

A WHEEL WITHIN A WHEEL:
SOUTHERN METHODISM AND THE GEORGIA HOLINESS ASSOCIATION

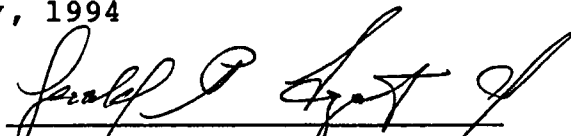

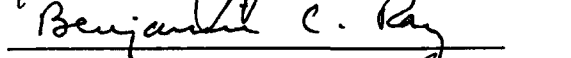
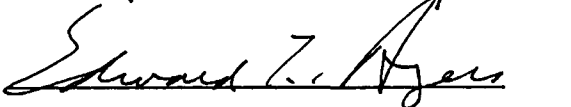
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ABSTRACT

The dissertation offers two major theses regarding the Wesleyan-Holiness movement in the United States. First, the Holiness movement which emerged in the North after 1830 emphasizing the speedy attainment of human perfectibility failed to attract receptive audiences in the South due primarily to the cultural conditions of the region. Southern Christians were deeply affected by the culture of honor and the frequent violence it spawned. Moreover, southerners were reluctant to subscribe to the northern formula of Phoebe Palmer's "quick and easy" means to achieving perfect love when they recognized the ambiguities of the slave system--a system most southerners understood as a necessary evil.

Second, during the Reconstruction period, at a time when most southerners were searching for new beginnings, the Wesleyan doctrine of immediately acquired perfect love began attracting widespread support in the Southeast. The study examines the Holiness movement's emergence in Georgia and demonstrates that, contrary to decree of several historians, a significant number of Wesleyan Holiness advocates in the New South were not drawn from the ranks of the dispossessed but were in fact members of the region's burgeoning middle class. Employing a blend of social and intellectual historical methods, the study pays particular

attention to the shifting cultural conditions occurring in the Georgia and the rest of the Southeast around the turn of the century and determines that these changes had considerable impact on the theological expressions of the Holiness movement.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
Chapter	page
I. INTRODUCTION AND THESIS SUMMARY	1
II. HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION	38
III. AMERICAN SHORTCUTS TO PERFECTION	78
IV. THE SOUTHERN PROBLEM	127
V. THE GALVANIC HEAVENLY BATTERY: THE HOLINESS EXPERIENCE IN GEORGIA	169
VI. THE PROBLEM OF METHODISM	213
VII. THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS	263
VIII. ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR THE OLD-TIME RELIGION	302
CONCLUSION	333
BIBLIOGRAPHY	341

For My Parents
Barbara and Moe

Chapter 1

Introduction and Thesis Summary

The Answered Prayer

A spirit of frustration and bitterness overspread the ranks of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the close of the Civil War. Like the majority of their non-Methodist neighbors, most southern Methodists had experienced their portion of hard times after the outset of war, and most could not envision an upturn in their fortunes in their immediate future. The bitterness resulted from encounters with their kindred denomination to the north, the Methodist Episcopal Church. Relations between southern Methodists and their northern cousins were at best tepid and at worst intractable in the two decades following the 1844 schism, but the northerners managed to widen the breach even further during the war when church leaders took advantage of Federal territorial gains and the pitiable social conditions in the South in an attempt to occupy and control southern Methodist churches and force denominational reunification one congregation at a time. The inimical northern scheme ultimately failed when the southern Methodists appealed to

the Federal Court system, but southerners were slow to absolve the northern intrigue and would, for decades following the war, adjudge northern Methodists kindred to the carpetbagger, scalawag, and other unsavory Union residue.¹

In most respects, the years immediately following the Civil War were the bleakest period of morale within the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Many southern church leaders believed, for example, that their flock was threatened by serious internal problems not directly pertaining to relations with the northern church nor their overwhelming material losses. Writing in the Southern Christian Advocate, the Rev. H. G. Wells of Charleston, South Carolina, opined that his congregation had "suffered terribly. Morals have become lax, backsliding frequent and in some localities the Church is in a condition to dishearten its ministers." Wells's observations concerning the disheartened ministry were not unfounded. In the years immediately following the war the average annual income of ministers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was about \$600, and, subsequently, many preachers found it necessary to pursue some secular means of support.²

Apparently denominational leadership concurred with Wells's judgment of the church's moral sluggishness. Bishop William Wightman delivered the episcopal address to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

gathered at Memphis on a Thursday morning in May, 1870.

Wightman described the southern church as an institution that had grown "deficient as to several matters which were formally regarded as aids and tests of methodistic piety." Wightman echoed Wells's assessment of church morale and suggested that a growing number of southern Methodists had become "worldly" and "fashionable" pursuing pleasures such as dancing and other forms of "evil." Wightman and his episcopal colleagues hoped to rally their constituency and precipitate a revival that would soon establish order and stability within the denomination's tattered ranks. The key to the much-needed revival could be found, the bishops believed, in the neglected Wesleyan theology upon which Methodism was founded, the doctrine of Christian holiness or perfection that cleanses the Christian from all deliberate sin and empowers him or her to obey God perfectly. The "only effectual remedy for most, if not all of our deficiencies, as a Christian people," Wightman declared, "is in an increase of inward, genuine, scriptural holiness." "We fear," Wightman said, "that the doctrine of perfect love, which casts out fear and purifies the heart, as taught in the Bible and explained and enforced in our standards, as a distinct and practicable attainment, is too much overlooked and neglected." It was the opinion of the episcopacy, Wightman continued, that "Nothing is so much needed at the present time throughout all these lands, as a

general and powerful revival of scriptural holiness." Wightman and his colleagues could not have realized it then, but their conference prayers for a mighty holiness revival would soon be answered, and when the answer came, most of them would question whether they had gotten what they bargained for.³

Within a dozen years following Wightman's address, a number of state associations for the promotion of the Holiness doctrine sprang up south of the Mason-Dixon line. A group of Texas Methodists established the first southern association in 1878. Though independent of church control, the associations were comprised largely of southern Methodists. Nowhere in the region was the southern bishop's ardent appeal for a sweeping Holiness revival pursued with greater zeal than among Methodist clergy and laity in the North Georgia Conference. Associations in Texas and Kentucky would eventually eclipse the Georgia movement's size and strength, but throughout much of the 1880s, the Georgia Holiness Association remained predominant among a tightly knit group of southern associations.⁴

Thesis Summary

This dissertation is a study of the Holiness movement in Georgia, but because the Georgia Holiness Association was closely aligned with associations in surrounding states, it

is, in the broadest sense, an examination of the development of Holiness religion in the New South. This dissertation represents the first scholarly attempt at an examination of the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition in the South. The movement's northern and western activities have received the lion's share of scholarly attention. This focus is understandable when one considers that a majority of Wesleyan-Holiness scholars are connected with Holiness denominations that splintered from the Methodist Episcopal Church around the turn of the century. Few of these upstart groups drew a significant number of converts from the southeastern United States. The "comeouters"--those Holiness advocates who chose to abandon ties with Methodism--were relatively few in number in the Southeast at century's end. Since the Midwest and Pacific coast supplied a clear majority of Wesleyan-Holiness comeouters at the turn of the century, it should come as no surprise that Holiness scholars connected with these groups focus more energy on Methodism's northern branch from which these churches evolved.⁵

Chapter two prefaces the study of American Holiness theology with a succinct history of Christian perfectionism in the Early, Medieval, and Reformation periods. The chapter is primarily dedicated to an explication of John Wesley's approach to doctrine of second-blessing holiness and a description of how Wesley's colleague and friend, John

Fletcher, transformed the idea of entire sanctification into a Pentecostal experience, which was essentially the same form the doctrine assumed in the South following the Civil War.

Chapter three considers the exportation of Wesleyan theology to America and traces its development in the northern United States before the Civil War. This section of the study begins with a cursory examination of a form of Christian perfection that emerged in the colonies among Reformed theologians at the time of the American Revolution. The study suggests that the perfectionism espoused by Congregationalists and Presbyterians in America was highly utilitarian inasmuch as its acceptance provided a means by which a Christian millennium of prosperity and peace could be established in the new republic, a millennium nurtured by the God-ordained institutions of good government maintained by American saints. Early Methodists demonstrated little interest in the Reformed tradition's vision of a perfect Christian republic during the early decades of the nation's existence, but by 1820 they were beginning to participate in the same millennial optimism for America and the world. Moreover, following a period of declension in Wesleyan perfectionism in the United States, the doctrine received renewed attention in the 1820s and 1830s and interplayed with the republican-driven themes of perfectionism cherished by the Reformed tradition. By 1850,

the two forms of perfectionism were so closely aligned that the distinctions were barely discernible. Antebellum northern perfectionism was marked by simplicity of doctrine, utilitarian ambitions for perfecting the social order, and an emphasis on speedy attainment of the experience of entire sanctification. Phoebe Palmer best exemplified the merger between Wesley's theme of second-blessing holiness and the American fascination for ease of attainment and pragmatic application of doctrine. Palmer established the "quick and easy" method of achieving holiness--a product of Holy Spirit baptism--that later dominated the American Holiness movement of the late nineteenth century.

While northerners forged ahead with their vision of Christian perfectibility and the ultimate reform of society, the vast majority of southerners declined opportunities to participate in the same quest. Chapter four looks at some aspects of the cultural milieu in the South before the Civil War and suggests that the region's preoccupation with honor and justice coupled with a tacit burden of guilt regarding the slave system made it nearly impossible for most southerners to appreciate, let alone accept, northern ideas of immediate perfectionism in either its individual or institutional form. If, as Wesley suggested, Christian perfection was the perfection of love, it was difficult for southerners, the majority of whom participated at some level in the culture of honor, to think in terms of a perfect

world ruled by perfect love.

With the collapse of slavery and a gradual decline in honor-inspired violence after Reconstruction, Palmer's theology of an immediately available baptism with the Holy Spirit began taking root in the South. The doctrine offered Georgians and other southerners an opportunity following the war to put their losses and personal sins behind them. Chapter five investigates the Holiness movement's early days in Georgia. The study demonstrates that the southern branch of the Holiness movement drew participants from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Holiness people were not, as several historians have suggested, drawn largely from the poor and dispossessed of the New South. Moreover, in the movement's early days, the founders of the Georgia Holiness Association were cultural optimists who looked for Holiness religion to sweep the region and initiate a bright future for the New South. Yet the Georgia Holiness Association was not long established when it began attracting the strident criticisms of southern Methodists who viewed the movement as a threat to denominational order. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s tensions flourished between Holiness people and those Methodists who failed to appreciate their theology. Most non-Holiness Methodists were troubled that Holiness Methodist ministers, who boasted that the movement was independent from the denomination, persistently scheduled special conventions emphasizing the

doctrine exclusively at their city and town Methodist churches.

Chapter six analyzes the theological and social issues dividing Holiness and non-Holiness southern Methodists. There were several theological differences between the camps. Most Holiness proponents argued that original sin remained in the hearts of believers after regeneration. On the other hand, most southern Methodists who took the time to challenge intellectually the movement argued that regeneration cleansed believers of sin and therefore a second work of grace was unnecessary. The controversy over theological differences was frequently heated, but the social distinctions between the factions was an even greater source of turmoil. Non-Holiness Methodists, for example, accused their Holiness cousins of displaying an exclusionist temper suggesting they believed themselves to be superior, sanctified Christians. The Georgia Holiness Association and other southern associations were an especially nettlesome problem for the church's hierarchy for yet another important reason. The associations were extraordinarily democratic organizations operating without sanction within a tightly run oligarchic institution. Men and women voted for their leaders in the Georgia holiness Association. Furthermore, most Holiness associations encouraged women to share preaching responsibilities with men. Holiness theology, with its emphasis on empowerment of Spirit baptism, had a

distinctively liberating effect on southern women who, like their northern champion Phoebe Palmer, felt called by God to share the gospel with others. This radical element in the Holiness movement would not long be tolerated by the power brokers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and by the 1890s the controversy between the hierarchy and the Georgia Holiness association escalated into a campaign designed to rid southern Methodism of its Holiness element.

Though progressive in its appreciation of women's roles in the church's ministry, the Georgia Holiness Association remained in many respects a remnant of southern provincialism that most southern Methodist leaders by the turn of the century were anxious to abandon. Like most southerners, the Wesleyan-Holiness advocates grew up in rural communities and were profoundly influenced by the traditions upheld there. With the emergence of a New South, Holiness people expressed concerns about the declension of these "old-time" values and their sudden replacement with southerner's interest in unholy leisure. Indeed, the cultural tastes of the majority of urban Methodists became increasingly sophisticated at the close of the century as the social mores of town and urban Methodists adapted to the climate of modern society. Consequently, most urban Methodists came to view the jeremiads of the Holiness preachers as something of an embarrassment to their church. The Holiness preachers, on the other hand, derived

considerable satisfaction in maintaining the standards of proper behavior widely held before the Civil War. Holiness people believed that one's personal conduct was a reflection of the individual's priorities. Those individuals who enjoyed worldly amusements were, therefore, worldly-minded and unfit for a heavenly home. Chapter seven investigates the shift in social values that occurred in the South with the increase of urbanization after 1880. Most southern Methodists were attracted to new forms of entertainment and the products of convenience that were increasingly available to the New South. In sharp contrast to their worldly colleagues, the Holiness preachers understood themselves as consecrated prophets of the antebellum standards of worldly conduct that rejected virtually all forms of "frivolous behavior." The prophets of old-time Methodism, with its strict legal codes derived from its pessimism of the world, came into direct conflict with urban Methodists beginning to appreciate a burgeoning list of diversions.

Holiness advocates rejected virtually every conceivable form of amusement, and as new distractions became available in the South, the Holiness litany of improper behaviors expanded accordingly. Holiness preachers fulminated against a wide spectrum of pastimes including, but by no means limited to, billiards, card playing, dancing, the cinema, the circus, the carnival--something Holiness preachers dubbed the "carn-evil"--, liquor consumption, smoking,

chewing, and horse racing. They also denounced the South's growing intrigue with baseball, and many were alarmed by the lurid influences upon their young people of a popular Atlanta-based soft drink called Coca-Cola. Their rejection of worldliness at the turn of the century differed little with traditional Methodism's views on social evils. They believed, in fact, that they were doing what their church's Discipline demanded of them. Pietistic differences became apparent only after the majority of southern Methodists made concessions toward the flourishing list of southern diversions while Holiness Methodists codified a seemingly endless index of forbidden pleasures. Problems arose when Methodists who enjoyed many of these worldly activities vented their hostilities toward the the Holiness movement. As southern Methodists became more urbane, moreover, the priggish aspects of their heritage epitomized in the Holiness movement created a source of internal friction.

By 1890, Holiness prophets of the old-time religion received ministerial assignments to the most rural charges in the remotest parts of the state. The assignments were not indicative of the preachers's preferences but reflect the church leaders' attempts to separate outspoken advocates of Holiness religion from the State's more "fashionable" urban charges where the worldliness and formality of worship the prophets spurned were rapidly gaining acceptance. In this arena of an increasingly

worldly southern Methodism, the Holiness movement's early optimism for a radiant future faded quickly. As the prophets came to recognize the permanence of the denomination's shift toward worldliness, one by one nearly all of them trashed their postmillennial expectations for the nation's glory and began promoting their premillennial convictions.

By the mid 1890s, the denomination's attempts to squelch the Holiness movement in Georgia began to show clear signs of success. Most of the state's young ministers recognized that active involvement with the Georgia Holiness Association was the equivalent of a fast track to a lackluster career of small town and rural pastorates. Consequently, most avoided formal ties with the organization, and the group folded in 1897. Yet the movement's leaders discovered alternative methods of keeping the doctrines and traditions of the old-time religion from extinction. Chapter eight describes how Georgia Holiness advocates established and supported Holiness newspapers, Holiness colleges, and a camp meeting at Indian Springs. Unable to maintain a formal link between the Holiness movement and southern Methodism, the Holiness advocates resurrected the old-time Methodist Camp meeting, set up their own private academies to train their young in the traditions and standards of the past, and lent support to a Holiness newspaper with a subscription list approaching

100,000 readers. These ventures succeeded because the Holiness proponents avowed their total independence from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, though these projects received their greatest support from men and women who happened to be southern Methodist.

After 1900, the movement's partition with southern Methodism provided an opportunity for both Holiness and non-Holiness Methodists to work out a truce and unravel an acceptance, if not an appreciation, for each other's position and objectives. Consequently, southern Methodism learned to live with the Holiness preachers and laity in its ranks and eventually curbed the severity of penalties against those affirming Holiness convictions. At the same time, the Holiness people moderated somewhat their criticisms of the church's worldly attributes and sought compromises that would allow their faction to remain in dialogue with church officials.

American Wesleyanism: An Historiographic Sketch

John L. Peters, in his monograph Christian Perfection and American Methodism (1956), was the first historian to map the direction and form taken by John Wesley's doctrine of Perfection after its exportation from Great Britain to America in the mid-eighteenth century. Within a year following the publication of Peters's work, Timothy L.

Smith's Revivalism and Social Reform appeared and demonstrated that perfectionism had a formative influence on the intellectual and social views of many northerners--and not just Methodists--in nineteenth-century America. Both Peters and Smith realized that the doctrine of perfection entered a period of declension after 1800 and that it did not become a major factor within Methodism again until after 1830 when several urban northerners, including a female evangelist named Phoebe Palmer, resurrected perfectionist theology and modified it by placing considerable emphasis on the instantaneous availability of perfection to all regenerate Christians. Wesley allowed for considerable latitude in the process of Christian perfection, placed little emphasis on the timing of its attainment, and, moreover, allowed that most faithful Christians would not be perfected in this life. In striking contrast, after 1840, the majority of American Holiness advocates argued that because perfection was instantly available, failure to attain it was sin. This American adaptation of the Wesleyan understanding of perfection set the tone for Holiness theology throughout the remaining decades of the nineteenth century: perfection was immediately available to anyone who was willing to surrender entirely his or her life to God. Consequently, some Holiness folk deduced that those believers who failed to receive the obvious benefits of perfection were spiritually inferior to those who had

received. Not all Holiness advocates handled the issue so tactlessly, but the immediacy doctrine made it nearly impossible for American Holiness advocates to ignore charges of religious exclusivity.⁶

Peters's and Smith's works were derived almost exclusively from the northern historiographical sources, and neither historian attempted to describe the development of perfectionist theology in the antebellum South. Though they do not offer reasons for concentrating their efforts on the northern revival, one may assume that they had trouble locating southern literary remains pointing to widespread acceptance of Holiness theology in the region before 1870. There is indeed a paucity of southern literature bearing on this topic. Accordingly, there have been no scholarly investigations of the scope of impact the Holiness revival of the 1830s had upon Methodists in the South. In The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States (1971), Vinson Synan was the first historian to suggest that there in fact was not much perfectionist activity in the antebellum South, but the scope of his research did not lead him to explicate the probable factors in the movement's failure there. This dissertation attempts to bridge this gap in Wesleyan-Holiness studies by demonstrating that, as a consequence of the cultural differences between southerners and northerners, perfectionist ideas in nearly any form received little positive attention among southerners.

Southern Christians rejected northern forms of perfectionism because they viewed them as impossibilities in an obviously imperfect and sinister world.⁷

The tardiness of a Holiness revival and the near absence of comeoutism in the antebellum Southeast by no means suggest that the Holiness movement was not an important issue for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South after the war. Southern Methodist advocates of Holiness theology played a significant role in the life of the church after 1880 and their spiritual heirs remain an active force in the United Methodist church in the South at the close of the twentieth century. Moreover, present-day Holiness activity within Methodism is prevalent enough to sustain the argument that the United Methodist Church remains the largest Holiness church in America. That is to say, there are perhaps more Methodist ministers who adhere to Wesleyan-Holiness theology than there are ministers in any other Holiness denomination.⁸

In his denominational history of the Church of the Nazarene, Called Unto Holiness, Timothy L. Smith provided the first--and in many respects, still the best--intellectual survey of the Holiness movement in the South. Yet because the majority of southern Holiness people remained within the Methodist camp, Smith limited his study to a handful of southerners who left other denominations to help form the Church of the Nazarene and paid little

attention to Holiness advocates remaining within the Methodist fold. More recently two studies have appeared that have begun to unravel some of the broader issues encountered by southerners as they embraced the Holiness movement after the Reconstruction period. Both works are unpublished Duke University Ph.D. dissertations and both take the form of interpretive biographies of significant southern Holiness evangelists. The first is John L. Brasher's: "'Standing Between the Living and the Dead'" which is, as the author describes it, a "selective and thematic" examination of his grandfather's Holiness ministry that extended from the 1890s until the early 1970s. Brasher challenges the stereotypical image of southern Holiness folk as the rural disinherited--a theme that has long dominated the discussion among scholars--and demonstrates that his grandfather was, by the best southern and northern standards, a well-educated and relatively urbane man. Although he offers no demographic data to substantiate the broader ramifications of his argument, Brasher is right when he argues that the movement was much more sociologically diverse than has previously been suggested. Advocates of the Wesleyan-Holiness movement in the South could be found among individuals from different economic and social backgrounds, but as this thesis will establish, a significant percentage of southern Holiness folk--at least those active in Georgia--could be counted among the ranks of

the burgeoning middle class of the New South. Several factors combine to obviate the educational and social makeup of the southern Holiness associations. Southern Holiness leaders apparently believed their constituents were at least literate since many, including W. A. Dodge in Georgia, published weekly newspapers with subscription figures large enough to precipitate the ire of frustrated editors overseeing the official southern Methodist organs. Southern Holiness advocates also established a successful college in Kentucky in the early 1890s, and a small group of schismatic Holiness Georgians organized their own college after the turn of the century. What is most significant to bear in mind is that the Kentucky school organized as a liberal arts college and the Georgia school merged with a liberal arts college soon after its establishment. The Holiness movement's interest in a classical education curriculum before and after 1900 suggests that many Holiness proponents placed considerable stock not only in "Bible education" but in more traditional forms as well.⁹

Scholars who have relied on the "uneducated, rural and poor" depiction perhaps have done so, in part, because they have dispensed with intellectual legwork in favor of social and economic history applied within the context of a specific community or group. In other words, several historians, without sufficient qualification, have labeled as poor and rural the majority of Holiness advocates in the

South because they have failed to examine their subject's theologies as thoroughly as they might in order to delineate the very real differences between advocates of Holiness religion. The Wesleyan-Holiness tradition, for example, should be carefully distinguished from the Pentecostal tradition of the early twentieth century. Though the traditions are related, and both fall into the same category as branches of the Holiness movement, their theological distinctions diverge at several key points. It is the Pentecostal wing of the Holiness movement that Robert Mapes Anderson describes in his 1979 book, Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism. And yet Anderson suggests that the Wesleyan wing of the southern Holiness movement was comprised of persons "predominantly of lower-class status." A lack of appreciation for theological subtleties coupled with the tendency among southern Wesleyans to remain quantitatively concealed by virtue of their ties with the Methodist church are the two principal factors precipitating confusion about the movement's social makeup. Moreover, the same factors have helped create general misunderstanding of the Wesleyan tradition's contributions to the broader southern culture and help explain why the role of Wesleyans is so frequently muddled with their more colorful Pentecostal-Holiness cousins or why it has been altogether unnoticed.¹⁰

Women Preachers

Robert Stanley Ingersol recently provided an excellent example of one significant contribution of the Wesleyan-Holiness movement in the South with his biographical dissertation of southern Holiness preacher and evangelist, Mary Cagle in "Burden of Dissent: Mary Lee Cagle and the Southern Holiness Movement." Born in Alabama during the Civil War, Cagle, along with a small coterie of other women, became a church leader and an ordained minister in the New Testament Church of Christ, a southern Holiness group that later merged with the Church of the Nazarene. Cagle and several other southern women took on a role in the South that was in some respects more progressive than that assumed a generation earlier by northern evangelist Phoebe Palmer. Moreover, those southern women were pioneers whose careers and ministerial ordinations indicate at least one aspect in which the Holiness movement of the late-nineteenth century was more advanced in its recognition of women's leadership qualities than the more traditional religious groups.

With Methodist doors to church leadership barred to women, those seeking full ordination credentials at the close of the nineteenth century found it necessary to unite with sectarian Holiness groups sympathetic to their ministries. Postbellum Georgia--where the only significant

episode of comeoutism centered around the call to ordained ministry of Leona Shingler--exemplifies this tendency. Shingler traveled with her husband, T. J., to any church in the state that would receive her and eventually established a congregation in Donalsonville. Traditional southern Methodists resented the expansion of the Holiness movement within their ranks for a number of reasons, but no issue was more divisive than feminine rights promoted by the Holiness folk. This study examines the complexity of the female component in the development of Holiness association in the South. Women played more than a supportive role in the southern Holiness movement; they were major players in the struggle against the dominant cultural perception of "woman's sphere" as something limited entirely to domestic pursuits. Respected southern conservatives like Warren Candler eschewed the Holiness movement because of its feminist leanings. Moreover, the first woman to serve in the United States Senate, Rebecca Latimer Felton, lent the movement her support for precisely the same reason that Candler spurned it. This is not to suggest that the Holiness movement provided a haven to those inclined toward sweeping reform in the area of feminine rights. What it does show is the complex patterns that emerge when one traces the development of Holiness theology in the nineteenth century: though conservatives in many respects, Holiness advocates were significantly more liberal than

their non-Holiness cousins on the issue of women's rights in church and society.¹¹

Theological Context

In pamphlets, books, and the press, members of the Georgia Holiness Association, like all southern Holiness advocates, characterized their theology as thoroughly Wesleyan and, therefore, as old as Methodism itself. Indeed, in most respects, the late nineteenth-century Holiness movement aligned itself with John Wesley's understanding of perfectionism. There were some important differences, however, that few Wesleyans seemed ready to acknowledge. By century's end the theology of the southern Holiness movement reflected a subtle shift from Wesley's catholic concept of Christian perfection to one that was uniquely American. In its New World environment, Christian perfection became something that was immediately available and pragmatically beneficial to the individuals and the society. The primary agent behind this theological transformation was Phoebe Palmer, whose "altar theology" established a formulaic method for the immediate and certain acquisition of perfection. Although most southern Methodists before the war refused to entertain Palmer's notions of heart holiness, many were familiar with her ideas. Stan Ingersol points out that before the war,

"Phoebe Palmer's special emphasis on holiness was well-known in Southern Methodist circles, and her publications circulated below the Mason-Dixon line." After the war, when the notion of perfectionism became more a realistic goal for southerners, Palmer's writings gained even greater acceptance in the region and eventually became the chief theological authority for the Holiness revival that occurred there after 1880.¹²

The uniquely American aspects of the Holiness movement have been presented at some length by Melvin Dieter in his The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century (1980).

Dieter described the Holiness movement in the United States as a "wedding of the American mind, prevailing revivalism, and Wesleyan perfectionism." Dieter provided a solid scholarly evaluation of the revivalistic aspect of the movement as well as the contribution of Wesleyan perfectionism, but he stopped short of offering details on precisely what constituted the contribution of the "American mind." This dissertation argues that Dieter accurately characterizes the multifaceted aspect of the nineteenth-century Holiness movement but pushes the point further by suggesting that prevailing aspects of American thought, namely utility and immediacy, played a significant role in the theologies of Phoebe Palmer and other American proponents of Christian perfectionism. Palmer, whose interest in the immediate availability of perfection was

especially pronounced, taught that one need not delay in the attainment of perfection but could take a "short and easy way" to perfection by offering oneself entirely to God and then insisting by faith that God is duty bound by this act to grant perfection.¹³

The Old-Time Religion

The northern leaders of the antebellum Holiness revival understood perfectionism as a tool for effecting social change needed for establishing the kingdom of God in America. Promoting a postmillennial view of human history, most of the northern perfectionists remained sanguine about the future of the world and the ability of perfected human agency to bring about positive change through a program of radical social reform. As Edward Beecher put it in 1835, it was the Christian's responsibility "not only to reorganize society in accordance with the law of God, but to abolish all corruptions in religion and all abuses in the social system and, so far as it has been erected on false principles, to take it down and erect it anew." ¹⁴

Champions of the perfectionist revival that spread throughout Georgia and the surrounding region after the war were familiar with and heartily approved of the northern movement's promotion of immediatism in the acquisition of personal perfection, but the southerners eventually

transformed the pragmatic element virtually eliminating any expectations of positive societal change. By 1900, the southern Holiness clergy, like their fundamentalist cousins, were, with a few notable exceptions, cynical about the possibilities of wide-spread social reform in America and the rest of the world. Most were premillennialists, and as such they sought to purify their own lives and the lives of their neighbors in anticipation of the coming Christ who would save them from the world; they understood their faith more in terms of personal experience than as a catalyst for social benevolence. Their mission was defined primarily as a battle against sin waged by the spreading of the Holiness doctrine throughout the land. The southerners were attracted to the immediate acquisition of perfection, not because they hoped to usher in God's kingdom on earth, but because they were convinced that God was about to destroy the world and they hoped to convert as many sinners as possible before the apocalypse came. As Tennessee Holiness evangelist Bud Robinson put it, when one receives the blessing of holiness, "it won't be long until it will break out on us and somebody will know it, and the first thing you know it will be all over the settlement, and then all over the state, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth." At the same time, Robinson believed that sanctifications alone would never effect the world's salvation. The redemption of society would occur only after the "very curse

of the earth is . . . burned out" by judgment fire sent from God.¹⁵

Why did the southern Holiness advocates, whose theology seemed to offer so much hope for individual humans, maintain such a gloomy perspective on the future of humankind? Without question the Holiness advocate's disgust with the southern Methodism's growing enchantment with worldliness triggered their shift toward pessimism, but optimism of the future was for southerners was a transient commodity for at least one other important reason. Charles R. Wilson, in his examination of civil religion in the postbellum South, Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause (1980), argues that while many cultural revitalization movements are utopian and optimistic about the future, the dominant Protestant religion of the South following the war was "a revivalistic movement" that sought to rejuvenate certain aspects of the Lost Cause. Wilson's observation helps highlight the unique characteristic of southern Holiness theology. Robinson and other southern evangelists devised a paradoxical concoction that merged their premillennial pessimism with a clear undercurrent of perfectionist optimism. They were confident about the individual's ability to become perfect, but few ever demonstrated clear adherence to the northern antebellum notion that American society and the world could be perfected by those who experienced heart holiness. Northern Holiness evangelists

looked to the future confident that humanity would assist God in the redemption of the earth. Southerners, on the other hand, found solace in perceptions of what once was. Their world could be improved temporarily if enough Christians pitched in and battled Satan, whom Kentucky Holiness evangelist Henry Clay Morrison described as "the god of this world." Yet the world would eventually have to be destroyed by the true "god of the universe," and he would establish his perfect kingdom without human assistance. It was the gloomy premillennial southern outlook that eventually came to dominate the American Holiness movement, and most of the movement's leaders concluded that postmillennialism was a product of the new biblical scholarship, one of Satan's most cunning inventions.¹⁶

Perhaps the vast majority of southern Wesleyan-Holiness folk grew up on farms and rural communities as did most people in Georgia and other southern states, but a significant number moved into the towns and cities of the New South taking up positions as merchants, teachers, and other traditionally white-collar professions. The Holiness religion these migrants adopted helped them adjust to social stresses they encountered as they settled into a more frenetic urban existence. While uptown urban Methodists grew increasingly uneasy with their revivalistic roots and embarrassed by the emotional outbursts that accompanied the campmeeting religion of their forebears, Holiness Methodists

looked to the urban Holiness conventions as a cultural-religious bridge offering a link between the New South and their perceptions of the past. Notwithstanding the novelty of their theology to the region, the substance of most Holiness meetings in the South varied little from the camp meeting revivals of the early nineteenth century. Though northern Methodists exported the theology of Christian perfection into the South, when Southern Methodists realized that the doctrine had roots traceable to the foundations of their church and to its founder, John Wesley, many were anxious to incorporate Holiness ideas in their revival campaigns. The Holiness people were seeking what gospel hymn writer and Georgia Holiness Association president Charlie Tillman described as the "Old-Time Religion." Charles Edwin Jones in Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936 (1974), observed the same general tendency among rural northerners who migrated to rapidly growing urban centers. Jones notes that Holiness religion benefited his own family "and other like-minded country folk in adjustment to urban life in much the same way that religion had assisted various foreign immigrant groups in accommodating to the New World."¹⁷

With the majority of the Holiness advocates unwilling to come out of their parent denomination, they discovered alternative methods of keeping the old-time faith, as they defined it, alive within the Methodist Episcopal Church,

South. In Georgia the Holiness Association established a large annual campmeeting where Holiness evangelists could practice the old-time religion and spread the message of full salvation unhindered by a meddlesome denominational leadership. Moreover, southerners eventually established one of the largest graduate theological seminaries in the United States, thereby assuring future generations of Holiness Methodists a steady supply of preachers and evangelists.¹⁸

The Methodist hierarchy's reaction to the Georgia Holiness Association moved from caution in the early 1880s to open hostility by the 1890s. Non-Holiness Methodists resented the activities of their Holiness brothers and sisters for a number of reasons unrelated to their feminist leanings. Methodist leadership's primary point of contention with the Holiness Association derived from the organization's close ties with northerners. Warren Candler among others explicitly argued that the northern church was using the Holiness movement as a major weapon in their arsenal against the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Many southerners also argued that the Holiness people were exclusivists who believed that Christians who were "merely justified" and had not been made perfect were second-class Christians. Though several Georgia Holiness Association leaders spurned clannish tendencies inherent in their theology, the accusation of exclusivity essentially was

correct, and the majority of southern Holiness evangelists did set their stock above what Bud Robinson described as "the average Christian." Southern Methodism's leadership was highly bureaucratized, accustomed to maintaining control from the top down, and resented the independence of the men and women evangelists who, without episcopal oversight, traveled from conference to conference preaching at campmeetings, in churches, or wherever they found receptive audiences.¹⁹

Because the Georgia Holiness Association held its meetings and services independent of Methodism, church leaders were unable to act directly in order to curb their influence on church members. Antagonistic bishops instead applied their power of conference appointments in order to demote the most notorious Holiness ministers. A high percentage of Holiness advocates in Georgia received transfers to "hard-scrabble" circuits and a demotion in salary after 1890; subsequently, all but the most ardent professors of the experience abandoned their ties to the movement and carefully avoided using Holiness rhetoric in their pulpits. Southern Methodism's campaign against the Holiness association in Georgia was in some ways a great success. In 1886 as many as 80% of the ministers in the North Georgia Conference claimed allegiance to the Georgia Holiness Association or their doctrine. In 1897, the association folded when it became nearly impossible to find

Methodist churches willing to sponsor their revival meetings.

Yet the quest for the "old-time religion" was by no means a dead-letter issue for Georgia Methodists after 1897. Holiness ministers led by W. A. Dodge secured a large tract of land near Indian Springs and established an independent campmeeting conducted for two weeks every summer and specifically devoted to the propagation of scriptural holiness in the region. The decision to establish an independent Holiness campmeeting association in the early 1890s was strategically well timed. With the gradual demise of the Georgia Holiness Association, the Indian Springs camp provided a suitable haven for maintaining a viable Holiness ministry in Georgia and the rest of the Southeast. Prevented from taking their message to the Methodist churches of Georgia after 1897, former members of the Holiness association began bringing the people to their meetings. It would seem that because the individuals who made their way to the camp possessed the resources and leisure time needed to take summer vacations, the constituency of the Wesleyan-Holiness movement in Georgia after 1900 remained predominantly middle class.

This is a study of a largely middle-class movement. There were exceptions on both ends of the spectrum, but Wesleyan-Holiness advocates in the South have remained generally interested in the acquisition of education and

wealth, while, at the same time, spurning cultural activities they deemed "frivolous" or "worldly." Historians should not be overly surprised by this assessment of one aspect of Holiness religion in the South. American religious history abounds with examples of well-educated persons making camp with groups that exist outside the margins of traditional religious faith. This thesis describes one organizational movement that was, at the same time, marginal and yet linked to a broader tradition, a movement that was both culturally connected and, at the same time, sought to distance itself from culture at several key points.

Notes

1. For a more thorough treatment of the difficult social and economic conditions encountered by southern Methodists at the close of the war see Hunter Dickinson Farish, The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism 1865-1900 (Richmond, 1938) 22-61. An excellent description of southern Methodist hostility toward clergy in the Methodist Episcopal Church is provided by Lawrence Brasher, "'Standing Between the Living and the Dead': John Lakin Brasher, Holiness Preacher," Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1986, passim.

2. Farish, Circuit Rider, 71; 32. For more on the social conditions encountered by postbellum Methodists see Francis Simkins and Robert H. Woody, South Carolina During Reconstruction (Chapel Hill, 1932), 398-402. A worthwhile institutional survey of Methodism during the Reconstruction period is provided by William Warren Sweet, Methodism in American History (New York, 1961) 304-31.

3. Journal of The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1870, 164-5.

4. Charles E. Jones Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936 (Metuchen, N. J., 1974), 49. By 1890, Holiness associations were established in North and South Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

5. Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion, 201-8. Jones's statistics show the distribution of holiness advocates by state from 1906-36. His data suggest that the majority of non-Methodist Holiness advocates were located in the midwest and along the west coast. Jones' figures are not entirely accurate (he finds no Holiness churches in Georgia in 1906; this study will describe a handful of these that were active at that time), but they are accurate enough to suggest that southern Holiness people tended to remain connected to the Methodist fold.

6. John L. Peters, Christian Perfection and American Methodism (New York, 1956). Timothy L. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War (New York, 1957). On the topic of the timing of perfection, Wesley argued that God "dispenses His gifts just as he pleases; therefore, it is neither wise nor modest to affirm that a person must be a believer for any length of time before he is capable of receiving a high degree of the Spirit of Holiness. . . . He has His reasons both for hastening and retarding His work." John Wesley, The Works of John Wesley, ed., Thomas Jackson, 14 vols., 11: 407.

7. Vinson Synan, The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States (Grand Rapids, 1971) 31. See also, Allan Coppedge, "Entire Sanctification in Early American Methodism: 1812-1835," Wesleyan Theological Journal 13 (Spring, 1978): 34-50. In his highly polemical essay Coppedge dismisses Smith and Peters' case for a decline in perfectionist emphases among Methodists after 1810. His evidence to the contrary fails to demonstrate that Methodists actually stressed the importance of preaching the Christian perfection message during the period of his study. In fact, Coppedge's lack of testimonies from the South and the Western frontier suggests that the doctrine may never have really gained acceptance there. Cf. Robert Stanley Ingerson, "Burden of Dissent: Mary Lee Cagle and the Southern Holiness Movement," Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1989, 24. Ingersol aptly points out "that the doctrine did not disappear from early 19th century Methodism but was certainly neglected in some quarters."

8. By far, the largest Holiness spinoff from the Methodists is the Church of the Nazarene which claims over 4500 ordained elders in the United States.

9. Timothy L. Smith, Called Unto Holiness: The Story of the Nazarenes, (Kansas City, 1962). Brasher, "Standing Between," ix. Brasher points to Liston Pope and Wilbur J. Cash as major scholarly contributors to the confusion surrounding the sociological makeup of the Southern Holiness movement. See Wilbur Cash, The Mind of the South (New York, 1941) 389, 290; Liston Pope, Millhands and Preachers, A Study of Gastonia (New Haven, 1942), *passim*. To Brasher's list should be added the recent comment of David Edwin Harrell that the Holiness associations that blossomed in the late nineteenth century "served as safety valves for poor and rural Methodists who were increasingly isolated from the sources of power within their denomination." See David Edwin Harrell, "The Evolution of Plain-Folk Religion in the South" in Varieties of Southern Religious Experiences, ed., Samuel Hill (Baton Rouge, 1988), 35. Harrell's observation can be dismissed by virtue of the fact that at least one Southern bishop and an impressive number of presiding elders were strong advocates of the Holiness doctrine and were active in associations located in the South.

10. Robert Mapes Anderson, Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism (New York, 1979), 28-46. Anderson views the issues separating Holiness advocates from non-Holiness Methodists as a matter of class conflicts. My thesis will show that this conclusion, as an axiom, does not bear up under careful scrutiny. Anderson offers no compelling evidence to suggest that middle class Christians are any less inclined to pursue a pietistic lifestyle or vice versa. Ingersol, Burden of Dissent, 1-33; 234-55.

11. Palmer never actively pursued ordination rights contenting herself with the privilege of preaching the gospel. Cagle and other southern women viewed full ordination credentials as a woman's right and a fitting token of their calling from God. Though a comprehensive text on women's roles in the Holiness movement has yet to be written, a handful of helpful essays and articles on the topic are available. See, for example, Letha Dawson Scanzoni and Susan Settag, "Women in Evangelical Holiness, and Pentecostal Traditions," in Women and Religion in America ed., Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Skinner Keller, 3 vols. (San Francisco, 1981) 3:223ff; Susie Stanley, "Empowered Foremothers, Wesleyan/Holiness Women Speak to Today's Christian Feminists," Wesleyan Theological Journal (1989) 103-116; Nancy Hardesty, Lucille Sider Dayton, and Donald Dayton, "Women in the Holiness Movement: Feminism in the Evangelical Tradition," in Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions, ed., Rosemary Ruether and Elanor McLaughlin (New York, 1979) p. 242ff. In addition to Ingersol's biography of Mary Cagle, one other biography of a female Southern Holiness preacher has recently appeared. See Susie Cunningham Stanley, "Alma White: Holiness Preacher with a Feminist Message" Ph.D. dissertation, University of Denver, 1987.

12. Ingersol, "Burden of Dissent," 38.

13. Melvin Easterday Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century (Metuchen, New Jersey, 1980) 3. Dieter's use of the phrase "the American mind" is certainly too sweeping a generalization. I intend to demonstrate in this thesis that with some modifications, Dieter's argument bears up. I think what Dieter means is that there was already in place in America before the emergence of Holiness leaders like Phoebe Palmer and Charles Finney, a significant undercurrent of perfectionist ideas among white, northern Protestants. In Revivalism and Social Reform, Timothy Smith has observed the same general idealized thrust among American Protestants in the North in the nineteenth century. Even transcendentalism of Emerson and Thoreau--a movement that differed significantly in its theology with the Holiness movement--shared similar concerns for a "higher life" with the advocates of Wesleyan Holiness (13). Phoebe Palmer, Faith and Its Effects: Or, Fragments From My Portfolio (New York, 1867), 232.

14. Edward Beecher, "The Nature, Importance, and Means of Eminent Holiness Throughout the Church," The American National Preacher, (1835) 193-94. Cf. Smith, Revivalism, 225-8.

15. Bud Robinson, Mountain Peaks of the Bible (Louisville, 1913) 107. See also the comments of Tennessee Holiness leader J. O. McClurkan in Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 184. Smith notes that McClurkan encouraged reform politics at the turn of the century but declared that "only the return of Jesus could really remedy political and economic evil."

16. Charles R. Wilson, Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause (Athens, GA: 1980) 10-15. Henry Clay Morrison The World War in Prophecy: The Downfall of the Kaiser and the End of the Dispensation (Louisville, 1917) 47.

17. Charles Edwin Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936 (Metuchen, N. J., 1974), xiii.

18. For more on the Indian Springs Campmeeting and its relationship with Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, see Z. T. Johnson, The Story of Indian Springs Holiness Camp (Flovilla, Ga., 1965).

19. Mark Bauman, Warren Akin Candler: Conservative as Idealist (Metuchen, N. J., 1981). Robinson, Mountain Peaks, 119.

Chapter 2

Historical Summary of Christian Perfection

An Ancient Quest

The quest for Christian perfection is as old as Christianity itself. The eighteenth-century Anglican churchman and founder of the Methodist movement, John Wesley, developed the idea of perfection into an explicit--if not systematic--theology; and, it comes as no surprise, that it is Wesley who has received the most scholarly attention in this regard. His formidable contributions to the theological development notwithstanding, Wesley's literary remains and personal accomplishments are best understood as one vital link in the chain of a much broader tradition.

Early Christians assigned a variety of interpretations to Jesus' command that his followers should become perfect as their "heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. 5:48, NASB) In some respects, much like the champions of the American Holiness tradition of the nineteenth century, Eastern Christianity tended to understand perfection as something attainable, at least to some degree, in this life.

Jaroslav Pelikan observes that the early Greek Church tradition generally perceived salvation as a precursor of "deification," the cultivation of a Christ-like nature. Influenced by the scriptural command of perfection and the Platonic notion of assimilation in the divine, Eastern Christians promulgated a concept of salvation that mystically transformed the believer and set him or her on a path leading to moral excellence through participation in the Divine nature.¹

Moreover, like the American advocates of "scriptural Holiness," some early Eastern theologians viewed redemption as but the first step in the process that may culminate in a second and higher level of perfection. As early as the late second century, theologian Clement of Alexandria (d. before 216), in his treatise On Spiritual Perfection, suggested that justified believers who are truly committed must move on "to higher and yet higher regions, until they no longer see the divine vision in or by means of mirrors." Only those who have become "pure in heart" may achieve this "apprehensive vision." Clement urged his student to advance beyond a life of simple faith and strive toward the higher realities of perfection that come with a deeper understanding of the Divine nature. Eastern theologians differed somewhat regarding the compass of human perfectability, but a significant number shared a common assumption that once an individual was saved, he or

she should then begin the process of what may best be described as a cleansing of carnality. Syrian theologian Ephrem (306-373 c.e.) declared that this purification begins with the acceptance of Christ's teachings, which, like a flame, "burns in our minds and is enflamed in our bodies and burns from us all works of corruption, fornication, impurity . . . together with every evil." Ephrem contended that this cleansing process promotes within the subject a sincere desire to accomplish God's perfect will. Those persons "who become beautiful by fire are perfected in love, knowledge, mercy, humility and willingness."² Ephrem's concept of perfection implied the possibility of--but never explicitly described--a sort of higher level of grace apart from justification. A contemporary of Ephrem, Macarius of Egypt (actually a group of writers), seemed to be the first early church writer to assert that, through grace, subsequent to justification, the Christian may obtain perfection in this life. Macarius' prime objective was the perfecting of love toward God and neighbor. This perfection of love was attainable but could not be absolutized since one of the hallmarks of the perfected Christian was that he or she recognize the need for continued spiritual growth. Christian perfection was, then, for Macarius, always a dilatory process; it was never simply a matter of "On with the new man, off with the old!" Of pressing importance to Macarius was the idea that

the believer establish a faith that acknowledges God's ability and desire to "deliver us from the power of sin completely, in this life." ³

Under the aegis of the jurist-theologian Tertullian (150-225 c.e.), Western Christianity purveyed a more legalistic theological outlook than what was prevalent in the East. Tertullian's introduction of the Roman legal term "satisfaction" into his theological treatises prompted his spiritual progeny to express their understanding of salvation within the context of an evolving system of penance. Moreover, Latin theology as developed by Augustine, fifth-century Bishop of Hippo, depreciated the subjective, experiential approach to theology that had developed in the East. Largely in an attempt to mitigate the effects of the schismatic disposition of the Donatists--a group who asserted that the true church of Christ may only be comprised of genuine and perfect saints--Augustine rigidly adhered to the notion that the holiness of the church was established, not upon the individual's attainment of perfection, but upon the sacraments dispensed within the unified communion. With the establishment of a strong sacramental foundation, Western Theologians began to understand perfection as a otherworldly goal rather than as something attainable in this life. The individual, hampered by the depravity of original sin remaining even after baptism, could aim at

perfection and was aided in this respect by grace dispensed through the Catholic Church, but he or she--and especially the common person--could never anticipate the realization of perfection in this life. The Synod of Carthage, meeting in 418, affirmed this judgment and pronounced "anathema" any believer who denied the perpetuity of his or her sinful nature.⁴ Hence, the theological foundations of sin and grace passed on to the medieval church gradually provided the basis for the church's sacramental system. The medieval Christian aimed at perfection by remaining unified with the Catholic faith and through participation in the objective rituals of the church, that is to say, the sacraments. The more disciplined in obedience to the church the individual, the greater his or her perfection. It comes as no surprise then that throughout most of the middle ages the idea of perfection became identified almost exclusively with monasticism.⁵

Fourteenth-century England witnessed a renaissance of sorts in a more subjective theology of Christian perfection. Walter Hilton (d. 1396) a Canon of Thurgarton Priory, Nottinghamshire, expressed his theology of perfection in the Middle English vernacular--an indication that he intended his message for a popular audience. In his best-known book, The Scale of Perfection, Hilton argued that a higher life is available, not only to those set apart for religious duty, but for anyone who is willing

to walk in "mekenes and charite" and who desires to be like "Jhesu in his manhede." Hilton bifurcated the Christian experience into two stages and separated these with what he called a "dark night"--the recognition of one's spiritual poverty and the need for a complete surrender to Christ. The first stage in the growth of the Christian is the "reformation in faith." All believers attain this level of spirituality, but only a few advance to the second stage, which he dubbed the "reformation of feeling." The first stage enables the Christian to receive Christ, the second empowers him or her to become Christ-like. Despite his mystical bent, Hilton refused to separate the contemplative life from the day-to-day activities of every individual. Moreover, Hilton's writings, including his Ladder of Perfection, strongly suggest a confidence that any Christian, including the common layperson, willing to forsake all else for Christ may anticipate being perfected in the love of God during this life. It is important to observe, however, that Hilton's overarching comprehension of salvation in no way anticipated the Reformation concept of sola fide. Perfection was attainable in this life for Hilton, but it was offered as a reward for the persistent efforts of the believer in the pilgrimage to put away sin and should not be interpreted as the effect of grace through faith alone.⁶

Protestant Forms of Perfectionism

Luther, Calvin, and other sixteenth-century Protestant theologians were more inclined to structure the Christian faith along more rational-objective lines. This penchant for a less mystical and more rational approach to theology had a significant impact on the way in which Protestant writers viewed the issue of perfection. Responding negatively to the Roman Catholic penitential system, Protestants, to varying degrees, equated the pursuit of holiness with the Medieval theology of works righteousness. Martin Luther affirmed the Christian's responsibility to grow in holiness after justification, but he understood the perfection of the individual as something imputed through the graciousness of God. Whatever good the individual may accomplish after conversion must be understood as one beneficial effect of what Luther described as a "foreign" or "alien" righteousness. This meant that for Luther the holiness of Christ, and nothing found within the Christian, precipitated the accomplishment of good works. And while the imputation of Christ's perfection is available to the Christian on earth, the attainment of perfect holiness remains an altogether post-mortem concern in Luther's writings. The Christian was, then, to be viewed as one who is simul justus et peccator, one who remains both saint--through the

imputation of Christ's holiness--and sinner--by the accounting of his or her own merit.⁷

John Calvin concurred with Luther's ideas on imputed holiness, but he declined to refer to it as an "alien righteousness." Moreover, Calvin went on to affirm that Christ's righteousness becomes the source of the believer's righteousness, and, as such, it effects a genuinely moral transformation that is objectively verifiable within the Christian. Yet Calvin viewed sin as a component of the passions. Consequently, he argued that every "desire of the flesh," whether recognized as such or not, must be properly understood as transgression of God's law. Calvin adamantly denied, then, that the transformation that commences with justification could ever become perfectly realized in this life; and yet his aversion toward metaphysical speculation would not permit him to offer a satisfactory explanation of why the corporal believer will, perforce, continue to commit sinful acts throughout life.⁸

Seventeenth-century Europe witnessed an ongoing movement in both the Lutheran and Reformed camps to clarify and systematize their respective traditions. The movement, or Protestant Orthodoxy as it is now known, was beneficial to the churches inasmuch as it helped delineate with considerable precision what Protestants were expected to believe vis a vis their Catholic cousins. Nevertheless,

the systematization of the Protestant faith did not proceed without certain liabilities. Protestant pulpits became platforms for theological disputation and ministers placed little or no emphasis on experiential faith. The period has been very aptly described as "a Protestant counterpart to the period of high scholasticism in the Middle Ages." Evangelical Pietism emerged during the seventeenth century partially in reaction to the strict formalism of Protestant Orthodoxy as well as the ongoing secularization of European society.⁹

One of Pietism's early representatives, Lutheran minister Philipp Spener (1635-1705), was an important figure in the development of perfectionist theology for at least two important reasons. First, while a pastor in Frankfort, Spener adopted Luther's theology of imputed righteousness but extended it by suggesting that the same righteousness of Christ is also imparted to the subject. That is to say, for Spener, the individual, through grace, may be cleansed of his or her sin and enabled to accomplish genuine good. For Luther, any good accomplished by the Christian was, in reality, accomplished through that person by Christ. Spener opined that the individual could himself act rightly if helped by imparted grace. With this foundation established, Spener advanced the argument that grace imputed perfectly must also be perfectly imparted to the believer. Once grace has been fully realized in the

life of the Christian, Spener observed that he or she grew in righteousness and was perfected by that grace, at least at the point of the intention, in this life. And for Spener the intention of the perfected Christian is synonymous with the desire to see the will of God actualized on earth. Every Christian, in other words, Spener observed, could "become more and more perfect" in this life at least at the level of intent to comport with the will of God on earth. Spener never anticipated the Holiness movement's rigid two-fold formula for the acquisition of perfection; rather, he perceived Christian perfection as a process rooted in baptismal regeneration that gradually unfolded throughout the Christian's life--a position championed by many non-holiness Methodists in the nineteenth century. Spener observed that "if your baptism is to benefit you, it must remain in constant use throughout your life." According to Spener, Christian perfection was a legitimate goal, but it was best understood as a process that allowed the Christian "to become more and more perfect" after regeneration.¹⁰

A second noteworthy contribution of Philipp Spener to the development of Christian perfection evolved from his understanding of Luther's priesthood of believers as a largely equalitarian enterprise. Spener advanced the role of seventeenth-century women in the Christian society as teachers and "spiritual priests" of the gospel who "work

together with and edify their fellow men." Spener's exegesis of scripture demanded that "the difference between man and woman, in regard to what is spiritual, is abolished" by God. Spener was by no means an advocate of total liberation for women in every social sphere. Moreover, he prohibited women from teaching before any public congregation. Yet his advocacy of women's privileges in the gospel to lead groups outside the church was an important step in the growth of women's activities that have become a vital hallmark of perfectionist groups ever since. To this end Spener encouraged the formation of small lay-directed groups called collegia pietatis that operated exclusive of the established church in order to promote the advancement of personal piety.¹¹

The Wesleyan Contribution to Christian Holiness

Albert Outler's observation that "John Wesley was the most important Anglican theologian of the eighteenth century" should not be regarded as hagiography. Questions about life's meaning, that arise in every society and every period in history, were accentuated in eighteenth-century England by the contemptible social conditions that accompanied the rapid proliferation of the factory system. The reality of men, women, and children, who faced a squalid domestic existence surpassed only by the unhappy

conditions rife in the mines and mills, posed the sorts of questions that the mainstream Anglican divines, whose penchant leaned heavily toward polemics of abstraction, simply could not address in an effective manner. Wesley's genius can be traced for the most part to his remarkable ability to express theological principles in ways that were readily understood even by the most unsophisticated audience. Outler concluded that Wesley was above all else "a folk theologian: an eclectic who . . . mastered the secret of plastic synthesis, simple profundity, the common touch."¹²

Although he was the founder of the Methodist movement, John Wesley remained a loyal member of the Church of England until his death in 1791, and it was his intention that the societies he founded should remain entrenched within the Anglican communion. Wesley lamented the social and political processes that precipitated the formation of a separate and independent Methodist Church in America at the close of the Revolution; by then, however, he was powerless to alter the course of events that resulted in the ecclesiastical schism. In England, where Wesley continued to exert considerable influence among the Methodist societies, the first Methodist schism away from the Anglican fold would not occur until six years after his death.¹³

Like his father Samuel, Wesley was a committed royalist and a devout high churchman. He received his formal education at Oxford University at a time when that institution was languishing through a period of intellectual stagnation. The students and faculty generally neglected their duties as researchers, lectures were frequently cancelled, and examinations were largely nominal. Wesley and a number of other students frequently managed to procure the services of tutors whose assistance would later be of benefit in helping them derive some meaning from their Oxford diplomas. Wesley's diary entries from this period of his career provide his readers with the clearest insights into his complex and sometimes erratic character. During his early student days at Oxford, Wesley cultivated an interest in the theatre, as well as a fondness for socializing with comrades in the local coffee house or tavern. But his appetite for worldly pleasures was gradually overcome by Wesley's introspective nature and his nearly puritanical obsession with self reproach.¹⁴

Wesley struggled with deep-rooted insecurities concerning his personal salvation--a struggle that only increased in intensity as he approached middle age. Generally speaking, his anxieties derived from an inability on his part to decide whether his eternal destiny was effected by the classical Protestant category of "faith alone" or by his personal attempts to maintain a holy

existence. His much celebrated leadership of the Holy Club at Oxford--whose members included such notables as George Whitefield and Wesley's brother Charles--indicates that Wesley was unable to align his approach to salvation with either Luther or Calvin, both of whom subsumed holy living under the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. Although Wesley and his little group were notoriously dutiful in doing charitable acts in their community--so much so that his detractors began assailing the group with the pejorative label "Methodists"--he found no relief for his bouts with self-contempt and nearly incessant barrage of personal uncertainty.¹⁵

When an opportunity for mission work in the American colony of Georgia came available to Wesley in 1735 he quickly accepted a position offered by the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel. Accompanied by his brother Charles, Wesley embarked for Georgia in October of the same year. Wesley's reasons for making the difficult passage were consistent with his anxious temperament. He noted in a diary entry that the principal reason he and Charles had chosen to abandon the comforts of England for the feral environs of Savannah was not "to gain the dung or dross of riches or honour; but singly this,--to save our souls."¹⁶

It is now a commonplace that Wesley's mission in Georgia was an abysmal failure. He never really got along with the colonists and managed to establish even less

rapport with the natives, whom, toward the end of his tenure there he characterized as "gluttons, drunkards, thieves, dissemblers, liars . . . implacable, unmerciful; murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, murderers of their children." Wesley mishandled his personal and professional affairs so badly that he eventually was indicted on twelve separate counts by a formal grand jury on charges ranging from slander to "hinderer of the public peace." In December of 1737, Wesley, frustrated by what he discerned as harrassment shown toward him by the local magistrates, "shook off the dust of [his] feet and left Georgia." 17

After returning to England in February, 1738, Wesley became even more sullen in his outlook on life and in his personal religious experience in particular. A journal entry from March of the same year strongly suggests that Wesley hoped to ameliorate his unhappiness through the cultivation of a stoical attitude. Reviewing promises made to himself during his student days, he renewed a pledge to "labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging myself in any of the least levity of behavior, or in laughter," and, as if the forgoing was not continent enough, he dourly added, "--no, not for a moment."18

If there was any benefit in the Georgia misadventure, it was Wesley's encounter with German Moravian missionaries and his subsequent interest in their assurance of personal

salvation. Wesley developed a close relationship with a Moravian named Peter Bohler after his return to England. Bohler convinced Wesley that his attempts to achieve salvation through pious behavior were self defeating and from a biblical point of view, inappropriate. Bohler encouraged Wesley to abandon his litigious approach to Christianity and to seek salvation as an "instantaneous work" received by faith alone. In May 1738, while listening to a reading of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, Wesley claimed to have finally received this "new faith." During his now famous visit to a Moravian society meeting on Aldersgate Street in London, Wesley observed that his heart became "strangely warmed," that for the first time in his life assurance of his salvation "was given him," and that he was indeed saved "from the law of sin and death."¹⁹

Wesley's concept of salvation, as it emerged after the Aldersgate experience, differed from the view promoted by his Moravian mentors in at least one important way. Wesley readily accepted the Moravian tenet of assurance by faith alone, but he gradually came to distrust Moravian quietism that he felt tended to depreciate the importance of good works altogether. Wesley's profound attachment to the Anglican heritage that laid stress on faith and works would not permit him to separate his new-found faith from an understanding of true conversion evidenced through works of

piety.²⁰

In the autumn of 1738, Wesley happened across a copy of Jonathan Edwards' Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God. Impressed with the progress of the spiritual awakening in America, he began examining other of Edwards' works and applying aspects of his theology to his own theological balancing act of faith and works. Perhaps the most important element in his appropriation of Edward's ideas was Wesley's adoption of the Edwardsean view that true religion is composed, to a large extent, of gracious affections which find their highest expression in love, joy, meekness, humility, and forgiveness. The objective expression of these affections should not be regarded as the means to salvation; salvation is procured by faith alone. Nevertheless, if the individual's faith is sincere, his affections, having been impressed by God's grace, will produce fruits, or good works.²¹

Wesley eschewed the Edwardsean emphasis on predestination replacing it with his own Arminian bias--predicated on the primacy of human free will. Moreover, he supplanted Edward's predominantly contemplative approach to Christian living--and accentuated Edward's emphasis on the fruits of conversion--by integrating the activist Anglican tradition tempered with the Protestant motif, passed on to him by the Moravians, of "faith alone." Rather than separate the two principles of

disciplined holy living and "faith alone" into dichotomous categories, he fused the two together into a unified and, as he saw it, balanced theology. Humanity was enabled to repent and seek forgiveness, Wesley argued, through the power of prevenient grace. Moreover, justification is granted, by faith alone through the meritorious death of Christ, to all who believe in him. What gives Wesley a distinctive place within the history of Christian thought was his integration of an additional emphasis, "participation" in the Divine nature, a principle he borrowed from the Eastern fathers, including Ephrem and Macarius. Having fused the principles of "holy living" and the assurance of salvation granted "by faith alone" with the Eastern emphasis on participation, the foundations for Wesley's theology of Christian perfection were fully established.²²

After Aldersgate, Wesley came to understand justification as the first important step in the Christian's life that should eventually culminate in what he described as "entire sanctification," the perfection of the subject's heart. Wesley rejected the Calvinistic depiction of sin as a component of the passions or emotions. He suggested instead that sin is a derivative of the will. Wesley defined sin as "a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. . . . to strain the matter farther is only to make way for Calvinism." Having defined sin as

any deliberate act of the will for evil, he asserted that there is no reason why the Christian should not anticipate being cleansed of sin in this life. Arguing against a neo-platonic anthropology that posited a dichotomy of spirit and "sinful human flesh," Wesley reasoned that the concept of "sinful flesh" is ambiguous and "is totally unscriptural, so it is palpably absurd. . . . no 'body,' or matter of any kind, can be 'sinful;' spirits alone are capable of sin." He pressed the Calvinists to explain the necessity of sinfulness in the justified believer: "Pray in what part of the body should sin lodge? It cannot lodge in the skin, nor in the muscles, or nerves or veins or arteries; it cannot be in the bones, any more than in the hair or nails. Only the soul can be the seat of sin."²³

Wesley was subtle enough in his arguments with Calvinism to avoid contradicting the Pauline tenet "all have sinned," but after the Aldersgate experience, he grew increasingly certain that God's grace was sufficient to cleanse the believer from all unrighteousness even while the Christian remains in the flesh. Like the Lutheran and Calvinist systems, the Wesleyan view of salvation begins with grace, repentance, and justification; but Wesley altered the traditional Protestant understanding of the relationship between justification and sanctification which had suggested that these were essentially aspects of the same work of grace. Instead, Wesley posited a

distinctive doctrine of sanctification that precipitated the life of holiness or "perfect love." Wesley taught that subsequent to justification, sanctification continued as a gradual process that may--although it may not--lead on to the believer's "entire sanctification." That is to say, at the time of justification, through grace, the process of dying to sin is set in motion; and at some later point in this life, the Christian may anticipate an additional work of grace that sanctifies him entirely and imbues him with the gift of perfect love. Wesley referred to this collateral work of grace as the "second blessing." Incorporating an analogy of physical death to illustrate this process, Wesley observed that, "A man maybe dying for some time yet he does not . . . die till the instant the soul is separated from the body. . . . In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time, yet he is not dead to sin till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love."²⁴

While the two works remained intertwined in his thought, Wesley carefully distinguished sanctification from justification. Sanctification is a process that begins at the moment of justification and never ceases to affect the life of the believer. Moreover the work of entire sanctification does not terminate the process for, Wesley asserted, even at this stage the Christian has not "attained all that they shall attain. . . . But they daily

'go from strength to strength; beholding,' now, 'as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.'" It is for this reason that Wesley scrupulously avoided the expression "sinless perfection." Wesley never intended the perfection of which he wrote to indicate a faultless character--at least the physical, emotional and intellectual aspects of the subject should not be construed as perfectible in this sense. Wesley set up his doctrine of perfection with an Eastern understanding of the term, thereby advancing the notion of an ongoing, dynamic process of grace that engenders a Christ-like nature in the believer.²⁵

In keeping with his view that sin, properly defined, is a component of the will, Wesley argued that, through grace, the corruption of the will that is universally present in humanity may not only be forgiven, but may be cleansed entirely. The Christian who has "died to sin" entirely seeks with heart, mind, and body to do "the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven." An apparent paradox arose when Wesley asserted that even the Christian, made perfect in love toward God and neighbor, would continue to transgress the actual will of God until the moment of death. The ignorance and propensity for error intrinsic to Adam's fallen race dictate that such transgressions are unavoidable; nevertheless such errors

should be confessed in the same manner as willful disobedience. Wesley obdurately maintained throughout his career that perfection should in no sense be absolutized. From a lack of perfect knowledge, the sanctified Christian is likely throughout life to think, speak, and act in ways that are imperfect; but Wesley stressed that this imperfection was not the result of an imperfect heart. Late in life, he observed that "there is no such perfection in this life, as implies an entire deliverance either from ignorance, or mistake in things not essential to salvation, or from manifold temptations, or from numberless infirmities." Yet he also maintained that while the Christian, in many respects, remains ignorant to the perfect will of God, he is obligated to participate in the process of grace that enables him to love "the Lord his God with all his heart. . . . and loving God, he loves his neighbor as himself."²⁶

Wesley's interpretation of the doctrine was inseparable from his social ethic. The process and eventual realization of entire sanctification bear a responsibility for social action that seeks to reveal God's compassion for all humanity. The content of Wesley's version of the "gracious affections" is evidenced through the proliferation of charitable acts. Reared in an Anglican heritage that was deeply conscious not only of sins of commission but of those of omission, Wesley was

wary of all forms of mysticism and pietism promoting a form of perfectionism that, at the same time, trivialized the significance of benevolent acts. Christians, Wesley maintained, should "lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind." One who has been justified and is going on to perfection is, he argued, fully obligated to perform charitable works and do good "to the bodies and souls of man." He saw the process as a morally demanding dynamic that unleashes the individual from the bondage of sin and establishes a conscious desire to accomplish God's perfect will by all possible means.²⁷

This concept of salvation as an ongoing process was reflected in the way Wesley set up his Methodist organization. He fully expected that his followers would wish to advance through the levels of spirituality he taught, and he rewarded this advancement by granting them membership in specific fellowship associations. Within a decade following the Aldersgate experience, the Methodist organization was, for the most part, already approaching its final shape. Wesley considered Methodism not as a distinct church but rather as a collaborator to the Anglican tradition. Its keystone, the local society, was made up of individuals who desired "to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins" and who "continue to evidence their desire of salvation." In other words, the society was open to anyone, justified by faith or

otherwise, desiring to seek salvation. In this forum, Wesley hoped society members in the experience of salvation would provide support to those who were not but who were committed to finding it.²⁸

Another of Wesley's organizational groups patterned most closely along the lines of Spener's collegia pietatis, and the Moravian societies that Spener's groups influenced, was the band. To join a Methodist band, Wesley required that the individual must advance to the level of the regenerated. In establishing an organization specifically for those who were in the experience of salvation Wesley argued that Methodist leadership was better equipped "to separate the precious from the vile." Band members met together on a weekly basis in order to sing and pray and to confess "faults" and "temptations" to one another. As a means of encouraging members to freely express these "faults" and "temptations" to the group, Wesley divided his "little companies" by sex and by marital status. The men and women gathered together on a quarterly basis "In order to increase in them a grateful sense of all [God's] mercies" by sharing together in a common meal consisting of "a little plain cake and water" described by Wesley as a "love feast."²⁹

Those Methodists who advanced even further along in the process of salvation and who "outran the greater part of their brethren, continually walking in the light of God"

could join an even more exclusive group, the select societies. Within a few years following Aldersgate, Wesley indicated that the rationale for the group was to direct the members "to press after perfection . . . and to incite them to love one another more." Much later in his career, in 1786, Wesley indicated that the bands had by that time come to serve the needs of those who were in the experience of salvation and "were going on to perfection." By the same date, moreover, membership in the select societies was being reserved exclusively for Methodists who, "so far as man could judge," were already "partakers" of Christian perfection. A century later, the American advocates of Holiness doctrine recognized Wesley's use of the select society and, in some cases, limited membership in their Holiness associations to those who could give a clear witness of their second blessing experience. Many American Methodists at the end of the nineteenth century looked upon these limitations as a form of exclusivism.³⁰

The shift in Wesley's criteria for membership in the select societies from persons who were seeking perfection to those already in the experience serves as a good barometer of a change in the way he understood the doctrine of perfection toward the end of his life. Originally, Wesley believed that the process of salvation leading to entire sanctification was gradual enough that most persons would not be perfected until "a little before their

death." As the number of Methodists claiming perfect love increased, especially after 1760, Wesley began to describe the experience as something that was as likely to occur early in life as was justification. In a 1762 journal entry Wesley observed that as a result of the Methodist revivals in England he was hearing of "persons sanctified . . . as frequently as of persons justified." As a result of these Methodist revivals of perfectionism and the testimonies of those who came under their influence, Wesley began insisting that justified Christians did not have to wait long for the "second blessing" of entire sanctification. In 1786, only six years before his death, Wesley wrote to Methodist itinerant John Ogilvie admonishing him to "strongly exhort all believers to expect full sanctification now, by simple faith." His penchant as folk theologian, par excellence, kept him from systematically addressing the timing of entire sanctification as it occurs after justification. It seems, however, that the mature Wesley perceived it as something to be obtained now rather than later.³¹

John Fletcher's Theology of Spirit Baptism

The scope of Wesley's perfectionist theology was dominated by Christocentric language. In sharp contrast with his successors in the nineteenth-century Holiness

movement, he rarely interpreted the salvation process in terms of the Holy Spirit. As a component of justification he understood entire sanctification as a gift bestowed through faith in Christ. Perfection was, he argued, a free gift from Christ purchased by his sacrifice on the cross. Emphasizing the biblical imagery of Christ the high priest who intercedes on the Christian's behalf, Wesley maintained that "Even perfect holiness is acceptable to God only through Jesus Christ." Though never dogmatic with the issue, for Wesley Christ serves as the provider and sustainer of sanctification.³²

In at least one instance--at the point of his doctrine of assurance--he did incorporate language about the Holy Spirit into his theology, in a manner consistent with the views espoused by more radical groups like the Quakers (a point not lost on Wesley, who once observed: "if the Quakers hold the same perceptible inspiration with me, I am glad; and it is neither better nor worse for their holding it at all"). Wesley taught the Methodists that assurance of salvation is given to the individual through the "witness of the Holy Spirit." He interpreted this witness as "an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out and I . . . am reconciled to God." Probably in recognition

that even this rather minor pneumatological or spirit centered emphasis might "run" the Methodists "into all the wildness of enthusiasm," Wesley vehemently maintained that the "testimony of the Spirit" must not be separated from "the fruit of the Spirit." Moreover, he recoiled from any extensive usage of Pentecostal or "Spirit baptism" language in interpretations of the "second blessing."³³

A century later as the doctrine of Christian Perfection found strong support among Methodists in the New South, the great majority of the tenet's advocates ignored Wesley's concern with the equation of Spirit baptism and entire sanctification. For the most part unaware of their anti-Wesleyan approach to the doctrine, nearly every Methodist preacher connected with the southern Holiness Associations described the experience of the second blessing in terms of a baptism of the Spirit. In this regard they were not initiating a unique theological idea, but were acting as heirs of another Methodist tradition well entrenched in the United States and possessing ties with British Methodism.

Even during the Wesley's lifetime, other Methodists understood the issue of Spirit baptism in a different light. John Fletcher, Anglican priest and co-laborer with Wesley in the Methodist movement, was the first to systematically apply a Pentecostal interpretation to his theology of a second work. In other words, Fletcher

described Wesley's second blessing experience as a "baptism in the Holy Spirit." Fletcher virtually supplanted his mentor's Christological framework with a dispensational theology centered predominantly along pneumatological lines. "So capital is this promise of the Spirit's stronger influences," observed Fletcher, "to raise the rare plant of Christian perfection, that when our Lord speaks of this promise, he emphatically calls it, The promise of the Father; because it shines among the other promises of the Gospel of Christ, as the moon does among the stars." Like Wesley, Fletcher taught that justification is given to the individual by faith in Christ, but he described the work, of entire sanctification as the "birthday of the Spirit of love in our souls." Concerning the biblical account of the day of Pentecost, Fletcher reasoned that those who were already "strong in the grace of their dispensation,"--what Fletcher understood as the "dispensation of Christ"--"arose then into sinless fathers." Those individuals not yet justified by this "dispensation of Christ" though not perfected in love had the "imperfection of their love only covered over by a land flood of peace and joy in believing."³⁴

For Fletcher, the upshot of all this dispensational language was that the historical day of Pentecost represented two distinct opportunities for those who were affected by it. For the disciples of Christ and for all

who already believed in him, it meant the realization of Christian perfection wrought by the "power" or the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." To those who did not yet believe, it offered justification and salvation. Though no more certain of the timing of entire sanctification than Wesley, Fletcher asserted that individuals must usually wait "a considerable time . . . to receive light to grow in grace, to do and to suffer his will before they are either justified or sanctified. . ." though sometimes, admitted Fletcher, "he 'cuts short his work.'" Fletcher's theology suggested that the dispensation of Christ, though of considerable importance, was overshadowed by the post-ascension dispensation of the "Holy Ghost" or "perfect Christianity" brought about by the Pentecostal power of the Holy Spirit. Yet even this dispensation of the Spirit would be eclipsed one day with the coming of the general resurrection and the dispensation of final perfection during which the "saints" will be "glorified" and made "equally perfect" in all things.³⁵

Wesley never was especially impressed with Fletcher's dispensationalism or his equation of Spirit baptism with the doctrine of entire sanctification. In a 1771 letter addressed to Methodist preacher and headmaster of Trevecka College, Joseph Benson, Wesley warned that it would be prudent to "abstain from speaking of . . . Mr. Fletcher's late discovery." In another letter to Benson, Wesley noted

that if any Methodist desired to refer to entire sanctification as "receiving the Holy Ghost, they may . . . , only the phrase in that sense is not scriptural and not quite proper; for they all received the Holy Ghost when they were justified." Fletcher was not the first to describe sanctification in pneumatological terms. He, like Wesley, was heir to an Anglican tradition theologically liberal enough to permit discussions that fell along both Christological and pneumatological lines. Ironically, the Arminian Fletcher borrowed much of the Spirit language he used to express his concept of sanctification from English Puritans. Fletcher was familiar with and heavily influenced by the writings of Puritan theologians like John Owen, a seventeenth-century Anglican turned Congregationalist who, in 1674, observed that "God sanctifies immediately by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Love and Peace." Owen, however, believed that this Spirit baptism, along with sanctification, occurs at the time of justification and then carries "on the work untill it comes to perfection." Fletcher, on the other hand, equated it with the point of perfection itself, the second blessing, or the "promise of the Father."³⁶

Occasionally, Fletcher's advocacy of Holy Spirit baptism smacked of exclusivity. "St. Paul everywhere declares," he wrote, "that it is the common privilege of Christians to 'be filled with the Spirit.'" Yet, Fletcher

asserted that the apostle "intimates that the name of Christian should be refused to those who have not received the promise of the Father." Moreover, Fletcher observed, the promise of the Father is offered only to the "truly penitent." Wesley did not directly criticize Fletcher for his restrictive leanings, but his concern with Fletcher's depreciation of regeneration in believers implied a similar concern. By arguing that the Holy Spirit was not given until the believer received the second blessing, Fletcher was suggesting that the regenerated Christian did not possess the Spirit. It was this aspect of Fletcher's theology that most troubled Wesley. The Spirit, for Wesley, is fully present in the believer's life from the inception of the new birth and throughout the life of the believer. However critical he may have been regarding Fletcher's Pentecostal understanding of entire sanctification, there is no evidence that Wesley ever asked Fletcher to stop disseminating his ideas. Moreover, it may have been Wesley's latitudinarian attitude that made it possible for Fletcher's views to become so influential in the Methodist church in America during the following century.³⁷

Notes

1. This is not intended to suggest that the American Holiness evangelists recognized the ancient post-apostolic influences on their theology. They contented themselves by depicting their opinions as thoroughly "biblical" and "Wesleyan." Moreover, they believed Wesley to be the most faithful interpreter of what they thought was clearly taught by scripture. What few nineteenth-century Holiness advocates recognized was Wesley's catholic bent and his familiarity with patristics from whom he gathered much that informed his view of Christian perfection. Jaroslav Pelikan, The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition 100-600, (Chicago, 1971), 155. Anthony Meredith in The Study of Spirituality, Cheslyn Jones, et. al., eds., (London, 1986), 113.

2. John E. L. Oulton, Henry Chadwick, eds., Alexandrian Christianity: Selected Translations of Clement and Origen, Vol. 2 of the Library of Christian Classics (Philadelphia, 1954), 93-163. Ephrem, An Exposition of the Gospel, Trans. George Egan, (Louvain, 1968), 14. The most exhaustive study of the development of perfectionism in the Christian tradition remains R. Newton Flew's The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology: An Historical Study of the Christian Ideal for the Present Life (London, 1934).

3. Cheslyn Jones, Study of Spirituality, 174; Paul M. Bassett, Exploring Christian Holiness: The Historical Development, (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1985), 74f. The writings of Macarius, though Egyptian and roughly contemporary with Macarius, were actually written by a number of individuals and were attributed to Macarius who likely served as their mentor. Wesley was familiar with and heavily influenced by the writings of both Ephrem and Macarius. Of the mystic Macarius he once remarked, "I read Macarius and sang." Flew, Idea of Perfection, 179. For a more exhaustive examination of Eastern Christianity and perfectionism see Stanley M. Burgess, The Holy Spirit: Eastern Christian Traditions (Peabody, Mass., 1989) passim.

4. See Pelikan, Catholic Tradition, 307-18, who offers an excellent description of the development of the Church's views on grace and perfection. Augustine reflected his opinion on the connection between objective ritual and sanctification when he wrote: "All of those who are perfect belong to the Church." Sermons of Augustine 4: 11. Jaroslav Pelikan observes that for Augustine, Christian holiness could not be measured by the holiness of individuals but rather by "the holiness of grace dispensed in [the Church's] sacraments." Furthermore, Pelikan accurately notes that Augustine established "a doctrine of

the objectivity of grace that was to be normative in catholic Christianity, especially Western Christianity, for more than a millennium. If perfection was attainable for anyone in this life, it would come through grace which was mediated through the church and its sacraments." And, as Pelikan notes, Augustinian theology dictated that "perfection was not possible without grace, and even with grace it was a goal rather than an achievement." See also Canons 6 and 7 from the Synod and Carthage in A History of the Church Councils, Charles J. Hefle, ed., (Edinburgh, 1876), 459. For more on the Donatist challenge to Augustine's theology see Pelikan, Ibid., 308-13. For more on the importance of sacraments in Augustine's soteriology, see F. Vandermeer, Augustine the Bishop: The Life and Work of a Father of the Church, tr., Brian Battershaw and G. R. Lamb, (London, 1961) 347-87. See also Peter Brown, Augustine of Hippo (Berkeley, Ca., 1969) 235-39.

5. See, for instance, Columban, "Perfection Through Community Discipline," in A History of Christianity: Readings in the History of the Church, 2 vols., Ray C. Petry and Clyde Manschreck, ed., (Grand Rapids, 1962), 1:164. The monastic self-consciousness of its own superiority often revolved around the issues of human sexuality. St. Basil (d. 379) taught that Catholics who married would receive pardon for loving their spouses. St. Martin (d. 396) agreed. Marriage was excused but virginity led to true holiness. See Flew, Idea of Perfection 174f. See also, Steven Ozment, The Age of Reform 1250-1550, (New Haven, 1980) 83f. Ozment observes that when "Roman persecution of Christians waned in the fourth century, the monastic life replaced martyrdom as the badge of Christian perfection." See also The Rule of St. Benedict; ed. Timothy Fry (Collegeville, Minn., 1981). A reflection of Augustine's monastic model, The Benedictines believed the first step to perfection was found in "unhesitating obedience" to church authority vested in the abbot and other superiors. 187ff; 295ff. Twelfth-century Cistercian Bernard of Clairvaux described the monastery as "the heavenly city on earth; it is Jerusalem." Bernard taught that the monks are in reality at one with the citizens of heaven. Bernard quoted in G. R. Evans, The Mind of St. Bernard of Clairvaux (London, 1983) 5. For an excellent description of the steps for monks that lead to perfection see Etienne Gilson, The Mystical Theology of Saint Bernard tr., A. H. C. Downes, (London, 1955), 97ff.

6. Walter Hilton quoted in A. P. Baldwin, "The Tripartite Reformation of the Soul in the Scale of Perfection, *Pear*, and *Piers Plowman*" in The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England, (Cambridge, 1984), 138; Walter Hilton, The Ladder of Perfection, tr. Leo Sherley-Price (London, 1957), 151ff.

7. Martin Luther, Luther's Works, eds., Lewis Spitz and Helmut Lehmann, (Philadelphia, 1955), 34:153; c.f. Bassett, Christian Holiness, 176. For an excellent treatment of the shift toward rational objectivity in the Reformers and especially in Jean Calvin, see Carlos M. N. Eire War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship From Erasmus to Calvin. (Cambridge, 1986). Eire notes that "Calvin did not want a religion in which reason had at times to be denied or suspended. Faith was reasonable, it had to make sense." 312. Luther renounced his own monastic vows because, as Roland Bainton points out, for Luther, those vows "rest on the false assumption that there is a special calling, a vocation, to which superior Christians are invited to observe the counsels of perfection while ordinary Christians fulfill only the commands." Roland Bainton, Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther (Nashville: 1978) 155f. Moreover, Luther once wrote that "my greatest sins were that I was so holy a monk, and so horribly angered, tortured, and plagued my dear Lord with so many masses for more than fifteen years," Martin Luther, Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings, ed., Timothy F. Lull, (Minneapolis, 1989), 61. Luther advised his readers "to abandon religious foundations and monasteries and their vows and come forth into the true Christian orders in order to escape . . . this blasphemous holiness, [i.e., chastity, poverty, and obedience] by which men imagine they are saved." Luther's deeply set convictions regarding the innate sinfulness of humanity made the active pursuit of holiness a matter of vanity. In the Smalcald Articles, Luther declared that "repentance continues until death, for all through life it contends with the sins that remain in the flesh." At best, the sin that remains "in the flesh" is "repressed" and "restrained" by the Holy Spirit, but cannot be purged. Moreover, Luther opined, personal holiness or "righteousness" is "finally perfected at the end through death." Ibid 157; 526 f.

8. John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion (Philadelphia, 1960), 3 vols., 3: 11; Bassett, Christian Holiness, 165ff; Justo Gonzalez, A History of Christian Thought, 3 vols., (Nashville, 1986) 3: 134 f; 142. Calvin argued that "some taint" of sin "always remains in our flesh." Furthermore, "there is still a continual warfare with the flesh." It is then, "a devilish invention for our minds, while we are in the earthly race, to be cocksure about our perfection." Jean Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion (Philadelphia: 1960) 396; 911; 1034; 1265ff. Calvin taught that the pursuit of holiness is severely restricted in this life because every work, even from the best intention "is still always spotted and corrupted with some impurity of the flesh." See William J. Bouwsma John Calvin: A Sixteenth-Century Portrait (London, 1988) 138f. For more on Calvinism and perfectionism see

Gerrit J. tenZythoff, "The Non-Perfectionism of John Calvin" in Reading Beyond: Chapters in the History of Perfectionism, ed., Stanley M. Burgess (Peabody, Mass., 1986) 719ff.

9. See, for example, Otto W. Heick, A History of Christian Thought, 2 vols., (Philadelphia, 1965), 1:471.

10. Bassett, Christian Holiness, 194; 196ff. Philip Jacob Spener, Pia Desideria trans., Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia, 1964) 66; 80. Spener observed that Christians "are not forbidden to seek perfection, but . . . are urged on toward it." A degree of perfection is attainable in this life, but such perfection only directs the Christian to recognize how far short of absolute perfection he or she actually is.

11. Spener quoted in History of Christian Thought, Manschreck ed., 2: 274f. Unfortunately, the best biography of Spener remains Paul Grunberg, Philipp Jacob Spener, 3 vols. (Gottingen, 1893-1906). There is no biography of Spener written in English. "Nobody can read Luther's writings," Spener argued, "without observing how earnestly the sainted man advocated this spiritual priesthood, according to which not only ministers but all Christians are made priests by their Savior . . . and are dedicated to perform spiritual-priestly acts." Subsequently, Spener taught "that all spiritual functions are open to all Christians without exception." Men and women of every rank are called to "study in the Word of the Lord" and to "exhort" because they are all part of "a royal priesthood." Spener, Pia Desideria 92ff. For a helpful discussion of the formation of small groups within the church and their eventual rise from sectarian to denominational status see Joachim Wach, Types of Religious Experience Christian and Non-Christian (Chicago, 1951) 187ff.

12. Albert Outler, "The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition," in The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition, ed. Kenneth Rowe, (Metuchen, N.J., 1976), 14; Albert Outler, ed. John Wesley, (New York, 1964), vii.

13. John Wesley, The Works of John Wesley, 3rd ed., Thomas Jackson, ed., 14 vols. (Kansas City, 1979), 11: 113ff; Henry D. Rack, Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism, (London, 1989), 523.

14. Edward Gibbon remarked that the fourteen months he spent at Oxford in the 1750s proved "the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life." (Quoted in Rack, Reasonable Enthusiast, 61). A more detailed account of Wesley's Oxford experience is found in V. H. H. Green, The

Young Mr. Wesley: A Study of John Wesley and Oxford, (New York, 1961) 84ff. A succinct examination of Wesley's early puritanical outlook is provided by Stanley Ayling, John Wesley, (London, 1979), 34. Ingvar Haddaly, John Wesley: A Biography (New York, 1961), 26ff. A more thorough treatment of Wesley's Puritanical bent is given by Robert C. Monk, John Wesley: His Puritan Heritage (New York, 1966). See also Richard P. Heitzenrater, The Elusive Mr. Wesley 2 vols., (Nashville, 1984) 1:50ff. Heitzenrater refers to Wesley as a "compulsive Pietist." While this may be accurate, as Gordon Rupp has observed, the Puritan influences on Wesley should not be overlooked. Gordon Rupp, "Son of Samuel: John Wesley, Church of England Man," in The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition, ed., Kenneth E. Rowe (Metuchen, N.J., 1976) 41. For a helpful look at Wesley's literary interests during his early Oxford career and later, see Onva K. Boshears, John Wesley the Bookman: A Study of His Reading Interests in the Eighteenth Century (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Michigan, 1972) 95ff.

15. Outler, John Wesley, 41ff. See also Wesley's revealing diary entries in Heitzenrater, Elusive Wesley, 51ff. Green, Young Mr. Wesley, 83; 100f. For a more recent discussion of Wesley's personal uncertainty before Aldersgate see Aldersgate Reconsidered ed., Randy L. Maddox (Nashville, 1990) *passim*. See also V. H. H. Green John Wesley (London, 1964) 53ff. Howard A. Slaate, Fire in the Brand: An Introduction to the Creative Work and Theology of John Wesley (New York, 1963) 82ff.

16. Wesley, Works, 1: 17. Cf. John D. Lee, "The Conversion Experience of May 24, 1738 in the Life of John Wesley," (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1937). The best bibliographic list of sources devoted to Wesley's Aldersgate experience can be found in the footnotes of Randy C. Maddox's article on Wesley's conversion "Celebrating Methodist History--When?" Methodist History 19 (January 1991), 63ff. Also Kenneth J. Collins, "Other Thoughts on Aldersgate: Has the Conversionist Paradigm Collapsed?" Methodist History, 30 (October 1991), 10ff; 17ff. Cf. David L. Cubie, "Placing Aldersgate in John Wesley's Order of Salvation," Wesleyan Theological Journal 24 (1989) 32ff.

17. Wesley, Works, 1: 66f; 61. A survey of Wesley's Georgia experience is provided by Green, Young Mr. Wesley 248ff. See also, Frank Baker, John Wesley and the Church of England (New York, 1970) 38ff. A more recent and more sanguine treatment of Wesley's experiences in Georgia is given by Richard P. Heitzenrater, "The Second Rise of Methodism; Georgia," Methodist History 28 (January 1990) 117ff. Heitzenrater points out that despite several failures in Georgia Wesley did manage to see a significant increase in church attendance during his time there.

18. Wesley, Works, 1: 86.

19. Ibid. 85-103. For more on Boehler's influence on Wesley see Theodore Runyon "The Importance of Experience for Faith" in Aldersgate Reconsidered 97ff. Green, Young Mr. Wesley 280ff.

20. Outler, John Wesley, 14ff. For a brief but interesting description of Wesley's rejection of quietism, see Martin Schmidt, "Wesley's Place in Church History," in Wesley in the Christian Tradition 74-5. Schmidt points out that Wesley "blamed Luther as well as Count Zinzendorf for [the Moravians] . . . rejection of the Law." See also William R. Cannon The Theology of John Wesley, (New York, 1946) 146ff.

21. See Gregory S. Clapper, "'True Religion' and the Affections: A study of John Wesley's Abridgment of Jonathan Edwards Treatise on Religion Affections" The Wesleyan Theological Journal, 19 (Fall 1984), 84. Wesley's abridgment reflects his rejection of some Calvinistic tenets in Edward's thought, and, as one would expect, he emphasizes those "signs" that address the change of nature occurring within the affected subject. Outler, Wesley, 15f. Wesley described Edward's work as a "dangerous heap wherein much wholesome food is mixed with much deadly poison." Wesley then took up the task of weeding out the "poison" of Calvinism from Edward's writings. Outler identifies Edwards as a major source of Wesley's theology of the Spirit. See also Monk, John Wesley 42f; and Charles Rogers, "John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards," Duke Divinity Review 31 (Winter 1966), 20ff. For a balanced appraisal of Wesley's appreciation of Calvinistic doctrines, see Robert Doyle Smith, "John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards on Religious Experience: A Comparative Analysis" Wesleyan Theological Journal 25 (Spring 1990) 130ff.

22. Outler, "Place of Wesley", 30. Outler maintained that Wesley's emphasis upon a fusion of pardon and participation renders his theology as relevant for modern society: "Wesley in my judgment, grasped this vital unity firmly and this is what gives him his distinctive place--then and now." For a helpful essay on John Wesley's reliance on early Eastern Fathers including Clement, Macarius, and Gregory of Nyssa, see John G. Merritt, "Dialogue With in a Tradition: John Wesley and Gregory of Nyssa Discuss Christian Perfection" Wesleyan Theological Journal 22 (Fall 1987) 92ff. After reading "The Exhortations of Ephrem Syrus" Wesley opined, "Surely never did any man, since David, give us such a picture of a broken and contrite heart." Works 2: 47f.

23. Wesley, Works, 6: 417f. See also John L. Peters, Christian Perfection and American Methodism (New York, 1956) 39. Theology of John Wesley, 193ff.

24. John Wesley, Christian Perfection, Thomas Kepler, ed., (New York, 1954) 22ff; Wesley, Works, 11: 402. John L. Peters, Christian Perfection and American Methodism, (New York, 1956), 58; Outler, John Wesley, 304. The best analysis of Wesley's view of the "second blessing" is offered by Timothy L. Smith, "John Wesley and the Second Blessing," Wesleyan Theological Journal 21 (Spring-Fall 1986) 137ff.

25. Wesley, Works, 11: 26; Outler, John Wesley, 30. See also Harold Lindstrom Wesley and Sanctification (New York, 1947) 145f. Lindstrom offers a detailed explanation of the limitations of entire sanctification in believers.

26. Wesley, Works, 11: 371-372, 383.

27. Ibid., 432.

28. An excellent description of Wesley's establishment of the Methodist organization is presented by Rack in Reasonable Enthusiast, 237ff; Wesley's personal description of the Methodist society's function is found in his "Nature, Design and General Rules of the United Society's," Works of Wesley, 8: 269-71. See also Frank Baker, John Wesley and the Church of England, (New York, 1970) 283ff.

29. Wesley, Works, 256ff. Wesley encouraged women leadership in his bands. The best available study of Wesley's interest and support of women's ministries is Earl Kent Brown, Women of Mr. Wesley's Methodism, (New York, 1983). For an interesting perspective on Wesley and his relationship to members of the Methodist Societies see Henry Abelove, The Evangelist of Desire: John Wesley and the Methodists (Stanford, 1990). Abelove describes Wesley as a poor organizer and argues that the Societies actually "organized themselves entirely on their own initiative." The reader should consider Abelove's use of source materials before determining the merit of his thesis. The work is based upon Abelove's 1978 Ph.D. dissertation which received little revision before publication. Moreover, it ignores the arguments of most of the secondary works about Wesley's life.

30. Rack, Reasonable Enthusiast, 240; Wesley, Works, 8: 260f; Ibid., 13: 259f.

31. Wesley, Christian Perfection, 43; Works, 3: 116; 12: 527. For more on Wesley's Christocentric theology of

sanctification see Harold Lindstrom, Wesley and Sanctification (New York, 1947) 198ff.

32. Wesley, Christian Perfection, passim; Ibid., 94.

33. See Dayton, Theological Roots, 42ff. Donald Dayton provides the most objective description of Wesley's pneumatological interests. Dayton argues that "apart from this doctrine of assurance or the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit and the heightened soteriological orientation resulting from the emphasis on the experimental, Wesley is strikingly Christocentric in his patterns of thought."; Quoted in Dayton, Ibid., 43; Wesley, Works, 123f; see for example, Wesley's letter to Joseph Benson dated December 28, 1770 in John Wesley The Letters of John Wesley, 8 vols. ed., John Telford, (London, 1932), 5: 214-15. Wesley indicated to Benson that he believed the Christian receives the Holy Spirit at the time of justification and not at the point of entire sanctification.

34. John Fletcher, The Works of the Reverend John Fletcher, 4 vols., (New York: Lane and Scott, 1851) 2: 630; Ibid., 631-632. By "dispensation" Fletcher meant that God had divided history into different stages of distinguishable progressive revelation.

35. Ibid., 632-633; 525-7.

36. Wesley, Letters, 5, 214-15; John Owen, Pneumatologia or a Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit, (London, 1674) 323. Owen, like other Puritans, did not anticipate Wesley's theology of a second work. Perfection, or "perfect obedience," for Owen, was unattainable in this life, though it could be approached, through gradual growth before death. For more on Fletcher's application of Owen and other Puritan Divines, see Monk, John Wesley, 128-30. An excellent examination of the Puritan equation of sanctification with the work of the Holy Spirit is provided in John von Rohr The Covenant of Grace in Puritan Thought (Atlanta, 1986) 104-12. von Rohr quotes seventeenth-century English Puritan Richard Sibbes who wrote, "Certainly the Spirit that sanctified Christ doth sanctify every member of Christ." Another seventeenth-century Englishman, William Strang, described sanctification in a manner not dissimilar with Fletcher a century later, as "a secret and yet sacred blast of the Spirit of God breaking in." John Fletcher, Checks to Antinomianism 4 vols. (New York, 1820), 1: 276-93.

37. Fletcher, Works, 3, 183; Wesley, Letters, 5: 228; See also Dayton, Theological Roots, 49; Wesley, Works, 8: 100f.

Chapter 3

American Shortcuts to Perfection

Perfection of the New Republic

When the Methodist preachers first began arriving in America in 1766 they carried Wesley's doctrine of a second blessing with them. Moreover, the foundations of American perfectionism, derived from non-Methodist sources,--namely the Reformed tradition--were already beginning to emerge in advance of their arrival in the colonies. These non-Methodistic forms of perfection gradually evolved and, in the ministry of Holiness theologian Phoebe Palmer, interplayed with Wesley's theology creating a distinctly American form of Christian holiness and promising a shorter and simpler route to perfection.¹

During the eighteenth century, New England Congregationalism underwent a shift in social perception from a strongly covenantal community perspective toward a more balanced mix of communal interests and increased emphasis on the individual. Heavily influenced by Enlightenment principles of human integrity, a number of

New England clergy began accentuating the individual's ability to reason. As a consequence of the development of this novel form of "rational religion," American Reformed theologians in the eighteenth century came to regard the individual conscience with considerably more optimism than had their Puritan forebears. In the years preceding the Great Awakening (1738-43), as one scholar has observed, "the notion of the perfectibility of the individual--through the cultivation of implanted faculties (chiefly reason)--began to make its way into colonial theological discourse."²

During the latter half of the century, New Divinity Reformed theologians experimented with a redefinition of God, suggesting that he actively sought the happiness of his people and was even obligated to do so for the sake of his personal glory. Even thoroughgoing Calvinists like Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803) maintained that persons preordained by this benevolent God could themselves be transformed from their selfish unconverted state to selfless purveyors of good works. Hopkins nurtured such a strong optimism for the human race that he eventually developed a postmillennial theology based upon his convictions that converted humans empowered to strive for the improvement of society would some day help usher in a Christian golden age that would finally secure the happiness of all

creation--Hopkins believed this new age would commence some time in the nineteenth century. Hopkins, like his mentor Jonathan Edwards, looked for the establishment of the millennium in America, but Hopkins introduced the concept of active social reform as a means of precipitating its realization. Antebellum Holiness preachers later jettisoned Hopkins's exclusory Calvinism with its limited atonement theology but readily accepted his ideas of the importance of human happiness. Moreover, they took up his theme of an American-centered millennium that would at long last be realized by men and women with perfect hearts.³

Connecticut Congregationalist Timothy Dwight (1752-1817) had even greater influence on a later generation of northern Holiness preachers. Dwight adopted the New Divinity theology of a benevolent God, yet he advanced his theology along lines that would prove overtly beneficial to the newly formed United States. Applying the rationalist-deistic concept of a balanced, well-organized universe to his theology while sustaining the Calvinistic tenet of God's dominion, Dwight was able to assert that the design of creation proves that a reasonable and benevolent God ordered and sustains it. Providence need no longer be accepted obsequiously in terms of mystery. Rather, for Dwight and his disciples, the activities of a reasonable God should be evaluated by rational, enlightened means. Carefully following Hopkins's assertion that God is

attentive to the happiness of his creatures, Dwight determined that God's purpose in creating the universe was the ultimate happiness of his people.⁴

Dwight and a majority of his New England colleagues began describing America as a promised land that had been made free by God and firmly established as the principal agent in securing the eventual happiness of all humanity. Dwight maintained that utility in the procurement of greater happiness was valid not only at the institutional level but at the level of the individual as well. Any activity that served a useful purpose in the advancement and perfection of the social order in America, Dwight legitimized as theologically valid. As Sidney Mead expressed it, Dwight, along with his disciples Nathaniel Taylor and Lyman Beecher "were never so concerned with building a coherent system of thought as in getting results." Dwight called on all Protestant leadership to combine their efforts in the elimination of the great social evils in an increasingly pluralistic America. Sabbath-breaking, intemperance, and ignorance of the Gospel headed a long list of precept violations targeted by Dwight and other pragmatic-minded divines of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A changed heart was, for Dwight and his followers, clearly evidenced by the exhibition of fairly specific types of social and moral behavior. Consequently, among American evangelical

Christians in the nineteenth century, whether Calvinistic or Arminian in orientation, revivalism and social reform would remain fused in a pragmatic union. Within the hegemonic borders of American Protestantism, the people's cultural aspirations, derived from an Enlightenment-based demand for happiness, became the central influences upon their theological opinions, and, in turn, the revivalists and other dispensers of theology worked feverishly to convert Americans and promote the behavioral characteristics essential to the establishment of the Protestant kingdom. Dwight, Taylor, Beecher and other American Protestants believed that converted individuals working within the institutions of church and government could some day perfect American society entirely and establish there the long-awaited Zion.⁵

The influence of Enlightenment ideas of reason, happiness, and utility incorporated in the theology of Hopkins, Dwight, and their successors rapidly caught on as the driving force of evangelical activity in American Protestantism. Within a few years of the close of the War of 1812, the New Divinity's principle of a benevolent, reasonable God dominated American Protestant thought. After 1815, a substantial portion of Protestantism readily accepted the notion that the United States as sacred space was also a land of remarkable opportunity. American Protestants, consequently, grew to expect that true

happiness could be realized not only in heaven, but in America as well. As the century wore on, Protestants increasingly sang the praises of American republican institutions. In some respects, the Wesleyan expressions of personal holiness sounded remarkably similar to the perfectionist views applied to social and political institutions by American Calvinists, and by mid-century, the two forms of perfectionism were so closely allied that clear distinctions were hard to detect.⁶

American Methodists Join the Quest for a Perfect Republic

American Methodists did not always share the Reformed tradition's optimism for America as the new Zion. During the early years, denominational leaders found themselves struggling just to prove their loyalty to the new nation. After 1776, John Wesley, who never developed an especially comprehensive millennial view, entertained political opinions that created a painful thorn in the flesh of Methodists living in the colonies. Wesley's intense loyalty to the crown cast a trans-Atlantic shadow of suspicion on the itinerants he dispatched to the colonies in the 1760s and '70s. It was problem enough for the first Methodists in America that they were an auxiliary movement within the Anglican Church. A loquacious Wesley only compounded the problem by publicly broadcasting his

heart-felt Tory sentiments during and after the American Revolution. So deep ran his convictions in this regard that he once observed that any subject of the Crown who "does not love the King . . . cannot love the Church." Suffice it to say, Wesley detested all republican forms of government. He justified Britian's militaristic response in the Revolution as an act of self defense--an attitude that apparently remained unmitigated until shortly before his death in 1791 when he autocratically declared, "We Methodists are no republicans and never tend to be."⁷

The earliest American Methodist leaders did not share the Reformed tradition's growing optimism for America as promised land. Yet they were deeply embarrassed by Wesley's ill-timed invectives. Francis Asbury, the only itinerant appointed by Wesley who elected to remain in the colonies after 1776, thought it most expedient to conceal himself during the Revolution because it was widely assumed that he harbored the same political sentiments as his mentor. Native-born Methodist evangelist Freeborn Garrettson, like most of his colleagues, was sympathetic toward the American cause, but his pacifist leanings, coupled with his refusal to swear an oath of loyalty, landed him in jail on more than one occasion. The procurement of individual salvations provided the primary raison de etre of the early circuit riders. Subsequently, there is little evidence that the Methodists saw themselves

as participants in a utilitarian race to establish the Kingdom in the United States. Moreover, the first generation of American Methodists could not conceive of America in such optimistic terms because they were excluded from the covenant by virtue of their ties with John Wesley and Anglicanism.⁸

Though American courts frequently accused Methodists of Toryism and disloyalty, the writings of Garrettson, and Jesse Lee, the first historian of American Methodism, reflected a commitment to the United States government. And yet early Methodists leaders drew clear distinctions between their politics and religion. Though deeply affected by the Revolution, Asbury offered sparse commentary about his feelings toward the campaign. The comments he did offer were characteristically bereft of political opinion. On one occasion, as hostilities between Great Britain and the colonies intensified, Asbury remarked that it was his "business" at that critical time "to be more intensely devoted to God." Moreover, after full-scale war broke out, Asbury reported that his chief concern for America was that the struggling nation experience "a gracious revival of religion." Asbury and his colleagues pursued the regeneration of individual souls, but in contrast to their Reformed neighbors they neglected to comment on the perfectability of political and social institutions.⁹

American Methodists were not long willing to separate their religion from their political aspirations, however, and in the early decades of the nineteenth century Methodism moved rapidly toward an alliance with the emerging consensus of an idealized unified Protestant America. Jesse Lee, who, like Garrettson, spent time in jail for his pacifist convictions during the Revolution, found himself unexpectedly elected chaplain to the United States House of Representatives in 1809. His decision to accept the position elicited the immediate reproach of his fellow preachers, who characterized his willingness to fraternize with the elite members of the nation's chief legislative body as an indication of his "worldliness." Methodists' image of themselves as the common person's sect dissipated rapidly during the second decade of the nineteenth century. Methodists, especially those located around eastern urban centers, shared in the nation's post-war industrial prosperity. Subsequently, as northern Methodists began to enter the ranks of the middle and upper-middle classes, they developed considerable tolerance for what rural and lower-class Methodists understood as "worldly" affairs. Moreover, well before mid-century, they were being fed from the pulpit by preachers engaged in the same sort of nationalistic rhetoric originally advanced by their Congregational neighbors. Northern Methodism quickly assimilated the Protestant vision of America as promised

land with its white Anglo-Saxon inhabitants as the chosen race.¹⁰

As Methodism flourished and gained widespread acceptance in the eastern urban centers and along the frontier its proponents jettisoned the peculiar Wesleyan emphasis on entire sanctification and drew closer to the mainstream Reformed vision of a perfectable social order--a vision that in the words of Dwight disciple Lyman Beecher would "enlighten and renovate the world." Lamenting the decline of interest in the Wesleyan doctrine of perfection, one Methodist minister wrote Methodist Magazine in 1819 observing that efforts among his colleagues, "to raise the standard of Christian perfection" had grown "few and feeble." The writer remained sanguine, though, that a revival of the Holiness doctrine would arise and that Americans would one day "see sanctifications as frequent as justifications." A revival of personal sanctification could best be achieved, he explained, through the formation of "special meetings" for the promotion of holiness structured along the lines of Wesley's original societies. The minister's anticipated revival of Wesleyan perfectionism would arrive within a decade following the publication of his article. What he could not have foreseen, or perhaps even understood, was that the emerging revival product would be a curious mix of Wesleyan and Reformed perfectionism.¹¹

At the time the article appeared some Methodist leaders had already embraced the Reformed tradition's vision for a more perfect social order. In an introductory address to their readership in 1817 the editors of Methodist Magazine offered no mention of the doctrine of personal holiness, choosing instead to extol the "auspicious events" occurring during "the few years of the present century" that were relative to the establishment of the "kingdom of God on earth." The editors, Joshua Soule and Thomas Mason offered evidence of the principal factor leading to the "Americanization" of Methodist theology. It was, they asserted, the "united exertions of thousands of all denominations" which had finally furnished "a pleasing prospect of the extensive triumph of evangelical truth."¹²

The proliferation of voluntary parachurch organizations and Methodist participation in those societies in the early decades of the 1800s precipitated the church's shift toward the Reformed tradition's style of perfectionism. Predicated on the theological ideas of Hopkins, Dwight and Taylor that promoted the "disinterested benevolence" of God, these voluntary societies sought to incorporate the assistance of all major Protestant groups in an effort to evangelize individuals with the pragmatic goal of remaking society in the image of God's kingdom. Historian James Turner notes that the influence of these

associations "amounted to a kind of end run around secularization." But, as Turner also points out, in order to enact with the broader secular world, church leaders had to urge "their followers to put on secular attire." Throughout the century, targeted by Hopkins as the age of the millennium, church and voluntary society leaders grew more ambivalent about the supernatural aspects of their faith and turned toward a more rationally oriented religion that opened the door to closer communion with the culture they sought to influence.¹³

Editors Soule and Mason appealed to more than the religiously convinced and demonstrated the shift toward rational, enlightened faith even before 1820. "The Governor of the universe recognizes man," they opined, "as a subject of reason." Faith, they asserted, "must be grounded in evidence." With a note of certitude that suggests a fairly common acceptance among Methodists of their views, Soule and Mason went on to point out that it "should never be forgotten that the age of miracles is past." Such rhetoric suggests that the other-worldly religion so prominent among early Methodists was beginning to give way to a much more "this-worldly" emphasis.¹⁴

By 1820, some American evangelicals depicted God as a deity who impersonally followed natural laws in all matters pertaining to nature and yet who remained involved at a personal level with the individual believer in matters of a

spiritual nature. As scientific inquiries began to unravel their causes, evangelicals were less likely to view natural phenomena like storms, earthquakes or drought as something attributable to the God's wrath and increasingly recognized such events as natural, mechanical effects of an imperfect, fallen world. As one such empirically-minded Methodist put it: "God has established the inanimate creation upon certain principles, which philosophers have, by common consent, termed 'the laws of nature,' and which determine its movements so that each cause produces its corresponding effect, and this in its turn becoming also a cause, produces its subjacent effect." The Deity became far less mysterious and, subsequently, many nineteenth-century theologians abandoned the principle of his immutability altogether. Arminians and New Divinity Congregationalists alike agreed that human actions influenced the divine plan. This flagging of God's mysterious attributes was reflected even in the sorts of popular literature enjoyed by evangelicals during the period. James Turner observes that the "'old steady sellers' of the eighteenth-century book trade--devotional volumes featuring a mysterious, unpredictable Jehovah--expired about 1820." In place of these, evangelicals substituted more rationally oriented literature that usually challenged the reader with some reform or missionary objective intended to advance the perfection of the republic and the world.¹⁵

Like most evangelicals, Methodist preachers attempted to maintain some relic of God's mysterious nature. Ironically, such efforts were themselves frequently structured upon rational arguments. In 1828 a New Jersey Methodist minister, Joseph Holdich, described God's mysterious attributes in purely mechanical terms as "an intricate piece of mechanism, comprising many springs, and levers and cogs" that mortal humans cannot fathom. Holdich continued on in his sermon to note, however, that nothing God does is "without reason, and no reasons subsist but such as contemplate the happiness of man and the glory of God." Methodist ministers and their Congregational neighbors continued to debate some of the finer points of surrounding the issue of human perfectibility, but after 1820, they were in complete agreement regarding God's ordering of the universe with humanity as the center. Throughout the early decades of the century Methodist leadership and a growing body of an increasingly affluent constituency traded the Wesleyan perception of an essentially sovereign God for the New Divinity's Deity whose glory depended on human happiness.¹⁶

Methodists readily adopted the ambitious social control agenda of the Congregationalists--especially Christian education, temperance, anti-gambling sentiments, and concern with proper observance of the Sabbath--interplaying revivalism and a form of social engineering

deemed necessary to procure true happiness and eventually the realization of the millennium. Having long since discredited any serious suspicion as "Tory sympathizers," the majority of urban Methodist leaders took on the role of zealous accomplices in the Protestant mission to Christianize America and the world. Happiness and utility in virtually every aspect of evangelism went hand in hand with Methodist theology after 1815. An anonymous writer to the Methodist Magazine in 1820 observed that missionary activity among native Americans must be stepped up so that "whenever [God's] Kingdom shall extend to the 'uttermost parts of the earth,' these depressed children of the desert shall be comprehended within its limits." Offering the kingdom to the natives would, he observed, grant them "the same happiness we would enjoy ourselves." Moreover, the writer clarified the utilitarian if not romantic aim of such missions. Once the "peace and happiness" of the native tribes have been secured, "instead of the savage yell, the murderous tomahawk, and all the sad effects of savage warfare, your ears shall be saluted with the songs of redeeming love, and the shouts of salvation; and behold all those advantages which flow from friendly and mutual interchange of acts of justice and kindness." Furthermore, he asserted that such benevolent activity would ultimately "connect the happiness of the present and future life together."¹⁷

Utilitarianism as an application of "right means" in the promotion of superior Protestant culture was, by 1830, the predominant force behind Methodist leadership's objectives. In his inaugural address as president of the newly established Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, a sanguine Wilbur Fisk proclaimed that the "Kingdom is gaining strength and enlarging its operations." The principles of the Kingdom, which for Fisk, a New York City minister, revolved around a program of social and political reform were "onward," and, he optimistically declared, "if the proper means are used, [Kingdom expansion] will continue to be onward until the final rennovation of our world." Fisk announced to his audience that it was only through the agency of benevolent, self-sufficient Christians that "the general happiness of the world" could be at long last secured. Methodist minister and a successor to Fisk at Wesleyan University, Stephen Olin echoed Fisk's sentiments and in his sermons remarked that "the Gospel takes care of the moralities and virtues of society. . . . No system . . . is so comprehensive, so plain, or so effective." Long before Dwight Moody figured out the application of capitalist theories in the promotion of his revivals, Olin called for the incorporation of "the system of business to duties--to prayer--reading--self examination--public worship--adapt means to ends." "Use right means," Olin admonished his

audiences "expect God's help when promised to every effort--sacrifice--gift. . . . Entire consecration of soul, body and substance is our duty." John Lindsey, a minister from the New England Conference, applied John Fletcher's version of "the promise" as a cleansing from sin to the American Protestant expectation of fulfillment. In an 1835 sermon, Lindsey declared that not only was God able to cleanse the believer from all sin, "but he has promised to do this. . . . Believe that you have now come to the moment of glorious promise. . . . and ye shall be clean."¹⁸

Olin and his colleagues were certain that a God who selflessly seeks the happiness of his creatures could be "expected" to deliver on all His promises. Following broader American Protestant influences, moreover, Methodists and other evangelicals were reminded that God expected them to uphold their covenantal obligations by advancing the accepted types of social reform. In effect, the enlightened rational faith rapidly evolving within American Methodism countenanced no delay in the establishment of the Kingdom. Catherine Albanese has observed that Americans of the nineteenth century "were doers more than thinkers." Americans have always been in a hurry, and this propensity for speed has certainly played a role in their religious outlook. Protestants in the United States, especially Northerners, viewed delay as something altogether un-American--a proclivity that eventually

fostered a growing sentiment of immediatism in northern abolitionism. A benevolent God, whose glory depended upon the happiness of his creation, would not expect his covenant people to put off the promises he made to them. Stephen Olin, like the great majority of his urban-based colleagues, looked upon delays in matters of salvation as symptomatic of sloth. "Procrastination is," he argued, "an offense against the reason and well-being of man." The conversion process should be not hindered by unnecessary postponements because of subjective emotions of guilt or unworthiness. Olin deemed a senseless waste of time conversion experiences that required long periods of reflection and confession. In fact, true conversion need not even be preceded by "deep, pungent convictions, nor profound sorrow, nor plenteous tears." The prospective convert need only "deliberately choose the better, resolve determinantly and at once to give his life to God's service." The common-sense approach to salvation espoused by Olin dictated that the important element in salvation was a conscious, rationally based decision for "absolute submission both in purpose and life." Once "we have submitted," Olin observed, we "can claim the promises . . . grace flows in spontaneously now the obstacle [of the self] is out of the way."¹⁹

Olin's fascination with the themes of utility, speed, and simplicity of doctrine were by no means unique.

Nineteenth-century evangelicals in every major denomination extolled similar themes in their revival services. Charles G. Finney, attorney turned Presbyterian evangelist and a key player in the early phase of the American Holiness movement, formulated his revival techniques along pragmatic-rational lines. It was in Finney that the New Divinity principle of social perfectability dovetailed with the Wesleyan position on individual holiness. Finney did not view revivals as a consequence of direct divine intervention, rather he saw them as events that could be precipitated through application of "right means."

Rejecting mystery and recognizing and exploiting specific traits of human psychology, Finney applied the same pattern of "measures" in order to effect the salvation of his followers in urban areas as well as along the frontier. Carefully targeting the emotions of his audience, Finney cleverly brought the unconverted to a point of existential crisis. The remedy for this crisis could be found easily enough by leaving the pew and going forward to the "anxious bench" where Finney or a co-laborer could present the plan of salvation on a more personal basis. Though most "New Divinity" proponents denied it, Finney was really applying the same principle to his revivals advocated by Dwight and his progeny: if it works, use it. Finney, who once remarked that "a revival is not a miracle; it consists entirely in the right exercise of the powers of nature,"

was simply reflecting the temperament of his time. His revival technique appealed to Americans who envisioned themselves as rugged individualists ordained by God to sponsor reform among those did not yet fully appreciate their efforts.²⁰

At the same time that Methodist preachers were incorporating plans for social perfection into their theological world view, clergy from several other denominations were taking a serious look at Wesleyan perfectionist ideas. Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and even Episcopalians recognized the doctrine of personal perfection as a potentially viable tool for the advancement of the millennium. Writing in 1835 B. F. Shephard, a professor at the Protestant Episcopal Seminary in Virginia, declared that he had no reservations about the expression "sinless perfection." Moreover, he asserted that Christians should attain this state, and indicated that the doctrine was receiving widespread attention in several denominations at that time. At about the same time, Charles Finney was reading Wesley and began dabbling with the doctrine of personal perfection; and in his "Lectures to Professing Christians," he opined that the privilege of entire sanctification was available to all Christians. Finney accepted an appointment to the faculty of Oberlin College in 1835. Soon afterwards a Holiness revival broke out at the

college, and Finney and the Congregationalist president of the school, Asa Mahan, claimed they experienced entire sanctification. Though Finney and Mahan's views on the doctrine of perfection differed in some regards, their views on the topic of Christian perfection were clearly influenced by their Reformed backgrounds. In general, the Oberlin brand of sanctification placed greater emphasis on the perfectability of the individual will. Though the Oberlin theologians gave considerable emphasis to the role of "faith" in the perfecting of the Christian, they tended to view entire sanctification simply as one's conscious decision not to sin. Finney, for example, described conversion and regeneration as "a radical change of the ultimate intention."²¹

Like a growing number of nineteenth-century Protestants, Finney held "happiness" as the supreme goal in life. Happiness could be found only by choosing to align one's life perfectly with the "will of God." With a flawless society as the aim and the immediate perfectability of the individual simply a matter of the right choice, Oberlin theologians set about modeling the ideal society within their own community. Finney and his colleagues never doubted, moreover, that the "Church can compel the world to transact business upon the principles of the law of God." Linking the doctrine of entire sanctification with social reform, Oberlin became a hotbed

of Christian activism for abolition and women's rights and was the first institution in America to grant degrees to women and blacks. Historian John L. Peters suggests that Mahan and Finney were popular advocates of perfection among the Methodists and, consequently, their "Reformed interpretation" of the Wesleyan doctrine "tended to become the standard view even in these quarters." While it is true that the Oberlin theologians provided a unique synthesis of Wesleyan perfectionism and the Reformed emphasis on the establishment of a model society and millennium, the Reformed emphasis was already pervasive in most branches of American Protestantism. ²²

An American Theologian: Phoebe Palmer

In a theological world dominated almost entirely by males, it is important to recognize that the most influential contributor to the nineteenth-century perfectionist impulse was a woman. Despite the limiting definition of the woman's domestic sphere, Victorian women did play a significant role in nineteenth-century American church life. Most of their activity was carefully circumscribed by the males who filled positions of leadership, but the image of the obsequious housewife is, to a great extent, an illusion. Women organized their own prayer groups, Sunday School associations, and benevolent

and reformed societies. They comprised the majority of Protestant church membership, and were, of necessity, required by the male dominated leadership to help in the Christianization of the world. The ministerial attitude toward Christian women was generally patronizing, of course, but with other avenues of expression withheld from them, Victorian women found that church work offered the best available opportunity to make a direct impact on society. By the end of the Federalist period, it had become nearly a commonplace in America that mothers were superior creatures to fathers in their ability to transfer the Christian faith to their children. There is compelling evidence to support the argument that women of the early nineteenth century received the willing support of their male leaders for their function as domestic evangelists. While the males conducted their business and other more mundane affairs, women accepted the responsibility for introducing the virtues of Christianity to their children. The Protestant ministry, moreover, actively encouraged women to learn the Bible and evangelize others with it in order to ensure that succeeding generations could provide the army needed for establishing the kingdom of God in America and, eventually the world. Women's function as the "prayer warriors" of the church was perhaps the most influential factor in preparing women for non-traditional roles in the church and the community at large. Historian

Nancy Cott observes that women's prayerful contact with God enabled them "to assert themselves, both in private and public ways." Moreover, this contact with the transcendent helped them "to rely on an authority beyond the world of men and provided a crucial support to those who stepped beyond accepted bounds."²³

Holiness evangelist Phoebe Palmer certainly played fast and loose with the boundaries of propriety established by the males of Victorian America. Palmer established her remarkable theological synthesis and ministry totally upon her presumption that she had received her charge from beyond the world of mortal men. The wife of a well-known New York City physician, Palmer possessed the resources of time available to the upper middle classes necessary for the pursuit of an evangelistic career. Palmer and her sister Sarah established a women's prayer meeting group in Phoebe's New York City home in 1835. Palmer eventually took full charge of the meeting and transformed her domestic orb into a school for the promotion of second-blessing holiness. Palmer's "Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness" was a great success and provided its female participants an opportunity to support one another as they sought to achieve a level of spirituality not even their pastors could fully appreciate. Patterned after Wesley's select societies, Palmer's Tuesday Meeting was open only to those persons who were in the experience

of the second blessing or who earnestly sought to receive it. After 1839 Palmer extended membership in her group to men and a number of well-known males from a variety of denominations were sanctified wholly under Palmer's teaching. Among the list of Palmer's converts were Episcopalian physician, Charles Cullis; later Methodist bishop, William Taylor; philosopher Thomas Upham; theologian Nathan Bangs; and eventually, Stephen Olin.²⁴

Born in 1807, Palmer was reared in a stable but "sober" Methodist household. She once commented that she did "not remember ever to have been willfully disobedient to any parental command." Like the majority of women of her era, she received only a rudimentary education. Yet she possessed a brilliant intellect that would later serve her ability to communicate ideas effectively. Serious and unemotional by nature, Palmer possessed a strong analytical bent and preferred to act on objective rather than subjective evidences. Having experienced no definite religious conversion as a child or young adult, Palmer came to regard any "feeling" of being saved an unnecessary qualification of justification. What was far more important was the conscious, rational action of believing in God and accepting his covenant promise that he received those who did so. Moreover, Palmer modified the Wesleyan view of perfection as a gradual process leading to the second blessing, promoting in its place what she described as the

"shorter and easier way" to perfection. Palmer's shortcut to the second blessing was ideally suited to the American context: it was quick, easy, and a practical means for achieving a perfect heart.²⁵

Palmer framed her theology of entire sanctification in the form of a contractual or covenantal agreement. The believer recognizes her need for cleansing from all sin and agrees to abide by requirements of God to have sin removed from her life. The requirement was full surrender of one's life to God and an agreement to serve Him faithfully. God demands of all believers "an act of deliberate and irrevocable surrender." Palmer based her theology upon the words of Jesus found in Matthew 23:19 in which he observes that it is "the altar that sanctifies the gift." The unsanctified Christian must, then, Palmer reasoned "take steps toward God's hallowed altar," in order to be purified entirely. "It is not knowledge" or assurance of cleansing the seeker requires, Palmer observed. What is important is the "action" which is the "appointed means of grace." Palmer's "altar theology" was, then, essentially a syllogism: Jesus said "the altar sanctifies the gift," therefore this is a promise of God. God keeps all his promises, hence anyone who offers herself entirely as a gift to God receives the promise of entire sanctification. So absolute was this "promise of the Father" for Palmer that she considered it an "insult to the Saviour" not to

believe his word that the sacrifice was received. Palmer's theological understanding dictated that delay in achieving perfection was, to use a more modern expression, un-American. A benevolent God whose primary reason for existence was to secure the happiness of His creatures would not expect His faithful to put off His promises.²⁶

Palmer's use of deductive reasoning came in handy during her evangelistic career that blossomed after 1840. On the basis of human reason, she granted certitude of God's promises kept to seekers who had received no objective assurances of their salvation or perfection. While holding a revival meeting in England, Palmer encountered a young man who was "intellectually convinced of his need of salvation" but who complained that he "had not received those sensible emotions of joy" as a testimony to his acceptance in God's kingdom. Palmer observed that he was seeking a "sign or a wonder" and admonished him to "act on the principle that you belong to God." Stephen Olin and other Methodists were using similar language in their own rational approaches to salvation, but Palmer was apparently the first to make an overt connection with the Wesleyan theology of the second blessing.²⁷

Palmer's concept of personal perfection exhibited a nuance of pragmatism. Entire sanctification was, she argued, a "preparation for usefulness" which, she observed, equipped the Christian to participate fully in "the work of

establishing [God's] kingdom on earth." The Lord required a vast army of sanctified Christians in order to inaugurate his earthly kingdom. "The cause of Zion now demands," Palmer wrote in 1857, "that every soldier enlisted under the banner of Christ . . . should come to the work." The all-out effort to usher in the kingdom was not feasible apart from the involvement of all Christians regardless of gender or denominational affiliation. Once the majority of Protestantism realized the value of the shorter way to perfection, sanctified Christians would "shake the world, and bring the reign of Christ." Later in the century, women Holiness evangelists in Georgia and other sections of the South would embrace Phoebe Palmer and her faster way to holiness, but by that time, most would reject her millennial optimism.²⁸

Palmer proclaimed that women could boldly enter the covenant of self-sacrifice and service for God because the experience of sanctification embued them with the same power granted to men. Palmer believed that the prophetic message found in Joel 2:28--"and it shall come to pass . . . that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy"--was coming to fulfillment in her own day. Incorporating language in her theological writings that was more in line with the theology of Fletcher than of Wesley, she described the act of sanctification as the "full Baptism of the Holy

Spirit." Palmer's theology of "Spirit baptism" granted to men and women of the nineteenth century the same "endowment of power; such as the male and female disciples received on the day of Pentecost." "Heart holiness and the gift of power," should, Palmer taught, "ever be regarded as identical." Women empowered in this manner were required by God to serve in many of the same capacities as their male counterparts. Women should be permitted to exhort and testify publicly to their experience of full salvation. Men who thwarted this God-ordained ministry of women were guilty of the sin of grieving the Holy Spirit. "How strange and unwarrantable," Palmer quipped, "the infatuation of some who professed to be Christ's disciples of the present day, who contemptuously hear 'the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophesy,' because it falls from the lips of a woman!" And at the height of the Victorian Age in America, Palmer heaped upon those men who denied the woman's right to preach the most ignominious insult imaginable by describing them as "unmanly."²⁹

The opinions of mortal men, Palmer argued, did not exempt women from exercising the right to preach the gospel. When "church order is at variance with divine order," Palmer maintained, "it is better to obey God than man." Historian Susie Stanley observes that for Palmer and for other Holiness women the "authority or command of the Holy Spirit superceded any command by mere man." Moreover,

Stanley writes, "the Biblical injunction of Acts 5:29 to obey God rather than man became the basis for the Wesleyan/Holiness women to challenge the authority of those who attempted to prevent them from preaching." Later in the century, southern Holiness women would find support in Palmer's writings as they began preaching in the churches and on the camp meeting circuit. In the 1880s, one southerner, Alma White, diagnosed her own reticence to preach publicly as the result of a "man-fearing spirit" and observed that it was only through the experience of entire sanctification that she was able to overcome this affliction.³⁰

Palmer faced her share of male detractors, but her sense of self confidence, the product of her recognition that she was empowered by the Spirit for a specific task, attracted more men than it repulsed. "Endued with power" from a source that was far beyond the world of mortal men, Palmer possessed the authority necessary to launch a successful, albeit radical, evangelistic campaign. Ministers from several denominational backgrounds flocked to her Tuesday meetings and many invited her to speak from their pulpits. She possessed a power they desired. Moreover, she knew a quick and easily comprehended means to the acquisition of that power. Palmer could exercise power over male and female audiences because she was the undisputed expert in her field, and because she was willing

to share her wisdom with men who were seeking their dream, the perfection of American society--and the shorter the way to this perfection, the better.³¹

Palmer's sober upbringing and life-long pietistic leanings led her to conclude that the sanctified life was easily identified because those who were "second blessed" exhibited the proper social behaviors. Perfected saints were endued with the power necessary to reject worldly fads and amusements. Theater attendance, undue emphasis on fashion, dancing, card playing, and the use of intoxicating beverages headed a long list of strict Holiness taboos. Palmer considered such "worldly appendages" as an indication that the individual who participated in them was a child "of this world rather than a child of the kingdom." Women who were truly filled with the spirit "put aside" their "jewelry and artificials." Men, she opined, cast "aside the noxious weed, and other questionable habits." Even fictional literature was to be carefully avoided since such stories frequently provided script material for the theaters. So adamant was she on this point that she severed her friendship with Harriet Beecher Stowe because Uncle Tom's Cabin was made into a theatre production. Later still, she accused Stowe of "aiding the kingdom of Satan" because she advocated billiards and nine-pin bowling as wholesome forms of recreation. Yet Palmer's rigorous social values were never as seriously

received in the North were as similar principles in the nineteenth-century South and the rural Midwest. Northern Methodists were so optimistic of the coming millennium that they generally avoided emphasizing the issues of worldliness--at least in this regard they were far less circumspect than their southern counterparts. Of greater importance to northern Holiness proponents like Bishop Jesse Peck, Syracuse University president Daniel Steele, and Holiness abolitionists such as Gilbert Haven were the broader forms of institutionalized sin.³²

Phoebe Palmer was the master craftsperson who merged the pervasive American attributes of utility, simplicity, and speed in the pursuit of happiness with the distinctive Wesleyan theology of the second blessing. In so doing she formulated a unique theological synthesis that appealed to Americans who wanted their theology to be practical, easily grasped, and quick to yield results. One disciple of Palmer's "shorter way" noted that Palmer gave him "a tangible view of the great doctrine of holiness." Moreover, he remarked that he "saw this blessing standing out in a substantial, practical form." Palmer did for Americans what Wesley had failed to achieve: define the Holiness doctrine in simple terms and offer it as something that could easily be attained. Palmerism, with its emphasis on "altar sacrifice" and subsequent integration of Fletcher's "Holy Spirit baptism" became the standard model

of theology for the Holiness movement in every region of America after the Civil War. Most of her writings and especially her 1843 monograph, The Way of Holiness, and her 1849 apologetic for women preachers, Promise of the Father, gained wide acceptance in the North during her life and quickly grew in popularity in the southern states soon after her death in 1874. Her simple, rational approach to the doctrine of entire sanctification inspired male and female evangelists alike to press believers to cast themselves on their altars, surrender their lives to God, receive "the power of the Holy Spirit," and join fellow Protestants in an effort to establish a more perfect world.³³

Notes

1. Anglican cleric and famous evangelist of America's First Great Awakening, George Whitefield, arrived in the colonies in 1738. Though never a member of a Methodist Society, Whitefield was heavily influenced by Wesley's pietism and especially his emphasis upon the necessity of the new birth. For a good biological sketch of Whitefield, see S. C. Henry, George Whitefield: Wayfaring Witness (New York, 1954).

2. In addition to Enlightenment influences, the Puritan dialectic between the covenant of grace and works was antecedent to the eighteenth-century Reformed tradition's optimism for human potential. There are a number of sources providing a more detailed explanation of the two-fold covenantal idea of grace and works found among the Puritans. See, for example, Michael McGiffart, "Covenant of Grace and Works," Harvard Theological Review, 75 (1982), 463ff. Joseph A. Conforti, Samuel Hopkins and the New Divinity Movement (Grand Rapids, 1986) 59f; and Jens Moller, "The Beginnings of Puritan covenant Theology," Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 14 (1963): 46ff; Quoted in Moller 65. R. T. Kendall, Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649 (Oxford, 1977). Kendall argues that Theodore Beza, John Preston and Thomas Hooker altered Calvin's theology of grace into a covenant of works wherein salvation is attained by a human act. von Rohr, The Covenant of Grace, 1-33; recognizes the human voluntaristic element within the Puritan view of salvation, but he is critical of Kendall for failing to recognize the Puritan dialectic between God's unconditional sovereignty and human conditionality. See also, William K. B. Stoevers A Faire and Easy Way to Heaven: Covenant Theology and Antinomianism in Early Massachusetts (Middletown, Conn., 1978). Stoevers, like von Rohr, carefully demonstrates the subtle balance between human action and God's sovereignty in Puritan thought, a balance he aptly describes as "a significant dialectical . . . between divine and human autonomy.", 15. Taking their cue from the Ramist-based writings of William Ames, colonial Puritans attempted to uphold the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination while at the same time infusing their theology with a relatively optimistic outlook of human potential. American Puritans believed that the fullness of God's grace was, in many respects, offered on a contingent basis to an obedient people. John Winthrop, for example, warned the early Puritans of Massachusetts that their failure to live up to the covenantal standards of behavior would result in the Lord's "wrath against us." Quoted by Alan Simpson "The Covenanted Community," in

Religion in American History, Ibid., 20. For a more thorough explication of American applications of Ramist thought see Andrew Gibbs translation and commentary on Ames' Technometry (Philadelphia, 1980). A brief but illuminating description of the continuity between the thought of European and American Puritans is given by David Hall, "Understanding the Puritans," in John F. Maulder and John F. Wilson, editors, Religion in American History (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1978) 1-16. There is now considerable debate as to how self-conscious first generation Puritans were of their place in history as a chosen people and even more discussion regarding their perceptions of America as promised land. What is more certain is that the early Puritans who elected to remain in America knew beyond any doubt that they had to focus their energies on the establishment of a Christian society that would rival or eclipse in perfection what they had known in England. For more on the early Puritan perception of its place in America see Edmund Morgan, The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop (Boston, 1958), 69f; Harry S. Stout, The New England Soul (New York, 1986) 105ff. Perry Miller described the traditional view of the Puritan National mission in America an "errand into the wilderness." Miller argued that Winthrop and other early Puritan leaders were conscious of their place in history as special messengers sent by God to establish an ideal society. Miller, Errand into the Wilderness (New York, 1956). Miller's thesis is accepted today by scholars such as Sacvan Bercovitch who finds the early Puritan optimism of America's sacred calling to be even more pervasive than what Miller had found. Berkovitch, The American Jeremiah (Madison, Wisc., 1978). More recent revisions of Miller's thesis has been helpful in the less than sanguine feelings that perhaps the majority of early Puritans held toward their new home. See, for example, Andrew Delbanco The Puritan Ordeal (Cambridge, Mass., 1989); and Theodore Dwight Bozeman, To Live Ancient Lives: The Primitivist Dimension in Puritanism (Chapel Hill, 1988). Both Bozeman and Delbanco present solid arguments in support of the premise that Miller's Puritan mission thesis has been built largely upon a questionable use of seventeenth-century literary remains. Delbanco views the Puritan immigrations after 1630 as a flight from persecution in England rather than a mission to a promised land. Moreover, Bozeman convincingly demonstrates that the Massachusetts Bay project was not inspired by millennial expectations. He admits that millennialist themes did emerge in New England within a decade following the arrival of the Puritans, but he shows that these themes should not be characterized as a sort of millennialism that would lead to a true paradise on earth before Christ's final coming. See also Jack P. Greene, Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture (Chapel Hill, 1988). John Corrigan, The Hidden

Balance: Religion and the Social Theories of Charles Chauncey and Jonathan Mayhew (New York, 1987) 3; See also John Corrigan The Prism of Piety: Catholic Congregational Clergy at the Beginning of the Enlightenment (New York, 1991) 61-4. Corrigan demonstrates that progressive Congregational ministers of eighteenth century began to view the human being, including the body, as essentially holy, and in "an orderly interconnected universe, the body was useful, even beautiful . . . less corrupt and the affections seemed more trustworthy." For more on the Enlightenment and its stress upon reason as the means of attaining truth, see Peter Gay, The Enlightenment: The Rise of Modern Paganism (New York, 1977). See also Herbert May, The Enlightenment in America (New York, 1976). Though Enlightenment thinkers encompassed a wide variety of religious views from Theists to Deists and skeptics, all optimistically believed that humankind could be enlightened through sound education and reason. Jonathan Edwards and his New Divinity coterie reflected the influence of Enlightenment ideas of the essential goodness of humanity and subsequent trustworthiness of the affections. Yet Edwards continued to place less emphasis upon social benevolence or what he called "holy action" than on the contemplative steps leading to the highest virtue of regeneration. Bruce Kucklick Churchmen and Philosophers: From Jonathan Edwards to John Dewey (New Haven, 1985) 21. Douglas J. Elwood The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards (New York, 1960) 148-9. Elwood notes that for Edwards the experience of God's presence "is the highest act of human apprehension." On Edward's relating religion and public life and his appreciation of individual human rights and liberties, see Gerald McDermott, One Holy and Happy Society: the Public Theology of Jonathan Edwards (State College, Pa., 1992).

3. For an excellent summation of Hopkins' view of God and millennialism see Conforti, Ibid., 117ff; 167ff; See also Sidney E. Mead, Nathanial William Taylor, 1786-1858: A Connecticut Liberal, (Chicago, 1942), 104.

4. Stephen E. Berk, Calvinism versus Democracy: Timothy Dwight and the Origins of American Evangelical Orthodoxy, (Hamden, Conn, 1974), 83ff. Kenneth Silverman, Timothy Dwight (New York, 1969).

5. Dwight asserted that Americans should cast off selfishness and work with God in promoting benevolent activities that would augment human happiness. Utility played the primary role in Dwight's theology. Whatever promoted God's kingdom on earth was valid; whatever did not enhance the coming kingdom should be discarded. The Revolutionary War was effective inasmuch as it liberated the colonies from the tyranny of the old world, and,

therefore, it served as a barometer of God's blessings on the new nation. In a Yale commencement speech following the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Dwight commented that America was the "favorite land of heaven" where, he observed, "the progress of temporal things toward perfection will undoubtedly be finished." Dwight quoted in Berk, *Ibid.*, 21-23. Silverman, *Dwight*, 22-3. Silverman demonstrates that Dwight borrowed his language from English authors like Alexander Pope, but he replaced the tradition that made England great with a forward looking millennialism that would be granted America by God. Nathan Hatch, The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England, (New Haven, 1977) 21-54. Hatch observes that "by the time American victory [in the Revolution] seemed assured, the rhetoric of New England sermons was brimming with euphoric images of America's role in hastening the Kingdom. Earnest Lee Tuveson, Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role (Chicago, 1968) 20-25. See also Ruth Bloch, Visionary Republic: Millennial Themes in American Thought 1756-1800 (New York, 1985) 75-93. Bloch observes that with "varying degrees of biblical literalism, millennial aspirations became a prominent feature of American Revolutionary consciousness." Moreover, Bloch suggests that "the distinction between secular and religious utopianism [in late eighteenth-century America] is difficult to make." The Enlightenment's visions of enduring happiness, liberty, virtue, knowledge, plenty, and peace, whether on a national or universal scale, contained many of the same elements as biblical millennial interpretations of the Revolution." Bloch finds that at the time of the Revolution "Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Baptists seem to have been the most overly . . . millennial groups." See also James Turner, Without God, Without Greed: The Origins of Unbelief in America (Baltimore, 1985) 35-72. Mead, Nathaniel William Taylor, 99-100. Berk, Calvinism versus Democracy, 185-188. Donald G. Mathews has suggested that at the time of the Second Great Awakening, denominational leadership sent out "professional organizers and literature merely [to make] sure that the local churches would be more or less alike." Mathews suggests that the similarity maintained between thousands of churches at the local level helped establish "a common world of experience" in the young nation. Mathews, "The Second Great Awakening as an Organizing Process" in Religion in American History, 215. For a more comprehensive description of the expansion of Protestant hegemony in America see Martin E. Marty, Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America, (New York, 1970). For a more thorough look at the nationalistic millennial theme see Tuveson, Redeemer Nation and H. Richard Niebuhr, The Kingdom of God in America (New York, 1937). After 1800 and the emergence of the revivals of the Second Great Awakening, Dwight grew increasingly

optimistic about America's role in the millennium and, subsequently, as Kenneth Silverman put it, he "became newly ambitious of redeeming society." The timing of the millennium vacillated throughout Dwight's career but before his death in 1817, his millennial optimism returned. In an article titled "Observations on the Present State of Religion in the World"--Dwight declared that in America "all the rude, gloomy, and gross scenes have vanished." Quoted in Silverman, Dwight, 150. Bloch, Visionary Republic, 131-44. Bloch's analysis strongly suggests that Dwight was not alone in his wavering between optimism and pessimism. She demonstrates that before 1790 premillennialism and postmillennialism were not polarized views as was the case in the nineteenth century. Both positions were, in fact, "linked with a seemingly intimate combination of magical, otherworldly, naturalistic, optimistic and pessimistic points of view." After 1800, postmillennial views became increasingly connected to optimistic views of America's future while premillennialists tended to move toward a more pessimistic appraisal of America and the future of this world.

6. Turner, Without God, 64-72. Turner shows how the Enlightenment's pragmatic appreciation of religion's place as a principal support for civil morality readily dovetailed with the concerns of eighteenth-century American church leaders. Enlightened Christians, Turner argues, "divorced morality from spirituality, played down the latter, and made of religion mainly a moral guide." Cf. Gay, The Enlightenment, 3. American Protestants of the nineteenth century enjoined the Enlightenment ideals of individual freedom of speech and freedom to recognize one's potential in the world unhindered by the constraints of arbitrary powers. A helpful compendium of Revolutionary period sermons that illustrate American Protestant concerns with personal happiness and liberty is provided in Religion and the Coming of the American Revolution, Peter W. Carroll, ed. (Waltham, Mass., 1970) 121-57. James Maclear, "The Republic and the Millennium," in Religion in American History, 186. Maclear observes that "As the bearer of history's promise, the Republic and its political life could never be consigned to a secular sphere free from religious direction. Rather, they were progressively perfected and spiritualized, and the religious resources of this task were to be mobilized by expectations of imminent victory." Maclear quotes Congregationalist minister Samuel Worcester, who, before mid-century wrote that "this country . . . is still not our own. God owns it all. And it is ours in the covenant of his gracious providence, that it may be beautiful with holiness." Martin E. Marty, Righteous Empire (New York, 1970) 89-99. Marty argues that the bonds between American political institutions and Protestants was so close "that a basic attack on American

institutions would have meant at attack on Protestant Christianity itself." Peter W. Williams, Popular Religion in America Symbolic Change and the Modernization Process in Historical Perspective (Urbana, Ill., 1989) 173-4. Turner, Without God, 82-4.

7. See Rack, Reasonable Enthusiast, 382, for a brief description of Wesley's millennialism. A better survey of Wesley's ambiguous millennialism is provided by Kenneth O. Brown "John Wesley--Post or Pre-Millennialist?" Methodist History 1 (1989): 33-41. Wesley, Works, 11: 197. Wesley quoted in Haford Luccok and Paul Hutchinson, The Story of Methodism (New York: Abingdon, 1926), 154. For a closer look at Wesley's political theory, see Briane Turley, "Wesley and War" in Methodist History, January 1991, 107ff. Wesley, Works, XI; 80-90. In 1775 Wesley published his "Calen Address to the American Colonies" in which he severely criticized Americans for their anti-monarchical policies and admonished them to "fear God and honour the King." Asbury, Journal Vol. I, 132. Of Wesley's political stance Francis Asbury opined in 1776 that he was "truly sorry that the venerable man ever dipped into the politics of America."

8. Luccok and Hutchinson, Story of Methodism, 151; Nathan Bangs, The Life of Freeborn Garrettson, (New York, 1845). In 1791, Jesse Lee, Methodist "missionary" to New England lamented that some Christians rejected him simply on the basis of his connection with Methodism. "The most friendly Society that I have found in Boston," Lee quipped, "is the Universalists." From an unpublished letter in the New England Methodist Historical Association Library quoted in Peters, Christian Perfection, (New York, 1956), 95. William Warren Sweet, Methodism in American History (New York, 1961) 88-91; Sweet has documented the persecution that Asbury, Joseph Hartley, Freeborn Garrettson, Philip Gatch, and other early Methodists encountered in the courts and from mobs during the war years. Freeborn Garrettson, The Experience and Travels of Mr. Freeborn Garrettson, Minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church in North-America (Philadelphia, 1791).

9. Francis Asbury, The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury, Elmer T. Clark, ed., Three Volumes, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), Vol. I, 162; 295. American Methodist avoidance of political commentary is also indicated in Jesse Lee's A Short History of Methodism in the United States published in 1809, Lee's history managed to evade any reference to the value of the American Revolution or to American institutions in general. See also Nathan O. Hatch, The Democratization of American Christianity (New Haven, Conn., 1989) 186. Hatch notes that first generation "Methodist preachers . . . were

preeminently soul savers and revivalists. They considered political involvement a distraction at best. . . . Lacking interest in politics or millennium, Asbury still marveled that Providence had so graciously prospered the designs of American Methodists." See also A. Gregory Schneider's excellent description of Methodism's relationship with the new republic in The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism (Bloomington, Ind., 1993), 149-68.

10. Peters, Christian Perfection, 100. Peters observes that the Methodist's "rising prosperity" in post-war America "did not provoke deepening piety." Consequently, the doctrine of entire sanctification received little attention during this period. Leroy M. Lee, The Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee, (Richmond: John Early, 1848), 468. Peters, Christian Perfection, 100. Even the politically silent Asbury remarked in his final address to the General Conference in 1816 that he envisioned in the "unexplored and unsettled part of the great western country . . . the glory of the whole Earth." Asbury, Journal and Letters, Vol. 3, 538. For an excellent account of American Methodists move after 1815 toward "respectability" and the mainstream in American culture, see Hatch, Democratization, 93; 201-6.

11. "A Preacher," Methodist Magazine, 2 (1819): 342. Cf. Peters, Christian Perfection, 99. William McLoughlin, Revivals, Awakenings and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977 (Chicago: 1978) XIV, 129. Though McLoughlin's observation that the American Protestant belief in the perfection of individual, nation and eventually the world "has been a constant" in American history, is too broad; such themes are a major component of American Protestantism after 1776 and especially throughout the nineteenth century. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform, 28. Smith argues that the Reformed camp embodied in the New School movement of the nineteenth century was able to move toward perfectionism because they replaced "the notion that original sin was imputed guilt with the view that it was a diseased condition of the moral nature." Once the New School came to this conclusion it "was only one step to the conception that salvation was also subjectively real." See also Michael Barkun Crucible of the Millennium: The Burned-Over District of New York in the 1840's (Syracuse, 1986) 25-29. Lyman Beecher The Works of Lyman Beecher (Boston, 1852) 1: 322.

12. Joshua Soule and Thomas Mason, "Address," Methodist Magazine, 1 (1817): 3ff. On the specific Protestant hope of the establishment of God's Kingdom in America, see H. Richard Niebuhr, The Kingdom of God, 64-98.

13. Turner, Without God, 87-8. Tuveson provides a concise description of Dwight and Beecher's anticipation of moral America as Kingdom of God, Redeemer Nation 169-73. A helpful and well-written description of American Lutheran's encounter with the evangelical idea of American reform is given by Willard D. Albeck in his chapter: "A Heritage in Tension," in A Century of Lutherans in Ohio (Yellow Springs, OH, 1966) 84-109. Also see note 19 for more on the Baptist's millennial vision.

14. Soule and Mason, "Address."

15. For a more thorough treatment of the nineteenth-century evangelical shift toward Enlightenment ideas, see Turner, Without God, 74-99. Joseph Holdich, "The Government of God," Methodist Magazine 12 (1828): 249. After 1820, the popular church presses abound with articles informing readers how to apply their faith in tangible, coherent ways by supporting or participating in the Christianization of the world. Theodore Dwight Bozeman, Protestants in an Age of Science The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought (Chapel Hill: 1977). Bozeman demonstrates that American Protestants (he relies on Presbyterian voices) were eager to embrace science and use it to support their theological convictions. The Presbyterians, Bozeman explains, "undertook to dissipate the supposed discord between intellect and orthodox belief and myth and mental backwardness" (48). Methodists and many Baptists gradually accepted the Reformed traditions interest in cultivating science alongside their theology often downplaying the role of the miraculous--though never dispensing with it entirely. An anonymous writer warned his Baptist audience in 1839 not to seek miraculous signs from God. Instead, he suggested, remember that the Holy Spirit "operates by clearly exhibiting, and bringing [his will] home to our consciences." "For the Christian Watchman," The Christian Watchman, January 18, 1839, 1. Another minister wrote, "Let the people have light beaming from science and religion, and the great question of self-government, that has so often trembled on the balance, will be resolved and settled as every patriot desires." Reflecting the Protestant mentality of the era the minister proclaimed that "religion's influence should be mingled with intellectual cultivation." "Religion and Science," Christian Watchman, July 3, 1839, 1. The evangelicals' infusion of science into their biblical premises occasionally led to some remarkable observations. One minister set out in 1839 to demonstrate scientifically that the biblical view of the millennium was valid and that the geological structure of the earth lent itself to being burned, so that God might establish his Kingdom here. The writer did not indicate whether he was post- or

premillennial in his outlook. See also Walter H. Conser, God and the Natural World: Religion and Science in Antebellum America, (Columbia, S. C., 1993); and also Wesley Norton, Religious Newspapers in the Old Northwest to 1861: A History, Bibliography, and Record of Opinion (Athens, Oh., 1977) 101. For more on the application of science to Protestants millennialism see Bozeman, Ibid., 119-24. Baptists did join Presbyterians, Methodists and other evangelicals in the antebellum reform movements and the hope for the post millennial Kingdom of God. See, for example, J. W. Olmstead, "Millennial Discourse," Christian Watchman, April 8, 1842, 1. William McLoughlin has provided a well-documented essay on Baptist interest in reform and the millennium in his New England Dissent, 1630-1833: The Baptists and the Separation of Church and State, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 2: 1265-74.

16. Holdich, "Government of God," 247.

17. "On the Necessity of Evangelizing the Aborigines of America," Methodist Magazine 4 (1820): 323ff. In his memoirs written during a tour of Europe, Methodist minister and college president Wilbur Fisk displayed acceptance of the need for Protestant social control and even opined that the purpose for keeping a journal of his travels was to help young people learn of the moral state of the world in order to prepare them "for the great purposes of their being." Fisk noted that the "signs of the times clearly indicate that the moral conflicts which have heretofore been conducted with but partial success . . . must take a wider range . . . in the various departments of political, moral and religious reform. Wilbur Fisk, Travels on the Continent of Europe (New York, 1838) iv.

18. Wilbur Fisk, "The Science of Education," Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review 15 (1831): 423. Moody received significant financial contributions from several of America's most wealthy businessmen. In return, they requested that he conduct his revival services--sometimes for weeks on end--in the urban centers where they operated factories. Some of Moody's sermons clearly focused on the working person's need to pay attention to the exigencies of the afterlife and not their plight in the world. For more on Moody's pro-capitalist bent, see James Findlay, Dwight L. Moody, (Chicago, 1969). Stephen Olin, The Works of Stephen Olin, 2 vols., (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1852), 1: 323ff. John Lindsey, "Gospel Purity," Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review, 17 (1835): 42.

19. Catherine L. Albanese, America Religions and Religion (Belmont, Ca, 1981), 255. Albanese offers a delightful treatment of the themes of speed and doctrinal simplicity in nineteenth-century American Protestantism.

The American penchant for achieving results quickly and easily remained with Americans into modern times. As Albanese points out, "Fast food had become a symbol of American culture with the golden arches of McDonald's hamburgers; the imposition of a fifty-five-mile-an-hour speed limit was a national tragedy." One might add that the revocation of the national speed limit was a cause for celebration among the majority of Americans. For more on American's fascination with rapid advancement, see Richard D. Brown Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America: 1700-1865; and Jay Martin, "The Intersection of Past and Future" in America Now, ed., John G. Kirk, (New York, 1968) 203. Martin suggests that Americans have now begun to reach certain limits. Olin, Works, I: 337, 23, 6, 26. Olin's fascination with quick advancement and speedy conversions was not unusual for Protestants in the North before the Civil War. Lyman Beecher echoed the same sentiments and fully expected the United States "should instantly rush up from barbarism to civilization." Lyman Beecher A Plea for the West (Cincinnati, 1835) 8. Urban Methodists like Olin, Fisk and Soule collaborated with Beecher and other Reform-oriented ministers in pressing for the speedy establishment of the Kingdom of God in America. See also Tuveson Redeemer Nation, 169-71. For a helpful examination of the change in conversion styles in early America, see Jerald C. Brauer, "From Puritanism to Revivalism," Journal of Religion (July 1978) 227-43. A fascinating narrative study on the topic is offered by Rodger M. Payne, "When the Times of Refreshing Shall Come: Interpreting American Protestant Varieties of Conversion, 1630-1830," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1988), and see also J. M. Bumstead and John E. Van de Wetering, What Must I Do to be Saved? (Hinsdale, Ill., 1976) 145-7.

20. On Finney's use of "right means" in the conducting of a revival, see, for example, Peter W. Williams, Popular Religion in America: Symbolic Change and the Modernization Process in Historical Perspective, (Chicago, 1989), 114-16. Williams recognizes in Finney's "new measures" a religiously-oriented form "of social engineering and manipulation." It was his "enormous personal charismatic power," Williams observes, that helped generate his success as a revivalist. Finney quoted in McGloughlin Revivals, 122-31. McGloughlin suggests that Finney leaned more toward "common sense and experience" than toward rationalism in his theology. Kuklick, Churchmen and Philosophers, 106-8. Kuklick shows the close relationship between Finney's theology and New Haven ideas "with Beecher as the link." Moreover, Kuklick points out, "the beliefs of Finney and his associates--Oberlin's perfectionist theology--were indebted to the New Haven Theology being taught at Lane Seminary where Beecher was president." See

also William McLoughlin's article "Charles Grandison Finney," in *Ante-Bellum Reform*, ed., David Brion Davis, (New York, 1967), 97-107. McLoughlin points out that Finney probably "adopted the doctrine of disinterested benevolence without realizing who its authors were,"--that is to say, the New Divinity theologians like Hopkins. Moreover, McLoughlin notes that "Finney transformed the doctrine [of holiness] into cosmic utilitarianism. He defined benevolence in terms of the greatest happiness of the greatest number." My findings concur with McLoughlin's, yet I am convinced that Finney's utilitarianism was by no means unique but in fact permeated American Protestant theology by in the North by 1830. Turner *Without God* 78-9. Albanese, *America* 157. Charles G. Finney, *Finney's Life and Lectures*, William H. Harding, ed., (Grand Rapids, 1943). In his "Revivals of Religion" lecture, Finney observed that "Religion is the work of man. It is something for man to do." He believed that God must bless "the work of man" in bringing about religious revivals, but he felt it important to recognize that when individuals were converted, "They are not enabled to put further exertions which they were unable to put forth. In other words, each human being possesses the innate capacity to find salvation; the subject need not wait on some special providence from heaven. In fact, for Finney, it is important not to detract the prospective convert by pointing out God's activity in the salvation event. See Charles G. Finney, *Sermons on Important Subjects* (New York, 1836), 51-3. Finney argued that if the sinner's attention is directed towards God's activity in the conversion process, "his submission is impossible. He can only submit when his entire attention is directed to the reasons for submission. Every diversion of his attention is but multiplying obstacles in his way." Hence, while Finney believed in God's activity in the process of conversion, at a practical level it was as he described it, an "irrelevant matter."

21. The best source that examines the widespread influence of Wesleyan Perfectionism in American Protestant thought remains Timothy L. Smith's *Revivalism and Social Reform*, (New York, 1965) *passim*. B. F. Shepherd, "An Essay on Christian Perfection," *Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review* 17 (1835): 380ff. See Smith pp. 107-9 for a succinct description of the influences played by New School Calvinism on the theologians at Oberlin College. See also Kuklick, *Churchmen and Philosophers*, 106-7. Some American Lutherans took interest in the new measure revivalism of Finney and substituted more traditional mode of worship with Lutheran revival meetings. Lutheran newspapers such as *The Lutheran Observer* were critical of "new measure Lutherans" who employed protracted meetings and the anxious bench in their efforts to help their congregations find

salvation. Albeck, Century of Lutherans 86-95. See also Pioneer Experiences; The Gift of Power Received by Faith, ed., Phoebe Palmer (New York, 1868). Palmer completed the testimonies of 80 ministers who claimed to have received Christian perfection. The list of ministers include representatives from Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregationalist, Dutch Reformed, and Episcopalian Churches.

22. Finney referred to entire sanctification as the "manhood in religion." He espoused the doctrine primarily on pragmatic grounds because, he believed, without it "revivals would become more and more superficial and finally cease." Oberlin Evangelist, January 3, 1839, 25. Finney argued, moreover, that the "tendency and effect of obedience, is to make the obedient individual happy." In fact "the state of mind required by the law, is itself happiness." When enough fully sanctified Christians have achieved this happiness, Finney argued, there will be an increase in "public and individual happiness." The doctrine of entire sanctification and its pragmatic link with his revivalism was of supreme theological importance for Finney. If everyone in America would simply receive sanctification it "would create a perfect state of society; and for any community to live together, in conforming to this principle, would be heaven itself." [Oberlin Evangelist, March 13, 1839, 49.] Finney's abolitionist sentiment was based upon his principle of happiness. "In the light of this law," he wrote, "how perfectly obvious is it, that slavery is from hell." Asa Mahan promoted entire sanctification on a similar pragmatic basis. The doctrine "must be," he wrote, "of the highest practical utility; because it lays the only adequate foundation for the most vigorous and prayerful efforts after those attainment of holiness, at which all admit we are bound to aim. Oberlin Evangelist, June 19, 1839, 110. Asa Mahan, Autobiography: Intellectual, Moral, and Spiritual (London: T. Woolmer, 1882), 267. Mahan boasted that he was "the first man in the history of the race who conducted women through a full course of liberal education, and conferred upon [them] the degrees of A. B. and A. M." Peters, Christian Perfection, 116. On the pervasiveness of New Divinity among branches of American Protestantism, see Smith, Revivalism, 32-3; 225-37; and passim.

23. The Seneca Falls Woman's Rights Convention which inaugurated the woman's rights movement in the United States met at a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. The Wesleyans championed the abolition of slavery and many applied their perfectionist leanings toward the advancement of black and women's rights. See Nancy Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835 (New Haven, 1977), 132ff, for an

overview of the nineteenth-century woman's relationship with the church and the clergy. For a helpful essay on the role of women in antebellum reform efforts see Nancy Woloch, Women and the American Experience (New York, 1984) 167-200. Barbara L. Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America (Middletown, Conn., 1981). Mary P. Ryan "A Women's Awakening Evangelical Religion and the Families of Utica, New York, 1800-1840" in Women in American Religion, ed., Janet Wilson Janes (Philadelphia, 1980), 89-110. Ryan has quantified revival converts in the area round Utica, New York during the early 1800s. Her data suggest that about "30 percent . . . were preceded into full church membership by persons who shared their surname." Moreover, Ryan points out, the "first family member to enter the church was twice as likely to be female as male." These data suggest, then, that women were "instrumental in a host of other conversions among their kin of both sexes. See also Martha Thomhave Blauvelt "Women and Revivalism" in Women and Religion in America, eds., Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Skinner Keller, (San Francisco, 1981) 1: 1-45. Blauvelt observes "that females often acted as evangelists within their homes and communities and helped instigate the century's frequent revivals." (1) Further, she suggests that evangelical theology "encouraged religious activism" among females "by maintaining that the church member's daily life attested to the reality (or fraudulence) of her conversion, indifference to God's cause suggested that one had not been saved after all. It is for this reason Blauvelt contends, that the "clergy explicitly demanded that laity work for revivals." Evangelical theology, in effect, had a liberating influence upon many female converts. Victorian women were assigned a significant ministerial role as chief theologians and preachers to the children of the household, and, as directors of the Sunday Schools, their ministerial influence extended to the young people of the church. The burden of teaching the youth, sustaining missionary ventures and benevolent societies and importantly praying for the success of the kingdom were all given the women of the church. Cott, Bonds of Womanhood. 140.

24. Harold Raser, Phoebe Palmer: Her Life and Thought, (Lewiston, N. Y., 1987) 79ff. Lori D. Ginzberg, Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the Nineteenth-Century United States (New Haven, 1990). Ginzberg analyzes women's religious and benevolent activities in the nineteenth century in light of what she sees as "the essentially class nature of benevolence." (7) Middle-class women like their male counterparts were, she argues, partially motivated in their activities by an elitist class consciousness. "Thus," argues Ginzberg, "the control of services to the poor and outcast was a key

element in the dominant groups' control of resources and of standards of behavior." (216) Although Ginzberg's reductionistic analysis may be helpful in understanding motivation underlying the actions of female reformers and evangelists like Palmer, she fails to consider seriously the ramifications of religious conversion and the subsequent ambition to share the experience with others. A more sanguine appraisal motivating factors in women's benevolent and mission activities is given by Carolyn De Swerte Gifford, "Women in Social Reform Movements" in Women and Religion in America 1: 294-340.

25. Raser, Palmer, 26; 29; 47; 166. See also Palmer's comments in her Faith and Its Effects: Fragments From My Portfolio, (New York, 1848), 232. Palmer admonished a fellow minister and friend simply to "try this short and easy way" to perfection.

26. Phoebe Palmer, Promise of the Father (Boston, 1859), 169; Phoebe Palmer, Four Years in the Old World, (New York: Foster and Palmer, 1866), 57. By the 1850s Palmer's "shorter way" to Christian perfection dominated American Holiness thought. See, for example, the comments of Episcopalian priest, F. Emerson Judd, in Pioneer Experiences ed., Palmer 272. Judd claims to have received sanctification in 1955 when another Episcopalian priest encouraged him to "Believe that ye receive these things, and he shall have them. Judd later found support for this experience from Methodist Bishop Hamline and his "heavenly-minded wife."

27. Ibid., 136-7. See also Raser, Palmer 255-6. Raser establishes a probable link between the "altar" terminology of eighteenth-century Englishwoman and Wesleyan leader Hester Ann Rogers and the common sense "duty to believe" God's promise approach of English lay preacher, William Carvosso. While it is certainly true that Palmer must have drawn from Roger's formulation of her "altar theology," and she was almost certainly familiar with Carvosso's Autobiography,--she never acknowledged the influence of either--as this study shows, the requirement to "accept God's promises by faith" was so pervasive in American Protestant circles, that Palmer could hardly have dodged its influences. Moreover, Palmer's pragmatic interest in speedy conversions was significantly different from Roger's approach. Palmer wrote, "I cannot believe that there is any lingering on the part of God in fulfilling his promises to the seeking soul. When we come to him in the way of his requirements, we are met with his blessing." Phoebe Palmer, Faith and its Effects, 30-1. For an extensive list of other Methodists providing testimony to their speedy sanctification "by simple faith." See Pioneer Experiences ed., Palmer, passim. A

friend and admirer of Phoebe Palmer, Stephen Olin told her in 1842 that he believed "in the doctrine of Christian holiness," but he was less sure about possessing a clear evidence of the experience. Olin, Life and Letters, 43-5. Two years later, in 1844, Palmer boasted in her diary that "Dr. Olin now enjoys the blessing." Wheatley, The Life and Letters of Mrs. Phoebe Palmer (New York, 1881), 244.

28. Palmer consistently interplayed the Reformed tradition's stress on pragmatism and human happiness with her own emphasis on Christian holiness. In the 1840s she observed that "God requires that I should be holy, in order that I may be more useful, and consequently more happy." Phoebe Palmer, Faith and Its Effects, 87; 256. Palmer, The Guide to Holiness, May 1873, 169-71. Palmer, "A Laity for the Times," The Christian Advocate and Journal, February 26, 1857, 33. Palmer quoted in Raser, Palmer, 93:95. Palmer's postmillennialist view was similar to views expressed by Beecher, Finney, Olin and other northerners. At one point in her career, during the early days of the Business Man's Revival of 1857-58, Palmer indicated that she believed the dawn of the millennium may already have arrived in America. Palmer, Promise, 172. She felt the millennium was at hand because she sincerely believed that the Protestant denominations "are gradually coming to the light" of the short and easy way to perfection. Palmer, Faith and Its Effects, 232.

29. Palmer, Promise, 172; 17; 28. Susie Stanley, "Empowered Foremothers: Wesleyan/Holiness Women Speak to Today's Christian Feminists," Wesleyan Theological Journal (1989): 104; 107.

30. Stanley, "Empowered Foremothers," 106; 107.

31. Psychologist Daniel Levinson observes that for every man, there are women who serve as special instructors. These "true mentors," as Levinson describes them, help to "animate" the part of the man that contains his "dreams." Perhaps on a macroscopic scale, Palmer became such an animator of dreams for the men to whom she preached. Men viewed her as a harbinger of their dream of a perfect America. Daniel Levinson, The Seasons of a Man's Life (New York, 1978). See also, Jean S. Bolen, Gods in Every Man (New York, 1989) 7.

32. Palmer, Promise, 190; 211. Raser, Palmer, 218-9. Wheatley, Life and Letters, 450-1.

33. Thomas Upham quoted in Darius Salter, Spirit and Intellect: Thomas Upham's Holiness Theology (Metuchen, N. J., 1986) 67. Perhaps Phoebe Palmer's career can best be understood in light of a paradigm of American religion

suggested by Nathan Hatch. Hatch observes that in the nineteenth century, "Powerful self-made leaders continued to rise within their movements. They came to prominence on a wave of popular acclaim, and their democratic appeal was difficult to squelch. These firebrands called their followers back to the first principles of the movement and noted how far the current generation had fallen." Hatch, Democratization, 206.

Chapter 4

The Southern Problem

Methodists and the Culture of Honor

Future Georgia Holiness evangelist Miller Willis dropped by an Augusta race track one afternoon in 1857. In a mischievous frame of mind and craving excitement, Willis wandered down to the track and "whooped and yelled like a demon" for a mare who had just won a heat. Willis intended his mettlesome cheers as an obvious insult to a rider whose horse had performed poorly in the race. His taunts achieved the desired effect, and the offended rider approached him, angrily demanding that he "hush, or I will slap you down."

"Well," Willis shot back, "you are big enough but if you do I will be with you when you do it." Apparently unimpressed by Willis's physical size--he stood only 5'6"--the rider slapped Willis and sent him sprawling to the ground. Drawing his knife--an action that was almost instinctive to him--Willis sprang to his feet and retaliated by sticking his "knife in him three or four times." Willis recalled later that the rider's "blood flew

all over me and him." The rider later died from wounds inflicted by Willis. Willis was never prosecuted.¹

Such incidents of violence were anything but uncommon in the Old South. Southern society through the period of Reconstruction was dominated by a system of honor that precipitated violent activities and then encouraged acts of retribution to counter insult and physical aggression. The authorities overlooked Miller Willis's slaying of the rider in Augusta because public sentiment ran in his favor. As Willis put it, "I will kill any man who slaps me down, and I will be thought well of by my friends for doing it." Willis's "friends" confirmed that his decision to seek retribution "was right." He was, after all, protecting his honor. But as Willis's biographer observed, it was this sort of "public sentiment" justifying violence in the name of honor "that has made many murderers."²

Like their laity, southern Methodist ministers were well acquainted with the vehement tendencies of their society. While holding a Methodist quarterly meeting near Tallahassee in 1854, S. P. Richardson, an itinerant minister from South Carolina, endured the heckling of seven young men who seemed determined to disrupt the service. Later that day the same party attempted to "run over" him with their horses. The ruffians eventually retreated when the "brethren grabbed sticks and anything they could lay their hands on." Yet late that evening, as Richardson and

a local preacher, "brother Dyke," were making their way home, "a brother came back at full speed and informed us that those fellows were just ahead . . . waiting for us; and that they had loaded their pistols and whetted their knives at the turpentine mill that afternoon for the purposes of putting us through."

Richardson expressed reservations about the wisdom of continuing on, but Dyke bristled at the suggestion that they avoid a fight, declaring that "no set of scoundrels could push him off the track." As the two men approached the location on the road where they anticipated the ambush, Richardson began to notice that brother Dyke was frightened and would be unable to offer much resistance. Opening his "fine, large, long-bladed new knife . . . in cold blood," Richardson realized any attempts "to reason with them would be futile," so he determined "to kill as many as I could before they got ready." Richardson quickly devised a scheme to overcome them "by placing my long, keen blade below the ribs." Fortunately for Richardson and his companion, a large group of Methodist laymen, having caught word of the group's intentions, interceded before the showdown and sent the roughs away. Consequently, Richardson narrowly avoided what likely would have been a grizzly encounter.³

Another Methodist, Alabama preacher John Harmon Nichols, like Richardson, was no stranger to violence nor

to threats of violence. While stationed in DeKalb County in 1866, Nichols received a warning from a former Confederate Captain to leave the area "and not show your d____d face here again," or, as the Captain put it, he would "blow a hole through you that a raccoon can jump through." The veteran backed up his threat by poking the barrel of his pistol into Nichols's chest. The preacher stood his ground, however, and refused to abandon the region and his circuit. Impressed with Nichols's fearlessness, the captain later offered his hand in friendship.⁴

Nichols was not always so self-controlled in his dealings with troublemakers, however. Two years later, in 1868, while stationed in Decatur, Alabama, the preacher crossed paths, coincidentally, with another Confederate veteran, in this case a colonel whose "war blood was still warm in the veins." The colonel "walked about the streets with a brace of pistols buckled around him" hurling obscenities at males he encountered, regardless of their age, race, or station. The colonel verbally accosted Nichols one day on a street in Decatur. At first the preacher made a valiant effort to avoid a disturbance, but the colonel, determined to precipitate either a battle or a surrender, followed Nichols through the streets and into the post office where he continued his verbal assault. As the two squeezed through "a narrow passageway between two

counters" the colonel started cursing, Nichols later recalled, "right in my face." "When I caught the colonel's eye," wrote Nichols, "a wave of resentment dashed through my whole being." In a blind rage, Nichols "thrust both hands into the colonel's hair and, jerking him to the floor on his back, fell on his breast with both knees, still holding to his hair, and raised his head and pounded it against the floor several times with great violence."⁵

The timocratic aspects of southern white society dictated that men of virtually every socio-economic and professional rank adhere to certain aspects of the honor code. The culture demanded that when a man was "slapped down," laughed at, or insulted he was expected to fight in order to maintain his honor and the dignity of his family. When a man refused to meet insult with violence, his peers invariably regarded him as a coward. From their pulpits and through the press, southern evangelicals spurned the honor code and the violence it fomented, but the system was so pervasive among southerners that even well-meaning Christians found themselves participating in the violence of the period. Willis, Richardson, and Nichols later regretted their actions and their contemplated acts of vengeance. Yet each was prepared against his better judgment to render an eye for an eye rather than suffer meekly. Dickson Bruce has observed that rural southerners "may have lost their fondness for recreational 'knock down

and drag outs' when they found religion, but they did not lose their belief in the efficacy and necessity of violence." Perhaps the majority of rural southern preachers found it necessary to resort to violence or threats of violence from time to time in order to control "rowdies" who frequented camp meetings and other religious gatherings. Lamenting the penchant toward violent behavior that permeated the culture, one nineteenth-century southerner observed that "farmers, merchants, bankers, physicians, lawyers, even ministers of the gospel, often slay their fellow man in private warfare."⁶

The Southern Duality

Superficially, at least, nineteenth-century southern evangelical leadership repudiated the seemingly ubiquitous violence endemic to the region. At the same time, aspects of their theology were supportive of the honor system that supplied the primary catalyst for the society's tumultuousness. Southern evangelical ministers tended to view their world as a dichotomy of good versus evil, light versus darkness. This simplification of the issues of right and wrong helped perpetuate the notion that the wrong should be checked by the force--or violence--of the right. Southern Methodist minister and editor of the Quarterly Review, Henry B. Bascom, admonished his peers to be aware

that two classes of good and evil coexisted in society and declared that "Every minister . . . should be a prophet of plagues and curses, as well as a messenger of peace. He is obliged, even by kindness as well as by duty, to point to the dart of vengeance trembling in the air!" God is "eminently merciful" to those who serve him, Virginia Methodist John Granbery assured his congregation, but the "blazing glory of infinite holiness is to the sinner a consuming, quenchless fire: the majestic arm of His avenging justice wields a whetted sword that spares not a victim and misses not an aim." Georgia Methodist Ira Potter proffered similar assurances to his congregation and then cautioned that the "anger of the Lord" was "like a stream of brimstone; and, indeed, when his wrath is kindled, and his sword whetted against the finally impenitent, fire and brimstone might seem a heaven compared to it."⁷

In the mid-nineteenth century, southern preachers and their congregations recognized a vast array of social ills and looked to God for the destruction of sin and the establishment of a truly moral society. They rejected, or at least attempted to reject, corrupted society in as much as this was possible. As Donald G. Mathews has pointed out, in rejecting the culture "they called it 'the world.'" The emphasis southern preachers like Bascom, Granberry, and Potter placed upon the austere attributes of

God suggests that nineteenth-century southern culture exerted a significant impact upon church leadership--an impact the evangelical congregations could hardly have missed. Moreover, the preachers' theological interest in seeing justice served in "the world" provided a source of vindication for individuals who, like Richardson and Nichols, took matters of justice into their own hands from time to time. Southern Christians recognized that heaven offered a perfect society, yet "the world" they inhabited fell so far short of this ideal they found it expedient to confront the world on its own terms until a vengeful God intervened. Southern evangelicals were, it seems, trapped between two cultures. On the one hand was the Kingdom of God, an unrealized otherworldly society; on the other hand Protestants were forced to live in "the world" and to come to grips with its manifold imperfections--and no imperfections were more glaring than the region's preoccupations with violence and slavery. Within this cultural context, the evangelicals understood the world as a place that could never be redeemed, but would have to be destroyed and rebuilt from scratch.⁸

Honor and a keen sense of justice were not, of course, the only factors supporting the behavioral violence of the South. Nineteenth-century southerners sought ebullieny and excitement in many facets of their lives. Frederick Law Olmsted once observed that the amusements of most

southerners "must be exciting, their festivities are exhausting, as if they were trials of muscular agility." Augustus B. Longstreet's humorous examination of antebellum Georgia society in his popular Georgia Scenes reveals a culture in which eye gouging "rehearsals" and no-holds-barred fights were waged between grown men. The restoration of honor smirched was a way of life, as well as a form of entertainment, in the rural South. It comes as no surprise that the religion of rural southerners needed to be every bit as sensational as the other activities in which they participated. As Olmstead put it, the religion of the Old South like its violent entertainment was "a matter of excitement--of spasms and experiences . . . of maddening despair and of ecstatic hope and triumph." The advent of the camp meeting revivals in the early nineteenth-century provided the forum in which rural southerners were able to find temporary refuge from the world, to unburden their suppressed guilt for transgressions committed during the course of the year, or since the last revival, and to socialize with others of like mind. Held in a forested area, usually during the fall of the year, and sometimes attracting thousands of participants, the camp meeting was, above all else, a place where the unsaved could find salvation from the world and evade the vengeance of God.⁹

As evangelists stood before their transient

congregations issuing white-hot warnings about the destiny awaiting all who did not turn to God and conform to his will, the visible and audible evidences of conversion manifested themselves. One North Carolina Methodist reported that backsliders and the unsaved who attended a North Carolina camp meeting in 1802 fell "under preaching, their whole length on the ground, and with such suddenness and violence as seemed almost enough to kill them." He went on to observe that some of his "neighbors fell at my feet like men shot in battle. This the people called being 'struck down,' and when they professed religion, they called that 'coming through.'" The writer also witnessed a "mysterious exercise" common to most southern campmeetings called "the jerks." "Sometimes," he explained, "their heads would be jerked backwards and forward with such violence that it would cause them to utter involuntarily, a sharp, quick sound similar to the yelp of a dog; and the hair of the women would crack like a whip." Still others "foamed at the mouth" or climbed poles or trees to "shout the victory." Witnesses to such activities occasionally reported that other individuals, frightened by what they observed happening around them, attempted "to fly from the scene," but even these folks would "fall by the way," under the influences of the preachers or, as the participants understood it, the power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰

The stringent realities of southern rural culture

demanded that conversion experiences be as dramatic and as turbulent as the social environment. The individual who came under conviction for his or her past life of sinfulness fully recognized that conversion was not something to be entered into lightly. Conversion, for the rural southerner, meant a sincere attempt to separate oneself from the world, including the old friends and associates who remained ensnared in that wretched state. The Methodist evangelists who conducted campmeetings in the South before the Civil War came to understand their role as something like a moral police force whose principal duty was limiting the unhappy effects of a brutal society and clearing the path to heaven. John L. Peters has pointed out that in this sort of environment the Methodist preacher "must inevitably, have felt that the burden of his message should be a warning 'to escape the wrath to come' rather than an exhortation 'to go on to perfection.'"¹¹

Declension of Holiness Theology in the South

Despite the rough conditions they encountered there, Wesley's earliest disciples did convey the message of the second blessing to their revival audiences in the South and along the western frontier. Francis Asbury, Freeborn Garrettson, and other Methodist leaders in the Second Awakening acknowledged that they preached on the theme to

audiences in the rural South; they also found evidence that some southerners claimed the experience. Yet there is no evidence to suggest that the doctrine of instantaneous second-blessing perfection ever received more than scant attention in the rural South during the years preceding the War of 1812. Moreover, it appears that those who experienced perfect love did little to pass the idea along to others. In 1814, Kentucky itinerant Benjamin Lakin interviewed an "old Brother" who told him that religion had fallen on hard times in that region because "for a long time he had not heard the doctrine of sanctification enforced." Since the doctrine had received little recognition in that region of the country by 1814 it seems likely that it had failed to take root among the rural Methodists Lakin ministered to there. The Wesleyan doctrine of second-blessing holiness did not receive a widespread following among Methodists in either the North or the South during the early decades of the nation's existence. The leaders in the northern revival of the 1830s and '40s exhibited a generally optimistic outlook toward the human potential for good. Linking their views of perfection with the need for social reform, Charles Finney and a growing number of perfectionist leaders came to regard the southern institution of slavery as the primary hindrance to national revival and the eventual perfecting of American social and political institutions.

Subsequently, the perfectionist revival that finally swept across denominational and state lines in the North after 1830 received a chilly reception in the South among the Methodists whose Discipline officially recognized entire sanctification as a viable part of the church's doctrine.¹²

Several factors played a role in the South's almost complete rejection of perfectionist religion before the Civil War. One hindrance to the cultivation of perfectionist teachings may be traced to a strong undercurrent of individualism within southern society. The nurturing of Christian perfection required a considerable amount of guidance and communal upkeep from those already in the experience. Wesley established his select societies with this required system of support in mind. Phoebe Palmer and other leaders of the antebellum northern perfectionist revival organized prayer meetings specifically intended to sustain what they recognized as a fragile experience. Southerners, however, were never as community-minded as their northern neighbors. They were too independent, too self-sufficient, and in many cases, too geographically isolated, to devote the energy needed to sustain a communal mechanism of mutual support for what most southern Methodists came to regard as a theological nicety.¹³

Southerners did, of course, appreciate certain social

aspects of their faith, but their cosmology was dominated by a good versus evil mentality that was skeptical of northerners's efforts to perfect the human race. The church as they understood it existed primarily as a shelter from the iniquity of a patently imperfect world. In the church the Christian could find refuge with like-minded brothers and sisters. Within their community the individual's spiritual needs received considerable attention. A well-delivered sermon, an emotional testimony from a fellow member of the congregation, a prayer inspired by the Spirit and delivered with power: these were the hallmarks of a positive church meeting or revival. What was most important to Southern Protestants was that they "got happy" or blessed when attending religious services. Those who "grew happy" during a revival service or campmeeting "shouted the praises" of their maker. The great majority of southern Christians were satisfied with their religion as long as it met their individual needs. In contrast with their northern cousins, southern preachers placed little emphasis on the radical reform of society. Some urban ministers asserted that the world could be helped to some extent but most preachers argued that in the final analysis, humans could do little to ameliorate corruption. Rev. T. V. Moore of Richmond realized in 1857 that the world was far too rotten to be reformed by human effort and warned the readership of the Quarterly Review of

the M. E. Church, South that indications of God's impending judgment were everywhere. The world would soon be destroyed by fire, so all humanity should "look forward with shivering apprehension to some fearful scene of judgment that lies in the undeveloped future." Years before Moore issued his grim forecast, the relatively urbane Henry Bascom referred to the earth as "the theatre of crime" and "the dishonor of the universe," and welcomed the day when "a baptism of fire, wipes away this disgrace." In Bascom's opinion, the feeble efforts of mortal men and women to stay or even delay God's wrath, while necessary and good, were at best temporary fixes, for the time of the judgment's "occurrence is settled by absolute pre-determination and special arrangement."¹⁴

Southern Methodists tended to reject the northern understanding of human progress that sprang from that section's postmillennial view of history. The second coming of Christ was, for perhaps the majority of southern Methodists at mid-century, a premillennial event. The optimism of the early frontier revivals was, as the century wore on, supplanted by a more despondent perception of history preceding the second coming. Southerners anticipated the advent, not as a natural result of the perfectibility of the race but, as Tennessee Methodist John Hanner described it, as a "catastrophe." In 1847, writing in the Quarterly Review, yet another southern preacher

dismissed the postmillennial view of social progress as a theory "of modern origin." The writer observed that the central purpose of his essay was "to show that it is not the scriptural doctrine--that no such season of perfect peace and universal virtue is to be expected before the Second Advent--that the Second Advent is not to follow, but to precede and introduce the millenium." Like many of his ministerial associates, the writer interpreted his world "as being full of wickedness and infidelity till the glorious coming of Christ."¹⁵

The southern outlook was not always so bleak. John Boles has demonstrated that a postmillennial optimism was prevalent among southern evangelicals who witnessed conversions during the Great Revival at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The early optimism dissipated significantly as the century wore on. By mid century the writings of evangelicals in the region clearly reflected a less confident historical outlook. As postmillennial hope gave way to premillennial gloom, southern Methodists expressed less and less interest in salvaging society, unless it was a piece at a time, conversion by conversion. While Northern evangelicals extolled the virtues of the state and viewed it as a positive factor if not a full-fledged partner in the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, evangelicals in the South perceived it at best as a "necessary evil," a temporary means of

controlling the more seemly elements of the world. It was something to be maintained and obeyed, but it was to be carefully separated from the business of the church. The majority of southern evangelicals were, as Anne Loveland has suggested, mainly preoccupied "with the conduct of individuals, rather than entities like corporations or governments." Southern Protestants did address concerns to government officials from time to time, but the issues involved nearly always pertained to the state's responsibility for maintaining justice and order within the boundaries of a given state. Only within an orderly society were the evangelicals capable of doing what they were called to do: convert sinners. God, they argued, did not call converts to become active in political affairs. As Southern Methodist Josephus Anderson put it, "It is greatly injurious" for the Christian to be "noisy about political questions, and contentious about matters of Civil government." Southern society, including the State, was, moreover, only as good as the church, for the church was the only truly decent institution in society. "Religion is," Anderson remarked, "the best safeguard of a nation." Few Southerners professed optimism, therefore, concerning the potential for sweeping social reform through political and other secular channels. Though he served as a Chaplain under Robert E. Lee during the Civil War, Georgia Methodist Anderson J. Jarrell remarked to his congregation that the

government was "crookedness from center to circumference. Its rules its manners, its customs, its standards of right are entirely out of harmony with the laws of God. Its paths are not fit for the King of glory to walk over them." Jarrell, like most southern evangelicals believed that individual reform through conversion and not government intervention was the key ingredient advancing a better society.¹⁶

The religious mood of the South before the Civil War was not, then, especially conducive to ideas of individual and corporate perfectionism. Rural southerners especially possessed no utopian sentiments concerning the potential of humanity and society. Southerners confronted a harsh and oftentimes brutal existence. The evangelicals had a difficult time thinking in terms of the new Zion arriving anytime soon in a part of America where violence and guilt were much more apparent than progress. They believed that might had to be met with might, not with something as abstract as the Wesleyan tenet of perfect love. Southerners did not share northern views on the topic because their culture was dominated by a preoccupation for justice rather than mercy, for honor and not self-sacrifice. Sin had to be judged, offenders punished. With few exceptions, southerners gave little consideration to the establishment of a perfect society; they were too preoccupied trying to imagine ways just to establish

order.¹⁷

Certainly there were some Methodists in the South who took an interest in the resurgence of perfectionist ideas in the North after 1835. The two sections of the country were culturally different, to say the least, but it would be an interpretive blunder to suggest that on the issue of perfectionism the regions held nothing in common. Georgia Methodist minister and physician Lovick Pierce, for example, "accepted the views of the modern interpreters of Mr. Wesley, as represented by . . . Mrs. Palmer as being not only true, but thoroughly Wesleyan." Pierce along with two of his colleagues in the Georgia Conference, Russell Reneau and Samuel Anthony, claimed to have experienced entire sanctification before the Civil War. For a brief time in the late 1840s, Pierce, Reneau and Anderson managed to foster some interest in the writings of Palmer and New England perfectionist Thomas Upham among their peers, but their efforts met with only limited success, and after 1850, the three preachers seldom mentioned the holiness doctrine as a second definite work of grace among their southern audiences.¹⁸

Southern Gradualism Versus Northern Immediatism

Some southerners sought and received the blessing but few were able to maintain their experiences for any length

of time. Rural Virginia itinerant John Wesley Childs received the blessing in the 1830s, but in a letter to his fiancée he lamented that he enjoyed the experience "for five months" and then lost it. Childs continued throughout his career to offer testimony concerning the importance of the doctrine, but he never reached a clear decision about his own experience. Moreover, Child's ministerial associate and biographer described Child's intense interest in the subject as a "peculiar emphasis." In August 1851, Southern Methodist evangelist John Tillet "made a profession of entire sanctification." Tillet noted in his diary that the "instrument which my heavenly Father employed to guide and urge me into this blessed state was a book written by Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, of New York." Like the Georgia preachers, however, Tillet's zealotry for the experience was short-lived and by 1853, "he seldom mention[ed] the subject." After Tillet's death, his son recalled that his father "changed his views somewhat as to the instantaneousness of the experience of sanctification and preached later in life more on growth in grace from conversion onward and less on instantaneous experience as the method of attaining it."¹⁹

With few exceptions, Southern Methodists who wrote much about the topic of sanctification described it as a gradual process rather than an instantaneous event. Lovick Pierce's son George adhered to the gradualist view, denied

the need for a second blessing, and yet was overwhelmingly elected to the episcopacy by the General Conference of 1854--all this despite the fact the delegates were well aware of his views on the topic. In his popular book on theology, The Bible Christian, Josephus Anderson asserted that sanctification was, "under the gospel, a glorious privilege." He observed, moreover, that "holiness is a progressive work, and the believer is required to employ the whole of life in 'perfecting holiness in the fear of God.'" In his book for young people, Experiential Religion, Leonidas Rosser, a Methodist from Virginia, who following the War came to terms with Palmer's approach, also described holiness as a "progressive" work "in which growth in Christian graces is gradual and slow."²⁰

The vision of perfection "now" rather than later, so prevalent in the antebellum North, attracted little interest among evangelicals in the southern states. Far more comfortable with the concept of "growth in grace" or gradual improvement, Southern Methodist Henry Bascom perhaps best summed up his colleague's feelings on the matter when he warned that the "dreams of modern progress and perfectibility are misleading millions."²¹

An Imperfect Institution

Southerners were restrained in their optimism because of the social ambiguities they encountered as a matter of

routine. Certainly the evangelical efforts to balance their religion against the violence of their environs created a craggy seedbed in which to cultivate perfectionist aspirations, but the challenge of another systemic evil made the quest for perfection an even less likely prospect. In the minds of some northern abolitionists the slave institution remained a formidable opponent to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. Orange Scott (whose strong abolitionist sentiment caused him to abandon the Methodist Episcopal Church in order to form the Wesleyan Methodist Connection), Charles Finney, Asa Mahan, and Theodore Dwight Weld, a Finney convert, all argued that the kingdom of God could not be realized in America before the abolition of slavery. Not all northern perfectionists were abolitionists, but most were deeply troubled by the institution. Despite her opposition to slavery in principle, Pheobe Palmer had little to say about the enterprise, choosing instead to trust in the ability of Providence to bring an end to the evil in due course. Palmer, nevertheless, like Finney and other perfectionists of her day, seemed to recognize slavery as something that was subject to the judgment of God--a hindrance to the advancement of the kingdom of God in America.²²

The relationship of Christian perfectionism with the South's acceptance and defense of slavery is extremely

complex. The question of slavery and southern culpability has recently come under the scrutiny of several scholars, whose efforts have brought understanding to the topic. James Oakes has established what is perhaps the best argument for the pervasiveness of guilt among slave-owning Christians. Oakes admits that there is a paucity of written confessions of guilt among antebellum slaveowners, and yet he has provided enough evidence to establish that a significant number of southerners were at least bothered to some extent by their participation in the institution. If one cannot say with certainty that most southern evangelicals experienced a sense of remorse, it can be argued with greater confidence that the experience of slave ownership gave them a sense of what might best be described as nervousness. That is to say, for many southerners, and not just evangelical southerners, slave ownership was accompanied by various kinds of anxiety.²³

Eugene Genovese has observed that he detects a sense of guilt among southern slave owners, but he points out that they never did "wallow in guilt." Genovese suggests that southerners "felt guilt about everything. But everything in this respect equals nothing. Their guilt feelings ended, as they began, as a personal matter." Genovese may be correct when he argues that southerners's approach to slavery was not significantly influenced by their sense of remorse, and yet as these sensibilities influenced their

theological opinions, the emotional climate amounted to something rather important. As it played a role in the lives of antebellum southern Methodists, the emotional and intellectual burdens that accompanied complicity with the institution of human bondage rendered the dream of instant perfection as a virtual impossibility.²⁴

Donald Mathews has observed that the southerners most likely to express anxiety over the question of slave holding were women who, he points out, "poured out their despair in diaries." Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, a Methodist from Augusta, writing in her journal in 1859 reflected upon her appreciation of Harriet Beecher Stowe's writings and observed that "Southern women are I believe all at heart abolitionists but there I expect I have made a very broad assertion but I will stand to the opinion that the institution of slavery degrades the white man more than the Negro and oh exerts a most deleterious effect upon our children." Thomas's anxieties about the institution stemmed from a deeply set fear that the burden of providing for her father's slaves might one day fall upon her. Another Methodist, Mary Burruss McGehee, in a letter written to her son in 1836, complained that the "subject of slavery . . . is the most perplexing that I have ever tried to think on." McGehee asserted that those whites burdened by the "acknowledged evil" of slavery should "as far as possible mitigate the evils of the lot & yet use every

exertion to have the evil removed."²⁵

Southern males occasionally echoed the same sentiments in their journals, but few dared vent their misgivings publicly, especially after 1830 with the rapid expansion of abolitionism in the North. Perhaps most southern evangelical leaders who were against slavery, or at least ambivalent toward the practice, in the 1820s and 30s demonstrated greater complicity toward its existence in the decades that followed. The writings of Henry Bascom, an individual Larry E. Tise has accurately described as a "proslavery clergyman," graphically illustrates the shift in attitude that occurred in the South as the tone of northern criticism grew increasingly indignant. In an 1832 address given by Bascom on several occasions for the benefit of the American Colonization Society, he admonished his listeners "to exert yourselves in wiping away the most defacing stain,--that of slavery,--that is seen lingering in the azure heaven of your country's reputation." "I conjure you," Bascom exclaimed, "by the outrage of dignity and violated sanctity of your kind to rise and alleviate the sufferings of those who were created to be as free and as happy as yourselves."²⁶

As the impracticality of the colonization movement manifested itself, Bascom's writings began to mirror some of his old racial prejudices, and he became the chief Methodist apologist for the slave institution--a

transformation that is best described as a transition due to nerves. In his 1845 monograph Methodism and Slavery, Bascom came short of declaring slavery a "positive good," for whites, but he did assert that "the Bible recognized the jural and social relation of master and slave as a concern of civil government, with which the church has no right to interfere." Bascom was prepared to admit the immorality of slaveholding as long as the convenience of emancipation in Africa seemed a possibility, but the idea of freed blacks occupying his turf worried him enough that he shifted back to a more conservative position.²⁷

The literary remains of Thomas, McGehee, Bascom, and other southern evangelicals strongly suggest that they were not troubled with the morality of slavery so much as they were bothered with what they perceived as inconveniences brought about by their personal relationship with the institution. They referred to it as "an evil" because it was for many a burden, and, worst of all, an unavoidable impediment, having "a most deleterious effect," as Thomas surmised, upon their children. Evangelicals secretly recognized slavery as a burden because it often created more problems than benefits for those perpetuating the system. As one South Carolina minister put it: "In this state of slavery I almost feel that every apparent blessing is attended with a curse." In his essay on the career of Charles Colcock Jones, Donald Mathews has demonstrated that

for some evangelicals, like Jones, the question of personal morality and the principle of slave ownership was really not the most pressing issue facing evangelicals. What was more pressing for the southern Christian were the self-imposed questions concerning his or her personal qualifications as a slave owner. That is to say, once southerners determined that slaveholding was, at a personal level, not a moral issue, any feelings of guilt they experienced were usually associated with either the burdens of the institution or feelings of insecurity stemming from a desire to be ideal Christian masters, an aspiration that remained for most southern evangelicals an irredeemable pursuit. Southern Methodist preachers were almost unanimously proslavery--at least by 1840 most affirmed the worthiness of what they described as "biblical slavery"--but they continually reminded their congregations that it was the slaveholder's duty to ameliorate the misery endemic to the system. The ministers believed that a contented slave population could be more readily converted, and, subsequently, more easily controlled.²⁸

Josiah Lewis, a Methodist presiding elder in Georgia, reminded his listeners about the injustices he had witnessed among Methodist slaveholders. Lewis was, according to George G. Smith, "fearfully severe in his denunciation of their course in withholding from the negroes their just due of food and clothing." The ministry

also admonished the slaveowning laity to give their slaves plenty of rest--especially on the sabbath--and to provide them with adequate and comfortable dwellings. Such admonitions were not handed down all that frequently, of course, but evangelicals could not hope to escape knowledge of what the clergy meant by the notion of "Bible slavery." Few whites possessed the resources needed to provide their slaves with all the benefits demanded by their spiritual leaders. When they gave the matter any consideration, they were troubled by the burden of their insufficiencies though not by any particular concern with the morality of slavery itself. Methodist slave owners came to the conclusion that there was simply no way to perfect a baleful institution, though they believed it their Christian duty to try and bring about gradual improvement wherever and whenever possible.²⁹

In some respects, the improvement was more apparent than real. Like non-evangelicals, southern Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians frequently resorted to violence in the management of their slaves. Ministers and lay persons alike whipped, flogged, bound, and slapped their servants in retaliation for even the most trifling offenses. Moreover, the most moderate voices among the southern Methodists vaunted the positive effects of corporal punishment when "administered properly" to an obdurate laborer. The concept of beating a grown man or

woman was reprehensible to most evangelicals, but as inhabitants of an imperfect world southern Christians believed it necessary to make certain compromises with the exigencies of slave ownership. Editor of the Nashville Christian Advocate and future southern Methodist bishop Holland N. McTyeire recognized this principle when he declared in his popular Duties of Christian Masters that the "mawkish sentimentalism that pronounces against all corporal punishment and deals in moral suasion only, must be deferred to the millennium. It does not suit the world as it now is, and human nature as it is." McTyeire inveighed against excessive use of force in his treatise, but he failed to offer any examples of what he believed constituted such excesses of punishment, except to say that these episodes of violence usually occurred when the master struck his servant "in anger." Unfortunately, when Methodists and other evangelicals became angry, they did strike out against their slaves, and when this happened many likely recognized that their actions were in violation of what their churches defined as biblical slavery--a fact that only intensified their burden.³⁰

Methodists had a particularly difficult time justifying their involvement in slavery. Wesley and most early Methodists were explicitly opposed to the institution, and the Methodist church in America was established in 1784 as an antislavery institution. By the turn of the century,

however, the denomination had, with only a few exceptions, given up on efforts to excuse slaveholding laity from membership. The church Discipline continued to require that ministers and other church officials avoid any personal involvement with the institution, but at the General Conference of 1816 the church delegates caved in for all practical purposes to the patterns of slave ownership by then well established among church membership. The Methodists learned to accept the fact that a significant number of their constituents were already enjoying the aristocratic benefits of slave ownership, and that number was increasing daily. "Little can be done," the Committee on Slavery reported, "to abolish the practice so contrary to the principles of moral justice." By 1820 slave ownership among Methodist ministers was becoming an increasingly common phenomenon, and denominational leadership took few steps to stop this trend. Any remaining antislavery sentiment eroded quickly as the leadership learned to accept the exigencies of slaveownership. Finally, in 1844 the denomination split along sectional lines when northern Methodist abolitionists made a well-organized attempt to have Bishop James Andrew, a native Georgian, removed from the episcopacy because he had inherited a number of slaves--slaves, he argued, he was required by Georgia state regulations either to sell or retain. The southern delegations to the convention voted

to secede rather than permit Andrew to surrender his office, and in 1845, delegates from fifteen conferences met in Louisville, Kentucky, and formed the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.³¹

The schism over a slave issue notwithstanding, until 1850 the southern Methodists officially opposed slavery and retained statements in their Discipline that referred to it as a "great evil." In response to abolitionist pressures, however, several of the annual conferences maintained a position that now seems diametrically opposed to the official church stand. The Georgia Annual Conference for 1837, for example, decreed that "Whereas, there is a clause in the Discipline of our Church which states that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; and whereas, the said clause has been perverted by some, and used in such manner as to produce the impression that the Methodist Episcopal Church believed slavery to be a moral evil . . . it is the sense of the Georgia Annual Conference that slavery as it exists in the United States is not a moral evil."³²

As a church that continued to maintain nominal resistance to the positive influences of slavery, southern Methodists experienced some difficulties in phrasing their proslavery arguments in such a way that they were able to justify the "evil" while at the same time avoiding the positive good theory as it pertained to whites. Southern

Methodists, following the leadership of Bascom and other proslavery Methodists, attempted in 1845 to come to terms with the ambiguities of an accepted evil. Southern Methodists wanted to maintain, in effect, that slavery was the product of an imperfect world, a systemic evil, but by no means a personal moral evil. Like the retributive violence they looked upon as a necessary component of justice, southern evangelicals understood slavery as something that was less than perfect and yet a superior alternative to the abolitionist's demands for rapid manumission. The result was a compromise with an imperfect world and a rejection of perfectionism in any form other than that which could be achieved gradually.³³

Though few southerners were deeply humbled by the effects of the war, the Confederacy's defeat in 1865 gave believers opportunity to ponder the meaning of God's judgment of the South. Few southerners were willing to admit the intrinsic wickedness of the slave system but determined instead that defeat served as punishment for their failure to Christianize properly their slaves. Toward the end of Reconstruction, as the southerners came to terms with defeat and began reordering their ambitions, the antebellum rejection of the doctrine of instantaneous perfection gave way to acceptance among a growing number of Methodists. Moreover, after 1880 the doctrine of Christian perfection became a widely acceptable teaching among

southern Methodists, and nearly every southern state boasted a Holiness association. At century's end, one advocate of the doctrine, Georgia Holiness Association President William Asbury Dodge looked back upon the attitudes pervading his region before the Civil war and remarked that the necessity of the Civil War indicated that the "public heart was not ready for a great work like this." A friend of Dodge's, Kentucky Holiness evangelist Henry Clay Morrison, apparently agreed with Dodge's assessment and opined: "Human slavery, civil war, and the troublesome times and social upheavals of reconstruction did not contribute to deep piety, and the doctrine of holiness and the experience of perfect love were sadly neglected." Writing during a less turbulent--though by no means an entirely settled--period in southern history, Dodge and Morrison were able to envision a type of southern Methodism completely dedicated to the propagation of perfect love. The South still experienced more than its share of violence and bigotry, but slavery had been eliminated, and quickly vanishing were the days when a Methodist preacher like John Harmon Nicols would spindle his antagonist's locks with his fingers and mash his head against the floor.³⁴

Notes

1. William C. Dunlap, Life of S. Miller Willis, (Atlanta: Constitution Publishing Co., 1892), 21f. Before his conversion in 1866, Willis had a long career of violent behavior and frequently started fights as a means of entertainment.

2. Probably the best explication of the honor system in the Old South is presented by Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior, (New York, 1982), passim. Wyatt-Brown convincingly argues that "Southern yeomen, no less than rich planters, found meaning in honor's demands." Wyatt-Brown offers a more succinct argument in Honor and Violence in the Old South, (New York, 1986). Dunlap, Life of Willis, 22. See also Michael Barton, Goodmen, the Character of Civil War Soldiers, (University Park, Pa., 1981) and Stowe, Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters, (Baltimore, 1987). An excellent description of the belligerence that remained a part of the South after the Civil War is provided by Ted Ownby, Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920, (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1990).

3. Simon P. Richardson, The Lights and Shadows of Itinerant Life, (Nashville: Publishing House of the M.E. Church, South, 1900), 127ff.

4. John Harmon Nichols, Proof of the Pudding, (Nashville: Publishing House of the M.E. Church, South, 1913), 35ff.

5. Ibid. 51ff.

6. Edward L. Ayers, Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the Nineteenth-Century American South, (New York: Oxford Press, 1984), 13. For more on the evangelical rejection of the code of honor and its most visible violent product, dueling, see Anne C. Loveland, Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order 1800-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980) 180-5. Dickson Bruce, Violence and Culture in the Antebellum South (Austin, 1979), 113. Bruce points to the incidents in the ministry of several Methodist ministers that reveal the widespread use of force among southern preachers. Even Francis Asbury, he notes, had to warn a group of troublemakers present at one meeting that the "unsanctified Methodists" present at the service might "be provoked to retaliate." And, said Asbury, "If it should come to that, you will get the worst of the battle." See also Peter Cartwright, Autobiography of Peter Cartwright (Nashville,

1956), 70-72; 160-61, and James B. Finley, Autobiography of Rev. James B. Finley; or Pioneer Life in the West, W. P. Strickland, ed. (Cincinnati, 1853) 327ff. O. P. Fitzgerald's, Sunset Views (Nashville: ME, 1900), 51; George Richard Browder, The Heavens are Weeping: The Diaries of George Richard Browder 1852-1886, ed, Richard L. Troutman (Grand Rapids, 1987) 88f. A Methodist preacher and tobacco farmer, Browder recorded in his diary one episode in which a "rufian" named John Muir villified and cursed him "in a horrid manner--telling how he could whip me 'before hell could scorch a feather.'" Browder maintained that he regarded Muir's vicious reproach a matter of persecution "for righteousness sake," and boasted that he "bore it patiently." "Yet I must confess," he wrote, "that I felt the movings of revenge & determined to resist unto blood if he struck me in malice." A. H. Redford, Life and Times of H. H. Kavanaugh, D.D.: One of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Nashville, 1884) 77 ff. An excellent literary examination of the American fascination with violent behavior is presented by Richard Slotkin, Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860. Slotkin argues that the frontier hero or Boone image promoted and hyperbolized in various works of literature, established a metaphor--a hunter hero myth--of the American male. B. J. Ramage quoted in Ayers Ibid., 10.

7. Anne Loveland presents a well-documented treatment of the southerners's dichotomization of the world in her chapter "The Church and the World" in Southern Evangelicals, 91-129; Ibid., 180f. H. B. Bascom, "The Pulpit, its Institution and Function" in Sermons From the Pulpit, (Louisville: Morton and Griswold, 1850) 70; John Granberry, "Christianity Reasonable in its Doctrines and Demands" in The Methodist Pulpit South, (Washington, D.C., 1858) 169; 179. Ira Potter, Sermons on Various Subjects Delivered on Various Occasions, (Nashville, 1883), 235.

8. Donald G. Mathews, Religion in the Old South, (Chicago, 1977) 42. Ayers, Vengeance and Justice, 28.

9. Olmstead quoted in Ayers Ibid., 122. Augustus B. Longstreet, Georgia Scenes, (New York: Harper Brothers, 1840), 11; 53ff. For a more thorough anthropological treatment of campmeeting religion in the Old South, see Dickson D. Bruce, And They All Sang Hallelujah: Plain-Folk Camp-Meeting Religion 1800-1845, (Knoxville, Tenn, 1974).

10. Albert Shipp, The History of Methodism in South Carolina, (Nashville, 1884) 273f; 330f. Harold Lawrence, A Feast of Tabernacles: Georgia Campgrounds and Campmeetings (Cumming, Ga, 1990) 4f. A strikingly similar account of

the jerks was given by Peter Cartwright in his Autobiography, 45f. For a helpful historical analysis of early revival exercises see John B. Boles, The Great Revival 1787-1805 (Lexington, Ky, 1976), 70ff.

11. Bruce, They All Sang Hallelujah, 66ff. Peters Christian Perfection, 92. Peters agrees with Charles and Mary Beard's observation that Methodist itinerants were required "to restrain the harshness and brutality of the backwoods, to tame the hot passions of men quick with the rifle and the dirk, to introduce sobriety into communities rife by drunken bullies." The Rise of American Civilization, I (New York, 1927), 450.

12. Peters, Ibid., 98. The principal theological concern of frontier Methodists was not related to the question of Christian Perfection. Rather it gravitated toward arguments with Baptists and Presbyterians over the Calvinistic issues of universal atonement and perseverance of the saints. See for example Redford, Life and Times of Kavanaugh, 63-5; Cartwright, Autobiography, 43f; 105; 136f. See also Cullen T. Carter, Methodism in the Wilderness 1786-1836 (Nashville, 1959) 26f; 35-41.

13. Mathews, Religion in the Old South, 41. Mathews observed that New Englanders, in contrast to southerners, "had bequeathed a legacy of social responsibility in the form of covenants, by which people bound themselves together by oath and declaration. Church, town and colony all assumed an organic identity in which the individual was constantly reminded of social responsibility and in which he was linked with his fellows for better or for worse in God's providential design." For more on the southerner as individualist, see John Boles's chapter titled "Theology of Individualism" in The Great Revival, 125-42. Boles points out that the individualistic emphasis among southern evangelicals was a reflection of their plan of salvation, a theology that placed considerable emphasis upon the individual's conversion to the exclusion of a broader appreciation of the community.

14. Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, The Secret Eye: The Journal of Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas 1848-1889, ed., Virginia Ingraham Burr (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990) 86. Another expression for "getting happy" commonly employed by evangelicals was "getting blessed." For more on the equation of a good worship service with emotionalism and shouting see Browder, The Heavens are Weeping, 56; 58; 86; 102; 162. T. V. More "Foreshadows of the Judgment" Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, April (1857) 188f; 199. Henry B. Bascom, "The Judgment" in Sermons from the Pulpit,

330; 322.

15. John Hanner, "Angelic Study" in The Methodist Pulpit, South, 88; "The Glorious Epiphany," Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South 1 (April, 1847), 264f. The anonymous author--perhaps Henry Bascom--opined that though "the world roll on in its pollution . . . the time is approaching--the time of its predicted purification." Cf. Jack P. Maddex, "Proslavery Millennialism: Social Eschatology in Antebellum Southern Calvinism," American Quarterly 31 (1979) 46-62. Maddex demonstrates that not all southern evangelicals were certain the world was unredeemable. Following the lead of northern Calvinists, many urban-based southern Presbyterians remained optimistic that the world was progressing toward the millennium. Nevertheless, even among these ministers, consistency on the issue is difficult to establish. Maddex characterizes Presbyterian James Thornwell's teaching on society as "progressive" and suggests that the social order was "part of an eternal scheme of development, surpassing human comprehension" (51). In 1841, however, when countering the charges of northern antislavery forces against the South, Thornwell opined: "Abolitionism is only a single aspect--a special direction of an absorbing mania--a particular form of a general spirit of madness and fanaticism. Socialism, teetotalism, perfectionism are all symptoms of the same great disease." Moreover, Thornwell declared that Christianity would never "make our earth a heaven." "Here," he continued "is where the philanthropists mistake." (Thornwell quoted in James Oscar Farmer, The Metaphysical Confederacy: James Henley Thornwell and the Synthesis of Southern Values (Macon, Ga, 1986) 218; 224.) Optimism of the kind Maddex describes was, moreover, rarely proffered in the writings of southern Methodists at mid-century. See also Loveland, Southern Evangelicals 159-63. Loveland also finds evidence of postmillennial optimism among southern evangelicals. The sources she names were, however, also from Calvinistic traditions and, more significantly, none of the citations was written after 1836. Loveland accurately observes that those southerners who espoused a postmillennial outlook tended to view progress in more individualistic terms than their northern cousins. In other words, the southerner who sought a humanly-constructed millennium looked for a gradual process of growth, one conversion at a time. John Boles, The Great Revival, 105-110. Boles correctly observes that although postmillennialism was clearly a significant factor in the southern revival at the turn of the century, for only a small number of believers did it remain a compelling issue.

16. Boles, Ibid. Ayers, Vengeance and Justice, 122.

Loveland, Southern Evangelicals, 108; 161. On the need to maintain the social order Loveland asserts that southerners believed "individual reformation" would also usher in the millennium. Though this is true to some extent the statement should be qualified. After 1840, southern Methodists held to the belief that the millennium would not occur until after some sort of apocalyptic event destroyed all elements of earthly evil. Loveland does note that "Millennialism . . . received less emphasis in southern evangelical thinking." The question of antebellum southern millennial views should provide a fruitful area for future research. For the purposes of this study it should be kept in mind that when compared with their northern counterparts, southern evangelicals were notably less sanguine regarding the progress of humanity and the establishment of the kingdom of God. See John G. Bowman, "Address to Legislators on Temperance," in Methodist Pamphlets for the People, vol. 4, Thomas O. Summers, ed., (Nashville, 1857) passim. Josephus Anderson, The Bible Christian: A View of Doctrinal Experimental and Practical Religion, (Nashville, 1856) 339.

17. C. Vann Woodward, The Burden of Southern History (Baton Rouge, 1968), 20f. Woodward remarked that "The South's preoccupation was with guilt, not with innocence, with the reality of evil, not with the dream of perfection." Though he makes this observation with the institution of slavery primarily in mind, the statement accurately expresses the dilemma many southerners faced when thinking in terms of human perfectibility. A good example of this approach was provided by William Wightman, author of Methodist Bishop William Caper's biography, who counted among his subject's most attractive personal attributes a rejection of human perfectionism. Observed Wightman, southern leaders of Caper's stripe accomplished more than "five hundred visionary philosophers with the best theories of the perfectibility of man." William Wightman, Life of William Capers, D.D., One of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Nashville, 1858), 514. See also Loveland, Southern Evangelicals, 259f. One major aspect of the problems southerners encountered in their attempts to maintain social control is given an excellent treatment in Wyatt-Brown's chapter titled "Charivari and Lynch Law" in Southern Honor, 435-461.

18. George G. Smith, The Life and Times of George Foster Pierce, D.D., L.L.D. (Sparta, Ga, 1888) 189. Mrs. J. W. Garbutt, Rev. W. A. Dodge as We Knew Him: With Sketches of His Life, Diary, Consecration and Sermons, (Atlanta, 1906) 29. George G. Smith, The History of Georgia Methodism from 1786 to 1866, (Atlanta, 1913), 266f. See also the comments of Georgian Methodist Ira

Potter in his chapter on "Sanctification" in Sermons on Various Topics. Like the great majority of his colleagues, Potter never professed attainment of instantaneous perfection, but following the theology of his friend Lovick Pierce, he clearly accepted the idea as valid.

19. John Ellis Edward, The Life of John Wesley Childs (Richmond, 1852) 129; The Iron Duke of the Methodist Itinerancy (Nashville, 1925), 72-7.

20. Loveland, Southern Evangelicals, 13. Loveland argues that "most southern evangelicals believed that sanctification was to be achieved gradually, and that although absolute perfection could never be reached in this life, it was the duty of the believer continually to strive for it." Donald Mathews points out that Southern Christians before the Civil War "learned that perfectly moral life was not possible in history by the act of humanity but only beyond time by the act of God." Mathews Religion in the Old South, 78. Smith, Life and times of George F. Pierce 188-9. Anderson, Bible Christian, 182ff. Anderson admitted the possibility of instantaneous sanctification and notes that "some do experience it." Nevertheless, he pointed out that these were a small minority and of those who did experience it, many "do not retain it." See also Whiteford Smith, "Man subjected to the law of suffering," in Methodist Pulpit South, 128f. Leonidas Rosser, Experimental Religion: Embracing Justification, Regeneration, Sanctification and the Witness of the Spirit, (Richmond, 1854) 86; 127; 158-9. Rosser did not employ Wesley's use of the "second blessing" to describe sanctification, but he indicated that the work was possible, though unusual, as an instantaneous work of grace subsequent to justification and a "gradual dying to sin."

21. H. B. Bascom, The Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (July, 1849), 409. Cf. Wightman, Life of Capers, 514.

22. For more on northern abolitionism and the question of perfection see chapters 12 and 13 in Smith's Revivalism and Social Reform 178-224. A more recent, though less comprehensive treatment of the topic is offered by John R. McKivigan The War Against Proslavery Religion: Abolitionism and the Northern Churches, 1830-1865 (Ithaca, NY, 1984) 93-110. See also Victor B. Howard, Conscience and Slavery: The Evangelistic Calvinist Domestic Missions, 1837-1861, (Kent, Oh, 1990) 1-39. Palmer Four Years, 500; 647. Palmer wrote of slavery in 1861 that "when we as a nation humble ourselves before the God of nations for this sin, and . . . resolve that the accursed thing shall be removed, then may we be enabled to lift up holy hands without wrath

or doubting. . . ."

23. James Oakes, The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders (New York, 1982), 117-22.

24. Eugene D. Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll; The World the Slaves Made (New York, 1972) 120.

25. Mathews, Religion in the Old South, 80. Thomas, The Secret Eye, 168-69. McGehee quoted in Loveland, Southern Evangelicals, 190.

26. One example of guilt expressed in a southern man's writings can be found in the diary of Benjamin Mosby Smith. Smith, a slave owner and professor at the Union Theological Seminary in Virginia commented in 1858: "Oh what trouble, running sore, constant pressing weight, perpetual wearing, dripping, is this patriarchal institution! What miserable folly for men to cling to it as something heaven-descended." Quoted in Francis Flourney, Benjamin Mosby Smith, 1811-1893 (Richmond, 1947) 74. See also the self-effacing comments of slave owner Charles Colcock Jones, in Donald Mathews, "Charles Colcock Jones and Slave Religion," Journal of Southern History, 3 (1975) 299-320. Jones was, in his own words, weighed down by "extreme guilt and abominable vileness." For an excellent and detailed look at another southerner, Henry Hughes, who altered his sentiments from antislavery to a flagrant proslavery positions see Farmer, The Metaphysical Confederacy, 197f. Larry E. Tise, Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701-1840, 363. Henry B. Bascom, Posthumous Works of the Rev. Henry B. Bascom, D.D., LL.D., Thomas N. Ralston, ed., Vol. 2, (Nashville; 1856) 285; 287. For more on Bascom's concerns with manumission see Moses M Honkle, The Life of Henry Bidleman Bascom, D.D., LL.D.; Late Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Louisville, 1854) 204f.

27. Henry B. Bascom, Methodism and Slavery: With Other Matters in Controversy Between the North and the South, (Frankfort, Ky, 1845) 65f.

28. John Witherspoon quoted in Oakes, Ruling Race, 118; Concern for passing the burden of slave ownership on to one's progeny pervaded the writings of some slaveholders. Thomas's writings possess this theme. James Oakes also provides writings by several evangelicals reflecting this idea. Oakes Ruling Race, 117-18. Oakes suggests that the children of slaveholders faced a psychological conflict bequeathed them by their parents who taught them that greed was a damnable sin and yet acquisition of wealth and slavery was acceptable. Donald

Mathews, "Charles Colcock Jones and the Southern Evangelical Crusade to Form a Biracial Community," Journal of Southern History, 41 (1975) 316. Many evangelicals were genuinely concerned with the religious development of the slave population, but the expediency of conversion as a means of social control played a prominent role in the arguments for nurturing slaves in the Christian faith. See, for example, Holland Nimmons McTyeire, Duties of Christian Masters, Thomas O. Summers, ed., (Nashville, 1859), 199-202. McTyeire opined that "religious culture aids greatly in the government and discipline of the slave population." Moreover, observed McTyeire, religious training helped establish "a stronger sense of duty upon the part of the negroes to obey . . . a feeling of fear to offend against the obligations of religion, and especially a fear of being 'churched' and expelled for bad behavior."

29. Smith, History of Georgia Methodism, 226. It comes as no surprise that when a slave expressed his appreciation for Lewis's statement against slaveholders, the minister told him to "shut your mouth, you'll be stealing your master's chickens tomorrow night if you get a chance." Lewis and virtually all of his southern colleagues did not wish to appear overly sensitive to the plight of southern blacks lest their audiences suspect them of antislavery sentiments. On Methodist concerns to meliorate the conditions of slaves see also McTyeire, Duties of Christian Masters, 27-77. See also James O. Andrews, "The Southern Slave Population," Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review, 13 (1831) 312-21.

30. McTyeire, Duties of Christian Masters, 88. McTyeire's section on "punishment of slaves indicates that harsh forms of discipline and acts of violence against slaves was common even among Christian slaveholders. McTyeire attributed the problem to masters who strike out against their servants in the "frenzy of passion." Methodist minister George Richard Browder recorded a number of beatings he and members of his household committed against his slaves and hired black laborers. See Browder, The Heavens are Weeping, 59; 64; 80f; 140f; 156ff. After administering one flogging against a slave "for indolence and trifling," Browder remarked, "I hate the necessity for punishment." Invariably, however, though such cases made him "unhappy," Browder justified his use of violence as necessary and right.

31. The best examination of the American Methodism's relationship with slavery remains Donald Mathews's, Slavery and Methodism: A Chapter in American Morality 1780-1845, (Princeton, 1965) passim. See also Lewis M. Purifoy, "The Southern Methodist Church and the Proslavery Argument"

Journal of Southern History, 32 (1966) 325-41. Oakes, Ruling Race, 119.

32. Hunter Dickinson Farish, The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism 1865-1900, (Richmond: 1938) 7.

33. For example, few ministers in any southern denomination were willing to admit that slavery would exist in a utopian society. It certainly had no place in the kingdom of God. Evangelicals knew in their hearts that slavery would not have a role in a perfect world, so they defended it on the grounds that it was a necessity in an imperfect one. An excellent discussion of the topic, as it was developed by James Thornwell, is offered by James O. Farmer, Metaphysical Confederacy, 216-33.

34. William A. Dodge, "Early Movement in Georgia," The Pentecostal Herald December 14, 1898, 6; Henry Clay Morrison, "New Era in the Holiness Movement," Pentecostal Herald August 18. 1909, 1.

Chapter 5

The Galvanic Heavenly Battery

The Second Blessing Comes South

In the spring of 1876, at the height of Reconstruction, the 32 year-old pastor of Atlanta's St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, South, William Asbury Dodge, like most of his southern neighbors, was searching for a new beginning. A friend from Maryland had recently introduced the preacher to the writings of Holiness evangelist Phoebe Palmer and a new monthly periodical published in Tennessee called the Way of Holiness. Within a short time Dodge's new literature convinced him of his need for a higher experience, and his "heart began to hunger for the blessing of entire sanctification." At the close of a revival service he was conducting at St. Paul's on the evening of April 15, in a spontaneous act of humility, Dodge dropped to his knees before his congregation and "made a humble confession" that though he had been converted to Christ before his fourteenth year, his heart was not pure, "and that he was not what he ought to have been." Dodge then implored "as many as would join me in seeking the blessing"

of entire sanctification "to remain after the benediction." About a dozen laypersons accompanied Dodge to his study where the group spent the next hour seeking the Lord in "earnest prayer." None of the laypeople received the blessing, and eventually each bid the pastor good night and made his or her way home.

Seated before his desk in the study, Dodge continued to pray for relief from the burden of his sin. Finally, the preacher picked up a pen and began scribbling on a piece of paper. He then sealed the paper in an envelope on which he wrote: "This is to stay sealed during my natural life, being the instrument of my consecration to God." The contents of the envelope remained secret for 28 years until a few months after his death in 1904 when his family stumbled upon the letter in an old trunk containing Dodge's valuable papers. Opening the envelope, his family discovered that it contained a letter in which Dodge made "a full consecration of all I have to God." Reflecting his acquaintance with Palmer's writings, Dodge wrote that he placed all of his possessions, family, time, and "anything else that appertains to me . . . on the altar to stay there forever." Within moments after Dodge penned his furtive consecration, he "claimed the blessing . . . and the sweetest calm came into" his soul.¹

A few weeks after Dodge's second blessing experience, while on a trip to Georgia, a new Jersey Methodist,

"Brother Ludlow," met and developed a friendship with another young Methodist preacher, Anderson J. Jarrell, pastor of St. James in Augusta. Before returning north, Ludlow invited Jarrell to visit him in New Jersey at the Holiness camp meeting held annually in Ocean Grove. Jarrell accepted the invitation, and while attending the meeting in August 1879 became acquainted with northern Methodist preacher and president of the National Campmeeting Association for the Promotion of Christian Holiness, John Inskip. Inskip encouraged Jarrell to seek the second blessing, and during one of the camp services, Jarrell testified that he had been entirely sanctified. Before returning to Georgia, Jarrell asked Inskip to hold a Holiness revival meeting in his Augusta church. Hoping to kindle what he perceived was a growing interest in second blessing holiness in the southern Atlantic states, Inskip agreed to conduct the revival and decided to arrange meetings with several other southern Methodist congregations in South Carolina and Georgia. Inskip arrived in Georgia in 1880 bringing the message of full salvation to large church audiences at St. James church in Augusta. The revival was apparently very successful and was described by a reporter for the Augusta Chronicle as "the greatest ever held in this city." It had taken a decade to be realized, but the southern bishops' prayers for a "mighty holiness revival" were, at long last, being

fulfilled in the Southeast; the Holiness movement was underway in Georgia.²

The Holiness movement rapidly swept over the state of Georgia in the early 1880s, and by 1885 it had become the state's most controversial religious topic. The movement provided Georgians from every social background with a different experience beyond what they realized in the new birth. Many had been born again before the war, and yet they could not erase from their consciousness the realization that the blessing of their first religious encounter had not saved them from great material and emotional loss. The Georgia Holiness Association's message of a "second blessing" experience was welcomed by thousands of Christians in the New South who identified their first blessing with a tragic era. The experience relieved them of all guilt from sin and released them from the burden of every past mistake. In the early days of the movement, they dreamed that the new blessing was a long overdue harbinger for a brighter future. At the same time the Holiness people pursued their dreams, most southern Protestants were seeking their own paths to a new and better South. An outspoken critic of the southern Holiness associations, O. P. Fitzgerald, addressed the broader non-sectarian implications of Protestantism for the region, describing it as the single most important factor bringing about progress in the New South. Southern Christians, he

declared, "set about the work of re-adjustment with alacrity, and pursued it with a steadfast patience born of unconquerable faith in the God to whom they had prayed in the agony of their struggle, from whose goodness they yet hoped to obtain larger blessings than those they had lost, and under whose guidance they hoped to reach a grander destiny than that for which their heroes had bled and died." What most of the Holiness people failed to realize was that their views of a "higher experience" would never be accepted nor even appreciated by the majority of their Christian neighbors taking alternative religious routes across the ever changing landscape of the New South. ³

The Holiness Movement Organizes in Georgia

The Holiness movement organized swiftly following Inskip's evangelistic visit to Augusta. A few weeks following the Augusta meeting, Dodge and Jarrell attended a Methodist district conference in Warrenton. The preachers were already good friends and had served together as circuit riders in the Watkinsville circuit in the early 1860s. During a break from one of their sessions, the men "met under an oak tree" in order to discuss the future of the Holiness movement in Georgia. Dodge later observed that "we talked the matter over, and resolved to ask Rev. Tom Pierce, who was presiding elder at that time, to let us

hold a holiness meeting after the conference was over." Pierce, whose father, Lovick, was perhaps the earliest consistent professor of heart holiness in the state, sanctioned the meeting. Led by Jarrell and Dodge, the group agreed to meet annually. In order to sustain the wave of interest in perfectionist teachings, southern Holiness leaders requested the assistance of Northern Methodist evangelists from the National Camp Meeting Association. George D. Watson, a former Confederate officer turned northern Methodist evangelist and associate editor for the Boston-based Holiness paper, the Christian Witness, was anxious to play a role in transmitting the northern doctrine of Christian perfection to his native Southeast. Granted an opportunity to minister there, Watson exhibited a seemingly ubiquitous presence in Georgia between 1883 and 1886.⁴

In 1882, Dodge and other leaders of the Holiness revival in Georgia thought enough interest had been generated in the perfectionist doctrine to warrant the establishment of a newspaper devoted entirely to the dissemination of Holiness views. Meeting in the office of Rev. Elam Christian at Milledgeville, Dodge, Jarrell, George Patillo (an intimate of Bishop George Foster Pierce), William C. Dunlap, and Ebenezer G. Murrah agreed to begin publication of a weekly edited by Dodge and titled, Tongue of Fire. In May of the following year,

twenty-four ministers and nearly one hundred laypeople from both the North and South Georgia Conferences met in Gainesville to organize the Georgia Holiness Association electing A. J. Jarrell as the organization's first president. Within months, the group changed the name of their paper to the Way of Life.⁵

Those who signed the 1883 Holiness Association Charter came from diverse professional backgrounds. As one would expect in a state that was, at the time, 80 percent rural, several farmers appeared at the meeting. More significant, however, was the percentage of urban-based professionals in attendance. Approximately 80 percent of those present for the meeting lived and worked in small towns and urban areas of the state. Moreover, of the twenty-four Methodist ministers who signed the charter, at least eight possessed bachelor degrees. Throughout the decade that followed the formation of the Georgia Holiness Association, reports from both the secular and religious press on the revivals sponsored by the association frequently took note of prominent citizens who claimed to have received the second blessing. For example, the writer of an 1885 Atlanta Constitution article observed that in one Atlanta Holiness meeting, "a prominent Georgia politician and lately a citizen of Atlanta" rose to his feet as a profession of his sanctification.⁶

These data strongly suggest that the advocates of

Wesleyan Holiness theology in the postbellum south came from a diverse socio-economic background. Moreover, all five of the early leaders of the movement who met at Millidgeville were under forty-five years old and the average age of their organization's membership was under forty two years. Though the relative youthfulness of the southern Holiness movement has never been brought to light, the evidence showing its middle-class origins clearly contradicts much common wisdom of Holiness scholarship. Historians of the movement have too often relied on the descriptive terms "poor" and "rural" in their analyses without providing sufficient demographic data to substantiate their claims.

Scholarly descriptions of Holiness religion tend to center upon images of ritualistic fanaticism among rural indigents of Appalachia and other impoverished regions in the South. Though such images are not always illusory, the attention of anthropologists and sociologists on snake handling sects that claim allegiance to the Holiness tradition illuminate only a minor portion of the Holiness movement. It is beyond question that adherents of the Wesleyan Holiness tradition at the end of the nineteenth century could be found among the rural poor of the South, but the data clearly indicate they could also be counted among the ranks of the burgeoning middle class. Moreover, as this study will show, in postbellum Georgia, a

surprising number of the brightest lights in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were, at one time or another, active in the Holiness associations located there. Though many of them would eventually disavow their connections to the movement, they were for a time caught up in what one reporter for the Atlanta Constitution described in 1885 as "the recently introduced religious wave that is creating such excitement in the state."⁷

After the 1883 signing of the Georgia Holiness Association charter, the organization met twice yearly at different Methodist churches in the North Georgia Conference and also held regular district and local meetings at other times during the year. Watson or other northern representatives of the National Campmeeting Association were present at all the Holiness conventions between 1881 and 1885. The conventions, which were in fact Holiness revival meetings, were usually emotionally charged with loud preaching and "holy shouting." To understand why well educated, middle class Methodists willingly promoted enthusiastic religious services, it is important to keep in mind that in this regard, the Holiness revivals differed little from much of mainstream southern Methodist revivalism before the end of the nineteenth century. The memoirs of non-Holiness Methodists during the period reveal that their revivals witnessed the same sort of "weeping" and "shouting" as their Holiness counterparts. As a

reporter for the Augusta Chronicle put it, "the character of" a Holiness meeting "is essentially Methodist and does not differ materially from the ordinary camp meeting."⁸

But if the emotional level of the Holiness revivals was similar to the revivals of the non-holiness Methodists, the content of the message and description of the experience were another matter entirely. The same Chronicle reporter observed that "the only difference seems to be that the holiness people go a step further than the average Methodist and preach a doctrine of sanctification and holiness of life that is a step higher than the usual teaching of the church." The key ingredient in every convention sponsored by the Georgia Holiness Association was Christian perfection. Holiness rhetoric permeated every sermon. The Holiness preachers from the North and South who led the meetings addressed the topics of justification and regeneration; yet the new birth occupied a position as mere preliminary to the second blessing, or, as the proponents frequently called it, the "baptism in the Holy Ghost." Employing language reflecting a strong adherence to Finney and Palmer's understanding of perfection, the preachers admonished converts to "put their all on the altar" and by faith receive "full salvation" from God. Holiness proponents understood regeneration as only the first step of the spiritual pilgrimage that culminated in entire sanctification. The subject could

realize perfect salvation only after he or she had experienced the second blessing. Consequently, in the minds of many Holiness advocates, those Methodists who failed to receive the blessing were, at best, second-class Christians, and at worst, eternally lost.⁹

The Holiness Experience

The testimonies of individuals who attended the Holiness conventions and received the second blessing are helpful in recognizing the significance that the theology held for individual lives in the New South. All the conventions allowed time for "a testimony meeting on the following line: 1. Our experience in a justified or converted state. 2. How we were led to seek for full salvation. 3. The work of Entire Sanctification." At one such meeting, a seeker of Holiness described his quest in the very revealing terms of his old war wounds. At a Warrenton convention, "Bro. Hays" from Talbotton, "arose and said, 'In a battle in Virginia we had a terrible slaughter, and I was wounded. I am now wounded, and am seeking and must find the great Physician that can cleanse my heart.'" Apparently encouraged by Hays's admission that he had still not achieved perfection, an unnamed "sister" interjected, "I was wounded last night." At the Gainesville convention in May 1883, a layman who had come

under religious conviction during the meeting because of his use of free prison labor testified that he found the blessing, "not as a minister but as a farmer." The convert assured the congregation that the "blessing is good for farmers, for you merchants and lawyers. Take it with you to the field, to the counting-room, to the office, to the shop; it is good every where." During another Holiness convention one woman, Sarah H. Ward, received the blessing and subsequently described her experience in some detail. In an article appearing in the Way of Life, Ward reported that her sanctification felt like a discharge from "a galvanic battery from the opening heavens of God's great love and tender mercy." The unearthly force "filled my soul with the Holy Ghost, transfusing Divinely electric force throughout my system, quickening stagnant pulses and invigorating my worn and weary body." Later that evening Ward returned to the Holiness convention services. "As soon as I entered the sacred portals, I felt the same electrifying influence, in a wonderful baptism, and I seemed to float in the air, and went over the Church rejoicing in the Lord." During one meeting, W. C. Dunlap reported that his entire sanctification occurred one day in the 1870s "while walking in the street, all at once heaven seemed to come down into my soul, and while I stood amazed, something seemed to say, "This is the work of Entire Sanctification." Since then I have had in my soul sweet

peace." In July 1885 at the Holiness convention in Lawrenceville, another convert, "an old member" of the church said the experience made him and the entire congregation feel "drunk with joy." Another characterized the blessing as a "great big chunk of heaven on earth." Joseph King, later a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church's Georgia Conference, reported that his heart cleansing at a Holiness meeting in 1885 was accompanied by the simultaneous laughing and crying of those surrounding him. King observed that a "marvelous change was wrought in me. I found my heart was filled with light, love, and glory. . . . I seemingly was taken out of myself and thought I was within a few feet of the gates of Heaven. When I came to myself I was standing in the aisle in silence, but such glory that . . . was utterly indescribable."¹⁰

Yet the testimonies of some Georgia Methodists suggest that not all sanctifications were so emotionally charged. A 34 year-old Holiness convert wrote to W. A. Dodge in 1883 and reported that while attending a Holiness convention, he was accosted by the Devil who told him that "if you get Holiness you will have to go to China and preach"--something the convert found altogether unsatisfactory. After a long struggle, the young man consecrated his life to Christ and "told the blessed savior 'I will go to China, or any where else.'" He failed to

receive the blessing at this point because he "did not have the faith to claim that I was sanctified entire." A few days after the meeting, the man "went out to the woods all alone and after a long struggle . . . took Christ as my sanctification by simple faith without any feeling . . . and now whether I have feeling or not, I have an abiding trust in Christ as my perfect and complete savior."¹¹

In her spiritual memoirs, Annie Mathews, wife of Georgia Holiness leader Rev. George W. Mathews, confessed that "the outspoken opposition of his own wife made" it difficult for the Rev. Mathews to pursue his Holiness ministry in Columbus. For twelve years, Annie stubbornly spurned her husband's theology of entire sanctification. Then in 1895, when southern Holiness evangelist Beverly Carradine held revival meetings in the couple's church, Annie reluctantly attended the services and listened to Carradine's strong arguments for the Methodist doctrine of the second blessing. She observed that the "preacher dwelt on the spiritual calm and the heart rest that come from complete surrender to the will of God. He quoted the doctrines of the Methodist Church. . . . He told of notable leaders who had witnessed to this soul rest. He quoted many Scriptures teaching it." Carradine then remarked that the doctrine was "found also in the hymnology of our church. Your choir this morning has chosen two hymns that beautifully teach this truth." The evangelist then quoted

from the hymns "Rock of Ages" and Charles Wesley's "Love Divine, all Loves Excelling." Embarrassed by the fact that she had personally selected two hymns that described a "double cure" and a "second rest," and realizing for the first time that it was a reality she had not attained, Annie found herself unable to assist her husband in the remainder of the service. "In this revival, I could not sing, I could not testify and I could not talk to seekers."¹²

Four days later, Annie resolved to seek the blessing. "That afternoon," she wrote, "I withdrew to my parlor and knelt" in prayer. "The Lord," she said, "dealt with my inner life." During her prayer that lasted for several hours, Annie realized that there were several areas of her life that she had never yielded to God. An urbane and well-educated woman, Annie began to recognize that her position as Vice President of the Woman's Missionary Society for her conference was a major factor in her rejection of her husband's views. She feared that if she "took this step and sought holiness, it would mean that never again would the women of the Conference Society want me in their midst." Once she had surrendered her life entirely, and her "heart said, 'Yes' to God--'Yes, at any cost," she experienced a calm assurance "that I had entered into a covenant relation with God for time and for eternity." Later that evening, when George returned home

before the revival service, Annie informed him of her surrender and asked him to advise her on the next step of her sanctification. "'The giving up is your part--your consecration,' he replied. 'Now you must believe that God does his part, which is the sanctification.'" That night, "before Dr. Carradine commenced to preach, I testified out of a full heart to God's sanctifying grace." The Women's missionary society did not reject Annie and in fact later elected her as their president, a position she held for an unprecedented twenty five years.¹³

Holiness as the Catalyst for Change

From the beginning of the movement in Georgia, the second blessing experience provided converts with a means of reordering their lives and, they hoped, the surrounding culture. A. J. Jarrell metaphorically described regeneration as a resurrection, but, he said, it is sanctification that "unties" the Christian and "sets him free." Jarrell challenged his wealthier sanctified church members at Trinity Church in Savannah to use their new-found freedoms in order to build a better South. "Take your money out of the vaults," he enjoined them, "Start some industry that shall give employment." Reflecting on his pastorate in Augusta during the late 1870s, Jarrell remarked that the "city took a new departure--built

industries by the hundred giving work to hands by the thousands . . . & therefore blessings to thousands." At the same time, W. A. Dodge made regular forays into the North and Midwest trying to enlist the services of sanctified missionaries--many of them women--to come and help relieve problems in the state's expanding urban centers. Kentucky Holiness evangelist and frequent speaker at the Georgia conventions, Henry Clay Morrison, said his "heart was stirred" by the material gains he witnessed in Georgia and South Carolina. Consequently, he challenged the readers of his Holiness newspaper, The Pentecostal Herald, "to press forward in unceasing effort of years to establish a great publishing house for the dissemination of full salvation literature. Let those who would grow tired look to the great future, and . . . press the battle on to glorious victory." Jarrell, Dodge, and Morrison, like many of their colleagues, viewed the Holiness movement as a catalyst of revolutionary social change. The Wesleyan theology of heart holiness, they believed, would remedy the region's social ills and would provide the key ingredient to a better future in the South. Jarrell preached to his congregations that there "must be a social revolution before our King has the right of way," yet the "revolution" he and other Holiness leaders preached was a curious blend of welcomed economic prosperity and the retention of the pietistic morality imbedded in the traditions of the Old

South. Jarrell expressed this quixotic sentiment when he invited his congregation to "Come and see a dying world revived--a corrupt world regenerated--a dark world illuminated."¹⁴

Jarrell and the Georgia Holiness Association's message of heart holiness met with enough success during its first two years of existence that during its spring 1885 meeting in Athens the membership voted to create a separate association for the South Georgia Conference. The newly created South Georgia Holiness Association elected as its first president future Methodist bishop, Joseph A. Key. Both associations reported successful Holiness campaigns in all sections of the state during the movement's early days. In 1883, the Christian Witness reported that at one Georgia meeting "many of the leading professional and business men of the county were at the altar seeking God. The county judge, who for years has been a member of the Church, was at the altar seeking holiness." George Watson, who provided most of the correspondence from Georgia for the Witness, remained optimistic that the movement would bring sweeping changes to both Georgia conferences. After preaching at the Gainesville convention in May 1883, Watson declared that "Georgia is ripe for Holiness." Even the presses in other southern conferences noted the Georgia Holiness Association's early accomplishments. In 1884 the Nashville Christian Advocate reported that "the air you

breathe" at one Georgia convention "seems to be perfumed with praises unto the Lord, and sanctification and perfect love are the topic of the day. Judges, merchants, clerks, mechanics, and reformed drunkards all attend the holiness meetings, and a great many profess sanctification."¹⁵

Though none of the southern bishops were in complete agreement with the message of a second blessing that dominated the Holiness conventions, most were willing at first to lend support to the movement in the hope that the well-attended revivals would benefit the church's growth. Moreover, the older generation Methodist leaders looked to the Holiness movement in Georgia as a means by which they hoped to curb what they perceived as a shift toward worldliness among their congregations. In an attempt to forge a closer alliance with the denominational hierarchy, the association invited Bishop George Foster Pierce to address the October 1883 Holiness convention in Warrenton. Despite George Watson's publication of a rather tactless and uncomplimentary editorial regarding Pierce and his theological views in the Christian Witness only weeks before the bishop's death in 1884, leaders of the Georgia Holiness Association generally respected and admired Pierce. The bishop accepted the association's invitation, assured his audience that "he was with them as a brother," and delivered a sermon touted by the Holiness preachers as "powerful." After the Warrenton convention, during a

conversation with future southern bishop and president of Emory college Warren Candler, Pierce remarked that the Holiness leaders in Georgia "are doing good. I had grave fears about them for a while, but my misgivings are gone. . . . The peril of the Church does not lie in this direction. It lies in the direction of worldliness, formalism, and a disposition to exclude any element of fervor from the piety of the Church."¹⁶

When their conversation took place in 1884, Candler shared Pierce's deference toward the Holiness movement and actively advanced the association's cause in the North Georgia Conference. Out of gratitude to Candler, Jarrell and other Holiness ministers in the conference broadcast their intentions to support Candler as a delegate to the General Conference meeting in 1886. With the mutual respect and support of Methodist leaders like Pierce and Candler, the Holiness movement's future in Georgia seemed very promising. The capable leadership of well educated and diplomatic figures, like association presidents Jarrell and Key, helped guard the movement against charges of fanaticism, and by 1885 the majority of the 240 ministers in the North Georgia Conference were either actively involved with the North Georgia Holiness Association or claimed adherence to the organization's Holiness views.¹⁷

Warren Candler was interested enough in the movement's success that in the fall of 1884, while pastor at St.

John's church in Augusta, he contacted George Watson "with an urgent request to come to the Holiness convention" he had scheduled for his church in October. Watson accepted Candler's invitation and remained in Augusta for the week long meeting. After thirty-six converts joined St. John's church by profession of faith, a grateful Candler wrote to the Wesleyan Christian Advocate remarking that George Watson preached "with great power and success," and that the "whole body of the Holiness Association were a blessing to the community." Convinced of the Holiness movement's benefits, Candler joined a group of clergy and prominent laypeople and asked Watson to bring his National Camp Meeting to Augusta in the fall of 1885.¹⁸

Problems Emerge in Georgia

The alluring charm of Georgia's Holiness associations was short lived. Troubles began emerging for the movement in July 1885 when the Atlanta Constitution published a series of unflattering articles on the Holiness movement in the state. The first article questioned whether the North Georgia Holiness Association was responsible for the suicide of Lawrenceville pastor, and husband of Bishop Pierce's niece, Michael Turner. Friends of Turner claimed he was driven to a "career of self destruction" by "these holiness people whose wild ravings

upset Mr. Turner's mind. . . . Feeling that he was eternally lost owing to his inability to experience the myth called perfect love he gave way to despair, and the strychnine phial tells the rest of the story." A member of Turner's church concurred with the charges against his Holiness neighbors and noted that the "conduct of these people will bring about a schism in the church. They are bent upon rule or ruin, and if they cannot have their own way they will drive off large numbers of members." Turner's suicide note, found next to his body at Stone Mountain, made no mention of his ties with the Holiness people, but rather indicated that an incessant problem with infidelity was the chief factor in his decision to take his own life. Moreover, Turner had a long history of depression, and it is unlikely that his contact with the Holiness association played a role in his self destruction.¹⁹

The reporter's sensationalized implications toward the Holiness advocates would no doubt soon have been forgotten had it not been for some unfortunate remarks made by the movement's most visible figure. In an interview with W. A. Dodge and his Presiding Elder, Holiness preacher William A. Parks, the Constitution reporter asked whether entire sanctification was necessary for salvation. Dodge replied that it was and explained that those Methodists who were "born again" but did not know of the doctrine were saved as

"in the case of infants whose burdens the Lord takes upon Himself. Those who have been born again but who reject the doctrine" were eternally lost. If Dodge's Holiness exclusivity was not enough to cause serious damage to the movement he helped establish, his tactless handling of the Turner suicide was. When the reporter broached the topic, Dodge pointed out that it was not the Holiness movement's fault that Turner had taken his life and suggested that "if Mr. Turner had been more fully committed to us than he was, he would today be a live man." Apparently sensing the precariousness of Dodge's undiplomatic statements, Parks quickly interjected praise for the unsanctified Turner and said, "We have not the heart for one word of criticism--nothing but tears to shed at the grave of our dear friend and brother, Mike Turner." Dodge's comments were not as easily amended as Parks might have wished, and after the Constitution's publication of the articles, the Holiness associations in Georgia began forfeiting the support of Methodist leaders who did not accept the doctrine of second blessing Holiness. Dodge had, unwittingly perhaps, publicly condemned to hell Mike Turner and nearly all the hierarchy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The Holiness movement's promising future in Georgia was suddenly in deep trouble.²⁰

A. J. Jarrell was deeply annoyed when he read the Constitution interview. In a letter to his brother-in-law,

Methodist historian George Gilman Smith, Jarrell confessed that he "sighed when I saw the interview of Parks and Dodge. I could have cried." Jarrell hoped to mitigate the damage to the association by asking the Constitution editors for an opportunity to rebut Dodge, but the paper refused him their forum. Jarrell then sent Dodge a letter giving his opinions on the matter and "calling on all others like him to acknowledge the grievous blunder . . . of allowing ourselves to be drawn into the secular press and publishing views which none of us hold." Jarrell hoped that his letter would be "published without corrections" in the Way of Life. "I challenged Dodge to do it," remarked Jarrell, "This is all I can do at present but it is only the beginning of what I mean to do." Exactly what Jarrell meant to do is unclear; what is more certain is that tensions and strong differences of opinion emerged between the leaders of the Holiness movement in Georgia by the summer of 1885. There is no evidence suggesting that the movement suffered any major factionalism within its ranks, but clearly some advocates of the doctrine stirred up internal controversy when they expressed their faith as an exclusive tradition outside of which there was no salvation. On the other hand, Jarrell and other well-educated ministers understood the second blessing as something beneficial to the Christian but not a prerequisite for eternal life. In Smith's reply to

Jarrell's letter he lent his support to the more inclusive theology and asserted that the "spirit you have will always be victorious; but all have not that spirit."²¹

The Augusta National Camp Meeting

Despite negative press reports on the movement's views, Warren Candler continued to support the National Camp Meeting scheduled for October 1885 in Augusta. A handful of other Augusta ministers and laypeople worked with Candler to bring the National Camp Meeting to their community. In the summer of 1885, Rev. Clement A. Evans, the Confederate general, namesake of Evans County, and member of the National Camp Meeting Association--a man who was, according to George Watson, "fully committed to the spread of holiness"--established the "Gracewood Camp Meeting Association" in Richmond County. The stated purpose of the organization was to "hold annually a National Camp-meeting" at Gracewood, a rural community located approximately seven miles from Augusta. Evans became friends with George Watson and kept him apprised of Holiness activities in the state. In May 1885, "in appreciation of him as a minister of the Gospel," Evans sold several large lots in the campground to Watson for a token five dollars (What Watson probably failed to realize was that Evans was still making a small profit). Watson

was then able to market the property to his own fiscal advantage. Evans had paid less than nine dollars per acre for the forty-four acre camp and no doubt hoped that Watson's National Camp Meeting connections would help him realize a tidy profit when he subdivided the acreage into smaller lots on which cottages could be built.²²

Watson did not disappoint Evans. The National Camp Meeting president ran articles in the Christian Witness extolling the virtues of property ownership at the Gracewood camp. Watson boasted that perhaps "no spot in the South is better adapted for a great National Camp-Meeting and for both a winter and summer religious resort." Moreover, beginning in the spring of 1885 and continuing throughout the year, the columns of the Christian Witness bristled with Watson's reports on the successes of the Holiness revival in the towns and cities of the North Georgia Conference. In Watson's opinion, the Holiness doctrine had no greater champions than the ministers of the North Georgia Conference. It would seem that Watson was intent on sustaining Evan's assertion that North Georgia and the Gracewood camp would provide an ideal setting for a regular gathering of the National Camp Meeting Association.²³

By early autumn, national association leaders had determined that the Gracewood Camp was not yet developed

enough and that downtown Augusta would provide a more suitable location and greater attendance for the national meeting in October. The organization erected a large tent, used earlier in the year by evangelist Sam Jones during his revival campaign in Nashville, on a vacant lot on Greene Street in Augusta, and services were held three times daily beginning on Saturday, October 3, and continuing through Tuesday, October 13. Attendance at the meetings averaged around 2,500 during the evening services, with more than 3,500 reported toward the end of the revival. Christian Witness reports during the services were generally favorable, but some accounts were openly critical of the southern approach to revivals. One apparently frustrated northern evangelist observed, for instance, that "the style of doing things" in Georgia was "totally different from the New England" method. The northern reporter opined that the "Southern people think nothing is done unless there is a gale of excitement, and they do not think they can seek pardon or purity without this. They cannot be induced to go forward for prayers unless there is much singing, much talking, much noise and hurrah." Of greater significance were the brief comments made by Watson who noted in one Witness article that "one of the pastors of Augusta, who had been considered somewhat indifferent to the 'second blessing,' went to the altar . . . though he declared that he was not conscious of any lack of submission to God."

Though Watson did not name the impenitent minister, it was without question the young pastor of St. John's, Warren Candler. ²⁴

In his final analysis of the revival, Watson deemed the Augusta National Camp Meeting a great success, but his vision of an annual meeting at Evans' Graceland camp never materialized. Moreover, after November 1885, the steady stream of articles to the Christian Witness that had zealously promoted the Holiness movement in Georgia came to an abrupt halt. After 1885 the National Camp Meeting Association--along with its organizational publication, the Christian Witness--turned its attention away from Georgia Holiness activities altogether and focused its energies upon the movement's growth in the central and southwestern sections of the country. The reasons for the sudden about-face in the northern organization's fascination with Holiness expansion in Georgia are as yet unclear. There is, however, evidence suggesting that A. J. Jarrell and the Holiness clergy of the North Georgia Conference received signals from ecclesiastical superiors to sever their friendly relations with the Northern Methodists. The official Methodist newspaper of both Georgia conferences, the Wesleyan Christian Advocate, made no mention of the Augusta meeting, nor did the publication print any correspondence concerning the events occurring there. With peak crowds approaching 4,000, the National Camp Meeting

was one of the largest revival meetings sponsored by Georgia Methodists since before the Civil War; it is highly unlikely that Jarrell and other participants sent no reports of the services to the Advocate.²⁵

One major factor in the hierarchy's unwillingness to proffer support for the burgeoning Georgia Holiness Association was, undoubtedly, the movement's exclusive bent. Yet the Augusta National Camp Meeting troubled the Southern Methodist leadership for at least one other unrelated reason. By and large, the hierarchy was unwilling to forget what it considered the "undue efforts" of northern church officials who had taken advantage of southern poverty and disarray during Reconstruction in an attempt to regain a foothold in the South. At one southern meeting, National Association evangelists reported that officials of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, "understood that we were there to make a raid upon the church for the purpose of enlarging our own territory . . . and that the Methodist Episcopal Church had loaned to the committee, not only its official sanction but also its money." Within three weeks of the Augusta meeting's conclusion, Warren Candler wrote to association president Jarrell concerning the potential "divisions and strifes" among Southern Methodists resulting from fellowship with National Camp Meeting evangelists from the North. Candler remarked that the northern church could, in his opinion, be

using the National Camp Meeting Association as a channel through which they were infiltrating the region. "Suppose," he argued, "they are careful to send into this region preachers only who agree with the views of the wing of our church they may think they can most likely secure. . . . Would such a state of things help Holiness Methodism or any other good cause? Is such a thing so recumbently improbable from a church which has once avowed the policy of disintegration and absorption?"²⁶

Candler's Trojan horse theory may not have been totally unfounded. Though the National Camp Meeting Association conducted twenty seven revival services during the Augusta campaign, they invited southerners to preach at only three of the services. In a conference where dozens of ministers and several presiding elders professed entire sanctification, the thorough domination of the Augusta revival by northerners undoubtedly offended an already anxious body of Southern Methodist leaders. Northerners did in fact describe the Augusta National Camp Meeting as "God's method of recruiting and cementing the sections so disastrously dissevered by the war of the Rebellion." Moreover, at a meeting of the Texas Holiness Association in 1899, one Northern Methodist leader, J. W. Lively, encouraged the Holiness adherents to abandon ties with the southern church and to unite with the more affable northern Methodists. In his address, Lively importuned the Southern

Methodists with the promise of northern support for their doctrines: "Come home, boys, to your mother. Methodism is the Mother of Holiness. Come home, and we will do as they used to do: give you a horse to ride, and a pair of old-fashioned saddlebags, with a Bible in one side and a Methodist hymnbook in the other; and put some money in your pockets, and send you out to preach holiness."²⁷

Candler sent a series of letters to association president Jarrell in which he vented his growing frustration with the Holiness movement in Georgia. Candler's very frank remarks to Jarrell concerning his shifting opinions toward the "second-blessing brethren" are revealing and bear careful examination. Candler asked Jarrell to "check some perils which beset the movement in Georgia," and then confessed that his own views on the topic "are somewhat modified." "I will start," Candler observed, "by saying that I who had lost all my apprehensiveness as to the movement . . . by reason of some intolerant and unfair words spoken during the last few days of the [Augusta] meeting and from some discoveries made as to insults since the meeting closed, have now the greatest fears." Candler noted that at one time he assumed that "the ugly words we sometimes hear from brethren professing 'the second blessing' was now-a-days for the most part confined to ignorant men who knew not of what manner of spirit they were." He explained to Jarrell that he heard

the president of the National Camp Meeting Association, William McDonald, "express the wish that any preacher among the Methodists who preached that a man got a clean heart in regeneration, 'should be squelched.'" Candler was especially bothered by McDonald's remarks because most members of the conference recognized that he promoted that theological opinion.²⁸

Yet McDonald's infraction was minor when contrasted with the preclusive remarks made during the Augusta meeting by his partner George Watson. While delivering one of his revival sermons, Watson explained to his audience "that if any preacher had never heard the doctrine of holiness thus preached he would be saved as idiots & heathen etc. but if he had heard of it & did not adopt it he would be lost." Candler observed that if "the leaders talk thus is it strange that a layman from South Carolina stood up and said he honestly believed more than half of the ministers & presiding Elders in the S.C. Conference were on their way to hell. For this speech, Dr. McDonald reproved him, but I thought he deserved the endorsement of the Doctor in view of his own utterances."²⁹

Moreover, Candler felt that Watson's publication of his visit to the altar during the evening service on October 8 was a humiliating gesture. Though Watson did not mention Candler's name in the article, he publicly vented his displeasure over Candler's refusal to seek a second

blessing. Candler rhetorically inquired of Jarrell if the Holiness "brethren want to drive me to give a reason for the faith that is in me & then urge that my doing so is a proof of an unclean heart. I want to minimize our differences; they seem to desire to bring them constantly to the front." Candler was troubled enough by Watson and McDonald's observations that he toyed with the idea of demanding an ecclesiastical trial during the forthcoming church conference in order to let an official committee determine "if I am a heretic." Candler reminded Jarrell that as president of the North Georgia Holiness Association, he was "in position to check these things" and informed him that he was willing to grant him the time necessary to do so before "making any public utterance" Finally, Candler officially severed his connections with the Holiness movement in Georgia, reminding Jarrell that "you and others of the second blessing brethren have intimated that you intended to vote for me for the Gen. Conf. & I do not want you to do so under any misapprehension of any views of mine you may feel interest me."³⁰

When George Watson realized that Southern Methodist leaders--and perhaps Jarrell as well--were thwarting his personal efforts to bring a second blessing revival to Georgia, he opened fire against his detractors through the pages of the Christian Witness. Five months following the

Augusta meeting, an article highly critical of the southern leadership's attitude toward the Holiness ministers of Georgia and South Carolina appeared in the Witness.

Written by Watson, the article portrayed the Holiness preachers as innocent sheep who, Watson claimed, had been recently "led to the shearing" for their Holiness convictions. With histrionic ardor, Watson portrayed the presiding elders and bishops as obdurate villains: "In the days of the Spanish Inquisition, wandering priests sat up at night, inventing ways to torture the saintly heretics. In the same spirit, tobacco-chewing, if not wine-drinking ecclesiastics, sit up in a bishop's cabinet, devising how most to afflict and fetter the most pious preachers in the [North Georgia] conference."³¹

Watson was reacting to the transfer of several Holiness pastors in the North Georgia Conference from some of the more prominent churches to less significant pulpits and, more importantly, the demotion of Gainesville presiding elder W. A. Parks to a small charge at East Putnam. In a letter of response to the Christian Witness, Jarrell attempted to placate Watson's anger by noting that four of the remaining presiding elders in the conference were "in the experience of holiness." Jarrell asserted, moreover, that while some of the transfers were "needless, save to gratify the views of laymen who were not in sympathy with holiness," he doubted whether more than a handful of the

moves were calculated to "afflict and fetter" the preachers involved. Jarrell's letter indicates that the Holiness movement in Georgia was not as heavily oppressed at that time as Watson suggested; and yet the National Camp Meeting Association was never again invited back to Augusta, and after 1885, George Watson avoided almost all contact with Georgia, concentrating his evangelistic efforts instead on the Midwest.³²

The North and South Georgia Holiness Associations continued to meet twice yearly at different Methodist churches in the Georgia Conferences. After the 1885 Augusta meeting, the evangelists invited to speak at these Holiness conferences held membership exclusively in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Dodge eventually took Jarrell's advice and squelched--though he never disavowed--the more exclusive aspects of his theology. Yet the Holiness movement in Georgia faced its darkest days after 1885. The die was cast at the Augusta meeting, and most Methodist leaders continued to view the Holiness movement as a menace to the church even after the Holiness associations in Georgia began limiting their ties with the northern Methodists. Southern Methodist bishops, newspaper editors, and college professors combined their resources to mount a campaign against what many of them described as the "Holiness cranks." Mainstream Methodists were finding

their own social pathways through the New South--paths the Holiness people described as "worldliness"--and they were in no mood to put aside the new pleasures imported to the rapidly growing towns from the North. What most detractors failed to recognize was that as veterans of the Confederacy, Dodge and Jarrell, along with many within their Holiness coterie--Jarrell served as a chaplain under Robert E. Lee and was present at his surrender at Appomatox Court House--had offered their services in one lost cause; they were determined not to lose yet another.³³

Notes

1. Mrs. J. William Garbutt, Rev. W. A. Dodge as We Knew Him (Atlanta, 1906), 16; 82-3. George G. Smith, History of Georgia Methodism from 1786 to 1866 (Atlanta, 1913), 401. Smith observed that while visiting friends in Maryland, Rev. George Kramer, a Maryland native and member of the North Georgia Conference, became interested in the writings of Phoebe Palmer and was sanctified wholly. When he returned to Georgia in the early 1870s, his presiding elder, W. A. Dodge, took an interest in Kramer's experience and began reading Palmer's writings. Much of the information regarding Dodge's sanctification is found in a Way of Life clipping (n.d.) located in the W. A. Dodge scrapbook. See also "Sanctification" Atlanta Constitution, July 12, 1885, 13.

2. W. A. Dodge, "Early Movement in Georgia," The Pentecostal Herald, December 14, 1898, 6. "The Tented Tabernacle," The Augusta Chronicle, October 6, 1885, 8. The Chronicle reported that "Augusta is the hardest place in the United States to arouse by a religious revival. The people are not impressionable and are slow to be moved." Sam Jones, "phenomenally successful elsewhere, failed notably in Augusta." The National Campmeeting Association was founded in 1867 by Inskip and Methodist Bishop Matthew Simpson in Vineland. The organization's main purpose was to encourage the dissemination of the holiness doctrine by holding campmeeting services in various parts of the country. Inskip served as president from the organizations inception until his death in 1884. While in Ocean Grove, Jarrell wrote his brother-in-law, George G. Smith, to tell him that Inskip gave him the opportunity to preach on the "beauty of Holiness" at the camp meeting. A. J. Jarrell to George G. Smith, C. C. Jarrell Collection, unpublished manuscripts, Woodruff Library, Emory University.

3. C. Vann Woodward, Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 (Baton Rouge, 1971), 113. Quoting Broadus Mitchell, Woodward described the search for a new beginning in punitive terms that may help in understanding the attraction the message of a "pure heart" for many southerners: "'During Reconstruction the South, like a man thrown in prison, had time to reflect on past sins.' Some sort of moral regeneration occurred in this prison, and 'the South found itself.' It experienced 'a change of heart.' A 'veil was torn off,' a fever subsided." See also the revealing comments of W. A. Dodge and H. C. Morrison concerning the absence of Holiness religion in the South before and during Reconstruction. W. A. Dodge, "Early Movement in Georgia," The Pentecostal Herald, December 14, 1898, 6; Henry Clay Morrison, "New Era in the

Holiness Movement," ibid., August 18, 1909, 1. Dodge's remarks corroborates Morrison's who argued that the "social upheavals of reconstruction did not contribute to deep piety, and the doctrine of holiness and the experience of perfect love were sadly neglected." The prayer of a Fairmount, Georgia resident submitted to the Way of Life in 1883 reflects another southerner's relinquishment of burden. The writer confessed that he was a sinner during the Reconstruction era but that God "didst quicken and convert my poor soul, and made me to rejoice in thy love, but Lord at times I feel in my heart that I still have sin, a very abominable thing in thy sight and I know that thou hast no pleasure in it. Lord I feel it and I know it and now, yes now, I ask thee to give me a heart cleansed from all sin, pride, envy, malice and everything Lord that is displeasing to thee. I do want a pure heart, one that can be held blameless until the coming of the day." The penitent found release from his burden through the formula of simple faith prescribed by Palmer: "Lord I have asked for a pure heart "and thou knowest I desire it above all things. What more can I do? What must I do? Believe, yes, thank the Lord I do believe, I do believe. Praise his holy name." A.E. "A Petition" The Tongue of Fire, September 22, 1883. O. P. Fitzgerald, John B. McFerrin: A Biography (Nashville, 1888), 393.

4. "Sanctification" Atlanta Constitution, July 12, 1885, 13. Briane Turley, "A Wheel Within a Wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association," Georgia Historical Quarterly (Summer, 1991), 298-90.

5. "Sanctification," Atlanta Constitution, July 12, 1885, 13. "Holiness Convention of Warrenton," The Christian Witness and Advocate of Bible Holiness (December 6, 1883), 5. Concerned that the publication of a holiness newspaper might cause hard feelings among the non-Holiness Methodists in the state, A. J. Jarrell expressed grave reservations about establishing the Tongue of Fire. By January of 1884, however, Jarrell was convinced that the paper was doing "a wondrous amount of good." Letter of A. J. Jarrell to George G. Smith, January 21, 1884, C. C. Jarrell Collection.

6. From the list of 124 Georgia Methodists who signed the charter, I was able to locate 67 names in the 1880 Census and in Methodist Conference records. Of the forty-three Holiness association members not employed as clergy, only seven were farmers. Of the remainder, thirteen were housewives, four grocers--retail or green--two college students, two cotton merchants, two commercial merchants, and one from each of the following occupations: store clerk, butcher, hotel clerk, school

teacher, carpenter, seamstress, dry goods merchant, ²⁰⁷brick manufacturer, milliner, city council clerk, newspaper editor, and one with no occupation listed. The majority of members resided in towns where they occupied professional and merchant positions. All of the charter members were literate. Although one would anticipate a higher percentage of professionals to attend the state's charter meeting than would be found at a local Holiness meeting, these data demonstrate conclusively that Holiness religion attracted others besides rural indigents. "Sanctification," Atlanta Constitution, July 12, 1885, 13.

7. Harold Lawrence has provided an excellent source of biographical data concerning Methodist preachers in Georgia before 1900 in his Methodist Preachers in Georgia 1783-1900 (Tignell, Ga., 1984). David Edwin Harrell, "The Evolution of Plain-Folk Religion in the South" in Varieties of Southern Religious Experiences, ed., Samuel Hill (Baton Rouge, 1988) 35. Harrell observes that "The Holiness associations that blossomed in the late nineteenth century served as safety valves for poor and rural Methodists who were increasingly isolated from the sources of power within their denomination." In many cases the Holiness Methodists were isolated from denominational powers, but this was not the result of their social status. The hierarchy distanced themselves from the advocates of second blessing holiness because of their intellectual differences; William W. Sweet, Methodism in American History (Nashville, 1961), 344. Sweet argues that the Holiness sects which sprang from the Methodist fold "were largely made up of the poorer and less educated classes, while their membership [was] largely drawn from rural and small urban communities." See also Robert Mapes Anderson Vision of the Disinherited, 31. Anderson's excellent essay contains few historical errors. His description of the Wesleyan Holiness people as "predominantly of lower-class status" is one of them. "Sanctification," Atlanta Constitution, Ibid,

8. An example of one historian's failure to recognize the theological distinction between the various branches of the Holiness movements can be found in Harold Mann, Atticus Greene Haygood: Methodist Bishop, Editor and Educator (Athens, 1965), 163. Mann argues that members of the Georgia Holiness Association encouraged the Pentecostal practice of "speaking in tongues," but he offers no documentation to support his assertion. Wesleyan-Holiness advocates in Georgia did not, in fact, practice glossolalia--at least there is no extant documentation suggesting that this was a common aspect of their meetings. Moreover, at times the reverse was true and non-Holiness Methodists experienced the gift of tongues. In the 1850s, S. P. Richardson, who was later an outspoken

critic of the Holiness movement in Georgia, spoke in tongues during a revival service that he was leading. After this incident, Richardson never spoke in tongues again because, as a result of having "lost control of my tongue and utterances. . . . Several women screamed out--not shouting, but alarmed." Simon Peter Ricardson, The Lights and Shadows of Itinerant Life: An Autobiography of Rev. Simon Peter Richardson, D.D., of the North Georgia Conference, (Nashville, 1900), 139. Methodist revival meetings tended toward emotion regardless of whether Holiness or non-Holiness evangelists were involved. This is a fact that some Methodist historians, including Mann, have failed to recognize. One Methodist evangelist from the South Georgia Conference, who was adamantly opposed to the Holiness movement, was J. D. Anthony [See J. D. Anthony, The Life and Times of J. D. Anthony (Atlanta, 1896)]. Anthony's memoirs provide a valuable description of the revivals he held in Georgia in the 1880s and '90s. "Seeking Holiness," The Augusta Chronicle October 9, 1885, 3. See also, Clement C. Cary, "Northern Georgia Letter Pentecostal Herald January 23, 1907, 3. Even as late as 1907 an outbreak of "holy shouting" occurred during the North Georgia Annual Conference.

9. For more on the Georgia Holiness Movement's view of sanctification, see, for example, "Christian Perfection" in The Way of Life, June 26, 1889, 1. See also, W. A. Dodge's sermon on the topic in Garbutt, W. A. Dodge, 150-61. Dodge noted that it is "a sad fact that not one in a hundred who fails to go forward and obtain" the second blessing, "stands firm in the Christian experience."

10. Information on the Holiness conventions are taken from clippings of The Way of Life, n.d. (though internal evidence suggests a date of 1885 or before), contained in the W. A. Dodge Scrapbook. "Sanctification," Atlanta Constitution. Joseph H. King, Yet Speaketh: Memoirs of the Late Bishop Joseph H. King (Franklin Springs, Ga., 1949), 38.

11. "Experience," The Tongue of Fire, September 22, 1883, 1.

12. Annie Mathews, Memorial Stones: Spiritual Epochs in the Lives of George and Annie Mathews (Atlanta, 1945) 18-27.

13. Ibid.

14. A. J. Jarrell, "Bear Ye One Another's Burdens," "Jacob's Conversion," "Come and See," "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord," sermons, Jarrell Collection. Garbutt, W. A. Dodge, 57; 101. Apparently Dodge's city mission work

evolved mostly from the need to provide food, clothing, and shelter to dislocated farmers seeking employment in the mills and factories. At one mission sponsored meal for the poor in Atlanta, Dodge's wife observed that "some old men were there and old women, and their eyes, dimmed with age, were streaming as they took with thankful hearts the food that was given them, suggesting to some better days they had known in the long ago when they lived in comfort on the old plantation where want never showed his haggard face." Henry Clay Morrison, "The New South," Pentecostal Herald, May 10, 1905, 1. Other Georgia Holiness ministers actively pursued social reform in the state in an effort to build the foundations of a better South. Most city mission positions in the North Georgia Conference were held by Holiness preachers after 1890--though some viewed the appointments to such places as demotions. Holiness minister and author of Miller Willis's biography, W. C. Dunlap helped to establish Paine Institute--the first college for blacks in the South--and served as the one of the school's first commissioners. Dunlap was a successor in that position to another Holiness preacher, James E. Evans. Dodge and Jarrell also devoted a considerable amount of attention to black missions. Black evangelist W. J. Adams from Millidgeville wrote the Atlanta Constitution in 1904 and credited Dodge with having conducted the "first colored holiness association in this state, at Griffin," in 1892. Clipping in Dodge Scrapbook. See also Mann, Haygood, 59.

15. Information on the formation of the South Georgia Holiness Association located in Way of Life clipping, n.d., in the W. A. Dodge Scrapbook. Christian Witness and Advocate of Bible Holiness, December 6, 1883, 5. June 7, 1883, 5. Article from the Nashville Christian Advocate republished in the Christian Witness, January 15, 1885, 1.

16. "The Holiness Convention at Warrenton," Christian Witness December 6, 1883, 5. Pierce's comments to Candler appeared in "On the Heels of the Augusta Meeting," Wesleyan Christian Advocate, October 28, 1885, 1. Watson, "Holiness Undefinable," Christian Witness, March 6, 1884. Watson was highly critical of remarks Pierce made at the Warrenton Convention suggesting that Holiness defied human description. Watson attacked Pierce at a personal level when he asserted, "We do not say that Bishop Pierce does not have the experience of perfect love but this we do say, that no man who knows the experience talks about it as he does."

17. Joseph King claimed that by 1885 "out of a membership of two hundred and forty composing this conference, two hundred had professed the experience of

sanctification." King, Yet Speaketh, 35. While this figure is impossible to verify, it is almost certainly excessive. There is, however, enough evidence suggesting that the majority of North Georgia preachers were deeply interested in the movement. Nearly all ministers in the Gainesville District, for example, did in fact profess to having received the second blessing. Garbutt W. A. Dodge, 72. See also, Joseph King, Passover to Pentecost (Franklin Springs, GA, 1914) 149-53.

18. "Our Trip South" Christian Witness, November 6, 1884, 4. Warren A. Candler, "The Meeting in Augusta," Wesleyan Christian Advocate November 5, 1884, 5.

19. "Sanctification" Atlanta Constitution July 12, 1885, 6-7.

20. Ibid.

21. A. J. Jarrell to George G. Smith, "July 25, 1885. C. C. Jarrell Collection. George G. Smith to A. J. Jarrell November 10, 1885, C. C. Jarrell Collection.

22. George Watson, "Gracewood, Ga.," Christian Witness July 16, 1885, 5. Information on Evans and Watson's real estate dealings are located in the Richmond County Clerk's office, Augusta, GA. See especially deed of William Deas to Clement Evans February 20, 1885 and deed of C. A. Evans to George D. Watson, May 21, 1885. Whether Evans' gift to Watson was intended as a kickback is uncertain, but Watson's free advertisement/articles for the Gracewood camp strongly suggest that he intended to help Evans sell the available lots. Watson described the camp as having an "atmosphere that is so pure and dry, that in the old wars the government kept the troops up there, because the muskets would not rust from dampness, and because of its exceeding healthfulness, for the soldiers. . . . For Northern people in winter, it is every way equal, if not superior to Aiken, S.C., and for Southerners a lovely religious resort in summer, with cool breezes and cool nights. The outlook from Gracewood is well-nigh enchanting, as the eye stretches away over the fields and valleys, and the tops of dark pine forests, for near a score of miles." Though Evans described his camp as being run by an "association," county court records indicate that Evans was the sole owner of the entire 44 acre parcel. Consequently, he stood to gain a huge profit on the sale of the land if he could attract the National Camp Meeting to Graceland on an annual basis.

23. For example, see Watson, "Augusta Camp-Meeting," Christian Witness, October 15, 1885, 5.

24. J. Livesey, "National Camp-Meeting in Georgia," Zions's Herald, October 14, 1885, 5. Livesey reported that as "the time . . . for the meeting approached, it became apparent that the grounds belonging to the Camp-Meeting Association, could not be prepared in season for it to be held there." Watson, "Augusta Camp-Meeting." Joshua Gill, "Augusta Camp-Meeting," Christian Witness, October 15, 1885, 5.

25. Watson, "The Latest From Augusta, GA." Christian Witness, November 5, 1885, 5. Though C. A. Evans' speculative venture with the National Camp Meeting Association collapsed, he was able to subdivide his property and sell it piece by piece in 1888 for a respectable profit of over \$2000. See deeds of C. E. Evans to R. M. Mitchell, June 7, 1888 and November 5, 1888.

26. Advocate of Christian Holiness, November, 1872, 108 quoted in Melvin Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century, 123. Warren A. Candler to A. J. Jarrell, November 7, 1885, C. C. Jarrell Collection.

27. Livesay, "National Camp-Meeting in Georgia." "The Augusta Campmeeting" Atlanta Constitution, October 4, 1885, 4. The Constitution reported that in his opening address to the camp meeting, William McDonald remarked that "holiness and not politics could bridge the chasm between north and south." The problem for most southern Methodists was that they were unable to suppress their suspicions that what McDonald and other northern Methodists meant by "bridging the chasm" was actually intended as a takeover and not a mutually agreed upon merger. C.B. Jernigan, Pioneer Days of the Holiness Movement in the Southwest (Kansas City, 1919), 101-2. See also Letter of George G. Smith to A. J. Jarrell, November 10, 1885, Jarrell Collection. Smith, who had pastored for some time in the West Virginia Conference, admitted his concerns regarding the northern influences in the growing southern Holiness movement and advised Jarrell to "let those of us . . . who have been further north, and seen the results of antagonisms as they are presented in the Witness . . . feel more anxious about insults. Smith commended Jarrell for his moderate spirit but warned that "all have not that spirit." See also Wilson, Baptized in Blood, 10. Wilson observes that Southerners in general "brooded that the Civil War had unleashed powerful forces that would descend from the North, or perhaps emerge indigenously, and destroy the southern Zion they were building."

28. Candler to Jarrell, November 3, 1885.

29. Candler to Jarrell, November 3, 1885; November 5, 1885.

30. Ibid., In one article for the Christian Witness, Watson attacked one of Candler's friends close friends, Methodist minister Simon Peter Richardson, as "dishonest" and "a scourge to every church" he served. Candler admitted Richardson's views were too liberal for his tastes, but reminded Jarrell that Watson's tactless comments were more offensive than his friend's preaching.

31. Watson, "He Opened Not His Mouth," Christian Witness, March 4, 1886, 4.

32. A. J. Jarrell, "Holiness in Georgia, Ibid., April 19, 1886, 8. Jarrell neglected to mention in his letter to the Witness the demotion of W. A. Parks--whose comments in the Atlanta Constitution interview had stirred up so much controversy in the conference. Jarrell's failure to come to Parks' defense, and his irenic efforts to mitigate the severity of punishment directed toward the Holiness movement cost him the respect of Watson and other Holiness leaders. See George Smith, "Tribute to A. J. Jarrell," Wesleyan Christian Advocate, September 16, 1896. Smith remarked that Watson and others "accused him of not being sufficiently pronounced and decided in his views, and while they did not assail him, they persistently ignored him as unsound."

33. As co-editor of the Christian Witness, Watson sent correspondence to the Witness on a weekly basis. After the Augusta National Camp Meeting in 1885, Watson gave no indication that he held any meetings in either the North or South Georgia conferences. The next record of his preaching in Georgia does not appear until 1894.

Chapter 6

The Problem of Methodism

Warren Candler's decision to sever his connections with the Holiness movement in Georgia came not simply as a knee-jerk reaction to his misadventures during the Augusta National Camp Meeting, but had in fact been brewing for some time. Candler had been carefully pondering the theological validity of the second blessing since George Watson conducted his Holiness campaign at St. John's in 1884. As the year progressed, Candler's examination of Holiness doctrines quashed his original enthusiasm for the movement. A member of Candler's congregation observed that the future bishop "examined the scriptures extensively, stated he found no authority to warrant this belief, and this was his position in the matter all through his life." His caustic encounters with Watson and his National Camp Meeting associates was the pivotal factor in his departure from the Holiness camp, and yet before October 1885, Candler had already determined that the second blessing theology of the Holiness preachers was an untenable and potentially "harmful" curse upon the church.¹

Candler did not draw his conclusions about Holiness

religion without counsel from at least one other member of the North Georgia Conference. During the Augusta meeting, Candler was in correspondence with his good friend and former president of Emory College, Atticus Greene Haygood. A former circuit-riding associate of Jarrell and Dodge, Haygood was a talented--perhaps even brilliant--champion of the Social Gospel in the South. Haygood openly disdained second-blessing theology and frequently enjoyed poking fun at advocates of the doctrine. Haygood advised Candler that true "Christian perfection has no definition. No perfection has--can't have. It is ideal. . . . No perfection has definition--de finis. To define is to limit. It is to de-fine the in-finite to de-fine perfection." Haygood also noted that "the best people I know never claimed this 2nd Blessing." Finally, he reminded Candler of the Holiness advocates' inherent stupidity. "They are not," he remarked, "close accurate thinkers. In exegesis they go mostly by the sound. I have had them say 'Amen' for me when I chanced to use the words 'sanctification,' 'perfection,' 'holiness'--clear out of the range of their views."²

Haygood's sense of humor occasionally gave way to rancor and he eventually became one of the Holiness movement's most determined adversaries in the South. Candler mimicked his mentor's disdain for second blessing Methodists and, later in his career, gained considerable

satisfaction from deriding the movement's most obnoxious activists. Several years after the Augusta meeting, while riding on a train, a verbose and apparently mettlesome proponent of the second blessing approached Candler and soon "was catechizing him as to his experience of the second blessing. 'No,' Candler drawled. 'I got the first blessing, and the third and the fourth and on, but I skipped the second for fear it would make a fool of me.'" ³

After 1885 the advocates of second blessing Holiness in Georgia and other parts of the South made enemies within the southern Methodist Church for a wide variety of reasons. The movement's clannishness and apparent exclusion of those who did not profess the experience of entire sanctification obviously generated a considerable amount of hostility among both church leaders and laity who made no claims to the experience. In 1885, months before Dodge made his damaging statement to the Constitution reporter, Clement Evans praised the Georgia Holiness Association's munificence and broad mindedness and noted that regarding sanctification, there "may be diversity in the individual experiences as the great awakening goes on." Evans, who never actually professed a second work of grace, declared that the Holiness revival "will be hailed by many different tongues. But there will be marvelous unity in the Spirit." Evans, like Candler,

abandoned the Holiness movement shortly after the Augusta meeting, and by the end of the decade, few non-Holiness commentators of the southern Holiness movement argued that it permitted much theological diversity within its ranks. Moreover, within a decade following the Augusta camp meeting, Methodist leadership's frustration with its Holiness element grew so expansive and so caustic that it finally erupted into a major confrontation in which the bishops and other power brokers of the church declared what one observer described as the "war to extermination" on the Holiness movement.⁴

A major point of contention between factions was the seeming inability of the Holiness people to scrutinize the nuances of their own theology. Though cognizant of their dependency on Palmer and Finney's theology, the champions of Holiness religion in Georgia, as elsewhere in the South, believed themselves the true spiritual heirs of John Wesley. They were, moreover, a special people ordained by God to propagate the Holiness doctrine widely in order to return Methodism to its heritage of Christian perfection. One zealous advocate of Holiness religion wrote in 1887 that if Wesley and the early leaders of Methodism "could descend from heaven, they would go straight to these 'holiness meetings' in Georgia, and shout there, as they do in heaven." Other Southern Methodists were not easily convinced that this was the case. George G. Smith, prominent Methodist historian and brother-in-law of A. J.

Jarrell argued that Wesley would not be entirely at ease in a Georgia Holiness meeting and would be troubled by the fact that his theology had been significantly modified by Phoebe Palmer and other northern Methodist evangelists. Smith lamented, moreover, a pervasive tendency among Holiness Methodists to teach "that any man who does not follow McDonald . . . and Mrs. Palmer is not a Wesleyan. I avow my faith in every clear statement in Wesley's Plain Account, and yet I do not believe that the teaching of these brethren and sisters is correct."⁵

After 1885, every official newspaper of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South provided the forum for the heated debate between non-Holiness Methodists and their kindred antagonists. The Southern Christian Advocate, based in Charleston, S.C., devoted more space to the issues of the Holiness movement than to any other church controversy in the decade following 1885. There were actually several variant issues in the debate, none monolithic enough to permit a simple explication of the issues dividing them. It was not unusual, for instance, to find opponents of the southern Holiness movement proffering support for the doctrine of entire sanctification. On the other hand some Methodists openly rejected the doctrine. In 1888, J. M. Boland, a Southern Methodist minister from Kentucky, published a book titled The Problem of Methodism. Boland's "problem" was the doctrine of Christian perfection which he

argued should never have been interpreted as a second work of grace. Boland premised his arguments against the Holiness movement on the assumption that "one generation transmits a large legacy of errors to another." The error being passed on by those professing the second blessing, Boland declared, descended to them from John Wesley who erroneously accepted the Anglican notion--based on that church's ninth article of faith--that the "infection" of carnality "doth remain . . . in them that are regenerated." Boland agreed that if sin remained in those who had been born again, a second work of grace would be needed to assure salvation. He suggested instead that what the Holiness people viewed as "sin in believers" was actually "nothing more than the consciousness of this internal conflict which always accompanies a severe temptation." Boland argued that Christian perfection was attainable in this life but not as the product of a second blessing. Rather it was "reached by a true unfolding of our moral and spiritual powers, together with the integrity of character which is superinduced by a retroaction upon activity involved in resisting temptation successfully." In less convoluted terms, perfection was, for Boland, simply the natural consequence of the Christian's determination to do what was right. Apparently he never recognized his affinities with the theology of Charles G. Finney. In an attempt to salvage Wesley's theological

reputation, Boland conjectured that the church's founder modified his opinion on the issue late in life and rescinded his second blessing theology.⁶

Some Holiness opponents were less anxious about maintaining Wesley's reputation. An article written by C. T. Carroll appeared in the Southern Christian Advocate, extolling Boland's ground-breaking work and propelling the controversy farther by insisting that "Mr. Wesley did not know what he believed on" the issue of the second blessing. Many southern Methodists interpreted Boland's book and Carroll's response as an attack, not only on the Holiness movement, but on Methodism's beloved founder as well. George Smith, who usually came down on the non-Holiness side of the debate, submitted a letter to the Southern Christian Advocate in spring 1889, denouncing Boland's volume as "regretful" and offering rare words of praise for the Holiness preachers, whom he believed had been unfairly ostracized by fellow Methodists: "The heretics now are the men who believe with Mr. Wesley. If one desires to be a Presiding Elder, a Bishop or a connectional officer of any kind, let him be sure to make a bold declaration of opposition to Mr. Wesley's views on this subject, and let him be vehement in denouncing the second blessing men, and his chances are good for promotion." In another article published in October of the same year, Smith censured the Holiness people in Georgia for single-handedly ruining the

Methodist revival season, but in the spring, while the opposition was dragging "Mr. Wesley's" good name through the mire, Smith discovered grounds for common cause with his Holiness brethren. Yet other Methodists apparently were not impressed with the theological niceties on both sides of the debate. For example one southern Methodist minister, R. H. Malone, after considering the complexities of the argument, observed that "some have taken fright at the words 'second blessing,' and have turned from the doctrine of holiness altogether, hardly making use of the word. Whether there be a second blessing or a third blessing or a continuation of blessings matters little." What did matter to Malone was that all Methodists "be delivered from 'inbred sin,' and thus 'perfect holiness in the fear of God.'" How they arrived at this level of perfection was inconsequential.⁷

The theological controversy grew especially vitriolic when, in May 1887, the former president of the South Georgia Holiness Association and newly elected bishop, Joseph S. Key, returned home to deliver a sermon on "Heart Purity" at the Holiness Convention in Cartersville. Key did not intend his message to be broadcast beyond the walls of the church where the convention was held. He was, moreover, unaware that an "unknown stenographer sat in the congregation and took it down and prepared it for publication." The stenographer then sold the manuscript to

J. W. Burke and Co., of Macon, who published it as a tract. The southern Methodist newspapers subsequently republished sections of the sermon in the summer of 1887. The sermon was extremely moderate and conciliatory in tone. The bishop later observed that the message was intended "to promote harmony and love" within the church. Key called on his Holiness brothers and sisters to practice humility and warned them that a "holier than thou" attitude was "unpardonable." He confessed that he personally had experienced a need for cleansing from sin following his conversion and regeneration, but wished to remain united with those whose experience was different from his. Moreover, he pleaded with every Methodist "who claims that he was cleansed when he was converted" to remain charitable and demonstrate the same sort of "patience and generosity" to his Holiness neighbors.⁸

The Reverend John E. Edwards, D. D., of the Virginia Conference was not inspired by Key's affable rhetoric and his efforts to make peace with the non-Holiness element in the church. Edwards' thinly veiled prejudice against Key and the Cartersville sermon obviated itself in a Raleigh Christian Advocate article in which he expressed his "surprise" when he discovered that a "Bishop in our church should appear on such an occasion as the apologist, if not the outspoken advocate and defender of such 'associations' in our church as were represented in that Convention."

Edwards averred his dissatisfaction with Key's "stale repetition of threadbare, and oft-repeated quotations" from a movement that was "secretly and insidiously impairing the unity and harmony of our church." Edward's grudge against Key and his associates continued to grow in spite of Key's rejoinders in the press intended to bring an end to the controversy. Late the following year, Edwards published another attack on Key and the southern Holiness movement in the Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Key's address was innocuous enough that Edwards found it expedient to misquote the bishop in order to accuse him of some wrongdoing. Edwards censured Key for preaching that apart from a second blessing experience, no one would enter heaven. Key had in reality acknowledged during his address that Christians might be made perfect at conversion, but apparently Edwards' deeply rooted prejudice against the only bishop who supported the Holiness movement in the South clouded his objectivity, and, it would seem, his honesty as well.⁹

Not all Holiness people were as moderate in their views as Bishop Key. The "second blessing men" who united to form the Georgia Holiness Association drew heavy fire from their opponents for their refusal to demonstrate tolerance toward the theological views of others. In some respects the controversy resembled a battle for honor. Most, if not all, southern Methodist clergy believed themselves to be

advocates of scriptural holiness. The primary point of divergence evolved from the question of whether entire sanctification could be achieved through a gradual process of maturation and dying to sin--the preferred southern approach since before the Civil War--or whether it could be had in an instant, as the northern Holiness preachers taught, by "placing" one's entire life "on the altar" and accepting, by faith, the gift of perfection. Having received careful instruction at the feet of northern evangelists, the leadership of the associations clung tenaciously to this "altar theology" and stood accused by the opposition for exhibiting a spirit of intolerance toward the views of others. Opponents especially criticized the formation of Holiness associations as an unnecessary symbol of exclusivity and spiritual superiority on the part of second-blessing advocates. One Georgia preacher summed up the opinion of the majority of the opposition when he wrote: "We have found the Methodist Church enough of a 'holiness association' for us, and we belong to no other." Another preacher agreed. In a letter to the Wesleyan Christian Advocate, W. L. Wooten of Roswell described the Georgia Holiness Association as "a wheel within a wheel," and asked, "Why the need of 'holiness associations. . . . Why an organization within an organization, when the Methodist Church is already fully committed to this doctrine and experience?"¹⁰

In 1887, South Carolina preacher George H. Pooser complained bitterly about an upstart Holiness association recently established in his conference and in a letter to the Southern Christian Advocate declared that Bishop Key "and other Methodist brethren have joined themselves to a society which puts an indignity upon our Church by assuming that it is not what it professes to be (a holiness church)." Pooser argued that the very existence of an independent Holiness association established by Methodists "seems to signify that the Church (Bishops and all) is unclean."¹¹

The opposition's concerns about the Holiness movement's exclusive leanings were not unfounded. Though a significant number of Holiness leaders and their followers were apparently willing to maintain dialogue with their opponents, others were not. Georgia Holiness Association presidents A. J. Jarrell and Bishop Joseph Key received the deference of the movement's detractors because of their moderation and example of Christian love. Yet the opinion of others, including George Watson, smacked of an attitude of exclusivity that bordered on--and sometimes crossed over to--a sanctimonious extreme. Watson enjoined the sponsors of Holiness association meetings to limit attendance to those friendly to the Holiness cause: "You do not want everybody at your holiness meeting. No one should be invited or encouraged to go except such as are deeply

interested in personal sanctification or those earnestly seeking pardon." Without exception, every newspaper issued by the Holiness associations in the South and the North was carefully edited to propagandize readers with Holiness doctrines. Dodge and other Holiness editors seldom permitted articles contradicting their views to appear in their papers. In the rare instances when they did allow dissenting expressions of opinion, the editors used the material as a platform for their rebuttal. At times the Holiness presses were willing to admit candidly their biases and intolerance of alternative points of view. In 1883, W. A. Dodge wrote in the Way of Life that true Christianity "is intolerant. It can brook no opposition. It not only seeks to extend itself, but to subvert and overthrow every opposing system. . . . It has always been aggressive, and in proportion to the vigor and energy of its aggressive movements has been its success (sic). It must continue to be so, or abandon its mission and cease to exist. Dodge's remarks were not all that unusual in the 1880s during a period in which American Protestantism was encountering a rapidly growing number of social and intellectual challenges to its hegemony. Yet the statement provides a useful barometer of the movement's temper and indicates why advocates of the religion were hesitant to make compromises with their opponents.¹²

Dodge's uncompromising rhetoric apparently impressed

many Methodists in the South. Throughout the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, an alarming number of southern Methodists revoked their subscriptions to the official publications of the M. E. Church, South, opting instead to devote their reading energies to Holiness literature like the Way of Life. In 1886, a reader wrote to W. D. Kirkland, editor of the Southern Christian Advocate requesting that he "please stop my Advocate, as I take . . . the Way of Life." Kirkland responded to the cancellation request by tactfully commending the quality of the Way of Life but, at the same time, reminding his readers that such cancellations revealed an attitude of "denominational disloyalty" among some of the Holiness people. Kirkland gently chided his readers to keep in mind that the "profession of sanctity, instead of releasing a man from his obligation" to the church, "ought to intensify it." The cancellations continued to pour into the offices of the Advocate during the next few years, however, and Kirkland's patience with his Holiness subscribers began collapsing into resentment. In 1889, a "leading" South Carolina layman wrote Kirkland grumbling about an anti-Holiness article that had recently appeared in his paper and warning Kirkland that if he did not "want the Way of Life to take the place of the Advocate in this section, don't publish any thing against the teaching of the Bible and John Wesley's account of Christian Perfection."

Infuriated by the Holiness advocate's threat, Kirkland accused the members of the Holiness associations of forsaking their vows and their church. The Holiness people, he declared, have "stood before a Methodist Altar and in the presence of God and his people have taken a solemn vow to support the institutions of the Church. And yet with an easy conscience they violate their solemn covenant, refuse to support their Conference paper, inveigh against it, and slander its editor. . . . Such sanctification is a sham."¹³

The clannishness of the Holiness movement--demonstrated by its tendency to form associations exclusive of the organized church--was, undoubtedly, the primary bone of contention for the vast majority of Methodists antagonistic to the Holiness cause. One presiding elder in Georgia observed that the movement's exclusivity became apparent even during conference activities. Methodist preacher J. D. Anthony recorded his frustration with those whose theology "necessitates a second spiritual birth." "Birds of a feather flock together," quipped Anthony. "At camp-meetings and other religious gatherings they are generally grouped together, conversing among themselves, preferring, seemingly, to eschew the company of all who do not subscribe to their peculiar views." Indeed, Holiness Methodists in Georgia were a tightly knit group. Apparently they remained "grouped together" even when

visiting meetings held by other denominations. In 1885 the Atlanta Constitution reported on a Baptist Camp Meeting near Cumming in which forty or fifty Methodists rose and "commenced to shouting" when the evangelist attempted to discount the validity of entire sanctification."¹⁴

Though they tended toward cliquishness, the Holiness people declared that they were by no means unique in this respect. In response to charges that the members of Holiness associations were arrogant in their attitudes toward their fellow Methodists, Georgia Holiness Association charter member and South Carolina minister R. C. Oliver wrote, "The holiness people and their leaders do intemperate things, but are no worse in this respect than their accusers." The comments of Anthony and other Methodist leaders, on the other hand, reflected their deeply entrenched interests in maintaining discipline and order within the institutional church. The clannish nature of the Holiness associations presented a clear threat to the order they desired. Though the Holiness preachers were Methodist by affiliation, and they held their meetings at southern Methodist churches, there was no effective means by which church officials could control the movement's activities and check the dissemination of its ideology. These aspects were controlled by the votes of association members who came together at convention time in the spring and fall each year. And to the chagrin of most traditional

southern Methodists, both men and women were permitted to vote. The southern Holiness associations were unauthorized democratic islands nestled within the boundaries of a frequently autocratic church.¹⁵

Most southern Holiness leaders defended the movement's exclusiveness on the basis of sound Methodist tradition. R. C. Oliver pointed out that Wesley himself had established what he termed "'select societies' for persons who were especially interested in the subject of Christian perfection." Oliver expressed an opinion shared by most Holiness association apologists: like Wesley's select societies, the Holiness associations served the useful purpose of pressing "believers to present their bodies a living sacrifice" before God. In other words, Wesley had, like them, established special organizations to promote holiness within Methodism, which was from its inception a Holiness church. A. J. Jarrell pondered the growing rancor leveled at his organization and suggested that the Holiness association was no different than any other organization within the southern Methodist Church. Though the church is also a missionary church, he remarked, "this does not forbid missionary associations in it. It necessitates them." Moreover, the church "is pre-eminently a Sunday-school church. But this does not forbid Sunday-school societies." Jarrell's logic was flawless in every regard except one, and again it revolved around the

question of church control. Missionary societies and Sunday school associations could be carefully regulated by bishops, presiding elders, and local ministers, but the activities of Holiness evangelists and their conventions remained outside their jurisdiction. The Holiness people, on the other hand, adamantly refused to disband the one organization that catered to their experience and theology of second-blessing holiness. Jarrell, Dodge, and other members of the Holiness associations in Georgia interpreted the movement they had spawned as the vanguard of a special errand, ordained by God, to carry on the vision of the Methodist church and "spread scriptural holiness throughout the land." The mission was, as southern Holiness preacher John Brasher expressed it, based on his yearnings to "return to the doctrines and experiences . . . which made our fathers' hearts flame."¹⁶

Most denominational leaders remained unenthusiastic about the opinions of Jarrell, Dodge and their associates and prayed for the dismantling of their Holiness associations. Yet at times the movements enemies seemed somewhat confused on how to pray for the organization's demise. In 1887 Kirkland offered what was by then pretty standard fare in the arsenal of reasons not to establish Holiness associations, arguing that "all Methodist preachers are 'believers in and preachers of holiness.'" He admitted that he had "deprecated the formation of

holiness associations for this very reason." Then reversing his argument, Kirkland warned those readers "not of the 'holiness association' not to oppose any movement which God may set his approval." But again, Kirkland apparently changed his mind and in his concluding remarks declared all Holiness associations "a delusion and a snare." Moreover, Kirkland rebuked "holier-then-thou divisions among our ministers or members," but then challenged those outside the association membership to a sort of Holiness contest in which they should labor to "excel our brethren of the 'association' in our holy living and zealous work. Let us prove to them and to the world that, for the inculcation of the doctrine of holiness, there is nothing superior to the CHURCH."¹⁷

The Rev. John Edwards experienced less difficulty than Kirkland in mincing his words and expressing his contempt for the southern Holiness movement and in the columns of the Wesleyan Christian Advocate remarked with optimism that he predicted the speedy elimination of all Holiness associations in the South. The "controlling element in southern Methodism will, in due time," he declared, "exterminate this fungus growth and excind this excrescence from the body of our church." After consulting their dictionaries to figure out what they had been called, the Holiness people sent their cancellation requests to the newspapers publishing this sort of remark--clearly

reflecting a law of cause and effect that Kirkland and most other denominational leaders seemed at first incapable of understanding. Eventually the editors grew weary of the skirmish and began limiting publication of letters and articles concerning the Holiness movement. In 1889, Kirkland acknowledged that he had received numerous "requests from all sides to stop such articles or stop the paper." The requests and the cancellations took their toll, and by 1890, most denominational editors had all but eliminated commentary of the Holiness movement.¹⁸

Another issue of contention between the southern Methodist mainstream and the southern Holiness movement revolved around the issue of "Divine" or "faith healings." Though the Holiness movement was itself very much divided over the question, many within the ranks of the Georgia Holiness Associations, including W. A. Dodge, were advocates of physical and emotional healing procurable by faith. In their 1885 interview with the Atlanta Constitution, Dodge and his presiding elder, W. A. Parks, discussed their views on the topic. Dodge remarked that "God will answer prayer for any lawful object when it suits His divine purpose, even to curing the sick. Remarkable stories of faith cure are known to us to be true." In point of this fact, Dodge related how a young woman "Miss Kate Strickland, of Forsyth county. . . . cast herself before God" and was cured of consumption. "Instead

of lying upon a bed of death," Dodge explained, "she has been restored to robust health." Parks concurred with Dodge and added: "She has new lungs." Dodge related several other examples of subjects cured of their illnesses by faith including "the case of Mrs. Wimpey." Mrs. Wimpey had been "for twenty two years . . . unable to raise her foot or extend her arm. Yet at the end of this long time an exstatic feeling stole over her. She felt the strength of her youth. Giving her heart to God she arose, and, walking swiftly down to the assembled congregation, she went in, like a spirit from another world, and called upon all to thank God for the favor." ¹⁹

Adversaries of the Georgia Holiness Association viewed the public broadcast of such miraculous healings as an embarrassment to the church. After reading the Constitution article, Georgia minister H. P. Bell wrote a letter highly critical of the state's Holiness movement listing among its several "excesses" the idea held by some second blessing "professors that 'the Lord gives new lungs' to consumptives on condition of prayer and faith." Parks' and Dodge's faith healing claims received the scrutiny of others besides those antagonistic to the movement. A. J. Jarrell wrote Dodge shortly after the article appeared warning him "and all others like him" to avoid "touching in any way the Faith Healing question." Jarrell, like Dodge and Parks, did not dispute the Lord's ability to heal

physical ailments, but was concerned that untenable claims for faith healing never become a hallmark of the Georgia Holiness Association. Jarrell censured Dodge for permitting himself to be "drawn into the secular press & publishing views which none of us hold."²⁰

Bell, Jarrell, and others on both sides of the Holiness issue were especially bothered by claims of miraculous healings because they did not wish to see Methodism or--in Jarrell's case--the Holiness association become too closely identified with the new forms of religious Mind Cure such as Christian Science, gaining prominence, especially in the industrialized North, during the 1880s. Yet Jarrell's assertion that none of the association members held such opinions was not entirely accurate. Dodge's friend, Sarah Ward, experienced a miraculous healing under the ministry of Dodge that in some respects, such as her rejection of medical treatments, bore striking similarities with patterns found among some Mind Cure groups. Ward testified that for eighteen months following her faith cure she "took no medicines, went to church day and night, whenever the occasion required, traveled where I chose, unembarrassed by infirmities." Ward's faith began wavering when some apparent symptom of her malady returned and she sought the advice of physicians, a mistake that would wreak havoc with her experience. In a letter to The Way of Life she declared "had I never yielded to the solicitations of

anxious friends upon the return of alarming symptoms, and accepted medical aid, to-day I would have been strong and well. No one has greater confidence than I in doctors and remedies and for fifty years gave ample proof of my belief, but, after direct and unmistakable healing by the Great Physician, turning to subordinate means, however capable, by science . . . a distrust of almighty willingness, readiness, and ability to heal, seemed the incentive to unbelief and disloyalty on my part." "Disobedience to my convictions," Ward concluded, "has been a source of much unhappiness." Jarrell and Dodge remained clearly divided over the importance of the faith cure emphasis for the Georgia Holiness Association, though the majority of the members tended to gravitate toward Dodge's more receptive approach to the practice.²¹

Women's Authority

Another and more significant point of contention between the Holiness and non-Holiness factions centered upon the women's rights issue. W. A. Dodge, evangelist William Godbey, and other members of the Georgia Association openly advocated feminine equal rights at several levels of church leadership and expressly challenged women to answer God's call to the field of Holiness evangelism. Not every Methodist in the state was

in agreement over the question of women's rightful place in society, yet Dodge and his associates fully recognized the unpopularity of their opinions.²²

The Old South's relegation of women to a position of inferior social status died an agonizingly slow death in the New South. The standard expression of a "southern woman's sphere" was a regular feature of articles appearing in the Quarterly Review of the M. E. Church, South. The opinions offered were characteristically Victorian and patronizing. "No one will question," wrote one southern Methodist, "that woman is mentally and physically specially adapted to home work. This is her sphere by divine appointment." Most articles encouraged Methodist women to seek an advanced education, but the rationale behind this support was nearly always based upon the proverbial vision of an erudite housekeeper. After completing her college education, a girl should return home; "not abandoning literary pursuits, she resumes the study of those domestic arts and accomplishments--needle-work, cookery, etc.--so essential to the comfort and happiness of home life." Reflecting on the administration of Wesleyan Female College in Macon during the 1880s, Mary Culler White related her frustration over the restrictiveness of the southern woman's sphere by pointing out that the South "was conservative on the subject of elevating a woman to a position that had always been held by a man." White's

biting application of understatement underscored southern Methodist women's growing resentment of the fact that until 1919, they were not granted full membership status in the church. ²³

By contrast with their non-Holiness colleagues, leaders of the Georgia Holiness Association gravitated toward a more liberal position. R. C. Oliver declared in 1886 that it was "time for us to turn from the traditions of men, and even from the customs of the modern Church in our effort to reach a right conclusion" on the question of a woman's right to preach the gospel. Oliver acknowledged that "many take the position that God forbids a woman to preach . . . and contend that she is out of her sphere, and deluded by the devil when she attempts to do so." He then applied the Old Testament story of prophetess Deborah to his argument, and quipped that many modern-day males would have subverted God's will for Israel in a misguided desire to have "the husband, Lapidoth, to prophecy and judge, while his wife, Deborah, attended to household affairs and looked after the children." Oliver admonished his fellow ministers to set aside prejudice and grant women the opportunity to "put on an equality, so far as prophesying is concerned."²⁴

As corresponding editor for Dodge's The Way of Life, William Godbey nurtured feminist ideas with the firm conviction that young girls should be taught early in life that they are equal, in the sight of God, to boys. In a

Sunday School lesson written for Georgia Methodist children, Godbey set up a hypothetical dialogue in which he encountered the perplexing query of a young girl: "But Brother Godbey, I am a little girl. Will God call me to preach?" "O yes," exclaimed Godbey, "He is 'no respecter of persons.' Deborah, Huldah, of the Old Testament, Phebe, Priscilla, and a host of others in the New Testament preached the gospel. God needs a mighty army to save this poor lost world." Godbey's convictions sprang from seeing his sisters "by reason of the prevailing dogma against woman's ministry . . . unfortunately withheld from the privilege which I am satisfied they would have participated in with great delight." Godbey chided his opponents by characterizing their "prevailing dogma" as "the old foggy notion."²⁴

As the Holiness association pressed women to answer the call of God to serve as preachers, a growing number began to take an active role at the conventions and other Holiness meetings in Georgia. As early as 1885 and throughout the early 1890s, Mrs. Pringle, an English evangelist, was preaching and assisting Dodge in Holiness services in Georgia. Methodists who attended these meetings proffered mixed reactions upon hearing the sermon of a woman evangelist. When Pringle began delivering her message at the Effingham camp ground near Springfield, "some men stood up aghast. Others sneered, others

ridiculed." Women members of her audience, on the other hand, "were pleased and interested." Yet several women did not share their neighbor's enthusiasm and instead "curled their noses as to say that she . . . unsexes herself."²⁵

A number of women, including at least one from Georgia, Mrs. S. S. Garbutt, credited Dodge with encouraging their desire to preach the gospel. When Garbutt received an invitation to bring the message of second-blessing Holiness to a black district conference meeting, Dodge encouraged her to "enter every door of opportunity that the Lord opens." An Illinois native, Mrs. R. E. Dimmit, also heard Dodge's summons for women evangelists while attending a Midwestern camp meeting. Dimmit reported that as Dodge delivered his message, she heard a "still, small voice" urging her to "go to the Southland." "Yes Lord," she responded, "anywhere Thou leadest." Subsequently, a few months later, Dimmit answered the call, moved her family to Georgia, and began preaching the Holiness message at missions in the state's towns and cities.²⁶

As she listened to Dodge preach, another woman, "the wife of a Quaker minister, sprang to her feet and began telling how she had resisted the call of the Spirit to preach the gospel, because it was not popular for women to preach, although her church licensed and believed in women prophesying." Apparently impressed with Dodge's views on the subject, the woman declared before the revival

audience, "I resist no longer, I will obey the call." Her obedience was immediately rewarded and the "fire of the Holy Ghost apparently fell on the whole audience." Some members of the congregation began shouting while "others fell where they were praying, and holy pandemonium reigned." Amy Cooper did not need to hear Dodge preach in order to answer her call to preach the gospel. After reading Dodge's commentary on a woman's right to preach the gospel in The Way of Life, she united her talents with those of her husband and began a preaching campaign on the west coast.²⁷

In the 1880s and 1890s a significant number of northern Holiness women like Dimmit answered the call to minister in the "Southern field" and moved to Georgia in order to serve the Lord in any capacity opened to them. So vigorous was God's voice in the life of Wesleyan Methodist Adelia Nichols Arnold, that she left her reluctant husband in Illinois and moved to Atlanta in order to minister to the poor blacks of that city. Arnold was especially drawn to the Atlanta jails which, she observed, were "thronged with colored men (also women) and they are arrested upon very slight charges, as their services are considered valuable in making public roads." With the assistance of two Georgia natives, Annie Jones and Josephine DuPont, Arnold endured the hardships of poverty and occasional mob violence in order to keep the doors of the Repairer Rescue

Mission open to poor Southerners of all races. After 1884, two northern Methodists, Jennie Smith and Addie Sherman--whose chief concern was reaching public servants unable to attend church services on Sunday--conducted an independent mission "chiefly among the street-car drivers and policemen" of Atlanta. Highly successful in Atlanta, Smith and Sherman expanded their evangelistic enterprise into Waycross and other urban areas in Georgia where they preached the message of full salvation largely among railroad workers.²⁸

Like the men, not all Holiness women felt called to the evangelistic ministry, yet the Holiness advocates believed it was the privilege and even the responsibility of all men and women to share their faith with others. David Thaxton, a Georgia Holiness layman, poetically described his encounter with one Holiness laywoman preacher at the state's Holiness camp meeting in 1897 and the impact her message had upon him:

Away over in a corner,
A good old sister rose,
And clapped her hands and shouted loud,
And said the good Lord knows
She'd followed Him through many years
But the time was drawing nigh,
When she would claim a home above,
In mansions in the sky.

A mighty sermon she did preach--
She said the Lord was good,
And all my sins would he forgive,
If I just only would
Just turn to him just like a child,
And all my meanness quit,
And promise him to sin no more,

He make me whole every whit.²⁹

Most southern Holiness leaders who supported women's evangelistic ministries did so primarily because of their theology which reflected the liberating effects of regeneration and entire sanctification. A. J. Jarrell called upon the women in his congregations to obey God rather than their husbands when conflicts arose. "The Devil," Jarrell remarked, told women to "subordinate everything in heaven and earth" to their husbands. This satanic commandment to women was, in Jarrell's opinion, "a lie." Holiness evangelist R. M. Guy proclaimed that "Christianity has emancipated woman and lifted her back to her place by man's side, from which paganism and sin had dragged her." Where, he asked, "is the man who will yet boast of his superiority, and refuse her the God-given right to fulfill her part of the commission. . . . Nay, my brother, if all would get out of God's way and let him call and anoint whom he pleased, many of our daughters . . . would be prophesying." Other Methodists apparently resigned themselves to accept change on the basis of the more defensible tradition of southern chivalry. After listening to Pringle preach, Methodist Layman Richard Winn reported that opposition to women evangelists "comes mainly from the fact that we have not been used to it . . . and our prejudices get the better of our reason." Winn, who

noted that he offered "no opposition" to the messengers of second blessing holiness, defended Pringle's right to preach on the basis of southern honor. "Ye men!" he exclaimed, "If she is a woman where is your gallantry toward the sex that you boast of? Has it petered out? If not, why deride the woman? Did your own mother never lecture you, sing for you, pray for you and point you to heaven? And was she not a woman? And where is that mother now? If a woman may lecture and pray with her household and point them to Heaven, why may she not do so in the great congregation, if she has capabilities?" Winn dared his fellow gentlemen to "Sneer if you will," but reminded them that "it is no compliment to your manhood and less to your gallantry." Winn and other southern Methodists apparently advocated women's rights in the pulpit simply out of a utilitarian conviction. They believed that sin-hardened men might respond better to the impassioned messages of female evangelists than they might to their male counterparts. Sinners might be persuaded to reform, they hoped, out of an innate sense of devotion to motherhood.³⁰

Rebecca Latimer Felton, the quixotic first woman to serve as a United States Senator and outspoken champion of the Holiness movement in Georgia, encouraged women's rights in the ministry. Felton, moreover, cautioned that such rights would inevitably lead women along the same paths of

corruption then enjoyed by southern Methodist male officials. After describing the perfidy she believed overspread the church officials in the state, Felton remarked that only after men "allow women to preach" would females "know better how to appreciate such privileges" as men had come to take for granted "in the business world." Even the popular itinerant evangelist Sam P. Jones seemed to accept the important role of women preachers following his entire sanctification in Georgia in 1886. Jones, who described his second blessing experience with typical dramatic flare as a "solemn and never-to-be-forgotten hour" during which he "turned loose the willows that overhung the banks, and swept out into the very midst of the ocean of God's infinite love," admitted that he had for some time wrongly judged women unfit creatures for the ministry. He had, he said, been "narrow in my views, conceited in my sex." His encounter with the effective ministry of several Holiness evangelists, including Women's Christian Temperance Union leader Frances Willard, led Jones to the conclusion women should play a role in "every hard battle for Christ."³¹

Yet the majority of Georgia Methodists remained critical of the Holiness movement's demands that women be granted an opportunity to occupy pulpits as evangelists, and many considered the practice simply another in a long list of Holiness fanaticisms. In this instance, however,

the Holiness proponents were, without question, more Wesleyan than the non-Holiness Methodists who challenged their feminist leanings. John Wesley had, after all, provided opportunities for women to preach over a century earlier. With a long-standing Methodist tradition clearly on Dodge and Godbey's side, it was difficult for the opposition to generate effective arguments against the practice. Hence, the disputations appearing in the denominational press tended to lean heavily away from objectivity toward subjectivity and personal prejudice. J. A. Thompson, a minister from the South Georgia Conference, cautioned readers of the Southern Christian Advocate that the Georgia Holiness Association had some "things gathering about it that should be watched with great care and controlled or harm will result." Thompson expressed his concern that the Holiness movement was "rather advanced on the woman's rights question." And, warned Thompson, "I do not believe the Bible authorizes woman to preach, as a general thing. . . . It occurs to me that the Holiness Associations should . . . occupy conservative ground on the woman question."³²

Southern conservatives were terrified that if women achieved any kind of public platform, they would use it to champion their cause for greater freedoms. Such was the concern of J. B. McGehee of the South Georgia Conference who observed that he was "not yet prepared to say that

distinct action which crowned the sisters, organized a Holiness Association . . . was eminently wise." McGehee sensed the political ramifications of encouraging women to speak publicly and remarked that it was a "dishonor of Heaven's primal design" to drag "lovely, exalted womanhood into the filth, fraud, and slime of dirty politics." Though they seldom mixed politics with religion, women Holiness preachers in the South occasionally admitted the anguish they felt as a consequence of their constant subjection to males. Holiness evangelist Daisy Gray observed that "civilized women the world over are aspiring to co-equal recognition, but as the Lord's servants we see her rights fiercely contrasted with man in all departments of activity."³³

It is impossible to determine whether Warren Candler, the archetypical southern conservative, considered the presence of Holiness evangelist Lizzie Smith at the Augusta National Camp Meeting yet another strike against his affiliation with the movement. Yet with Candler's personal tastes lining up solidly against every aspect of women's rights, especially the overtly pro-suffrage organizations such as W.C.T.U., there is little question that the proliferation of women preachers in the movement revolted him. Candler's antifeminist temper ran deep and never abated. In a letter to fellow southern bishop Collin Denny in 1914, Candler suggested that Denny join him in

his effort to organize anti-suffrage associations in every southern state. "Woman's suffrage," he explained, "would hurt the South more than did reconstruction, it would be our utter ruin."³⁴

George Smith expressed his own disposition regarding the matter in a letter to the Southern Christian Advocate: "I don't think the Lord ever showed His common sense more than when He failed to call women to preach and take charge of churches, and I don't think women evangelists ever do much permanent good, and this I say more confidently because some [the Holiness preachers] are so pronounced on the other side that it may be supposed we are all agreed as to woman's call to preach." Smith moreover observed that "unless we can be sure that only women of sound sense shall preach, and of pure lives shall vote, I think we had better abide where we are." Dodge and his coterie were strangely quiet on the issue of suffrage, but their clear defense of a woman's right to speak created yet another problem for Methodism. Tensions arose when Dodge and other Holiness leaders in Georgia and other sections of the South made up their minds that fully sanctified women met both of Smith's criteria: Pringle, Dimmit, Arnold, and a growing number of other women were, they felt, individuals of "sound sense" and their experiences of entire sanctification served as credentials of pure lives. They were filled with the Holy Ghost and knew Him not as an abstraction but as their

personal friend and constant companion.³⁵

The Holiness people were willing to step beyond the boundaries of southern Victorian propriety because, as Holiness evangelist Seth Rees put it, "No church that is acquainted with the Holy Ghost will object to the public ministry of women." Characterizing the growth of the southern Holiness movement as a "Holy Ghost dispensation," a sanguine Fannie McDowell Hunter rejoiced that some whose minds "have been beclouded by the fogs of superstition from medieval errors are being cleared and as the Spirit touches the heart, liberty is given. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Others, such as Holiness evangelist Daisy Gray, portrayed their aspirations in more mundane terms. Gray transcribed her prescription for women preachers into verse and submitted it to the Kentucky-based Holiness paper, The Pentecostal Herald:

They talk about a woman's sphere
As though it had a limit;
There's not a place in earth or heaven,
There's not a place to mankind given,
There's not a blessing or a woe,
There's not a whisper, yes or no,
There's not a life or death or birth,
That has a feather's weight of worth,
Without a woman in it.³⁶

The Church Goes on the Offensive

Determined to contain what they perceived as the radical social and theological ideas promoted by the Holiness movement, officials of southern Methodism sought, as the editor of the Southern Christian Advocate put it, to "assert" the church's "prerogatives" and permit "no divisions in her own ranks." Foremost in the church's arsenal of weapons against the Holiness associations was the episcopal authority of conference appointments. After the Augusta National Camp Meeting, it had become increasingly commonplace for active members of the Georgia Holiness associations to receive demotions, both in salary and status of their assignments. The career of W. A. Dodge is indicative of the power often wielded against Holiness figures. Having served as presiding elder of the Gainesville District, in 1885 Dodge was pastor of the large and prominent congregation in that north Georgia community. In 1887 Dodge rode the circuit for the rural sections of Fulton County, and, in 1889, he assumed responsibilities as a junior preacher at the Walker Street Church in Atlanta. From 1890 through 1891, Dodge was back in the saddle as a circuit rider for the isolated Forsyth and Bolton circuits. The North Georgia Conference of 1891 appointed Dodge as Conference Colporteur for the following

year. Dismissed from the pulpit, Dodge functioned as a peddler of Bibles and Methodist literature, and two years later, in 1894, he served as a city missionary in the south end of Atlanta, the same position he had held twenty years earlier.³⁷

Without question, the chief antagonist of the Holiness movement in Georgia was Atticus Haygood, whose campaign against the North Georgia Holiness Association gathered steam after the death of Bishop Pierce in 1884. It is highly unlikely that as senior bishop Pierce would have tolerated any concerted efforts by conference and denominational officials to disarm the Holiness movement. Pierce was intimate with George Patillo and other leaders of the movement and openly encouraged their activities if not some of their ideas. Dodge had been close friends with Pierce's father, Lovick, and served as his bedside nurse during the final weeks of the elder Pierce's life in 1879. Shortly after the bishop's death in 1884, Haygood took advantage of his position as agent for the prestigious Slater Educational Fund and president of Emory College to influence appointments of Holiness ministers. One of Haygood's biographers observed that Haygood "influenced appointments made in 1885 and 1886 by Bishops McTyeire and Wilson." By 1890, the year he was elected bishop, Haygood was rapidly becoming alcoholic and was leaning theologically in the direction of agnosticism. He was in

no mood to tolerate what he viewed as the pious pretension of the Holiness people. Convinced that perfectionist theology constituted a modern heresy, between 1885 and his death in 1896, Haygood wrote extensively against the "holiness cranks." His final book, The Monk and the Prince (1895), lampooned Georgia Holiness preachers by depicting their archetypical representative in the form of the eccentric fifteenth-century Florentine monk, Savonarola. Haygood observed that the study of the monk was important "because he is a type of those who profess not only religion, but claim to have the only theory for getting it." After his election to the episcopacy, Haygood used his influence over appointments to demote Dodge and other advocates of the second blessing.³⁸

The North Georgia Conference appointments for December 1890 sent an unmistakable warning to Holiness leadership that their allegiance to the Holiness movement would exact a high cost. Five presiding elders with Holiness antecedents "were put back in the Pastorate." S. D. Evans, C. A. Jamison and Clement C. Cary--all outspoken Holiness advocates--were demoted from regular pastorates to "city missionary" status. In fact, Holiness ministers filled every city missionary position then established in the North Georgia Conference. The Gainesville District, which had achieved a denomination wide reputation as a major bastion of Holiness influence, received an inordinate

number of ministerial appointments from outside the North Georgia Conference. A. J. Jarrell, the association's most eloquent and influential member, was handed a transfer, at Haygood's request, to the South Georgia Conference where, less than three years later, he was "given permission" by the bishops to transfer to St. Louis Missouri and a church that Jarrell lamented "had views different from those I had cherished all my ministerial life." Jarrell had not in fact requested the transfer and pleaded with Bishop Eugene R. Hendrix, another Holiness opponent overseeing transfers for that year, not to send him. When Hendrix declined Jarrell's request, Jarrell begged him to indicate the reason for the transfer, but as his wife put it, "his questions were evaded." The move to Missouri was disastrous to the Jarrell household and within two years Jarrell, broken financially and physically, finally received permission to come home to Georgia where he died in 1896.³⁹

Recounting the ecclesiastical opposition to Jarrell, Dodge, and the entire Holiness movement after 1885, Clement Cary later wrote: "It was indeed a fortunate thing that men like A. J. Jarrell and W. A. Dodge were at the head of the Holiness movement in Georgia--fortunate for the Southern Methodist Church, when the fight was so intense upon this movement on the part of officials and individuals. The

conditions were such at that time that a word from these two brethren would have carried hundreds of members into a separate organization." Cary indicated that a period of crisis emerged during which a schism nearly split the Gainesville District: "A sanctified presiding elder was removed by the appointing power, and another entirely out of sympathy with this doctrine took his place. A crisis was reached and nothing but the loyalty of Dodge, Jarrell, and a few other leaders, held the people in the church."⁴⁰

The southern Methodist Church declared its "war to extermination" against the Holiness movement because the the Holiness people and their theology of exclusion were an embarrassment to church leaders seeking to maintain absolute sovereignty at every level of the church. The Georgia Holiness associations were symbolic of everything the hierarchy detested. They were organized and maintained by democratic processes and after their first gathering in 1882, they scheduled their conventions and meetings without consulting presiding elders or bishops. The Holiness advocates carried their democratic ideas to an extent that was unbearable for most denominational power brokers when they granted full organizational privileges to women. Moreover, the male leaders viewed women as co-equals in the gospel at a time when when most Methodist officials were certain that the sphere for which women were "best suited" was the home. Finally, they ruffled the feathers of the

denomination's newspaper editors when they published their heretical opinions in a weekly that rivaled the official conference newspaper's subscription figures. In these respects, the Holiness leaders in Georgia and throughout the South were progressivists. They were, moreover, too advanced in their church politics and views of women to remain unmolested by a patently autocratic southern Methodist leadership. Dodge and his associates were the liberals of their time and region and paid a high price for their views. Yet in other respects they were a reminder of the past, a symbol of what once was, prophets of an old time religion in a New South. They were prophets of the old law in a society just beginning to enjoy the effects of license. They were, as southern evangelist John Brasher described it, "standing between the living and the dead."⁴¹

Notes

1. Centennial Souvenir of St. John M. E. Church, South, Augusta, Ga. 1798-1898 (Augusta, 1898), 64. Candler to Jarrell, November 5, 1885, Jarrell collection.

2. Atticus Greene Haygood to Warren A. Candler October 21, 1885, in The Warren A. Candler Collection, Woodruff Library, Emory University.

3. Alfred M. Pierce, Giant Against the Sky: The Life of Bishop Warren Akin Candler (New York, 1948), 48.

4. For more on the cliquish nature of the Georgia Holiness movement see pp. 216ff. Though there were a few exceptions to the exclusory pattern in the movement, most Holiness preachers and their like-minded laity considered the conversions of non-Holiness Methodists to be inferior. Clement A. Evans, "The Holiness Convention in Athens," Wesleyan Christian Advocate, March 25, 1885, 1. Isaiah Reid, The Christian Witness, September 12, 1895. Quoted in Timothy L. Smith, "The Holiness Crusade," The History of American Methodism, ed., Emory S. Bucke, 3 volumes (New York, 1964) 2:625.

5. George G. Smith, The History of Georgia Methodism From 1786 to 1866 (Atlanta, 1913), 401. Smith recognized and was critical of Palmer's modification of entire sanctification to a "shorter way." Leonidas Rosser, "Sanctification," Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South November 1887, 239. George G. Smith, "N. Georgia Letter," Southern Christian Advocate, October 31, 1889, 1.

6. The editors from most denominational papers were personally antagonistic toward the Holiness movement in the South. W. D. Kirkland of the Southern Christian Advocate was an outspoken critic of the Holiness movement in Georgia. Moreover, the chief publication for the denomination maintained a strongly anti-holiness position throughout the 1880s and 1890s. See Smith Called Unto Holiness, 44. J. M. Boland, The Problem of Methodism: Being a Review of the Residue Theory of Regeneration and the Second Change Theory of Sanctification, and the Philosophy of Christian Perfection (Nashville, 1888), 5; 55; 324-31. Boland was a classical nineteenth-century liberal and as such believed all creeds were relative and should be adapted to current intellectual and social climates. He observed that in "making up our Creed, we ought to start with the idea of choosing between imperfect orthodoxies, and not between one orthodoxy and a hundred heterodoxies" (6).

7. C. T. Carroll, "Heresy of the Second Work," Southern Christian Advocate, April 25, 1889, 1. George G. Smith, "Georgia Letter," ibid., May 30, 1889, 1; Smith, North Georgia Conference Correspondence, "ibid." October 31, 1889, 1. In his diary, George Smith recorded that "after visiting Thomaston and other places where they have been holding holiness meetings," he had determined that these meetings were "not beneficial but on the whole injurious." George G. Smith, Diary, August 9, 1887, George G. Smith Collection, Woodruff Library, Emory University.

8. Joseph S. Key, "Note from Bishop Key," Raleigh Christian Advocate, August 24, 1887, 2. "Bishop Key's Conclusion," ibid., August 17, 1887, 2.

9. The Rev. John E. Edwards, D.D., "Our Virginia Correspondence," ibid., August 3, 1887. "The Problem of Methodism," Quarterly Review of the M.E. Church, South, October 1888, 32-3. Edwards asserted that Key defined second blessing holiness in his address "as being something more than mere regeneration" and then quoted the bishop as saying that "without this holiness, I am fearfully persuaded none of us shall see the Lord." On the contrary, Key did not refer to conversion as "mere regeneration" though many within the Wesleyan Holiness movement did. He did remark that without heart purity. . . . we are fearfully convicted none of us shall see the Lord," but he never suggested that the second blessing was the exclusive means by which God granted heart cleansing.

10. "The Holiness Movement," ibid., January 3, 1887, 4. Though generally critical of the Holiness movement, R. H. Malone, "The Nature of Sin and of Holiness," Quarterly Review of the M. E. Church, South, October 1889, 34. The anonymous author opined that "all Methodist preachers are 'believers and preachers of holiness.'" W. L. Wooten, "A Wheel Within a Wheel," Wesleyan Christian Advocate, September 3, 1885, 2.

11. George H. Pooser, "State Holiness Association," Southern Christian Advocate, June 9, 1887, 1.

12. George Watson, "Your Holiness Meeting," Christian Witness, May 15, 1884, 4. W. A. Dodge Way of Life, 1883. Clipping in Dodge Scrapbook. For more on American Protestantism's conflict with a rapidly changing culture, see Marty, Righteous Empire, 210-32.

13. W. D. Kirkland, "Denominational Disloyalty," Southern Christian Advocate, August 26, 1886, 4; Kirkland, "Boycotting the Advocate," ibid., December 12, 1889. As late as 1898 loyalty to the denominational presses was

still a serious issue with which the editors had to contend. As the combined subscriptions to Southern Holiness papers approached the 100,000 mark, denominational papers in the South suffered a severe declivity in subscription numbers. See "Report on Wesleyan Christian Advocate," North Georgia Conference Minutes, 1896, 25. See also, ibid., 1898, 39. The reports noted that pastors were duty bound to encourage members to subscribe to the Advocate and "discourage any disposition on the part of pastors or people to substitute . . . certain local papers, some of which, published at a distance, are misleading to the mind and poisonous to the life of the church."

14. J. D. Anthony, The Life and Times of Rev. J. D. Anthony (Atlanta, 1896) 247-80. "Among the Churchmen," Atlanta Constitution, October 12, 1885, 2.

15. R. C. Oliver, "Holiness Association," Southern Christian Advocate, June 30, 1887, 2. For more on the contrast of the democratically controlled Holiness associations with the southern Methodist church see Ingersol, "Burden of Dissent," 28-29.

16. A. J. Jarrell, "Gist of the Press," Wesleyan Christian Advocate, October 14, 1885, 1. Farish, Circuit Rider, 73. Farish correctly observes that during the late 1870s and 1880s, "a new type of evangelist appeared in the Church. . . . these new evangelists were not subject to the restraining influences with which the regular travelling ministry was hedged about." Brasher, Living and the Dead, 128-29.

17. W. D. Kirkland, "The Holiness Movement," Southern Christian Advocate, January 6, 1887, 4.

18. Ibid., February 21, 1889, 1. After 1889, The Wesleyan Christian Advocate and Southern Christian Advocate had, with few exceptions, limited coverage of Holiness issues to announcements concerning the associations' activities in the Southeast. In 1894, the new editor of the Quarterly Review of the M. E. Church, South, John J. Tigert, followed suit and disallowed all articles openly hostile to the doctrine of Christian Perfection. See Smith Called to Holiness, 43-4.

19. "Sanctification," Atlanta Constitution, July 12, 1885, 13.

20. H. P. Bell, Wesleyan Christian Advocate, October 21, 1885, 2. For more on the issue of faith cures among members of the Holiness movement in America, see Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion, 57-60; 103-4. For a brief but

highly descriptive explanation of the issue in the ministry of Holiness evangelist Mary Cagle see Ingersol, "Burden of Dissent," 170-2. Ingersol points out that the doctrine's most ardent supporters in the southern Holiness movement "believed that this emphasis held the key for missionaries to conquer foreign diseases in the field." Most Wesleyan Holiness leaders in the South were open to faith healing activities in their meetings but shied away from making the issue a central theme of their theologies. Moreover, the majority of those making a specialty of the ritual tended--though with many exceptions--to gravitate toward the Pentecostal Holiness camp. See also Jarrell's more exhaustive description of his view on faith healing in his pamphlet, "Members and Friends of the Methodist Church in Georgia" (n.d., though probably late in 1885 or 1886), Georgia Room, University of Georgia Library. Jarrell declared that the Georgia Holiness Association had "nothing to do with" the "Faith-healing Movement. . . . If the Lord answers prayer, and raises the sick, with or without medicine, we will praise him, as we ought." Yet Jarrell argued that such healings "are not to be brought prominently before the public mind." For more on southern Methodism's antagonism toward Christian Science see Rebecca Felton, "The Future of Methodism," 2. Rebecca Latimer Felton Collection, University of Georgia Library.

21. Sarah H. Ward, Way of Life, (n.d.), in Dodge Scrapbook. In 1888, while pastor at La Grange, Jarrell wrote an expanded version of his "Members and Friends" pamphlet intended as an apologetic for the the Holiness movement in the South. Titled "Christian Perfection: An Address by the Southern Holiness Associations," the document was signed by sixteen of the most prominent Holiness leaders in the South including W. A. Dodge. It is noteworthy that Jarrell deleted all mention of his concern with the faith cure issue that appeared prominently in the earlier tract and limited "fanatical extremes" of the Holiness movement to "Come-out-ism, New Revelations, Infallible Guidance of the Spirit, etc." Dodge, whose penchant was toward a strong affirmation of faith healing, had no problem condemning such excesses but would have been hard pressed to lend his signature to Jarrell's first document. Dodge apparently moved in the direction of the position held by his good friend, Kentucky evangelist W. B. Godbey, though he apparently never fully embraced it. Godbey preached a "four-fold Gospel" that included "Regeneration, Sanctification, Healing, and the Second Coming," and viewed these elements as essentials of genuine Christianity. W. B. Godbey, "Divine Healing," in Six Tracts by W. B. Godbey, ed., Donald W. Dayton (New York, 1985). A. J. Jarrell, "Christian Perfection: An Address" (La Grange, Ga., 1888), Church of the Nazarene Archives,

Kansas City, Mo. Clement C. Cary, another leader in the Georgia Holiness movement indicated that Godbey and others within the Wesleyan Holiness movement were creating a faith healing "dogma" that was novel to the movement. Cary remarked that he had "no special war to make on my brethren who hold to the 'faith healing' dogma, but I cannot follow them into that field. I do draw the line, however, and shall earnestly and publicly protest against their putting me down as a sort of holiness heretic. Cary declared that he could not "accept this modern dogma, which has been added to the old original movment." "Georgia Letter," Pentecostal Herald, August 2, 1899, 3; c.f., ibid., October 25, 1899, 2.

22. Some Southerners were open to the idea of women preachers as long as these evangelists avoided contact with the mainstream church and took their message instead to the mission field where the leaders had difficulty finding enough men to serve. As early as the General Conference of 1878, the church hierarchy granted permission to Lochie Rankin to carry the gospel to China. See Mary Culler White, The Portrait of Wonderland: The life Story of Alice Culler Cobb (New York, 1925), 81-82. Leadership in the southern Holiness movement opened the pulpits in their churches to women evangelists and eventually granted full ordination credentials to the first woman minister in the region.

23. For more on the pervasive character of the religious inequality of women in the South, see Donald G. Mathews, Religion in the Old South (Chicago, 1977), 169-70. See also Ingersol, Burden of Dissent, 55-58. Anonymous, "Women's Sphere," Quarterly Review of the M. E. Church, South, April 1889, 20; anonymous, "How Shall I Educate my Girl?" ibid. White, Portrait of Wonderland, 81.

24. W. B. Godbey, "Sunday School Lesson," The Way of Life, June 26, 1889, 2. Godbey, Autobiography of Rev. W. B. Godbey (Cincinnati, 1909) 22; 82. See also Godbey's extended apologetic for women evangelists in his Woman Preacher (Atlanta, 1891).

25. "Sanctification," Atlanta Constitution, July 12, 1885, 13. Harold Lawrence, A Feast of Tabernacles: Georgia Campgrounds and Campmeetings (Tignall, Ga., 1990) 46.

26. Garbutt, Rev. W. A. Dodge, 100-02; 110-12.

27. Ibid., 100-02.

28. Helen Arnold, Under Southern Skies: Reminiscences in the Life of Mrs. Adelia Arnold (Atlanta, 1924), 41-53;

63-69. At the close of the Civil War, Arnold, like many other northern Christian women raised in abolitionist homes, reported that she "felt a strong desire to go South . . . and teach the emancipated slaves" (15). David Tasker, "Georgia Letter," Christian Witness, November 28, 1889. While preaching in Atlanta, Sherman reported that she was unwelcome at first but eventually received a note from the police chief, a Catholic, to evangelize his officers. "Gov. Colquit, Mr. Grady, Dr. Hawthorne, and a number went with us. . . . Several were saved in our meetings. From that time every city would invite us to the police headquarters." Jennie Smith, Incidents and Experiences of a Railroad Evangelist (Washington, D.C., 1920), 37-38.

29. David J. Thaxton, "The Campmeeting," Middle Georgia Argus, August 1897, 3.

30. A. J. Jarrell, "The One Thing Needful," sermon, Jarrell Collection. R. M. Guy, "Women's Place Under the Gospel," Pentecostal Herald, August 9, 1899, 4-5. Winn's observations quoted in Lawrence, Feast of Tabernacles, 46. Statements like Winn's reflect the pervasive southern view that women were intrinsically morally superior to males. Occasionally, as with Winn, the dogma worked to the woman Holiness evangelist's advantage. Later, even some Fundamentalists championed woman's suffrage for similar reasons. Baptist John Roach Straton, for example, preached that woman's suffrage "would purify electoral politics." Margret L. Bendroth, "Fundamentalism and Femininity: The Reorientation of Women's Role in the 1920s," Evangelical Studies Bulletin, March 1988, 1-4.

31. Rebecca L. Felton, "The Future of Methodism" (1897), in the Rebecca Latimer Felton Collection, Georgia Room, University of Georgia Library. The controversial letter of support for the southern Holiness movement appeared in the American Outlook and the Atlanta Journal. "Sam Jones on the Second Blessing," Pentecostal Herald, June 21, 1899, 6. See also "Sam Jones," Christian Witness, May 6, 1886, 2. Jones served as an agent for W. A. Dodge's Way of Life, selling subscriptions for the paper during his evangelical campaigns. Jones' opinion on women quoted in Edward L. Ayers, The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction (New York, 1992), 175-76.

32. J. A. Thompson, "Notes from Georgia," Southern Christian Advocate, October 1, 1889, 1.

33. J. B. McGehee, Autobiography, 116; 148. Daisy D. Gray, "Woman's Ministry," Pentecostal Herald, December 23, 1908, 2.

34. Warren Candler to Collin Denny, January 15, 1914, Collin Denny Collection, Alderman Library, University of Virginia. For a good scholarly treatment of Candler's conservatism, see Mark A. Bauman, Warren Akin Candler: The Conservative as Idealist (Metuchen, N.J., 1981).

35. George Smith, "Georgia Letter," Southern Christian Advocate, August 9, 1888, 1. For individual testimonies of the role of the spirit in the lives of women Holiness evangelists in the South, see Fannie McDowell Hunter, Women Preachers (Dallas, 1905).

36. Seth Rees quoted in Dieter, Holiness Revival, 44. Hunter, Women Preachers, 33. A broad and helpful description of issues encountered by women evangelists in the South is provided by Catherine Greer O'Brien, "'Where the Spirit of the Lord Is, There is Liberty:' The Holiness Movement and Women Preachers in the Rural South" (graduate seminar paper, University of Virginia, 1989). Gray, "Woman's Ministry," 3.

37. Garbutt, Rev. W. A. Dodge 87-88. Conference actions against Dodge after the Augusta meeting was especially severe probably because church officials viewed his management of The Way of Life as a threat to the conference newspaper The Wesleyan Christian Advocate. By 1890, Dodge's subscription list topped the 5000 mark which was over half the number of readers then taking the Advocate, a statistic that no doubt frustrated many conference officials.

38. Mann, Haygood, 166-67. Bauman, Warren Akin Candler, 49-50. Atticus G. Haygood, The Monk and the Prince (Nashville, 1895), 265-66. Haygood lamented that, like Savonarola, "those who profess the most extraordinary perfection Christian character are not infrequently incapable of charity in judging their brethren." The tone of Haygood's rhetoric suggests that he may have felt personally threatened by the Holiness people because of his personal problems which ranged from his abysmal management of finances to his addiction to alcohol.

39. J. H. Baxter, "North Georgia Correspondence," Southern Christian Advocate, January 15, 1891, 1. Baxter's correspondence was celebratory as one might expect. Baxter authored an anti-Holiness book in 1886 titled "Sanctification," and regularly wrote pieces for the Wesleyan and Southern Christian Advocate critical of the Holiness associations. "North Georgia Conference Appointments," Nashville Christian Advocate, December 20, 1890, 10-11. Five of the nineteen charges in the

Gainesville District received non-conference ministers in 1891. See also Mann, Haygood, 166. See also George G. Smith's memorial of A. J. Jarrell in the "North Georgia Conference Minutes" (1897), 6. Smith reported that Haygood requested Jarrell's transfer out of the conference in 1890 and that the majority of bishops sought his transfer to Missouri. A. J. Jarrell to George Smith, October 16, 1894, Jarrell Collection. Jarrell reported that he continued his requests to return to Georgia but Hendrix refused him. See also letter describing the hardships of the transfer from Mrs. A. J. Jarrell to daughter-in-law Mrs. C. C. Jarrell, November 13, 1893.

40. Clement C. Cary quoted in Garbutt, Rev. W. A. Dodge, 72.

41. For more on the autocratic nature of Methodist Church government in America see Hatch, Democratization of American Christianity, 179-206. The fact that the southern Methodist bishops were able to uproot Jarrell in 1893 and send him several hundred miles to another conference against his will, and without giving him any reason, demonstrates how powerful the bishops remained as late as the 1890s. The first great challenge to the southern bishop's authority arose in 1918 when the bishops, led by Candler, tried to overrule a huge majority of delegates at the General Conference who had voted for women's voting rights in the church. Delegates "immediately reaffirmed" their action "thereby 'overruling the bishop veto.'" Mrs. R. W. MacDonell, Belle Harris Bennett: Her Life Work (New York, 1987 Reprint), 248-49. Brasher, "Standing Between the Living and the Dead." See also Ingersol, "Burden of Dissent," 250-51. Ingersol finds the same description appropriate for his subject, Mary Cagle. Cagle and her coterie, he notes, viewed their mission as "bridging a span not only between heaven and earth but between past and present."

Chapter 7

The Law and the Prophets

In February 1881, shortly after arriving to take charge of the Methodist church at Eatonton near Augusta, W. A. Dodge discovered his new flock beset with a serious problem. Several lay people in the congregation were "dance-loving church members." Dodge wanted to invoke disciplinary action against the "worldly-minded" dancers in his church but determined that it would be wise to first write Bishop George Pierce and seek his advice in the matter. Pierce responded swiftly to Dodge's concern and cautioned him to "stand firmly by the Discipline in dealing with your disorderly members." "I am more than ever convinced," remarked Pierce, "that dancing professors know nothing even of the first principles of Christ's religion. No one in the enjoyment of religion ever danced since the world was made." Pierce declared, moreover, that Methodists who participated in any form of dance, whether "round and square, private and public . . . violate their baptismal vows, ignore Church authority, grieve their pastors, sin against God, and disgrace their Christian profession. Oh! Shame--shame--shame!" The upshot of

Pierce's letter was that "the Church cannot allow it. Those who will not give up this and kindred sins must go out by withdrawal or expulsion." Pierce made it clear that his personal views on the issue of entire sanctification were at variance with those espoused by Dodge, but offered assurances that he appreciated the pastor's aggressive handling of the matter and remarked, "I like the way you talk." When the impenitent dancers refused to withdraw their memberships, Dodge, armed with an episcopal mandate, immediately exercised his authority and expelled them from the church. The majority of his congregation apparently accepted Dodge's actions and the membership increased dramatically under his ministry. Later, during a Holiness revival meeting, "nearly all who had been expelled came back."¹

Southern Methodism's Shift Toward Worldliness

Protestant churches in the South had a long tradition of assailing church members who violated their teachings and pursued worldly vices of dance and theater attendance. Southern evangelicals believed that when they renounced the world in order to follow Christ, every secular diversion became suspect. Devoted Christians knew, furthermore, that genuine salvation was evidenced by an effort to shield oneself from the corrupting influences of the culture. No

group was more intolerant toward the onslaught of worldliness among its members than the southern Methodists. Arminian in their theological perspective, southern Methodists were unable to evade the grim spectacle of a contingent salvation. The Calvinistic leanings of the Presbyterians and Baptists afforded them the solace of eternal security whenever they occasionally lapsed into sins of the worldliness, but Methodist pietism bore a more frightening cost; backsliding could mean eternal damnation, the loss of one's soul.²

Before the 1880s, the pietistic social values of the Holiness Methodists differed very little with those held by the majority of their opponents. The similarities were at times in fact striking. The southern Methodist's obsessive concern with the discipline of intractable members was already beginning to wane when Dodge excommunicated the dancers in his church. Pastors and most of their bishops grew weary of enforcing the church's rigid discipline codes against the peccadilloes of its "fashionable" members. So rapid was the church's transformation to a more tolerant institution that at the beginning of the twentieth century, Dodge's friend Garbutt was forced to admit that measures such as the one Dodge had employed "to enforce discipline" were "a lost art in the present day Methodist church." In sharp contrast with their non-Holiness neighbors, after 1880 the advocates of the second blessing were increasing

the intensity of their attacks on all forms of worldly activity. Virtually no form of recreation or fashion was spared the constant onslaught of the Holiness preachers's uncompromising strictures.³

The uptown churches in South's urban areas were, for the Holiness people, centers of denominational moral latitude. In his novel, Two Lawyers, Kentucky evangelist and frequent speaker at the Indian Springs camp, Henry Clay Morrison, described in lurid detail the laxness of an uptown church in the fictional city of Newton. The "membership of this church was for the most part a very worldly people. . . . Quite a number of the official members attended the races. . . . Dancing, card-playing and theatre going were so common among the young people of the congregation that anyone who would have dared to have questioned the propriety of such behavior would have at once been put down as a religious fanatic." Yet the story at the Central Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Newton ended happily when a handful of "faithful women called earnestly upon God to send to the church and city a revival of the 'old-time religion.'" Their prayers were gloriously answered and a new pastor, Rev. Mr. Grace, "a sanctified man," took over at Newton. Rev. Grace's inspired sermons were more than the fashionable Methodists could bear. Consequently, "the most worldly and wicked of the members of Central Church went away and joined the

Episcopalians."⁴

Indeed many urban Methodists were profoundly annoyed when confronted by obtrusive Holiness pastors anxious to follow the old-time approach to religious discipline. W. D. Kirkland recognized their irritation when he warned that "the arrogance of some and the extravagance and erratic performances of others . . . are fast bringing the doctrine of Christian holiness into disrepute with the better class of people in and out of the Church." In the early days of the Holiness movement in Georgia, the uptown churches had solid representations from both Holiness and non-Holiness camps. S. P. Richardson, the outspoken critic of Holiness who in 1881 succeeded A. J. Jarrell as pastor of St. James in Augusta, reported that upon his arrival he "found the church almost equally divided on the doctrine of the 'second blessing theory.'" Richardson indicated that those offended by Jarrell's theology had pulled their membership from his congregation and transferred across town to St. John's. At the end of the century most of the prominent churches in the South were controlled by preachers who distanced themselves from the Holiness movement. A minority of the Holiness laity remained loyal to these "worldly congregations," and like the "faithful women" in Morrison's novel they prayed for revival and the entire sanctification of their fashionable preachers. Yet after 1890, many Holiness people transferred their memberships to

the less affluent congregations in the southern towns and rural areas.⁵

Holiness Preachers Fill the Rural and City Mission Pulpits

Holiness people in Georgia were generally literate and in some cases financially well off. Why then were they attracted to the less notable churches? It is likely that many were simply following the Holiness preachers who were being shut out of uptown congregations and receiving appointments in the rural, small town, and city mission charges. Southern Holiness writer and evangelist John Carradine--ironically a grandfather of the movie actor John--recognized the dilemma many Holiness laypeople faced when the church "discounted" their sanctified preachers and "sent them to broken down appointments." When confronted by a new pastor "who opposed the doctrine, ridiculed the experience, and either adroitly or forcibly undid the work of years," those laypeople who refused to discard their Holiness opinions "had tough decisions to make regarding whether to stay and bear ridicule or go."⁶

The name of W. A. Dodge, the firebrand behind the Holiness movement in Georgia, became synonymous with rural and city mission charges after 1886. Laity who shared his convictions sometimes followed him to his new appointments after he left their church. Charlie Tillman, the

nationally popular music evangelist and author of the song "The Old Time Religion," was a member of Dodge's Walker Street congregation in the south end of Atlanta in 1893. When Dodge transferred to the East Point mission, Tillman moved his family's membership to that little charge. Tillman admitted that some "people accused us of following him, and I may say it is no great concern if they thought so. Pastors who knew him best would not blame us for doing so."⁷

Like Dodge, few other Georgia Holiness preachers were afforded the opportunity to preach in the state's more prominent pulpits following the Augusta Camp Meeting in 1885. Preachers in the South Georgia Conference fared no better in this regard than their colleagues in the North Conference. George W. Mathews, the irenic and well educated president of the South Georgia Holiness Association, possessed character traits that were in heavy demand among the more distinguished congregations; yet when he received appointments to such churches, his views inevitably came into conflict with the opinions of the most prominent members. At one such charge, his wife Annie recalled, he learned "that the official board of the church which we had served for one year had requested a change in our appointment, not for personal reasons, but on account of the holiness message." The bishop in charge of appointments then relocated Mathews to a congregation where

he said "George Mathews would be gladly welcomed." North Georgia pastor Clement C. Cary was a prodigious writer possessing a fairly subtle theological mind. Generally balanced in his opinions, Cary was willing publicly to chide both Holiness and non-Holiness camps. Cary recognized that his Holiness views kept him from occupying the more notable charges in the North Georgia Conference and seemed to take this fact in stride throughout most of his career. Then in 1907, just after receiving his appointment from the annual conference, Cary's indignation finally exploded. In an article published in the Pentecostal Herald, he complained that he had been moved from his "small mission charge" in Gainesville and "set down on a circuit in the centre of the State, which means exposure to wind and weather, and much hard work. A quarter of a century ago, I served the same charge." Though powerless against the might of the southern bishops, Cary warned "that this sort of thing is not to continue." For his comments, the conference rewarded Cary with an even more abysmal circuit in 1908 near Griffin. Cognizant of his standing as conference pariah and growing too old to manage the hardships of circuit riding, Cary retired from the pastorate the same year.⁸

The ministerial style and cultural views of many Holiness preachers did not fit well with the ministries of the uptown churches. As prophets of the old-time religion,

the Holiness preachers sought to uphold the conventions and discipline of a rapidly fading tradition. At the same time, the members of the uptown churches were growing more accustomed to formality in worship and greater personal liberty. Consequently, Methodist officials found it more expedient to appoint Holiness preachers to city missions and small town charges where their mannerisms and views were less likely to clash with more urbane church members. The Holiness ministers were especially capable city missionaries because their adaptation of the rural-based old time religion was well received by displaced rural southerners seeking employment in the cities after 1880. Moreover, many of the Holiness preachers in the South, including Clement Cary, admittedly preferred urban ministries to rural charges. Following a successful evangelistic campaign in the nation's capitol, southern evangelist Bud Robinson, who was himself reared in an extremely isolated and mountainous section of Tennessee, remarked on how easy it was "to get people saved in Washington as most any town or city we have ever worked in, and strange to say, much easier than in the smaller towns. I know of no place on earth to-day that is harder than the small town of the country." While many scoffed at Holiness preachers' back-woods mannerisms, some urban Methodists were attracted to Robinson and other southern Holiness evangelists because they recognized some important

elements in the preachers' style reminiscent of the religion of their youth. Displaced newcomers to the towns and cities of the region found at the Holiness meetings what one historian described as "a substitute family, a religious home away from home."⁹

The tendency of southerners from rural backgrounds to find comfort in the folksy style of urban Holiness preachers was illustrated in the earnest testimony of Edward L. Waggoner. In an article written in 1904 for the Pentecostal Herald, Waggoner recorded that he "was born and reared in the State of Georgia on a farm. My people were among the leading citizens of the community, and I was taught the right principles of life, and to know virtue and truth." Waggoner joined a community church at a young age but soon fell away and "began to wander . . . more and more until I fell deep into sin, and then I felt I was a disgrace to my people, so I left home. Farther and farther and deeper in sin I went until I was bound down in the deepest of sins, but passed off as a gentleman and a nice man. I was a gambler, a drunkard, a cigarette fiend, a tobacco fiend, cursed and used other indecent language, would lie, fight, cheat, and swindle, and a slave to deeper sins of this world." Waggoner traveled around the South dragging "this form through the gambling dives, bar rooms, back streets and alleys, and through some of the slimiest places of the principal cities of the South at all times of

the night, with my mind crazed with rum, and my soul ruined with sin. I have worn the handcuffs . . . and looked out through the prison bars. O, how I hate to tell these things!" Waggoner began realizing that his addictions and habits had nearly complete control of his life and that he was headed for ruin. Then one night, as he "staggered along the streets of Memphis . . . I came upon a band of Christian workers--'The Bible Mission' people, known as the 'Holiness people,' pleading to sinners to come to God. So they were pleading to me. I listened, and went to hear them again and again. And by hearing them I found that there was deliverance for me. They were preaching that there was power in the blood to cleanse and to keep clean; they were preaching that men could be saved from their actual sins, and from the very power of sin, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." At a Friday evening service, sensing that "the dear Saviour" was with him, Waggoner gave his life to God. Three days later, "realizing that I could not stand without the power of God, I bowed upon my knees to God . . . and asked him in faith and in the spirit to make me strong; and then and there He filled me with the Holy Ghost." 10

The Holiness Style

Those Methodists whom Kirkland described as the "better

classes," the urban Methodists of the New South, who had acquired tastes for the uptown or "fashionable churches," found the preaching style of Holiness preachers like Robinson too provincial, their morality too antiquated for their more progressive sensibilities. H. P. Bell, a layman in the North Georgia Conference, who had attended at least one of their services, thought Holiness preachers boorish and legalistic. He lampooned them for modifying the Holiness message in their conventions "to meet every phase of feeling, emotion and and condition, until seekers approach the altar. Then, with song, exhortation and frequent, flippant repetitions of the blood! the blood! that seem to many almost like sacrilegious familiarity, urge them to 'claim it right now,' and this process is kept up until the profession is made." Bell thought especially inelegant the Holiness practice of closing services "with a sort of finger snapping accompaniment," to which "they sing 'Down by the river side,' (one verse of which begins, 'Old Satan's mad, and I am glad') or some similar song."¹¹

Another layman who was personally attracted to Holiness theology wrote to the Pentecostal Herald lamenting his visits to Holiness meetings which he believed were contaminated with "irreverent expressions and sentimentalism." The leader of a camp meeting he attended in July 1899 addressed God in "very familiar" terms and then cried out "at the top of his voice, 'Hallelujah!'

Another sentence, then another loud cry, and so on throughout. Take one petition in the prayer, 'Oh Lord, give us a boost;' then another, when interceding for an afflicted person, 'Oh Lord, send a slice of heaven to him.'" The sermons, he remarked, "were much on the same line, the great effort seeming to be to stir the emotions alone, without regard to the Spirit's work on the heart. When the congregation had settled down into a calm, the preacher cried in a very loud, 'Why don't you say, Amen! If you don't do so, I'll backslide,' etc, all followed by a laugh." The witness was equally dismayed when the preacher at one meeting "placed his hands on one of the book-stands and jumped up twice, kicking his feet up about three feet each time." In a remark suggesting that the approach in question was not all that unusual in Holiness circles, he asked, "Why are meetings conducted in this way?" The writer's comments suggest that not all Holiness preachers exhibited such inelegant behavior in their services, yet enough fit the mold that bishops grew increasingly reluctant to place them in the fashionable southern churches.¹²

Moreover, at times the southern Holiness preachers admitted that though they preferred urban ministry they did not feel at ease in the uptown congregations. Some complained that these churches were ill equipped to reach hardened sinners like Waggoner, and in this regard they

were probably right. While visiting Atlanta in January 1907, Clement Cary "worshipped in a leading Methodist church." Cary said that during the service he "had the great pleasure, so-called, of listening to four people singing in an unknown tongue, while people gazed at them with mouths wide open. Why . . . churches arrange for and put up with such a thing in public worship, is hard to understand. But I suppose it is due to taste. I am glad in my soul that my religious tastes don't crave that kind of music. Give me the old time singing . . . which appeals to the heart and grips the emotions." Kentucky preacher and newspaper editor Henry Clay Morrison occupied some of the most notable pulpits in Kentucky before he embarked on his evangelistic campaign. His experience with these uptown congregations taught him that the "influential churches in Southern Methodism . . . have largely given up the doctrine of entire sanctification." "All through the Southland," he opined, "we have 'fashionable congregations' and ministers who are preaching almost everything else than the definite sanctifying power of Christ's blood."¹³

Rules of the Old-Time Religion

The Holiness preachers, like most southerners, sought a brighter future for their region, but they felt matters would only deteriorate if they neglected the values and

morality of the old-time religion. Consequently, as the end of the the century approached, southern Holiness preachers grew more outspoken in their attacks against highbrow Methodists and the life styles they cultivated for themselves in the expanding urban areas. As more amusements and worldly fashions became available in the region, the movement's list of specific social evils grew accordingly. For most southern Holiness preachers at the turn of the century, there were few peccadilloes in life. All sin was explicitly evil, and as such it had to be eradicated from the Christian's life. If the fashionable churches sought oratorio performances and other symbols of high fashion, the Holiness people felt duty bound to avoid it, thereby demonstrating their sanctity and their uniqueness. Southern Holiness people believed that, as Bud Robinson put it, "In regeneration God takes us out of the world; in sanctification he takes the world out of us."¹⁴

W. A. Dodge argued that there were "but two minds in the world,--one is the mind of Christ, the other of Satan." "Sinners," he observed "have but the evil" mind. Entirely sanctified or "fully saved" Christians "have only the mind of Christ." Those Christians who had been regenerated but not sanctified wholly, Dodge asserted, possessed a "double mind" and were, consequently, always "vacillating" between doing what was worldly and what was holy. Dodge argued that the merely regenerated often

"backslid" into the evils of the world because their double mindedness drove them to seek pleasure and fun: "One mind says, 'Read the Bible.' The other says, 'Read the newspapers. One says, 'Go to church.' The other says, 'Stay at home.' One says 'Hold family prayer,' while the other says 'go to bed.'" Clement Cary argued that certain "popular evils" in the New South were sinful because those who pursued such diversions as the theater, circus, carnival, ball games, or dances were in fact "hunting fun and amusement. This is their aim and desire." Southern Holiness preachers believed that sanctified Christians were to seek only spiritual fulfillment and reject "worldly lusts or pleasures." Holy Christians could derive happiness from church attendance, Bible study, prayer, and "holy conversation," with those of like mind, but they were to avoid contamination from events and activities endorsed by the world.¹⁵

Not all urban Methodists were offended by the Holiness movement's Puritanical concerns with worldly amusements; some, in fact, found their attitude amusing. A New Orleans preacher, R. G. Potter, whose comments appeared frequently in the southern Christian Advocates under the pen name "Gilderoy," quipped that as a result of Irish ancestry he was "full of fun, having a keen sense of the ridiculous, and much given to joking and repartee." On the other hand, "many of the holiness people who are as solemn as a

grave-yard at night insist that all this comes from the 'remaining roots of bitterness,' 'indwelling sin,' the 'dregs of depravity,' still in me, and many other like things." "To gratify some of" his Holiness associates, Potter confessed that he went "down on my knees to let them pray for me; but the ridiculousness of trying to pray the Irish out of an Irishman, has as often got the better of me, until I was convulsed with laughter while in the act of prayer."¹⁶

What the Holiness preachers lacked in their sense of humor they made up in their zeal for orchestrating the old time values of a holy life. A favorite target of the Holiness movement was fashionable Methodists who wore unholy attire. The preachers thought that Methodists who pursued interests in the latest fashions revealed an underlying problem with conceit and arrogance, a clear indication of the "old man's" hold on the "merely regenerate." One writer to the Pentecostal Herald remarked that when Holiness folks attended "any leading church of Methodists and observe closely the dress of the members" they soon recognized that only a very small group in the church still practiced the "old-time religion." Even the most moderate Holiness ministers in the South and Midwestern sections of the country maintained allegiance to the values of old-time Methodism that upheld standards against fashionable dressers. In a sermon describing the

scales of heaven awaiting everyone in his congregation, A. J. Jarrell quoted a hypothetical, yet typically worldly Methodist, Miss Flora McFlimsey, who regularly insisted that she could not "see any wrong in dressing as I please." "Poor little painted butterfly," Jarrell remarked, "do you think you will fix the scales that you are to be weighed in?" Jarrell warned the fictional Miss McFlimsey that those Methodists who complained "of a high standard in religion . . . had a low religious character." Others were even more adamant regarding the depravity of worldly dress. One writer to the Pentecostal Herald declared that the wearing of fashionable attire was a terrible sin that eventually "begets dishonesty, leads to crime, and ends in temporal and eternal ruin."¹⁷

Bud Robinson detailed the worldly ruin of one "young woman" who could do nothing save "look pretty, wear fine clothes, put on perfumery . . . and flirt with a little fellow blowing blue smoke out of his nose and driving a livery rig." The woman's insatiable appetite for worldly fashions and amusements drove her "to end her miserable existence by jumping into the river." In Georgia, the leaders of one Wesleyan Holiness church attempted to hedge such tragedies by admonishing their people to avoid the wearing of any gold and "dress in a neat and plain manner, not, to attract attention, but to avoid it, leaving off needless ornamentation, but be 'clothed with a meek and

quiet spirit, which is well-pleasing to God." Though there was considerable latitude among Holiness preachers as to what constituted worldly attire, there was consensus that the wearing of jewelry--including for many southerners the wearing of wedding bands--feathers of any sort (something Bud Robinson referred to as the wearing of "dead birds"), ruffles, and corsets was sinful.¹⁸

Moreover, Holiness religion caused those who practiced it "to lay aside every filthy and useless habit." Not only did it "cleanse" the sanctified Christian's "lips of all foul speech; it will lead him to discontinue the use of all by words [e.g., darn, shucks, golly, and goodness sakes] and exaggerated forms of expression; in short, it does away with all that is hurtful to the soul, body or influence and places before us the highest ideal of perfect manhood and womanhood." Since the Holiness preachers held different opinions as to what activities were in fact "hurtful to the soul," most thought it best to avoid all questionable forms of entertainment. Dancing remained the most reprehensible worldly activity for Holiness Methodists until well after the turn of the century. The Way of Life proclaimed it an evil because it led women "into crowded rooms and late hours, which are injurious to health and usefulness. . . . into very close contact with pernicious company; evil communications; corrupt good manners." Dancing required women "to use and permit freedom with the

other sex, of which I should be heartily ashamed."

Moreover, attendance at dances made parents and friends "anxious" and elicited the disapproval of "Ministers and good people." Dancing "has a bad name. . . . is generally accompanied with drinking. . . . is a great temptation and snare to young men, and. . . . unfits the mind for reflection and prayer."¹⁹

Georgia association leaders denounced theater attendance--an activity that quickly gained popularity among Methodists and other Protestants in the New South--as being equally unfit for the Christian mind. Clement Cary observed that to "love the theatre is to love the world, and the attendance upon it is to be taken as proof of that love." Cary lamented that by 1910 very few Methodists thought it "incompatible with a Christian life to visit the show." Moreover, Cary was deeply concerned that the devil was then trying to draw preachers into the theater as well. At that point Satan's plan had met stiff resistance, but if he had succeeded, Cary urged, "the last remaining obstacle to theatre going would have been destroyed." Cary argued that "theater going," card playing, and other worldly amusements were dangerous because Christians who engaged in these pleasures "cannot be distinguished from the world. Holiness means an unmixed religion; one that does not mix with the world. It is 'pure religion, and undefiled before God.'"²⁰

Like many evangelicals, southern Holiness preachers spoke out against all forms of substance abuse they believed destructive of the body, the Holy Ghost's temple. The most dangerous substance denounced by the Holiness leaders was alcohol, but tobacco received a considerable amount of attention as well. Some ministers blamed nearly every social ill on the use of the "filthy weed." R. B. McGregor observed that the cigarette "saps the vitality of youth; weakens the will power; creates unlawful appetites; ruins the intellect; poisons the blood; injures the eyes; makes idiots; produces insanity; effects the action of the heart; poisons the cells of the lungs; shatters the nerves; hurts fatherhood; sends venom into the unborn generations; sticks its deadly fangs into every particle of the body; creates selfishness; weakens character; takes away ambition; degrades manhood; lessens morals; hinders success; produces thieves; manufactures liars; blights society; creates disrespect . . . and damns souls." Henry Clay Morrison warned his Holiness audience that tobacco use "blunted" one's "moral quality . . . and the habitual user of cigarettes cannot be fully trusted." Morrison was even more alarmed however with the rapidly growing popularity of an Atlanta-based soft drink named Coca-Cola. Morrison alerted his readers "to the fact that alcoholic spirits is not our only enemy" and that as alcohol abuse "retires to the background," "other enemies" were "coming to the

front." Morrison observed that "while it commences as an apparently innocent drink," Coca Cola was "the coming enemy of our young men, for these reasons: First, it contains chiefly caffeine, or the elements of strong coffee, and therefore keeps awake; second, it stimulates the whole system; and third, it produces a habit almost as strong as the tobacco habit. Keeps an average boy awake till two o'clock in the morning, fires and stimulates his whole nervous system, and turns him loose in a town or city full of temptations, and his destruction is almost sure to follow." Morrison observed that "Mothers all over this land are bewailing the fact that the boys do not come home at night or retire as they used to do and 'Coca Cola' is one of the" principal reasons behind their corruption.²¹

It seems that with the arrival in the South of each new entertainment form or popular product, advocates of Wesleyan Holiness scrutinized the innovation to determine its worldly dangers. Some, though apparently not all, Holiness preachers disapproved of the South's enjoyment of baseball and other spectator sports. As Holiness colleges emerged in the region, in order to show their separateness from Methodist colleges such as Vanderbilt, administrations disallowed the formation of intercollegiate athletic teams. Even George G. Smith, who opposed much of what the Holiness movement in the South stood for, leveled praise at

one southern Holiness college in 1907 and remarked that he would "a thousand times rather have" such an institution "than a great college where football teams go all over the land demoralizing as they go."²²

Urban development in the New South created yet another major stumbling block for Holiness preachers anxious to see society follow the paths of righteousness. Like most evangelicals in the South, the Holiness people saw violations of the Sabbath as an insidious evil that was gradually gaining a stranglehold on modern society. The proper observation of the Sabbath was, after all, listed in the ten commandments, whereas dancing and theater going were not. Holiness Church activities were, consequently, limited on Sundays to worship and evangelism only. Holiness preachers inveighed against churches that sponsored "oyster suppers" or other activities reflecting concern with "this-worldly needs." As late as 1907, the Pentecostal Herald warned readers to avoid the preparation of meals on Sunday "taking care that the Sabbath does not become a day of toil and drudgery in the cooking department." Most Holiness people refused to read newspapers or conduct any form of secular business on the Lord's day. At the same time, New South communities demanded the benefits of utilities and transportation requiring Sunday labor. While some Holiness preachers attacked society's growing acceptance of Sabbath labor,

others sought to bring the message of full salvation to those whose employment prevented them from attending regular Sunday services. Holiness evangelist and a national officer in the W.C.T.U., Addie Sherman and her colleague Jennie Smith specialized in spreading the gospel among railroad and street car workers in addition to urban police who worked Sunday beats. In the 1880s and 1890s, Smith gained a national reputation as the "Railroader's friend." During an evangelistic tour through Georgia one railroad worker presented Smith with a poem he had written in tribute to her ministry. The poem reflects the worker's deep concern for his status as a Christian with no choice but to work the Sabbath:

Can I Live and be a Christian
On the Railroad with its cares,
With a thousand frets and worries,
Aggravations here and there?

Can I live and be a Christian
With so much to make me mad?
Can I keep my heart uncalled,
With no Sabbath to be had?

Yes though there be temptations,
Turn whatever way I will
I can live and be a Christian
Working on the Railroad still

But 'tis hard to have no Sabbath,
God's appointed day of rest,
Yet he put me on the Railroad,
And he knoweth what is best.²³

Holy Living and Politics

The southern Holiness movement's rejection of alcoholic beverages of every type seemed to have been a formative influence in their political leanings. Nearly all the commentary in the regional Holiness papers upbraided Republican and Democratic parties for their unwillingness to take a strong stand against liquor trafficking. In 1905, one Holiness minister advised his readers that both parties were in fact actively assisting in the liquor traffic. He cautioned that Christians supporting either party would experience difficulty "facing Christ" on the last day. Clement Cary announced that he had voted a straight Democratic ticket until 1888, "but about that time I kicked out of that party, because of its attitude on the whiskey traffic, and ever since I have been . . . voting . . . the prohibition ticket." The political commentary in the Holiness press was almost without exception supportive of Prohibitionism. "Mr. Roosevelt and Judge Parker may be very good men," decreed Cary, "but I don't like the crowd with whom each respectively runs. Both of the leading political parties are too much in league with the liquor power in the United States to suit me, and I shall not vote with either." Sam Jones remarked in 1899 that he had "never seen a holiness man that wasn't a prohibitionist from his hat to his heels. I have never seen one who didn't vote for prohibition always and everywhere." At least one Holiness preacher blamed bad politics for the

increasing worldliness in the church. H. C. Morrison, who chaired the Prohibition Party in Kentucky and actively campaigned for presidential hopeful Nelson A. Miles in 1904, observed following the election that "some of our Bishops are remarkably conservative when it comes to an aggressive fight against the great evils of the day. We fear it is a love for old political parties, that makes them so slow to strike at the evils of the time."²⁴

Rebecca Felton Lends Her Support

Near the end of the nineteenth century, the Holiness movement's rejection of worldliness received strong support from the well known Georgia suffragette, Rebecca Latimer Felton. Though she never openly espoused second blessing Holiness theology, Felton recognized in the movement something kindred to her own moral conservatism. In July 1897, Felton wrote an article titled "The Future of Methodism" that she published under the name "An old Methodist" in The Nashville based American Outlook and in The Atlanta Journal. Felton excoriated the denominational hierarchy and worldly pastors for their lax handling of church discipline problems. She said the problem stemmed from the fact that the church was "helplessly divided on several points especially on sanctification or holiness." Recalling what she viewed as a golden era of

"Methodist power" in the South, Felton observed that the "line was drawn strictly at worldly amusements. A member that got drunk, played cards, went to the theatre or danced, got the 'grand bounce.' Now if you should run a fine-tooth comb through these fashionable churches you would catch a large majority of its membership in those recreations." Felton described the fashionable "city churches" as "nice gathering places for the rich and tony crowd who go to spend Sunday in a respectable place and keep up a reputation for general business." Membership in the city Methodist churches was reduced, she suggested, to "a good recommendation for a banker, merchant, and real estate dealer. . . . The once great church is frittering away its grand opportunity and running amuck against its old-time progress and power by these methods."²⁴

Felton's article attacked one worldly--though unnamed--Atlanta preacher who "had closed" his church basement "to the praying temperance women who have worshipped and prayed in the building for a quarter of a century." The same minister "preached against Christian Science" but was "'too cowardly' . . . to preach against sin, gambling &c." The Rev. Walker Lewis, who had recently forbidden the Atlanta chapter of the W.C.T.U to meet in his church was outraged by the "cowardly" public attack on his character. Because the article denounced Methodists who persecuted the Holiness movement, Lewis presumed that it

had been written by the movement's most loquacious representative in the state, Clement Cary. Lewis wrote Outlook editor B. F. Haynes in hopes of gleaning some hard evidence proving that it was Cary who had "slandered" him, but Haynes, himself a Holiness advocate, refused to supply Lewis with the author's name, and remarked that after carefully rereading the article that he found "no mention of your name, nor anything that I can see which would justify your demand." Haynes did permit Lewis an opportunity to rebut the charges in the Outlook, but Lewis remained unsatisfied. In his response to Haynes, Lewis warned, "your answer will not do. I put you on notice, you shall not shield the author of this infamous article. I put you on notice I am not going to stop my demand for the name of this writer. If on my return home, I find you are still reluctant, I shall appeal to the law." Haynes corresponded with Felton, informing her of Lewis's fulminations. Lewis defended his position in the Wesleyan Christian Advocate referring to the article as "'untrue and slanderous,' and the writer unworthy to belong to the Methodist Church." Never one to shy away from an intellectual contest, Felton published a notice in the Outlook acknowledging that the "article published in The American Outlook under title of 'The Future of Methodism' is mine and I am ready to take care of it." She also wrote Advocate editor W. F. Glenn demanding that he show proof of

the article's "falsehood and slander." Otherwise, she said, she would have no choice but "elaborate the former article in Georgia as well as Tennessee newspapers." Distressed when he discovered that he had characterized one of the most powerful women in the South a "coward" and a "slanderer," Lewis immediately fired off a letter to Felton saying "I want his name. I have no controversy with you, and did not mean to reflect upon you when I thought he would be brave enough to come out of hiding. . . . Again, I insist that you should furnish me his name."²⁵

Felton assured Lewis that she was in fact the author of the offending article, but Lewis's Victorian sentiments--and no doubt his deep-seated embarrassment from having implicated Felton--forced him to the expressed conclusion that she was incapable of writing such criticism. Ignoring the admitted author altogether, Lewis continued to seek evidence against the less influential Holiness preacher Cary. Lewis began publicly to attack Cary in what would appear to be something of a red herring strategy designed to scuttle his unwelcomed quarrel with Felton as quickly as possible. In response, Cary announced that he was not the article's author but that he "knew four-fifths of it to be true." In an article for the Outlook, Lewis declared, "You cannot evade the issue. 'Clement C. Cary.'" Lewis suggested Cary "appeal to the Higher Powers for a change of heart, or to the Lower Powers

for a change of name. You are inaccurately named, before and behind. The Latin of Clement Cary is 'The Peaceable Darling!' What could be more preposterous! . . . You are a walking arsenal of war." Lewis moreover remarked that Cary's relation to the Holiness movement was "so very slight that Satan would not quarantine you to prevent its spread, even though it were usually as infectious as smallpox." "My dear fellow," he concluded, "you cannot evade the issue, and the only issue by taking cover under personalities."²⁶

Cary apparently enjoyed the misguided controversy and the public spotlight it afforded him, but by the fall of 1897 he was ready to forget the entire matter. Yet Lewis, determined to restore his besmirched honor, brought up formal charges against Cary in November at the North Georgia annual conference meeting. Lewis introduced a measure asking that the conference censure Cary on the vague grounds that he said "four-fifths of Mrs. Felton's letter is true." The measure "was overwhelming voted down" by the conference delegates. Yet conference officials did not forget Cary's public approval for Felton's remarks and after 1897, they consistently appointed him to some of the poorest circuits in the conference.²⁷

The Georgia Holiness preachers and their followers viewed the controversy and subsequent attack on Cary as symptomatic of the church's attitude toward its second

blessing Holiness members. Several Holiness preachers wrote Felton thanking her for her article and offering further evidence of how worldly and antagonistic toward the Holiness view denominational leadership had grown. Dodge's friend and co-founder of the Georgia Holiness Association, E. G. Murrah, pointed to the career of turn-coat Holiness minister Clement Evans as indicative of how worldly the church was. Though still a Methodist elder, "Evans had officiated with the whiskey party and was going to make speeches for them. . . . He went all over the state making speeches for the party who are pledged to perpetuate in our commercial centers the whiskey traffic." Murrah told Felton that he and Cary introduced a resolution at the annual conference meeting "condemning preachers for taking active part in whiskey politics." Murrah lamented the fact that the resolution "was laid on the table." Another Holiness preacher wrote Felton to announce that he had, after many years, abandoned the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, because of the denomination's "intolerable despotism, tyranny and oppression" toward the second blessing crowd. The minister transferred his credentials to the Methodist Protestant Church because "the preachers are not expelled for preaching Holiness but set forth their views without fear or molestation." "The great trouble in the M.E. ch.," he declared, "is their modern episcopacy which has been a curse."²⁸

Southern Holiness advocates felt that the bishops and other worldly denominational leaders had forsaken the blessed paths of the old time religion and had grown antagonistic toward those Methodists who remained committed to the old ways. As one anonymous "Old time Methodist" preacher who wrote Felton put it, perhaps her "efforts" and the efforts of others like her might some day lead to "the restoration of our beloved church to its old time purity. May you and I, my dear sister, live to see that day when all the ministry of our beloved Zion will be placed on an equal footing share and share alike as in the days of Bishop Asbury." The Holiness Methodists recognized their status as second-class citizenry in their chosen denomination. They looked to their past as a model of what could be. Though they were progressives in their views on women's rights and democratic in their style of church government, in the area of church discipline and the rigid enforcement of personal piety, and in the simplicity of worship, they struggled to conserve the church their parents had established. As evangelicals, they were unwilling to maintain their ideas quietly, and continued to warn all who would listen to embrace the standards. Sam Jones liked his Holiness friends because they were tireless in their assault on "liquor, card playing and every phase and form of worldliness in the church." At the same time, the majority of southern Methodists were trying to come to terms with the trappings of modern culture and formality in

worship increasingly available in towns and the urban centers. These progressive Methodists held little patience for the rigid disciplines of their Holiness cousins.²⁹

Lamenting the rapid encroachment of worldliness in the church, one Georgia Holiness advocate recorded his or her convictions about "Old-fashioned Methodism" and biases against the new fashionable approaches to worship in verse:

I have watched my papers closely,
to keep up with the news;
I have read of different churches,
their pulpits and their pews;
I read of decorations fine, read of
the towering spire,
And how artistic are the songs as
rendered by the choir;
A modern, new religion too, most
popular it seems to be;
But good old fashioned Methodism
is good enough for me.

I read of heavy Brusseled aisles, and
velvet cushioned seats:
And how the white gloved sexton
smiles, and coming people meets;
Of Euchraist in silver too--of gold
baptismal fonts--
And several "toney" practices the
Savior never counts:
I find old customs laughed at much
--they're "out of style," I see;
But good old-fashioned Methodism
is good enough for me.

The congregation singing too--
that now has got to go,
As absolute, old timey, and as all
too plain and slow.--
The idea now an organ is, and ballet
girls-select--
And a fellow in a scissor tail to
stand up and direct;
But give me the dear old hymns
singing all was free,
And good old-fashioned Methodism

--they're good enough for me.

I find camp-meetings scoffed at now,
 and ridiculed--as "straw,"
 The thing now aimed at mostly is
 a preacher who can draw--
 Not penitents, but stylish folks who
 laugh and who applaud--
 Not men with money, heart and
 hand, for heathen lands abroad;
 The preacher now to be in vogue
 most eloquent must be;
 But good old-fashioned Methodism³⁰
 is good enough for me.

There was something altogether sacred about the southern Methodist tradition of the old-time religion that found its highest expression in the antebellum camp meeting. The Holiness people recognized the camp meeting as the model of all that was best in a worship service, but more, it was the setting wherein the Holy Spirit "was manifest at every service." Unimpressed with the fashionable churches and their formal, ritualized worship practices, the southern Holiness people continued to advocate a return to the old-time religion with the camp-meeting style worship services. Emma Foster, a southern Holiness laywoman described these meetings as places where the "preaching was powerful, earnest and plain, and God honored it to the saving of souls. . . . Souls would get converted at one service, and then go right back to seek the second blessing, and praise God. They got it, too. Some would come into the experience during the sermons, and would praise God aloud, and, amid tears and groans and

shouts, the altar was filled with seekers after pardon and holiness." Most Holiness Methodists were unable continually to move their church membership in order to remain attached to a Holiness preacher. Moreover, most Georgia Holiness Methodists wanted to remain within their local church even when the pastor antagonized their theology. The Georgia Holiness Association, consequently, decided they should establish a place where they could promote their views and unite annually for a celebration of the old time religion. The association decided to establish a Holiness camp meeting at Indian Springs.³¹

Notes

1. George F. Pierce to W. A. Dodge, February 8, 1881, in Garbutt, W. A. Dodge; 98-99; Ibid, 7. An interesting evaluation of Southern Methodist leadership's intense disdain for social dancing is given by Farish, Circuit Rider, 342-51.

2. For more on Southern Methodism's long standing rejection of all forms of worldly mindedness among its members and the encroachment of worldly diversions in the South after 1880, see Farish, Circuit Rider, 347-61. See also, Ownby Subduing Satan, 56-66. Ownby gives an fascinating description of the tensions circus attendance caused between rural southerners and their Baptist and Methodist pastors.

3. Ayers, Promise of the New South, 168. Ayers observes that discipline within all the southern denominations declined throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The number of people censured by their churches for dancing, swearing, adultery, drinking or any other offence fell with each passing decade. See also, Christopher Waldrep, "So Much Sin: The Decline of Religious Discipline and the Tidal Wave of Crime," Journal of Social History, 23 (Spring 1990), 535-52. Among several factors Waldrep cites as leading to the decline in church discipline was the end of slavery which promoted a stronger sense of white solidarity. Consequently, he notes, "Disciplinary expulsions were not conducive to the racial unity postbellum whites sought." Garbutt, W. A. Dodge, 98.

4. Henry Clay Morrison, Two Lawyers (Louisville, 1898), 7; 202.

5. Richardson, Lights and Shadows, 246-47. Richardson tried gently to undo the damage done to the congregation under Jarrell's ministry by conducting a Holiness meeting "according to my explanation of the doctrine." The minister made the mistake of inviting his presiding elder to speak at one of the services. What he did not realize was that his superior was in full sympathy with Dodge and Jarrell. Richardson grumbled that the presiding elder "threw a bomb into the whole camp, scattered all my plans, and intensified the strife and party spirit."

6. Beverly Carradine, The Sanctified Life, 201-3. Carradine, who spent much of his career in the Midwest addressed his concerns in the context of comeoutism

that was pervasive in that region and in the Southwest. Comeoutism was extremely rare in Georgia, however, and most Holiness Methodists were forced to remain in a church with a pastor who depreciated their religious perspective or relocate membership in the nearest Methodist church with a pastor who supported them. With well over 100 Georgia Methodist ministers still in sympathy with the Holiness doctrine after 1900--many of them occupying broken down city missions--it was often still possible for lay people to find a Holiness pastor.

7. Tillman quoted in Garbutt, W. A. Dodge, 31-32.
8. Mathews, Memorial Stones, 41. Cary, "From North Georgia," Pentecostal Herald, January 23, 1907, 3.
9. Bud Robinson, "Bud Robinson's Corner," Pentecostal Herald, March 27, 1907, 4. Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion, xiv.
10. Edward L. Waggoner, "Saved and Kept," Pentecostal Herald, August 3, 1904, 4.
11. H. P. Bell, "Rev. Wm. A. Parks Letter," Wesleyan Christian Advocate, October 21, 1885, 1.
12. Y., "Levity in Our Meetings," Pentecostal Herald, July 26, 1899, 5.
13. Clemet C. Cary, "From North Georgia," Pentecostal Herald, January 23, 1907. Henry Clay Morrison, Open Letters to the Bishops, Ministers, and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Louisville, 1900?), 49; 53.
14. The description of southern and midwestern Holiness leaders' concern with worldliness and high fashion is given by Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion 85-90. Jones correctly depicts the Holiness people in these regions as having identified their tradition "with ideas and customs then past or passing, rejecting as 'modern' worldly, and un-Christian much of their present environment."
15. Dodge, "The Double Minded" sermon in Garbutt, W. A. Dodge 150-61. Clemment Cary, "The Evils of Theatre-Going", Way of Life, March 8, 1893, 1.
16. Gilderoy, "Letter from Gilderoy," Wesleyan Christian Advocate, October 21, 1885, 1.

17. "Old Time Religion," Pentecostal Herald, June 15, 1898, 3.

18. Robinson, Ibid., 102. The Discipline of the Holiness Church, Donalsonville, Ga., (Louisville, 1903) 19.

19. William Arnold, Pentecostal Herald February 1, 1899, 1. Cf. Jones Perfectionist Persuasion, 87. "A Lady's Nine Reasons for Not Dancing," The Way of Life, January 29, 1890, 1.

20. Cary, "The Theatre Question," Pentecostal Herald, January 19, 1910, 3-4. Cary, "Be Ye Holy, For I Am Holy," The Repairer and Bible Advocate, August 1901, 4.

21. R. B. McGregor, "Cigarettes," Pentecostal Herald, April 14, 1898, 4. Henry Clay Morrison, "Coke and Tobacco," Ibid., November 29, 1905, 1.

22. "A Note by the Way," Pentecostal Herald, September 18, 1907, 5. Smith also applauded the Holiness movement's long tradition of "emotional" services over the "dead formality of fashionable churches and ragtime music rather than operatic."

23. Discipline of the Holiness Church, 18. "Question Bureau," Pentecostal Herald, September 4, 1907, 5. Railroad Evangelist, 51; 62; 97. For more on the broader evangelical southerner's concern with sabbath observance see Ownby, Subduing Satan, 104; 106-111. As in most other respects, Southern Holiness people were no more legalistic regarding Sabbath observance than most evangelicals. Yet they took special pride in maintaining the old-time standards long after most twentieth-century Protestants had moved toward less rigid observation of the Lord's day .

24. B. Helm, "Holiness and Elections," Pentecostal Herald, March 22, 1905, 3-4. Cary, "From North Georgia," August 17, 1904, 2. Cary encorsed S. C. Swallow for president on the prohibition ticket. "Sam Jones on the Second Blessing," Pentecostal Herald, June 21, 1899, 6. H. C. Morrison, "An Interesting Conference Incident," Pentecostal Herald, November 29, 1905, 8.

25. Rebecca Latimer Felton, "The Future of Methodism," American Outlook, July 15, 1897, Felton Collection.

26. Ibid. B. F. Haynes to Walker Lewis July 20, 1897, Felton Collection. Lewis to Hanes, July 24, 1897, Felton Collection. Fewis to Felton, July 29, 1897, Felton Collection.

27. Felton provided details surrounding her intellectual collision with Walker in a manuscript she composed several years after the incident and also titled "The Future of Methodism," Felton Collection. C. C. Cary to Felton, August 24, 1897. Cary recognized Lewis' timidity toward Felton and obviously found the entire incident amusing. "Strange," he remarked, that Lewis "should turn from you to arrest me!" Moreover, Cary characterized as "ridiculous" the fact that Lewis and the editor of the Wesleyan Christian Advocate "should address themselves to me and ignore you, when you are the original offender," Lewis, "The Issue Can Not Be Evaded," American Outlook, August 1897, Felton Collection.

28. "Future of Methodism," Felton Collection. Cary to Felton, December 2, 1897, Felton Collection. For a record of Cary's appointments before and after 1897, see Harold Lawrence, Methodist Preachers in Georgia, 94.

29. E. G. Murrah to Felton, November 17, 1897, Felton Collection. Frank Spence to Felton, August 20, 1897, Felton Collection.

30. "Your True Friend, Though Unknown" to Felton, October 17, 1897, Felton Collection. "Sam Jones," Pentecostal Herald, June 21, 1899, 6. "Old Fashioned Methodism," The Way of Life, clipping in Dodge Scrapbook.

31. Emma Foster, New Orleans Christian Advocate, October 5, 1883. Quoted in Farish, Circuit Rider, 71.

Chapter 8

Alternative Methods for the Old-Time Religion

Campmeeting

On an afternoon in December 1889, five men wandered through a forested area near the town of Flovilla in Butts County, Georgia. Four of the hikers--W. A. Dodge, H. A. Hodges, J. H. Curry, and George Mathews--held leadership positions in the North and South Georgia Holiness Associations, organizations that in the fall of the year had merged their resources to reestablish a state-wide association. At several points during their excursion, the group paused and bowed their heads in prayer. The newly reunited Georgia Holiness Association had formed the little committee and requested that the men do what their Methodist forebears had done many times in the past and locate a suitable area for a permanent camp meeting. After several hours the committee entered a clearing where an unusually massive oak stood. Kneeling to pray beneath the spreading limbs of the ancient tree, the men soon reached a unanimous decision that the tract of land surrounding the oak was the spot for which they searched. The fifth man,

their guide and a Baptist layman from Flovilla, named Captain Smith, "was so impressed by the earnestness, the sincerity, and devout attitude of these men" that he and a group of his friends purchased the ten-acre lot and donated it to the Holiness association.¹

The group had good reason to search carefully for a good location where they could establish their Holiness camp meeting. By 1889 it had become impossible to conceal the fact that Methodist ministers aligning themselves too closely with the Georgia Holiness Association were likely to find themselves on the short end of the appointment process at conference time and sacrifice the amenities of a comfortable urban pulpit for rigors of a hard scrabble circuit in some remote region of the state. Dodge's mercuric fall from a presiding eldership to a circuit riding charge was symbolic of how unmerciful the episcopal fiats could be. Consequently, the town and city churches that in the movement's early days had welcomed the Holiness conventions were rapidly shutting their doors. When the association met for their spring meeting in March 1890, they congregated in the "small sawmill town" of Ashburn, a community so remote from the town and urban churches the organization had grown accustomed to that George Mathews remarked, "We wondered as we looked out on the town the morning after our arrival why we had been directed to so

small and unpromising a field." Dodge and Mathews realized that the days of Holiness conventions in Georgia were numbered as tensions between advocates of the second blessing and the opposition heightened. They concluded that what they required was a place of their own, a place that would remain unmolested by bishop, presiding elder, and unfriendly pastors. They decided to establish an independent camp meeting at Indian Springs.²

The Methodists of the Old South had established camp meetings in the past owned and maintained by the denomination, but the church was changing. Southern Methodism was quickly losing touch with its heritage of an old-time gospel. It was becoming more worldly and increasingly willing to overlook Southerners' fascination with the new amusements available in the region. Though fiercely loyal to the denomination of their forebears, the Holiness people believed they could no longer trust it to support their theology or their pietistic values. As Clement Cary observed, they would not come out of the church though they were often besieged by requests from more militant Holiness advocates to do so. A. J. Jarrell said that when the membership of the Georgia Holiness Association came out of the church it would be "feet first." Though determined to remain attached to the denomination, Georgia Holiness leaders were subtle enough in their thinking to realize that if they were ever to mollify the majority of the opposition they would have to

move the controversial wheel of Holiness out of the denominational orb by establishing a permanent yet expressly non-denominational Holiness camp meeting, a haven in which the standard practices of piety espoused by Methodists before them would be protected and nurtured for the benefit of future generations. The defensive posture of the association was evidenced in the organizational charter that declared the main purpose of the camp meeting as an "exclusion of all teaching not vital to the doctrine of entire sanctification."³

The camp leaders were reacting to the onslaught of criticism they received throughout the latter part of the 1880s from others within southern Methodism who viewed as unrealistic their theology and social standards. As the ecclesiastical war of words escalated and the demotions of Holiness preachers to the most unenviable charges became common, the movement's leaders realized it could only grow increasingly difficult to hold their conventions in town and city churches where the host pastors were placing careers on the line. By the late 1880s, Georgia Holiness preachers recognized that their association was in decline and sought an alternative means of keeping their views alive. A permanent and independent camp meeting site provided a discrete location where the Holiness clergy could hear the nation's finest proponents of the doctrine of second blessing holiness preach on the topic.⁴

Dodge, Mathews, and their Holiness colleagues were right. Officially stigmatized by the southern Methodist hierarchy, the Georgia Holiness Association attracted fewer and fewer young clergymen. In North Georgia, where earning a respectable salary hinged on one's evasion of the Holiness associations, the movement began to decline rapidly throughout the early 1890s. Holiness preachers continued to exhort congregations to seek heart purity, but after 1894, the majority did so exclusive of the Georgia Holiness Association. Facing severe financial difficulties, Dodge's The Way of Life issued its final copy in 1895 when Dodge sold his subscriptions to H. C. Morrison, editor of The Pentecostal Herald. Association members continued to gather for their semi-annual Holiness conventions, but each year they did so in less prominent churches. In 1896 they were ostracized by almost every church in the North Georgia Conference and had to congregate in a tent on Edgewood Avenue in Atlanta. Shortly after the meeting, in an attempt to keep the message of second blessing Holiness alive in Georgia, Dodge decided to disband the organization and focus his attention on the campground at Indian Springs. In 1898, Dodge's good friend Clement Cary opined that it was "a matter of regret that the 'holiness movement' in Georgia, which at one time was accompanied by marked power, has almost ceased to be a movement. . . . the semi annual gatherings have about been

abandoned." Yet Cary recognized that at "Indian Spring . . . the 'second blessing' doctrine 'properly so called,' has the right of way. This will still hold this people together, and serve as a means of propagating this gracious experience."⁵

A number of factors played a role in orchestrating the Georgia Holiness Association swan song. While the organization leadership generally avoided direct confrontation with southern Methodist leaders, their newspapers frequently bristled with critical commentary regarding the worldly attitude of most bishops and presiding elders. Moreover, the Holiness movement's message of second-blessing holiness carried with it the implication that most Methodists--those who had experienced only one blessing--were spiritually inferior. The majority of Georgia Methodists conceded the validity of some form of Christian perfection, but most understood the doctrine as a process of cleansing from sin that continued throughout the life of the believer. Others perceived that the process might indeed culminate in a distinctive work of grace but cautioned against focusing too much attention on one doctrine and ignoring the other foundational tenets of their faith. These groups were sensitive to the exclusionist and potentially schismatic tendencies that accompanied the formation of associations for the promotion of Holiness. "Come-outism" was an ongoing problem within

Methodism after 1880, and church leadership in Georgia took steps--at times harsh ones--to protect their ecclesiastical interest.⁶

After 1890, many southern Methodist leaders were determined to take whatever measure necessary to control the Holiness movement in Georgia and in the other southern states. At the denomination's General Conference in 1894, the bishops had in mind Indian Springs and other well established Holiness camps in Texas when they warned delegates that their church harbored a "party with holiness as a watchword; they have holiness associations, holiness property." The denomination's leaders noted, moreover, that the Methodists who participated in these associations and private Holiness camps "disparage the new birth, and all stages of spiritual growth from the blade to the full corn in the ear, if there be not professed perfect holiness." In a power play devised to restrain Methodist evangelists who travelled to Holiness camp meetings in the South, the Conference delegates established a new church law stating that no "local preacher shall enter the recognized territory of any of our pastoral charges for the purpose of conducting protracted or revival meetings except upon the invitation of the preacher in charge." The new law in effect stipulated that before a southern Methodist preacher could agree to address an independent camp meeting in any conference, he was to seek permission from the

presiding elder and the Methodist pastor whose church was closest to the camp. With the new legislation in place, uptown Methodists hoped to extend control over Holiness preachers even in the rural camp meeting setting.⁷

It was virtually impossible to enforce the new regulation, and few Methodist preachers relished the thought of becoming involved in an unpopular ecclesiastical trial simply because a colleague agreed to speak at a nearby Holiness camp meeting service. George G. Smith spoke of the absurdity of the new regulation and observed that "men will go to . . . holiness camp-meetings when they please . . . and the best thing we can do is to let them alone." Pentecostal Herald editor and regular speaker at the Indian Springs camp meeting, Henry Clay Morrison was the first prominent figure to fall victim to the anti-Holiness legislation. In 1896 Morrison conducted revival services at a camp meeting near Dublin, Texas, after receiving notice from a local Methodist pastor and the presiding elder that he was unwelcomed there. When the presiding elder filed a complaint against Morrison, the denomination tried and ejected him from the ministry. Morrison had as many friends as enemies in the church, and after filing an appeal with the Kentucky Annual Conference, the denomination restored his ministerial credentials.⁸

The General Conference of 1898 mandated even stricter enforcement of the anti-Holiness legislation making it a

crime for Methodist laity as well as preachers to help conduct public services not sanctioned by a local pastor and his presiding elder. Some local pastors did attempt to exercise their new authority and sent notices to Methodist evangelists to remain clear of their communities. Shortly after the General Conference, Clement Cary observed that "official notices are already being sent out by pastors warning others to 'keep off my ecclesiastical premises,' some of the notices having reached Georgia." Cary lamented that "Rev. Sam P. Jones has been notified by a pastor in Alabama not to put his unhallowed feet on said pastor's sacred territory, and Rev. W. A. Dodge has received similar notification from a preacher in Texas." As in the case of the original legislation, however, most pastors and presiding elders recognized the autocratic nature of the 1898 ruling and decided to look the other way when Holiness Methodists conducted their camp meeting services in their back yards. Morrison was not far wrong when he commented that the 1898 legislation was intended "to crush out the great holiness revival in which many thousands of our people have been converted and sanctified." Though Morrison warned his readers that he had "no doubt this new law will be vigorously enforced," few non-Holiness Methodists took the Conference edict seriously.⁹

Though the edict was not widely enforced, some southern Holiness evangelists like Bud Robinson felt stifled enough that they left the denomination and united with other independent Holiness groups. While there were no major episodes of "comeoutism" in Georgia Methodism, a small number of southern Methodists in the state, unwilling to accept the anti-holiness regulation, quietly left the church and established their own groups. Frustrated by the dogmatic decrees issued in the General Conferences, a Donalsonville couple, T. J. and Leona Rish Shingler, left their Methodist congregation at the beginning of the century and created an independent Holiness church that later affiliated with the Church of the Nazarene. Leona Shingler became an evangelist in 1904 and was perhaps the first woman in the state to be ordained in any church.¹⁰

A wealthy family, the Shinglers owned one of the largest lumber and turpentine businesses in Georgia. Shingler's rigid Holiness values played a major influence in her husband's business practices. Throughout the late 1890s and in the early 1900s, T. J. relied on black convicts for a significant percentage of his labor force, a practice his wife incessantly condemned as unacceptable in God's sight. Though she regarded her husband's use of convict labor with disdain, Shingler decided that the presence of oppressed blacks on the family farm furnished a

providential opportunity for ministry, and she made a regular habit of preaching the gospel of full salvation to them. In 1906, during a Holiness revival at the Donalsonville church, Shingler realized his wife was right, "was convicted for working convicts," and gave up the practice. T. J. never felt called to ministerial service and was content to accompany Leona to the small churches and community schools throughout the Southeast where she preached to anyone who would listen to a woman minister. A close friend observed of T. J. that he "showed no pride when he would climb into his white steamer automobile and drive his wife to the most remote part of the country to tell of the saviors power to save. He owned one of the first automobiles."¹¹

At the time of her death in 1911, Leona Shingler had played a major part in the establishment of several Holiness churches in Georgia. In memory of his wife, Shingler built and endowed an impressive Holiness school at Donalsonville named Shingler Holiness University. The Donalsonville Holiness college like other Holiness schools emphasized a classical liberal arts education along with the traditional biblical curriculum offered by most church supported institutions.¹²

A Spirit of Concession

After 1900, Methodist efforts to disrupt Holiness activities in Georgia began to subside. Southern church leaders chose to ignore what remained of the movement rather than afford its constituency an opportunity for further martyrdom. Moreover, the fierce loyalty to the church on the part of the majority of Holiness Methodists may have played a role in quieting the most outspoken critics. An attitude of toleration gradually surfaced in both Georgia conferences. In 1903, the year before his death, Dodge became senior pastor of St. James, Atlanta, a lofty appointment for a man who had known nothing but hard scrabble circuits and mission assignments during the previous eighteen years. In the same year, the conference delegates honored Dodge by requesting that he address an evening session of the North Georgia Conference. Dodge's Holiness convictions never wavered. As late as 1900, he still referred to Christians who could not claim the second blessing as the "merely regenerated." Yet Dodge and most of his associates moderated their criticisms of church officials as the century drew to a close. By 1900 the Southern Methodist presses rarely received letters from Holiness Methodists that were openly critical of the denomination's leaders. In 1906 the editor of the Wesleyan Christian Advocate expressed his pleasure that the Holiness movement had grown more tolerant of other's views and that a "wiser leadership" was "discouraging the abuse of the

Church, and an unkind and un-Christian criticism of the Church authorities is now less frequent than some years ago." In 1908, the conciliatory president of the Indian Springs camp meeting association, George W. Mathews, admitted that during the movement's early days, the Georgia Holiness Association was, at times, "almost reckless with enthusiasm." The movement made "mistakes," he observed, and it was not surprising "that out of these defects many should frame grounds of criticism that in turn weakened the influence of the good done." Mathews suggested that a "spirit of concession on the part of those who preach the doctrine, has been a gain to both opposers and advocates of the doctrine." As southern Methodism came to realize that most Holiness proponents were uninterested in fomenting schism, the denomination made the adjustments necessary to tolerate the second blessing advocates within its ranks.¹³

Southern Methodism learned to live with its Holiness element, but after 1900, in its move to make compromises, it surrendered much of its distinctive emphasis on the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection. By 1903, the official southern Methodist position on the doctrine of Christian perfection had become so vague that it was impossible to discern what the denomination actually believed. The 1903 edition of Doctrines and Polity of the M. E. Church, South tendered a definition of holiness

virtually stripping the doctrine of any meaning. The statement noted that it was the "duty of every child of God to attain unto that type of Christian experience and character, and to lead that life that may be fitly described by the term 'Christian perfection.'" Yet the statement concluded that as "to what is to be accomplished progressively and what instantaneously, and whether or not Christian perfection is a thing to be "professed"--these are points of secondary importance about which Methodists do now differ, and always have differed." ¹⁴

Some Georgia Holiness advocates fought the tide of compromise that arose after 1900 and attempted to reassert the presence of Holiness advocates in the state. A few months following W. A. Dodge's death in January 1904, a nostalgic Charlie Tillman sought to honor his friend's memory by resurrecting the North Georgia Holiness Association. By September of that year, the restored association boasted "forty names . . . on the roll . . . consisting of preachers, laymen, and consecrated women." At the new association's first meeting members elected Tillman president. Another close friend of Dodge, W. O. Butler, set the tone for the uncompromising nature of the organization and warned that "from now on, the movement will take an aggressive form." The organization held its first Holiness convention in Atlanta in March 1905. Butler and Tillman announced plans for a fall meeting in Jackson,

but the convention never materialized and the restored association disintegrated as quickly as it had reemerged.¹⁵

The reasons for the sudden emergence and disappearance of the Georgia Holiness Association remain unclear. It is unlikely that Tillman, Butler and others who resurrected the organization were unprepared for the sort of criticisms they almost certainly received from their non-Holiness colleagues and church officials. It is more likely that individuals within the movement recommended the association's extinction. George Mathews certainly recognized that the Holiness association as it existed in the 1880s and '90s was a key issue of contention within southern Methodism. As president of the Indian Springs Camp Meeting Association, Mathews was willing to allow the association--which held meetings in the state's Methodist churches--to fade from the scene in favor of the less obtrusive independently owned and operated camp meeting that gave no official recognition to any denominational hierarchy. Whether or not Mathews confronted Tillman and suggested that he cancel the Jackson convention and all subsequent association meetings in Georgia may be impossible to determine. What is certain is that after 1905, the Indian Springs Camp Meeting Association remained the centralized Holiness Association for the state, and Methodist ministers like Tillman, Mathews, Butler, along

with non-Methodist champions of the theology, such as the Shinglers, focused their attention on the annual camp meeting event.¹⁶

Old-Time Religion Thrives at Indian Springs

Even with the demise of the Holiness association in Georgia, the camp at Indian Springs continued to provide a suitable haven for the maintenance of a Holiness ministry. The strongest regular supporters of the camp came from professional backgrounds. Like the patrons of the Holiness camps in the North, the southerners who regularly attended the camp had to be wealthy enough to afford a two week vacation each August. Yet many camp supporters pooled their resources in order to help poorer Methodists attend the meetings. F. C. Benson and other wealthy association members built large cottages at the camp equipped to accomodate up to fifty people and invited individuals from their community to attend the meetings at no cost. Unable to take their message to the town and city churches of Georgia after 1896, former members of the Holiness association began bringing the people to their meetings. One Holiness partisan observed that in "this way many people were brought into the camp who had never heard of holiness, and many of them found the experience at the altars of the tabernacle."¹⁷

With the reduction in tensions between Holiness and non-Holiness Methodists that occurred after 1900, an increasing number of the state's Methodist preachers became active in the Indian Springs camp. In 1907, Mathews reported what he perceived as a revival of second blessing holiness among preachers in both Georgia conferences and noted that "more than a hundred" Georgia pastors were present at the August camp meeting. Mathews was pleased that the demise of the associational conventions did not doom the Holiness movement in Georgia. Instead, he noted that the "movement has taken on a different form." Independent Holiness camp meetings, colleges, and periodicals were, he noted, "taking the place of the associational meetings in churches, which always had an element of friction." With the mitigation of this "friction" Mathews remained hopeful that Methodists on both sides of the issue could maintain their unity.¹⁸

The former members of the Georgia Holiness Association and their spiritual heirs continued to lend energetic support to their camp meeting at Indian Springs. Moreover, most Methodist members of the camp association helped in the maintenance of Asbury college, an independent liberal arts school established in 1890 near Lexington, Kentucky. In turn, Asbury provided prospective southern Methodist preachers from Georgia and other states with the training in the Holiness tradition that was necessary for keeping the doctrine viable within the denomination. The author of

the Indian Springs Camp history, Z. T. Johnson noted that The Pentecostal Herald, Indian Springs Camp Meeting and Asbury College were "bound together by common interest in the propagation of scriptural holiness and in the training of Christian workers for world-wide service." In effect, the Pentecostal Herald furnished a suitable replacement for Dodge's Way of Life, the camp meeting association at Indian Springs took over the role of the Holiness associations in the state, and Asbury college offered an educational alternative to southern Methodist youth seeking to avoid the increasingly worldly patterns of instruction found at the denominational institutions at Vanderbilt and Emory. The three Holiness institutions provided an effective means for sustaining the old-time religion in a rapidly changing New South.¹⁹

The last president of the North Georgia Holiness Association and regular song evangelist for the Indian Springs Camp, Charlie Tillman, gave nostalgic expression to the tension that existed between the Holiness people and their increasingly worldly environment:

'Tis the old time religion
 'Tis the old time religion
 'Tis the old time religion
 It's good enough for me.

It was good for our mothers
 It was good for our mothers
 It was good for our mothers
 It's good enough for me.

It has saved our fathers
 It has saved our fathers
 It has saved our fathers
 It's good enough for me.

Makes me love everybody
 Makes me love everybody
 Makes me love everybody
 It's good enough for me.

Tillman described the nature of the "Old Time Religion" in another popular gospel song titled "Old-Time Power:"

They were in an upper chamber,
 They were all with one accord,
 When the Holy Ghost descended,
 As was promised by our Lord.
 Yes, this pow'r from heav'n descended
 With the sound of rushing wind;
 Tongues of fire came down upon them,
 As the Lord said He would send.

Yes, this "old time" pow'r was given
 To our fathers who were true;
 This is promised to believers,
 And we all may have it too.

Refrain: O Lord, send the pow'r just now,
 O Lord, send the pow'r just now,
 O Lord, send the pow'r just now,
 And baptize ev'ry one.

Tillman and his associates believed that the old-time religion was rooted in the Pentecostal power of a Holy Ghost baptism--something they understood as spiritual heirs of Palmer and Fletcher as the agency of entire sanctification. The power of the Spirit enabled them to resist temptation and to lead holy lives in a society that had quickly shifted toward worldly interests. Most Holiness leaders recognized that their Methodist forebears of the Old South did not understand the power available to

them. Moreover, they were cognizant of the doctrine's northern antecedents delivered by officials for the National Camp Meeting Association after the War. Southern Holiness Methodists were conciliatory toward their northern cousins and were generally willing to play down sectional differences in favor of a united effort to propagate the Holiness movement across America and the world.²¹

Yet northern and southern advocates bore certain theological differences. The old northern Holiness revivals of Finney and Palmer were progressively oriented, optimistically predicting the eventual perfection of American society and the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. With few exceptions, by the late 1880s southern advocates of second-blessing perfectionism viewed the golden age of religion, not in the future, but in their own past. Though few antebellum southern Methodists endorsed northern views of Christian perfection, their sanctified heirs remained attached to the simplicity of their rural values. In the early stages of the movement's development, several Holiness preachers were openly optimistic about the future of the New South and humanity in general. Yet by 1890, as the Methodist church's reaction to the movement grew more severe, with few exceptions the southern Holiness people were rapidly shifting to premillennialism, believing that the world and the human race were growing more corrupt and would eventually face God's destructive wrath. Clement

Cary shared the northern Holiness movement's optimistic appraisal of the future of humanity and wrote numerous articles in the church presses and the Pentecostal Herald denouncing the southern Holiness movement's premillennial bent. Cary pointed out that the Southern movement had not always been so pessimistic about humankind's potential for good. "It was," Cary remarked, at "some of their camp meetings" that he "heard much of Pre-millenarianism, which then began to be unwisely introduced into this once promising movement." Cary lamented that the doctrine became so pervasive in the Southern Holiness movement that many advocates "seemed disposed to class all those of the contrary opinion as heretics of the first water."²²

Southern evangelist John L. Brasher, who like many of his Holiness colleagues shifted from an optimistic postmillennial stand to a decidedly premillennial position at century's end, summarized the movement's typically nostalgic perspective when he remarked that his identification with the Holiness movement resulted from his personal desire to restore the "doctrines and experiences . . . which made our fathers hearts flame." Charlie Tillman, whose revelry in the "Old-Time Religion" was well known nationally, was so certain of the world's imminent destruction that in 1902 he published a little song book titled Eleventh-Hour Songs for the Eleventh-Hour Laborers. By the time of the First World War, Henry Clay Morrison's

outlook was so bleak that he remarked, "We regret to write down here what our fellow-men will regard as a pessimistic view of the future." Morrison felt that the best Christians could hope for "following the close of this world war" was a "short period of peace" during which time the Gospel could be preached to every nation. After this brief period of calm, Morrison observed, Christ would return to earth overturning the evil kingdoms of the world and establishing his reign on earth.²³

It was the eccentric Holiness evangelist W. B. Godbey who best expressed the reasons most southern Holiness people gravitated toward a premillennial historical outlook. Godbey, who abandoned postmillennialism for premillennialism in 1884 argued that the clearest sign of the Christ's second coming would be "an awful apostasy" that would infect the churches. Godbey declared that "a man with half an eye can see. . . . A wonderful sign of the literal fulfillment of the later day prophecies." Godbey believed the surest sign of this coming was being fulfilled by wicked church leaders who persecuted the Holiness people. "Do you know," Godbey asked his Holiness readers, "in some places they will take their sanctified men and send them away off into some cold place?" Godbey recognized that the end of world and the coming of Christ were near because the Methodist church had grown hopelessly worldly and had instigated persecution of its saintliest

members. This opinion more than any other factor, directed Morrison, Brasher, Watson, and other Holiness preachers toward the same gloomy forecast. ²⁴

Thrust suddenly into a more modern landscape by the social transformation of the New South, southern Holiness proponents sought to capture the transcendent values of their parents and retain these ideals in an era of considerable social stress and change. Moreover, they merged the old-time values with what they understood to be the old Methodist tradition of second blessing holiness. No longer "merely regenerate" southern Methodists could lay claim to a special power from God that helped them overcome the worldly and fashionable temptations accompanying southern urbanization. The second blessing provided a sense of balance and order for thousands of displaced rural southerners attempting to honor their heritage in unfamiliar and sometimes hostile surroundings. Holiness had come south at the right time. Participation in the movement gave opportunity for many to put their "war wounds" behind them and restore meaning in their lives. For countless others, Holiness religion provided a cultural bridge linking them with their perceptions of a simpler and more wholesome age. For members of the Georgia Holiness Association, Holiness religion combined all that was sacred in the old-time faith with the added dimension of a quick and easy means to perfection and a Holy Ghost power that

helped them resist the corrupting influences of the New South.²⁵

Charles Reagan Wilson points out that many religious prophets of the Lost Cause warned their fellow southerners about "the dangers of materialism and worldliness." Wilson demonstrates that for some southern Christians this fear of material success was a pressing issue. Yet Holiness southerners like many other of the region's evangelicals were by no means intimidated by material advancements in the New South. Perhaps the great majority of southern evangelicals appreciated the opportunities for material success afforded them by the economic transformation of the region. Yet most feared the temptations accompanying such success. In 1925 a Southern Baptist preacher in Florida remarked that "We have all been brought closer to each other by new methods of communication and ways of travel. This has been at once a great blessing and a curse. While the things that are elevating are more easily reached by the masses, the things that are evil are more accessible also. . . . and the problems of society have become more difficult." Dodge, Jarrell, Cary, Morrison, and most of the movement's leaders welcomed industrial expansion to the Southeast after 1880. They were happy to achieve material success and leveled criticism only at those individuals for whom worldly achievement had degenerated into a carnal, worldly attitude. The wealthiest Holiness proponents in

Georgia, the Shinglers and Bensons, received a high degree of respect from their colleagues in the Holiness tradition because they gave generously of their resources in support of the Indian Springs Camp, Holiness colleges, and mission efforts at home and abroad. Southern Holiness advocates approved of the acquisition of worldly wealth as long as one used these resources to help bring sinners the message of full salvation before the Lord's return.²⁶

W. B. Godbey characterized economic and technological advances in the South and throughout the nation as another sure sign of the end of human history and the coming reign of Christ. The locomotive trains, ocean liners and other "wonderful inventions" were "not invented for the accommodation of the devil, but for the accommodation of God's people that they may evangelize the whole world speedily." So convinced was Godbey of the inherent goodness of the New South's transportation systems that he insisted the kingdom of God in the millennium would be serviced by modern transportation devices "and every street car will have inscribed on it 'Holiness to the Lord; Hallelujah!' and every conductor when he bawls out, 'All aboard!' will follow it with a big 'Hallelujah!'" Moreover, Godbey concluded that wealthy Christians who gave generously from their abundant resources made it possible to support mission efforts that would bring the gospel to every creature before the coming of Christ. Godbey praised

the generosity of men like "Brother Dennett" who "gave \$50,000 to spread the Gospel among the heathen." "With such strides," Godbey declared, "we certainly should girdle the globe with salvation and holiness to the Lord."²⁷

The perfect millennial world Godbey envisioned would be ruled by the Holiness people. The entire world, he observed will be the possession of the saints, and be ruled by them from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same." Godbey's vision of the coming destruction of the old earth and the establishment of the millennial reign of Christ included some rather peculiar speculations as to which saints would occupy various administrative offices. "I feel divine intimation," Godbey declared, "that the apostle Paul will be President of the United States. I expect we will receive an invitation from him to the grandest holiness convention that the world ever saw, and people will come from all over Christendom."²⁷

Southern Methodism's "war to extermination" against the Holiness movement in Georgia and the South, that reached its zenith in the 1890s, subsided quickly in the early 1900s when the factions involved developed greater tolerance for old enemies. The Holiness evangelists continued to highlight their role as prophets of the true Methodist faith, and their non-Holiness counterparts came to view Holiness theology as an eccentricity, an archaic remnant, they could learn to live with. The Holiness

people moved their administrative organization outside the denominational fold when they stopped holding Holiness conventions in the southern Methodist churches. Yet in reality the transformation of the Holiness movement in Georgia and the rest of the Southeast, with its curtailment of Holiness conventions and emphasis on alternative methods such as the creation of Holiness camp meetings and colleges, was a shrewd application of smoke and mirrors. The Holiness leaders declared that the new organizations rested entirely outside the denomination's purview and were, consequently, not amenable to ecclesiastical directives, yet they made no secret of the fact that these private enterprises were intended as a holy leaven for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Christ was returning soon. The "false church," the fashionable Methodists in the South, as Godbey and his colleagues described them, "has already accepted the 'love of the world'. . . and, of course, she doesn't want Christ to come back." It remained for the Holiness preachers to guide those who would listen back to the true paths of the old-time religion, the same religion that was good for their mothers and had saved their fathers. Dodge, Morrison, Godbey, and the vast majority of their colleagues recognized that the Holiness movement in the South was not just a parachurch organization; it was the true church, it was Methodism. The Holiness wheel maintained the outward

appearance of having spun away from the denomination, yet southern Methodists in both camps recognized that the wheel would remain forever within the southern Methodist wheel, an emblem of what once was and what would one day be.²⁸

Notes

1. Z. T. Johnson, The Story of Indian Springs Holiness Camp (Flovilla, Ga., 1965) 8.

2. Annie Mathews, Our Golden Anniversary: A Retrospect of Fifty Years of The Indian Springs Holiness Camp Meeting (1940), 4.

3. Garbutt, Rev. W. A. Dodge, 4. Johnson, Indian Springs, 8.

4. The establishment of an independent camp meeting for the promotion of Holiness religion was by no means unique to Georgia Methodists. Southern Methodists in Texas also were deeply concerned about the denomination's antagonistic attitude toward their position and began establishing their own private camps in the 1880s. Holiness advocates in Georgia, Texas, and other parts of the South drew inspiration for these independent camps from northerners who had established their own camps--such as the Vineland, N.J. meeting where A. J. Jarrell was entirely sanctified--just after the Civil War.

5. W. O. Butler in Garbutt, Rev. W. A. Dodge, 43. Clement Cary "From North Georgia," Pentecostal Herald, August 10, 1898, 4.

6. For a thorough treatment of the "comeoutism" issue in the southern and northern branches of Methodism, see Smith Called Unto Holiness, 28-56.

7. Pastoral Address in The Journal of The General Conference, 1894, 25. Joseph Key almost certainly offered a dissenting vote toward the statement.

8. George G. Smith, "Georgia Letter," Southern Christian Advocate, n.d., clipping in George G. Smith Collection, Woodruff Library, Emory University.

9. Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 41-42. C. F. Wimberly, A Biographical Sketch of Henry Clay Morrison, D.D.: The Man and His Ministry, (New York, 1922), 113-15. H. C. Morrison, "The New Law," Pentecostal Herald, June 22, 1898, 8. Clement C. Cary, "From Georgia," Pentecostal Herald, July 20, 1898, 4.

10. Smith, Called Unto Holiness, 42. Ingersol, "Burden of Dissent," 42. P. P. Belew, "The Beginning of a District," Herald of Holiness, August 9, 1933, 14.

11. "A Review of the History of the First Church of the Nazarene, Donalsonville, Ga.," Nazarene Archives, Kansas City, MO. W. W. McCord, "Donalsonville, GA." Pentecostal Herald, January 24, 1906, 4. "Biography of Thomas John Shingler, Jr." Nazarene Archives.

12. "History of the First Church, Donalsonville."

13. Garbutt, Rev. W. A. Dodge, 136. W. A. Dodge "One Need of the Holiness Movement," Zion's Outlook, December 6, 1900, 3. Quoted in "The Holiness Convention," Pentecostal Herald, December 5, 1906, 3. George W. Mathews, "The Holiness Movement in the Southeast," Pentecostal Herald, March 25, 1908, 2-3.

14. Doctrine and Polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Nashville, 1903), 69.

15. W. O. Butler, "The Movement in Georgia," Pentecostal Herald, September 14, 1904, 4. W. W. McCord, "N. Ga. Holiness Convention," Pentecostal Herald, March 22, 1905, 2.

16. The Methodist presses offered no mention of the reorganized Georgia Holiness Association and no doubt tried to ignore the issue.

17. Z. T. Johnson, The Story of the Indian Springs Holiness Camp (Flovilla, 1965) 8. Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion, 20.

18. Mathews, "Indian Springs Camp," Pentecostal Herald, September 4, 1907, 5. Mathews, The Holiness Movement in the Southeast, 2-3.

19. Johnson, Indian Springs Camp, 4.

20. More popular gospel songs of Charlie Tillman can be found in his "Funeral Songs and Minister's Helps" (Atlanta, 1940).

21. The wealthiest southern Holiness proponents in Georgia donated large proportions of their incomes to Holiness causes. For more on the Shingler's personal financing of international Holiness missions see "History of the First Church Donalsonville." J. W. Hughes, "Wilmore, Ky." Pentecostal Herald, July 26, 1899, 5.

22. Clement C. Cary, The Second Coming of Christ: Showing Pre-Millenarianism to be Unscriptural and Unreasonable (Atlanta, 1902), 3. Apparently anxious to help uncover the theological anomalies of the Holiness

movement in the South, Bishop Warren A. Candler wrote the introduction to Cary's little book. The issue of the millennium's nature was the only major theological issue upon which Cary and W. A. Dodge differed.

23. Brasher, Standing Between, 128. Tillman, Eleventh-Hour Songs for The Eleventh-Hour Laborers (Atlanta, 1902). Henry Clay Morrison, The World War in Prophecy: The Downfall of the Kaiser and the End of the Dispensation (Louisville, 1917), 88.

24. W. B. Godbey and Seth C. Rees, The Return of Jesus (Cincinnati, 1898) 75; 79. Brasher, Standing Between, 128.

25. Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion, 17. Jones recognized the movement's deep attachments to earlier values and practices and suggested that as "Nostalgic middle-aged participants in a commercial and industrial revolution, they longed to reinstitute evangelism of the country-side in their city congregations."

26. Wilson, Baptized in Blood, 83. Wilson recognizes that many southern "ministers and churches accepted the benefits of material improvements." Few Holiness writers seemed disturbed by the shift toward New South capitalism, yet the majority remained convinced that the revivalistic style of the antebellum South was superior to the more refined methods in the urban churches of the turn of the century. "Alachura Baptist Association Minutes," 1925, 16-17 quoted in Ownby, Subduing Satan 194. See also Helen Lee Turner's "Fundamentalism in the Southern Baptist Convention: The Crystallization of a Millennialist Vision" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1990), 443. Turner notes that Southern Baptists were also repulsed by much of the New South's modernity, yet they refused total rejection "of the positive side of the changes, primarily those things that came with more money." The Holiness proponents felt no condemnation for their acquisition of wealth, but experienced guilt when they used it for any sort of frivolous entertainment or pleasure.

27. Godbey, The Return of Jesus, 21-22.

28. Ibid., 49.

Conclusion

In a letter to Dodge's Way of Life in January 1890, H.R. Withers advised readers to "push the work. Never mind what our critics say--push the work; it is of God." "All objections to the work" of the southern Holiness movement, Withers insisted, "are captious, or proceed from groundless fears of timid men." Another writer, James L. Ivey from Asylum, Georgia, urged readers to "never mind criticism, misconstruction, or persecution in its modern form. The more some plants are bruised the sweeter the fragrance. The more they are stamped the more they spread, the more they are kicked, the more they are scattered." Withers and Ivey's admonitions reflect a principle that following the Civil War blossomed into an infallible southern dogma: the active defense of time-honored traditions and values will inevitably meet with oppression from the worldly-minded who have abandoned their heritage. And like the saints of old, the defenders of the old-time religion should not despair but rather look forward in the end to their vindication and the reception of a martyr's crown, the reward for their stubborn efforts. Participants in the Georgia Holiness

Association like their colleagues in other southern states remained highly confident that they were a peculiar people, chosen by God to represent true Methodism in the New South. In the early 1880s they fully expected the denomination to rally to their cause and support their interpretation of Wesley's doctrine of the second blessing. Yet when it became clear that the great majority of denominational leaders and a growing army of worldly laypeople opposed their rigid doctrines and absolutistic morals, the Holiness Methodists regarded their rejection as a badge of honor. Moreover, they interpreted the persecution of their ministers at the hands of worldly apostates a signal of God's favor.¹

Holiness Methodists in Georgia associated their new-found fascination for a pure heart with all that was good, lovely, and noble in the evangelistic teaching of their parents. Before the war, southern Methodists were likely to agree on what constituted "the world." As youth, they had learned the importance of shunning worldly habits. They honored their memories, yet the imperfections of the world in which they grew up with its culture of honor and violence forced them to make certain compromises--compromises they later admitted were displeasing to God.

With the coming of the Civil War, the world they created lay in ruins. At first they were hard pressed to

explain their defeat at the hands of a more worldly enemy, but as Charles Reagan Wilson has demonstrated, they quickly recognized that their military losses could be best understood in terms of a refining fire--what Wilson describes as a "baptism in blood"--rather than as a form of punishment. They developed new myths to cope with and explain their defeat and humiliation. Eventually, they came to believe that the losses they suffered were a blessing that indicated God's chastening love and his desire to restore his chosen people.

John Inskip and the northern Methodists transmitted the message of instantaneous perfection to individuals searching for a renewed sense of meaning. Many of the southerners who helped establish the region's Holiness movement had experienced the new birth before the war but recognized that after the South's fall something more was needed. The second blessing helped them come to terms with their losses and provided a source of optimism for the New South. Early optimism gave way quickly to a premillennial pessimism when a new generation of southern Methodist leaders grew critical of the movement's theology and cultural ambitions. Subsequently, the worldly-Methodists, those who eschewed second-blessing holiness, eventually took stringent measures to check the movement's advance. The Holiness people relinquished aspirations for a perfected world sanctified by Holy Ghost baptized preachers

and laity and reinterpreted their role as prophets of pristine Wesleyanism in the form of the old-time revival in a world teetering on the brink of God's vengeful return. Holiness leaders in Georgia and other parts of the Southeast coped with the onslaught of criticism against their views in much the same way they had made sense of the North's persecution of the region during the war. They argued that oppression at the hands of worldly hypocrites, the consequence of their strong stand on the old-time religion, was the surest indication that their cause was a just and holy one. Consequently, few Holiness leaders were willing to admit that it was, in large measure, the narrowness of the movement's views that precipitated much of the controversy.

Though most southern Holiness advocates never recognized it, their formulation of the second blessing was as much a novelty as it was an old-time tradition. Wesley never deprecated regeneration as Dodge and others in his coterie tended to do. Furthermore, Wesley's approach to entire sanctification was less formulated and offered a broad interpretation regarding the method and timing of attainment. The Georgia Holiness Association, like other associations in the South, dictated a rigid method for achieving holiness patterned exclusively after Palmer's model of altar theology. Moreover, the original Wesleyan view of sanctification was derived to a large extent from

Greek Christian writers whose concept of divinization affirmed that Holiness is active in this world. Wesley's application of this Eastern Christian idea led him to uphold the essential goodness of creation and the Christian's subsequent duty to alleviate suffering through acts of loving benevolence. The early northern perfectionists generated a similar optimism and channeled their sanctified energies into the often quixotic arena of social reform. Sustaining the traditions of their forebears, after 1890, the southern Holiness movement resisted the temptation to believe that the world could ever be radically improved until Christ returned and vanquished the worldly-minded who actively opposed the Holiness message. In the meantime, they lent their resources to spread the message of heart holiness through camps, colleges and mission activities. They sought the salvation and sanctification of sinners one soul at a time and the protection of their converts from worldly temptations. They perceived their role in history as that of victims, unfairly persecuted by church officials and encompassed on all sides by a culture rapidly capitulating to the temptations of modernity. Their mission, as the victimized embodiment of true Christianity, was, as W. B. Godbey put it, "to be true and show Israel their sins; that is, show the Methodists, etc., their sins." Godbey's et ceteras included the entire human race. The Holiness

mission he believed began with the apostate Methodists who had forsaken their heritage and continued through the spreading of scriptural holiness throughout America and the world in anticipation of Christ's coming. Godbey declared the Holiness movement "the morning star . . . the John the Baptist which precedes the second coming, and this is an obvious sign of His coming, and that it is very near."²

Few Holiness preachers believed themselves corporately or individually capable of ridding the world of the devil. Godbey observed that as the end approached many "'shall be purified. . . .' the wicked will not understand. Can you make them understand it to save your life?" As Godbey's good friend Dodge put it, with the achievement of Holiness "the mind of Satan is taken out of you." Only those Christians who had received the blessing and who knew what it was to have the Devil removed could understand the mission which hinged on the expulsion of corruption in the individual. The southerners accepted Palmer's short and easy way to the experience because they believed the time was quickly running out; Christ would soon return to claim his sanctified flock and, as H.C. Morrison put it, "cast into a furnace of fire the proud and worldly pleasure seekers of this world."³

The southern Holiness advocates were a paradoxical blend of old values and conservatism merged with theological ideas relatively new to the region. Their most

outspoken leaders created avenues of expression for women while at the same time condemning worldly attitudes and activities. They were not the disinherited, nor were all of them rural, yet the majority had grown up in farming communities and experienced profound difficulty parting with the values passed down to them there. Certain that the church of their forebears had abandoned them, the southern Holiness proponents determined to remain true to their heritage and sought ways to experience the old-time religion while maintaining ties to a denomination they felt had relinquished its sacred charge to "spread scriptural holiness across these lands." The Holiness movement in Georgia and other parts of the Southeast was one among many metaphors of the New South. The movement represented one group's attempt to come to terms with the suddenly shifting foundations of a once fairly static culture. The Holiness people willingly participated in the advancements of the New South and understood the progress as means to an end--the eventual destruction of sinners and the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. The kingdom was by all estimations rapidly approaching, and no southern advocate of Holiness religion doubted that it was a kingdom where the old-time religion would be good enough for everybody invited to enter.

Notes

1. Withers, "Our Arkansas Letter," Way of Life, January 29, 1890, 2. Ivey, "Fragments," ibid.

2. Outler, John Wesley, 252. Outler notes that Wesley's "affirmative notion of 'holiness' in the world must be taken seriously--active holiness in this life--and it becomes intelligible only in the light of its indirect sources in early and Eastern spirituality." Godbey, Return of Jesus 76; 78.

3. Garbutt, Life of Rev. W. A. Dodge, 161. In 1905 H.C. Morrison, who abandoned his postmillennial optimism five years earlier, called for the establishment of a "great army" of Holiness witnesses and evangelists in order to begin the battle to win "a hundred thousand souls" to the message of full salvation. Morrison, "Let No One be Discouraged, Let No One be Idle," Pentecostal Herald, October 4, 1905. See also Morrison's premillennialist remarks in "The Destruction of the Wicked," ibid., November 29, 1905, 1.

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(Kansas City) Herald of Holiness

(New York) Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review

(Jackson, Georgia) Middle Georgia Argus

(Nashville) Nashville Christian Advocate

(Oberlin, Ohio) Oberlin Evangelist

(Lexington) The Pentecostal Herald

(Nashville) Quarterly Review of the M. E. Church, South

(Raleigh) Raleigh Christian Advocate

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(Charleston) Southern Christian Advocate

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