



ENGRAVED BY SARTIN

JOSEPH MILLARD.

CENTENARY MEMORIAL

OF THE

PLANTING AND GROWTH

OF

PRESBYTERIANISM

IN

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA AND PARTS ADJACENT,

CONTAINING THE HISTORICAL DISCOURSES DELIVERED AT A CONVENTION OF THE SYNODS OF PITTSBURGH, ERIE, CLEVELAND, AND COLUMBUS, HELD IN PITTSBURGH, DECEMBER 7-9, 1875.

WITH APPENDICES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

PITTSBURGH:

PRINTED FOR THE PUBLISHING COMMITTEE,
By BENJAMIN SINGERLY, 74 THIRD AVENUE;
AND FOR SALE BY
W. W. WATERS, PRESBYTERIAN BOOK STORE.

1876.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1876, by
AARON WILLIAMS, FOR THE PUBLISHING COMMITTEE,
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

NOTE.

The profits from this work are to be appropriated toward the endowment of the "Elliott Lectureship" in the Western Theological Seminary at Allegheny, Pa.

THE LIFE AND LABORS
OF THE
REV. JOHN M^CMILLAN, D.D.

*THE GOSPEL WHICH HE PREACHED, AND ITS INFLUENCE
UPON THE CIVILIZATION OF WEST PENNSYLVANIA.*

A DISCOURSE
BY THE
REV. D. X. JUNKIN, D.D.





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Deut. xxxii. 7.—*Remember* the days of old, *consider* the years of many generations : ask thy father, and he will show thee ; thy elders, and they will tell thee.



HUMAN progress is entirely dependent upon the memory. By this power the mind retains or recalls knowledge once acquired, and thus garners the materials of thought, comparison, and deduction. Memory is at once the *recorder* of the intellect and the storehouse of the affections. Without this faculty of mind, man would be a perpetual *novice*—his past a *blank*, his future *imbecility*—indeed he would not be *man*. Without memory, science and art would perish.

What memory is to the *individual*, history is to social man. “History,” said one, “is the memory of nations.” It teaches philosophy by example and experience. It gathers light from the past to shed upon the future, and to con its lessons is a dictate both of reason and of revelation ; for, whilst it increases the sum of human knowledge, it kindles a virtuous emulation of deeds beneficent and great, inspires gratitude to the God of history, and proclaims his glory.

It was doubtless from considerations of this kind that Moses reca-

*This discourse is an abridgment of the one previously delivered at Pigeon Creek and Chartiers, the pastoral charge of Dr. McMillan.

pitulated the history of Israel, and enjoined, as he did in this text, its rehearsal in every generation—"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations," etc. Although this passage and its context is richly suggestive, I propose not to detain you with a full discussion of it, and I shall make no further use of it, except to vindicate, by divine authority, the propriety of celebrations like the present, and the duty of studying the history of God's providence—especially such events as relate to the Church of Christ and to the interests of civilization and regulated liberty.

The holy nation, and almost all others, have associated important events in their history, not only with monumental erections, but with memorial days, anniversaries, jubilees, and centenaries. For this, in your speaker's judgment, we have divine authority in our text and numerous other Scriptures. We are exhorted, perhaps commanded, to "remember the days of old."

History, when truthful, is a narrative of God's providence; and he who fails to recognize "God in history" has no adequate conception of it. The plot of the vast drama of time, of which history is but the successive acts and scenes, was planned by the divine mind. He shapes the destiny of nations. He decrees the rise and fall of empires. He is "King of kings." His glorious purposes ever in view, He provides instruments best adapted to their accomplishment. When social tempests rage, He

"Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm."

And if it be our duty to know God in his being, perfections, and works, it is our duty to "remember the days of old, and consider the years of many generations."

This brief discussion of our text will suffice to exhibit its meaning, and opens the way, whilst it supplies an apology, for a glance at the history of our Church in this region; and especially for a sketch of the life and labors of the venerable man whom I have been requested to commemorate.

The pioneers of Pennsylvania were a race of men better qualified to make history than to write it. The axe, the mattock, the plough, and the rifle, were implements with which they were more familiar than with the pen. Having to struggle with the forest, with wild beasts, and with savage men, they performed heroic deeds worthy

of historical record; but they had no leisure or facilities for recording them; and it is difficult to rescue from the dim traditions and the imperfect records of the times the story of their toils and prowess and sufferings, worthy to be written in imperishable lines.

If the civil and military enterprises of a new country are difficult to ascertain and verify, it is still more difficult to trace the founding, in a frontier country, of that kingdom which "cometh not with observation." The physical development of a country—the felling of the forest—the building of cabins and towns—the opening of roads—the struggle with savage foes—the burning of dwellings—the murder or captivity of neighbors—are events that impress themselves upon the common memory and become the traditions of a settlement, and are recited by the parents to the children at a thousand firesides, and are often recorded in letters and newspapers. But the quiet rearing of the first family altars in forest homes—the first gathering for social worship beneath the forest shades—the first readings of the Holy Book—the first echoes of the voice of prayer and praise from the grand old hills—the first advent of the missionary of the cross—the noiseless planting of the seeds of piety, which afterwards grow into congregations of the Lord—these, because less exciting, are less clearly remembered.

Still, there is much material for the church history of Western Pennsylvania—far more than could be compressed into a single discourse of reasonable length; and, as the theme assigned me is *biographical* rather than *historical*, I shall introduce *general* history only so far as my specific subject may demand.

On the 25th day of July, 1775, two mounted men might have been seen slowly riding over the Laurel Hill. The path was almost impracticable, the day was sultry, and both horses and riders gave proofs of weariness. Their equipage was such as was usual at that early period—saddle, bridle, capacious leather saddle-bags, corduroy over-alls, with overcoats strapped upon the saddle-pad behind the riders. About noon they arrived at the cabin of a Mr. Barker, near the western base of Laurel Hill. At that point the travelers part company, their routes leading in different directions. One of them tarried at Mr. Barker's till five o'clock in the afternoon, in order to obtain the convoy of that settler to the next house, about thirty miles distant. The person thus awaiting convoy through the

wilderness was a young man not yet twenty-three years old, of slender but well knit frame, a little above medium height, of rather dark complexion, of grave and comely, but not very handsome features, and of a demeanor that betokened earnestness and energy of character beyond his years. He was dressed in the garb usual with clergymen of the period, now dusty from the moil of travel.

This young man had been licensed to preach the Gospel, nine months before, by the Presbytery of New Castle, at East Nottingham, in Chester county.

From that date he had been itinerating in preaching the Gospel, first in the vacancies of his own Presbytery, and then in different places in Augusta and Rockbridge counties in Virginia. In July he crossed the mountain from Staunton to the head of Tygert's valley, and bent his way to the Northwest, preaching in the settlements through which he passed, until he arrived at the western base of Laurel Hill, as already stated.

At five o'clock on the evening of that 25th of July, under the guidance of Mr. Barker, the youthful preacher set forth on his way to the part of the country which was to be the field of his life-long and valuable labors. "Nothing remarkable happened," says he in his journal, "save that Mr. Barker shot a doe, part of which we carried with us. Night coming on, and being far from any house, we were forced to lodge in the woods. We sought for a place where there was water, unsaddled our horses, and hobbled them with hickory bark, and turned them to the hills. We then made a fire, roasted a part of our venison, and took our supper. About ten o'clock we composed ourselves to rest. I wrapped myself in my greatcoat and laid me on the ground, with my saddle-bags for a pillow." Such was the first night spent in Western Pennsylvania by the man who was to prove her chief Apostle. Let us trace him from that night in the woods, until he reached the scene of his nearly sixty years' toil.

"THURSDAY.—This morning we rose very early, ate our breakfast, got our horses, and set to the road again. About noon we arrived at Ezekiel York's (doubtless 'the next house' before mentioned). Here my companion left me, and I had to take to the woods alone. Crossed two hills, which in some parts of the world

would be called mountains, and after traveling what they called twelve miles, came to the glades. My lodging this night was not much better than last night. I had a deerskin and a sheet under me, and a pillow for my head. This, however, I placed under my haunch, to keep my bones from the floor, and I placed my coat under my head." "Friday," continues his journal, "I left the glades and traveled ten miles, to one Coburn's. Here I got some grain for my horse—the first since Wednesday morning. They told me that I was about ten miles from Col. Wilson's, where I intended to tarry the rest of the week; but the day being wet, the road difficult, and houses scarce, I lost my way often. About sunset I came to a cabin, but it was waste. I searched all about, but could find no inhabitants. I then took another path, and reached another cabin; but there was nobody at home, and the door was barred. I went further along the path, but found no shelter. The night being dark and very rainy, I returned to the forenamed cabin, turned my horse into a field, climbed the wall of the cabin, and went into a hole in the roof that served for a chimney. I then opened the door, brought in my saddle, kindled a fire, laid myself down on a sort of a bed, and slept very contentedly till morning. I then buckled on my wet clothes, got my horse, and set out, not knowing which way to steer. But before I had gone many rods, I met the owner of the cabin, told him the story, got directions of the road, and came to Col. Wilson's in time for breakfast."

On the first Sabbath of August he preached at Mount Moriah to a small congregation. This was his first sermon in Western Pennsylvania; and after mentioning the smallness of the audience, he adds: "However, they seemed attentive, and some tears were shed." Those tears were the harbingers of copious showers, afterwards shed under the preaching of the same earnest lips; and that sermon was the first link in a series which reached on for more than half a century.

Returned the same evening to Wilson's, the young preacher remained there till Wednesday, August 4th. Thence we can trace him, by his journal, from point to point, preaching and visiting, until on Saturday, the 21st of August, he arrived at Mr. John McDowell's, on Chartiers Creek, where, on the following day, he

preached his first sermon on that field of his life-labor. Previous to his arriving there, he had visited a number of settlers with whom he had been acquainted east of the mountains, one of them his brother-in-law. These settlers were doubtless from Chester county. On the next day he rode to Patrick McCullough's, on Pigeon Creek, and on Tuesday, the 24th, preached his first sermon in that part of his future charge, at the house of Arthur Forbes.

Such was the time, and such the circumstances, of the first advent of the great and good JOHN McMILLAN to Western Pennsylvania, and to the churches of Chartiers and Pigeon Creek, in which he was the instrument of a work which told so mightily upon the interests of religion, education, and civilization in this western region.

JOHN McMILLAN sprung from that sturdy, earnest, godly, and liberty-loving race, the Scotch-Irish. His parents, William and Margaret (Rea) McMillan, emigrated from the North of Ireland to Chester county, Pa., about 1742, and settled at Fagg's Manor, where she died when the subject of this sketch was but ten years old. He was born on the 11th of November, 1752. Like Elkanah and Hannah, his pious parents had devoted him, in purpose and in prayer, to the Gospel ministry. Having lost an infant son, they solemnly vowed that, if God would give them another son they would call him by the same name (John), and devote him, God willing, to the sacred office. The son was given, the vow was fulfilled, and, as we shall see, the child thus devoted was made the instrument, like the forerunner of our Lord, of turning many to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Trained in the family and in the school of the vicinage, he made good progress in primary studies, and in due time entered the Fagg's Manor Academy, then under the direction of that eminent divine and educator, Dr. John Blair. In that school were trained many men who in their day attained eminence, such as Davies, Cummins, Robert Smith, James Finley, Dr. John Rodgers, and others. At that academy young McMillan continued, until its principal, Dr. Blair, was called to Princeton College. He then, at about the age of fifteen, repaired to the grammar school of Pequea, in Lancaster county, and pursued his studies under that

learned scholar and theologian, Dr. Robert Smith. Your present speaker, in his earlier life, saw the scenes of McMillan's training, much as they were a hundred years ago. The churches, forty years ago, were substantial stone structures, the pulpits in the side instead of the end of the building, and with the straight high-backed pews of the most orthodox type. Then, and very likely yet, these ancient churches were surrounded by the grand old forest trees, beneath which the red man had strayed; and at Pequea the tree was pointed out under which George Whitefield had preached.

Young McMillan continued at Pequea until the spring of 1770, when he entered the College of New Jersey, then under the presidency of that great scholar, theologian, statesman, and patriot, Dr. JOHN WITHERSPOON, the vice-president being Dr. Blair, formerly of Fagg's Manor. Previous to entering college young McMillan had been the subject of religious impressions, under the ministry of such men as Blair and Smith, and had united with the church.

But whilst a student at Princeton, his religious views and experience assumed a much more clear and satisfactory type, particularly during a season of revival in the college, which occurred not long after he entered it. He was then eighteen years old, and seems to have shared largely in the spiritual blessing. In his manuscript notes, he says, in regard to this season: "At one time there were not more than two or three of the students that were not under serious impressions. On a day which had been set apart by some of the students as a day of fasting and prayer, while the others were at dinner I retired to my study, and while trying to pray, I got some discoveries of divine things which I never had before. I now saw that the Divine law was not only *holy, just, and spiritual*, but also that it was *good*, and that conformity to it would make me happy. I felt no disposition to quarrel with the *law*, but with myself, because I was not conformed to it. I felt it now easy to submit to the Gospel plan of salvation, and felt a calm and a serenity of mind to which I had hitherto been a stranger. And this was followed by a *delight* in contemplating the divine glory, in all His works; and, in meditating upon the divine perfections, I thought I could see God in everything around me."

In this brief quotation are disclosed the elements of McMillan's

future power and wide-spread influence for good. In that narrow study in old Nassau Hall, which seven years afterwards trembled with the roar of battle, and was partly consumed by British vandalism—in that narrow study, and at that noontide hour, in the soul of that young suppliant on his knees, were sown the seed of lofty principles and mighty impulses, which grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength, and made him the hero that he was. Then was laid by the same Spirit who hath garnished the heavens, the broad and deep foundations of John McMillan's greatness and marvellous influence for good. Then were shed abroad in his heart the grand impulses which bore him forward in study, in labor, in toil, and hardship, and through trials and dangers that might appal the stoutest heart. And in that young student's soul that day were planted the grand *principles* of religion and of regulated liberty, the dissemination and development of which, by him and his fellow-laborers, among the brave and hardy settlers of this region, have laid the broad and stable foundations of our Christian civilization, and made Western Pennsylvania a great, glorious, and prosperous community.

The Gospel which, in that hour of fasting and secret prayer, was more fully shed abroad in that young student's heart, was not the mawkish, sentimental, emasculated Gospel, which is so rife and popular in certain quarters in our day. It is not a Gospel which disregards law—prostrates all distinction between *right* and *wrong*—esteems the righteous and the wicked as equally worthy and safe—softens the lurid flames of Hell to the faintest rose color—palsies the restraints of law by scoffing at its penalties; enfeebles the moral tone of the community by holding up *manhood*, instead of *Godhood*, as the standard of right; abates the abhorrence of sin, by denying that it cost the atoning blood of the Son of God, and boasts that men do not need that blood. It was not a Gospel that teaches men that its provisions are a sort of *insolvent law*, in which God lets down the high claims of eternal justice to the level of man's shattered abilities, and consents to accept a *percentage* of the duties which men owe to God and to the rule of right, instead of a perfect satisfaction. It was not a Gospel that substitutes man's putrid "inwardness" for the moral law, as a rule of life. It was not a Gospel which *fosters*, instead of *eradicating*,

the lusts of our corrupt nature, and bears such fruit as has recently emitted its fetid odors from a Brooklyn Court. No, my countrymen, the Gospel which won the hearts of John McMillan and James Power, and Joseph Smith and Thaddeus Dod, and Matthew Henderson,* and the other godly and self-denying men, of our own and other branches of the great Presbyterian family, who were the pioneer preachers of this region, was a Gospel that teaches men to *fear* God as well as to *love* Him—to *reverence law* as the exponent of the will of the Supreme—to aim to *satisfy* the *claims* of law, by accepting the suretyship of Christ, who has in our stead obeyed its precept and endured its penalty—a Gospel that makes men feel that they are *under the law* to Christ, and sweetly drawn to obey it, as a rule of life, by the impulse of love and gratitude. It is a Gospel that “magnifies law and makes it honorable,” not by the prostration of its penalties, and defeating its requirements, but by a complete *satisfaction* of *both*, through the obedience unto death of the God-man, our Surety and Redeemer. The Gospel which McMillan learned and taught proposed no abatement of the high claims of justice—no compromise with sin, and relinquished no demand for perfect obedience to law. But it pointed to the “Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world”—not by an absolute pardon, which would only encourage rebellion, but by an atoning *obedience* and *sacrifice*, which paid the sinner’s debt, and at the same time demonstrated that God was so determined to punish sin that he would not spare his beloved son, when he stood charged even with imputed guilt. It was a Gospel which exhibited at once “the goodness and severity of God”—a Gospel which demonstrates by the most terrible tragedy of time, that it is of the *essential nature* of God to vindicate justice by punishing sin, whilst it girdles his throne with the rainbow of mercy and of hope. It is a Gospel of *peace*, originating in eternal *love*, but based upon the rock of eternal *justice*—a Gospel that slays the sinner’s enmity and wins him to obedience, by demonstrating God’s love to the sinner in the death of Jesus—a Gospel that provides a propitiation (forgiveness), but only that its author may be *feared*; because it proves that God *never* forgives

* Matthew Henderson was the first Associate Presbyterian Minister in West Pennsylvania. He labored at Chartiers near Canonsburg in what is now the U. P. congregation of that place.

until it is *right* and *safe* to forgive. In short, it is a gospel that gives "glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will to men."

Such was the Gospel which at that noontide hour flooded the mind of the youthful McMillan with a light "above the brightness of the sun." Like the monk of Erfurth, it came to him in his solitary cell. Like the Apostle Paul, it came to him "about noon;" and it is not an uninteresting coincidence that the Apostle of the Gentiles and the Apostle of Western Pennsylvania received this fresh baptism about the same hour of the day. Paul's illumination was preternatural—McMillan's by the ordinary operation of the Spirit of Grace; and if the former was called to a more magnificent and world-wide work, the latter was called to a mission the results of which no human arithmetic can measure.

We have dwelt longer upon this crisis in our hero's history, because, as we judge, it contains the *seeds of things*—the *embryo* of that mighty influence which God, through this good man, exerted upon the growing population of this region, and which He continues to exert throughout the vast West. Into his young heart, at that crisis in his history, was poured the light of that Gospel which he and his fellow-evangelists brought across the Alleghenies and planted amid the grand old forests of Western Pennsylvania—a Gospel whose real believers will lie abased before their God, whilst they *spurn* the yoke of *man*—a Gospel which draws men to God and to duty "with cords of love"—that teaches them to respect the rights of others, and defend their own—that inculcates the true elements of *law, order, and regulated liberty*—and a Gospel whose outgrowth, into a formulated church government, as naturally produces REPRESENTATIVE REPUBLICANISM as does the development of the acorn the oak. The great ideas of *social federation, representation, trust, responsibility, social duty, and accountability to God*, are all taught in the Calvinistic theory of the Gospel; and all these are necessary elements of a true civilization and of civil liberty. And if our noble commonwealth has exhibited a model representative democratic government, which her younger sister states have been glad to copy, and which challenges the admiration of the world, she owes it to the doctrines of evangelical religion; and it is a matter of history, that Presbyterian men exercised a controlling influence

in shaping the fundamental law and the jurisprudence of our commonwealth.

And it is a matter of gratulation, that the seed sown by McMillan and his compeers has taken such deep root, in the region of which this city is the metropolis, and has produced so sturdy and prolific a crop that, at the close of a century after their advent, the descendants of the pioneers maintain, with unswerving firmness, the principles and institutions of their fathers. West Pennsylvania still contains "*the backbone of Presbyterianism.*" And, as an index of this, it is but just to say that the local organ of our Church in this city (and it is but the echo of the unswerving conservatism of our people) has firmly maintained sound doctrine and civil and ecclesiastical order, and has never truckled to the loose morality and the corrupt liberalism of the times. It has never failed to rebuke, in terms just and explicit, that morbid tolerance of error and social corruption, which springs from the fact that their abettors are rich and fashionable, or their authors men of genius and popular talents.

But to resume our narrative. Mr. McMillan graduated in the fall of 1772, and returned to Pequea and prosecuted theological study under Dr. Robert Smith, as did many of Dr. Smith's former students, from time to time, as there were then no theological seminaries in the country. In due time he was received under the care of the Presbytery of New Castle, and, after the usual trials, licensed to preach the Gospel, as already stated. This occurred before he was quite twenty-two years of age. We have already traced his journey and his labors, until he arrived upon the field of his life work.

In order to a full appreciation of the labors of McMillan and his compeers, it would be necessary to exhibit the state of this country, and of its sparse inhabitants, at the time of their advent. This would swell the present discourse beyond due limits, and might trespass upon fields allotted to others of my learned friends, who are to take part in this celebration. I will only call attention, then, to those marvellous movements of Divine Providence, by which this region was reserved to become the home of Presbyterians.

At one time it seemed likely that the lily flag of France would wave from Quebec to New Orleans, over the Canadas and the vast valley of the Mississippi—symbol of the power of the

Bourbons, and protector of the Popish religion. At another time, under the auspices of the Ohio Company, of which the Washington family were active members, there was a prospect that this region would be settled by Germans, and that the language of Luther would here prevail. But God had other purposes; and this land was reserved for the occupancy of that race which, having migrated, for conscience' sake, from North Britain to Ulster, had stood, at Derry and on the banks of the Boyne, for the Protestant religion and the liberties of the world.

It was a kind and wondrous Providence by which the power of France was swept from the vast region which they once claimed, and by which the scarlet woman was kept from rearing her altars and establishing her persecuting power in this magnificent domain. It was a wondrous Providence that reserved for the Scotch and Scotch-Irish Presbyterians a home in this grand region, and committed to their rude but honest hands the chief part in laying the foundations and shaping the structure of our institutions, civil and religious.

The main events, civil and military, which secured this result, are known to the tyro in our history. The French were expelled. The honest Germans would not settle in a region over which Episcopacy claimed *rule* and *tithes* (for Virginia claimed this region at the time Lawrence Washington was negotiating for German emigrants, and Episcopacy was the established religion of the old Dominion), and thus it was that West Pennsylvania was reserved for the Scotch-Irish.

We have not space to describe the slow and difficult process by which these western counties were settled. The population was still sparse when Mr. McMillan arrived. The people were still grappling with the forests, and endangered by savage foes. No more interesting historical field is afforded in our country than is West Pennsylvania. The simple facts connected with its settlement, its defence against the French and the Indians, and its progressive development, transcend in interest the stories of romance. From the time that the first traders visited this region, as early as 1715 or 1720, on to the date of the advent of the first permanent white settler, Christopher Gist, in 1752, its history is one of thrilling interest; and illustrates, in the most wonderful manner, the

grand unity of that scheme of Divine providence, the record of which makes up the drama of human history. The visit of a young Virginian to Venango Le Bœuf, and the forks of the Ohio, the next year after Christopher Gist's settlement, constitutes a link in one of the most stupendous chains of human events which history records. Gist accompanied this young man on this important journey; and, on their return, the youth narrowly escaped death by an Indian bullet, in what is now Butler county; and was near perishing the next day in the swollen waters of the Allegheny, a short distance above where this city now stands. But God preserved him then, and subsequently, to become the FATHER of his Country, and to give to history its most ILLUSTRIOUS NAME.

On his way out, that youth had cast his military eye over "the Point," the future site of Forts Duquesne and Pitt; and, when he returned to Williamsburg, he made such a report of the military importance of the position as induced Governor Dinwiddie to send Capt. Trent, the next year, with a company of soldiers, to take possession of this locality and erect a fort. Trent arrived on the 17th of February, 1754, took military possession of the site of the future Pittsburgh, and commenced the erection of a fort; but before it was completed, it was, on the 17th of April, beleagued by Contracœur with a large body of French and Indians. These came down the Allegheny river in about one thousand canoes and batteaus. Trent being absent, his lieutenant, Ward, was constrained to capitulate, and returned to Virginia. And thus, on the site of this city, began, a century and a quarter ago, that memorable conflict, the old French war, which sent its thunders into every quarter of the globe, sent desolation along our frontiers, and resulted in sweeping the lilies of France from the vast domain which she claimed in Canada and the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi.

Previous to this war, a few settlers had arrived—some from Maryland, some from Virginia, but much greater numbers from Cumberland, Franklin, and other counties of Pennsylvania. But they had nearly all abandoned their rude homes, upon the commencement of that war. After the peace of 1762, many of them returned, and the tide of the immigration, notwithstanding the alarms and horrors of Pontiac's war, became steady, and many flocked to this

region—some from other colonies, but chiefly from the parts of Pennsylvania which had been settled by the Scotch-Irish, and also from Ireland itself.

Like Gideon's men, the pioneers were *select*—selected by a process somewhat similar. None but the hardy, the brave, the rough and ready, the self-denying and adventurous, would be likely, voluntarily, to encounter the toils and perils of the wilderness. The Scotch-Irish Presbyterians preponderated, although considerable numbers of German descent and some from other colonies mingled with them. They were of the middle class in society, which is removed alike from the effeminacy of the wealthy and the indolence and ignorance of the lower *strata*. Whatever the Presbyterian immigrant might be forced to leave behind, he brought with him to his forest home the *Bible* and *Shorter Catechism*, and, long before there were any ministers, or organized congregations, or public worship, many a cabin in the world resounded with the voices of praise and prayer.

At the time of McMillan's advent, Pittsburgh was an irregular village. The country was a wilderness. A dense and majestic forest reared its countless sturdy columns and tossed its stalwart branches over this broad expanse of hill and valley, broken only here and there by "a deadening" or incipient clearing. The roads were rough and often dangerous, mere bridle-paths, almost impracticable for any conveyance except the pack-horse. The rude log cabin, with its clapboard roof and doors, its earthen, or at best its puncheon floor, and rough and sylvan furniture, was the settler's home. Salt, iron, glass, powder, shot, and all such necessaries, had to be brought over the mountains on pack-horses. Their food consisted of the products of the soil, prepared with the rudest appliances, to which milk, pork, venison, and other fruits of the chase were added. Their clothing, after the garments brought with them were worn out, was largely of their own manufacture. Flaxen cloth and linsey-woolsey constituted the garments of the women and the hunting shirts of the men, whilst buckskin was a staple both for moccasins and dress. As many as nineteen bridegrooms have been known to be married in the same blue cloth coat, the only dress coat in as many wedding parties, which was made to do duty, by fair sale or generous loan, for several years. Their manners and customs were as simple and unostentatious as

their attire. A frank hospitality marked their intercourse with neighbors and with strangers. A sound morality, a simple honesty, and often, too, decided piety, imparted lofty character to the pioneers. Their women were worthy of such husbands, and worthy to be the mothers of the generations which, under blander auspices, have descended from them. They were heroines in their sphere, and many a deed of daring was performed by woman's hand in those trying times.

It was to such a wilderness land, and to such a brave, thoughtful, and unsophisticated people that John McMillan and his fellow-laborers came an hundred years ago.

After his first visit to Chartiers and Pigeon Creek, he preached at several points in this region, and amongst others at Fort Pitt, where he spent the second Sabbath of September. Thence he returned to his father's house in Fagg's Manor, which he reached in October, 1775. He then attended Presbytery, and was appointed to go on another missionary tour, to the valley of Virginia, and thence westward; and we can trace his progress, by the help of his journal, through Maryland, Virginia, and over the bleak Alleghanies, in the depth of winter, till he again arrives at Pigeon Creek, on the fourth Sabbath of January, 1776, and on the next Sabbath at Chartiers. This second visit awakened great interest in the places where he labored, and he often speaks of the assemblies being "numerous, attentive, and much affected." He returned home in March. Soon after a call was made and forwarded to his Presbytery, which he accepted on the 22d of April, 1776. He was then dismissed to the Presbytery of Donegal, then the most westerly Presbytery of the Church, and by it he was ordained, in view of taking charge of those congregations in which he spent his life. His ordination took place at Chambersburg, June 19, 1776.

Meantime the war of the Revolution had begun. Lexington and Bunker's Hill and other battle fields had been baptized to freedom in patriot blood. Fifteen days after McMillan's ordination the Declaration of Independence was made and signed, and the country committed to a life or death struggle.

He tarried in the East until August 6th, when he was married to Miss Catherine Brown, daughter of an elder of the church of Upper Brandywine. The marriage was solemnized by the Rev. John Car-

michael, father of the late Mrs. Robert Jenkins, of Windsor Place, Lancaster county, and grandfather of the wives of Drs. John W. Scott, John W. Nevin, Alfred Nevin, and Rev. W. W. Latta. It was this patriotic pastor, as his daughter, Mrs. Jenkins, informed me, who, when on a visit to Washington's camp at Valley Forge, heard our great chief complaining of the great want of *linen* for dressing the wounds and sores of his suffering soldiers. Carmichael returned home, and, on the next Sabbath, made an appeal to the patriotic women of his charge, asking them to spare three or four inches from the lower end of a certain garment, to meet this crying want in the suffering army. The women of Brandywine responded to the call; and, by Tuesday noon, the pastor might have been seen approaching the camp with several bags full of narrow rolls of linen, just such as the surgeons needed. The country was so poor, and importations being cut off, it was necessary for people to deny themselves, in order to sustain the patriot cause. And I have no doubt that the young bride, Catharine McMillan (for she was still there), contributed her full share to the stores of the surgeons. And these were no flimsy cotton rags (cotton was then unknown), but good substantial home-made linen.

Such were the perils of the times, that McMillan did not take his wife to the West until more than two years after his marriage. But he visited his congregations, spent much time amongst them, preaching, ordaining elders, and administering ordinances. At length, in November, 1778, his family accompanied him to the field of their future abode and labors.

In a letter written to Dr. Carnahan, in 1832, he describes the home to which he brought his family. "The cabin in which I was to live was raised, but it had neither roof, chimney, nor floor. The people, however, were very kind; they assisted in preparing my house, and on the 16th of December I moved into it; but we had neither bedstead, tables, stool, chair, nor bucket. All such things we had to leave behind, as there was no wagon-road over the mountains, and everything had to be carried on pack-horses. We placed two boxes, one upon the other, for a table, and two kegs served for seats, and having committed ourselves to God, in family worship, we spread a bed on the floor and slept soundly till morning. The next day, a neighbor coming to my assistance, we made

a table and stools, and in a little time we had everything comfortable about us. Sometimes, indeed, we had no bread for weeks together, but we had plenty of pumpkins and potatoes, and all the *necessaries* of life; as for *luxuries*, we were not concerned about them. We enjoyed health, the Gospel and its ordinances, and pious friends. We were in the place where God would have us be; and we did not doubt but that He would provide everything necessary. And, glory to His name, we were not disappointed."

Brethren and countrymen, what a mighty influence for good was begun in that log-cabin, on the night of the 18th of December, 1778! When that young minister and his young and godly wife knelt that night in family prayer, a train of causes was set in operation, which reached on through more than half a century, and is still operating for good far beyond the sphere of their personal agency: The Gospel, as preached by him and by those who were converted under his ministry, or educated through his agency, has proved mighty through God to the accomplishment of grand results. As a minister, an educator, and a citizen, he was a man of wondrous work. Possessing a strong physique, a mind above mediocrity, an education solid and in advance of his times, his labors must have been simply prodigious, especially in the early years of his ministry, when the poverty of his people prevented them from giving him an adequate stipend, and his own hands had to minister to his necessities. To write always one, and sometimes two, sermons a week, and to commit them to memory—to visit his flock, scattered over a wide district of forest country—to catechise, to assist at communions, to attend church courts—and all, over such roads as the present generation cannot conceive of, demanded Herculean toil and brain work.

And the results of the labors of him and his contemporaries are stupendous. If there is a striking contrast between the log-cabins of the pioneers and the stately mansions that now adorn both town and country; if the Western Pennsylvania of to-day, with her towns, cities, churches, colleges, schools, factories, steamboats, railroads, and her ten thousand appliances of human elegance and comfort, presents a wondrous contrast with the forest-clad, savage-roamed, roadless, and thinly populated Pennsylvania of one hundred years

ago; if we now exult in a civilization such as adorns and blesses social life; and if we may justly claim that our region has sent forth men, means, and influences to shape the great commonwealths which have sprung up west of us, we ought, in simple justice, to trace our own solid greatness and the happy influences which we have been able to set forth, largely to the seed sown by John McMillan and his compeers in toil, and to the plastic power of their life and labors. Into the details of these labors we have not time to enter. A volume could not record them. They were *abundant, unceasing, earnest, and powerful*. The grand old story of the cross was their central and never forgotten theme. The doctrines of the cross—the *motives* and the *glories* of the cross—they loved to proclaim. The fall and depravity of man—the abhorrent nature of sin—the sinner's liability to the law's dread penalty—the need of a Redeemer and an atonement—the love of God in providing both—Christ's death and righteousness—the freedom and fulness of salvation—the necessity of the new birth, faith, and repentance; Sinai, Gethsamane, Calvary, death, judgment, heaven, hell: such were the themes of the preaching of John McMillan and his contemporaries of our own and other branches of the Presbyterian Church in these Western counties. And they are the only themes worthy of the pulpit. These doctrines had, in the British Isles, so leavened society as to accomplish wonderful reformation and sow the seeds of liberty and constitutional government. The Bible, the Sabbath, and Calvinism, had made Britain what she is, and had made Ulster the nursery of freemen. And when these doctrines, in connection with the republican form of church government, were planted in the virgin soil of this region, and amongst a people of strong mother wit, of simple manners, and free as the winds which tossed the forests round them, they had fuller development, and have produced their normal fruits in fuller measure than ever before. I except only New England, where the same causes wrought the same glorious results.

Dr. McMillan's voice, even when your present speaker sat under it, in 1829-31, was strong, clear, and powerful in the tones of denunciation, but often meltingly tender. As I remember him, he was peculiarly powerful in exhibiting the terrors of the law. He almost made you hear the mutterings and feel the vibrations of Sinai's

thunder; and yet, when setting forth the love of Jesus, his voice would mellow to the tenderest tones. At the communion season he was peculiarly effective. Then his heart, and eyes, and voice were like those of one fresh from Gethsamare and Golgotha. Methinks I can hear him yet, as in melting accents, he would say to the communicants, as they sat around the long white table: "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!" Forty-six years ago, last March, I sat down, for the first time, at the holy table, in the dear old church of Chartiers. The lovely and beloved John Cloud, who, with the lamented Laird, laid his bones beneath the torrid sands of Africa, our first martyr missionary, sat by my side. Dr. McMillan served that table; and the memory of that scene shall never fade from this heart. It was a Bochim. So tenderly did the Doctor portray the scenes of Calvary, that every eye ran over, every heart was full. My dear friend Cloud was convulsed with emotion, and the entire audience was moved. My venerated President, Dr. Matthew Brown, was there, with soul aglow, assisting in the ordinance; and it was a day to be remembered. Alas! how few then present linger here below. But it is well—Heaven only is home!

It might be pleasant, on this centenary, to make mention of the places and houses of worship of one hundred years ago; to follow the early preachers as they proclaimed the Gospel, first in the private cabin-houses, then in "the tent," located near some sparkling spring, with logs or puncheons for seats, ranged like the seats of a church; a platform roofed over for a pulpit, with a board in front for the books, and a bench for a seat, with no shelter for the congregation but the grand old forest trees. Many a time have McMillan and his compeers proclaimed the Gospel from one of these "tents," in a church whose walls were the horizon, or at best, the surrounding hills, whose pillars were the sturdy forest trees, whose ceiling was the sky, and whose floor was the grassy or the leaf-strewn earth.

Then succeeded the structure of unhewn logs, roofed with clapboards, sometimes "chuncked and daubed," and sometimes not. Then, as the resources of the worshipers improved, the hewn log meeting-house, with recess in the centre of each long side, so that two lengths of logs could be builded in, the pulpit occupying one

of the recesses. Then came, as years rolled on, the structures of frame, stone, and brick; but none of these last belonged to the period we celebrate.

For a long time they had no means of heating their churches in winter. No stoves were to be had; and even when it was proposed to introduce them, it was resisted by some as an innovation almost heretical. Hardy dames must our grandmothers have been. Hardy men their sons and husbands. Sometimes an earthen hearth would be placed in the centre of the meeting-house, and a pile of wood or charcoal would afford some heat; and the open puncheon floors, and abundant crevices between the logs, afforded escape to the carbonic-acid gas, which else had suffocated our orthodox ancestors.

Communion seasons, in the earlier years, were less frequent and better attended than now. Sometimes hundreds would gather from near and distant congregations to share the blessed privilege; and such was the hospitality of the times that all found entertainment. Sometimes thousands would be drawn together; and with wagons and other appliances for shelter, many would remain upon the ground from day to day—a camp meeting.* Glorious revivals often marked these assemblies; and in many such our Christian hero bore effective part. And for all that is sublimely simple, solemn, and impressive in the worship of God, some of these scenes in the grand old forests of these counties throw the more artistic services of our most gorgeous churches into utter shade.

I will have time only to mention, without elaborating, that which was by no means the least important part of the life-work of my hero. Nor is it necessary, as this subject will be fully treated by my brother, Dr. Brownson. He was the *father of education*, in its

* The pioneers brought with them from the older countries, and from Ireland and Scotland, the custom of using *unleavened bread* at the Lord's Supper. There can be no doubt that this custom originated in a desire to conform, as closely as possible, to the ordinance as originally instituted. There can be no doubt that unleavened cakes were used at the first Lord's Supper; and that it was considered as symbolical, even under the Christian dispensation, is manifest from 1 Cor. v. 8. When the custom of using *sweetened* unleavened cakes came in, or why introduced, we cannot ascertain. It is not universal. There can be no doubt that unleavened bread, in the form of cake, is more convenient than bread from an ordinary leavened loaf; whilst it is certainly not *less* scriptural.

higher grades, in this western land. True, Smith, Dodd, and others started schools at an early date, and deserve much praise. But McMillan began his cabin-college early, and maintained it long, until it was merged in the Canonsburg Academy, and then in Jefferson College. He educated more than one hundred young men, most of whom entered the ministry, and others became distinguished in other professions. What human arithmetic can calculate the influence for good that resulted from his educational labors, and then from the teaching and the preaching of his pupils, and theirs, in a widening ratio of progression. As an educator, he is entitled to the gratitude of posterity.

Fourteen years ago, in a little metrical memorial of my class (1831), delivered in Providence Hall, Jefferson College, I made mention of several of the early worthies in the history of the college; and, as I cannot give my estimate of my venerable subject in fewer words, you will pardon a quotation from my little poem:

“There was another, fifty years ago,
 Still lingering mid these scenes—a saint below;
 A reverend relic of a bygone age,
 The Christian pastor, teacher, patriot, sage;
 By all the sons of Jefferson revered,
 I see him now—just as he once appeared,
 Above the medium height, erect and square—
 Frost slightly sprinkled o’er his massive hair;
 His eyes benignant, features long and grave—
 Step slow and steady—manners blunt and naive;
 His costume—he despised the gay *beau monde*—
 Fashion prescribed not what he doffed and donned—
 Broad-brim and doublet, broad skirt, small clothes, won
 Respectful notice; ’twas the style of Washington!
 A wit, a scholar, patriot, and divine,
 His name in Western annals long shall shine.
 While yet, on Western hill, and plain, and glen,
 Roam’d savage beasts and not less savage men;
 While settlers’ cabins, few and far between,
 Dotted these wilds; and wigwam fires were seen
 Gleaming along meandering Chartiers,
 He came, the Apostle of the pioneers.
 With earnest manner, and with tearful eye—
 His pulpit earth—his sounding-board the sky—
 And oft his trusty rifle by his side;
 His hearers armed against a savage foe.

He spake, mid forest shades, of Him who died,
 Pointed the way to Heav'n, and warn'd of coming woe.
 Mid scenes like these, he and his brave compeers—
 The stalwart Presbyterian pioneers
 Of Western Pennsylvania—sowed the seed,
 Of which their sons now reap the glorious meed :
 Religion, education, freedom, arts,
 A teeming husbandry and crowded marts,
 Refinement, enterprise, and plenty reign,
 Where erst roam'd prowling beasts and savage men.
 And songs of Zion now are sweetly sung,
 Where erst the war-whoop and the death song rung.

All honor to the men whose stalwart arms,
 'Mid toil, privation, and war's dread alarms—
 Whilst struggling for a home and daily bread,
 In faith and prayer the deep foundations laid,
 On which our glorious institutions rest !
 Oh ! be their names revered, their mem'ry blest ;
 And, while we give their deeds to hallowed fame,
 High on the scroll write John McMillan's name !
 When embryo Jefferson, neath clapboard roof,
 Of future greatness gave the earliest proof—
 A cabin college in the wold—he won
 The honored title—FOUNDER OF JEFFERSON.

Of many interesting incidents in the history of this good and great man we have not time to speak. Of the defects of his public character and career, and they were few, it might be ungracious to make mention. The most prominent of these was, perhaps, an undue *severity* in rebuking what he disapproved, and a certain *bluntness* of manner and speech which sometimes repelled those whom he might have won. As illustrative of this trait, we might mention his impatience with the freaks of fashion and with foppery in dress. He clung to the cocked hat, breeches, and shoe-buckles, long after others had laid them aside ; and seemed reluctant to permit woven cloth to supersede the buckskin. Joseph Dunlap, son of the President of the College, was somewhat inclined to foppishness in dress. Meeting him one day when trigly dressed, the doctor broke out with, "Joe, can you tell me the difference between you and the devil?" "Oh, yes," retorted Joe ; "the devil wears a cocked hat, a low flapped doublet, a coat of continental cut, breeches and shoes with knee and shoe buckles ; but I wear pantaloons and clothing of

modern style." The laugh was against the Doctor, and he joined in it with great good humor.

He loved a practical joke. It is said that once, on his way to Synod, accompanied by that devout man, Joseph Patterson, they asked for a little whiskey, by way of making some compensation for the watering of their horses at a country inn. A small quantity was poured into a glass, when Mr. Patterson proposed asking a blessing. Dr. M. assented, and whilst this devout brother was saying a somewhat protracted grace, the Doctor emptied the glass, and in reply to the rather blank look of his brother, he remarked, "You must watch, as well as pray." The story of Dr. Ralston soundly thrashing a bully, who was treating Dr. McMillan rudely, when the two were on their way to presbytery, is well known. I had the story from Dr. Ralston's son. About 1825, a student, who afterwards became an able minister, was introduced by Dr. Brown to Dr. McMillan, with a view of obtaining aid from a fund of which the latter had control. In the course of conversation it transpired that the student was married, when the doctor, with characteristic bluntness, shook his head, saying, "Oh! the fellow's married, is he? Ah! I don't think my fund will carry double." But I believe after all, it did.* Other anecdotes of our hero might be added, but I must bring this already too lengthy discourse to a close.

The civil history of our region, and other things germane to this centenary, will be given by other speakers. In these you will be able to discover many things that were hindrances to Christian work among the pioneers. The rival claims of Pennsylvania and Virginia to this region, and the existence for many years of two governments, led to social strife, which hindered the progress of religion. The incursions of hostile Indians was also a great hindrance; and the border wars kept up such a spirit of revenge, as was very unfavorable to piety and the arts of peace. The Whiskey Insurrection, too, was for a time a hindrance, and into its excitements nearly all were drawn. But Dr. McMillan's influence did much to restrain disorder and restore peace. The college war, too, was a

* Dr. McMillan solemnized the marriage of Dr. McElroy, now of New York, to Miss Allison near Canonsburg. When Dr. McElroy's attendant, Dr. George Junkin, tendered a fee, Dr. McMillan declined taking it, saying, "No! No! dog wont eat dog."

hindrance. It was a fight for union, which, like some other fights for union, widened the breach. But I leave these details to others, and forbear.

In the summer and fall of 1833 he had made a very pleasant tour, visiting friends and former pupils, and returning homeward, was suddenly taken ill in Canonsburg, and after a short but severe illness, died at the house of his friend and physician, Dr. Jonathan Leatherman, on the 16th day of November, 1833, aged eighty-one years and five days. He died in the faith, and sustained by the consolations of that Gospel which he had so earnestly proclaimed for nearly sixty years.

“He being dead yet speaketh.” The springs and rills of influence for good which he opened still flow on, and have gathered into broad and mighty rivers, which make glad the city of our God. The blessings from a covenant-keeping God still descend from generation to generation. Pigeon Creek and Chartiers still exist, and work effectively for Christ. The sons of Jefferson do many of them still live and labor. Those that are dead yet speak by the influence they have left behind. And all over this broad land, and throughout the missionary world, the waves of blessed influences, set in motion by JOHN McMILLAN, will roll on, circling wider and wider, till they shall at last break, in sparkling beauty, around the Judgment Throne !

