch-Irish families and notes that "except two, there was not less than from five to six children in each family, each going barefooted in their shifts in the warm weather and no woman wearing more than a shift and one thin petticoat; they are a colony from Ireland moved from Pennsylvania, of what we call Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who, with others in the neighboring tracts, had settled together in order to have a teacher of their own opinion and choice." He mentions the fact that trade is carried on at Charles Town: "having a wagon road to it, tho two hundred miles distant, because our roads are not yet shortened, and properly laid out, and from the many merchants there they afford them English goods cheaper than at present in this province, the trade being in few hands they take a much higher price."

Continuing his letter the Governor chats quite interestingly of conditions in the particular section in which the McCorkles were making their new home: "This year they have suffered much by the dry season . . . the air is fine, water good, running springs from each hill and the country so healthy that few or none have died since their settlements seven or eight years ago; they sew flax for their own use, and cotton and what hemp they have sewn is tall and good."

This year, 1755, was a momentous one for the frontiersmen and lines of defense in all the colonies as well as for McCorkle and his family. A year previous, the French and Indian War had opened with the skirmish at Great

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Meadows, when young George Washington had made his initial bow in American history. The war went badly for the English, and the first regular troops sent over from England, under the command of General Braddock, were surprised and almost annihilated in the Pennsylvania forests. This defeat of the English regulars and the colonists exposed the whole line of frontier settlement from Pennsylvania to the furthest Carolina settlements to the savage raids of Indians. Distress and alarm pervaded the colonies, and even as far south as North Carolina excitement and dread pervaded. Governor Dobbs received the news while on his tour of inspection. "I was alarmed," he wrote, "with a report of our troops being defeated and General Braddock killed."

Though the excitement was felt as far as North Carolina, the real danger lay in the frontiers of provinces to the north, and the terror of Indian atrocities forced hundreds who were peaceably settled in Pennsylvania and Virginia to flee precipitantly. It is not known whether the McCorkle's family came to Rowan County before or after Braddock's defeat, and there is the possibility that Alexander McCorkle and his family were among the number of these terrior-stricken and fleeing bands of refugees from Pennsylvania or Virginia.

In this year of Braddock's defeat and of Samuel Eusebius McCorkle's arrival in the community where he was to live and serve so nobly, another stranger visited the Cathey's Meeting House neighborhood. This was the Rev. Hugh McAden, who had been sent down by the Synod of Philadelphia as a missionary to North Carolina. Mc McAden preached throughout the entire section of North Carolina

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from the Yadkin to the Catawba. While he was passing through Virginia, preaching from time to time among the Scotch-Irish settlers there, he began a diary which he kept from day to day and which gives an idea of the times and territory through which he was passing. Such entries as this suggest the nature of a journey such as the McCorkle family, too, was making over these same roads and through these same quiet valleys, with not only the natural hardships of such a wandering, but with the ever-present danger of lurking Indians: "Alone in the wilderness. Sometimes a house in ten miles, and sometimes not that." And again, having stopped at the home of one of the pioneer settlers, Mr. McAden, the missionary notes: "Stayed for dinner, the first I had eaten since I left Pennsylvania." Mr. McAden, stopping overnight at Timber Ridge in Virginia, writes: "Set apart a day of fasting and prayer, on account of the wars and many murders committed by the savage Indians on the back inhabitants . . . preached to a pretty large congregation." The meeting was evidently held under the trees, as was often customary in this time of scarcity of meeting houses and churches, for he continues: "Encouraged them to turn to the Lord . . . the only sure refuge in time of difficulty; and exciting them to put themselves in the best posture of defense they could and endeavor . . . to defend themselves from such barbarous and inhuman enemies. Great attention and solemnity appeared throughout the whole assembly; nay, so engaged were they that, though there came up a pretty smart gust, they seemed to mind no more than if the sun had been shining on them . . . we were little more disturbed than if we had been in a house."

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Mr. McAden, like Governor Dobbs, now received a shocking piece of news . . . "the most melancholy news of the entire defeat of our army by the French at Ohio, the general (General Braddock) killed, numbers of the inferior officers, and the whole artillery taken. This, together with accounts of fresh murders being daily committed upon the frontiers, struck terror to every heart . . . The whole inhabitants were put to universal confusion. Scarcely any man durst sleep in his own house—but all met in companies with their wives and children, and set about building little fortifications. I was so shocked . . . that I knew not well what to do."

What he did do, and what many others at the same time did, was to turn his face hastily towards the Carolinas. And he records that in September he "came up with a company of people that had left the Cow Pastures in Virginia on account of the depredations of the Indians." This was supposed to be a part of the congregation of the Rev. Alexander Craighead, who had had a congregation at Cow Pasture, and who, with numbers of his people, fled to the quieter regions of North Carolina and settled in Mecklenburg County, eventually becoming pastor of Sugaw Creek Church, near Charlotte.

Whether they were participants in the horrors and confusion of that year, 1755, or not, Alexander McCorkle, with his wife, Agnes, his eldest son, Samuel Eusebius, and his younger children, found their way into Rowan County and chose a site for what was to be their permanent home until the day of their death. This site of the Alexander McCorkle home, where young Samuel grew to manhood, is within the bounds of what is now Back

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Creek Church. In 1750, and for the next few years, settlements grew dense for a frontier and were uniting themselves into congregations.

The history of the period impresses emphatically the fact that in these pioneer days of the American colonies the church was the centre not only of the religious life of the community, but the nucleus of social, educational, civic and military activities as well.

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CHAPTER V

Thyatira

After Alexander McCorkle, with the help of his son, Samuel, and his sturdy Scotch-Irish neighbors, had completed the building of his new log house in this North Carolina wilderness, there was still plenty for each member of the family to do. This section of the province was not a primeval forest, but instead a vast prairie covered with peavines and great stretches of grass and cane-brakes. Scarcely a shrub could be seen, and game abounded. The Moravian Bishop, Sanguebury, wrote in 1752: "There are many people coming here because they are informed that stock does not required to be fed in the winter season." He cites the inaccuracy of this claim, and fears that those coming in hopes of winters so mild as neither to have to feed nor protect stock will be grievously disappointed.

As yet, there were no schools, and in these first few years young Samuel, though only a boy himself, became the instructor of the younger members of the family. The elder McCorkle and his wife, Agnes, were pious people, and regularly attended meeting on the Sabbath at Cathey's Meeting House, a substantial log church in the vicinity. No doubt the existence of this meeting house had been a large factor in the selection of this community for their new home. Cathey's Meeting House was at this time one of the few Presbyterian churches built in North Carolina. There were many worshipping assemblies or congrega-

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tions, but few, if any, organized churches, and no settled ministers.

Despite the fact that Cathey's Meeting House had no minister, with only occasional visits from itinerant missionaries sent down from Philadelphia, regular services were held on the Sabbath in the log church. Sermons were read to the people by the elders of the congregation.

A book of sermons, brought over from Ireland by Samuel Young and read from regularly by the elders at Cathey's Meeting House, is still extant, and in possession of Samuel Young's descendant, Mrs. Q. J. Scott, of Cleveland, North Carolina. Samuel Young, certainly a leader in the community, is said to have been one of the elders at Cathey's Meeting House, and at Thyatira Church when the name was changed to that. This venerable book, bound in heavy brown leather, is dedicated in words of piety "To the Right Honourable Ann, Lady Wharton," in the hopes that "my noble Lord and Ladyship may be examples of a Holy, Self-denying Obedience and Faith. So prays (as in Duty bound)

Right Honourable,

Your Ladyship's most Obedient
Servant and Chaplain,

WILLIAM TAYLOR."

Its title is "A Treatise of the Life of Faith," published in London in 1688 (the year William and Mary ascended the throne) and brought to America by Samuel Young in 1748. It contains sixty-six sermons on one chapter of the Bible, the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

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It is written in Ye Old English and dissertates at length upon such topics as sanctification, justification, glorification, blessings of this present life, and temptations of the world. These sermons, long-winded and exacting, perhaps, were undoubtedly sincere and determined agents and instruments for the fearless conquest and fortification of pioneer souls. Mrs. Scott has also in her possession a genuine Watt's Hymn Book brought over by some of her Scotch-Irish ancestors, and from which songs of praise rose to break the stillness of this frontier region.

It was either just before or just after the McCorkles settled in their new home, that the Rev. Hugh McAden passed that way. In his journal he records that he spoke twice at Cathey's Meeting House to a large audience. This was in December, 1755. Evidently the people of the congregation were pleased, for they urged him to remain as the joint pastor of Cathey's Meeting House and that of Rocky River. Mr. McAden considered their proposal carefully, but there was one circumstance which finally made him decide against its acceptance. Some years previous to this, while Mr. McAden and the McCorkle family were still in Pennsylvania, a great division had sprung up in the Presbyterian Church, as it had formerly in Ulster, on the subject of "experience in religion." On the actual tenets of the creed there was little difference of opinion. These Scotch-Irish people were Calvinists, following the Westminster Confession, and in their church government and forms of worship they were Presbyterians after the Scotch or Geneva Model.

But, on the question of whether true spiritual exercises implied or admitted great excitement,—whether conver-

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sion was a very rapid or a very gradual work, whether evidences of grace were decisive, or necessarily obscure, whether true revivals were attended with great alarms, convictions, great distress, and strong hopes and fears,—whether a collegiate course of education was a necessary preparation for the ministry of the Gospel, and whether personal religion should form a part of the examination of candidates for the ministry,—on all these subjects there grew up very great and very heated differences. Finally the Synod of Philadelphia, which embraced all the Presbyterian churches south of Pennsylvania, became, in consequence of these diversities, divided into what was known as the OLD SIDE and the NEW SIDE,—the OLD SIDE objecting to, and the NEW SIDE approving of, these manifestations of religious experience.

Throughout his boyhood young Samuel McCorkle must have heard many discussions and debates on this burning question. Evidently his father and mother adhered to the OLD SIDE, or conservatives, as did most of the congregation of Cathey's Meeting House, though there existed considerable divergence of opinion among the members. Mr. McAden, weighing the matter of staying with this congregation to become its first permanent pastor, must have sensed this division of feeling rather keenly. Personally he adhered staunchly to the NEW SIDE. At any rate, after considering the situation, he decided not to accept the call. His friends and sympathizers in the question made out their subscriptions and he moved on across the Yadkin, which in his diary he notes he crossed with great difficulty.

Mr. McAden went his way, and Cathey's Meeting House remained as it had been, without a settled pastor, though

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with regular church services. Young McCorkle continued to be a studious youth, and during these years taught at an English public school, getting the elements of his own education as best he could through his own efforts. Each year he became more and more engrossed in the study of literature and history and showed a zeal for the study of science. There were few books available, but he made thorough use of what he had. Of course, in his, as in every other Scotch-Irish pioneer home, the Bible was the chiefest textbook.

So life moved along uneventfully until he was about eighteen. That year (1764) two strangers came from Philadelphia to spend some time in the Cathey's Meeting House neighborhood. They were two ministers sent down from Pennsylvania to readjust congregational matters in North Carolina—Messrs. Elihu Spencer and Alexander McWhorter. Population had greatly increased in North Carolina by this time and more meeting houses had been erected, and often there was overlapping of congregational boundary lines; there was need to ordain new elders, and for the Synod in many ways to give more definite care to its southern congregations. When Mr. Spencer and Mr. McWhorter left the Cathey's Meeting House community, they had accomplished, among other things, three very important changes. First, they had caused to be settled amicably, for the time being, the differences of the congregation in regard to the Old Side-New Side controversy; second, they had changed the name "Cathey's Meeting House" to "THYATIRA CHURCH"; and third, with authority from the Synod, they had laid off definitely the boundaries of Thyatira congregation (1764).

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Sugaw Creek, Hopewell, Steel Creek, New Providence, Poplar Tent, Rocky River, Centre, and Thyatira were laid out almost simultaneously; Rocky River was most successful in obtaining a settled pastor.[7]

The name "Thyatira" (Acts XVI, 4) was the third given this little church in the wilderness. For Presbyterianism in Rowan County is older than the organization of the county. On the 17th of January, 1753, John Lynn and Naomi Lynn gave a deed for twelve acres of land, more or less, on James Cathey's line, in Anson County, "to a congregation belonging to ye Lower Meeting House, between the Atking and ye Catabo Do., adhering to a minister licensed from a Presbytery belonging to the old Synod of Philadelphia." On the 18th of January, 1753, a similar deed for twelve acres more, "on James Cathey's north line," was conveyed to the same congregation.[8] Thus we learn that the first name was Lower Meeting House, then Cathey's Meeting House, and finally Thyatira Church, which it is to this day. The original deed for the land on which Thyatira Church stands, some ten miles west of Salisbury, is now preserved in the library of the Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

When Samuel McCorkle was twenty, he wanted to begin his classical education. Up to this time, since coming from Pennsylvania, he had studied only at home. Throughout the colonies there were early established what were known as Classical Schools, which had become quite an integral part of the cultural life of the period. These

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[7]"North Carolina Colonial Records," W. L. Saunders.
[8]"Deed Book," Vol. I, pages 46-47, Rowan County Court House.

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Classical Schools were maintained by ministers of the various denominations, particularly the Presbyterian and Episcopal, and no better ones are recorded than those conducted by the early Scotch-Irish ministers in Virginia and North Carolina.

One of the very best of these during young McCorkle's boyhood was that conducted by Dr. David Caldwell, of Guilford County. It was here that Samuel McCorkle gained his classical education. When he entered it, at the age of 20, he is described by a contemporary as tall, about six feet one inch; finely formed; light hair, and pale blue eyes; mild, grave and dignified in his appearance; cheerful in his disposition, and of fine conversational powers. In late years he was said to resemble Thomas Jefferson to such a marked degree that during a visit to Philadelphia it led to an introduction between the two, and both are said to have retired from the interview with expressions of satisfaction.

Young McCorkle benefited greatly from contact with a personality like that of Dr. Caldwell's, and Dr. Caldwell seems to have left his mark upon him as he did upon all his students. Such was Dr. Caldwell's reputation that it was considered throughout the South a sufficient recommendation or passport for any man to have passed through the course at his school with the approbation of the teacher. Many who became eminent received their whole literary and theological instruction there—the number of scholars in his school was large for the time and circumstances of the country, usually about fifty—his mode of discipline was his own and it is believed he never had to expel or suspend a student for improper conduct.

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He soon became so celebrated that he had students from all States south of the Potomac. Many of his students became eminent as statesmen, lawyers, judges, physicians, and ministers of the Gospel. While some of them only prepared for college with him, usually for Princeton, until Chapel Hill was established, and then for that institution—the larger portion, and several of those who became most distinguished in after life, never went anywhere else for instruction, and never enjoyed any higher advantages. Five of his scholars became governors of different States.

Dr. Caldwell had married Rachael Craighead, daughter of Rev. Alexander Craighead, of Sugaw Creek Church, in Mecklenburg County. She was of inestimable help in the school, and her influence for good over the students was incalculable. The remark was current that "Dr. Caldwell made the scholars, but Mrs. Caldwell made the preachers."

It was to such an atmosphere of culture and dignity, and to contact with such valuable influences, that Samuel McCorkle came when he left his pioneer home in Rowan County to begin his classical education in Guilford County. By the time he had remained two years with Dr. Caldwell, and felt in addition the inspiration of Mrs. Caldwell's noble spirit he had decided to enter the ministry. Accordingly he set out for New Jersey to enter Princeton University, then known as Nassau Hall, a name which it bore in honor of the king, William III of England, of the house of Nassau.

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CHAPTER VI

Princeton Years

PRINCETON, or Nassau Hall, as it was then called, played so important a part in the life of Samuel Eusebius McCorkle, and of the early Presbyterian Church in America in general, that it is interesting to consider something of the conditions and ideals of this institution in that period. We get a clear picture of Princeton as it was when Samuel McCorkle was a student there from an address delivered by Professor Lansing V. Collins, Secretary of Princeton University, before the Monmouth County Historical Association in 1926, and from it obtain an idea of the customs and practices of campus life there in the 18th century. The following descriptions and history are taken almost verbatim from Professor Collins' manuscript.

The College of New Jersey, in which many of the early Presbyterian Scotch-Irish ministers were educated, was moved from Newark, New Jersey, to the little village of Princeton in 1756, just one year after Samuel McCorkle had come to live in North Carolina. Its president at that time was the Rev. Aaron Burr, father of the famous Aaron Burr. While the college was at Newark, the students had lived in private lodgings, as there were no dormitories and no semblance of campus life such as later developed at Princeton. By the time Samuel McCorkle arrived, the college was well established in its new home, and most activities were carried on within the one large building known as NASSAU HALL.

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The main object of the erection of Nassau Hall, besides the theoretical one of giving the college a real and visible existence in the eyes of the world, was "that the students might be boarded as well as taught in one building and live always under the inspection of college officers, more sequestered from the various temptations attending a promiscuous converse with the world,—that theatre of folly and dissipation."

The village of Princeton, on the King's Highway, contained some forty to sixty houses when Nassau Hall was built, but had enlarged considerably by the time young McCorkle arrived. Coming from his pioneer home, Nassau Hall, with its forty-nine rooms must have seemed palatial to the sturdy North Carolinian. At the time of its completion, in 1756, it was the largest academic building in the country.

On the main floor was the prayer hall or chapel—a hall about forty feet square with a gallery, and which is now the faculty room. In the basement were the dining-room, a kitchen, and various recitation rooms. The library was over the main entrance, and the whole structure, built of stone, with a cupola on top, was quite imposing for its time. Young McCorkle found that the dining-room had a code of its own. Each of the four classes had a table to itself, and the grammar school boys had theirs. Wandering from table to table was strictly forbidden. Students sat in alphabetical order, in rotation, beginning with the seat of honor on the right hand of the tutor at the head of the table. The account says that: "He that sits highest shall always carve, and he that sits opposite shall cut bread, and he that sits next on the right shall serve in dealing out

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provision." Mr. Collins remarks: "There is also this delightful addendum: And none shall eagerly catch at a share, but wait till he is served in his turn." The carver's duty brought him certain prerogatives, such as setting aside special tid-bits for a subsequent meal, the ordinary method being to impale them with a fork on the under side of the table—an unwritten law which was always respected, except by stray dogs which ventured from time to time into the mess hall.

In addition to the dining-room, there was maintained by the college and run by the steward a "Buttery," open daily from breakfast time till 8 A. M., from noon until 2 P. M., and from 5 until sunset in summer and until curfew in winter. At this buttery, as at the modern drug store, students could purchase small luxuries. When it became evident that the students were spending too much money in the buttery, the list of articles was cut by college law down to bread, butter, and small beer; and it was particularly set forth that no one should buy more than half a pound of butter at any one time.

Prior to the student days of Samuel McCorkle, the college kitchen, in the basement of Nassau Hall, was a pleasant lounging place. Cooks in those simple days seem to have been genial. Loitering near the kitchen and pantry was so popular a pastime that it became a nuisance, and when a new kitchen building was erected outside of Nassau Hall, a stern rule was issued absolutely forbidding undergraduates to enter its portals. It was further decreed that if they wished to make afternoon tea, they be allowed a fire in the old kitchen in Nassau Hall. It was probably here that Samuel McCorkle and his classmates brewed themselves a cheering cup.

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One student wrote that the college laws were "exceedingly well formed to check and restrain the vicious and to assist the students and encourage the virtuous." Each student on entering the college was given a copy of the laws to write out and have signed by the president, thus constituting matriculation. Here are a few of the regulations regarding courtesy and precedence in vogue and to which young McCorkle was subjected:

"Every member of college shall treat the authority of same and all superiors in a becoming manner, paying that respect that is due to every one in his proper place.

"Every scholar shall keep his hat off about ten rods to the president and about five to the tutors.

"Every scholar shall rise up and make obeisance when the president goes in and out of the hall or enters the pulpit on days of religious worship.

"When walking with a superior shall give him the highest place.

"When they first come into the company of a superior or speak to him, they shall show respect by pulling their hats.

"Shall at any door or entrance give place to a superior. Overtaking or meeting him going up or downstairs shall stop, giving him the banister side.

"Shall not enter a superior's nor even an equal's room without knocking at the door.

"Shall never intrude themselves upon a superior.

"Shall never be first in any undertaking in which a superior is engaged or about to engage.

"Shall never use any indecent or rude behavior in a superior's presence . . . And if called or spoken to by him,

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if within hearing, shall give direct, pertinent answer, concluding with 'Sir.'

"Shall call none by nick-name.

"Shall treat strangers and people residing in town with all proper complaisance and good manners.

"Shall not appear out of their rooms dressed in an indecent, slovenly manner, but must be neat and compleat."

(In his "History of the United States," E. Benjamin Andrews points out the existing social condition of this period: "There was an aristocracy, of its kind, in all the colonies . . . Social lines were sharply drawn, an 'Esquire' not liking to be accosted as 'Mr.' and each looking down somewhat upon a simple 'Goodman.' These graduations stood forth in college catalogues . . . The Yale triennial catalogue until 1767 and the Harvard triennial till 1772 arranged students' names not alphabetically or according to attainments, but so as to indicate the social rank of their families. Memoranda of President Clap, of Yale, against the names of youth when admitted to college, such as 'Justice of the Peace,' 'Deacon,' 'of middling estate much impoverished' reveal how hard it sometimes was properly to grade students socially.")

Apropos of this law that the student must be "neat and compleat" in appearance,—the campus undress costume about the time Samuel McCorkle entered, and continuing until the middle of the next century, was a dressing gown. This varied in material and weight according to the season. Ordinarily it was made of a brilliantly patterned calico and heavily padded. College fashion prescribed its cut and length and number of buttons and pockets. For official occasions, such as examinations or appearance on the col-

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lege rostrum, the student dressed formally, and it was an art whose process was long and in which the services of a barber were required. For, while bob wigs were never worn at Princeton as at Harvard and Oxford, in the 18th century, nor was there any officially prescribed manner of wearing one's own hair, nevertheless the contemporary queue and curled ear locks rendered a barber's help indispensable.

In a diary of the period a student who was to speak in Hall after supper writes: "Near five o'clock, waiting for Barlow to dress me, and at last obliged to run out of college to his house." Another day the same student says: "Am taking all afternoon in dressing, etc.,—and study none at all."

Punishments were simple and few in McCorkle's day. The system of fines in use before 1760 had been abandoned as "it would seem to be punishing the parents for the offenses of the children." In place of it a system of graded personal treatment was developed,—private reprimand, public formal admonition, confession before the assembled college, followed by a severe lecture or, in serious cases, being sent to Conventry and prohibited to speak to one's fellows until a committee of the Trustees had sat upon the case.

Holidays were not celebrated then either, and there is no record of even an extra dish or two at Christmas.

Follow young McCorkle through his daily routine: The rising bell rang at five, and lest any student should claim he did not hear the college servant goes to every door and beats till he wakens the boys, which leaves them without excuse. In later years, a horn that sounded on dark winter

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mornings like the last trump was blown in each entry, taking the place of the rising bell. Roll call and prayers were at five-thirty, after which came an hour's study. Breakfast was served at eight and until nine the students were at liberty. From nine to one they had recitation and study hours; at one the dinner bell rang, and until three all were free again. From three to five were study hours, and at five was evening chapel, after which came liberty till supper was served at seven. At nine the curfew rang, and every student had to be found in his room when the tutors made the rounds. "After nine," writes one of the students of the day, "any may go to bed, but to go before is reproachful."

Curfew was respected even in the village taprooms. By the time Samuel McCorkle reached Princeton, an organ had been installed (by President Davies), and James Lyon, the father of American hymnology wrote most of his first hymn book in Nassau Hall shortly after McCorkle graduated, and remarked in his diary that the students sang as badly as the Presbyterians in New York,—"which seems to have been very badly indeed." Musical instruments, especially flutes and violins, were popular at Nassau Hall.

Of course, at that time, there were no organized athletics, although there was ball playing even in the earliest days, the favorite practice place for handball being for a long time the back wall of the president's house. Classes in dancing and fencing were in vogue too. The long corridors of Nassau Hall afforded fine playrooms in bad weather; and in the evenings, because they were unlighted, or only partially lighted by candles, they were scenes of glorious scufflings in the dark.

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No fire was kept in the prayer hall, and at five-thirty of a cold winter's morning, one had to secure his warmth as best he could from the stirring descriptions of a heated hereafter, contained in some of the sermons delivered from the towering pulpit—notably the sermon delivered one morning by George Whitfield. But while the prayer hall had no heat, each study had its little fireplace, and in time generations of students built a whole system of etiquette around those study fires and the tobacco pipes that decorated their hearths. Wood was the fuel, and candles the only light. Two wells supplied the college with water for drinking purposes, and for its scanty ablutions.

Though Christmas was not observed as a holiday in the Rev. Samuel McCorkle's student days, and the "Glorious Fourth" had never been heard of on the national patriotic calendar, Nassau Hall did have one really gala day. This was Commencement Day. It had been observed for the first time in 1748, while the college was still at Newark. This initial celebration was enacted with all the dignity and stateliness that Governor Belcher and President Burr could devise, and the pomp of that occasion was never forgotten. After the college was removed to Princeton, and began to grow, Commencement Day (held in the fall) took on even greater eventfulness and color.

There were the grammar school graduating exercises, prize contests of various sorts, oratory by the hour and speeches by the dozen. The village was crammed with visitors—the main street looked like a county fair, with booths erected on both sides of it, where hucksters and farmers sold refreshments, and wandering musicians enlivened the crowd. Horse races were run off on Nassau

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Street. The climax of commencement week was the ball, held at one of the taverns.

Just as today the town of Princeton is a halting place for the New York to Philadelphia motor buses, so in the 18th century the village was the mid-journey station for the stage-coaches. All the pageant of colonial life in New Jersey passed along the King's Highway between the campus and the town. So that even in term time there was always something to catch boyish interest at the tavern greens—fleeting glimpses of the gay world fifty miles to the east in New York . . . or to the west in Philadelphia."

Dr. John Witherspoon, the Scotchman, came to Princeton in 1768, the same year in which the young Scotch-Irishman from North Carolina arrived. With the coming of Dr. Witherspoon, a new force entered not only the history of the college, but also the history of the Province of New Jersey and colonial life in general. At first Dr. Witherspoon was content to attend strictly to his college business and not mingle at all in politics. On his arrival at Princeton he knew nothing of the colonial grievances against the English government. He merely watched the situation, and by slow degrees formed the opinion that ultimately made him the prominent colonial figure he became.

There had been two rival literary societies in college before Dr. Witherspoon came called "The Well Meaning" and "The Plain Dealing" Clubs. Because of the increased bitterness of their rivalry, the faculty had suppressed them. The new president permitted their reorganization under the names CLIOSOPHIC and the AMERICAN WHIG Societies, not merely to satisfy undergraduate whim, but because he realized their possible value as safety-

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valves for undergraduate energy and as adjuncts to the curriculum which he intended to emphasize. He conceived of the college not solely as a nursery for the education of ministers, but rather as a training ground for the preparation of young men to take their place in the widening spheres of colonial life as Christian gentlemen and scholarly men of affairs. And he sensed in the two literary societies the possiblity of moulding and developing a latent power for the eventual good of his adopted country . . . Their importance in organizing campus life is a striking feature in every allusion to them in the 18th century Princeton documents. They formed the backbone of that life; they were the centre of college loyalties, and the promoters of college friendships; even their "paper wars" and wordy wrangles over foolish trivialities had their part in giving life at Princeton its distinctiveness. We can but wonder to which one of these revived societies young McCorkle gave his allegiance. His future eloquence as an orator is perhaps traceable to the training he received in their forensic discussions.

Under Witherspoon they became serious organizations. They were the unique feature of life at Princeton, constituting an activity in which even academic loafers really worked, compelled by the force of campus opinion. Their influence was not merely formal, nor confined to style and manner of literary effort. Here, besides the production of poems, essays, and orations, and the satisfaction of the personal partisanships of the campus, the deeper feelings of the 1760's that had seen the end of the French and Indian War and had led collegiate political temper to stage at commencement The Military Glory of Great Britain

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was now turned to local questions which had grown into national problems. Here were discussed the proud ideas of young America which in 1772 (the year Samuel McCorkle graduated) found partial expression in Freneau's and Breckenridge's commencement poem on "The Rising Glory of America," and in the ultra-patriotic orations of successive commencement platforms . . . Here were thrashed out the new politics of the day, and here was independence of the colonies advocated long before it became a public matter.

In 1770, during Samuel McCorkle's sophomore year, and twelve months before the famous clash of the Regulators with the Crown Government in the Battle of the Alamance, in North Carolina, the following incident took place. It is safe to infer that young McCorkle, being a thorough and red-blooded young colonial, played his part in it along with the rest of the Princeton undergraduates. In July, 1770, just two years after Dr. Witherspoon reached Princeton, when the letter of the New York merchants breaking a non-importation agreement and inviting the Philadelphia merchants to do likewise, came through Princeton, the undergraduates seized it and burned it in front of Nassau Hall. "All of them" wrote James Madison to his father, "appearing in their black gowns, and the bell tolling."

Here are details of the burning of the letter from another of McCorkle's fellow students: "This afternoon (July 13th) the students at Nassau Hall, fired with just indignation on reading the infamous letter from the merchants of New York to the committee of merchants in Philadelphia, informing them of their resolution to send home orders for

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goods contrary to their non-importation agreement—at the tolling of the college bell went in a procession to a place fronting the college and burnt the letter by the hands of a hangman hired for the purpose, with hearty wishes that the names of all the promoters of such a daring breach of faith may be blasted in the eyes of every lover of liberty and their names handed down to posterity as betrayers of their country." This occurred six years before the birth of the Declaration of Independence.

A new Americanism was abroad in the land and the Princeton campus was full of it. On September 20, 1772, Samuel Eusebius McCorkle received his degree from Nassau Hall, Princeton. He went out from its gates alive to the current of dissatisfaction and indignation which was growing rapidly toward the mother country, and which was to culminate four years later in the immortal Declaration of American Independence.

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CHAPTER VII

A Religious Diary

A very happy custom in colonial days was the keeping of diaries, and from these day-by-day records have been learned some of the most valuable phases of American history. In many of those which have come down to us are preserved not only an account of the happenings of the moment, but, more valuable still, a record of the reactions of these happenings upon the character and spirit of the writer.

When Samuel Eusebius McCorkle left Princeton College with his A. B. degree, he carried with him a diary which he had begun in his senior year. It was started under the influence of a revival of religion which swept Princeton in that year 1772, and its contents reflect the introspective questionings of the youthful author. To quote from a fragment of the diary:

"Saturday, April 11, '72, Nassau. 1st. Resolved, This day to begin a religious diary, having been a long time convinced of its necessity and importance, and having oftentimes made faint resolutions to begin it. Resolved, To begin with a short record of my whole life, offering up a prayer to Almighty God for his assistance and direction, intending to devote the whole day to religious purposes.

"Very early in life I was impressed with a sense of divine things, and lived convinced of the necessity of religion, and convinced that I was without it, sometimes careless, sometimes awakened, till about the age of twenty, when,

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at the approach of a sacrament, I was more than usually concerned, and resolved to defer it no longer. Here I fell into a self-righteous scheme, and mistook a certain flow of natural affection for real delight in religion, while I never saw the enmity of my own heart, the odiousness of sin in its own nature, nor the glory and excellence of God in his own nature; only hated sin because it exposed me to misery, and loved God because I hoped he would make me happy. Upon this I fear thousands are apt to rest, as in all probability I should have done, had it not pleased God to send me to college; the last year of my residence was a considerable revival, in which it pleased God to open my eyes to see my awful deception. In the beginning of this work, I found my heart not properly engaged, but indifferent and unaffected." This young heart-searcher then recounts the effect upon him of reading Boston's FOURFOLD STATE: "I cast my thoughts upon my past life, and began to examine my religion and the motives of my actions. I found they were all selfish, and that since the time when I thought I had got religion I had fallen away even to the neglect of secret prayer."

Next the diarist comes upon Hopkin's State of the Unregenerate,—"which presented," he writes, "such a picture and enmity of the human heart, and of the misery they are in by nature, as fully convinced me that I had never seen my own heart, never had had any proper views of God; and, in short, that I had never known anything about religion. Here I felt myself in great distress, and had very violent exercises, till my passions subsided, and seemed to end in a calm, rational conviction." The sermons of Jonathan Edwards were perused next. However, Mr. Hopkins'

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sermons, showing "the dreadfulness and misery of man's estate, and the horrid nature of sin," seemed to grip him most, and caused him to declare "I could never raise my thoughts to contemplate the feelings and glory of God in Christ, though I sometimes attempted it; my sins seemed to be so aggravated, that they made me sometimes almost despond of God's mercy; and what seemed most of all terrible to me was that I had in that state been admitted to the table of the Lord."

Here in the diary he considers a question which has puzzled thousands of sincere Christians before and since, i. e., the dispositions of Providence in the creation of man, and his justice in condemning him: "I found a secret disposition to clear myself by the doctrine of man's inability, till I read Mr. Smalley's sermons on that subject, which seemed to give considerable light in vindicating the justice of God. Another cavil seemed to be against the mercy of God. I thought I desired salvation, and found fault that it was not given me."

This introspective soul-searching must have resulted in a stabilizing of his faith and a change of heart which he believed to be "unto life." When he left Princeton, his determination to enter the ministry was firmer than ever, and he soon began his theological studies with his mother's brother, the Rev. Joseph Montgomery, of New Castle Presbytery, Pennsylvania. For two years he pursued diligently his preparation for the ministry, and in the spring of 1774 he received his license to preach from the Presbytery of New York, as recorded in the report of that Presbytery to the Synod.

Immediately after receiving his license, he went to Vir-

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ginia, where he spent the next two years, probably as an itinerant preacher, for we find no record of those early months of his ministry, except the bare statement of where they were spent. Then in 1776, at the outbreak of the official hostilities of the American Revolution, he came back to his home and his people in North Carolina.

In connection with this first "religious diary," begun the year of his graduation, it is interesting to know that in later life he drew up for his children a complete memoir of his life. He confided this manuscript to a friend of the family who was to carry it from Tennessee to North Carolina. Unfortunately, the bearer either lost or mislaid it, and no copy of it exists.

When Samuel McCorkle returned to the little Scotch-Irish settlement of his boyhood days, he had spent ten years in preparation for the work he was to undertake. At twenty he had entered Dr. Caldwell's "Classical School" and spent two years; at twenty-two he had entered Princeton and spent four years; at twenty-six he had gone to New Castle Presbytery to study for his ministerial career; at twenty-eight he had received his license from the New York Presbytery; and at thirty, after two years of practical experience as an itinerant preacher in Virginia, he had returned to North Carolina and found a field ready for the Harvest. It was not until 1792 that he received his D.D. from Dickinson College.

And what of Cathey's Meeting House, or Thyatira Church, as it was now called, and the family and friends in North Carolina during these years while young McCorkle was away preparing himself for his great life work?

It will be recalled that in 1764, before McCorkle had

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gone away to school at all, Messrs. Spencer and McWhorter had come down from Philadelphia, and by the authority of the Synod had made Thyatira Church and Centre Church to supersede all other places of worship in a long strip of country extending from the Yadkin to the Catawba, in which they were, at the time, the only churches. It was at this period that the seven historic churches of Mecklenburg were also laid out, while Fourth Creek followed shortly.

These two emissaries were not only to settle disputes, and specify the boundaries of congregations, but were to ordain elders and dispense the sacraments as well. A list of those serving as elders at Thyatira during the twenty-five years following the visit of Messrs. Spencer and McWhorter includes the father of Samuel McCorkle, Alexander McCorkle; William Cathey, from whose family the log meeting house received its name; John MeNeely; James Graham, direct from Scotland; John Dobbin, Samuel Young, and Samuel Barkley. There were others, but no written record is preserved.

During all these years efforts had been made from time to time to obtain a resident pastor, but so far, for one reason or another, this congregation, far away "in the wilderness of North Carolina" had been unsuccessful in procuring one, up to the time when Samuel McCorkle returned after his long absence. The year following the visit of Messrs. Spencer and McWhorter, Thyatira and Fourth Creek Churches had united in a call for one of them, Rev. Elihu Spencer. The two Rowan congregations sent wagons, accompanied by elderly men all the way to New Jersey, to move Mr. Spencer's family to Rowan

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County. But after all, he declined to come, though the North Carolina congregations had gone so far, and to such exertions and trouble to obtain him. It is alleged that the reason he declined was that the messengers refused to pledge themselves to restore his wife to her friends in the event of his death.

So eight more years passed, and Thyatira depended upon the sermons read by her elders on the Sabbath and the occasional visits of itinerant preachers to keep alive the spirit of religion in the neighborhood. And then, in 1772, the very year in which Samuel Eusebius McCorkle graduated from Princeton, a Rev. Mr. Harris took charge of the church and remained for two years. No record whatever is left of his ministration there.

There followed another period of three years for Thyatira without a resident minister. Finally, in 1776, Samuel Eusebius McCorkle returned to his home and to the people among whom he was to labor and to serve the remainder of his long and useful career.

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CHAPTER VIII

Home, Church and Country

After his ten years' absence, Samuel McCorkle found many changes in the growing community about Thyatira Church. The nearest village of any size was Salisbury, the county seat of Rowan, which lay some ten miles east of the church. Salisbury, too, had a considerable number of Scotch-Irish settlers, and this congregation also was without a regular pastor. In the early days of his return, Mr. McCorkle went frequently into the little village to preach to them.

At this time the principal inn in Salisbury was kept by Mrs. Elizabeth Maxwell Steele. When Mrs. Steele had married William Steele, she was the widow of Robert Gillespie, a sturdy pioneer who had been scalped by the Indians during an attack on Fort Dobbs, near Statesville, in the French and Indian War. By her first marriage Mrs. Steele had two children, an attractive daughter, Margaret Gillespie, and a son, Robert Gillespie. By her second marriage she had one son, John Steele, who was destined to play an important part in the history of the period. The eldest son, Robert Gillespie, was a captain in the Revolutionary War, and died unmarried.

On his visits to Salisbury, the Rev. Samuel McCorkle frequently met Mrs. Steele's lovely young daughter, Margaret. He soon fell in love with her, and before he had been at home six months they were married, July 2, 1776. He must have won the hearts of the people of Thyatira also,

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for he preached to them often, and they soon offered him a call to become their pastor. Accordingly, he was ordained by Hanover Presbytery, August 2, 1777, and continued as Thyatira's pastor until the day of his death. In Foote's "Sketches of Virginia" is found a reference to Mr. McCorkle's ordination, which took place concurrently with that of William Graham, afterwards famous as the founder of Washington and Lee University. "The Presbytery met at Rockfish, October 25, 1775, and on October 26th Mr. Samuel McCorkle, a probationer from the Presbytery of New York, who afterwards held a conspicuous place among the ministers of North Carolina, was taken under the care of the Presbytery. Seven months later the Presbytery met at Timber Ridge, May 1, 1776: present, Rev. Messrs. Brown, Waddell, Rice, Irvin, Wallace and Smith, with Elder Charles Campbell. Mr. McCorkle, a licentiate, preached the opening sermon, from Job XXVII, 8, 'For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he has gained, when God taketh away his soul'?" It was about two months after this important event that Samuel McCorkle married Margaret Gillespie, and a few weeks more before he began his work as pastor of Thyatira Church.

These were the stirring times of the first months of the American Revolution. The Rev. Mr. McCorkle was a devoted partisan of the colonial cause. His contact with Dr. Witherspoon, who took so active a part in the Revolution, and in the formative days that followed, and his association with the new American spirit abroad on the Princeton campus and alive in the Princeton Literary Societies, left no doubt in his mind as to the justice of the cause.

The Scotch-Irish had left their own homes with a deep,

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bitter, and abiding hatred of England and her ways. From her had come all their woes, and the need of abandoning their homes. Naturally, as abuse followed abuse from the mother country, this smouldering flame was eventually fanned into a burning fire of enthusiasm for colonial political independence. Of course, this was a slow and gradual process, fermented by indignities suffered by the American colonists at the hands of English Crown officers.

You will recall that as early as 1771 some of the taxpayers of North Carolina under the name of REGULATORS, many of whom were Scotch-Irish, had resisted unsuccessfully the king's troops at the Battle of The Alamance, in Guilford County. In Rowan County, in the very bounds of Thyatira congregation, the Sotch-Irish citizens, goaded by the iniquitous dominance of Governor Tryon, indignant at the oppressive conduct of the other officers of the crown, and pushed beyond endurance by unjust and illegal taxation, formed in 1774 what was known as "The Committee of Safety." The chairman of this committee was Samuel Young, a member of the Rev. Samuel McCorkle's congregation, and who, tradition says, was one of Thyatira's first elders. James Brandon, another member of Thyatira Church, was clerk of this committee. Resolutions known as the "Rowan Resolves" were drawn up, and clearly show the tempo of the members of the committee as well as of the people whom they represented.

The "Rowan Resolves" were not a declaration of insubordination to the crown. The time for that was not yet ripe. Despite its opening expressions of allegiance to the crown, the resolutions declared the right of the colonists to impose taxes; refused the attempts to impose taxes or

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duties by other authority than that of the General Assembly, in whom the legislative authority of the colony was vested; they declared the cause of the town of Boston to be the common cause of the American Colonies; they urged as the duty of the American Colonies to unite for opposition against every infringement of their common rights and privileges; they proclaimed the African trade injurious to the colony; and included a number of other measures necessary to the rights and liberties of the colonists. In this day, when so much is made of the "Buy at Home" movement, it is interesting to realize that the "Rowan Resolves," formulated in 1774, included this resolution: "That to be clothed in manufactures fabricated in the colonies ought to be considered as a badge of distinction, of respect, and true patriotism."

Thus, while affirming their loyalty to the king, they yet hoped to secure their liberties by the repeal of odious laws. The further conduct of this committee during that same year showed that the idea of resistance was steadily growing towards the idea of independence in the minds of the patriots of Rowan. The following year, Rev. Samuel McCorkle saw his Scotch-Irish neighbors a few miles to the south in Mecklenburg, in convention assembled, draw up the famous document known as "The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence," May 20, 1775.

In his home life and in his intimate associations, Mr. McCorkle felt the inspiration of a glowing patriotic fervor. His mother-in-law, Mrs. Elizabeth Maxwell Steele, for whom he had the deepest devotion, was an ardent colonial patriot, and the incident which took place in the later years of the Revolution, of her relieving General Greene in his

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hour of need by the gift of her bags of gold, has become a part of North Carolina history and has made of her one of the foremost heroines of the American Revolution.

The following Revolutionary incident, which happened to Mr. McCorkle himself, is related by Dr. Walter L. Lingle, President of Davidson College, in the "Christian Observer": "General William Lee Davidson, for whom Davidson College was named, was born in Pennsylvania and was brought by his parents to North Carolina when he was a child. He and Dr. McCorkle were born in the same year, and were evidently intimate friends. When General Davidson was killed in a battle on February 1, 1781, near the present site of Davidson College, while opposing the army of Cornwallis, he was wearing Dr. McCorkle's overcoat. The preacher had loaned his soldier friend his great coat as he went forth to battle for liberty on that cold day."

Dr. McCorkle's sympathies are further shown in a sermon which was printed in 1829, years after his death, in a little pamphlet published at Fayetteville and called "Presbyterian Preachers." Its text was Deut. IV, 32, and it was delivered just after the close of the Revolution "on a day of Thanksgiving and Prayer." A copy of the pamphlet is now in possession of Dr. McCorkle's great-great-grandson, Mr. Samuel McCorkle, of Thyatira community, in Rowan County.

Several lineal descendants of Dr. McCorkle, all brothers and sisters, reside still in the general vicinity of Thyatira. Besides the aforementioned Samuel McCorkle, there are his brothers, W. J. McCorkle and Henry D. McCorkle, and their sister, Mrs. C. J. Freeze (Ella McCorkle), of Kannapolis. All are great-great-grandchildren of Dr. Sam-

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uel McCorkle and his wife, Margaret Gillespie McCorkle. After his marriage and ordination as minister of Thyatira, a busy life unfolded in these stirring Revolutionary days for the newly installed pastor. During the years that followed ten children were born to Dr. and Mrs. McCorkle. The family seem to have lived in moderate well-to-do comfort on a plantation near the church, and to have gathered about them a reasonable supply of house furnishings, far exceeding that of the average pioneer household. In his will Dr. McCorkle speaks of "the Plantation whereon I now live" and mentions specifically the dwelling house, the outhouses, house furniture, farming utensils and livestock. He further denotes the presence of a number of Negro slaves, and he speaks with special emphasis of his bookcase and desk, his encyclopedia, his books on languages and science, and other books. The body of Dr. McCorkle's will is included at the conclusion of this sketch.

This "bookcase and desk" which Dr. McCorkle mentions so specifically in his will now belongs to his great-great-grandson, Mr. Samuel McCorkle, of Thyatira. This beautiful old secretary is of solid cherry, mellowed and enriched by time. In line it is pure colonial. And strange to say, in a batch of papers which its owner also inherited from his distinguished ancestor, is preserved the receipt which the maker of this prized piece of furniture, John Gheen, gave to Dr. McCorkle when, on its delivery to his home, the doctor paid the cabinetmaker a sum amounting to about $75.00. Also there is the Windsor chair, supposedly made by the same craftsman, John Gheen. It is put together with pegs, and its present owner says that a number of collectors have offered him tempting sums for this

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chair and the lovely old secretary, with its beveled wooden doors and intriguing secret drawers and compartments.

Something of the day by day interests of this pioneer preacher and his household are reflected in the contents of a number of other papers which have come down to his descendants. For instance, there are intact a deed and plat of a farm of 311¾ acres which Dr. McCorkle purchased May 29, 1804. It adjoined the James McConnaughey and Henry Jenkins property, and at present is in the possession of Mr. George Goodnight, lying just north of the hard surfaced road about a mile east of Thyatira.

There is also a yellowed paper showing an inquiry made of John Anderson in regard to purchasing 200¼ acres formerly owned by John Reed. A receipt, signed "Samuel McCorkle," acknowledges payment of the whole of his salary for the year 1795. In this package, too, are a number of interesting marriage licenses, presumably of those couples whom Dr. McCorkle had united. And one bit of crumbling paper signifies that "Mathew Locke received July 10, 1799, note of 4 pounds 11 shillings," the amount of which is credited to the account of Samuel McCorkle "on a note in the hands of General Locke."

While Dr. McCorkle was thus building his home and entering as much as time would permit into the cares and joys of family life, he was greatly shocked by the death of his beloved mother-in-law, Mrs. Elizabeth Maxwell Steele. In the "Fayetteville Gazette" of January 3, 1791, appeared the following obituary notice: "Died on Monday, the 22nd of November, in Salisbury, after a lingering and painful illness, Mrs. Elizabeth Maxwell Steele, relict of Dr. William Steele, and mother of Margaret McCorkle, wife of Rev. Samuel McCorkle.

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"Her name and character are well known, but best by her most intimate friends. She was a devout worshipper of God; she was distinguished during the War as a friend of her country; she twice supported with dignity the characters of wife and widow; she was a most tender and affectionate parent; kind and obliging neighbor; frugal, industrious, and charitable to the poor." There follows a letter written by her in 1783, and filled with advice and admonition to her children, Margaret Gillespie McCorkle, Robert Gillespie, and John Steele. In part she writes: "My dear children—If I die before any of you, I wish that this letter may fall into your hands after I am dead and gone, that you may see how much affection I have for you, and that what I have often said while alive may be remembered by you when I am in eternity . . . I want you to keep out of bad company—it has ruined many young people. I want you to keep company with sober, good people, and learn their ways, to keep the Sabbath, to be charitable to the poor, to be industrious, and frugal, just to all men, and, above all, to love one another . . . I wish I could take you all to heaven. Then, think of the vanity of this world,—think of Jesus the Saviour,—death,—judgment, and eternity; and don't forget the living and dying desire of your most affectionate mother till death and after death, 'Elizabeth Steele'."

A perusal of Mrs. Steele's will, on record in the Rowan County Court House, Salisbury, N. C., bespeaks the love and high esteem in which she held her son-in-law, Dr. McCorkle. It is dated the 15th day of December, 1789, and among its provisions are the following:

"I give and bequeath my soul to God in humble hopes

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of his mercy through Jesus Christ, and my body to the earth, and I desire it may be buried in the grave at Cathey's Meeting House along side of my late husband, William Steele, in a decent manner at the discretion of my executor, and after all my just debts and funeral expenses are paid and satisfied, I give and devise to my much respected son-in-law, the Rev. Samuel McCorkle a tract of land (described in detail). I also devise and bequeath unto said Samuel McCorkle my Negro fellow Dick that went off with the British troops, in case he can be ever recovered . . .

"I give unto my dearly beloved son, John Steele, my wedding ring and one-third part of all my personal estate . . . I give unto my dearly beloved daughter, Margaret McCorkle, all my clothes, wearing apparel of every kind with my rings, except my wedding ring already disposed of, together with my riding horse, saddle and bridle, and the trunk that contains my clothes; and also one-third of my personal estate.

"I give to my grandson, Alexander McCorkle, and my three granddaughters, Nancy, Elizabeth and Sophia McCorkle—daughters of Rev. Samuel McCorkle, tract of land (then described) . . . I hereby do make, ordain, and appoint the Rev. Samuel McCorkle and my son, John Steele, Executors of this my last will and testament." The will is witnessed by Max Chambers and Margaret Chambers. In the codicil she provides that six silver tablespoons marked E. S. shall go to her son John Steele, if he survives her; if not, they are to go direct to her daughter, Mrs. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle.

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CHAPTER IX

Zion-Parnassus Academy

When Samuel Eusebius McCorkle began his ministry at Thyatira Church, the bounds of the congregation were very extensive, including in those days the congregations of what are now Back Creek Church and Third Creek Church and others. Preaching, of course, was one of his major activities. A man who spoke then had time to study and to prepare, and cogregations had time to sit down and listen. Sunday was the one day, and the minister their one man. They went to church uncritical and humble, feeling their need.

Visiting the sick and burying the dead required long and toilsome journeys over rough roads, at times almost impassable. The communion service, too, was not the simple sacrament that it now is, occupying just a short while after the regular morning service. It was looked forward to for months, and the most elaborate preparations made for its celebration. As in Scotland and Ireland, it was truly "the great day of feast." It was held less frequently then than now, and was an outstanding occasion lasting several days,—days filled with prayer, fasting, and exhortation, with special emphasis on self-examination.

An old custom brought over from Scotland and Ireland and one which tradition declares was followed at Thyatira, Rocky River, and other early North Carolina churches, was the giving of "Tokens." Mrs. W. R. Grey, wife of Professor W. R. Grey, of Davidson College, and daughter of the late

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Rev. J. M. Wharey, D.D., for a good many years pastor of old Rocky River Church, near Concord, North Carolina, recalls that when she was still a little child, the children of the home and community had a bag of old tokens which they played with, using the tokens for money in their play. The extensive use of the tokens in the United States is revealing. All the early Presbyterian churches appear to have used them . . . The token is found not only all over New England, but wherever the Presbyterian Church was planted in the United States and its presence still lingers.

As we have said, preparation for the communion lasted several days. When the worshippers were being dismissed on the fast day, the minister and elders stood in front of the pulpit. As the members filed past, those WHO WERE IN GOOD STANDING and worthy to communicate were handed each a small piece of metal known as a TOKEN. The importance and solemnity with which this distribution was regarded may be inferred from what is recorded of one Scotch minister of whom it is declared "he never gave a token of admission to the Lord's Supper without a trembling hand and a throbbing heart." The token itself was usually a small plate of lead, marked with some device referring to the congregation which owned it, or to the ordinance with which it was connected . . . some such appropriate text as "Let a Man Examine Himself," or "Do This in Remembrance of Me."[9] In some communities, and quite likely at Thyatira, a Thanksgiving service on Monday closed the communion season.

In the days of Dr. McCorkle's ministry, the system of church supervision and discipline was strict, and as far as

[9]"The Story of the Token," Robert Sheills.

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the session of the church was able to determine, no person was allowed to come unworthily to the Lord's table. The greatest care and vigilance were used so as to exclude all unbelievers or improper persons. Those disqualified in the opinion of the session were summarily refused tokens, which thus debarred them from further participation in the service. It was not for nothing that the small "Session Houses" were erected alongside the church building, where recalcitrant members could easily be brought up before the session for investigation and discipline.

On the Sabbath, when the elders served communion, they received from each communicant the token, guaranteeing his fitness to partake with his brethren of the sacred bread and wine. Should members be absent on the days when the tokens were distributed to the worthy, it was not permissible for their tokens to be carried to them by neighbors and friends. These elaborate communion services, and other ceremonies of his pastoral office, Dr. McCorkle performed with regularity and fidelity.

In addition to these duties, Dr. McCorkle also conducted a Bible School in connection with his church on a unique and systematic plan. In a note to a sermon printed in 1792 he says: "Here I beg leave briefly to suggest to my brethren the plan of catechising from the Scriptures, as the platform or ground of a catechism. I have proceeded from Genesis to Job, and through part of the four evangelists; and I design, if God permit, to proceed on to the end, asking questions that lead to reading and reflection. I have found it profitable to myself and my people, and can venture to say that as far as I have proceeded there is not a congregation on the continent better acquainted with the Scriptures.

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"The congregation I have divided into a number of divisions, of fifteen or sixteen families each, assigned to each division a set of written questions, and from one part of one or two books, as they may be long or short, in each Testament; catechising in the morning from the Old, in the afternoon from the New Testament, and closing by calling on the youth to repeat the shorter catechism.

"This set of Scriptural questions, thus examined, we pass to the next division of the congregation, who often attend as spectators, knowing that they are next to be examined on the same questions. Thus in rotation every individual will be examined."

In preparing his sermons, Dr. McCorkle usually wrote them out, but did not, in delivering them, confine himself to manuscript or notes. He declared that when he was to treat on a disputed or argumentative subject, however, he would never be seen in the pulpit without full notes. On other occasions, he would use his discretion. A list of his published sermons includes, among others, four sermons on the subject of Infidelity as brought to the United States during the French Revolution; one on "The Principle and Practice of Giving to Charitable and Benevolent Objects"; one on "The Terms of the Christian Communion," and one, said to be very beautiful and eloquent on "The Death of General Washington."

The father of Dr. McCorkle, the venerable Alexander McCorkle became very deaf during the years of his son's pastorate, but each Sabbath found him crowding closer about his son's ministerial desk to drink in his words of praise and wisdom. The pulpit instructions of Dr. McCorkle abounded with argument and observation, founded

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upon common sense. He had a scholarly knowledge of Latin and Greek, and his sermons, enriched by historical and literary research, were compelling and convincing. Princeton had taught him how to study; how to analyze, how to prepare a discourse; a wide experience gave him a storehouse of information to draw upon; and Nature stamped him as a great man. He attended the judicatories of the church with care, and respected their decisions. It is said that in selecting delegates to the Assembly, if but one delegate were to be sent, he preferred a man of age and experience; if two were to be sent, he desired there should be one of the older and one of the younger members of the Presbytery chosen.

Eight years after Rev. Samuel McCorkle began services as pastor of Thyatira Church, he opened a classical school about a mile east of the church and called the new institution Zion-Paranassus Academy. You remember that the royal residence of David and his successors stood upon the Hill of Zion in Jerusalem, and that the name came to stand for the ancient Hebrew theocracy or the modern Church of Christ. And Parnassus, you recollect, was a mountain about 8,000 feet high in Central Greece, and anciently regarded as sacred to Apollo (the god of youth, manly beauty, music, song, and prophecy) and to the Muses (the godesses of poetry, art, and science). The very selection of such a name shows the calibre of the founder of the academy as one of abiding religious faith and conviction combined with the idealism and esthetic qualities of the dreamer and the esthete.

The achievements of Dr. McCorkle through this classical school were truly remarkable. No doubt he modeled it

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after the famous one conducted by Dr. David Caldwell, in Guilford, where he had received his own classical education. To the regular course of instruction, Dr. McCorkle added a special department for teaching-training, which Dr. Alphonso Smith has called "the first normal school in America." At Zion-Parnassus Academy Dr. McCorkle worked diligently and constructively, carrying on at the same time his duties as pastor of Thyatira, and giving some attention also to the cultivation of his plantation. He was educated far beyond his times, and with this acquired culture he combined a natural aptitude for teaching which had manifested itself when as a boy he taught his younger brothers and sisters in their early years in the wilderness of North Carolina. At Zion-Parnassus Academy he demonstrated that he was the forerunner of the modern psychologist, and the methods he used in dealing with his pupils were prophetic of this later day. He probably never heard of an "intelligence test," as we understand the term, yet he selected his students in the light of their qualifications to receive classical education. He discouraged young men who were destitute of talents from following any of the learned professions. This, perhaps, was one of the secrets of his great success.

Forty-five of Dr. McCorkle's students of Zion-Parnassus Academy entered the ministry, and many others of them became lawyers, judges and officers of the state. And more remarkable still,—six of the seven graduates of the first graduating class (1798) of the University of North Carolina were his pupils at Zion-Parnassus. Their names were Samuel Hinton, Wake County; William Houston, Iredell County; Robert Locke, Rowan County; Alexander Os-

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borne, Rowan County; Edwin J. Osborne, Salisbury; Adam Springs, Mecklenburg; while the other graduate of this historic class was Hinton James, of Wilmington, the student who had the distinction of comprising, singly and alone for two weeks, the entire student body of the University of North Carolina when its gates first opened for admission of students.

Despite his full program with its many duties, Dr. McCorkle, above everything else, kept his ear attuned to the religious qualities of his congregation and of his church at large. In 1802, and for the next few succeeding years, a great revival took place in the Presbyterian Church. Dr. McCorkle, always conservative, was disinclined to favor it on account of the "exercises" that accompanied its awakening of the spirit. However, with great open-mindedness and fairness of judgment, he was persuaded to attend a revival meeting in Randolph County, North Carolina. Dr. McCorkle described the proceedings in a letter written from Westfield August 9, 1802, to Mr. Langdon in Salisbury, North Carolina. In part he says: "A sermon was delivered on Friday to a large, thoughtless, disorderly crowd, which became gradually composed and serious, until Monday, which was the most solemn that my eyes ever beheld. Near three thousand persons attended, and of these near three hundred were exercised throughout the occasion, and perhaps not fewer than half of them on Monday.

"Nothing very unusual at such meetings appeared until Sunday evening, when a stout Negro woman, who had been all day mocking the mourners, fell; and fell in a state of horror and despair that baffles description. In this state

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she continued with intervals, for three hours. I viewed her all the time, and it was impossible for my imagination to conceive of her being more tormented had she actually been in hell. She often roared out: 'O Hell! Hell! Hell! Thy pangs have seized me, O torment! Torment! etc.' She said she saw hell flames below, herself hung over by a thread, and a sharp, bright sword drawn to cut it through. Her exertions at this moment, nor hell nor devil, could describe. Two stout Negro men were no match for her struggles. I thought of the man among the tombs with his legion. Such an exercise I never beheld,—and I have seen not less than a thousand . . . At intervals she cried 'O for Mercy!' and at last she shouted 'Glory! Glory!' as loud and as long as she had roared out 'Hell, torment' before . . . Very different but not less noticeable was another exercise on Monday. After a sermon and two exhortations, arose with trembling and wild consternation, a man who abjured the preachers before God, to say on their conscience, whether they did believe the necessity of these convictions which they had been urging. The whole assembly was struck with solemn astonishment. The preachers, after a pause, said with one voice: 'We do, we do believe it.' He then turned to the assembly and begged of those who had felt the conviction to pray for him and others who had not. He sat down. An awful silence ensued, and then a prayer was performed for them. When this scene ended, he rose and called on all who had not felt conviction to join with him in prayer for themselves. After a short, pathetic prayer, he retired. He said that he had never suspected our sincerity, but wished to have the assembly impressed with our public declaration; that his

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feeling was a bodily sensation rising . . . toward his breast, and that with this sensation arose his resolution to speak, and an impulse irresistible to execute it. And certain am I that, had he studied for a year, he could have devised no plan that would have produced such a solemn effect on the assembly. In the evening he was severely exercised. This man possessed a large portion of natural understanding and a liberal education, but regrets that he had been too long wandering through the wilds of infidelity and intemperance. He has firmly resolved to abandon his old companions, and choose new ones, and be another man. May God enable him to do so. What wonders are doing around us!"

The letter concludes with a recital of other interesting examples of "the working of the Spirit."

The effect of this revival in North Carolina and particularly upon Dr. McCorkle's congregation of Thyatira Church is significant. You will bear in mind that the immediate background was the excitement and general disorganization due to the American Revolution, which had been concluded after a seven years' struggle. During these troublous years, religious instruction and worship had been continued by the Presbyterian churches with a degree of exactness. Nevertheless, the march of armies is marked by plunder and vice, and immorality and dissipation naturally increased. After the settlement of peace, many things were found to have crept into at least some of the congregations in Carolina, which could not be justified or tolerated. Among these obnoxious practices are listed "parties for dancing, considered by many as harmless as they were fascinating; a freerer and more dangerous use

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of spirituous liquors, and in some nighborhoods the toleration of horseracing." This new trend is explained by realizing that all had sought for freedom of opinion and of conscience through the moral strife of the Revolution; many considered freedom from moral obligation as a part of civil liberty. Dr. Wm. Henry Foote declares: "Among things of a very objectionable nature which had become prevalent was the habit of distributing spirituous liquors at funerals. Provisions of some kind were set out, commonly before the door, or carried round in baskets, and spirits offered freely to those who desired. The solemnity of the occasion was sometimes lost in the excitement, and scenes of drinking invaded the house of mourning. To preserve the appearance of religion, someone, an officer of the church, if present, was called upon to open the scene of eating and drinking by asking a blessing on the refreshments prepared."

It seems that on one occasion Rev. James M'Gready, a young minister just returned to Guilford County, was called upon at a funeral to ask a blessing. "No," he replied, "I will not be guilty of insulting God by asking a blessing upon what I know to be wrong." Mr. M'Gready was six feet tall, with prominent features, grave demeanor, solemn speech, powerful voice, with the appearance of great physical strength—a champion not to be despised. The funeral party were impressed, and a great sensation produced. After this, Mr. M'Gready devoted himself and his sermons to alarming church members as to their state of sinfulness. Mr. M'Gready's message spread, through his own efforts and others of the ministry who felt as he did, on the subject of revival and "bodily exercises," and became a part

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of the general revival which swept through Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio and parts of North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

Rev. David Caldwell, Dr. McCorkle's former teacher, held a revival meeting on Deep River in Randolph County in January, 1802. He invited "the brethren of the west of the Yadkin" to attend and bring members of their congregations with them. Dr. McCorkle and three other ministers of this section went, taking with them about one hundred of their people. Dr. McCorkle was anxious about the revival, but strongly prejudiced against considering the exercises as a necessary part of the working of the Spirit. He held out a long time, at first rather confirmed in the opinion that the work could not be of God, there was so much disorder. Conversations with the new converts and those under conviction while "struck down" had gone far toward changing his mind, when a messenger came to him as he was walking round in deep thought. The messenger bore a request from his son, who had been "struck down," to come and pray for him. He went and kneeled by him and began to pray . . . "When he arose," says Dr. Foote, "his doubts had given place to deep conviction that the work of God was going on notwithstanding the bodily exercises."

Another view of Dr. McCorkle's reaction to the revival movement is given in a letter written by Rev. James Hall, pastor of Fourth Creek Church in Iredell County. Dr. Hall, with Dr. McCorkle and other ministers, set out for the revival with about one hundred of their people. The journey was from fifty to eighty miles for most of them. "We who were ministers," writes Dr. Hall, "went on

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horseback, and the rest in wagons. The clergy passed on before the wagons, and arrived at the place of meeting on Friday. That night my people lodged within five miles of the place where a remarkable circumstance happened among them. At evening prayer in the house where they lodged, a man about thirty years old became deeply affected, who I believe was pious from an early youth. Impressions immediately ran through the assembly like fire along a train of powder; so that in a short time almost all the young people, who composed three-fourths of the company, became religiously exercised. The fathers were filled with astonishment, as none present had ever beheld such a scene. Nothing but cries could be heard for a considerable time. When those had in a measure subsided, the fathers spent the greater part of the night in prayer and exhortations." When they arrived at the place of meeting, public worship had already begun. The young people from Iredell County took their seats and attended with composure until the assembly separated at twilight. Then they retired to their tent. "I did not follow," says Dr. Hall, "for about half an hour, allowing them some time of relaxation, as I expected our meeting would be a tender scene. When I went to them, they exhibited to me a spectacle truly affecting. Not less than twenty of the young people were lying in sore distress, and uttering ardent cries for mercy. A multitude had collected round them before I came. My brethren and I could do nothing but pray for them, as they were in no situation for conversation. Some of these affected ones remained in distress all night. Dr. McCorkle had previously mentioned to me his desire that his young people and mine should spend the evening together. After

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some time spent in prayer with us, he returned to his young people, and found the greater part of them religiously exercised. Next morning, which was the Sabbath, Mr. Kilpatrick came to me in much distress and told me he feared God had forsaken his little flock, as not one of them was affected. About that time his young people, and some of Dr. McCorkle's, retired to the woods and spent some time in social prayer. When the hour of public worship approached, and they were about to return, some of them were struck down, and in a short time the greater part of them were so affected that others were obliged to supply them with fire and camp furniture; and they lay there until nine o'clock the next day before they could return to camp."

In the end Dr. McCorkle, though brought to believe in the revival as a work of God, ever looked askance upon these exercises and accompanying extravagances. "He rather tolerated than approved camp-meetings; and sometimes was opposed to them, especially as standing, regular means of instruction or excitement." He is said to have borne open testimony against the exercises. In other words, he sympathized consistently with the Old Side.

Thyatira Church had been founded by the Old Side Synod of Philadelphia. At the time of Mr. McAden's missionary visit in 1755, there had been some considerable division even then on the subject of revivals. In the revival movement of 1800 and its succeeding years, feeling in the Thyatira congregation became yet more intense upon the subject. Finally, in 1805, this difference became so wide and the issue so well defined that it was deemed best for the cause of religion that the two factions in the congregation should separate. Accordingly, in that year, Back Creek

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Church was set off from Thyatira as a separate congregation, adhering to the New Side, while the conservatives, or Old Side adherents, remained with Dr. McCorkle at Thyatira.

Dr. McCorkle spared no effort to make of his congregation not only a religious people, but an intelligent people as well. Religious welfare and cultural knowledge in his estimation went hand in hand. In these years, when books were scarce and recreational facilities limited, he maintained at his church a well-stock circulating library. Members of his congregation who possessed libraries of their own generously loaned some of their books to Thyatira's Circulating Library. Samuel Young, one of the elders, in his will bequeaths his books "in the Thyatira Library" to members of his family. Among the volumes on the shelves of Thyatira's Library were Rollins's "Ancient History"; Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"; Mosheim's "Ecclesiastical History"; Prideaux's "Connections"; Hume's History of England"; Butler's "Analogy"; and, of course, among the other favorites, copies of the Holy Bible.

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CHAPTER X

A Cornerstone Laid

THE NAME of Dr. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle is inextricably interwoven with the founding of the University of North Carolina. Just how closely has scarcely been realized. About six months after the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, the new State of North Carolina, not yet a part of the United States, adopted its constitution, and in it were included these "golden" words: "All useful learning shall be duly encouraged and promoted in one or more universities." Tradition credits inclusion of these words in the constitution to the Scotch-Irish of Mecklenburg County, and in particular to one member of the committee which reported on the constitution, Waightstill Avery, a graduate of Princeton in 1789.

North Carolina entered the American Union November 20, 1789, and that same year the charter of the university was granted by the general assembly. The University of North Carolina is the oldest State university in America.

The trustees under this charter included forty outstanding men of the State, chosen because of their character, integrity, and qualities of leadership. The Rev. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle, pastor of Thyatira Church and conductor of Zion-Parnassus Academy in Rowan County, was among the forty. This notable body was made up of military leaders conspicuous in the Revolution, of judges, of United States senators, of speakers of the State senate, of lawyers, merchants, legislators and commoners, but Dr.

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McCorkle had the distinction of being the only teacher and preacher included in this distinguished group. The chairman of the board was Governor Samuel Johnston. Three of its members were signers of the Constitution of the United States: Hugh Williamson, William Blount, the historian, afterwards United States senator from Tennessee, and Richard Dobbs Spaight, soldier of the Revolution, delegate to the Congress of the Confederation, and who later became governor of North Carolina. Others of Dr. McCorkle's co-workers on the Board of Trustees who were destined to become governors of States were Samuel Ashe, Benjamin Williams, Benjamin Smith, the first benefactor of the university, and William Richardson Davie, its "Father." The other member from Rowan besides Dr. McCorkle was Adlai Osborne, Clerk of the Rowan Superior Court. William Richardson Davie was the moving spirit of the body.

At the very first meeting of the Board of Trustees, November 25, 1790, Dr. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle, with Benjamin Hawkins, the Federal senator, and Dr. Hugh Williamson, an ex-professor of the University of Pennsylvania, were appointed as a committee to procure for the use of the board information respecting the laws, regulations, and buildings of the universities and colleges in the United States, together with an account of their resources and expeditures, and an estimate of the cost of the necessary buildings of the new university. This was the first of many committees on which Dr. McCorkle served in connection with the beginnings of Chapel Hill.

To understand and appreciate some of the difficulties encountered in the launching of so far-reaching a public in-

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stitution, it is well to glance briefly at general conditions of the period: "The beginnings of the university were in troublous times, its struggles were not only with want and penury, but with ignorance and prejudice and a wild spirit of lawlessness.

"All the world was in a ferment . . . Furious efforts were made to force the United States into alliance with the French Republic. The vision of the sister democracies of the Old World and the New marching shoulder to shoulder to plant in every capital the standard of universal freedom, and conquering together a universal peace, aroused every sentiment of romantic philanthropy and quixotic gratitude.

"The rage of parties was strong in North Carolina, as elsewhere. It stood in the way of all measures for the advancement of public good. It stimulated bad passions, prevented co-operation, and divided the people into hostile camps. In the general excitement, the cause of education was little regarded.

"The population of the State was only about 400,000, of whom about 100,000 were slaves. The city of Raleigh was located in 1792,—the State House was not finished until 1794. The inhabitants of the State lived remote from one another, and mutual intercourse was prevented not only by long distance but by the execrable roads and the almost entire absence of spring vehicles. The two-wheeled sulky and stick-back gig were possessed by the better class, while only a few of the wealthiest could boast of the lumbering coach. Most traveling was on horseback, it being quite the fashion for the lady to sit behind the gentleman and steady herself by an arm around his waist.

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"The diffusion of intelligence through most of the regions of the State was by the chance traveler or wagoner. In 1790 there were only seventy-five post offices in all the Union . . . there was only one letter to seventeen people, and only 265,500 letters carried in a year. The postage was from seven to thirty-three cents, according to distance. In his message to the legislature of 1790 Governor Alexander Martin complained that there is only one mail route in the State, and that runs through the seaboard towns."

There were no public schools "and not more than three schools in the State in which the rudiments of a classical education could be acquired."[10] Dr. McCorkle's Zion-Parnassus Academy was certainly a member of this trio, though Dr. Battle does not specify it by name. A list of the textbooks from which students gleaned their classical education included Euclid's "Elements in Mathematics," Martin's "Natural Philosophy," and some of the Greek and Latin classics. In these Scotch-Irish classical schools, where the Princeton influence was strong, Moral Philosophy was taught from a syllabus of lectures by Dr. Witherspoon, of Nassau Hall. As a rule the students had no books on history or miscellaneous literature. One of Dr. Caldwell's students registers delight at coming across Voltaire's "History of Charles XII of Sweden," a volume of Roderick Random, by Smollett, and an abridgment of Don Quixote.

While Dr. McCorkle and his committee were making the necessary investigations, the next step was the selec-

[10]"History of the University of North Carolina," Dr. Kemp P. Battle.

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tion of a location for the new institution. To decide this, a meeting of the trustees was called to be held at Hillsboro in August, 1792. When the day came, despite the distances and the terrible conditions of the roads, twenty-five of the forty members were present. Dr. McCorkle made the journey from Thyatira on horseback, we presume, for he was among the number who answered roll call on that momentous day.

A specification of the charter of the university was that its site "was not to be within five miles of the seat of government, or any of the places of holding the courts of law or equity." Dr. Battle explains that this provision was made probably "on account of the rowdyism and drunkenness during court week."

The selection of the location proceeded by ballot, and from the places in nomination was chosen "Cyprett's or Cipritz's Bridge," afterwards Prince's Bridge, on the great road from New Berne by Raleigh to Pittsboro. Thus it was located as near as possible to the centre of the State. The great roads from Petersburg, Virginia, to Pittsboro, North Carolina, and the country beyond, and from New Berne towards Greensboro and Salisbury, crossed on this eminence. At the northeast corner of the crossroad was a chapel of the Church of England, New Hope, Chapel Hill, or the Hill of New Hope Chapel.

Dr. McCorkle and his fellow members of the board realized the paramount part played by the great public highways in the life of the people, particularly in that era of no railroads. Those who made tobacco rolled it away to Petersburg, little wheels being attached to the hogsheads. Those who made corn generally converted it into hogs

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and drove them on foot to Philadelphia or Charleston. Wheat was ground into flour and sent by wagon to distant markets—to Fayetteville, Wilmington, New Berne, Petersburg, and the villages by the way. The corn and rye not fed to swine were changed to whiskey, and the fruit into brandy,—and that which escaped the capacious throats of the neighborhood drinkers was peddled along the road to the rural drinkers or sold in bulk in the village shops. In violation of all rules of political economy, a man was at the same time an agriculturist, a manufacturer, a transporter, a wholesale merchant, a retailer and a voracious consumer.[11]

The returning wagons brought home supplies, and also the news of the day, there being no postoffice nearer than Tarboro.

The location chosen, New Hope, Chapel Hill, the next question to be agreed upon was the actual site of the university buildings and grounds. It is conceded that nearly all the donors of the site were Scotch-Irish, "part of that band of immigrants which had left Pennsylvania and sought on the waters of the Haw, the Deep, the Yadkin and the Catawba a more peaceful home."

To make the selection, a commission was elected, one member from each judicial district. When these commissioners had agreed upon a site, their report was referred to a committee on which Dr. McCorkle served with Messrs. William R. Davies, Jones, Ashe, Sitgrave, and Willie Jones. This committee accepted the report, and the site was therefore agreed upon.

[11]"History of the University of North Carolina," Dr. Kemp P. Battle.

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Dr. McCorkle must have felt an engrossing interest in the plans now under way for the laying out of the new buildings and grounds of the university. The Building Committee met at Chapel Hill in August, 1793, marked off the sites for the buildings, together with the necessary quantity of land for offices, avenues and ornamental grounds. They then laid off the village in lots and reported that it was happily accommodated to the introduction of several important public roads, which it is highly probable will in future lead through it. There happened to be a tract of eighty acres of land which ran inconveniently near the prospective buildings. They bought the entire eighty acres for $200.00. On motion of William Davie, the location and construction of a building large enough to accommodate fifty students, and also the laying out of the village of Chapel Hill and selling lots therein, were directed to be entrusted to seven commissioners, styled the Building Committee. They contracted with James Patterson, of Chatham County, for erecting a two-storied brick building, ninety-six feet seven inches long and forty feet one and one-half inches wide for $5,000.00, the university to furnish the brick, sash weights, locks, hooks, fastenings and painting.

The cornerstone of this building was laid October 12, 1793. It was a momentous day for the Rev. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle. For to him fell the high honor of delivering the cornerstone address. On this great day a large crowd of people formed a long procession along the narrow avenue. An account of the happenings was written by William Richardson Davie. Only a few acres were cleared in the growth of primeval forest trees. Many of the people

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in the crowd were clad in the insignia of the Masonic Fraternity, the Grand Master, General Davie, being arrayed in the full regalia of his rank. These people marched with military tread, reminiscent, as were also the wounds and scars on many faces, of the Revolution through which they had recently passed. Besides William Richardson Davie, there was also present his great rival, Alfred Moore. Next was the great lawyer, William Hall, and next, "the most popular man in North Carolina," John Haywood, for forty years treasurer of the State. General Alexander Mebane was there, and John Williams, founder of Williamsboro; Thomas Blount, from Edgecomb, and the venerable Senator Hargett, from Jones, and other senators. After these came the trustees and after the trustees came the State officers not trustees, Judge Spruce Macoy, of Salisbury, among them. There followed officers of the county, and then the gentlemen of the vicinity; the donors of the land and their neighbors, all marching in this first procession for the laying of the cornerstone of Old East on the 12th day of October, 1793. General William Richardson Davie, as Grand Master of the Free and Accepted Order of Masons, officiated and, as we said before, the Rev. Samuel E. McCorkle was the orator of the day.

And Dr. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle upheld gloriously on that day the noble tradition of his Scotch-Irish ancestors whose defense of Londonderry "stands unexcelled in the annals of human valor and endurance," and whose gift to North Carolina was leaders in peace and war like the McCorkles, "the Grahams, the Jacksons, the Johnstons, the Brevards, the Mebanes and hosts of others." It was fitting that he should make this first address, the report of which follows:

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"Observing the natural and necessary connection between learning and religion, and the importance of religion to the promotion of national happiness and national undertakings, it is our duty to acknowledge that sacred Scriptural truth, 'except the Lord build the house they labour in vain who build it. Except the Lord watcheth the city the watchman walketh in vain.' For my own part, I feel myself prostrated with a sense of these truths, and this I feel not only as a minister of religion, but also as a citizen of the State—as a member of the civil as well as the religious society."

After laying down the proposition that the happiness of mankind is increased by the advancement of learning and science, the doctor observed: "Happiness is the centre to which all duties of man and people tend . . . to diffuse the greatest possible degree of happiness in a given territory is the aim of good government and religion. Now the happiness of a nation depends on national wealth and national glory and cannot be gained without them. They, in like manner, depend on liberty and good laws. Liberty and laws call for general knowledge in people and extensive knowledge in matters of the State, and these in turn demand public places of education . . . How can any nation be happy without national wealth? How can that nation or man be happy that is not procuring and securing the necessary conveniences and accommodations of life; ease without indolence and plenty without luxury or waste? How can glory or wealth be procured without liberty and laws? They must check luxury, encourage industry, and protect wealth. They must secure me the glory of my actions and save me from a bowstring or a bastille.

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And how are these objects to be gained without general knowledge? Knowledge is wealth—it is glory—whether among philosophers, ministers of State or religion, or among the great mass of the people. Britons glory in the name of Newton and have honored him with a place among the sepulchers of their kings. Americans glory in the name of Franklin, and every nation boasts of her great men who has them. Savages cannot have, rather cannot educate them, though many a Newton has been born and buried among them. Knowledge is liberty and law. When the clouds of ignorance have been dispelled by the radiance of knowledge, power trembles, but the authority of the laws remains inviolable; and how this knowledge, productive to so many advantages to mankind, can be acquired without places of education, I know not."

(The eyes of the orator kindled as he looked into the future.)

"The seat of the university was next sought for, and the public eye selected Chapel Hill—a lovely situation in the centre of the State, at convenient distance from the capital, in a healthy and fertile neighborhood. May this hill be for religion as the ancient Hill of Zion; and for literature and the Muses, may it surpass the ancient Parnassus! We this day enjoy seeing the cornerstone of the university, its material and architect for the building, and we hope ere long to see its stately walls and spire ascending to their summit. Ere long we hope to see it adorned with all the necessaries and conveniences of civilized society."[12]

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[12]"History of the University of North Carolina," Dr. Kemp P. Battle.

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CHAPTER XI

Visions of the Prophet

THAT same day, following the ceremonies of the laying of the cornerstone of Old East, the sale of village lots took place. Two months later, December 4, 1792, Dr. McCorkle was made chairman of a committee to report on "a plan of education." Serving on this committee were also Messrs. Stone, Moore, Ashe, Hay and Hugh Williamson. The result of Dr. McCorkle's work on this committee is one of the most signal services rendered by him to the university in its early days. Of him in this connection Dr. Battle says: "It is certainly to the honor of Dr. McCorkle that, while he established . . . in the wilds of North Carolina a normal school, the first probably in America, he likewise drew up a scheme for the more practical instruction which all institutions of higher learning at the present day (1907) have to a greater or less extent adopted."

Dr. Hugh Williamson, an alumnus of the University of Pennsylvania, was probably responsible for the exaltation of scientific courses in the university plan submitted by Dr. McCorkle and his committee. The sense of Dr. McCorkle's report was as follows: that considering the poverty of the university, the instruction in literature and science should be confined to the study of the languages, particularly the English, the acquirement of historical knowledge, ancient and modern; Belles Lettres, Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; Botany and the theory and practice of agriculture best suited to the climate and

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soil of the State; and the principles of architecture. It recommended the procurement of apparatus for Experimental Philosophy and Astronomy. They believed that a library should be procured, but deferred this until additional funds should be provided. The following month, the Board of Trustees ordered the scheme of Dr. McCorkle's committee to be carried out.

Dr. McCorkle was appointed also on a committee to look into the financial condition of the institution, and further evidence of the confidence reposed in him was his appointment to draw up the by-laws of the university. This was a tremendous responsibility. They were written first by him, then referred to a committee and, with few changes, adopted. The following partial summary is enlightening, a reflection of Dr. McCorkle's ideas of educational requisites and conditions:

The duties of the president, or presiding professor, were to superintend all studies, particularly those of the Senior Class, provide for the performance of morning and evening prayer, examine each student on every Sunday evening on questions previously given them on the general principles of morality and religion; to deliver weekly lectures on the Principles of Agriculture, Botany, Zoology, Mineralogy, Architecture and Commerce; and to report at least once a year to the trustees with what recommendations he saw fit.

The studies in the first class were English, Grammar, Roman Antiquities, and such parts of the Roman historians, orators and poets as the professors might designate, and also Greek Testament.

The second class was to study Arithmetic, Bookkeep-

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ing, Geography, including the use of globes, Grecian Antiquity, and Greek Classics.

The third class was to study Mathematics, including Geometry, Natural Philosophy, and Astronomy.

The fourth class was to study Logic, Moral Philosophy, Principles of Civil Government, Chronology, History, Ancient and Modern, and Belles Lettres.

For admission to the first class, the lowest, the examinations should be passed on Caesar's Commentaries, Sallust, Ovid or Virgil, and the Greek Grammar. Equivalent Latin works were accepted. Attendance on prayers twice a day was required and morning prayer at sunrise.

The regulations as to the hours and study conformed more or less to the pattern which Dr. McCorkle had learned at Princeton. "At 8 P. M. students shall return to their lodgings and not leave them until prayers the next morning. On Saturdays, students had all morning to speak, read, and exhibit compositions, and Saturday afternoon was allowed for amusement.

All were required to attend divine services on the Sabbath. In the afternoon they were examined on the general principles of religion and morality. They were enjoined to reverence the Sabbath, to use no profane language, etc. Keeping ardent spirits in their rooms, association with evil company, playing at any game of hazard, or any kind of gaming, and betting were prohibited.

An aristocratic principle was introduced, according to Dr. Battle, when it was ordered that they "treat each other according to the honor due each class."

The election of a presiding professor for the new university was an event of great importance. It took place

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on January 10, 1794, and many believed that Dr. McCorkle would be the undoubted choice. But William R. Davie seems not have been in favor of the pastor of Thyatira and the master of Zion-Paranassus. General Davie conceded his learning and fitness in academic requirements, but he doubted Dr. McCorkle's business stability. The story had got abroad that when Dr. McCorkle would be at work sometimes on his farm he would carry into the fields volumes on theological subjects, for his diversion in the intervals of heavy labor. A neighbor, happening to seek him out on one occasion, found him stretched out deep in his studies, while his Negro ploughman was fast asleep under another tree, and the mule was contentedly cropping the tender new corn tops.

This may or may not prove the doctor's business deficiencies. In a letter written by Davie later on, there is the suggestion of the distrust of the wisdom of all preachers. At any rate, Dr. McCorkle was not even nominated. The name of one of his former pupils, Rev. John Brown, pastor of Waxhaw Church, and afterwards president of the College of Athens, Georgia (University of Georgia) was placed in nomination, however. But the honor went to Rev. David Ker, then pastor of the Presbyterian church at Fayetteville. Mr. Ker was thirty-six years old, Scotch-Irish, and had been educated at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.

Perhaps the failure to receive this office was one of life's disappointments to Samuel Eusebius McCorkle. If so, he voiced no complaint and showed no resentment. Instead, great soul that he was, he returned to Thyatira and worked and prayed and labored for the university, which seem-

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ingly, in a crisis, had failed him. He collected the sum of $42.00 as a gift from his congregation to the new institution, "the only instance of congregational help given it in those early days." Among the treasured papers of Dr. McCorkle's great-great-grandson, Mr. Samuel McCorkle, of Rowan County, North Carolina, is a time-worn sheet bearing a list of the names of subscribers of donations to a fund of ten pounds ($50.00), payable to the trustees of the University of North Carolina. In return, the paper states, subscribers are to have the privilege of having one scholar educated free from expense of tuition. From it, dated July 30, 1793, one learns that "James Hall" agrees to pay his pledge August, 1794, and others agree to pay in periods of from one month to nine months. And opposite the pledge of J. M. King, Dr. McCorkle has written "Paid."

Though the sum of the whole amounts to $50.00, it is possible that this is the original subscription list, of which perhaps only $42.00 was collected and sent to the university. In the charter of the university it had been specified that any subscriber of ten pounds, payable in five annual installments, was entitled to have one student educated free of tuition.

Dr. McCorkle's influence is again seen in the arrangements of the buildings on the campus, for it was partially due to him that the original plan of the trustees was changed from the idea of one long building, facing east, in accordance with the custom of Orientalization in architecture then prevalent, to the orthodox idea of a quadrangle, which in England and Scotland was the mode.

To sum it up, Dr. McCorkle's mind and hand are felt

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and seen in many departments of the university organization and buildings—in the choice of the location through his services on the original Board of Trustees; on the committee to procure information regarding other American colleges as a working basis for the University of North Carolina; on the committee to ratify the selection of the site for the buildings and grounds; on the committee to submit a plan of education; as the writer of the original by-laws which, somewhat amended, were adopted; and finally, as orator on the great day of the laying of the cornerstone.

The year following the laying of the cornerstone and the selection of Rev. Mr. Ker as presiding professor, a new plan was suggested—that the university faculty now be made to consist of a president and five professors. Accordingly, Governor Samuel Ashe, president of the Board of Trustees, with Messrs. William R. Davie, Willie Jones, Hogg and Stone, were appointed a committee to make inquiry for a proper person to be president and to ascertain terms on which he could be procured. Three professors were then voted for, and Samuel Eusebius McCorkle was chosen professor of Moral and Political Philosophy and History; Charles W. Harris, professor of Mathematics; and Rev. David Ker, professor of Languages. The two latter were already members of the faculty, Dr. Ker being, it will be recalled, presiding professor. The intention now was to appoint Dr. McCorkle presiding professor, thus dethroning Dr. Ker.

An unexpected difficulty arose. Dr. McCorkle realized that if he should accept the proffered position, and become the presiding professor or acting president—later on,

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should a president be chosen, he would lose the use of the residence now appropriated to the use of the presiding professor. Dr. McCorkle, despite the fact that General Davie was skeptical of his business ability, was canny enough to know that when a president should be chosen, this home (now occupied by Rev. Mr. Ker) would be turned over to the new head. Therefore, he agreed to accept the office of acting president on condition that should this happen his salary would be increased the annual value of this residence. The trustees declined to accede to his proposition and Dr. Ker continued in the office of presiding professor, and lived on for some years as an occupant of the president's residence.

Dr. McCorkle quickly forgave this rejection of his proposal. But among his friends, and particularly to his half-brother-in-law, General John Steele, formerly member of Congress and First Comptroller of the Treasury, under Washington, Adams and Jefferson, the matter caused bitter resentment. Apropos of this feeling, General Steele wrote General Davie a letter which was couched in such severe terms as to break the friendly relations between them. General Davie afterward tried to renew their friendship. General Steele's answer, of which he kept a copy, shows that the scar was deep and the sore unhealed. John Steele wrote: "My letter was the dictate of what I considered at the time, and still think, a just indignation for the ill treatment which Dr. McCorkle received . . . I have no sons to educate, and my nephew (son of Dr. McCorkle) is relieved of the humiliation of acquiring his education at an institution whose outset was characterized by acts of ingratitude and insult towards his father." The letter begins with a formal "SIR."

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This unfortunate incident occurred in 1795. Dr. McCorkle returned to his church at Thyatira and resumed his work at Zion-Parnassus Academy. Here he labored in each with increasing benefit and splendid achievement until the failure of his health in the early years of the 19th century. He received his death warrant in the pulpit, being struck with palsy while conducting the services of the sanctuary. He was forced at last to put aside his ministerial work. For a time his disorder affected his mental powers; his mind finally cleared, but his body never regained its strength and vigor.[18] In 1807, by order of the Presbytery, he was taken under the supporting care of the congregations of Thyatira and Back Creek. He died June 21, 1811, just one year before the United States was plunged once more into a war with the mother country.

True to his sense of order and plan, and his habit of looking ahead, he left explicit directions for the conduct of his funeral. The text which he chose for the funeral service was Job XIX, 25-26: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." The 19th Psalm and the 61st Hymn of Watts' second book were sung in the church.

"The elders, attired in black, sat together by the corpse before the pulpit, which, out of respect, was also attired in mourning. As the body was borne to the grave, the congregation sang: 'Hark! from the tombs a mournful sound'." In accordance with his wish, as expressed in his

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[18]Rev. John Brown, D.D., preached as a stated supply at Thyatira and Salisbury during this period.

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last will and testament,—"I commit my soul to Almighty God in sure but humble hopes that it will and can only be saved by the merits of my Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ . . . I commit my body to the grave to be buried with my four children in the buryingground at Thyatira,"—he was laid to rest in Thyatira's peaceful graveyard.

On October 17, 1855, a centennial celebration was held at Thyatira Church in commemoration of its founding. Just two decades hence, no doubt, a ceremony celebrating the bi-centennial of this historic church will be reverently held. Whether we look backward to 1755 or forward to 1955, we are aware of the imprint left upon this church and community, upon the State of North Carolina and the Presbyterian Church at large, by the vivid personality and noble character of Dr. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle.

Within this church he spent his boyhood; to it he consecrated the best years of his life and service; and for it he labored long and steadily throughout the period of his declining years. But his influence far transcends the confines of his congregation and community. For his talents, his brilliant intellect, his burning zeal, and his unwavering faith were bulwarks of the early Presbyterian Church throughout North Carolina, and are responsible in no small measure for the firm foundation upon which this great denomination today rests securely in this State.

Rowan County may justly boast of names glamorous with the glory of statesmanship and patriotic service, but no name upon her register can claim more fully the right to be honored and reverenced by posterity than that of Samuel Eusebius McCorkle, Thyatira's great preacher,

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teacher and prophet. He was indeed what Dr. Thomas W. Lingle, of Davidson College, calls him, "a noble and gifted man who, through a long life, suffered much and gave himself, body and soul, unreservedly to the service of his church and State."

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LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT
OF
SAMUEL EUSEBIUS McCORKLE

Rowan County Court House
Book G, Page 187
(In Part)

In the name of God Amen.

Samuel E. McCorkle, of the County of Rowan and State of North Carolina, (Minister of the Gospel,) being in a sick and low condition but of perfect mind and memory, and reflecting on the uncertainty of human life, do make and ordain this my last will and Testament, that is to say.

In the first place and as my greatest concern, I commit my soul to Almighty God in sure but humble hopes that it will and can only be saved by the Merits of my Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ . . . and I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he will stand on the Earth at the latter Days, and after my skin worms destroy this Body, yet in my flesh shall I see God,—I therefore commit my body to the grave to be buried with my four children in the Burying ground at Thyatira should I die near that place, in a manner mentioned in a paper left with this my will,—And as to the worldly Estate wherewith it hath pleased the Almighty to endow me in this life, I dispose of the same in the following manner:

To my beloved wife, Margaret, in whom I place the utmost confidence, and with a view to support her authority in the family as well as to support her declining years as comfortably as my Estate will admit, I give and devise for

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and during her natural life the whole of the Plantation whereon I now live with the dwelling house, outhouses, and all the appurtenances thereunto belonging, and also the use of my House furniture, farming utensils, outstanding Debts, live Stock, and anything else not herein Specifically Bequeathed which may belong to me at my decease for and during the Same period, that is to say, her natural life,—Also I give my beloved wife for the term of her natural life the entire use of my two negroes Dick and Jude, with power to dispose of them by sale or otherwise and also of any of the foregoing personal property, should it appear to her to be for the interest and advantage of my children. Should she, however, at any time cease to be my widow, it is my will that all the movable property of my estate be then divided into equal shares, or as nearly as may be by three good men, such shares to be one more in number than herself and my children, who shall then be at home and not married. Two of which shares, that is to say, her own share and one share super added, I do hereby give to her and her heirs and assigns forever.

3rd. To my Son Sandy, and daughters, Nancy, Elizabeth and Sophia, I leave in full possession of everything bequeathed to them by their dear grandmother, Mrs. Steele, the legacies to be paid to them out of my estate in money or otherwise as they may agree among themselves.

4th. To my beloved son, Sandy, I give my book case and desk, Eycyclopedia, and all my books on language and Science in hopes that he will make good use of them, all my other books to be disposed of by my wife as she pleases —only not out of the family. To my son Sandy, I do also give, devise and bequeath the whole of the Plantation or

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tract of land whereon I now live after my wife's death, with the buildings and appurtenances thereunto belonging and to his heirs and assigns forever. And whereas it is my desire that my said son shall live near to his mother and render her every assistance in his power, I recommend to my wife to allow him to carry on the clearing and improvement begun on the North side of the Creek and in case of his actually leaving there, to give him what assistance she can with convenience but not to allow him to rent or dispose of it in any other way than living upon it during her life.

It is further my will and I do hereby accordingly direct that if a certain tract or body of land on or near Stony River in the state of Tennessee, formerly the property of my wife's brother, Captain Robert Gillespie, has been granted by the state of North Carolina, as I am informed, to my son Sandy, he may continue to hold it without any molestation from me or my heirs or he may at his option convey the whole of said land to my wife in trust for her other children, in which case, and in consideration whereof I do authorize and empower her to give him a full Title to my two Negro boys, Ben and Isaac. If the title to the said land be in my name it is my will that my son Sandy shall have the said two negro boys, Ben and Isaac, and in that case I devise the said land as above described on or near Stoner's River to my wife in trust for use of my other children, to be divided among them in equal shares to their heirs and assigns forever.

Should the title to the said land be in the name of my son Sandy, as I expect, and should he make choice to keep it for which I allow him one year from my death to make

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up his mind and give his determination to his mother in writing—in that case I give the two negro boys Ben and Isaac, before mentioned, to my wife during her natural life and at her death to be divided together with the other personal Estate and Effects Bequeathed to her for the same period among the whole of my children or survivors of them and if any be dead at that time, having issue, it is my will that such issue shall stand in the place and receive the share which the deceased would have been entitled to if living.

5th. It is also my will and I do hereby devise my part of a tract of 4,000 acres of land on the waters of Duck River in the State of Tennessee formerly entered by Father in John Armstrong's office but not yet surveyed or divided to my five daughters namely, Nancy, Elizabeth, Sophia, Peggy and Harriet, to be distributed among them in shares as near equal as possible, regard being had to quantity and value, and their heirs and assigns forever.

6th. I give and bequeath to my eldest daughter Nancy my negro woman Sylvia, and such children as she has at present or may hereafter have.

To my daughter Elizabeth I give my negro woman Fan and her child, together with her future increase.

To my daughter Sophia I give my negro girl Hagar and her issue.

To my daughter Peggy I give my negro girl Milly and her issue.

And to my daughter Harriet, I give my negro girl Lydia and her issue. The whole of the said Negroes and their issues to belong to my several daughters as above particularly given and to their heirs forever.

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7th. In order to provide against the inequalities which may be occasioned by the death of any of my Negroes or the loss or disturbance which all personal property is liable to, as well as to afford my good and beloved wife the means of rewarding such of my children as may be most dutiful and affectionate to her, I have concluded upon further reflection to give and I do hereby accordingly give and bequeath to my said good and beloved wife my negro woman Jude and her child, August, and also all her future issue to be and remain the entire property of my wife and at her free and absolute disposal by will, gift, or any other manner which she may think proper, only not to go out of the family. And this last acknowledgment I make to the goodness and prudence of my wife not as interfering with, but in addition to the several gifts and bequests which I have made to her in other parts of this my last will and testament.

8th. And lastly I appoint my good and beloved wife Margaret my only and sole executrix . . .

In attestation whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal having first had the same read to me as contained in this and foregoing sheets in all 6 pages, at my own house in the County of Rowan and State of North Carolina, the 16th day of January in the year 1806.

John Steele, Alex Lowrance, Wm. S. Cowan, witnesses.

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Extract from "Carolina Watchman," September 9, 1847

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS IN IREDELL COUNTY

Most of the original settlers were of Scotch or Scotch-Irish descent. Most of those, however, who settled in the region of Rocky Creek (1779-1795) came from Montgomery County in Maryland . . . Other families from the same state but not from the same county, located themselves in the region of Hunting Creek. They were different in some respects from the Scotch-Irish, by the side of whom they built their cabins. They were perhaps, more refined than the latter, and contributed to improve them in some things, while they learned of them also what proved useful to themselves; particularly in domestic manufactures . . . the Scotch-Irish were superior to the Marylanders; while in the culinary arts and in agriculture, the latter excelled. The Marylanders were the best farmers, especially in raising corn. For a long time there was a deep-rooted prejudice in the minds of each people against the other. Their young people did not associate together, and parents would not allow inter-marriages. The first case of the kind was that of Wm. Harbin, Esq., who died in Statesville a few years ago: he married Jane Baitey, a lady of the Scotch-Irish party, while he was a Marylander.

The Marylanders were a plain, hardy, industrious people: their living in winter was pork with milk and hommony. One great distinction between these two races of people was that while the Scotch-Irish used mush, mostly, the Marylanders thought hommony indispensable: and while they also depended upon a supply of meat,

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their Scotch-Irish neighbors thought those fortunate who abounded in milk.

All, both men and women, wore wool hats with an exceedingly narrow brim. A few, however, of the highest rank, had them made of beaver, which would last a life time. The young people of both sexes, in summer, when about their ordinary business, went without shoes and stockings; the young women wore short gowns and petticoats; and the young men, hunting shirts, with trowsers of tow and cotton. Boots were not common; they were worn only by a few of the highest rank. Both boots and shoes were sharp pointed at the toes.

For Sunday dress the men had coats and small clothes of cotton and wool mixed; and if colored a little black or blue, though not sheared, they were regarded as very fine . . . From whatever race, they were a church-going people . . . Living at great distances apart, most of them were compelled to travel many a weary mile to the house of God and return home the same day. To go ten or twelve miles was accounted little hardship: even if, . . . women and all, they were required to walk . . . The young ladies carried, tied up in a pocket handkerchief, their fine shoes and stockings, toghether with their linen aprons, of their own manufacture bleached white as now, nicely folded up, and pressed in little squares and triangles, so that the folds would all show when spread out. When they came near the place of worship, they sat down on a log and put these on: and on their return, replaced them as before: and the same folding of their aprons (on which they prided themselves) was carefully preserved to be opened again the next Sabbath: their shoes in this way would last a long

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time . . . They ate their meat upon wooden trenchers and drank their milk from little noggins. Coffee was little used. It is said that when the merchants went to Philadelphia after goods a quantity as great as a shot bag full was considered a sufficient supply; and if a customer purchased a half-pound at once, he was thought extravagant . . . Some grew up and had families before they tasted the beverage, which was mostly assigned to the sick.

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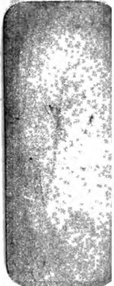

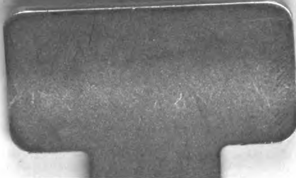

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