

# THE SCOTCH-IRISH IN AMERICA.

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## THE SCOTCH-IRISH IN THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY.

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I HAVE been asked to tell the story of the Scotch-Irish in the Cumberland Valley.

Though the theme is rather trite in this region, it has received so far no attention in the many able papers which have been published by this Society.

The Cumberland Valley extends from the Susquehanna to the Potomac, a distance of about sixty miles, with an average width of from ten to twenty miles. This beautiful valley is set in a rustic frame of mountains, on which the eye rests with peculiar pleasure. The region received its present name after the formation of Cumberland County, in 1750. Previous to this it had been known by its Indian name as the "Kittochtinny Valley," though the early settlers in York County called it the "North Valley." Blessed with a salubrious climate, a fertile soil, and abounding springs of water, it has long been celebrated as one of the richest agricultural regions of the country.

When first invaded by the white man the valley seems not to have been covered by a dense forest, as generally supposed, but much of it was open "barrens," with scattering trees, while thick groves of primeval forest shaded the water courses. At this time it was not occupied by the Indians in any great numbers. Wandering parties crossed the region in pursuit of game, but the permanent lodges of the aborigines were then farther north and west.

The Cumberland Valley is not large, but it is so situated as to have had a peculiar influence on the early settlement of our race in this country. It was open for settlement when the largest wave of emigration from Ulster set in, and it became a seed plat from which many plants have been transferred to all other parts of this continent, and even to the ends of the earth. The generous invitation which William Penn extended to the oppressed of all nations brought our ancestor to this friendly colony, where this man was making, as he declared, "a holy experiment" in the interest of civil and religious liberty.

They were a hardy race, born and bred in the school of adversity. They cherished the memories of Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart, John Knox, and the martyr heroes of the Grass Market in old Edin-

burgh. They knew the history of Bothwell Brig and the battle of the Boyne equally well, for they had learned them both at a mother's knee. When they came to this country they had been "harried" out of two kingdoms, and cherished sacred and awful memories of them both. They sought freedom to worship God according to the plain teaching of His word, but they also sought a place where they might lay the hearthstone and build up the sacred shrine of family life beyond the reach of a bishop's court and the hated stigmas of its cruel edicts. They were willing to cross the stormy deep, and make a home in "Penn's Woods," taking all the risk that was involved in such an enterprise, if they might be free from those despotic methods in both Church and State to which they had so long been subjected.

In speaking of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, Mr. Bancroft says: "Their training in Ireland had kept the spirit of liberty and the readiness to resist unjust government as fresh in their hearts as though they had just been listening to the preachings of Knox or musing over the political creed of the Westminster Assembly. They brought to America no loyal love for England; and their experience and their religion bade them meet oppression with resistance."\*

This heroic people generally landed at Newcastle or Philadelphia, and when they began to come their numbers were such as to cause some dismay to the gentle Friends. James Logan wrote in 1729: "It looks to me as if Ireland is to send all its inhabitants hither; for last week not less than six ships arrived." † He adds: "The common fear is that, if they continue to come, they will make themselves proprietors of the province." This fear was not without some warrant, for they did continue to come. Dr. Baird, in his "History of Religion in America," states that "from 1729 to 1750 about 12,000 annually came from Ulster to America."

It is true that these did not all come to Pennsylvania, but it is safe to say that the majority passed into this province. Other colonies were encumbered with State establishments in religion. The people of Ulster had experienced enough of that, and all they wanted was liberty. The word had crossed the sea that such freedom was to be found in Penn's Arcadia in the wilderness, and to this land of promise they set their faces. Some remained in the eastern part of the province, but the more resolute and determined pushed out to the frontier, and the ground on which we stand to-day was the very outpost of that frontier early in last century.

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\* History, U. S., Vol. III., p. 29.

† Rupp's "History."

Several reasons might be mentioned as contributing to this movement toward the front. The best land had been taken up at the east end of the province, and many of the Scotch-Irish emigrants were too poor to buy the improved farms of the East, though it must not be supposed that the early settlers in the Cumberland Valley were all poor. Those who came about the middle of last century had just closed out leases in the old country on such favorable terms that they could not retain their farms without paying more, and it is fair to presume that many of them brought quite a competence with them.

Then as a matter of fact they did not care to settle down among a people so alien in language as the Germans or so peculiar in religious belief as the Friends. They were said by their enemies to be "clannish;" and if loving one's own race and religion deserves that epithet, then we must allow that the charge was just. Besides all this, when once the stream set in, the crowd was so great that an overflow to the frontier was inevitable.

Naturally the unoccupied parts of what is now Lancaster and Dauphin Counties were first appropriated. Here came those "Paxton Boys," so feared and hated half a century later. For a time the blue waters of the Susquehanna formed the western boundary of even Scotch-Irish audacity; but this natural limit was soon overpassed, and hardy, adventurous spirits began to pour into the beautiful region beyond, and to exercise those rights of "squatter sovereignty" so well known and oft repeated on the American frontier.

It must be confessed that the frank and rather forward manners of our ancestry did not exactly please the serene amiability of our Quaker friends. It is to be feared that they were sometimes sorely tempted to regret that their leader Penn had been so very liberal in his invitation to the oppressed in all lands to come and share in the blessings of his "holy experiment." When that great and good man had passed away, and the business of his descendants had passed into the hands of their scheming agents, who had their own plans for personal aggrandizement, it is not strange that criminations and recriminations were frequent between the two parties.

James Logan himself, the agent of the Penns, was of the Scotch-Irish race, but he had accepted most of the principles held by the Quakers, and in the letter already quoted he says, without disguise, that the people from Ulster were "not wanted" in this province. With such a reception as he would accord them, it is not strange that they wished to move on and take possession of the unoccupied wilderness.

But who was this people thus depreciated, if not despised? To answer this question in this presence would be like "carrying coals to Newcastle," or petroleum to Oil City. We are all pledged to the opinion that they were about the grandest people that ever lived. They were strenuous asserters of civil and religious freedom. They were intelligent and patriotic. They were thrifty and hardy. It has been well said of them: "They were always contented with little, though happy with more." But they were not a luxurious people; they had not slept softly or fared sumptuously for many generations.

Though on religious principle they were law-abiding, yet for nearly two hundred years the law had generally been against them. They brought to this country an indignant sense of outraged rights and persecuted piety. They never claimed to belong to the "non-resistant party;" for they had been trained in the school of John Knox, who taught what another had so felicitously expressed, that "resistance to tyrants is obedience to God."

"This was the class of people," says Dr. Wing, \* "by which the county of Cumberland was at first settled, and for more than forty years afterwards there was scarcely a mingling of any other in its population."

Only a narrow river, the Potomac, separates the Cumberland from the great valley of Virginia, the Shenandoah. After a short stay in the Cumberland Valley many passed on into Virginia, and thence spread over the South and West. As soon as the western part of the province was opened up to emigration by the purchase from the Indians of that region then known as the Westmoreland country, the tide of emigration set in that direction, and many families that had remained for a generation in the Cumberland Valley sought to improve their condition by going west. The witticism of Charles Dickens, that "an American would not accept a place in heaven unless he were allowed to move west," has never found a better illustration than in the Scotch-Irish race.

But now the question may be asked: "What did these people do that is worthy of record?" I propose to consider

#### I. THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCOTCH-IRISH IN THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY ON THE HISTORY OF RELIGION IN THIS COUNTRY.

A recent writer on the "Making of Pennsylvania," who seems to have inherited the prejudices of the last century, quotes with evident gusto the saying of Winthrop Sargent that "the Scotch-Irish always †

\* "History of Cumberland County, Pa.," p. 15.

† "The Making of Pennsylvania," p. 181.

clothed themselves with curses as with a garment." The saying is a very happy introduction to several profane anecdotes with which the writer has been pleased to disfigure his book, but it certainly does the race injustice. It is not the memory which has come down to us from the pious men who founded the churches of the valley.

While it is certainly true that the race have not all been saints, yet as a class they were a truly religious people. They had suffered much for the sake of their religious principles. They brought the Bible, the Confession of Faith, and the Psalm Book with them, and the chain of churches which they founded in the Cumberland Valley is proof of their devotion and religious zeal. The organization of these churches is not a matter of record. It is a curious fact which illustrates well the religious spirit of these people that as soon as we find any trace of their settlements in the valley their churches are there as a part of their very existence.

The earliest notice of ministers visiting the valley is in 1734, when the Presbytery of Donegal "ordered Mr. Alexander Craighead to supply over the river two or three Sabbaths in November." The next year Thomson, Bertram, and Craighead were sent to supply the people in the same region.

These early churches of the valley are well worthy of more notice than we can give them in a short paper. They have been the pride of our people from the very beginning. As their names indicate, they were generally located by the natural springs so abundant in this limestone region.

Let us pass up the valley, glancing hastily at each of these early churches founded by the fathers. Taken in order, from east to west, the first is the

*Silver Spring Church (Lower or East Pennsboro).*

This venerable church still exists, and is a sturdy witness for the truth, though it has divided its original territory with the church in Mechanicsburg. The first pastor was Rev. Samuel Thomson, who was ordained and installed (1739) the same day over both East and West Pennsboro. The early meetinghouse was built of logs, but in 1783 the congregation erected a more substantial structure of stone, which is still standing. This noble work was accomplished in the early pastorate of Rev. Samuel Waugh, "the first American pastor" of this congregation. This church stands near a beautiful spring, which derives its name from James Silvers, who in 1735 took out a warrant for the land on which the spring rises. Though the name doubtless

was derived from the original proprietor, yet the corporate name of the church is Silver Spring.

*First Church, Carlisle (Upper or West Pennsboro).*

Passing up the valley, the next one of the early churches was located at Meeting House Springs, on the banks of the Connodoguinet Creek, near to Carlisle. Though farther west, it was founded quite as early as the church at Silver Spring. Since 1833 it has shared the field with the Second Church of the same denomination. The first pastor at the Meeting House Springs was Rev. Samuel Thomson. The house that he preached in was undoubtedly a log structure, but no relic of this ancient sanctuary remains; for soon after the town of Carlisle was laid out (1751) the congregation decided to build within the borough limits.

During the time of division into "New Lights" and "Old Lights" two churches were built in Carlisle, one under the pastoral care of Rev. George Duffield, who, at a later day, was chaplain of the Continental Congress in Philadelphia; the other was served by Rev. John Steel, who showed his fitness for work in the Church militant by both fighting and preaching. During the Indian Wars he was commissioned by the governor as a captain of militia. He served his day and generation well, and then went home to the land of rest and peace (1779) during the Revolutionary War, for which he was duly enrolled as "Rev. Capt. Steel."\*

This man, whose name will ever be held in grateful remembrance in the Cumberland Valley, was born in Ireland, and licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Londonderry. He came to America in 1742, and most of his ministry was spent in this valley. During all the Indian wars he ministered to a people with rifles in their hands, while his own gun was standing in the pulpit beside him.

The gentle and amiable Dr. Robert Davidson began his pastorate at Carlisle in 1785. It was early in his ministry that the two congregations in Carlisle were happily united, and the venerable stone church on the public square (which was begun under the ministry of Steel) was finished by the addition of a gallery. This edifice remains to this day a solid memorial of the men who laid its massive foundations in 1769.

*The Church of Big Spring (Hopewell).*

Passing up the valley, we find the next of these early churches at

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\* "Centennial Memorial, Presbytery of Carlisle," Vol. I., p. 195. See also "First Presbyterian Church of Carlisle," by Rev. Dr. C. P. Wing.



Big Spring (now Newville). Though the first call which appeared in Presbytery from any of these churches was from the congregation at Meeting House Springs (Carlisle) for the services of Rev. Samuel Thomson (1737), yet the first pastor actually installed was Rev. Thomas Creaghead,\* called "Father Creaghead" in the minutes of the Presbytery.

This venerable man was the son of Rev. Robert Creaghead, who was in the siege of Londonderry, and the father of Rev. Alexander Creaghead, who afterwards removed to the region of Mecklenburg, N. C., where his advanced political views bore fruit after his death (1766) in the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence (1775). This apostle of civil and religious liberty was the first man to preach in this valley; and he, by the appointment of Presbytery, installed his own father, Rev. Thomas Creaghead, pastor of the church at Big Spring, October, 1738.†

Thomas Creaghead, the first pastor of Hopewell Church, was an able preacher, and greatly beloved by his people. Under his impassioned sermons his audience was frequently melted to tears, and sometimes was unwilling to disperse at the close of the service. On one of these occasions (in April, 1739) he became exhausted, and hastened to pronounce the benediction. Waving his hand, he exclaimed, "Farewell!" and sunk down and expired in the pulpit. There is a tradition that his remains were buried beneath the pulpit in the old church in which he died.

#### *The Middle Spring Church.*

The next meeting place of the Presbyterians up the valley was at Middle Spring, about three miles north of Shippensburg. This congregation was at first a part of the Big Spring charge. On the minutes of the Presbytery they share the name Hopewell. After the separation of Middle Spring from Big Spring the former was called for a time Upper Hopewell, and the latter Lower Hopewell.

The first house of worship here was built of logs, and was erected about 1737. The congregation increased so rapidly that a larger house was found necessary, and again the material used was logs. In 1781 a stone church was built on higher ground, near the site of the present church. This building stood until 1848, when it gave place to the present substantial brick structure.

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\*The name is now generally spelled Craighead.

†"Craighead Genealogy," p. 39; "Centennial Memorial, Presbytery of Carlisle," Vol. II, p. 24.

This congregation has always been strong and influential, though for many years it has divided the field with the flourishing church of Shippensburg. The church in town was originally Associate Reformed, but since 1825 it has belonged to the presbytery of Carlisle. From 1765 to 1854, a period of nearly one hundred years, the church of Middle Spring had but two pastors, Rev. Robert Cooper, D.D., and Rev. John Moody, D.D., both men of mark and power. In times of peace and war its pastors and people have played no unimportant part in the affairs of Church and State.

*The Rocky Spring Church.*

The next beacon light for the early Presbyterians, passing up the valley, was at Rocky Spring. It is generally agreed that its organization occurred about 1739.\*

One of its earliest and most distinguished pastors was Rev. John Blair, who served the three churches, Rocky Spring, Middle Spring, and Big Spring. He was a strenuous supporter of the "New Light" party of the last century, and was never connected with the Presbytery of Donegal. Hence we have very little record of the church in those early days. His pastorate is supposed to have lasted from 1742 to 1755, when the whole frontier was devastated by the Indians, and he retired to the east with many of his people.† Mr. Blair never returned to Rocky Spring, but on the decease of his brother, Rev. Samuel Blair, he accepted a call to be his successor at Fagg's Manor in 1757.

Rev. John Craighead, who lived and died on the field, was the second pastor of the Rocky Spring Church. He was the heroic pastor who in the dark days of the Revolution led his people to the tented field and fought bravely under Washington for American independence. In this arduous struggle his neighbor, Rev. Robert Cooper, D.D., pastor of the Middle Spring Church, was his companion.

One story oft repeated has come down to us which well illustrates the spirit of the men and the age. As they were going into battle one day a cannon ball struck a tree near Mr. Craighead and dashed off a huge splinter which nearly knocked him down. "God bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Cooper, "you were nearly knocked to staves!" Well, yes," was the ready reply of his jocular friend; "and though you are a *cooper*, you could not have set me up."

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\*"Centennial Memorial, Presbytery of Carlisle," Vol. I., p. 209.

†"Centennial Memorial, Presbytery of Carlisle," Vol. I., pp. 198, 209; also "The Log College," p. 197.

These worthy men, however, never forgot their high calling as ambassadors for Christ. When in camp they acted as chaplains to their soldiers, and labored with commendable zeal for their moral and spiritual improvement, and when independence was secured they returned to the valley and resumed the usual functions of the sacred ministry.

*Falling Spring Church, Chambersburg.*

One of the earliest settlements in the valley was made where Chambersburg now stands. Here Benjamin Chambers, the youngest of four brothers who had emigrated from County Antrim, Ireland, was allowed by the proprietaries in 1730 to fix his claim. He was on friendly terms with the Indians, and suffered no molestation from them until the beginning of the French and Indian war. The settlement was known by the name of Falling Spring until 1764, when the town of Chambersburg was laid out and named after the proprietor.

By appointment of the Presbytery the Revs. Samuel Thomson and Samuel Caven supplied "the people of Conococheague" much of the time during the years of 1737 and 1738. By this general description was meant the people at the various settlements along the Conococheague creek. The churches have generally gravitated to the towns and are now known severally as the Mercersburg, Greencastle, Robert Keñnedy Memorial, and Falling Spring Church, Chambersburg.

The first pastor at the Falling Spring Church was Rev. Samuel Caven, who was ordained and installed November 16, 1739, but his pastorate here terminated in 1741. He was afterwards pastor of the Silver Spring Church, where he died November 9, 1750.

It has been the good fortune of the Falling Spring Church, Chambersburg, to remain where it was first planted. It has one of the most beautiful locations in all the valley, and as we wander through its ample grounds and its quiet churchyard, where now rest the sacred dust of many generations, we are reminded of the refined taste of the man, Col. Benjamin Chambers,\* who, January 1, 1768, deeded the ground to the congregation for "the yearly rent or consideration of one rose if required."

The present church edifice is a substantial stone building which passed unscathed through the fires of invasion in 1863, and still remains a sacred memorial to the taste and piety of those who built its massive walls in 1803.

*The Mercersburg Church (Upper West Conococheague).*

The earliest date assigned for the organization of the church in this

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\*Nevin's "Churches of the Valley," p. 141.

region is 1738. There seems to have been several different preaching places for these "Conocogig" people, as the congregation embraced all the region afterwards occupied by the churches of Welsh Run, Loudon, and St. Thomas—a region about fourteen miles square.

The first meetinghouse was a rude log building erected at "Church Hill," a place about two and one-half miles from the present town of Mercersburg. Owing to the perils connected with the Indian wars, the church was surrounded by a stockade. Their first pastor, Rev. John Steel, who was afterwards pastor of the church in Carlisle, was the leader of his people in war as well as peace. The people went to the house of God on the Sabbath day all armed and ready for any emergency.

In 1819 the old log church gave place to a stone building, and as the rough walls were covered with plaster, it was known as the "White Church." It was occupied until 1855, shortly after which it was torn down, and services were confined to the church in town.

The town of Mercersburg was laid out in 1786. To meet the wants of the population which soon collected here, a house of worship was erected in 1794. The stone church which was then built, having been thoroughly renovated, is still occupied by the congregation, though very little remains of the original structure either in plan or appearance.\*

*Greencastle Church (East Conococheague).*

The greater part of Franklin County is watered by the Conococheague Creek. It is divided into two branches known as the east and west creeks of that name. This general region appears on the minutes of the Donegal Presbytery as the "Conococheague Settlement," or "the People on the Conococheague." The flood of Scotch-Irish immigration was so great that settlements were made almost simultaneously throughout the entire length of the Cumberland Valley. The Presbytery of Donegal "sent supplies to the people of the Conococheague almost as soon as to the people of the Conodoguinet."

As early as 1738 the congregation of East Conococheague was divided.† The clerk of the Presbytery describes the region in rather vague terms, but the record is plain as to the fact that the congregation had agreed to divide, and that the Presbytery consented to the division while expressing the opinion that the people had acted somewhat hastily in separating without the consent of the Presbytery.

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\* Dr. Thomas Creigh's "Historical Discourse in Nevin's Churches of the Valley," and Rev. William A. West in "Centennial Memorial of Carlisle Presbytery," I., 205.

† Nevin's "Churches of the Valley," page 162.

The eastern part of the congregation thus divided embraced that region which is now known as the town of Greencastle and its vicinity, but which was then called "East Conococheague."

We would naturally suppose that the other part of this divided congregation was the church on the west branch of the Conococheague and now known as the church of Mercersburg. But this was not the case. Besides these two centers, which still remain strong congregations, there was another located between them which was "New Light" in its sympathies, and which kept up a separate existence until about the beginning of this century. It will come into notice again in the sketch of Welsh Run (Lower West Conococheague), with which it was associated for years under the ministry of Rev. Thomas McPherrin.

The first building used as a place of public worship within the bounds of the East Conococheague congregation was probably a log house, and was erected near a spring on the lands of William Rankin, about three-quarters of a mile east of Greencastle. About the middle of last century a better house was erected, which became historic as the "Old Red Meeting House." This church building is quite minutely described in Nevin's "Churches of the Valley;" It was a frame building and painted red. During the ministry of Rev. Robert Kennedy the church was enlarged by an addition of twelve feet to the front. The "Old Red Meeting House" was occupied until 1828, when it was torn down and a plain brick church 50x60 feet was erected in the town of Greencastle. This building, which has been greatly improved; is still occupied by the congregation.

The Church at Greencastle was strengthened by the addition of another congregation in 1825. As far back as 1783 the Rev. Matthew Lind settled at Greencastle as pastor of the Associate Reformed congregation. In 1791 the congregation erected what was known as the "White Church." This plain little building became historic. Here the Associate Reformed Synod met in 1799, when the standards of that Church were adopted. Here the first General Synod held its sessions in 1804. Here Dr. John M. Mason made his celebrated defense of open communion. Rev. Matthew Lind was pastor of this Church, 1783-1800; John Young, 1800-1803; John Lind, 1804-1824. In 1825 the congregation placed itself under the care of the Presbytery of Carlisle, and the Rev. Matthew Lind Fullerton became its pastor. After Mr. Fullerton's death, in 1833, the "White Church" and the "Red Church" people were united under the pastorate of Rev. James Buchanan, who, though greatly beloved, was compelled by failing health to resign his charge in 1839. This congregation,

under a succession of worthy pastors, has still remained united and prosperous.\*

*Robert Kennedy Memorial Church (Lower West Conococheague),  
Welsh Run.*

This Church had its origin in the divided state of the Church at large during the New Light and the Old Light controversy of last century. In 1741 it was organized as a New Side Church, and was closely associated with the New Side branch of East Conococheague congregation, which was mentioned in connection with the Greencastle Church. For a time these people were served by a Rev. Mr. Dunlap, and afterwards by the Rev. James Campbell, a member of the Presbytery of New Castle. The labors of the latter were spent on this field for several years about the middle of last century. In 1774 the Rev. Thomas McPherrin became pastor of the congregations of East Conococheague (New Side branch), Lower West Conococheague, and Jerusalem (Hagerstown). He continued pastor of at least part of this charge until 1799. Rev. Robert Kennedy, a man of keen intellect and scholarly tastes, became pastor in 1803. In this region he spent forty years of ministerial service, which has been commemorated by giving his name to the church.

The first house of worship at Welsh Run was a log structure, which was burned by the Indians in 1761. A second building was erected in 1774. It was constructed of logs, which were covered with weatherboards. This sanctuary was of the ancient model with high pulpit, a stately sounding board, and high-backed pews. This building served the congregation as a place of worship nearly a century, when it was torn down in 1871 to give place to the present Robert Kennedy Memorial Church, which was erected by Mr. Davidson Kennedy, of Philadelphia, in memory of his father.

But time would fail me to tell the story of all the congregations that were closely affiliated with these "churches of the valley." It was the same sturdy race of men who planted the first churches up the Susquehanna and along the blue waters of the Juniata, who "held the fort" in Sherman's Valley † and set up their standards in the Path Valley region, who planted old Monaghan in the edge of York County, spread out through the "Barrens," and built the stone churches on the Great Conewago and Marsh Creek. They not only sent their missionaries down into the Valley of Virginia, but furnished most of the

\* Rev. W. A. West, in "Centennial Memorial, Carlisle Presbytery," I, 199.

† Robinson's Fort, where Center Church now stands.

pioneers for the Westmoreland region, which in that early day included almost everything toward the land of sunset.

The *status* of the churches in Cumberland Valley has been altered somewhat by the changes which have gradually come over the race elements of our population. Many families of the original settlers have passed on the wave of emigration to the West, and their places have been taken by worthy people of the German stock. But most of these original churches continue strong and prosperous, notwithstanding the racial changes which have gone on around them. The strength of the original congregations is evinced not only by their present healthy condition, but by the strong colonies which they have sent out. These young churches have in some instances quite equaled their parent hives, and almost all are showing the aggressive power of a pure gospel by gathering into their communion many who were not originally of Presbyterian families.

Our people are generally true to the traditions of the fathers; for though devoted to his "Confession of Faith," the Ulsterman was able to criticise it. The authority in matters of religion which it had conceded to the civil magistrate, he was no longer willing to admit. He had learned something in the school of affliction, and on this point he had grown wiser than his teachers. In an ideal Christian state, where all men had accepted one interpretation of Scripture, it might be a very beautiful system; but in such a very imperfect world as this, with its conflicting opinions as to the claims of God, the powers of the Church, and the needs of the soul, the Ulsterman had found to his sorrow that the civil magistrate could not be safely trusted with the question of heresy.

The freedom which he claimed for himself he conceded to others. The outward uniformity in religion which the Westminster fathers had hoped might be secured in Great Britain and Ireland, he saw was a Utopian dream which he renounced forever.\* He revised his "Confession of Faith" (1788) so as to limit the powers of the civil magistrate to secular concerns, and left the Church free in its own province. On this whole question the Presbyterians of Pennsylvania were greatly in advance of the New England Puritans and the Churchmen of the South.

The restless spirit of enterprise in the Scotch-Irish race has caused the children of many of these early settlers in the Cumberland Valley to seek their fortunes in distant parts of the land, but the churches

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\* "History of the Presbyterian Church," Hodge, 408; "American Presbyterianism," Briggs, 364.

which they planted remain the sacred monuments of their religious principles. Other races have come in to swell the population of their beautiful valley, but the day must be far distant when their memorials shall have perished from the land which they at first consecrated to liberty and religion by toil and sacrifice in tears and blood.

## II. THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCOTCH-IRISH IN THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY ON THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN THIS COUNTRY.

The Scotch-Irish Presbyterians have always been conspicuous in their maintenance of education, both higher and lower. Their zeal in this matter finds expression in their "Directory for the Public Worship of God," where all "not disabled by age or otherwise" are exhorted "to learn to read." The schoolhouse was generally built beside the church, and quite frequently the pastor was the head of a "log college," where the young people learned at least the elements of a higher education, and many were thus fitted for the highest positions both in Church and State.

The right and duty of private judgment, on which the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian has always strenuously insisted, involves by the bonds of an invincible logic the importance of popular education. If the people must decide for themselves in matters of religion, they must learn to read and think for themselves. Therefore, wherever these reformation principles have prevailed the schoolhouse has been planted under the shadow of the church.

But another principle of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian which wrought to the same end was the place which he gave to the laity in the government of the Church. The ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church sits in judgment upon the qualifications of the young candidate for the ministry. He must weigh the obscure, erratic, or mistaken views of the heretical teacher. He must approve or reject the new measures which, in the providence of God, are constantly emerging in the history of the church; he must be "wise to know what Israel ought to do" in every new crisis; and all this is impossible unless this representative of the people be a reading, thinking man.

But after all, the most potent influence demanding the appliances of a higher education among our ancestors was the deep and unchangeable conviction which prevailed among them that the ministry of the church can never be safely intrusted to unlearned and ignorant men. This principle, which finds expression in the written constitution of the Church, has had all the force of an unwritten law grounded in the elementary prejudices and traditions of our race. Dr. Alexander, in



his "Log College," doubtless tells the exact truth when he says: "The first Presbyterian ministers in this country were nearly all men of liberal education. Some had received their education in the universities of Scotland, some in Ireland, and others at one of the New England colleges. And, though there existed such a destitution of ministers in this new country, they never thought of introducing any man into the ministry who had not received a college or university education, except in very extraordinary cases; of which, I believe, we have but one instance in the early history of the Presbyterian Church."\*

A recent writer, who shows no love for the Scotch-Irish, or for their religion, confesses: "The Presbyterians of Pennsylvania, whether Scotch-Irish, or English, always showed a stronger leaning toward the best sort of education than either the Quakers or the Germans."† The reason is not far to seek. The whole Quaker movement was a reaction against the institutional religion of England. It was an appeal from outward authority to "inward light," and religion was thus made a matter of inner conscience and direct spiritual suggestion. It was in many respects a noble protest of manhood and Christian consciousness against the lying pretensions of sacerdotalism, and as such may we never forget to honor it; but the "inner light" alone proves to be a mere will-o'-the-wisp, and those who try to "walk in the light" of "the sparks" which they "have kindled" either end in a very meager spiritualism, or wander off into a dreary rationalism. It is not safe to give up the light of God's word or the guidance of his Church.

The minor sects of Germans were, in their way, quite kindred to the Friends in much of their religious thinking. They made little or no appeal to authority. In their mystic thought there was little need of books and libraries. They believed that educated men were generally rascals. They had left their native land to escape from the authority of a Church and a State that seemed to be always against them. They associated books and education with the men who had been their oppressors, and they wanted no more of them. They did not wish an educated, professional ministry. They even resisted the free school system when it was at first proposed. Of course this was not true of all the Germans. Men of the Muhlenberg or Schlatter type were always friendly to the higher education. But the common "boors of the Palatinate," as Franklin called them, especially those who had gone daft on the subject of religion, had no high ambitions in the way of education, scientific or classical. Their divisions on minor

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\* "The Log College," p. 10.

† "The Making of Pennsylvania," by Fisher, p. 184.

points of religious opinion were endless, but they were pretty generally united in their contempt for "book learning."

Now, in marked contrast to all this, the religion of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian was the religion of a book, and that book was the Word of God. The exposition of that book was found in another volume, which he called his "Confession of Faith." It not only contained the Calvinistic system, as set forth in the "Confession of Faith" proper, but the "Larger" and the "Shorter Catechisms," with proof texts, the "Directory for the Public Worship of God," and the "Form of Presbyterian Church Government." To these were added "The National Covenant" (1580), the "Solemn League and Covenant" (1643), the "Sum of Saving Knowledge," and several historical papers.

As I write, I have a well-worn copy of this ancient volume lying before me, which some one of the early fathers brought to the Cumberland Valley. It is safe to say that the young man who had thoroughly digested that volume, with his Bible in hand, had already secured a liberal education. The memorization of the "Shorter Catechism" and its proof texts in childhood laid the foundation; the study of the rest of the book in later years erected the superstructure of a noble Christian manhood.

All this cultivated a strenuous intellectual life, and made the race ambitious to obtain as much education as possible. But there was another principle at work among our ancestors which wrought powerfully in the same direction: they all held to a high theory of inspiration. To expound the Book of God properly it must be read in the original tongues; hence the Ulsterman always insisted on having an educated minister, and it was his fondest wish that at least one of his sons might be chosen of God for the sacred office. This high and generous aim in the matter of education has gradually weaned our people from the farm, and sent them into the professions.

The desire to secure the benefits of the higher education, and especially to provide suitable pastors for the churches springing into existence in all the new settlements, had led to that holy venture, the "Log College" at Neshaminy, Bucks County, Pa., where the elder Tennant trained a generation of young men who were noted for their fervent zeal in the work of the gospel ministry. Out of this noble experiment grew Princeton College and all that the name of Princeton stands for to-day.

Tennant set the example; it was soon followed by others, and about 1760 a classical school was organized in Carlisle, with Rev. Henry McKinley as Principal. This school was broken up in 1776, when the

Principal and most of the students enlisted in the patriot army. But the ideal did not pass away; and as early as 1781, before the close of the war, we find John Montgomery, Robert Miller, Samuel Postlethwaite, Dr. Samuel McCoskry, William Blair, and others, as trustees, asking the Presbytery of Donegal for a conference concerning the interests of this school. Their request resulted in their securing the patronage of the Presbytery; and, though the trustees at Carlisle had only thought of an academy under the care of the Presbytery, their action led up to the founding of Dickinson College in 1783.

It would be a labor of love to dwell on the several classical schools which for more than a century were maintained at various points in this region.\* The devoted and laborious preceptor was generally a minister of the gospel, who taught "the humanities" all the week and filled the sacred desk on the Sabbath. Most of these "log colleges" have ceased to exist, but they did a noble work in their day, and kept the torch of liberal studies burning through dark and troubled times. Much of this work culminated in the founding of Dickinson College, though many classical schools continued to do a work of liberal education for the people far into this century.

The gifted and brilliant Rev. Charles Nisbet, D.D., of Montrose, Scotland, was persuaded to become the first "Principal" of the college. Rev. Robert Davidson, D.D., of Philadelphia, was his honored coadjutor in the college, and also in the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church in Carlisle. James Ross, LL.D., author of a Latin grammar, was made Professor of Latin and Greek, and these worthy men had at least one assistant in the English department of the young college.

It is almost pathetic to see this heroic people, while still panting in the awful struggle against the despotic claims of the Old World, bravely setting themselves to provide for that higher education which was essential to their divine ideal, a free Church in a free state. They had the profound conviction that they could not attain to this Canaan of their hopes unless they were guided by that pillar of cloud by day and fire by night which is furnished by a generous Christian culture.

As a race, our people have often been charged with a lack of religious charity, but the history of Dickinson College is a complete refutation of the charge. For fifty years it was conducted under Presbyterian auspices, but never under the care of Synod or General Assembly. So liberal was the management that the college was lost to the Presbyterian Church, though it has still received the liberal benefactions of her people.

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\* "Centennial Memorial, Presbytery of Carlisle," Vol. I., p. 342.

### III. AS TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCOTCH-IRISH OF THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY ON THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY.

No race element in the early settlement of this country brought with them more decided convictions on the subject of civil and religious liberty than the early fathers of Cumberland Valley. The duty of passive obedience had been preached to them for more than a hundred years. They had heard the doctrine from the minions of the Stuarts in Scotland, and they had heard it again from the prelates of Ireland, but it never really commanded their assent. For a little while, during the prevalence of the commonwealth and the ascendancy of their party in England, the Presbyterians may have been tempted to use it themselves; but when the heavy hand of Cromwell's military despotism was laid on the Kirk, they were compelled to review and correct some of their former principles.

During their sojourn in Ulster they were subjected to a rough schoolmaster, who set them again to the study of that hard question, the proper relation between Church and State.\* All the saintliness of Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living" and "Holy Dying" could not reconcile them to the cold-blooded despotism of his prelatial demand that the Presbyterian ministers in his diocese should either submit to Episcopal ordination or to the deprivation of all authority as ministers of religion. And if this was the tender mercy of the man who, in the day of adversity had written "On the Liberty of Prophesying," what could be expected of the rest? The story has been told so often that it need not be repeated here. In one of the papers read this evening Mr. Froude has been aptly quoted on this subject of the hardships which the Presbyterians of North Ireland were compelled to endure at the hands of the Established Church.

It may seem unfortunate in these halcyon days of peace to recall the mistakes and hardships of former generations, but the veracity of history requires us to painfully traverse these

"Old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago."

It is only in this way that we can arrive at any proper understanding of the men and the motives which combine to make our American history.

The right of the people to a voice in the government of both Church and State has always been a fundamental principle with the Scotch-

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\* Reid's "History of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland;" "Scotch and Irish Seeds in American Soil," by Rev. J. G. Craighead, D.D.

Irish Presbyterians. The contemptuous disregard of this principle by the lords temporal and spiritual of Great Britain sent these men across the stormy Atlantic in the pursuit of freedom, civil and religious. They had borne much in the Old World without making armed resistance; for a long time they showed the same spirit in the New World; but a time came when the smoldering fires of their discontent burst out in the flames of indignant rebellion, which swept the last vestige of British domination from the land.

The patriotism of our ancestors was put to the test first in the French and Indian wars, and afterwards in the long and weary conflict for independence.\* In both these trials they came through the fiery test with distinguished credit.

The first conspicuous service performed by the Scotch-Irish was their defense of the frontier of the colony against the savage invasion of the Indians, who were instigated by the French to harass the English settlements, and thus stay the tide of British colonial enterprise. The spirit which animated the French was not only patriotic, but religious. Those who are familiar with the heroic efforts of the Jesuits to convert the red men of the lake and the forest know that it was the religion of the "Most Christian King" and his people, quite as much as their colonial ambition, that actuated the French in all their efforts to capture the New World.† It was a conflict between the Romanism of France and the Protestantism of Great Britain.

The Scotch-Irish of the Cumberland Valley were foremost among the provincial troops during the whole French and Indian War. From the Potomac to the St. Lawrence they left their mark in patriot blood on every battlefield. In their own province they were a wall of fire between the murderous savage of the wilderness and the men of peace by the Delaware, who were out of harm's way.

Whatever may have been the motive which prompted the proprietaries and their agents to push the Scotch-Irish back to the frontier, the fact is undeniable. It may have been, as some suggest, to prevent quarreling between them and the Germans; or, as one intimates, to prevent intruders from invading the valley under Lord Baltimore's title;‡ or, as our fathers came to believe, to put a sturdy fighting race between the non-resistants of the east and the danger which lurked on the frontier. In either case the result was the same: the Scotch-Irish

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\* Loudon's "Indian Wars," Carlisle, Pa.; Breed's "Presbyterians and the Revolution."

† Parkman's works throughout, especially the "Jesuits in North America."

‡ Day's "Historical Collections," p. 263.

performed a faithful picket duty on the front for the defense of the whole colony, and yet were blamed for everything that they did in self-defense.

The Quakers might lift up their hands in holy horror at the promptness with which our fathers defended their families and themselves against the murderous attacks of those roaming bands of savages; but these men of peace were not only largely responsible for putting the Scotch-Irish in the position where they were compelled to bear the brunt of the Indian war, but they did not blush to revile the men who were defending every hearthstone in the colony at the peril of their lives.

The pitiful story of Braddock's defeat in 1755 is indelibly impressed on the memory of our people.\* The disaster itself was not more unfortunate than the ill-advised retreat of the British army before an enemy weaker in numbers and resources. Gov. Morris was at Carlisle when the first news of the disaster reached him. He had come to the frontier for the purpose of sending on supplies, and to encourage the people in the midst of the general alarm.

The need was greater than he or any one else had imagined. Even before Braddock's defeat, and when that general with his army had gone only thirty miles from Fort Cumberland, a party of one hundred Indians, under the notorious Shingas, came to the Big Cove, in what is now Fulton County, killed and took prisoners about thirty people, and drove the remainder from their homes. Rumors of contemplated attacks came upon the people in quick succession, and actual massacres were reported at various points along the frontier.

A general sense of security and hopefulness had possessed the English colonies. An army of British regulars was thought invincible. When the news of the great disaster reached the valley, all was panic and confusion. The fugitive wagoners who brought the first report did not spare abundant exaggeration of the danger. The Governor called the Assembly to meet in Philadelphia to devise means to defend the frontier. At the earnest request of the people, he gave directions for the building of two stockade forts, one at Carlisle and the other at Shippensburg. He promised arms and ammunition, but advised the people to form associations for their own defense. Four companies of militia were organized, and he seems to have done what he could in the way of supplying these companies with powder and lead.

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\* Parkman's "Montcalm-Wolfe," I., pp. 187-233, and Wing's "History of Cumberland County."

It was hoped that the remnant of the army, under Col. Dunbar, would be allowed to camp in the Cumberland Valley for the winter. The position was central; it was on the frontier; it was just where the army was most needed; it was in the section which had made the greatest sacrifices for the support of the expedition; these and many other considerations seemed to demand that here the remnant of the broken army should go into winter quarters. But the northern frontier was menaced, and Maj. Gen. Shirley, who now had the control of the American forces, decided that the troops in Pennsylvania should be sent north, and that Pennsylvania must take care of herself.

Great was the consternation in this region when the inhabitants saw all the troops, arms, and ammunition passing through the valley and hurrying away to the northern frontier. It was with the saddest forebodings that our people saw themselves left to the tender mercies of every skulking band of savages who might be tempted to invade their settlements for scalps and plunder. Their worst fears were soon to be realized in a reign of terror scarcely ever equaled in the history of this country.

While the Governor and Assembly were wrangling over the question as to whether the lands of the proprietaries should be taxed, and the Quakers were insisting that no money should be voted for the support of a war against the Indians, the Scotch-Irish of Cumberland Valley were left to shift for themselves as best they could, and thus they sustained that "storm of blood and fire" which the cowardly retreat of Dunbar had unfortunately invited.\*

And now came the darkest period in the history of our people. The defeat of Braddock left the whole Cumberland Valley exposed to the stealthy and murderous incursions of the savages, and it is impossible for us to imagine the terror in which the people lived. Up to this time their relations with the Indians had been so peaceful that they were not prepared for the conflict. They had built no forts. They were almost destitute of arms and ammunition. Their log cabins were widely separated in a new and wilderness country. The attack was sudden, unexpected, and deadly. No age nor sex was spared. When their natural protectors were slain, women and children were often carried away into captivity. Many of the inhabitants were for the time driven back into the eastern part of the province; but enough remained to man the forts now hastily constructed, and to keep the enemy at bay.

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\* Parkman's "Montcalm and Wolfe." I, p. 233; Wing's "History of Cumberland County, Pa.," p. 44.

Finally the expedition from Carlisle, under the command of Gen. John Armstrong, which destroyed the Indian town of Kittanning, broke the power of the enemy on our immediate frontier.\* The evacuation of Fort Du Quesne by the French (1758) three years after the defeat of Braddock, and its occupation by the English, pushed the outer line of defense farther back, but for several years after this the whole frontier was subjected to frequent and murderous attacks from the stealthy and savage foe. Even as late as during the Revolutionary War the hardy men who stood at the front—and they were Scotch-Irish with scarce an exception—still feared the tomahawk and the scalping knife of the bloodthirsty savage.

The Scotch-Irish of Cumberland Valley were prompt to recognize the principles involved in the War of Independence. To enter minutely into the history of this struggle would be quite beyond the scope of such a paper as this, but justice to the memory of our patriot dead requires that we should not forget their service in "the day that tried men's souls." It is safe to say that not even among the Puritans of New England was the war for independence more popular than among the Presbyterians of our valley. As a people they not only knew their rights as British subjects, but all the traditions of their race prompted them to resist every encroachment of royal oppression. The thought of a clash with the arbitrary domination of England sent a thrill through all the settlements from Ulster. The fierce conflicts of other days were recalled, and it was soon evident that the average Scotch-Irish man had little love for the mother country.

The first news of the Boston massacre and the closing of the ports in that region aroused the whole population of our valley as one man. A meeting of "freeholders and freemen" † was called on Tuesday the 12th day of July, 1774, in the stone church which still stands on the square in Carlisle. John Montgomery, an elder of the congregation, was chosen to preside over this meeting of patriots. Resolutions were adopted declaring that Boston was suffering in the common cause of all the colonies, that every prudent measure ought to be adopted to secure redress for the past and safety for the future, that a Congress of Deputies from all the colonies would be a proper method for this purpose, that the colonies ought to unite in refusing all commerce with Great Britain or her dependencies until they have secured a redress of grievances, that the inhabitants of this county will contribute to the relief of their suffering brethren in Boston whenever it is neces-

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\* Parkman's "Montcalm and Wolfe," I., p. 423.

† "Men of Mark of Cumberland Valley," p. 42.



sary, that a committee for this county be appointed to correspond with similar committees of this or other provinces as to "the general welfare of British America," and that James Wilson, Robert Magaw, and William Irvine be the deputies appointed to meet the other deputies from this province. at Philadelphia, on Friday next, "in order to concert measures preparatory to the General Congress."

The language of these resolutions was loyal, but it was determined. These men were making demands which were sure to be resisted. They were commending as patriots the men whom the king and the Parliament were treating as rebels; they were proposing to confederate with the other colonies for mutual defense; it is plain that a collision was inevitable.

But these fathers of American liberty did not quail when the storm of battle came nearer. By May of the next year (1775) we learn that "a county committee was organized, three thousand men associated, five hundred men were taken into pay and drafted, to be armed and disciplined and marched on the first emergency; and for this the county was drawn upon by a tax on all estates, real and personal, for twenty-seven thousand pounds."\*

The preparations for the impending conflict went on persistently. The committee of the county, writing from Carlisle July 14, 1776, assures the President of Congress that "the spirit of marching to the defense of our country is so prevalent in this town that we shall not have left men sufficient to mount guard, which we think absolutely necessary for the safety of the inhabitants and ammunition."

The spirit of the Pennsylvania Assembly was intensely conservative. They had instructed their delegates in the Continental Congress to oppose every proposal of separation from the mother country. At this juncture a petition from the people of Cumberland County was presented to the General Assembly of the province, which among other things declared: "If those who rule in Britain will not permit the colonies to be free and happy in connection with that kingdom, it becomes their duty to secure and promote their freedom and happiness in the best manner they can *without that connection.*" †

This petition concluded with the courteous but emphatic advice to the Assembly, "that the last instructions which it gave to the delegates of this province in Congress, wherein they are enjoined not to consent to any step which may cause or lead to a separation from Great Britain, *may be withdrawn.*"

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\* Wing's "First Presbyterian Church of Carlisle," p. 110.

† "American Archives," Fourth Series, Vol. VI., p. 850.

This bold advice was taken. When the motion for independence was finally acted upon in Congress, the weight of Pennsylvania was carried in its favor by the casting vote of James Wilson, of Cumberland County. The overcautious delegates, whose patriotism was never questioned, but who still hoped for some advantages by delay, were rebuked by the failure of their reëlection, and men from the interior who were ripe for revolution were chosen by the people.

The published action of our people, therefore, in that critical period between the closing of the port of Boston and the Declaration of American Independence shows how prompt they were to demand a redress of grievances or complete separation from the mother country. When the time for action came such ministers of the gospel as Steel and King, Craighead and Cooper, not only urged their people to enlist for the war, but set them a glorious example of heroic sacrifice for the good cause by joining the army of patriots under Washington.

On the eve of the departure of Magaw's Battalion from Carlisle, March 17, 1776, the almost youthful chaplain, Rev. William Linn, preached before it a sermon full of fire and enthusiasm. This patriotic discourse so far agreed with the feelings of his hearers that a copy of it was solicited for publication, and thus we see reflected in its fiery periods the thought and spirit of the time. After recounting the recent scenes at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, he exclaimed: "Be of good courage, then, cherish this ardor, gather strength from every excitement; and when the day of trial comes, the Lord make you like Saul and Jonathan, 'swifter than eagles' and 'stronger than lions.' When you come to be drawn in battle array, let your breasts rise high and your joints stand firm, let a generous indignation sparkle in your eyes and flush your cheeks. If you have any mettle, if you would not have your names damned to perpetual infamy, behave like men and fight for your people and for the cities of your God."

Indeed, the War of the Revolution was begun and maintained for principles peculiarly dear to Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. As they were among the first to declare themselves in favor of separation from the mother country, so they were among the last to lay down their arms, and that only when the great cause was won.

They were conspicuous in almost every battle of the great struggle; and when the conflict ended in the triumph of their aspirations, it is not strange that the free representative principles of their Church government should have been adopted as the model for our Federal Constitution. The Scotch-Irish Presbyterians at last had attained to their ideal: *a free Church in a free State.*