

WHITLEY ALLEN
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Pioneer Religious Revivalists of Madison County, Iowa.

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THE PIONEER RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

By CAL. OGBURN

The time embraced in this sketch is approximately ten years—from 1860 to 1870.

The religious services to which reference will be made were held for the most part in Elm Grove Church, a frame structure built in the early sixties on my grandfather Barnabas Ray's farm, on the line between Scott and South townships, Madison County, and in the various near-by schoolhouses, and were conducted by the Methodist Episcopal, Evangelical, and Christian Union churches, the members of the last named organization frequently being dubbed by those of rival denominations "Democrat Methodists."

In the pioneer days of that part of Madison County—the vicinity of Peru—where I was born (1857) and grew to manhood, people either were religious or they were not. The line was sharply drawn. There were but few who were merely religiously inclined, and perhaps not so many who were just moral men and women without any church affiliation. Such "connecting links" as these were decidedly in the minority. The number of positively irreligious people was also comparatively small. Those who were religious attended the services of the church regularly on Sunday. Those who were not spent the day visiting, or hunting and fishing.

Perhaps there was no statute law against it—I do not remember ever to have heard that there was any—but it was a rare thing indeed for anyone to engage in labor of any kind on Sunday, no matter how urgent it might seem to be.¹ Even at harvest

¹Chapter 33, Acts of the Fifth General Assembly, approved January 19, 1855, which is almost identical with Chapter 596, Code of 1924, our present law on the subject, was as follows:

"Sec. 1. That if any person be found on the first day of the week, commonly called Sabbath, engaged in any riot, fighting, or offering to fight, or hunting,

time, when the grain was over-ripe and might be ruined by storms, work was suspended when Saturday night came and not taken up again till Monday morning. "Hardened sinners," thought to have "sinned away their day of grace," and therefore to be beyond redemption, obeyed this unwritten law of the community to the extent that they refrained from working on Sunday.

But many of the religious became lukewarm. And it was notable that the hotter the days and the more suffocating the nights the colder, religiously, they grew. They simply could not maintain their spiritual fervor when the thermometer registered into the nineties! Some even began to doubt the genuineness of their own conversion and backslid completely. This was evident first of all in the "social meetings" of the church, where the testimonies became as forced and formal, and the extemporaneous prayers as lacking in fervency and earnestness as if they had been purely ritualistic. Hence it will be seen that if religion was not to languish, if the backslidden were to be reclaimed, the doubting encouraged, and sinners converted, religious services better adapted to those ends than the ordinary meetings for worship on Sunday must be inaugurated.

The camp meeting had served this purpose in other places, but the day of the camp meeting was about over before the settlement of Madison County had made much progress. I can only recall one camp meeting, and that was held in the woods on a hill some two miles southeast of Peru and on the opposite side of Clanton Creek. I was very young at the time, but remember distinctly being there. My mother's father took an active part in it, and that probably more than anything else fixes it in my mind. It was the novelty, to me, of him and his family living in a tent in the woods, and also that of the religious services held out of doors and particularly at night. I cannot recall that father was

shooting, carrying fire arms, fishing, horse racing, dancing, or in any manner disturbing any worshipping assembly, a private family, or in buying or selling property of any kind, or in any labor (the works of necessity and charity excepted), every person so offending shall on conviction be fined in a sum not more than five dollars, nor less than one dollar, to be recovered before any justice of the peace in the county where such offence is committed, provided, nothing herein contained shall be construed to extend to those who conscientiously observe the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, or to prevent persons traveling, or families emigrating from pursuing their journey, or keepers of toll bridges, toll gates, and ferrymen from attending the same.

"Sec. 2. For all offences, and assessments under the provisions of this act, the offenders shall be committed to the jail of said county until the said fines, together with costs of prosecution shall be paid."

there, but think that mother and I tented with grandfather. That probably was the first and no doubt was the last camp meeting ever held anywhere in that vicinity. I am quite sure that it was in the summer or early fall of 1860. The Civil War coming on, there was an end to camp meetings. After that for a number of years "basket meetings" were very common.

These meetings, like the camp meetings, were usually held in the native woods, and on a Sunday, where the shade was abundant and there was a spring to furnish water for those who attended. In spite of the fact that such meetings were meant primarily for religious worship, the social features in most instances predominated. As a means of reviving the lukewarm and backslidden perhaps they were but little better than the Sunday school picnics, then also much in vogue, though these never were held on Sunday. And as for converting the godless, that was scarcely attempted or expected. There were two services, one in the forenoon and the other in the afternoon, at both of which there was preaching. But to most persons that which gave zest to the occasion was the picnic dinner, where, in small groups and companies, the midday meal was eaten with many a quip and jest. The atmosphere was decidedly social, rather than devotional. Therefore to meet the need there was left the revival or protracted meeting.

The first protracted meeting of the "revival season," which embraced the latter part of one and the first part of the ensuing calendar year, usually was begun on a Sunday, in the fall, generally toward the end of November. Services were held every night and almost every day for a month or six weeks. The most notable thing about these meetings was the peculiar manner in which they were conducted. In every respect they were radically different from those of the preceding months. For one thing the preaching and that too by the same preacher, was in no way like what it had been. Instead of being expository and didactic—that is, the explanation of the text, the orderly development of some relevant theme, and then its practical application—the sermons now were decidedly hortatory, sometimes highly dogmatic, arbitrary and commanding. Quite often it was the preaching of Jonah: "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." At

other times, while just as hortatory, the preaching was persuasive, pleading, and often pathetic. It was the wail of Isaiah: "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Frequently as the preacher proceeded with his discourse the pendulum swung from one of these extremes to the other; from denunciation to expostulation, and then back again—back again—again—and again. Not all preachers could do this well, but all of them attempted it. It should be remembered that this was long before the professional "revival evangelist" was known, when the preacher had to depend on his own efforts and such local help as he could get.

As doubtless has been understood, the purpose of such preaching was not to give instruction, but to move to definite action—to reclaim backsliders and convict sinners, and that to the extent of compelling both classes to at once and openly confess and renounce their indifferent and evil ways. This was the double purpose of the revival. Whatever besides was accomplished was merely incidental, and was not taken into consideration when summing up the results.

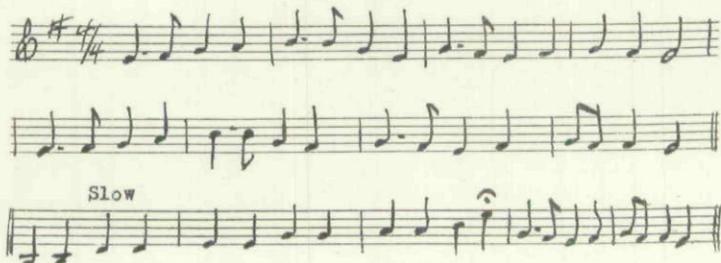
Usually when closing his discourse the preacher invited and urged persons to come to the altar as "seekers," though sometimes he did not, and especially if he was lacking in hortatory ability. In that case he requested some lay member of the church, either a local preacher, licensed exhorter, or some other gifted person, to follow the sermon with an exhortation. And nowhere was the individuality of the man seen more clearly than while exhorting. I remember well two men, each of whom was typical and the representative of the class of exhorters in which he belonged.

One of these men was as aloof and forbidding as Mount Sinai. At least such was the impression that he made on my mind when I was a boy, and it always remained. I knew him well, and cannot recall ever to have seen him smile. He was a pleasant enough man, too, in spite of his stern countenance. Deeply religious, he had the marked respect of all who knew him. He was of stout build, with a great shock of iron-gray hair that stood in a tousled heap above his high forehead and very dark face, usually clean shaven, though he sometimes wore a fringe of beard under his chin. He had a very large wide mouth, and

when exhorting often made an exceedingly wry face, squinting his black piercing eyes and turning his great mouth obliquely upward, and at the same time drawing a deep full breath with a very pronounced aspirating and supping sound. His voice was that of the rolling thunder; not particularly loud, but deep and powerful enough to shake the very foundations of the earth. I never saw him stand in the preacher's place behind the pulpit when exhorting, but always on the floor in front of it. As he grew impassioned and even eloquent, which he often did, he moved slowly, ponderously, crushingly, convincingly down the aisle, on one side of which the women invariably sat, with the men always on the opposite side of it. Then it was that his power overshadowed and overawed all who were within the sound of his mighty voice. Even the "rowdies" in the rear of the room were held spellbound. This man was Whitley Allen, by vocation a farmer, by avocation an exhorter.

A common method of his was to precede the exhortation by singing a certain hymn. I never heard him sing any other, and never heard anyone but him sing it. With the tune to which the words were joined, that hymn, more than anything else, describes the man and the kind and manner of the exhortation with which he followed it.

Imagine a large man of sturdy build, such as I have described, somewhat past middle age, standing before a rural congregation and, with a stentorian voice, singing the following song, descriptive of the Judgment Day, and you will have a look at an important part of a pioneer revival meeting as I knew it:

THE JUDGMENT²

²The author advises us that the music herein set out was written by Dr. H. H. Stoner from hearing the author sing the hymns.—Editor.

See the eternal Judge descending—
 View him seated on his throne!
 Now, poor sinner, now lamenting,
 Stand and hear thy awful doom—
 Trumpets call thee;
 Stand and hear thy awful doom.

Hear the cries he now is venting,
 Filled with dread of fiercer pain;
 While in anguish thus lamenting,
 That he ne'er was born again—
 Greatly mourning,
 That he ne'er was born again.

Yonder sits my slighted Savior,
 With the marks of dying love;
 O, that I had sought his favor,
 When I felt his Spirit move—
 Golden moments,
 When I felt his Spirit move.

Now despisers, look and wonder;
 Hope and sinners here must part;
 Louder than a peal of thunder,
 Hear the dreadful sound, "Depart!"
 Lost forever,
 Hear the dreadful sound, "Depart!"

The last line but one of each stanza was repeated twice, becoming progressively louder and the volume correspondingly greater till the third time it was indeed as the cry of a lost soul: "Lost forever! *Lost forever!* Lost F O R E V E R!" I almost shudder even now as I recall with what terror, as a boy, I listened to the singing of that solo.

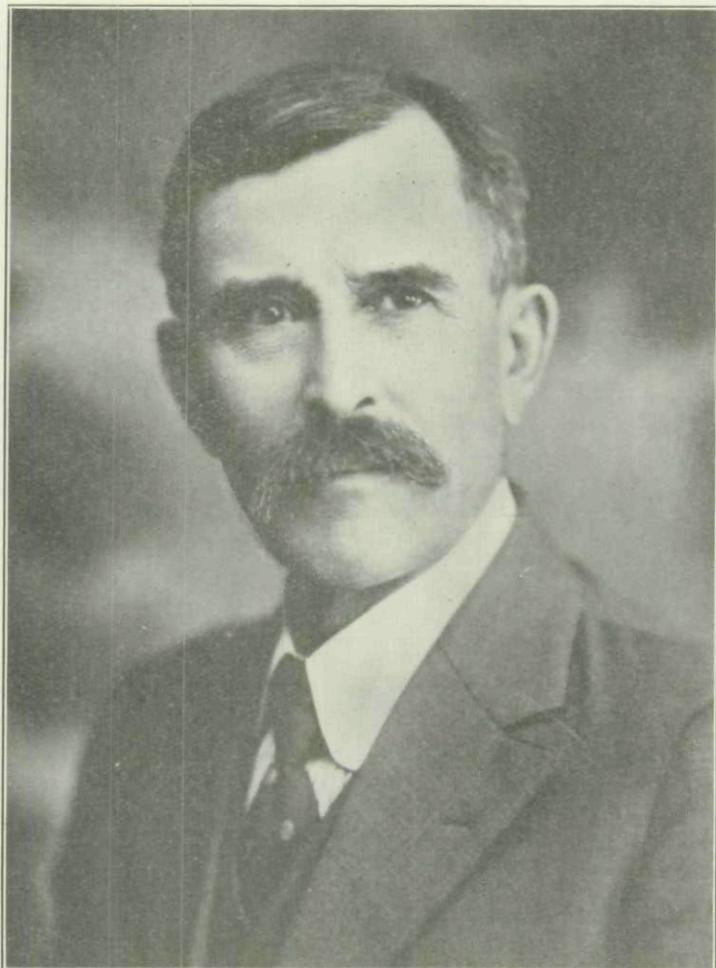
It is not difficult to imagine the effect that this hymn, sung in the manner that I have indicated, would have on an audience of simple-minded, uneducated people, and particularly when immediately followed with a stirring exhortation telling of "divine wrath about to fall upon the ungodly," and the horrible fate of the impenitent, who at that very moment were "hair-hung and breeze-shaken over a lake of unquenchable fire and brimstone."

The hymn and the exhortation was the distinct echo of a kind of preaching, common enough at a somewhat earlier date, that

still was more or less in vogue with preachers of a certain temperament and training, and especially when they were "holding" protracted meetings. Excerpts from a discourse of the kind to which reference is made will present the matter more clearly than a mere description can do, and at the same time will be substantially a reproduction of one of Whitley Allen's exhortations:

"Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they will not bear their weight, and these places are not seen. The arrows of death fly unseen at noonday; the sharpest sight cannot discern them * * * Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead and to tend downward with great weight and pressure toward hell * * * There are the black clouds of God's wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm and big with thunder * * * The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course when once it is let loose * * * It will be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity * * * You must wear out long ages, millions of millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty merciless vengeance * * * If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing it would be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight it would be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But alas! Instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell! And it would be a wonder if some that are now present should not be in hell in a very short time—before the year is out. And it would be no wonder if some persons that now sit here in some seats of this meetinghouse in health, and quiet, and secure, should be there before tomorrow morning."

Very probably it would not have been acknowledged, but it is quite evident that the purpose of such preaching, and of hymns and exhortations of like character, was to alarm, dismay, terrify,



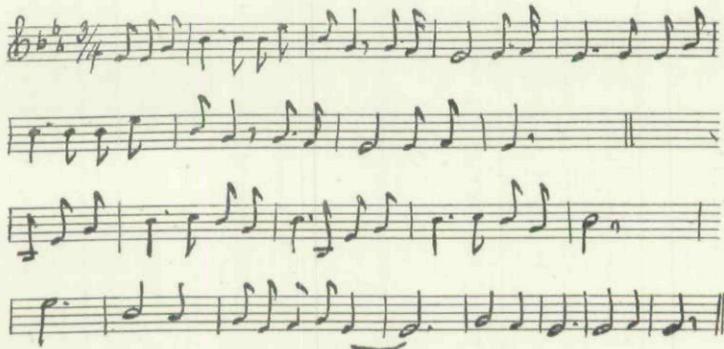
CAL. OGBURN

Evangelist in the Christian Church. Born in Madison County, Iowa, 1857, now of Los Angeles, California.

and so produce a mental state which was interpreted as "conviction." It was "the Black man will get you" of silly mothers magnified to its highest power. And it worked—with certain persons—for an indefinite time, which, according to my observation, was not long. The unruly child's obedient fear of the "Black man" is usually of short duration!

The other exhorter to whom reference has been made was in every respect the opposite of the one I have described. He was a small man somewhat past middle age with a florid, clean shaven face, thin, light brown hair tinged with gray and worn rather long as was the custom, and sparkling blue-gray eyes. I knew this man even better, if possible, than I knew the other. He was of an unusually cheerful, "sunshiny" disposition, laughing merrily and often. To accomplish his purposes with men he used persuasion, and in this he represented the opposite agent, force, or method, whichever one may choose to call it, that was employed in a protracted or revival meeting of the pioneer time in Madison County. Like the other man of whom I have spoken, he, too, often preceded his exhortation with a solo, usually singing a hymn which I never heard anyone but he and my mother sing. It was this:

MERCY'S FREE



By faith I view my Savior dying,
 On the tree! on the tree!
 To every nation he is crying,
 Look to me! look to me!

He bids the guilty now draw near,
 Repent, believe, dismiss their fear;
 Hark! hark! what precious words I hear,
 Mercy's free! mercy's free!

Did Christ, when I was sin pursuing,
 Pity me, pity me?
 And did he snatch my soul from ruin?
 Can it be, can it be?
 O yes, he did salvation bring;
 He is my prophet, priest, and king;
 And now my happy soul can sing,
 Mercy's free! mercy's free!

Long as I live, I'll still be crying,
 Mercy's free! mercy's free!
 And this shall be my theme when dying,
 Mercy's free! mercy's free!
 And when the vale of death is passed,
 When lodged above the stormy blast,
 I'll sing while endless ages last,
 Mercy's free! mercy's free!

This man was my grandfather, Barnabas Ray, a farmer and cabinet maker. It was on his farm that Elm Grove Church was built. After his death I bought from one of my uncles that part of the farm on which the church stood, and lived within sight and hearing of it. Under date of November 4, 1915, Mr. Isaac Reager, then of Norcatour, Kansas, but for many years a well and widely known resident of Madison County, Iowa, wrote me: "I well remember you as a boy, being intimately acquainted with your parents. Soon after coming to Madison County I deposited my church letter with the Elm Grove people. They were a noble lot of Christians. And your Grandfather Ray was one among the best. He was one of the best exhorters we had in the county."

The exhortation by whomsoever given ended with an urgent plea for backsliders and sinners to come to the altar, or "mourner's bench," as it generally was called, as "seekers of religion." However, this plea was never entirely finished before the congregation began to sing an appropriate song of invitation. I would like to say "hymn," but this seldom or never was done; for if the preaching during a pioneer revival meeting was different from

what it had been, the singing was radically so. The staid and devotional hymns of Watts, Wesley, Montgomery, Toplady and other great hymn writers seldom or never were sung, but in their place there was much that was without either "rhyme or reason." That many of the songs that were sung were outlandish is a mildly expressive term to use concerning them, both as to words and tune. It should be kept in mind that this was long before Bliss, McGranahan, Stebbins, Sankey and other singing evangelists of their type were known, men who gave dignity and devotion to their own hymn-songs as well as to the compositions of such writers as Fanny J. Crosby, D. W. Whittle, William O. Cushing, and Eben E. Rexford.

One of the least objectionable of these "revival songs" which was sung as a part of the invitation, commencing, as I have said, before the exhorter had finished, so that his voice and that of the singing congregation mingled, was one that was nearly as simple as a nursery song. It ran about as follows, though words were often improvised till it went on almost without end:

Come to Jesus—come to Jesus—come to Jesus,
 Just now—just now;
 Come to Jesus—come to Jesus,
 Just now!

He invites you—he invites you—he invites you,
 Just now—just now;
 He invites you—he invites you,
 Just now!

He will save you, etc.
 He is willing, etc.
 He is able, etc.
 Don't reject him, etc.
 Now accept him, etc.

Sometimes in response to the invitation many persons of both sexes and all ages, but for the greater part children and young people, together with several annual backsliders, crowded to the altar, which was the beginning of a scene of indescribable confusion. Many of the "brethren" came from one side of the room and as many or more of the "sisters" from the other side, for it was not permissible for men and women to sit together, and

kneeling with the "mourners" they began to talk to them and to pray aloud for them, till the jargon and Babel that greeted the ears was beyond the power of language to tell. While this was going on about the altar, there was much singing by the congregation. Whoever wished to do so "started a song," in which others joined with the loudest voices they could command. And as no musical instrument superior to a tuning fork ever was allowed, it not infrequently happened that the song was pitched far too high, was sung with many a discord, and was "out of tune" in as many other ways as possible.

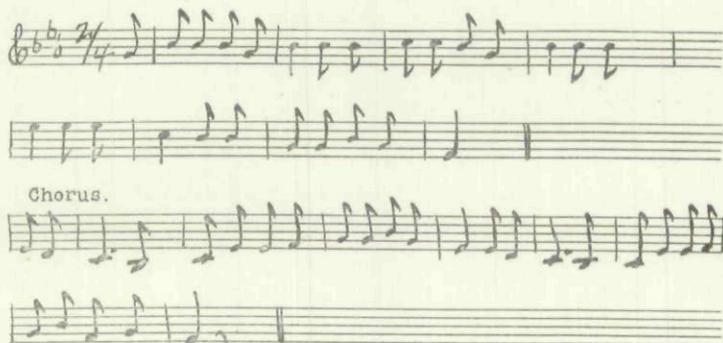
When there was a lull in the singing, the preacher in charge requested some brother or sister, usually the former, to "lead in prayer." Responding to the request, the praying, like the singing, was as though the Lord were quite deaf and very far away. Lung and vocal power alone limited the sound made. As he prayed vociferously, scores of other persons supplemented what he was saying, and not infrequently so vigorously as to entirely drown his voice, by such interjections as "Yes, Lord!" "Come very near!" "Hell yawns—mercy cries!" "Glory! glory! glory!" "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" "Send down the power!" "A—men and a—men!" "Hallelujah! hallelujah!" Intermingled with all this, there was much wordless groaning and the frequent and loud clapping of hands. What was taking place reminded one of nothing so much as the account of the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel, who "leaped about the altar which was made, and cried aloud" to their god to send down fire to consume their ready sacrifice. Beyond any doubt they were sincere in what they were doing, and it is furthest from my thought to cast any reflection upon them. Many of them were very near and dear to me.

Among my earliest recollections is that of being at a meeting held in a residence not far from where my father lived at which there was such confusion as I am telling about. There was no church, or meetinghouse, anywhere in that vicinity at the time, and very likely there was none in the county at so early a date. But be that as it may, the meeting at which I was present was held in the forenoon in the home—a log house—of N. S. Allcock, one of the very early settlers, and before the meeting ended

there was such a bedlam that, frightened and crying, I clung desperately to my mother for protection.

Scores of ridiculous songs were sung when the revival was at its height, and they were sung over and over night after night, the tunes being even more absurdly inappropriate than the words as a means of worship. For instance, the people sang, with a zeal that demanded a better medium of expression:

WE'LL ANCHOR OVER JORDAN



We'll anchor over Jordan,
 We'll anchor by and by,
 And the old ship of Zion
 Will land us safe on high.

Chorus

O, there's balm in Gilead
 To make the wounded whole,
 And there's power in Jesus' blood
 To cure the sin-sick soul.

Through grace I am determined
 To conquer, though I die,
 And if I hold out faithful,
 Eternal life have I.

Chorus

O, there's balm in Gilead, etc.

It was quite common to sing a few of the well-known hymns, with many improvised variations and choruses. One of these, sung perhaps more than any other, was John Cennick's beautiful tribute to Christ, familiar to scores of thousands half a century

or more ago, which began with the words, "Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone." It was sung when urging persons to come to the altar, and was thought to be very appropriate immediately following an exhortation such as that of Whitley Allen, of which I have spoken, as it supplemented and emphasized what had preceded it. As sung, it ran thus:

Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone—
 The judgment day is a-rolling on!
 He whom I fix my hope upon—
 The judgment day is a-rolling on!
 Prepare! O, prepare!
 The judgment day is a-rolling on!
 Prepare! O, prepare!
 The judgment day is a-rolling on!

His track I see, and I'll pursue—
 The judgment day is a-rolling on!
 The narrow way, till him I view—
 The judgment day is a-rolling on!
 Prepare! etc.

For the purpose of admonition and encouragement to backsliders who had been reclaimed and sinners who had been converted, the following was a common variation of the hymn:

Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone—
 O, glory! Hallelujah!
 He whom I fix my hopes upon—
 O, glory! Hallelujah!
 Travel on, believer, travel on,
 We are going to join the army by and by!
 Travel on, believer, travel on,
 We are going to join the army by and by!

More than likely before the congregation had finished with this "reconstructed hymn" one or more persons would be shouting, and if so very probably they changed abruptly to the more appropriate,

GLORY! HALLELUJAH



Shout! shout! We're a-gaining ground!
 O, halle—hallelujah!
 The power of the Lord is a-coming down!
 O, glory! Hallelujah!

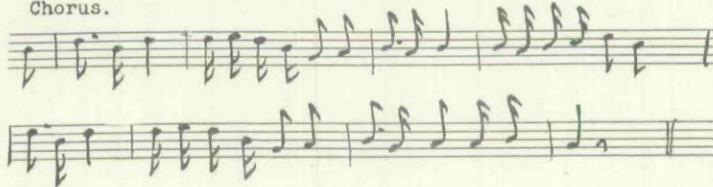
When I get up on Pisgah's top—
 O, halle—hallelujah!
 I'll praise the Lord, and never stop—
 O, glory! Hallelujah!

During a time of shouting, hand-shaking and general rejoicing, when all the inherited conventional rules requiring the men to occupy a separate part of the room from that of the women were swept aside, a favorite song was this:

THE OLD CHARIOT



Chorus.



We'll take our fathers by the hand,
 And all united in one band,
 We'll march right on to the Promised Land,
 But don't you leave me behind.

Chorus

We will roll the old chariot along!
 We will roll the old chariot along!
 We will roll the old chariot along!
 But don't you leave me behind.

The only variation in this song for from five to ten minutes or longer, depending altogether on whether someone in the audience thought a change of program desirable and proceeded to change it, was to substitute "mothers," "sisters," "neighbors," "preacher," or some other word for "fathers." The tune to which these words were sung, like nearly all the others, was a kind of rollicking, "jazzy" sort of composition, and went along by its own momentum when once given a start.

When, in the progress of the revival, persons had been to the "mourners' bench" many times without "experiencing religion," as frequently was the case, sometimes the audience was dismissed near midnight, and the preacher and a few of the members remained. Gathering about such "seekers" at the altar, they sang in the most pleading manner possible:

Show pity, Lord, O, Lord forgive!
 Save, my dear Savior!
 Let a repenting rebel live!
 Save, my dear Lord!
 Save! O, save!
 Save, my dear Savior!
 Let a repenting rebel live!
 Save, my dear Lord!

Are not thy mercies large and free?
 Save, my dear Savior!
 May not a sinner trust in thee?
 Save, my dear Lord!
 Save! O, save!
 Save, my dear Savior!
 Let a repenting rebel live!
 Save, my dear Lord!

Perhaps the most striking feature of the pioneer revival as I knew it, that which most of all would have made a lasting impression on a visitor from one of the planets whose inhabitants had always worshipped in an orderly and devout manner, was the shouting and its sequel, or what, in most instances, accompanied or followed it. And the shouting, in the manner and the duration of it, was as varied as the characteristics of the persons who engaged in it. A few illustrations out of many will be given:

About as long ago as I can remember I saw three buxom girls,

almost young women, shouting at a revival meeting. There was no church building in the neighborhood at the time, so the meeting was held in a small schoolhouse built of logs, the services being held at night. As it was before the introduction of kerosene lamps in that neighborhood, the room was lighted with candles. In those days all public meetings held at night were announced to begin "at early candlelighting." It being in the winter, the girls were wearing heavy shawls, homespun no doubt, which they soon threw aside when they began to shout. The impression that remains in my mind is that they "jumped up and down," at the same time ejaculating at short intervals something which I do not definitely recall. But I do remember well their shrill, high-pitched voices. I saw these girls, one of them particularly, shout a number of times in the years following, and their shouting always was after the same manner as when I first saw them. It never was of long duration, or great physical exertion. Soon over, they as quickly resumed their usual calm demeanor for the rest of the meeting of that night. It was as though the small blaze had gone out from the lack of fuel. For this reason, perhaps, the criticism was frequently heard concerning them that they were "just putting it on." That is, their shouting was not spontaneous, but rather from a sense of duty. Be that as it may, they represented a class of shouters to be seen, and heard, at all revival meetings, and about whom the same criticism was made.

When I was a boy, small enough to be overlooked on that occasion at least, I happened to be near the preacher and one of the official members of his church and overheard them discussing and pointing out to each other, when a revival meeting was in progress and there was much shouting, those who were sincere and who were not. It made a deep impression on my young mind. That they would do such a thing seemed strange to me then, and even more so now. I wonder if they had good reasons for believing and saying what they did?

In an early day in Madison County one of the shouters whom I knew, who was of the opposite type to those I have just mentioned, was a young man. In height he was but little if any more than five feet, weighed not to exceed one hundred and

twenty pounds, and was of a very nervous temperament. His hair was very dark—almost black—while his eyes were blue-gray, the contrast giving him a rather peculiar and attractive appearance. His face was long and narrow, chin narrow and prominent, forehead high and full. His shouting almost invariably began while he was still seated, with a succession of indescribably peculiar sounds, somewhat like the combination of a sigh, a moan, and a half articulated word or short sentence. He repeatedly thrust his fingers, first those of one hand and then the other, with some deliberation through his hair, at the same time slowly rolling his head from side to side, and staring at those about him without seeming to see anyone. His gaze always appeared to be at something far away. Then suddenly his eyes turned upward, and, clapping his hands together repeatedly, as he shouted, "Glory! glory! glory!" he sprang to his feet and began to bound up and down quite rapidly, reminding one of nothing so much as a very active boy skipping the rope, when it was turned by two others mischievously speeding up the movement in an attempt to trip him. This action, invariably the same each time and always perfectly rhythmic, continued for several minutes. At last he suddenly extended his arms at right angles to his body, clenched his hands, became as rigid and seemingly almost as lifeless as a statue, and in that condition fell backward, his eyes wide open, turned far back, and motionless. Neither was there so much as the flutter of an eyelid. About the only sign of life that he gave was that of his heavy, labored breathing, much like one in a very profound slumber.

Sometimes he would lie in that cataleptic state for hours. I have known him to be still in a trance, or what seemed to be such, when the meeting closed at a late hour of the night, and to be brought to my father's, two miles distant, before regaining consciousness, which would be sometime between midnight and daylight. No effort that I ever knew to be made could revive him. Nor could his clenched hands be opened, or his arms, legs or body flexed. But at last physical nature seemed to gain the supremacy over the strange spell that held him in its vise-like grasp, and gradually he began to relax. He opened his hands and flexed his arms slowly, as though they were numb; his eye-

lids moved, and his eyes, as with an effort, returned to their normal position and began to function, as he stared wonderingly at those about him. Then, with half conscious exertion, he sat up, arose presently, and the cataleptic condition was over, but probably only till the following night, if the revival meeting still was in progress and he attended, as most likely he would. In that case the experience of a great many such occasions would almost surely be repeated. He would shout again, and with much the same sequel. Interrogated as to what he had experienced while in the trance state, as occasionally was done, he remembered nothing definite, only that he "had been very happy."

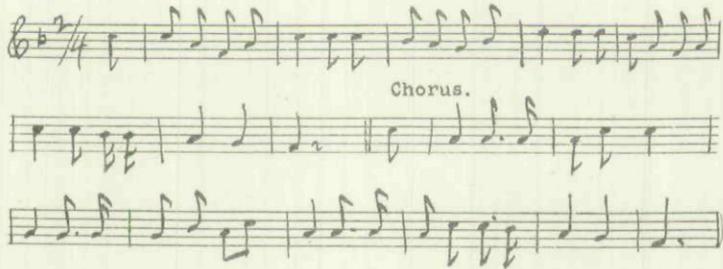
Looking back calmly, it seems probable that such a cataleptic condition as I have mentioned was superinduced by hypnotism, but of which he and those about him were utterly ignorant. Indeed if the word "hypnotism" had been spoken not one of them would have had more than a vague idea as to its meaning.

Doubtless even at this late date there are a number of persons still living in Madison County who would at once recognize the subject of this sketch as being that of Charles W. Hoover, familiarly known to everyone as "Charley," and a great many more of later generations will readily recall him as the man who preached for years in scores of places—churches, schoolhouses, residences and groves—throughout the southern part of the county. Never more than a licensed local preacher, he was in reality a circuit rider, going on horseback far and near to his appointments. For many years he did this and, strange as it may seem, when he became a preacher he did not shout as he had done before. But for that matter there no longer was shouting by anyone as there had been. Coming in 1855 from Indiana with his parents, when he was about eight years of age, "Charley" Hoover lived in Madison County continuously for nearly or quite sixty years. He never married. His earnestness, sincerity and piety never were doubted. He was held in the very highest esteem by all who knew him, and these were to be numbered by hundreds.

Between these extreme instances or examples of shouting, of which I have told, there were many more, in some of which the characteristics of one and in others those of the opposite type

predominated. Many indeed were the variations and eccentricities that were shown from time to time. Whitley Allen had a son, Isaac, usually spoken of as "Little Ike," to distinguish him from another Isaac (Big Ike) Allen, a man of sturdy rather than athletic build, not yet of middle age, who ordinarily was decidedly taciturn, and just as deliberate in all his movements. But under the stimulus of the revival he became quite the opposite, talking freely and moving quickly, though he did not leap upward like others whom I have mentioned. In fact a great many "shouters" did not manifest their emotions in that manner. There was a song frequently sung in those revival meetings to the sentiment of which "Little Ike" Allen almost invariably responded energetically, and as literally as he could under the circumstances. The song was this:

CLIMBING JACOB'S LADDER



We're climbing Jacob's ladder—
 We're climbing Jacob's ladder—
 We're climbing Jacob's ladder—
 And I'm on my way.

Chorus

Good news gone to Canaan—
 Good news gone to Canaan—
 Good news gone to Canaan—
 And I'm on my way.

We'll climb a little higher—
 We'll climb a little higher—
 We'll climb a little higher—
 And I'm on my way.

Chorus

Good news gone to Canaan, etc.

We'll climb it into heaven—
We'll climb it into heaven—
We'll climb it into heaven—
And I'm on my way.

While this lilting song got well under way, which did not take long, "Little Ike" would mount to the top of the seats and walk about the room, stepping lightly from the top of one seat to that of another, flinging his arms wildly, and "exhorting" with a rapid and ready flow of language. Not infrequently he attempted to climb upon and over the heads and shoulders of the men standing massed about him, in his excited efforts to carry out literally the injunctions of the song. No doubt he really thought, while under the hypnotic spell, that he was "climbing Jacob's ladder."

Another man, a large, brawny, staid sort of man he was, would laugh long and loud, one guffaw following another in quick succession, till his body became limp and his laughter hysterical. Laughter much after this order was a common manifestation. Two men would embrace each other and laugh immoderately, laugh while the tears were streaming down their flushed faces. Men would clasp hands, laughing loudly and punctuating their laughter with interjections and expletives of the most joyous kind. "Glory to God, brother Smith! ha! ha! ha!" And the other would respond, "Bound for Canaan, brother Jones! Hallelujah, ha! ha! ha!" A great many similar expressions of gladness might be heard when the rejoicing was at its height.

And there was weeping, too, much of it. Backsliders and sinners under conviction wept with bitter tears the sorrow and remorse they felt, while the recently converted and reclaimed backsliders wept for joy. And Christians could find no way so good by which to express their sympathy for the "seekers," and their happiness over the lukewarm restored and sinners converted, as to weep for and with them.

While these scenes, which I feel that I am trying in vain to portray—for it is impossible merely with words to paint a picture of "Bedlam"—were being enacted, the "rowdies," mostly young men from far and near, were standing on the seats in the

rear of the room that they might have a better view and making sport of what they saw and heard. Not infrequently they became very boisterous, which brought keen reproof from the preacher and others of prominence in the church, and occasionally they were arrested for "disturbing a religious meeting." However I never knew a conviction to follow. They either were "let off this time" on the promise of future good behavior, or if brought to trial, acquitted, the "Court" probably feeling that it would be practically impossible to disturb a meeting where there was so much confusion.

Perhaps someone would like to know if these pioneer revivals were union meetings? No; never! Invariably they were denominational, for in those days there was a religious intolerance so intense and sometimes so bitter and unreasonable that it cannot now be understood. Nothing expresses the situation at that time quite so well as to say, "The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans." It was a rare thing indeed for a prominent member of one denomination to so much as "darken the meetinghouse door" of another at any time, and particularly when a revival meeting was in progress. The "rowdies" alone gave their presence to all sects and parties alike during a protracted meeting! Occasionally some "weak-kneed brother," as he was called, broke the unwritten law of his church by attending the revival of some other, which brought down on his well meaning head a keen rebuke from those in ecclesiastical authority over him.

Ridicule was a keen weapon that two rival churches made use of. The meeting place of one was to the other "Sheep Heaven," instead of Elm Grove, presumably because converts followed their leaders as thoughtlessly as sheep, and were about as lacking in mother wit as sheep. Retaliation was made by calling the schoolhouse in which their "religious adversaries" met "Slop Bucket," thereby insinuating that they got the scraps from the table of "their betters" as converts and additions to their church.

It should be kept in mind that to a great degree, in many instances at least, the ultra, rabid, unreasonable political conditions then prevailing not only laid the foundation for but intensified these religious antagonisms and animosities. It was when to "bolt" one's party, or fail to vote a "straight party ticket,"

was an unpardonable political sin. Speaking for himself and a great many others as well, a man of that day said, "If my party were to place on the ticket the name of a horse thief, and I knew him to be such, I would vote the entire ticket!" Without further consideration of it, here is a strong side light on the intolerant religious spirit by which most people were dominated, and which was reflected more or less in every revival meeting of that period. Let us be glad that we live in a better atmosphere.

A word or two may be added that possibly will be of interest, for a question may have been suggested: "Did all 'seekers' profess conversion before the revival meeting came to a close?" They did not. And sometimes this was followed with direful consequences, but whether as cause, result, or mere coincidence I express no opinion. Let one illustration suffice:

When I was a small boy I knew a young man of excellent family who was universally regarded as moral and upright. In fact he was often held up as a model. At a revival meeting he became a "seeker," but did not "experience religion," though he came to the altar night after night. I can see him now, sitting on the "anxious seat," after the congregation had been dismissed and nearly all were gone, in deep anguish weaving himself backward and forward, while the tears like rain ran down his face. A man was there that night by the name of Lovelace, who was a member of the same church as that holding the meeting, but of another local organization some distance away. Presuming to be of assistance to the young man in his distress, he sang, for the first time I ever heard it,

My latest sun is sinking fast,
My race is nearly run;
My strongest trials now are past,
My triumph is begun.

Chorus

O, come, angel band,
Come and around me stand;
O, bear me away on your snowy wings,
To my immortal home.

He sang on to the end of the song. But it was of no avail. The indescribable sorrow, despair, probably would be the more appropriate word, continued unabated. The protracted meeting closed, and he had found no relief. But it was the turning point in his life, for from that time he began to retrograde. Some years after he made complete shipwreck of himself, taking his loved ones down with him to an endless sorrow.

From what has been said concerning them, it should not be thought that the people who participated in these pioneer religious revivals were of less than average intelligence, for such was not the case. They had recently come from various places of the East and South, and were as intelligent in every respect as were the people of the communities whence they came. And, in part, for that very reason the pioneer religious revival of Madison County is a problem in psychology—which I pass on to others for solution.

SNAKE IN THE EYE OF A HORSE

A horse was brought to this city en route for St. Louis, whither his owner is taking him, covered over with a blanket with this significant sentence in large letters printed upon it, "Snake in the eye." Drs. McGuin & Allen were requested to examine the eye, and found in what they denominate the anterior chamber a living parasite or worm, about two inches long of a white color in lively active motion. It appears that it was perceived there near a year ago, when the eye was becoming of an opaque milky color, in which condition it is now, and of course the sight of that eye is lost. The other eye is an excellent one, and the animal, which was raised in this state, is a noble one. The intention is to exhibit him or make sale of him for that purpose. It is a rare curiosity.—*Keokuk Daily Journal*, Keokuk, Iowa, March 30, 1859. (In the newspaper collection of the Historical, Memorial and Art Department of Iowa.)

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