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History of the Disciples of Christ in Tennessee to 1850

C. P. Roland

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HISTORY OF THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST IN TENNESSEE TO 1850

A Thesis

Submitted for the Master of Arts Degree
Vanderbilt University, 1931

By

C. P. Roland
HISTORY OF THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST IN
TENNESSEE TO 1850

A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, Vanderbilt University, 1931.

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Nashville, Tennessee
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CHAPTER I.

THE PLACE OF THE DISCIPLES IN HISTORY
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THE PLACE OF THE DISCIPLES IN HISTORY

The name, "Disciple" was not the only name applied to the people under consideration in this sketch. Two designations existed in the early days of the movement; one was "Disciples" and the other "Christians". This resulted from a preference of two outstanding leaders, Barton W. Stone and Alexander Campbell. They and others, who will be discussed later, espoused common principles in religion in fields distant from each other about the same date. Stone and his colleagues in Kentucky preferred to be called "Christians". The Campbells and those identified with them chose at first the designation "Reformers", but later they chose to be called "Disciples". When the two groups learned that they agreed on all fundamental principles, they united, and since their union either the term "Disciples of Christ" or "Christians" has been indorsed by all.

Their union took place officially in Lexington, Kentucky, in March 1832. The new congregation resulting from it adopted the title of "The Church of
Christ", whereas before the union it bore the name, "Christian Church". Either "Disciples" or "Christians" as a designation is consistent with the principles they advocated. "Disciple" has been chosen for this discussion because it appears more often in histories and official documents. This is the appellation found in the United States Census; also in the American Church History Series, and in the History of Religious Denominations in the United States.

In order to locate the Disciples in religious history the larger movements preceding them will be briefly sketched. During the sixteenth century a great reformation was wrought in Europe. The work of the Reformers resulted in religious division, and the Disciples of Christ movement began as a reaction against division. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the Roman Catholic Church dominated Western Europe. Small isolated parties such as the Waldenses constituted the only other groups. Internal corruption and an idle

2. Census of Religious Bodies - 1926.
clergy, among other things characterized the Catholic Church. The Pope claimed world authority in both political and religious matters. This world power kept the Bible from the people, objected to its translation into the vernaculars, and held the common people ignorant of the "Word of God".

Out of this religious situation a number of great reformers arose in Europe. Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Cranmer, and Wesley came to challenge the position of the Roman Church and to promulgate new principles. Although their work tended in the same general direction, each made his separate contribution to the movement and emphasized certain doctrines. Luther contributed such ideas as the sufficiency of the scriptures, the right of private judgment, and justification by Faith; Zwingli emphasized the appeal to the Word of God, and openly resisted and condemned such Roman practices as sale of indulgences and worship of images. John Calvin originated a theological system built on the idea of God's sovereignty. Wesley and his colleagues impressed on humanity a sense of personal accountability to God, and vitalized conversion by a strong emotional element. 6 All these Reformers con-

tributed much to the religious life of their day. Doubtless their efforts crystallized into organizations with a permanency they never suspected, for soon after the Reformation movement started religious division commenced and antagonism developed among them. This resulted from a demand made of them to set forth and support their doctrines. When each leader had formulated his views, differences among them were apparent, but they refused to reconcile them.

These leaders, Luther, Zwingli, and others attacked the Romanists. The Romanists in return demanded of them to support their teachings before the people. This resulted in the formation of theses, catechisms, creeds, confessions of faith, and finally the tyranny of the Popes and councils gave way to a tyranny of creeds. Intolerance, a characteristic of the age, became pronounced and even in Europe divisions resulted from the "Creedal" test.7

When the first settlers left Europe and came to this country they brought this religious inheritance with them. They transplanted the religious names, creeds, divisions, and intolerance to American soil.

Among others, the Episcopal Church, a branch of the Church of England, came. The charters of certain colonies authorized its establishment by expressly ordering:

"That the said presidents, councils, and ministers should provide that the true word and services of God be preached, planted, and used, according to the rites and doctrine of the Church of England, not only in the said colonies, but also as much as might be amongst the savages bordering on them."\(^3\)

The Episcopal Church entered America not only in creed as indicated by the lines above, but also through succession of authority. The same historian says that, "Dr. White of Philadelphia, and Dr. Provost, of New York, were in like manner consecrated by the archbishop of Canterbury, at Lambeth, February 4, 1787, as Bishops of the American Protestant Episcopal Church".\(^9\)

Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists also came to America where they built meeting-houses and fostered their particular tenets in the early years of American history. Those calling themselves Baptist Christians subscribed to The London Confession of Faith, prepared in 1689. Zwingli's work of 1527

formed the basis of it. The Presbyterian Confession of Faith held to Calvin's doctrines. It became authority with them when, "agreed on by the assembly of Divines at Westminster, in 1647, and ratified by Parliament in 1649 and 1690". 10

The Methodist Episcopal Church grew out of the Societies and work of John Wesley. The movement organized into Church form and set forth "The articles of Religion" in 1784. All these and others of the leading churches had established themselves in America by 1800, and the fruits of religious division immediately asserted themselves.

It was this division (of Christians) that prompted some leaders in these different organizations to advocate Christian Union in the early part of the nineteenth century. By Union, they meant a coming together of the various religious parties through adopting a name agreeable to all and lopping off all party names and tests of fellowship. Those who conceived such a Union became leaders in the Disciples' Movement, and their contribution to Christianity has been an effort toward "Uniting all the people of God on the Bible alone".

10. Ibid. p. 648.
Barton W. Stone and the Campbells, Thomas and his son, Alexander, were prominent among them. The two latter leaders began their work for a reformation in Pennsylvania and Virginia. They originally lived in Ireland and, while there, were affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. The Seceder Congregation of Washington, Pennsylvania employed Thomas Campbell as pastor immediately after his arrival in the States, but soon became suspicious of him. They stated as a basis of their suspicion "that he was disposed to relax too much of the rigidity of their ecclesiastic rules, and to cherish for other denominations feelings of fraternity and respect in which they could not share". Mr. Campbell's sympathies were strongly aroused in regard to other branches of the Presbyterian family, who had not, for a long time had an opportunity to partake of the Lord's Supper. He thought it his duty in the preparation sermon to lament the existing divisions and to suggest, "that all his pious hearers, who felt so disposed and duly prepared should without respect to party differences, enjoy the benefit of the communion season". When

12. Ibid. V. I, p. 223.
his statement was reported to the Presbytery Mr. 
Campbell was examined by them. They found him worthy
of censure for not adhering to the "Secession Testi-
mony". After their verdict, he appealed to the Synod,
and prepared the following in defense of himself be-
fore the latter body:

"For what error of immorality ought I to be
rejected, except it be that I refuse to
acknowledged obligatory upon myself, or
to impose upon others, anything as of Divine
obligation for which I can not produce a
'Thus saith the Lord'?" 13

The Synod found some flaw in the proceedings
of the Presbytery and released him from censure. Soon,
thereafter, he separated from them to become leader of
a small band who united with him on the principle,
"Where the Scriptures speak, we speak, and where the
Scriptures are silent we are silent". They then
built a meeting-house, a log cabin, three miles from
Mt. Pleasant, and on the road between Mt. Pleasant and
Washington. This group who withdrew from the Presby-
terian Synod with Thomas Campbell called themselves,

Before those happenings, Alexander Campbell,
remained in great doubt as to his possible future re-

lations to any existing religious party. This resulted from his dissatisfaction with the divided and distracted condition of religious society, and the aversion manifested by the clergy to some much needed reforms. Since, however, "a complete and radical re-formation was proposed", and that by one, too, whose judgment and piety it had become almost his nature to revere, all the difficulties of his position disappeared. By 1831 Thomas Campbell had become fully convinced by the hostility of the different parties, "that it was necessary that the Christian Association should assume the character of an independent church". He took this step very reluctantly, but eventually accepted an appointment as elder. The group then licensed Alexander Campbell to preach, and chose four deacons. None of them at that time had been immersed, but after a serious study of the Bible teaching on baptism they arrived at the conclusion that the Bible language, "We are buried with him by Baptism", means immersion. So on July 4, 1831, Thomas Campbell immersed some of the members in a deep pool in Buffalo Creek about two miles above the mouth of Brush Run.

On June 12, 1812, Alexander Campbell, his sister, and his parents arranged with Elder Luce, a Baptist minister, to immerse them. They had previously discussed with Elder Luce the condition on which they desired immersion, namely, a simple confession that "Jesus is the Son of God" without giving a religious experience. Elder Luce had at first objected to these changes, as being contrary to Baptist usage, but finally consented. In such procedure, they diverged widely from Church customs, since there was not any "of the usual forms of receiving persons into the Church upon a detailed account of religious feelings and impressions. There was not even a Church meeting to which any such 'experience' could have been related. Elders Luce and Spear, with Elder David Jones of Eastern Pennsylvania, constituted the only Baptists known to have been present."\(^{17}\) At that meeting seven were immersed, which made in all ten immersed believers in the group.

At the next meeting of the Church of Brush Run thirteen other members requested immersion. Thomas Campbell administered it on the simple confession of

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Christ as the Son of God. Soon others followed their example, and increased the number to thirty. At that juncture in their progress the great majority consisted of immersed believers. "Upon which, the other individuals who had been in the association abandoned the cause, being unwilling to follow the reformatory movement any further".\(^{18}\) Having made this start, the Campbell movement continued to grow and expand. Through evangelizing, debating and writing, it spread rapidly in Virginia and adjoining states, and finally united with Stone's followers in Kentucky.

While the Campbells were organizing in Pennsylvania and Virginia, a group of ministers in Kentucky traveled toward the same goal. B. W. Stone stood foremost among them and soon became the "father" of the movement there.

He imbibed Calvin's doctrine early in life. While embracing it, he believed "that mankind were totally depraved, that they could not believe, repent nor obey the Gospel and that regeneration was an immediate work of the Spirit, whereby faith and repentance were wrought in the heart".\(^{19}\) He testified later in life that he not only believed these doctrines, but

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accepted the conclusions to which they led: "Unconditional election and reprobation as taught in the Westminster Confession of Faith". He committed himself so fully to it that his strength failed and sighs and groans filled his days. Not in his physical nature alone did he perceive its effects, but on the heart also. Later in life he shuddered to write about it, saying, "Blasphemy rose in my heart against such a God, and my tongue was tempted to utter it. Sweat profusely burst from the pores of my body, and the fires of hell got hold of me".

While Stone vacillated in this state of agony and uncertainty, in 1791, William Hodge, a strange young preacher, addressed the people of Alamance in Guilford County, Kentucky, on the text, "God is Love". Stone became interested in Hodge's preaching, for it unlocked for him a new door of approach to God. He meditated Hodge's explanation of the text, and found many statements from the Scriptures supporting it. This resulted in his rejection of the total depravity theory in its entirety. The fruits of his new views soon expressed themselves in his life when he confessed sin and folly in disbelieving His word so long and for

20. Ibid. p. 122.
21. Ibid. p. 123.
following so long the devices of men. Finally, he said, I saw "that a poor sinner was as much authorized to believe in Jesus Christ at first as at last".22 Following this experience he found great joy in living and purposed to become a minister. He was working toward this ideal when he heard of the McGready meeting in the Cumberland territory and decided to attend it. There he first beheld a scene that was new and strange. It baffled description for many, very many, fell down, as men slain in battle, and continued for hours together in an apparently breathless and motionless state. Sometimes they revived a few moments, and exhibited symptoms of life by a deep groan, or piercing shriek, or by a prayer for mercy most fervently uttered. After lying thus for hours they obtained deliverance.23

He continued in attendance throughout the McGready meeting and returned with zeal sufficient to undertake a similar one at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in 1801. In the progress of it he made a great departure, by preaching on the text, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned". His departure lay in asserting

conditions for salvation, such that every person had equal opportunity for it.

This brought the censure of his constituents and they accused him before the Presbytery of Springfield under which he was then working. Before the date for trial arrived, others in the same territory began breaking with Calvanistic tenets. David Purviance, Marshall, Mc Nemar, and Thompson, also Presbyterian preachers, were proclaiming the doctrine of salvation offered to all men on the same conditions. The "system mongers", waiving the good these men were accomplishing, soon made war on Stone and his colleagues. The Presbytery of Springfield, Ohio, opened the attack by carrying M'Nemar through its fiery ordeal, for his anti-Calvanistic preaching. Ultimately, his case was brought before the synod, at Lexington, in the fall of 1803. During the proceedings in the case, Stone and his associates, perceived a blow aimed at all of them. After which, they drew up a protest against the proceedings, and declaring their freedom from such authority withdrew from the Synod. 24

This action placed them outside of any organized religious group and they fostered a movement that in the principal points was identical with the Campbell

movement. When the two leaders became aware of this identity they met for comparison in 1824. At first, what seemed irreconcilable differences appeared between them, but after closer investigation they found them more imaginary than real. On this point, Mr. Davis says, "they then joined hearts and hands, and God blessed them with the most important work since the apostolic age". After a number of friendly conferences between the leaders, they planned a meeting of representative men from both groups at Georgetown, Kentucky, to continue four days. This meeting was held the latter part of the year 1831. As a result of it another similar one convened in Lexington on New Year's day. Smith, commonly known in the Disciple writings as "Raccoon" John Smith, represented the Campbell group and Stone, the other. At a private conference they decided that Smith should make the first address, and that the grounds of union should be clearly set forth. Smith accepted the opportunity to deliver the introductory speech and in it said, "God has but one people on the earth. He has given them but one Book, and He therein exhorts and commands them to be one family." He then concluded

that Union must be practical, and closed with the
exhortation, "Let us, then, brethren, be no longer
Campbellite, or Stonite, or New Lights, or Old Lights,
or any other kind of lights, but let us all come to
the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the only book in
the world that can give us all the light we need".27

Stone spoke second and in conclusion offered
his hand, thereby signifying an acceptance of the con-
ditions of Union. The two groups united in sentiment
on that occasion but property transfer did not occur
until later. Thomas H. Allen visited Lexington, and
while there induced them to complete the union by
transferring "to the new Con_revation, thus formed
under the title of 'The Church of Christ', the com-
fortable meeting-house which they had previously held
under the designation of 'the Christian Church'".28

News of the Lexington meeting soon scattered
widely. Similar unions were then effected throughout
Kentucky and adjoining states. Thereafter, entire
groups as well as individuals enlisted in the movement
for Reform. Adherents within a few decades numbered
thousands and other religious bodies were giving it
attention. This discussion of their progress in Penn-

27. Richardson, R. 1G. Cit. p. 273.
28. Ibid. p. 274.
sylvania, Virginia and Kentucky has related their work to older Churches. It has also led up to the Tennessee phase, the discussion of which appears in another part of this treatise.
CHAPTER II.
SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OF THE
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The Disciples' Movement in Tennessee originated just as many factors had prepared the masses for a reformation in religion. The political, social and religious condition of the time made them ready for new ideas, and especially those of a democratic kind. The Disciple leaders grasped this opportunity to arouse the masses and present their plea as a reaction to the old order.

Among these characteristics, resistance to restraint was pronounced. The Colonists had fought England only a few decades before and supported their action by the principle that people have just grounds to revolt against the old order when it interferes with inalienable rights. This idea of opposition to restraint was easily translated from the political realm to the religious, and the period from 1800 to 1825 was characterized by the efforts of many in Tennessee and adjoining territories to secure more freedom in the church.
James O'Kelly of the Methodist Church was one of the first to attempt this. He revolted against the creation of a new organization called the "Council" and it was inspired by the same principle that brought the Revolution. An expression of it is found in one of his letters to a co-laborer shortly after the separation and shows that he was prompted in what he did by his objection to increasing power. When the controversy first began, he had no intention of a break with the Methodists. Even while the Elders of the North made him their table laugh, he was loth to go away, and said, "A Methodist I am, and how shall I change?". O'Kelly's attack, according to this, aimed not at the Methodist Church but at a tendency in it to further centralize power. Even after the breach, he considered this the result of his action and wrote,

"What have I done? Overturned government? What? The council---not Methodism. I only say no man among us ought to get into the apostle's chair with the Keys, and stretch a lordly power over the ministers and Kingdom of Christ."

The incidents which preceded this letter were that O'Kelly had for some years been one of the foremost

2. Ibid, p. 300.
preachers in the southern territory. He had travelled various circuits in Virginia and North Carolina and wielded a strong influence for Methodism. It was when the Church invested Bishop Asbury with what O'Kelly termed "one-man power" that he began to oppose. A historian of the Methodist Church trying to do justice to the memory of O'Kelly, asked his people to remember the power with which the Church had invested Bishop Asbury. In England, after the death of Mr. Wesley, appointments made by the President, were submitted to the vote of the Conference, but in America, Asbury had full power to station the preachers where he pleased; "there was no appeal whatever from his decision, and there was no earthly tribunal to which he was accountable for his actions". 3

This statement corroborates O'Kelly's and establishes the fact that he was prompted in his resistance by the same desire for democracy in religion that had obtained in the political realm. The controversy ended in the withdrawal of O'Kelly and a number of his supporters from the Methodists. They then formed a new religious group called at first

"The Republican Methodists" and later "Christians".
The separation occurred in Baltimore, November 1, 1792, at a General Conference over which Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury presided conjointly. The occasion for it came during an attempt to revise the Discipline. O'Kelly made a motion which aimed at destroying the itinerant system, by the destruction of the episcopal power in making the appointments. A long debate on this motion then ensued and it failed to carry. Upon its failure, O'Kelly and a few of his adherents withdrew and returned to Virginia. At the Conference of 1793 James O'Kelly, Rice Haggard, John Allen, and John Robertson were entered "as formally withdrawn from the Connection". Taking the opportunity for greater independence these ministers, with O'Kelly as the principal leader, perfected a separate organization. In 1794 about a thousand people entered it and more than that the next year, but the number never became large. Mr. Davis, a late historian among the Disciples sums up the movement from the viewpoint of numbers, as not a large success; and then adds, "But their principles, being true, still live in the lives of many".

5. Ibid., p. 176.
In the Cumberland section of Tennessee the same tendency toward freedom of conscience was manifested in the first years of the century, in both the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. The Presbyterians entered Tennessee among the pioneers and established presbyteries. The first form of this church in the State was Calvanistic. Presbyteries of this same people were originally formed in Ireland in 1642. When the Scotch-Irish came to America, they brought with them, "the Solemn League and Covenant the Confession of Westminster, the gloomy and stern doctrines of Calvin". Upon their coming to this country, they settled through the western district of Virginia, along the base of the Blue Ridge. From here they branched out in an overwhelming flood, covering the mountains of Tennessee and a thin skirt of Kentucky. They had a successful and enviable record through the eighteenth century until near its close. Their first presbytery organized in Tennessee in 1785, was called the Abingdon Presbytery. In it the new spirit of liberty soon began to assert itself, according to Phelan who affirms that, "From the first, the seeds of discord were implanted in the soil of Tennessee Presbyterianism".

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7. Phelan, James, History of Tennessee, p. 216.
8. Ibid, p. 216.
1791 Cossan took issue with the Presbytery on a point of discipline. In 1792 the General Assembly, in answer to a question from the Carolinas, determined, "that those persons who professed a belief in universal salvation through the mediation of Jesus Christ should not be admitted to the sealing ordinances of the gospel". This clause containing a stern restriction of conscience, became the occasion of a breach, and in 1796 a report went to the synod, that great excitement prevailed in the Abingdon Presbytery and that Charles Cummins, Edward Crawford, Samuel Doak, Joseph Lake, and James Balch had withdrawn and formed an independent Presbytery of Abingdon.

A more serious schism soon followed this first breach among the Tennessee Presbyterians. It grew out of the Great Revival begun by McGready, and ended in two new religious groups, namely, the "Stone-ites" of Kentucky, previously discussed, and the Cumberland Presbyterians of Tennessee. McGready came into Tennessee about 1800. He and two McGee brothers began a revival at the Red River meeting-house in that year which terminated in the "great revival". The meeting


at Red River began in June and soon attracted great crowds. Some of the participants brought tents and food. This gave birth to the camp-meeting idea: "the next month the first camp-meeting the world had ever seen was held at Gasper River Church in Logan County, Kentucky".11 As the numbers in attendance increased, inspiration spread and a demand was made for more preachers than the church could supply. David Rice, at that time the leading member of the Transylvania Presbytery, visited the Cumberland Country, and became convinced that the revivals were doing great good. Acting on this conviction, he made the suggestion which led to the Cumberland Churches's origin. He suggested that laymen who possessed the proper qualifications for carrying on the work should be selected to apply for membership in the presbytery. Acting on this, "Alexander Anderson, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King applied and were licensed to exhort".12

During the revival, the Cumberland Country was a part of the Transylvania Presbytery, but in 1802 it was divided and the Cumberland Presbytery established. Ten

11. Ibid., p. 223.
12. Ibid., p. 224.
ministers composed the latter, "of whom, five favored and five opposed the method of the revivals". This first point of cleavage was soon followed by doctrinal differences and out of them the Cumberland Presbyterian Church evolved. The historian asserts that "McGready, Hodge, McGee, Rankin, and McAdow, accepted the Westminister Confession of Faith in so far as they believed it agreeable with the Word of God". By the condition imposed, "they excluded the doctrine of fatality".

Both this movement and the O'Kelly movement present instances of a tendency of the settlers across the mountains to break with the old forms and enter new lines of investigation. They reveal a situation favorable to the first leaders among the Disciples of Christ in Tennessee.

Another condition that gave the Reformation leaders a ready hearing was the general religious apathy of the period. This was the result of a number of causes, among which were after-war effects, Indian menace, and lack of Bible knowledge.

Religious leaders of all the churches lamented the low moral status and spiritual apathy that prevailed

13. Ibid., P. 224.
at that period throughout the Western Territory, of which Tennessee was a part. Mr. McNemar, a zealous co-laborer of Barton W. Stone, received letters from contemporary ministers in which this is apparent. One of them admitted that he had preached with difficulty during the past winter, because his heart was little engaged. He said, "I know I am not as I ought to be, yet cannot be effected with my sad case".15 Another replied that the dead state of religion there, as well as elsewhere, was truly discouraging. He thought it a wonder of mercy that God was so kind to the "Sardis" where he lived. His own conscience smote him and caused him to exclaim, "When I look into my wretched heart, and consider how much I have dishonored God, by a dead and careless life; I have reason to cover my head in dust".16

These were written just prior to the Great Revival, and were interpreted by the receiver, Mr. McNemar, as showing a favorable condition for a great reformation. His encouragement came from the belief that a sense of the total depravity of human nature, and of the entire separation of the soul from God, prepared the way for the entrance of spiritual

life. Dr. Robert Davidson, another Presbyterian historian, corroborates these statements in an account of his people. He states that a regional advance was made by them in 1817 when the Synod of Tennessee was set off. Their expansion at the time included the Presbyteries of Union, Shiloh, West Tennessee and Mississippi.

As a preliminary to this statement he gives a most vivid picture of the apathy in religion throughout the territory. He charged the masses with indifference and worldliness to such an extent that special days of prayer and fasting were appointed in 1807, 1808, and 1809. The necessity for such meetings, according to Dr. Davidson, arose out of the low state of religion and numerous and increasing errors of the day, the neglect of ordinances and of the religious education of youth, and the growing fondness for intemperance, balls, horse-races, and theatrical amusements.

Before noticeable improvement of such conditions was possible the public mind was distracted with political matters and the War of 1812. These

17. Ibid., p. 15.
absorbed the attention of Tennesseans until peace came through the Treaty of Ghent in 1815. That this war further depressed religious life is attested by all church writers of that time. One declares it would be folly to suppose that so protracted and severe a contest could have been carried on without extensively affecting the country in all its interests. It inflicted a fatal injury on the cause of Religion.----

To so great a length was feeling carried, that a hot advocate of war could not hear a clergyman of contrary sentiments preach, or finding such a one unexpectedly in the pulpit, would leave the house. 20

A complete description of the period must in addition to the foregoing accounts, include attention to an anti-clerical attitude. Doubtless, it was provoked by ignorance of the Bible, intolerance toward other churches, and a low moral standard among the clergy.

The clergy of the period taught that they had received a miraculous call to preach and this tended toward diminishing Bible study and Bible knowledge. In order to encourage their votaries to believe this

doctrine they acted consistently with it. D. Lipscomb, one of the most reputable editors, and scholars of the early Disciples of Christ, lived among the Baptists of East Tennessee in his early life. He acquired his information of these matters through personal experience, and claims they believed that when the Lord called it was irresistible. Those called thought He would afflict until the call was obeyed, and that sooner or later the man must preach. They claimed not only a special, direct call from the Lord, but quoted the Scripture, Hebrew Vi:4, applied to the Son of God, and appropriated it to themselves.\textsuperscript{21} The minister who labored under this belief often prefaced his sermon with about these remarks:

"I do not know what I shall be able to say to you today. I can not say anything, save as the Lord gives it to me. I stand simply as his mouthpiece, what he gives to me, I will give to you."\textsuperscript{22}

It sometimes happened he would stand awhile, the imagination would refuse to work, and he would sit down, saying, "The Lord is not with me; I cannot preach for you today".\textsuperscript{23}

Although the typical Calvinist preachers of those sections engendered faith in such ideas for a time,

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, p. 27.
\end{footnotes}
their very lack of a vital message filled with Bible quotations, turned some to desire more religious knowledge. Since they did not have a store of scripture upon which to draw, they were forced to resort to imaginary tales and scenes to arouse and frighten the people. They interpreted the dire misfortunes of their own lives and the lives of their constituents as God's providential interferences. This led them to accept dreams, sickness, restlessness and other similar happenings as God's means of bringing them into his service. They thought God specifically designated which person should preach. If the one designated had no desire nor inclination for the task, God impressed it in some form that he must preach. They thought the call often came in the form of a dream, and sometimes simply as a feeling of unrest and doubt. While a person passed through these experiences distress and forebodings would oppress the mind. He would not understand the meaning of them. Often the feeling of distress and depression would so fill the heart that he was unable to sleep. He would lose his appetite, and go into a general bodily decline, all the time not knowing what was the cause, or that he
was "laboring under a call to preach". Often when he understood he was "called" the flesh was weak and he would draw back. If any sickness, mishap, or misfortune came upon him or his family in this state, he would accept it as a punishment, inflicted by the Lord, for his refusing to respond to the call.\textsuperscript{24}

These superstitious ideas were not destined to a long life, for logical Bible study, and a true interpretation of human instincts would displace them, as was soon evidenced by happenings in the lives of certain individuals. Elder John Smith and Jesse Sewell went through these experiences and then took advantage of their own plights to enlighten others.

Smith was taught to interpret misfortunes as a call to preach. After his marriage to Anna Townsend in 1806, he was soon ordained under the Calvinist creed and entered upon his duties as a minister. He received an invitation from some Baptists near Huntsville, Alabama, in 1814 to locate there and went to that region. The call was sent by his father's old friends from East Tennessee, that had located about fifteen or twenty miles from Huntsville. When they learned that a son of George Smith had come into

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, p.25.
the State, and that he was a preacher of their own faith and order, they sent him a request to come and see them, and to preach for them. They expressed at the same time the tenderest regard for the memory of his father. Smith accepted this invitation and on Saturday afternoon, January 7, 1815 went to visit these brethren and friends of the family. While he was riding toward his destination, his wife was called to the bedside of a sick neighbor that lived close by. She answered the request and during her absence a terrible tragedy occurred. When she left the cabin she took her infant, but left her three older children in the care of her brother and a younger sister. They were tired and went to bed early. About ten o'clock screams of anguish reached Mrs. Smith and she rushed back homeward to behold that the house, which was built of light poplar logs, was wrapt in fire. By the glare of the flames she saw her brother holding one little child by the hand.

News of the tragedy was borne by two messengers to her husband. As soon as they had delivered it, he set out hastily to comfort his grief stricken wife.

The thing that gave him greatest concern was to find a source for comforting her. When he resorted to his religious beliefs, whence it should have come, he was disappointed, and concluded,

"I can give her no consolation. If I tell her that our babies are glorified, the thought that possibly they were of the non-elect will only aggravate her woe." 27

He tried other subterfuges to evade the conclusion of the doctrine, but all of them failed. When he reached the spot where his house had stood, he dismounted and went to the place where she was sitting. He tried to say something to her, but the thought of reprobation choked him. They then walked to a spot out of sight and sat down. Her first words to him were, "Can you ever forgive me for leaving home as I did last night"? 28 He saw immediately that his own forebodings of the possible infant's hell had not oppressed her brain, and that all the theology of earth could not reverse her heart's decree.

After this experience John Smith was open to new religious convictions and soon met those who offered him opportunity to speak freely of a plan of salvation based on conditions for pardon. He then became a leader.

27. Ibid. p. 103.
28. Ibid. p. 104.
in the new movement, and wrought wonders even among his old constituents.

John Mulkey’s life furnishes another instance on the point under consideration. In 1809 he was preaching under the supervision of the Stockton Valley Association. He was a very pious and influential preacher among the Baptists. It is said that at that early date he converted himself in an effort to sustain Calvinism. It occurred while he was preaching on the tenth chapter of John, in William Sim’s House, on the Cumberland River, and making one of his strongest efforts to establish Calvinism. His attempted argument for it convinced him that the doctrine was false. This roused up the powers of his great mind, and caused him to express "a change in his sentiments on unconditional election and some other subjects". 29

This discussion of how the early Disciple leaders capitalized on prevailing superstition and used it to interest multitudes in Reform is furthered by an incident connected with the Sewell family. This family of East Tennessee had been for a number of generations Baptist preachers. They held the orthodox teachings of that church, but "had adopted their theories in the

milder and more reasonable type". They formed studious habits and devoted themselves to diligent reading of the Bible. William B. Sewell, the pastor of the Wolf River Church, possessed such studious traits that, coupled with a critical mind, led him to a different style of preaching from the Baptist preachers generally of that country. This distinctiveness lay, according to a biographer, in his use of "what he learned from the Bible". His manner of preaching was new to the people and interested them, and they soon set him down as destined to be one of the foremost preachers of the age. Other preachers felt reproved by their lack of Bible information as compared with his and soon began to complain that "he preached too much about and from the Bible, and not enough about the work of the grace of God in the heart and the converting power of the Holy Ghost".

A happening during the time he was regarded as a sound Baptist preacher furnishes an example of it. He and a brother preacher were away from home preaching together. As they started to meeting on Sunday morning his companion observed that Sewell had his Bible. Im-

31. Ibid., p. 54.
32. Ibid., p. 54.
mediately, he very seriously said to Sewell:

"'Brother Sewell, I am sorry to see you carry that book with you to church.'

'Why so,' asked Brother Sewell. He replied, 'I am afraid the people will think we learned our sermons out of it.'"33

The first record of a preacher's openly declaring "conditional salvation" in West Tennessee is the case of Mr. Ross. Conditional salvation is here used in antithesis of salvation through, "foreordination, predistination, and election", as defined in the Westminster Confession of Faith: The meaning of which as understood generally is,

"absolute, unconditional election, and therefore, eternal reprobation, and that a part only are embraced in the atonement of Christ--; that the doctrine of the salvation of infants is not taught in it--; and that it teaches the Holy Spirit works only on the hearts of the elect."34

Mr. Ross, while preaching the funeral of Miss Eliza Norfleet in July 1817, made such a departure as to startle his hearers. The customs of the time demanded that his case not be passed in silence, so, he was brought before a convention of delegates from churches of Red River Association in the Union meeting-house, Logan County, Kentucky. The convention charged him

33. Ibid, p. 54.
with "preaching doctrine contrary to the 'Abstract of Principles'". He answered the charge by "demanding a trial on whether they were contrary to the Bible".

Intolerance was also a characteristic of both preachers and religious groups of the period. This is so well known that it needs little exposition. This affected the masses against the clergy of the time, since they rather encouraged than discouraged it. Elder John Smith first preached in Kentucky after his change of religious views and then decided to visit his old home in Wayne County, Tennessee. On his visit there he met Isaac Denton, of whom he thought as a father in the Gospel. Denton, his old pastor, was at the time they met, on his way to an appointment. They greeted each other cordially, dismounted, and entered into conversation. This had not progressed far when Smith sought to draw Denton out relative to the former's change of views, and said to him:

"'I suppose, Brother Denton, that you have heard many unfavorable things about me--concerning my departures from the faith, and the errors into which I have run.'

36. Ibid, p. 691.
'I have, Brother John,' said Denton, and I was grieved--deeply grieved--to hear them.""37

They passed from these remarks within a brief space to a point of controversy for Denton said to Smith,

"'But you are gone - you are gone - John!' 'Where to, Brother Denton?" quickly asked Smith. 'From the faith of the Baptists!' as quickly rejoined Denton. 'Well,' said Smith, 'I will tell you truthfully the whole route I have traveled: I have gone from the Philadelphia Confession of Faith to the Bible as my only guide in matters of religion.""38

Upon Smith's last assertion, Denton immediately retorted, 'I have set down Alexander Campbell, John, as the most corrupt man in the world'.39 By this allusion Denton sought to divert the conversation. Smith had previously heard that the Clear Work meeting-house had been closed against him, and refusing to have the conversation diverted, forced Denton's admission that it was. To this Denton also added, "you will not be allowed to speak there".40 After Denton's last remark their interview grew more argumentative until they took unfriendly leave of each other. The last word that either spoke to the other in this parting was Denton telling Smith not to attempt to preach in Clear

37. Williams, op. cit., p. 405.
38. Ibid., p. 405.
Fork meeting-house.

This form of intolerance belonged not only to preachers but was practiced in the home almost to the extent of disowning children. John Carr, in his "Early Times in Middle Tennessee" cites the case of John McGee of North Carolina as an instance of it. His parents were of the strict Presbyterian sort. By association with the Methodists he was convinced, "of the necessity of a change of heart". He joined the Methodists and wrote home that the Lord had done great things for him and that he had become a preacher among the Methodists. Upon receiving this news, "his mother was almost distracted, and at times seriously thought of disowning him".  

Another incident in John Smith's life also illustrates this intolerance in the home. One of the things that concerned him most was how to reconcile his mother to his action. He knew conditions of the times so well that he realized the importance of having this question solved before seeing her. On his first visit after rejecting Calvinism, he had scarcely been greeted by her when she introduced the matter, saying:

41. Carr, J. Early Times in Middle Tennessee, p. 108.
"They tell me John that you have left us! They say that you deny the good Spirit that once gave you peace, and that you tell sinners that water can wash away their sins! For a long time I would not believe them; but why didn't you wait till your poor old mother was dead and gone?"42

Smith admitted to her that his mind had undergone some change with reference to certain doctrines once held true. He as firmly denied the accusation relative to what he told sinners, by answering:

"I do not teach nor believe such things. I have never denied the Spirit, nor taught that water can wash away sins."43

He then clinched his point by making an argument for tolerance, that she could not answer. In kind words he told her that he would be glad to continue a Baptist on her account, but added, "I could not then be true to my convictions of duty". He told her that it pained him to know that he was wounding the feelings of his mother, and offered what he regarded as a fair proposition. He told her that he would turn back and preach Calvinism as faithfully as he ever did, if she would agree to answer for him in the day of judgment.44

In addition to the foregoing citations

43. Ibid, p. 411.
44. Ibid, p. 411.
of intolerance, we add other cases selected from Mr. Carr. They substantiate what has been gathered from church historians in two particulars, namely, a lack of vitalized message, as well as intolerance. While tracing the spread of Presbyterianism in Tennessee, he described the congregation at Shiloh, near Gallatin, in Sumner County. William McGee, their pastor, was a good man, but with but few exceptions he preached to a cold, dead people. These Presbyterians generally were bitter persecutors of the Methodists. After speaking of their pastor as "a good man," and complimenting his learning, he concludes, "his preaching was lifeless and without power—a dull, formal affair."

Another element that belonged to religion in the early part of the nineteenth century was emotionalism. This strongly characterized the McGready meeting and its successors. They introduced it, and used it more effectively than any preceding religious workers. The testimony of various writers who participated in these meetings is extant, and all agree in their assertions regarding it. The most extreme display of it came in connection with certain physical exercises

46. Ibid, p. 66.
called "the Jerks". Preceding the "Jerks" the subject fell to the ground, generally with a piercing scream. These demonstrations occurred in the Red River Congregation as early as 1799. Of the scene there John McGee said, "The floor was soon covered with the slain". 47 The jerks affected different members of the body. No one attending the meetings could resist. All classes, saints and sinners, wise as well as ignorant, were subjected to these exercises and their accompanying manifestations of singing, shouting, crying, leaping, and dancing. They occurred at church, at home, on the road, and in the forest, and attracted the attention of the people of the whole world. 48 As has been stated before, both Presbyterians and Methodists united in this type of camp-meeting, but the Methodist preachers seemed to adopt these exciting and emotional methods to a greater extent than others. One of their historians presents a vivid account of the preparation for them. They usually selected a square plot with a shelter in the center. These shelters were sometimes sufficiently spacious to accommodate thousands of persons. A pulpit was erected at one end. In front of

47. Garrett and Goodpasture, History of Tennessee, p. 158.
the pulpit was the altar: this was designed as a place for penitents, where they might be collected together for prayer and religious instruction. This altar was usually made of poles, or square pieces of hewn timber placed on posts, at the four corners, with openings for passage. Inside the altar were seats, called by many the "mourner's bench". At the close of the sermon or exhortation, an invitation was given for mourners, or penitents, to come to the altar.\footnote{49}

It was amid such influence that shouting and various other excitements found their place as agencies in conversion. Methodist ministers have ever placed a high estimate on their value according to a late writer who gives as his verdict, that the good accomplished at these meetings will never in time be properly estimated. "They were extraordinary occasions, adapted to the times, and were, under God, a great blessing."\footnote{50}

B. W. Stone, of the Disciples, visited the McGready Meeting, and at first approved this use of emotionalism. On his return to Kentucky he conducted a similar one at Cane Ridge, Bourbon County. The same exercises and demonstrations accompanied his meeting.

\footnote{50} \textit{Ibid}, p. 339.
that had characterized the McGready meeting. He also considered it a good work, the work of God. In later years he said of it, "Much did I then see, and much have I since seen, that I considered to be fanaticism; but this should not condemn the work". 51 Although his first meetings, he soon supplemented it. He perceived the inefficiency of it during a meeting at Concord, Kentucky. Mourners collected before the stand every day for prayers. Petitions were being offered for them, but none seemed to be comforted. The same people came daily. In his meditations on this situation and considering what could be the cause, he said that the words of Peter at Pentecost rolled through his mind, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost". He thought, "were Peter here, he would thus address these mourners". So he quickly arose and addressed them in the same language, and urged them to comply. 52 From this start he gradually lessened his emphasis on the emotional and placed it more on scriptural commandments to convict sinners.

52. Ibid, p. 61.
In adopting the altar of prayer Stone was an exception among the leaders of the Disciples. The Reformation movement in the main was a reaction against it and its connections. To show this, we relate an occurrence in the work of T. Fanning. It presents strikingly the reaction of the Disciples in their early years: He attended a meeting in Franklin County, five miles southwest of Winchester, in 1832. The Disciples there had prepared straw and other accoutrements for mourners. During a recess of the meeting Mr. Fanning secured help, gathered up the straw and things pertaining to the service, carried them off and threw them down the hill. When the audience assembled, he preached a discourse against the whole system of getting religion and these exercises. By this method he stopped those disciples from calling mourners to be prayed for that they might be converted.53

It was upon this background of lethargy and formalism among the Calvinistic Presbyterians and Baptists; of stress on emotionalism and feelings among the Methodists; of intolerance and division among all that the Disciples of Christ launched their movement in Tennessee.

CHAPTER III.
THE DISCIPLES IN TENNESSEE TO 1840
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The three major divisions of Tennessee affected the progress of the Disciples of Christ in the State. The location of cities, distribution of population, and customs of each section modified the Reformation in religion the same as history in general. Middle Tennessee embraced the movement earlier than either of the other sections and became a hub for it. Disciple Churches abounded in it, while the movement was in infancy in East Tennessee and West Tennessee.

The first traces of it in Middle Tennessee existed in the counties of Wilson, Sumner, and Marshall. The leaders in them were Joshua K. Speer and B. W. Stone, who claimed that they began without being influenced by Campbell. J. W. Grant in an unpublished document prepared for the Tennessee Historical Society could find no earlier record than these. After he had completed an intensive investigation of Disciple origins he concluded, "That men here in the State, in the various religious parties then existing
here, learned from a study of 'the Book', and advocated in their teaching, the principles pleaded for in the Reformation.¹ To demonstrate this, he gave as examples the congregation of worshipers claiming to be simply Christians and identified with no sect or party organized at Bethlehem, in Wilson County, as early as 1815; also, the congregation at Liberty, in Marshall County, which separated from the Richland Association of United Baptists in 1823. Their "communing with brethren who were called Christians, and assisting to set apart a deacon in that Church" was given in explanation of it.²

B. W. Stone pleaded for Reform in Tennessee many years before Campbell visited the State. S. E. Jones, a minister and educator among the Disciples in later years, interviewed Mr. Charles Ragan of Sumner County regarding Stone's visits there and learned that he preached first in the fifth civil district in 1811 on the farm of H. P. Jones. From there he went to a place near where the village of Roganna now stands and preached on Bledsoe Creek. While at the latter place,

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¹ Grant, J. W.: A Sketch of the Reformation in Tennessee, p. 3.
² Ibid., pp. 4, 5.
"Stone was accompanied by Brethren Craighead and Doddridge". After leaving Bledsoe Creek he went to Hopewell. The informant certified that "there were additions at both places but the number is not known". 3

Stone entered Wilson County in 1815, and perfected an organization of Disciples. This group, the Bethlehem Church, continued to cherish the unique distinction thus given them as late as 1845. In kind remembrance of his labors they wrote: "The Church at Bethlehem, (Wilson County) has been organized for about thirty years. Father Stone used to preach at this place." 4

D. Lipscomb, a late and well known editor among the Disciples, confirmed this account of Stone's early preaching in Wilson County, in an article to The Gospel Advocate in memory of David C. Bills and wife. His acquaintance with these two pioneer Disciples was very intimate and he spoke of them as "Father and Mother Bills". He stated that they were among the first to espouse the cause of the Reformation in Middle Tennessee. He gave 1830 as the date of it, and said, "they embraced the Gospel under the preaching

3. Ibid., p. 10.
of Barton W. Stone, and cast their lots with the brethren of the Reformation. A congregation was then formed and set in order a half mile from where Wilson Hill Church now stands in Marshall County."

Davidson County also occupied a prominent place in the early history of the movement in the State. Its distinction resulted from other connections than priority alone. It had within it the strong Nashville Church which A. Campbell frequently visited. The History of the Movement in Davidson County in the earlier years is composed principally of the history of the church in Nashville. Because of this, the origin and growth of the latter will be portrayed in greater detail than that of others. Goodspeed's History of Nashville sketches it in connection with the work of Phillip S. Fall, and states that the "history of the first Church of the Disciples in Nashville is inseparably connected with the history of the First Baptist Church". This relationship grew out of Mr. Fall's influence and teaching. After the pulpit had been vacant for more than a year, he was called from Louisville, Kentucky, in 1825 to be pastor. He was

an Englishman of attractive personality and eloquence. At the time of his call to Nashville, he made no secret of a change in his views upon certain doctrines which the Baptists had uniformly maintained, but had no intention of separating from the Baptist Church.7

Among the first unusual statements made by him that tended toward a change of the Nashville Church was, "No congregation is worshiping according to the New Testament unless it partakes of the Lord's Supper on every Lord's day."8 To test the scriptural authority of this statement his congregation made a special study of this part of the worship during the year 1827, and decided to partake of the Supper weekly.

When the Nashville Baptist Church first began to tend toward what was called "Campbellism", the Mill Creek Church was requested to take action. The former refused to appear before its bar, and then adopted the ordinance of weekly communion. The minority, composed of three dissenters, were powerless to do anything, so they withdrew, and the First Baptist Church of Nashville became the first Disciples' Church. The full form of the Disciple worship was adopted in

7. Ibid., p. 494.
8. Ibid., p. 495.
May 1828, and the entire Baptist Creed repealed. The Church at that time had a membership of about 450. Below is the resolution which they adopted and incorporated in their proceedings in explanation of this change:

"The congregation resolved to reject all human creeds or Confessions of faith and to adopt the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and practice to be governed thereby: That they will in the future, in imitation of Apostolic Churches, meet for worship every Lord's day, to break the loaf, unite in reading the Scripture, prayers, praise and contribution for the support of the poor saints, and that all persons making truly the confession required by the Apostles, be received by immersion for the remission of their sins into the Church."  

After the Nashville Church had worked for one year apart from the Concord Association, they presented themselves again to be admitted into that body. The spirit of this presentation and its acceptance are impressive, and exhibit a trend in Tennessee at that time toward new ideas in Religion. When the Nashville Church decided to present itself to the said association, it tried to prohibit any future misunderstanding with that organization by a mutual interpretation of the latter's constitution. To

9. History and True Position of Church of Christ in Nashville, p. 5.
effect this they quoted from the Association's code of government, published in 1825, which declared "that the Association shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, neither shall it have any ecclesiastical power, or infringe upon any of the internal rights of the churches".10

The Nashville Church expressed its willingness to unite with the Association if they agreed as to the meaning of the above statement. They then defined their understanding of it in the following clear manner:

"that the Association has no power to determine what any church shall receive as her creed or confession at all, other than the Bible; and consequently that she has no power to lord it over God's heritage, as to condemn any church for holding or teaching any scriptural truths, though they be at variance with the opinions of this body concerning such truths."11

Finally they repeated these explanations in their conclusion in a more brief form that incorporated the essence of it all, "We look upon our constitution as guaranteeing to every church connected with it, a full, free, and unmolested liberty of conscience".12 The Concord Association accepted the Nashville Church on

11. Ibid., V. 4, p. 330.
12. Ibid., V. 4, p. 330.
this interpretation of the constitution, an action that gave both a unique relationship.

For some time after this union the sources of information on the internal work of the Nashville Church are few. Critics on the outside ceased their criticizing and allowed them to conduct their affairs smoothly and quietly. The Nashville Disciples were uncertain as to why they didn't hear as many things said against them as at first. "Whether our peaceable and inoffensive conduct towards our brethren has put them to shame, or whether they have given us over as lost, is the cause of our present quietude, I cannot say."\(^\text{13}\)

As previously stated, Mr. Campbell used the Nashville Church as an agency through which to obtain his personal contact with Tennessee. He came to Nashville first from Bowling Green, Kentucky, in December, 1830. On the trip J. Creath, Jr., accompanied him. They arrived in the Capitol city on Friday, December 10, and in the evening of that day he delivered an address on "The Characteristics of Apostasy and the Mystery of Iniquity". He contrasted these with primitive Christianity. At the close of his discussion, he

announced that he would speak the following evening. His presence in Nashville attracted large audiences, among whom were the clergy of the city. Because of this, he proposed, in connection with an announcement of a second appointment, that he would attend to any inquiries or objections which persons might have to offer. When the time arrived, after some inquiries proposed by J. Creath had been noticed, Mr. Jennings, the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Nashville, rose and controverted Mr. Campbell's views of faith, as merely a "natural faith". He advocated a faith produced by a "supernatural operation". When Mr. Jennings had finished, Mr. Campbell replied in an orderly manner and then the audience was dismissed.

The next day, December 11, Campbell delivered an address on Ephesians 4, after which ten persons came forward and were immersed in the Cumberland River in the presence of an immense crowd. The day following, he left the city in company with P. S. Fall and visited Franklin and Columbia.

On December 21, they returned, and Mr. Campbell continued to lecture each evening. During the

Richardson, R: op. cit., V. II., p.338.
latter part of his stay, he was again challenged by Mr. Jennings and they arranged a formal discussion for December 25, at ten o'clock. On the 28th he left for home. In addition to the general influence that followed his discussions with Mr. Jennings, more than thirty persons accepted his teaching during his visit to Nashville, "and the cause of the Reformation was greatly strengthened". 15

Between 1830 and 1835 nothing of particular interest happened in the Nashville Church. This was a period of steady growth in numbers and of improving internal organization. By 1835 some false impressions and misrepresentations of Campbell were extant, and he visited Nashville a second time. His daughter, Lavinia, accompanied him on this tour, and both spent several weeks in Nashville and vicinity. This trip grew out of the necessity for "disabusing the public mind of the false impressions made upon it by the misrepresentations of his opponents". 16 In order to do this he traveled to other districts surrounding Nashville. At all the places he visited, great crowds flocked to hear him, so that it was seldom any house

15. Ibid., V. II, p. 343.
16. Ibid., V. II, p. 400.
could be found large enough to accommodate them.\textsuperscript{17}

In Nashville alone twenty persons were added to the Church during his second visit. This brought the total number there to about six hundred. Mr. Campbell left Nashville highly pleased with the progress the Reformation was making there as well as in the surrounding districts. What had been accomplished in the latter resulted from the work of a preacher whose name seldom received mention, a Mr. Hardin. Mr. Campbell's appreciation of him evidenced itself in a report that, "He found several new churches in the vicinity, established through the influence and labors of a Brother Hardin, of whose piety and devotion he entertained a high opinion".\textsuperscript{18}

From its beginning, the Nashville Church of Christ fostered missionary work. Its early method of doing this was through the elders of the local congregation. The first churches did not organize to spread their doctrine, but each one, as its internal strength grew, selected and supported men in the field. The Nashville Church furnished a good instance of this plan. Mr. Fall, the minister in charge when it

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid., V. II, p. 400.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Ibid., V. II, p. 400.
\end{itemize}
adopted Reform, remained in Nashville until 1831. By that date many of the members were able and willing to enter the mission field. They developed into leadership during the absence of a pastor and became efficient in conducting services. Among them, "Moses Norvell, Henry Ewing, A. C. Ewing, were prominent in the management of affairs, and a more intelligent, zealous, and happy church could not be found". 19

According to reports to various church periodicals, Davidson, Maury, Wilson, Rutherford, Bedford, Marshall, Giles and adjoining counties presented a cluster of congregations by 1840. Also, to the east Smith, White, Warren, Van Buren and Bledsoe formed a second array that readily heard the Disciples' plea. (See map, p. 122)

Maury County was surpassed only by Davidson in density of Disciples. D. Lipscomb observed this unique relationship of them and said: "Probably the largest number of Christians outside of Davidson County is in Maury County. In this county thirty years ago there were five churches, most of them weak

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in number, now there are twenty-three churches."

Reports from Maury claimed that four congregations originated there before 1840. Some of them are incomplete as to evangelists and the exact year they began but their names and a few other facts are given in the following: Cathey's Creek began in 1832. During a meeting there in July of 1834 conducted by James N. Brown there were ten additions, and the total increase of the year was seventy. Berlin, northeast of Columbia, started in 1836. Joshua K. Speer planted the seeds of the Reformation there and reported: "I have planted another congregation northeast of Columbia this year. They number about fifty, mostly new converts." Philippi organized in 1838. A. P. Craig conducted their revival and converted eighteen by his efforts. Lasoe began in 1832, but no other information about it was contributed until 1838, when nineteen were added during a meeting at that place.

Marshall County bordered Maury on the east and Giles on the south. Reform principles entered them at an early date and became deeply entrenched by

23. Ibid., V. 7, p. 85.
1840, Marshall included Wilson Hill, Berea, Cedar Creek, Liberty, Lewisburg, Robinson's Fork, and Green Hill. Berea was the first to be organized in the county. It began about 1816 through the efforts of Joshua K. Speer. He introduced the movement at Cedar Creek, also.

Liberty is reputed to have started about 1823. By 1840 it was in a flourishing condition. Willis Hopwood reported his meeting there in that year as fraught with satisfactory results: "Yesterday a meeting closed at Liberty meeting-house (the church where my membership is). During the meeting there were about fifty persons immersed, and several of the old Baptists added who have stood aloof for years."25

The congregation at Green Hill, near Liberty, was functioning during the thirties, for the same writer announced thirty immersions there during August, 1840, and adds that, "Brothren Centrell and Griffing, our evangelists, myself and some others attended part of the time."26 Robinson's Fork, nine miles from Liberty increased fifty in membership the same year. So, by

24. Ibid., V. 9, p. 475.
1840, Marshall County was dotted by a number of growing bands of Disciples. Willis Hopwood, Evangelist for the county, was active in extending the movement to every district.

Liberty Union and Robertson's Fork in Giles County adopted Reform principles while the movement was still in its infancy. Liberty Union preceded the other by about three years. Our first record of it, written in 1832, stated that during a four-day meeting of "the Disciples of Christ" there in May "the cause of reform was powerfully pled". Some peculiar characteristics of that meeting, according to the writer were: first, such love and harmony prevailed that it exerted a good influence on all the country; second, many old men pled Reform. So noticeable did the latter become, that the writer expressed his surprise, "to see so many old men; for we expect to see the young more susceptible to change than the old. Yet amongst the Reformers are not only the young, but many of the middle-aged and venerable fathers in the land." 27

No such detailed information abounds about the conditions prevailing at Robertson's Fork. A zealous

evangelist, B. W. White, included it in his itinerary in 1848 and added twenty to its original membership.28

The counties of Bedford, Rutherford, and Wilson lie east of Davidson and Maury. J. K. Speer and Willis Hopwood labored to establish the movement in them. They co-operated in a meeting at Rock Creek, Bedford County, as early as 1832. Their efforts resulted in thirty converts, and they judged that the Reformation was progressing there. Their preaching convinced even the elderly members of other religious groups. Hopwood rejoiced that among the converts were not only two of his own children, but "a Cumberland Presbyterian Elder, of good standing in that sect".29 He expressed delight to observe that "many of the intelligent espouse the cause of Reform". Within twelve miles of Livinston in Rutherford County were four congregations. Hopwood preached to all of them. The four had six hundred members by 1835 and ten public speakers. They had not advanced to the full form of Disciple practice at that time, for he said, "I think they do not break the loaf at any one of them every Lord's day; but seem to be

28. Ibid., V. 6, p. 119.
29. Ibid., V. 5, p. 285.
moving a little forward, for all talk of doing it monthly, and they will mingle." 30

Rutherford County in the early thirties became a stronghold for the Reformers. The names of two churches appear in reports from there as early as 1832. During that year Rock Spring, "by a vote of ninety-seven to three abandoned Human Creeds, and went forward in Reform". 31 In less than a year after this action its growth had been remarkable, according to Peyton Smith who preached there and reported one hundred and forty immersions since his last communication; "thirty-two at Rock Spring in the last four days meeting". 32

Smith's friend, F. E. Becton, Jr. of the same county supplemented the early annals of that county by relating the incidents connected with Smith's becoming a Reformer. The latter and some of his colleagues repeated in Tennessee practically the same course that was taken by leaders in other States. Originally Smith and other church leaders in that section belonged to the Concord Association of Separate Baptists. Smith, C. Curtis and some of their associates went before the Association to get honorable release

30. Ibid., V. 3, p. 471.
31. Ibid., V. 3, p. 471.
32. Ibid., V. 4, p. 93.
from membership in it. They understood that their views were not consistent with those held by the Association and that unless they got released they could not escape injurious publicity. Letters of dismissal in full fellowship were granted them but they were excluded from preaching in the house. After the vote had been taken they retired to a neighboring grove, half a mile off, and addressed an audience that followed them. Four professed faith and one lady was immersed at the service.33

After this occurrence, Smith became a zealous evangelist among the Disciples and was a factor in the origin of congregations in other places.

Readyville, also in Rutherford County, had an early origin. Smith, himself, contributed information about it in 1832. During a four-days meeting ten accessions resulted. Curlee, Bowman, Berry, Hubbard, Dr. Becton, Sweat, Davis, Griffing, Harris and Flemming attended.34

Murfreesboro, of Rutherford, came in Flemming's itinerary in 1832, but he encountered strong opposition there. In the face of it he received encouragement by

33. Ibid., V. 4, p. 90
34. Ibid., V. 3, p. 515.
"having scarcely a meeting without some additions". 35

In 1833 he returned to Murfreesboro for a second meeting. His report of it stated that the Church of Christ there was composed of more than forty Disciples, about fifteen of whom had been introduced into the Kingdom by immersion since the first of March. 36

J. C. Anderson and his co-laborer, T. C. Griffin, followed Fanning at Murfreesboro. They preached there in 1835, as a result of which: "the day before ten were immersed; and a few days before that, four others; and at nearly every meeting, I and Brother T. C. Griffin have some make the good confession". 37

Albert G. Branham contributed most of the information concerning the Disciples in Wilson County. In the late forties he made an effort to obtain statistics on the churches and report the extent of their progress. Some of his findings are incorporated in an unpublished manuscript by J. W. Grant. He learned the system of worship in each congregation and whether it supported an evangelist, in addition to the date and circumstances of its organization. He was informed that Bethlehem, the oldest Church in Wilson County,

35. Ibid., V. 3, p. 471.
36. Ibid., V. 4, p. 473.
37. Ibid., V. 6, p. 569.
began to meet weekly just a year before his visit. Their original plan was a monthly meeting to hear preaching. A "Brother Warren" usually preached to them on Lord's day. "Besides their weekly contribution they have given Brother Trott seventy-five dollars yearly, for two years, allowing him to preach where he thinks best." 38

The church at Rutland's meeting-house, also in Wilson County, allied with the Disciples in 1832. Their history presents striking similarity to the church of the Disciples in Nashville. They separated from the Baptist Church of that place "by laying aside their abstract of principles, and agreeing to be governed by the Bible alone." 39 After their separation they and the Baptists held equal shares in the house. They continued for some time to meet tri-monthly, but advanced under the preaching of their elder, Edward Sweat to monthly meetings. Their custom on Lord's day, as reported by Branham, was, "after singing and prayer, usually by the elder, they hear a discourse from him, break bread and retire. They give no special sum to the spread of the Gospel. They are somewhat scattered,

39. Ibid., p. 18.
but none would have to ride over five miles to meet, which would be a small task if their soul longed and panted after the tabernacle of the Lord. Edward Sweat spread the Reformation in the surrounding territory and reported in 1833 that "about one hundred had been added in the last five months".

At Franklin even more stubborn opposition was encountered than at Murfreesboro. Fanning, though one of the ablest among the Disciples and aided by Adams in 1833, scarcely succeeded in establishing his cause. Other churches attempted to keep their members from attending. "To effect this the Baptists and Methodists had meetings every day and night during our stay; though notwithstanding their opposition, we had crowded and intelligent congregations all the time." They converted and immersed seventeen during the week, and in addition aroused interest in organizing a church. Before their departure this interest matured in an assembly of citizens on the closing day at the Masonic Hall, "to see if it were possible for a church to be formed on the word of God". There, for the first time, they saw "sixteen intelligent disciples give themselves

40. Ibid., p. 18.
42. Ibid., V. 4, p. 526.
to each other to worship according to the Apostles' teaching". In September of that year thirty-three others were added, which made a sufficient number for an efficient organization. White Hill of Williamson received early mention but no details of the congregation were given.

J. K. Speer in 1833 began to lament the practice of many evangelists of his day. He criticized their lack of system and follow-up work. Among other things he said, "Without doubt the Reformation is suffering greatly on this account. I fear too many of our proclaimers are to be blamed upon this subject." In connection with the above report from Speer's pen we learn that his membership was at Berea. He stated that "Brother Hopwood and myself immersed something over two hundred last year in our section. Have immersed several at Berea, the place of my membership." At the latter place Fanning and Speer together reported total additions in 1833 to be sixty-three.

Perry County came within the scope of evangelists prior to 1840, but they entered from West Tennessee.

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43. Ibid., V. 4, p. 526.
44. Ibid., V. 4, p. 234.
45. Ibid., V. 4, p. 234.
46. Ibid., V. 4, pp. 431-526.
Because of this, its discussion will be linked with the West Tennessee division.

A group of counties in the Cumberland district embraced Reformation principles but a few years later than their neighboring counties just to the West of them. Bledsoe, Jackson, Smith, Warren, and White formed a connecting link between Davidson and Maury of Middle Tennessee and the counties in the extreme east. Sarah Higginson Spicer wrote from Lebanon Mills, Warren County, in 1834, that she had recently changed her religious views; that after living ten years an acceptable member of the Methodist Church, she concluded she never submitted to "New Testament Baptism". Her statement attributed her change of views to her own efforts: "I read the Book and concluded I never had New Testament Baptism. I heard A. Anderson preach and was immersed by him."47 Immediately following this she revealed the intolerance of that day, for her change, she says, "incurred the displeasure of most of her relations".

By 1835 McMinnville in Warren County had two citizens who enlisted as proclaimers. Robert G.

47. Ibid., V. 5, p. 45.
Spicer, one of the two, stated that six had recently been converted there and a "Brother Carter" had promised to travel the next year. He closed by saying, "I expect to devote a considerable portion of my time to proclaiming the Word."\(^{48}\)

At Meadow Fork, a third congregation of Disciples organized in 1833, but no details of their work were furnished.

W. D. Carnos, a prominent scholar among the Disciples, reported the status of the work in Bledsoe County in 1834, saying that, "Two or three congregations in this county meet every first day to keep the ordinances. Opposition is strong, but many promising young people in the county are devoted to the work."\(^{49}\)

He conducted a meeting in Bledsoe in 1835. Randolph and Mulkey aided in it and eleven adopted their views.

Five separate groups in Jackson County identified themselves with the Reformation in its early years. Liberty, the first to do so, started in 1825. In 1845 a reporter said, "Brother John Mulkey organized it about twenty years ago". By the latter year their worship was irregular. They assembled only twice a month, had no weekly contribution and gave no special sum to evangelists. One of their elders, "Brother Lawson" delivered

\(^{48}\) Ibid., V. 6, p. 141.

\(^{49}\) Ibid., V. 6, p. 142.
an address weekly. 50

At Bagdad in 1836 weekly meeting was the practice. A member of the group who lived at Fort Blount, six miles from Bagdad, said: "We occasionally have accessions, and would have more than we do if the people generally were better informed upon the subject of the Reformation." 51

Smyrna Disciples started about ten years later than Liberty. When Braham reached them in 1845, they assembled bi-monthly to hear a discourse and break bread. At that time John Harris had been set apart as an evangelist, and had some monthly appointments. 52

The last of the organizations of Jackson County within the period was Talley's Old Field. The date of its beginning was but little later than Smyrna, since the report says it began about fourteen years before the record was made. The short notice concerning it reads, "The church at Talley's Old Field was planted about fourteen years ago. Erasmus Gow preaches for them monthly and they break bread twice a year." 53

51. MIl. Harb., V. 6, p. 361.
53. Ibid., p. 21.
The number of organized groups in the East Tennessee counties during the period of study were few. One at Buffalo in Carter County increased in membership from forty to one hundred during 1833. The reporter said much opposition was encountered there, "but truth is prevailing". 54

At Athens, in McMinn, Mr. C. W. K. Welsh experienced a severe form of intolerance in 1832. He went there to initiate reform and Mr. Pope, a Presbyterian preacher attended the first service. He asked of Mr. Welsh permission to speak first. It was granted and he used the opportunity to denounce "me and all whom I fellowshiped, as Arians and heretics of the deepest shade; and when he had finished his discourse, he dismissed the congregation, charging his hearers not to hear me". 55 Mr. Pope then walked out, followed by most of his adherents, but the outrage caused great excitement there. By 1835 the number of Disciples at McMinn had increased sufficient for two congregations of sixty each. Their form of worship was identical with that in general; they met on Sunday of each week,

55. Ibid., V. 3, p. 608.
"and many of them were in high standing among men". 56

These two constitute the only group reports from East Tennessee. Randolph, Mulkey, and Carnes visited Rhea and Roane Counties in 1835. They added eleven during a meeting in the former and twenty-one in the latter. 57

West Tennessee was evangelized from Southern Kentucky and Middle Tennessee. Roane's Creek in Carroll County was the first church of Disciples of Christ in the western district. The earliest account of it appearing in any periodical was sent in by John R. Howard in 1834, but Goodspeed recorded 1825 as the year it began. Tradition in the community confirms it as the date, for in 1925 a centennial of its organization was commemorated by the church. Mr. Howard's report of it in 1834 gave no information concerning its origin, but merely stated their condition at that time:

"There is a congregation of our brethren in the neighborhood (Roane Creek) composed of about forty brothers and sisters, living in great union and harmony; but they have not yet commenced meeting together, as did the first Christians to keep the Lord's day, by fellowship, breaking of the loaf, and prayer." 58

56. Ibid., V. 4, p. 574.
57. Ibid., V. 6, p. 422.
58. Ibid., V. 5, p. 523.
This group had the usual annual protracted meeting, for in 1840 a report stated that there had been twenty additions. 59

During the early period two places were prominent in the western district as centers of Disciple effort; namely, Paris, in Henry County, and Adamsville, in McNairy County. From these counties evangelists went to nearby areas and spread their doctrine. John R. Howard of Paris occupied chief place in that vicinity as a proclaimer of Reform doctrine. Allen Kendrick worked in McNairy and adjoining counties. In the latter part of the period they were aided by Trott and others sent by the Middle Tennessee Disciples.

In 1834 the group of Disciples at Paris was small, but they began to assemble and formed a nucleus for initiating the movement there. W. Z. Goodman reported only three at the time of his moving into the territory. From the time he and his wife located there in January of 1834, the five assembled faithfully for ten months, and throughout the period did not hear one of their preaching brethren. J. McCall brought

59. Ibid., V. 11, p. 183.
joy to them when he visited Paris in November and "commenced proclaiming the glorious gospel of the Son of God".  

Mr. Goodman did not inform us from what place J. McCall came. It seems probable, however, that he was a native of West Tennessee. He continued his work at Paris until a church began, and was therefore its planter. By November 17, fourteen conversions had resulted and the nineteen Disciples of the place organized a church. McCall was influenced by their solicitude and "the warmth of sectarian opposers" to remain till the twenty-sixth. During that week, "He continued to teach and baptize for the remission of sins, the result of which was, that some half dozen of our Methodist friends were immersed, and some Presbyterians".

Not only did the newness of the message in Paris attract hearers, but the inclemency of the November weather furnished opportunity for additional advertising of the meeting. During its progress, snow covered the ground, and thereby made an unusual background for the baptizing services. This, however, did not cool the ardor of either the minister or candidates,

60. Ibid., V. 5, p. 45.
61. Ibid., V. 5, p. 45.
but brought out many observers.

On one evening when three young men were to be baptized the ground lay under a carpet of snow. The crowd at the water's brink was estimated to be one hundred and fifty. Early the following morning a lady in town sent for the minister to immerse her. A number of the citizens repaired to the place of immersion, saying as they went, "It was so cold it would put her faith to the test".62 She was immersed and returned home through the snow. The final result in numbers added was twenty-five. Among them was "one of the first standing in society". This was, doubtless, John R. Howard, for in a report from him just a few months later he referred to his immersion at the age of twenty-six by McCall.63

McCall's success at Paris provoked other ministers to visit the town. Before many months had passed John R. Howard said that they had a big meeting on a certain Saturday and Sunday and that "Brethren Mansel W. Matthews, Allen Kendrick, Samuel Giles, Lynn, D'Spain, and myself were present as proclaimers. Nine made the good confession and were immersed, among them

62. Ibid., V. 5, p. 45.
63. Ibid., V. 5, p. 378.
three Methodists. One of them was an old lady and had been in their society twenty-three years. 64

Mount Vista the second place in Henry County to adopt the new movement organized in 1838, Thomas Potts reported the origin of the congregation there, saying, "A congregation was organized at this place last winter. It consists of fifteen members, and has two elders and one deacon." 65

Paris and Mount Vista constituted the total for Henry County during the period. Almost from the first Paris took the lead as a center of missionary activity, and ministers went from there into Henderson, Carroll, Gibson, and Perry Counties.

In 1834 John R. Howard visited Crooked Creek, Perry County, and found about forty Disciples there. 66 Allen Kendrick conducted a meeting at the same place in 1835 which resulted in three additions. 67 The second group in Perry that identified with the Disciples congregated on Buffalo Creek. They attributed their origin to John Hooten of Hickman. Howard's description of the latter pioneer placed him among the illiterate, but it does no discredit to his force as a reformer.

64. Ibid., V. 5, p. 378.
65. Ibid., V. 5, p. 283.
66. Ibid., V. 5, p. 523.
67. Ibid., V. 6, p. 431.
He described him as, "entirely illiterate, but mighty in the scriptures, full of zeal and fervent in piety. He informed me that during the last six months, he had immersed one hundred and forty at two places alone—Buffalo Creek and Crooked Creek in Perry County". 68

Howard set in order a church in Carroll in 1835 at Reedy Creek, eight miles from Huntingdon. After he had immersed one they numbered seventeen. They then, "chose and set apart an elder, two deacons, and an amiable, zealous young brother of some promise for a proclaimer". 69

Adamsville of McNairy County became the second center of importance in West Tennessee. Evangelists preached the Disciples' doctrine there as early as 1834. J. H. Dunn supplemented original efforts by locating with the Adamsville church as pastor. In 1838 he wrote that during a meeting that year ten were added, and that the total membership was sixty. 70

Besides Adamsville, two other places in McNairy received mention before 1840, namely Clear Creek and Cypress. Dunn, Wynne, Sanders, Kendrick and Gilliland proclaimed at Clear Creek during a five-days

68. Ibid., V. 6, p. 431.
69. Ibid., V. 6, p. 431.
70. Ibid., V. 9, p. 191.
meeting and added ten. 71 The same article said that Dunn, Wynne, and Sanders cooperated at Cypress the same year in a four-days meeting that resulted in the immersion of one, and that Sanders lived in Hardeman County.

These evangelists also carried the Reform into Henderson, Hardeman, Haywood, and adjoining counties. In 1840, Dunn conducted a meeting at White's Meeting-house, Henderson County, that resulted in five immersions. 72 Gist, Holmes, and Gilliland attended.

Allen Kendrick evangelized in Haywood as early as 1834, and wrote that the prospect for the Reformation there was encouraging. He arrived in Brownsville one Friday evening and addressed five discourses to small but attentive audiences. On Sunday he spoke on immersion. After the people were dismissed two very respectable and intelligent ladies of Brownsville, members of the Presbyterian Church, came and demanded baptism, so they retired to the water where three were immersed. 73

Besides the local West Tennessee evangelists, some from Middle Tennessee began to visit the western

71. Ibid., V. 11, p. 183.
72. Ibid., V. 11, p. 183.
73. Ibid., V. 5, p. 286.
district about the middle of the decade. A citizen of Tipton County announced that Peyton Smith was laboring in his vicinity. Efforts there met with more than the usual opposition. He stated that, "The sects are still violent against us, and are not content with shutting us out of their meeting-houses, but have actually attempted to exclude us the courthouse by monopoly. Our present number is twenty-eight."74

While in Tipton County, Smith visited Covington. After a suitable address to an assembly there he proposed that those who were desirous to keep the commandments and institutions of the Great King, make themselves known to one another by giving in their names, in manifestation of their willingness to unite with each other in the worship and order of the ancient congregations. "Twenty came forward in acceptance of the proposition, broke the loaf, etc."75

A similar affair took place at Somerville in Fayette County in 1832. One who signed W. T. M. conducted the meeting. After speaking for two hours he made the proposition for union, and ten accepted it. He said, "some of them I had previously immersed,

74. Ibid., V. 5, p. 472.
75. Ibid., V. 5, p. 286.
and, I suppose they were the first who were immersed for the remission of sins, in the western district. 76

An effort at establishing Reform in Madison County in 1840 resulted in fifteen additions. 77 The preacher, called "Father Watkins" preached five days, but did not organize a church.

In the preceding discussion, the early centers of the Reformation in each grand division of Tennessee prior to 1840 were determined as follows: Davidson and Maury Counties in Middle Tennessee; Henry and McNairy Counties in West Tennessee. During the period East Tennessee was not sufficiently evangelized for vital centers to appear. Nashville was the only one of the five large cities where a strong organization could be found.

In the reports and extracts given, the vital characteristics of the Disciples of Christ were manifested as follows: (1) Their primary motive was to unite all religious parties on the New Testament as the only Creed. (2) Their early themes were "Union of the People of God", "Immersion for Remission of Sins", and "Weekly Communion". (3) Their worship con-

76. Ibid., V. 3, p. 569.
77. Ibid., V. 3, p. 569.
sisted of five acts: singing, giving, prayer, Bible study, and communion. (4) Their attitude toward other groups was to recognize none as the true Church, and consequently to proselyte from them. (5) Their church organization was simple, being of the Congregational type and consisting of elders, deacons, and evangelists. The attitude of other churches and church leaders toward the Reformation was rather intolerant.

By 1840 a few leaders were beginning to realize the unorganized condition of the Movement and deplore the situation. J. K. Speer perceived it clearly and said: "I am truly glad to see the practice of immersing people and leaving them scattered like sheep without a shepherd or fold, has produced some complaining. Without doubt the Reformation is suffering greatly on this account. I fear too many of our proclaimers are to be blamed upon this subject."
CHAPTER IV.

ADVANCE OF THE DISCIPLES FROM 1840-1850 —

INITIAL ORGANIZATIONS
Between 1840 and 1850 the Disciples in Tennessee continued their evangelization and also developed some new organs for spreading their principles. To a considerable extent missionary activity was carried on at this period in the same manner as during the first years, but in addition to the former unsystematic plan, a more efficient method originated. This took the name of "Co-operation". Of course, it tended to displease the older system by utilizing much of the best evangelistic talent and restricting it to definite areas. Through the forties the movement spread from the early centers into new communities as well as into countries which had not been reached in its earlier progress.

In Davidson County the Nashville Church held a place of prominence. From its origin it occupied a unique position and was usually in advance of others. Because of its scholarly talent and strength in numbers and wealth, the others accepted its leadership and patterned after it.
By the middle of the decade the original meeting-house of the Nashville Church was too small, and plans were laid to build a new one at a different site. The need for a more commodious chapel resulted from members being compelled to retire for want of seats. The members and friends, therefore, actively engaged in making preparations for the erection of a more commodious building, and selected for this purpose a very eligible site in a more central position than the old location.

At the time plans were in progress to build a new house the Nashville Church was increasing in an unprecedented manner. Its rapid growth resulted partly from the labors of J. B. Ferguson, who was pastor at the time, and partly from its internal reorganization. Ferguson accepted the call to the pastorate in 1846. His first three years of pastoral labors resulted in an unparalleled increase in numbers. This stimulated the congregation to greater activity, but his most effective and unique contribution was the organization of an efficient eldership. They carried out the discipline of the church more energetically, which resulted

in the exclusion of many who had proved themselves unworthy of its fellowship. The loss in numbers that resulted from "the exclusion of many who had proved unworthy", must have been more than compensated by new converts, for the writer said next, that seventy-three were added during the year "which made the whole number of members five hundred and forty-six".  

In addition to strengthening its internal affairs the Nashville Church continued missionary work in Davidson County, and other fields. In 1849 a report on missionary activity stated that, "the brethren at Nashville have pledged themselves for three hundred dollars annually".  

Another article containing information on the work and worship of the Nashville Church in 1849 possessed more than the usual historical significance. It announced a "Sunday school" as a part of the first day services. So seldom did the term appear in the early periodicals that the Nashville Church was unique in this part of the work. This Sunday school did not supplant their customary Lord's day worship, but merely

2. Ibid., V. 2, p. 422.
3. Ibid., V. 2, p. 274.
supplemented it. Their practice at the time demanded as a minimum of four services weekly. At eleven o'clock A.M. on Sunday their pastor for more than a year lectured on the Pentateuch. Their special devotional and worship hour was three o'clock P.M. Sunday. Then the church met to celebrate the Lord's death and resurrection in the institution of the supper. At night the pastor preached on the gospel, and again on Wednesday night.¹

The Sunday school hour was not stated. The information available dealt with its government, facilities and composition. It was spoken of as, "attached to the church and under the superintendence of Elder W. A. Eichbaum". A library of eight hundred volumes was collected for it. It had a membership of sixty-five male and one hundred female scholars. The reporter said there was also attached to the Nashville Church of the Disciples "two colored Sunday schools under the immediate control of colored members. They number one hundred and twenty-five scholars."²

The points previously mentioned constitute the matters of historic interest connected with the

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¹ Ibid., V. 2, p. 422.
² Ibid., V. 2, p. 422.
Nashville congregation prior to 1850. By the mid-century it had a large membership, a located pastor, J. B. Ferguson, a well attended Sunday school, evangelists in the county, and plans in progress for a more commodious meeting-house.

The other organizations reporting from Davidson County during the decade were Sycamore in 1844, South Harpeth and Hanna’s Ford in 1849. These reports detailed the usual type of organization and worship, and mentioned noticeable increase in numbers at each place.

The first record of the Reformers in Montgomery County appeared in 1843. T. Fanning, while on a preaching tour visited Clarksville and his efforts resulted in five additions there. Four who had originally belonged to the Methodist Church were immersed by him. One elderly lady was added from the Baptist. He also visited "Gallatin, Castalian Springs, Hartsville, Rome, and Lebanon, at all of which many intelligent persons were disposed to hear the truth".  

Evangelists were in the new fields of Franklin, Cannon, Lincoln and White Counties in 1844.

6. Ibid., V. 1, p. 47.
None of these reported organizations in the earlier period, but were dotted with them by 1850. C. Curlee, aided by R. B. Hall, S. E. Jones, Y. W. McDaniel, B. White, and Wm. Dill converted thirty-one in Cannon.\footnote{Ibid., V. 2, p. 164.}

In the same year J. J. Trott sent information of a meeting in that county and said, "Brother Jones and others held a meeting at Brawley's Fork which resulted in the conversion of thirty-eight persons".\footnote{The Christian Review, V. 1, p. 238.}

B. W. White preserved a record of how the Reform movement was launched in Lincoln County. He aided in establishing it there. His report stated that he and Curlee had just returned from a tour through the counties of Bedford, Lincoln, and Franklin. "Brethren Hopwood, Griffin and McDonald were in attendance."\footnote{Ibid., p. 240.}

When J. J. Trott went into Overton County in 1844 he was much encouraged by the progress there. He found fifty members at Livingston, and was informed there were eight churches in the county with a membership of five hundred and sixty in all. He also obtained a list of his preaching brethren in that county.

While at Livingston Trott inquired about Jackson County and was informed that there were nine churches in Jackson County with a membership of around nine hundred in all. He also learned that "Brother Newton", an interesting and efficient evangelist, had added sixty in Jackson County in the last two months.

In East Tennessee greater activity characterized the workers between 1840 and 1850 than prior to 1840. John Mulkey, previously mentioned as a pioneer of that section, was continually making converts. He accepted a call to give his entire time to evangelization and the results proclaimed his exceptional ability. A biographer testifies that he "must have delivered, in the fifty-three years of his entire ministry, nearly ten thousand discourses, and immersed as many believers. At one meeting in Celina, Clay County, Tennessee, in the summer of 1855, he immersed one hundred and five persons in five days."  

10. Ibid., V. 1, p. 237.  
11. Ibid., V. 1, p. 237.  
In Carter County, where only one group of Disciples had been reported prior to 1840, three were organized by 1850. Their status in membership and location as certified in 1844 were: "Mount Pleasant, ninety-two members, Turkey Town, sixty-four, and Crab Orchard, twenty-four. Buffalo, the oldest church in the county, had one hundred and twenty-one members."\(^1\)

In Washington County no organization reported prior to 1844. In that year three identified themselves with the Disciples. They were Boon's Creek, having a membership of two hundred and fifty, Kibblers with a membership of thirty-nine, and Limestone with fifteen members. The reporting evangelists were James Miller, J. Hail, and J. Duncan.\(^2\)

Efforts in Sullivan and Granger met with some success during the decade, also; in Granger, Liberty and Boon's Creek were organized; Liberty had ninety-four members and Boon's Creek thirty.\(^3\)

Concord and Fork had one hundred and nine and forty-three members, respectively, as certified by D. T. Wright.

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\(^2\) Ibid., V. 1, p. 168.
\(^3\) Ibid., V. 1, p. 168.
Anderson County came within the radius of Reform workers also during the forties. Pioneer preachers from Carter County introduced the principles there and formed a small nucleus for further development. David M. Buck and John Wright visited it, delivered nine discourses, and converted fourteen.16

Prior to 1840 Nashville was the only one of the five principal cities of the State into which Reform preachers had introduced their message. In 1848, J. J. Trott and J. Eichbaum entered Chattanooga, but did not organize a church. They were kindly and hospitably entertained. Messrs. Covert, Parham, Brandon, and Glass made arrangement for them to preach in the Presbyterian house. They continued from Friday night until Monday night, but had no additions.17

A comparison of Reform status in East Tennessee at the close of the first period with that at 1850 reveals that the latter period was characterized by better results for the Disciples. Whereas, only two congregations were reported during the first, twelve obtained mention in the latter. These numbers are not exact, but only indicate the trend of the

16. Ibid., V. 2, p. 191.
movement in that section up to 1850.

In West Tennessee Paris continued to hold its place of prominence and growth. By 1848 the church there felt itself able to map out a bigger program. This resulted in erecting a new meeting-house and supporting two evangelists. W. G. Roulac, of Rutherford County and S. B. Aden of Henry County furnished this information to The Christian Evangelist of that year.18

Reform leaders ventured into Hardeman, Dyer, Gibson, Madison, and Shelby also during the decade. Hardeman County was reached by the McNairy preachers, Dunn and Wynne, whose efforts were supplemented by one of Hardeman's native sons, named Sanders. These three conducted a meeting at New Hope, about five miles north of Middleton. They added five to the number of Disciples already living in the community and started a congregation.19 (A congregation still continues to worship there).

Gibson and Dyer Counties were evangelized by Cooper and Vandyck. They operated under the supervision of the Paris church, as aforesaid, and were

18. Ibid., V. 1, p. 186.
supported by it. In 1849 Cooper visited Gibson County and had fifteen additions. In Dyer three were added. J. H. Vandyck visited northwest Gibson and added six. 20

J. J. Trott and Eichbaum traveled the western territory just prior to 1850. The Nashville church acting as State agent directed them there. On their tour they preached at Jackson, in Madison County, Bolivar, in Hardeman County, and Collierville and Memphis in Shelby County. On their way to Memphis they stopped at Union in Shelby County. There they found a "Brother Webber" in charge of the church. During their stay in Shelby they made five converts. They returned by Jackson, in Madison County, and after organizing a small congregation, went to Dresden. 21

Prior to 1840 the only large city of the State having a church of Disciples was Nashville. By 1850 Jackson and Memphis had organizations and evangelists had preached in Chattanooga. P. S. Fall launched the movement in Nashville; Trott and Eichbaum, in Jackson; and B. W. Stone, the Kentucky leader, in Memphis. In 1848 a reporter from Memphis said:

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21. Ibid., V. 2, p. 390.
"The congregation at Memphis was set in order by the collecting together of about twenty members in 1847 by Brother B. W. Stone. Our present number is forty-five."\(^{22}\)

He failed to name any of the converts, and give location of the meeting place, but J. P. Young's *History of Memphis* supplied both. He stated that, the original church of the Disciples began on Linden Street. It was known as the Linden Street Christian Church and was founded in 1846, but incorporated in 1850. The original members were, Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Caldwell, Mary McIntosh, and Ann McGuire. The lot was bought and the church was organized on the southeast corner of Linden and Mulberry. B. F. Hall was pastor from 1846 to 1853.\(^{23}\)

Although the two accounts had a slight discrepancy in dates, there was sufficient identity to justify the conclusion that both belonged to the same group. B. F. Hall was ordained by B. W. Stone in the early years of the Reformation. This information came from a sketch of Hall's life in possession of John L. Rogers, which said: "On the 15th of May, A.D.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., V. 1, p. 220.
\(^{23}\) Young, J. P.: *History of Memphis*, p. 516.
1825, I was, by prayer and imposition of hands, ordained by the venerable B. W. Stone and others.  

By 1840 the men of talent among the Disciples became aware of the limitations resulting from their unsystematic plan of evangelizing. These leaders did not desire to hinder any individual who was proclaiming the principles, but they planned to supplement the original method by other agencies. These agencies: Co-operations, Bible Colleges, and Church Periodicals, all three originated during the decade under discussion and the two latter have continued to the present time.

Independence of thought and action kept the Disciples of Tennessee from any united effort in their early years. They placed emphasis on the sovereignty of each congregation. This was carried to the extent of a rather general sentiment against even a located minister, called a pastor. Only the far-seeing leader as early as 1833 visioned the deficiencies of the original system. J. K. Speer perceived it at that time and filed against it a just complaint when he said: "The practice of immersing people and leaving

them scattered like sheep without a shepherd or fold, has produced some complaining. Without doubt the Reformation is suffering greatly on this account."

This was not the sentiment of the majority in those years, and was not heeded by them. Even as late as 1843, one leader of prominence proclaimed that the churches of the Disciples were very unanimous in asserting the independent form of church government, and repudiating all foreign interference with the discipline of the individual congregation.

He fought the "Pastor System" and advocated such congregational independence as to hold in check development of co-operations to any great extent. He maintained that the congregation is the school for educating and preparing men for the ministry, that the members are the best judges of qualification, and that the bishops constitute the presbytery for consecrating to the work.

Another and even more concise statement of this view of congregational independence appeared after the Nashville Church trouble with Jesse B. Ferguson whom they called to be pastor in 1846. Re-

flecting on their previous experience, Mr. Fanning said:

"Should the members determine to hire another pastor to come to Nashville to take charge of the worship of God for them, no better results can be anticipated than those already experienced." 28

As Fanning grew older he resigned his position of leadership and influence to D. Lipscomb. This resulted in a further hindrance of organization among Disciples, for Lipscomb sanctioned Fanning’s views of methods and agencies in the church. He was pleased to know that the churches generally throughout Middle Tennessee were led, from conviction on the part of some and from necessity on the part of others, to conduct their own worship. 29

These two pioneers emphasized their ideas so forcibly that the practice of having pastors was uncommon before 1850.

An effort on the part of those desiring "co-operation" was more successful and reached its highest development among the Disciples during the decade. The county constituted the original unit, but later a district organization was effected, and finally a state co-

29. Ibid., p. 94.
operation formed.

One of the first efforts to organize co-
operations began at Nashville in 1841. In December
of that year the Church in Nashville invited by letters
and publications in the newspapers, the "brethren" to
assemble for the purpose of more maturely deliberating
upon the gospel mode of regulating churches, and making
known the glad tidings to the world. And notwithstanding
the short notices, there convened on the sixth of
January, 1842, in that city, fourteen ministers, and
many intelligent disciples from various parts of the
State. That was, perhaps, "the largest representation
of brethren and churches ever known in Tennessee". 30
It does not seem that this meeting purposed a State Co-
operation, but rather to study and discuss a general
co-operative plan. The records of the period show that
it developed first in the county as a unit, and that a
state organization was not perfected until near the
close of the forties. By 1844 many counties had
organized co-operations. R. B. Hall of Rutherford
gave information from his locality to that effect, when
he wrote: "I am preaching for four congregations,

30. History and True Position of the Church of Christ
in Nashville, p. 6.
namely: Rock Spring, Spring Creek, Cripple Creek, and Big Creek. We have all the officers required by the Gospel and are in a prosperous condition."

By 1848 Macon, Warren, Maury and Cannon had adopted the county plan. The particulars of Macon reveal that Bagdad, Jennings Creek, and Line Creek held a co-operation meeting at Red Boiling Springs, Macon County, Tennessee. They employed "Brother Samuel De Witt, evangelist, for nine months on $125.00 to $150.00". In Warren, Ivy Bluff, Fountain Springs, Philadelphia, and Rocky River co-operated. A "Brother Elkins" was employed as evangelist and was to be supported by the above named churches. In Maury County, "the co-operation called 'Brother Cone' to proclaim". Cannon County united with Rutherford in 1848 and the two called a single evangelist into that territory. A notice of it said: "The churches of Cannon and Rutherford Counties have sent and called forth our aged and zealous Brother Curlee once more into the great spiritual harvest."

For some reason, possibly lack of financial strength, the co-operation plan had not gone into East

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and West Tennessee to any considerable extent by 1850. Only a few intimations of it appear and these are in the form of calls for aid from the other districts. One from East Tennessee said that the brethren in these counties of East Tennessee and Georgia desire, and need very much the assistance of an evangelist. Richard Price, of Hamilton County, said that an evangelist who would devote his time in that section would be sustained. 36 From West Tennessee John R. McCall made the urgent appeal: "Cannot the co-operation aid us in the coming year with an evangelist in the district? We have, I suppose, near two thousand brethren scattered in the district and no evangelist regularly in the field. I do think this a propitious time." 37

All these indicate that the Disciple Churches in Tennessee had adopted rather generally the County Co-operation idea. Just as County Co-operations became general, some leaders agitated a larger unit in the form of a State Co-operation. To this intent, they sent forth the invitation:

"Annual State Co-operation Meeting is to be held at the brick meeting-house called Friendship, nine miles east of Franklin,

Williamson County, Tennessee, commencing on Thursday before the third Lord's day in September, 1844. The Congregations of Jesus Christ in Tennessee, East, Middle, and West are urgently solicited to represent themselves at the above proposed meeting. 38

The object of it was to obtain "information about each congregation and arouse interest in supporting evangelists".

"Support of Evangelists" doubtless prompted the entire co-operative movement. By 1845 it occupied a prominent place in their meetings as well as editorials. Under the original system financial support was uncertain, because the preachers bore the main part of the burden themselves. A notion of the early custom that prevailed among the Disciples is exhibited in a pioneer preacher's experience:

"Starting out without the promise of aid from any quarter...as did many others then and before—I was not disappointed as to support; I neither received nor refused much. Occasionally a good sister gave me a pair of socks, sometimes I got a pair of pants, or "Janes" to make them. During successful meetings a brother would, now and then, put into my hand, rather slyly, a small piece of money." 39

By 1845 a better plan was under advisement, and pursuant to previous appointment, many of the Disciples

of Christ met to consider "what are the duties of Christians in reference to the disposition of worldly goods". The chairman appointed a committee of five to draft a report embracing the teaching of the Bible on that subject.40

This committee prepared the report and in addition recommended "semi-annual co-operation meetings". They also approved the selection and support of state evangelists. Favorable action was taken on their report, and J. J. Trott was selected for state evangelistic work. In a brief time W. A. Eichbaum was employed to assist him. They were laboring in this relationship in 1848, when John M. Barnes wrote his approval of the plan. He first exhorted that no county be without its bearer of the glad tidings of salvation to its perishing crowds. Then he said, "Of your state evangelists would I especially speak, and of the two who for the past year have been in the field - of Bro. Trott and Eichbaum, because I know them well, and am somewhat acquainted with their work for the year 1848".41

41. The Christian Magazine, V. 1, p. 32.
The Nashville Church supervised the first state evangelistic efforts. It acted merely as an agency for co-ordinating and collecting funds from other churches. Eighteen months after accepting said agency from churches of the state generally for the spread of the Gospel among the destitute, it selected a committee of five brethren whose duty it was, "to correspond with the churches throughout the state; to collect and disburse funds, to select and sustain evangelists, and to report its proceedings to the congregation". Moses Norvell, Wm. A. Eichbaum, W. H. Wharton, Orville Ewing, and J. B. Ferguson were appointed to act as the committee.42

Trott and Eichbaum, the ones entrusted first as state evangelists, were actively engaged in that capacity at the close of the forties. A great portion of the historic material available on the early churches has been preserved by them. They traveled the state at large and were satisfactorily supported in their labors. During the months of February, March, and April, 1849, they visited many of the churches in the counties of Wilson, Summer, Decalb, Cannon, Rutherford, Williamson, Maury, Giles, Marshall, and Lincoln.

42. Ibid., V. 2, p. 228.
Throughout their travels they obtained a hearty response from the Disciple brotherhood, and soon expressed the belief that if men could be obtained, the whole hearted brethren and sisters would furnish the money to send "the gracious gospel of the blessed God", all over the three great natural divisions of Tennessee, and even to destitute portions of adjoining states.\(^{43}\)

In 1850 Trott submitted a financial report to the Nashville Church. It indicated further that state evangelization was indorsed completely at that time. His report named forty-two congregations that contributed to it, as well as a long list of individuals. The total yearly receipt was $837.45, which left a surplus of $37.45 after expenses were paid. Trott's salary for the year 1849 was $500.00, and Eichbaum's $300.00.

The co-operation plan had reached its highest development in Tennessee by 1850. It had started as a county system, and ended in a state organization. The state leaders began early in 1850 to promote it through the fifties. They refuted any idea that it interfered with neighborhood and local co-operation. They said it encouraged this and sought general good at the same time. "A meeting of the friends of Apostolic

\(^{43}\text{Ibid.}, V. 2, p. 273.\)
Christianity throughout the state has been appointed for the Friday before the second Lord's day in October next, to be convened at Nashville. The number of evangelists engaged by co-operations in 1850 reported were "three in East Tennessee, and thirteen in the entire state".

In addition to the two foregoing methods of disseminating Reform principles, namely through itinerant evangelists and co-operation agencies, Bible Colleges and Church Publications sprang into existence during the period. The schools that originated among the Disciples at that date were Burritt College in Van Buren County and Franklin College of Davidson County. Both of these continue in operation at the present. Burritt College operates under the same name but Franklin College is now known as Fanning Orphan School. These two institutions were the Disciples' early contribution in the state.

Burritt College opened so near the end of the decade than an announcement of it constituted most of its history. The Disciples of Spencer, Van Buren County, wrote The Christian Magazine in 1848 that they

44. Ibid., p. 228, V. 2.
45. Ibid., p. 28, V. 3.
were erecting in their town a splendid college edifice, known in the charter obtained at the last session of the Legislature as "Burritt College". They said, "We are progressing finely with said building, and expect to have it ready for the institution to go into operation by the first of October next. It is situated upon the top of Cumberland Mountain, in the town of Spencer." 46

Burritt College opened under the presidency of one of Tennessee's leading educators of that day, W. D. Carnes. Prior to his acceptance of the Spencer position, he had obtained the B. A. degree at Knoxville, and had for a few years been head of the University's Preparatory Department. He resigned his position there to become President of Burritt College. He served in the latter position eight years, and left it to accept the presidency of the State University at Knoxville. He gave Burritt a momentum which aided it to function throughout succeeding decades.

Even before the establishment of Burritt the Disciples in Davidson, Maury, and adjoining counties felt the need for an institution in that territory. T. Fanning grasped the opportunity offered and planned

46. Ibid., V. 1, p. 288.
the organization of a college there. Before he located at Elm Crag near Nashville, he and Mrs. Fanning conducted a school at Franklin. It was the first in a series of schools under their management. It began as a female school in January, 1837 at Franklin, Tennessee, and was well patronized from the beginning. For three consecutive years it was an eminent success. From Franklin they went to "Elm Crag, the name first applied to their farm and school, next Franklin College and Minerva College, then Hope Institute, now Fanning Orphan School." Fanning had a unique idea of education for his day. This accounts for his founding an industrial type. He recognized that the country had more colleges already than were supported. "Still," he said, "the colleges in existence put it out of the power of at least seven eighths of the youths of the country to become educated, and our chief object is to offer superior advantages to young men who inherit no fortune, but who are willing to depend on their own exertions and merit for success." 

This preface introduced an article outlining a system of physical, mental, and moral training to be

attempted simultaneously and harmoniously. Under his system each student spent a definite number of hours daily doing physical work, preparation of lessons, and Bible study. It was, therefore, a limited type of Industrial Education. This characterized Minerva College (The Girl's School) as well as Franklin College.

Franklin College opened at Elm Crag in 1845. During its first four years it made steady progress, according to a contemporary writer, who said: "This institution has been in existence for four years; having had within its walls an average of one hundred and thirty students each year. It owes it existence mainly to the zeal, energy, and enterprise of our devoted and intelligent brother, Tolbert Fanning." At the end of the four years, Minerva College for women was planned in connection with it. The decision to start it was announced in 1848. The Board of Directors departed from the general idea of that time on the education of girls and said:

"Having the fullest confidence that Female education is generally partial, and in many in many instances, puerile, and believing also that woman possesses capacity for very high cultivation, it is the in-

tention of the Trustees, to give suitable facilities to girls for acquiring a Classical, Mathematical, and Scientific, as well as an ornamental education."\(^{50}\)

Suitable buildings were constructed and the necessary equipment installed in each. Mr. and Mrs. Fanning gave considerable sums of money to the college at its beginning and upon their death left a large estate to further their school project. Among the Alumni of the two schools are the names of many eminent Tennesseans, such as David Lipscomb, H. R. Moore and E. W. Carmack. Mrs. James E. Scobey, also an Alumnus of Franklin College, ranked it as the greatest of its kind. Her tribute was: "For fourteen years prior to the Civil War, Franklin College continued to be the leading school in the South among the Disciples; and no school for girls among them had a better reputation than Mrs. Fanning's."\(^{51}\)

After the death of Mr. and Mrs. Fanning, his contribution to education became a part of the epitaph which marked his burial place. In emphasis of his two major interests, and adorning a massive stone pyramid in the old school yard, these lines were inscribed:

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50. Ibid., V. 1, p. 319.
51. Scobey, Jas. E.: op. cit., p. 153
"Two objects were near his heart: first, to restore the service of God to the order God gave in the New Testament; second, to place a good industrial and literary education within reach of every youth. He labored to these ends during his life and desired his property devoted to them after his death."

The first periodical started by the Disciples in Tennessee began in 1844. It operated under that title until 1848, when it was changed to The Christian Magazine. Preliminary to its organization, a meeting of the Disciples of Christ convened at Rock Springs, Rutherford County, September 18, 1843. Representatives came from various parts of the state. While in assembly they unanimously resolved that, "A journey, advocating the interests of the Church of Christ, should be established in Nashville, commencing January 1844." After the resolution had passed, W. H. Wharton, J. C. Anderson, and T. Fanning were requested to procure the aid of other competent brethren throughout the state as corresponding and reporting editors. They chose, "Jno. M. Barnes of Middle Tennessee, W. D. Carnes of East Tennessee, and Jno. R. Howard of West Tennessee to represent their respective divisions of the state.

in the editorial department." At the predestined time the first issue appeared in the form of a weekly publication. It devoted space to commentary on scripture, debates on disputed topics, news from Tennessee churches, evangelists, etc.

In 1843 some additions and changes were made and it was designated The Christian Magazine. At that time T. Fanning and J. B. Ferguson became the publishers. It also served effectively in preserving much of the early history of the Disciples in the state. Only one other publication, The Bible Advocate, ran contemporaneous with The Christian Review. The editor of the latter said in 1845 that the first number of the third volume of The Bible Advocate published at Paris, Tennessee, by Dunn and Aden, and edited by J. R. Howard, had come to hand. He also added that it was much enlarged and improved in every respect. It consisted of twenty-four pages, neatly enveloped, and was published monthly.54

These two publications, two Bible Colleges, and co-operation organizations constituted the means

53. Ibid., V. 1, p. 48.
54. Ibid., V. 2, p. 2.
employed by the Disciples of Christ to make conversions in Tennessee. Through them they sought to educate their membership and convince non-members of the merits of their principles.
CHAPTER V.

MAJOR PROBLEMS OF THE DISCIPLES

AT 1850 -- CONCLUSION
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In the preceding chapter the methods by which the Disciples tried to meet their evangelistic and missionary problems were presented. Through the organization of "Co-operations", they succeeded in reducing to more system this part of their work. By means of a church press and Bible Colleges they were beginning to prepare a membership and ministry in their fundamental doctrines. This led to greater unity of faith, worship and practice. At 1850, however, two large and challenging problems remained unsolved by them: "What would be the Disciples' attitude toward slavery?" and "Should Christians work through societies?" Both these problems had been before their leaders for some years prior to 1850 but were destined to pass on to later decades for final solution.

As early as 1832 the Millennial Harbinger deemed it appropriate to give space to the subject of slavery, and devoted a number of pages to a dis-
11. Discussion of "Slavery in Virginia". A. Campbell's editorial reveals clearly that at that early date he grasped the moment of the issue. He prefaced it with the statement: "A Crisis has arrived in Virginia.... which has made all men think upon a question from which the philanthropist and the Christian often turn away in portentous indecision and trembling anticipation."  
Campbell held to the view of "State Sovereignty", but encouraged his native state to exercise this right by freeing herself of slaves. He contended that, "It is in the power of Virginia, as we well know, and were it our business, could easily demonstrate, to free herself from this evil without loss of property, and much to her interest, honor, and happiness now to seize the opportunity, and to hear the voice of the first sign".  

In addition to such terse statements of his own views in editorials, Mr. Campbell attempted to enlighten his brotherhood on the great issue by reprinting extracts from the secular publications. In one issue of the Harbinger was printed the entire discussion of "Some of the evils of slave labor, and decline of lands in many of the early settled parts of Virginia".  

2. Ibid., V. 3, p. 15.  
3. Ibid., V. 3, p. 16.
It was taken from the *Richmond Inquirer*. Another extract from the *Richmond Whig* occupied a half page, and following it, space was granted to individuals and groups for articles of information on the issue.\(^4\)

By 1835 Mr. Campbell realized more fully than before the tragedy to churches developing from the slavery problem. He began at once to urge a plan among the Disciple brotherhood that would prevent division. His first few sentences on the subject, "Slavery and Anti-Slavery" reveal that he foresaw the possibility of such among the Disciples. He said that numerous and various communications on the subject of Slavery had been received at his office, and "they are laid on the table until the present storm is passed by".\(^5\) In the same discussion Mr. Campbell allied himself firmly with the South in point of view, and announced his willingness to plead her cause. He held as sacred the rights of the South to its slaves and the rights of the North to its land, neither of which were at first obtained in the temple of Justice and by the laws of immutable right and obligation. He said, "both of these are now consecrated and sanctioned

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4. Ibid., V. 3, pp. 17, 18.
5. Ibid., V. 6, p. 587.
by national agreements, bonds, and pledges, as solemn
as matrimony, and as irrevocable as the Magna Charta
of our national existence". 6

By 1845 discussion of the slavery issue
assumed the form of debate in even the church publica-
tions. Writers and speakers were testing the scriptural
authority of the institution. During that year Thomas
Campbell replied to certain customary arguments against
slavery in an issue of the Millennial Harbinger. He
assumed the position that the Bible sanctioned slavery,
but condemned inhuman and immoral treatment of slaves.
He said, with respect to American slavery, that wherever
it is distinguished by any inhuman and antichristian
adjuncts, by any unnatural, immoral, and irreligious
usages it will go down, and that, in these respects, no
Christian can either approve or practice it. 7

After this assertion he called upon "the
American people, both as citizens and Christians, to
consider these things, and so to discharge their duties
both civil and religious for the amelioration and
ultimate abolition of slavery". 8

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6. Ibid., V. 6, p. 588.
7. Ibid., V. 16, p. 8.
8. Ibid., V. 16, p. 8.
During the years that the Campbells were attempting to educate the Disciples on the slavery issue, B. W. Stone of Kentucky freed his slaves. He did not wait for political pressure, but reached the conclusion that it was contrary to scripture, so in 1835 of his own accord he emancipated those bound to him.\(^9\)

Such statements of attitude as the Campbells proclaimed and such action as Stone took had a tendency to divide their followers. The Campbells, in particular, perceived the danger and made an effort to prevent it. Even after some "brother editor" and other brethren had treated him rudely, and had prejudiced the minds of his readers regarding his views, Campbell said, "I am led to believe that we will nevertheless succeed in accomplishing the object contemplated..... in preventing any division amongst us after the manner of some other religious communities."\(^{10}\)

After 1845 many prominent leaders of the Disciples devoted their best talent to prevent the formation of parties in the church on the slavery issue.

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Their efforts yielded a worthy reward, for the much feared division did not come. Of course, some of the Disciples of Tennessee discharged their duty, as they understood it, by championing the Union cause and some, the Southern, but this difference of political affiliation did not become a test of church fellowship. They practiced the suggestion contained in one of Campbell's last statements on the subject prior to the great conflict, in which he urged that if Christians were true to their principles, they would not, for any difference of opinion on this subject, be alienated into two parties. He said, "That no Christian community, governed by the Bible, Old Testament or New, can constitutionally and rightfully make the simple relation of master and slave a term of Christian fellowship or a subject of discipline".11

The sentiment expressed by Campbell was endorsed by Tennessee writers, although they did not so freely give space in church papers to such issues. T. Fanning stated his position in an effort to disabuse the minds of his brethren about the Christian Bible Society. Some Tennessee Disciples were skeptical

11. Ibid., V. 16, p. 263.
of it, since they thought it tainted with abolition, because it originated in a free state. Fanning expressed regret that the brethren of the North or South should be suspicious of each other, and said:

"On this question there should be no fearful apprehensions. I have the pleasure of knowing most of the brethren who have been most active, and being intimately acquainted with their sentiments, I can assure the Disciples of the South that those of the North are generally neither northern or southern men, but prudent Christians, who have the cause of God more at heart than the abstract subject of slavery."12

These stalwart leaders so emphasized the unity of Christians on a Bible basis that the Disciples in Tennessee passed the terrible catastrophe of civil war without dividing into two parties.

The Disciples did not solve the society question as successfully as the slavery issue, for eventually it resulted in division. Division did not come within the scope of this treatise, but the seeds of it were sown before 1850.

The first type of society that originated among the Disciples of Christ was a Bible Society. It started at Cincinnati in 1845 and soon requested sup-

port from Tennessee members. It appealed for aid from Tennesseans through *The Christian Magazine* of that year under the following heading:

"The American Christian Bible Society was organized January 27, 1845. The following is its preamble: 'After mature deliberation, the four churches of God in Cincinnati, known commonly as Disciples of Christ, or Christians, on the evening of January 27, 1845 organized the Society, designated at the head of this article with the subjoined Constitution.'"\(^\text{13}\)

T. Fanning, one of the editors of the *Review*, gave space to the above article and indorsed the organization by saying: "What do the brethren of Tennessee and the Southwest say? Shall we not, brethren, heartily engage in this good work?"\(^\text{14}\)

This Bible Society also received sufficient approval during the few years just following its announcement for donations to be made to it. In 1848 E. A. Smith, agent for it, sent a contribution from Nashville, from which city he reported a total of $183.70 given by both whites and colored that year.\(^\text{15}\)

The first statements of opposition to societies among the Disciples were directed at Temper-

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13. Ibid., V. 2, p. 80.
14. Ibid., V. 2, p. 80.
ance Societies. O. D. Williams of Commerce, Tennessee in a long essay discussed "Temperance and Temperance Societies". The Christian Review published it in 1845. This essay answered an affirmative on the same subject previously contributed by W. F. Evans of Scottsville, Kentucky. After both articles had appeared, T. Fanning stated with reference to temperance and the support of the needy that God had given positive laws and society in which to act; consequently he said: "Temperance Societies, Free Mason Societies, Odd Fellow Associations, and scores of other societies are utterly useless, and worse than useless to Christians."

This expressed completely Fanning's attitude toward all such church aids. D. Lipscomb and others in later years, when the issue became more vital, referred to him as the early champion of the opposition. After this generalization by Fanning on the society movement, The Christian Review and The Christian Magazine vehemently opposed it. Neither of the kinds of societies previously named caused the division of the Disciples.

Prior to the late forties a "Missionary Society" as a

16. Ibid., V. 1, p. 105.
part of the church's organization was unknown among them, but about that date some leaders among the Disciples indorsed it. D. Lipscomb traced its origin to D. S. Burnett, an eloquent, earnest, and successful preacher from the Baptists. He had been secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, so he proposed and urged the adoption of a duplicate of that society by the Disciples. He thought it had proved effective among the Baptists. This proposition was brought forward in the forties – only pressed in the latter years of the decade. 18

After the question of missionary societies was introduced much writing and discussion followed. Most of it was later than 1850, and therefore outside the scope of this discussion. According to D. Lipscomb the Disciples entered the fifties under the leadership of those who indorsed Campbell's saying, "An individual church or congregation of Christ's disciples is the only ecclesiastical body recognized in the New Testament. Such a society is 'the highest court of Christ' on earth." 19

19. Ibid., p. 76.
Distribution of Disciple Churches in Tennessee 1850
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