

## *The Religious Revival of 1858 in Philadelphia*

THE winter of 1857-1858 witnessed in the nation a period of religious excitement that by the spring of the latter year seemed to burst forth upon the community of Philadelphia with a sudden intensity. It swelled into a movement involving segments of a population of approximately half a million people, then gradually dissipated its accumulated emotion and expended its efforts in the task of sustaining and nurturing remnants of religious gatherings, and finally succumbed to the crusading spirit of the Civil War.<sup>1</sup> The participants and beneficiaries of this upsurge of religious sentiment were at the time struggling to regain a sense of equilibrium, all but destroyed by the financial collapse which had caught them off balance on the morning of Friday, September 25, 1857. On that day the banks of Philadelphia, one after another, had partially suspended specie payment; by the next, the suspension was complete and the closed financial institutions, besieged by creditors, sought the protection of the police force while financial leaders dispatched united appeals to the General Assembly at Harrisburg asking for legislation that would give some measure of legality to an action that had been a financial necessity.<sup>2</sup>

To those who understood the intricacies of finance the story of this prelude to the religious revival was simple. With the close of the Crimean War the Bank of France had begun buying gold in sufficient quantities to endanger the discount rate of the Bank of England which, in turn, obliged British investors to liquidate many of their holdings, especially their American investments. This caused American credits abroad to shrink, and subsequently the domestic money market began to tighten.

<sup>1</sup> *Pentecost; or The Work of God in Philadelphia, A. D., 1858* (Philadelphia, 1859).

<sup>2</sup> J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884* (Philadelphia, 1884), I, 726.

Philadelphia's banks had been almost completely adapted to commercial and industrial needs. They held much of the highly speculative paper of the American railroads. This paper was as yet unproductive of returns save from their sale at enhanced values in the stock market, opportunities for which had steadily declined through 1856 and 1857. Finding themselves unable to realize capital sunk in railroad ventures, the banks concentrated all their efforts to save themselves upon recalling loans from more legitimate sources, thus pronouncing the sentence of failure upon many worthy merchants and manufacturers, and destroying the confidence of the investing public.<sup>3</sup>

To the layman in finance, as he waited outside the closed banks by day, or congregated in hastily assembled mass meetings to petition the legislature for monetary relief on behalf of the suffering community or to testify to his troubled condition as mills and factories closed and added to the ranks of the unemployed,<sup>4</sup> all this was the outcome of the unnecessary risk to which businessmen had subjected their resources.<sup>5</sup> Bitterness replaced any suggestion of sympathy when it was revealed within a few days that Mr. Frederick W. Porter, for thirty-three years the Corresponding Secretary of the American Sunday School Union, and seemingly a man of deep religious conviction, had defaulted of about \$89,000.00 of his institution's funds. Though the amount of the defalcation proved to be much less and the shortage was quickly replaced by Mr. Porter's friends, the testimony of faithlessness remained unrefuted.<sup>6</sup> The evidence seemed to be all in when it was disclosed that Mr. Thomas Allibone, prominent churchman, intimate friend of Bishop Alonzo Potter of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, as President of the Pennsylvania Bank had systematically used the funds in his care to conceal his own bankrupt condition and to aid his friends, so that in the crisis the institution proved to be but a shell easily crushed to reveal the dissipation of the resources of its depositors.<sup>7</sup>

Few of the people of that generation had had time for boredom or

<sup>3</sup> George W. Van Vleck, *The Panic of 1857* (New York, 1943), 23, 28, 31, 106.

<sup>4</sup> *New York Observer*, October 29, 1857, estimated that forty thousand people of both sexes, adults and minors, were out of employment in Philadelphia.

<sup>5</sup> *Presbyterian*, October 3, 1857.

<sup>6</sup> *Episcopal Recorder*, October 17, 1857.

<sup>7</sup> Wayland F. Dunaway, *History of Pennsylvania* (New York, 1935), 192-193.

for cynicism. On the whole they had believed in the goodness of man, though they were willing to subscribe to a little predatory liberty because of the imperfections of human nature.<sup>8</sup> Their's was a dream of a new world, devoid of acquisitiveness and exploitation—a new world, simple and local, like the world that seemed about to be obliterated.<sup>9</sup> The blow had fallen with such unexpected suddenness. While the newspapers had been singing the editorial refrain “A Good Time Coming,” and printing reports from every part of the country which indicated favorable crops and foreshadowed a satisfactory future,<sup>10</sup> legislators, financiers, public officials, and even clergymen had joined the ranks of the professional sharks and promoters to toy with the resources that were counted upon to make the nation great.<sup>11</sup> Poverty there was; poverty there had been; but the mighty voice of the pulpit had tended to produce a mood of acquiescence by the teaching that the poor were the exalted of God, more receptive to His grace because they were not compelled to wrestle with worldliness. Multitudes now were in this state of receptivity—and waited for the grace of God.

For His coming must be in judgment to exact vengeance, not only upon the recreants unmasked, but upon those who in this time of stringency were hoarding their resources, withholding payments of obligations that they might take advantage of the speculative opportunities of the moment. The *Presbyterian* reminded such as these that “In addition to their sin against God and against their neighbor they may find to their cost that honesty would have been the best policy.”<sup>12</sup> Man, therefore, must be redeemed; redeemed from the sin of selfishness concealed by the complacency which accompanied the acquisition of easy wealth, seemingly even more readily achieved since the pot of gold had been revealed in far off California, wealth which was approved because it was believed to be one of the attributes of a nation blessed by God and destined to take its place beside the greatest.

Truly men should have been concerned for their redemption, but

<sup>8</sup> E. Douglas Branch, *The Sentimental Years* (New York, 1934), 11.

<sup>9</sup> Norman Ware, *The Industrial Worker, 1840-1860* (Boston & New York, 1924), 20.

<sup>10</sup> Reverend Kingston Goddard, *The Poor in the Keeping of God* (Philadelphia, 1857).

<sup>11</sup> Van Vleck, 31.

<sup>12</sup> *Presbyterian*, December 26, 1857.

the profusion and confusion of causes had merely harried their perplexities, had dissipated their energies, and lulled them into inactivity. Indeed they were at the end of an era of "Lost Causes."<sup>13</sup> They had entered into the labors of their forebears but they had apparently failed in their trust. For example, long and hard labor in the cause of Temperance had seemed to be crowned with victory when in the spring of 1854 the General Assembly enacted legislation to forbid the sale of spiritous liquors to minors, the insane, and to habitual drunkards, and had followed this in the next winter with statutes to forbid the sale of intoxicating drinks on Sunday and to proscribe "grog" shops under the penalty of heavy fines. Despite violent protests, a Democratic legislature had repealed these laws during the year just passed and this action had then been complacently accepted.<sup>14</sup>

Political turmoil and famine in Europe had driven hundreds of thousands from their homes across the seas to produce the greatest wave of immigration the United States had yet known. Many of these immigrants went to populate the great west; others had to dig in at their port of entry because of lack of resources to carry them further.<sup>15</sup> These brought with them an Old World attitude toward spiritous liquor and their political value in the struggles for party successes made it expedient to take note of their desires. Most of them were Roman Catholics whose very presence strengthened the Protestant fear of the fulfillment of an inherent potential in the Church of Rome for control of the educational institutions of the country.<sup>16</sup> That Church was growing with an overwhelming consistency while Protestantism was either static or beginning to wane. Within the memory of most adults the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist Churches had broken either on the rock of conservatism or the issue of slavery; the Protestant Episcopal Church in the wake of the Oxford Movement in England<sup>17</sup> was struggling with a growing Catholic party and had only just stemmed the flow of secessions to

<sup>13</sup> Ware, 18.

<sup>14</sup> Asa E. Martin, "The Temperance Movement in Pennsylvania Prior to the Civil War," *PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY*, XLIX (July, 1925), 195-230.

<sup>15</sup> Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration* (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), 112, 303.

<sup>16</sup> Ray A. Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860* (New York, 1938), 156.

<sup>17</sup> E. R. Hardy, Jr., "The Muhlenberg Memorial," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, XIII (September, 1944), 155-192.

Rome from the clerical and lay people of the Church.<sup>18</sup> Early in September, Philadelphia had been the scene of the first open and avowed attempt to make a bold attack upon the theory of the infallibility of Holy Scriptures, when a small band of liberals had gathered in a Convention of Infidels and pledged themselves to seek out like-minded folk throughout the nation.<sup>19</sup> The world as they had known it was about to come down upon the heads of all people.

For with poverty aggravated by a steadily ascending cost of living, and with wealth breeding ease and luxury, had come a lower moral standard. Lawlessness was rampant, prostitution prevalent.<sup>20</sup> Against almost overwhelming odds the workingman had struggled to better his position and income, but the dark days of 1854-1855 had destroyed many of his gains and circumstances now threatened to push him below the security level of the bond servants of the South.<sup>21</sup>

Even these brethren had been neglected. The "Underground Railway" ran through the city largely unaided and unabettled. The birthplace of the antislavery movement had given itself over to a campaign of silence in the interests of the merchants, for Philadelphia was and hoped to continue to be one of the two great markets for Southern purchases.<sup>22</sup> The difficulties in Kansas were not too clearly understood but when the Reverend Dudley Atkins Tyng, popular young rector of the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, raised his voice to condemn slavery as the cause of national misfortunes, he was not only challenged from the body of the church during his sermon, but his audacity provided the opportune moment for requesting his resignation as rector, the action of the vestry being upheld in a plebiscite of the members of his church.<sup>23</sup> With Mr. Tyng in mind, the press criticized the judgment of clergymen who treated such secular subjects in their pulpits and attributed such indiscre-

<sup>18</sup> George E. DeMille, *The Catholic Movement in the American Episcopal Church* (Philadelphia, 1941), 63.

<sup>19</sup> *Minutes of the Infidel Convention*, September 7-8, 1857 (Philadelphia, 1858).

<sup>20</sup> William W. Sanger, *History of Prostitution* (New York, 1859), 611.

<sup>21</sup> J. R. Commons, et al., *History of Labor in the U. S.* (New York, 1918), I, 613-616.

<sup>22</sup> Avery Craven, *The Coming of the Civil War* (New York, 1942), 291.

<sup>23</sup> *A Statement to the Congregation of the Church of the Epiphany, of Facts Bearing on the Action of the Vestry in Requesting the Resignation of the Rector* (Philadelphia, 1856).

tions to a lack of acquaintance with the business world and with the principles of human action which were employed in that realm.<sup>24</sup>

Politically many Philadelphians were at a loss. Old allegiances were weakening, yet men were slow to create new ones. The new, dynamic Republican Party appeared to demand a definitive stand on the question of human rights as it affected the Negro in the South, a stand which many were seeking vainly to avoid. The first National Convention of the Party held in the Musical Fund Hall, Eighth and Locust Streets in Philadelphia in June, 1856, had assumed the character of a great revival meeting, filled with camp-meeting fervor and a crusading enthusiasm. Among participants in the deliberations on this occasion were many vociferous ministers and a radical antislavery element under the leadership of Lovejoy, Wilmot and Giddings. Most of the delegates left the Convention with the firm belief that a great movement for free men, free speech, and free thought had been launched.<sup>25</sup> Further news that a Convention for Compensative Emancipation was to meet in Cleveland, Ohio, on August 25, 1857, aroused hope that what was becoming the dominant problem of the day might yet be solved to the satisfaction of all men. The resultant organization at this time of the National Compensation Association led some to believe that the task was accomplished.

Perplexed, as if between the upper and the nether millstones, religious leaders and the devout in their religious gatherings were calling for a renewed spirit of devotion to replace the indifference which had come to be characteristic of the evangelical churches. The periodic recalling of the diffident to religious fidelity had begun in the New Jersey Dutch Reformed churches about 1725 and under the leadership of Edwards, Whitefield, and Wesley had fastened a revivalistic pattern upon the non-Roman churches of the land. Shortly after the creation of the Republic, revivalism had begun its wide crescent-like sweep from Kentucky and Tennessee across the Ohio Valley and back through New York State to New England again. Many religious movements sprang from this "burnt over" area as it came to be called, and the Millennialism of the Millerites employed the practices of the revival so extensively, that with the

<sup>24</sup> *Dollar Newspaper*, July 9, 1856.

<sup>25</sup> Allan Nevins, *Frémont, Pathmaker of the West* (New York, 1939), 431-432.

failure of the movement in 1843, revivalism came to be generally discredited though it still appeared in separated areas here and there. By 1854 the practice was beginning to return to favor and a mood of expectancy began to develop.<sup>26</sup> In 1857 periodic and seasonal revivals in the churches of Philadelphia were beginning to assume new intensity but, for the most part, participation was confined to the faithful adherents of some particular congregation. The shock of September 25, however, served to stir up the religious press of the city. The next day one religious journal suggested that spiritual concerns were often best advanced when temporalities did not follow the path of human desires;<sup>27</sup> another emphasized that the remedy was in the hands of the people should they but dwell on spiritual truths and considerations.<sup>28</sup> A writer, signing himself "Business," reminded the community through the pages of the *Episcopal Recorder* that many meetings had been held for the purpose of proposing measures of relief but that as yet no one had suggested taking counsel with God.<sup>29</sup>

Meanwhile, clergymen of several denominations united in calling a Union Prayer Meeting for Thanksgiving Day, November 26, in the Methodist Episcopal Union Church, Fourth Street below Arch,<sup>30</sup> and on the same day, the Right Reverend Alonzo Potter, Episcopal Bishop of Pennsylvania, addressing a large gathering of the members of his church, struck the note of God's generosity and His severity to a people who had allowed themselves to become enamored of worldly goods to the exclusion of repose, devotion, the home, friendship, patriotism and philanthropy.<sup>31</sup> In many Methodist churches periodic prayer meetings became protracted meetings, assembling daily at specified hours;<sup>32</sup> and the Reverend James Caughey, an eminent Methodist revivalist, was brought to the city to conduct a series of meetings.<sup>33</sup> The Baptists, assembled in Annual Meeting, recommended that the first Monday in January, 1858, be

<sup>26</sup> Alice Felt Tyler, *Freedom's Ferment* (Minneapolis, 1944), *passim*.

<sup>27</sup> *Presbyterian*, September 26, 1857.

<sup>28</sup> *American Presbyterian*, October 1, 1857.

<sup>29</sup> *Episcopal Recorder*, October 17, 1857.

<sup>30</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, November 24, 1857.

<sup>31</sup> Bishop Alonzo Potter, *Discourses, Charges, etc.* (Philadelphia, 1858), 233-234.

<sup>32</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, March 1, 1858.

<sup>33</sup> Frank Beardsley, *History of American Revivals* (New York, 1943), 224.

observed as a day of spiritual humiliation and prayer for a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the churches of the Association, and for the conversion of the world.<sup>34</sup>

Word began to come back across the mountains from the Middle West that groups of Presbyterian Synods were meeting together in Pittsburgh, and that other gatherings had been scheduled for Cincinnati and Xenia, Ohio, to discuss the general state of religion in their churches; the need for a revival; the things which were preventing revivals; and the means to be employed to promote a revival.<sup>35</sup> To laymen in the cities of the East, the *Journal of Commerce* was giving regular advice "to steal awhile away from Wall Street and every worldly care, and spend an hour about mid-day in humble, hopeful prayer."<sup>36</sup>

In the midst of all this appeal to religious hopefulness thousands suffering from cold and lack of adequate shelter were receiving each week from city and ward agencies meat, bread, rice and coal.<sup>37</sup> Some, native Americans as well as immigrants, were finding the struggle beyond human endurance and were taking their own lives, often by means that were sickening and revolting.<sup>38</sup> Yet hopes for something from on high burned brightly. The *Presbyterian* observed on January 30, 1858, that it had never seen more hopeful prospects for a general and powerful revival of religion; God must be about to visit the churches with a special manifestation of His grace.<sup>39</sup> A week later, the same paper asked, "Are You Safe? Why should you suppose you are? Has the saving blood of the atonement been sprinkled on you? Have you an Advocate and Intercessor on high? Have you become alienated from your sins and reconciled to God?—If not there is not in heaven or earth a refuge for you."<sup>40</sup>

While the pulpit and religious press were calling the faithful to repentance and amendment of life, a few young men were gathering for prayer, as was their custom, in a room over a carriage shop on the south side of Chestnut Street just west of Tenth Street. Here were

<sup>34</sup> *Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association*, 1857.

<sup>35</sup> *Presbyterian Magazine*, Philadelphia, 1858.

<sup>36</sup> *Journal of Commerce*, November 26, December 7, 1857.

<sup>37</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, March 3, 1858.

<sup>38</sup> *American Presbyterian*, January 14, 1858.

<sup>39</sup> *Presbyterian*, January 30, 1858.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, February 6, 1858.



the quarters of the Young Men's Christian Association, an organization with extremely evangelical views, dedicated to the task of aiding young men in the struggle which then frequently accompanied the transition from a rural home to life in a strange and large city.

The Young Men's Christian Association had evolved out of the experience of a young apprentice, George Williams, whose nominal religious life in the Church of England had been quickened by intimate fellowship with some Nonconformist fellow workers, and under whose leadership prayer meetings and Bible classes had been formed for other apprentices. In London he had succeeded in interesting his employer, Mr. George Hitchcock, with whose help the movement spread to other drapery establishments and eventuated in the formation of the Young Men's Christian Association as an instrument to sponsor prayer meetings, Bible classes, and mutual improvement societies in London business houses. The movement prospered and by 1848 it had acquired attractive quarters containing a library and reading room in which educational classes were conducted.<sup>41</sup>

News of the organization reached the United States through various channels and, in 1851, George Hay Stuart, one of the prominent businessmen in Philadelphia, while in Europe on a business trip, sought out George Williams in London, learned of his ideas and methods, and returned home with a desire to see the organization established in his own city.<sup>42</sup> Nothing was accomplished immediately, though he did find some who were conscious of the fact that the churches had not yet developed a metropolitan mind which made them able to recognize their responsibilities to the numbers of young men who were coming to live within the shadow of their buildings. By the summer of 1854 the subject had been discussed sufficiently to call a public meeting for June 15 in the Sansom Street Hall. At this meeting the Young Men's Christian Association of Philadelphia came into being with Mr. Stuart as its first president, and with a membership of fifty-seven, of whom five were clergymen. Space was rented at 833 Arch Street for a library and reading room and for

<sup>41</sup> Laurence L. Doggett, *History of the Young Men's Christian Association* (New York, 1922), 23-36.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Ellis Thompson, ed., *The Life of George H. Stuart by Himself* (Philadelphia, 1890), 93; *The Presbyterian*, June 20, 1918.

meetings of the Board of Managers, but the response in terms of use by the young men of the community gave little encouragement to its founders.<sup>43</sup> The Association did not receive the wholehearted approval of the citizenry. A mass meeting of the Protestant Churches of Philadelphia resolved that "no person pretending to be connected in the unauthorized meetings of the Young Men's Christian Association, so-called, should be admitted to the Church" and the innovation met with general opposition from the social clubs and lodges.<sup>44</sup> In his later years, John Wanamaker confirmed the community resentment in a pencilled note on a scrap of Western Union telegraph blank, remarking, "The Y. M. C. A. for ten years had to account for its very existence. Every day it had to face the same dreary interrogations. Ministers and whole denominations stared at it with freezing eyes. We had to go out and get references."<sup>45</sup> But the group persisted in a weekly prayer meeting and held monthly meetings in the lecture rooms of some of the churches with whom it found favor. There essays on moral and religious subjects were read and discussed. By 1857, these latter meetings had achieved a fair attendance though the featured prayer meetings continued to fall short of expectations.<sup>46</sup>

At one of these meetings in the fall of 1857, John C. Bliss, a native of Alabama, recently returned to Philadelphia from New York where he had been employed and where he had experienced a religious conversion, suggested that a noon-day prayer meeting similar to that which had been held in New York during the past winter, be instituted by the Association.<sup>47</sup> The fulfillment of this suggestion led to the establishment of a noon-day meeting on the Monday before Thanksgiving Day in the Methodist Episcopal Union Church on Fourth Street below Arch. These meetings were continued there daily, except Sunday, until increasing hostility on the part of the pastor of the church toward the lay leadership employed, led to their transfer, on February 3, 1858, to the anteroom of Jayne's Hall, 627-633 Chestnut Street, near the heart of the business district. Throughout this period the number of participants in the daily

<sup>43</sup> *First Annual Report of the Y. M. C. A. of Philadelphia*, May 28, 1855.

<sup>44</sup> Joseph H. Appel, *The Business Biography of John Wanamaker* (New York, 1930), 32.

<sup>45</sup> Russell H. Conwell, *The Romantic Rise of a Great American*, MS. copy in the possession of the John Wanamaker Company, Philadelphia, 49.

<sup>46</sup> *First Annual Report of the Y. M. C. A.*

<sup>47</sup> *Presbyterian*, November 27, 1858.

meeting averaged twelve, though once attendance did reach thirty-six.<sup>48</sup>

Caught in the web of financial distress which resulted in the liquidation of his business, and ill from the fruitless struggle to preserve it, Mr. Stuart found it impossible to continue to give to the Association the kind of leadership it needed.<sup>49</sup> Thus it was that in the fall of 1857, he engaged, and guaranteed the stipend of \$1,000.00 per year for an unknown young man of nineteen who had returned during the past year from Indiana where he had spent some time in an effort to overcome the threat of tuberculosis. Thus John Wanamaker became the Corresponding Secretary and the first paid employe of the Y. M. C. A., though one of his unpleasant duties proved to be the task of raising the funds to pay his own stipend.<sup>50</sup> Secretary Wanamaker proved to be possessed of the requisite evangelical nature in addition to the intense energy often found in those afflicted as he was.<sup>51</sup> The Wanamaker family were Methodists; John's mother had been raised in the Reformed Church; and John himself had been an attendant at a Lutheran Sunday School. He had grown up near the brickyards in what is now Southwest Philadelphia, had come to the city to take employment while still but a lad, and had at that time experienced conversion in the Independent Church of which the Reverend John Chambers was pastor. Ill health took him west to recuperate; upon his return he decided not to resume his place behind the store counter for a while and by the time of the Annual Meeting of the Y. M. C. A. in 1857 he had assumed the post of Secretary.<sup>52</sup> It was under his direction that the noon-day prayer meeting accepted the hospitality of Dr. Jayne and was transplanted to Jayne's Hall.

Wanamaker's interests were not confined to the Y. M. C. A. On Sunday, February 7, he made an abortive attempt to establish, single-handed, a Sunday School in a vacant house on Pine Street near twenty-fourth Street, but the few youngsters he collected bolted the meeting at the threats of their less docile companions.

<sup>48</sup> *Fourth Annual Report of the Y. M. C. A.*, November 2, 1858.

<sup>49</sup> Edwin Wilbur Rice, *The Sunday School Movement* (Philadelphia, 1917), 341.

<sup>50</sup> Appel, 23.

<sup>51</sup> Herbert Adams Gibbons, *John Wanamaker* (New York, 1926), I, 39.

<sup>52</sup> Appel, 23.

The next Sunday he was back again and the experience was repeated, this time in a house at 2135 South Street, the door of which was battered down while his pupils scooted out through the rear exits. Undaunted, he returned again for the third Sunday in a broken and deserted house on South Street beyond Twenty-Third Street with the same, by now, traditional results. By this time he had attracted the attention of the neighboring Volunteer Firemen, who, admiring his determination, sponsored decorum in and protected the neighborhood of the new Bethany Sunday School, affording Wanamaker a contact he was to use to advantage almost immediately.<sup>53</sup>

It was under a leader of such dogged perseverance that the Y. M. C. A. entered upon a season of activity which was to win for it the praise and esteem of at least a part of the community. Wanamaker believed that the first important step in the success of any enterprise was to make it known. This purpose he began immediately to effect, both in the interest of the Bethany Sunday School and of the Y. M. C. A.<sup>54</sup> In the midst of advertisements of religious services and protracted prayer meetings, flanked by the millennial cry, "Jesus Is Coming," there began to appear regularly in the city's papers the announcement of the daily prayer meeting sponsored by the Association in the heart of the commercial district. The hand of the effective organizer began to be felt. At the monthly meeting of the group on February 22, the day following that on which friendly firemen had agreed to lend a helping hand in his Sunday School endeavor, the prospects of starting additional prayer meetings were discussed and particular emphasis was given to the proposal of soliciting the consent of the several volunteer units of the Fire Department to instituting meetings in their houses. At this meeting a committee of fifty was appointed, the members of which voluntarily pledged themselves to be ready, day or night, to conduct meetings for prayer whenever and wherever they might be begun.<sup>55</sup>

While the newspapers of the city were noting the undercurrent of religious activity and commenting upon the excitement which was being created by the religious meetings held in New York City,<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Gibbons, I, 50-55.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 183.

<sup>55</sup> *Fourth Annual Report of the Y. M. C. A.*

<sup>56</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, March 1, 1858; *Philadelphia Evening Journal*, March 1, 1858.

the youngest of the city's dailies, the *Press* of John Weiss Forney, boldly sounded the fanfare that riveted attention upon what now appeared to have been but the preparation for a great emotional stir. Forney had launched the *Press* on August 1, 1857, without much in the way of public preparation and had barely gotten under way when the panic overtook him.<sup>57</sup> Denied printing patronage and ceasing longer to be of one mind with his political idol, President Buchanan, he must have come to appreciate the disturbed, uncertain, and divided mind of the people and reckoned that a sweeping religious experience might be the factor which would reunite an already shattered nation. For on Saturday, March 6, the *Press* published in bold type on its front sheet a column and a half under the caption, "Religious Awakening," in which it said, "The indications are abundantly clear that the country is about entering into an era of remarkable religious excitement. . . . We lay no claim to the gift of prophecy to predict the precise results which may follow the present 'great awakening' throughout the country. We can only utter the fervent wish that it may tend to harmonize sectional differences, and personal animosities, and to nationalize the great sentiment of brotherhood from one end of the Union to the other. If we have but this result, it will have worked greater work than miracles."<sup>58</sup> The future seemed to be in hands other than man's.

On Sunday night, March 7, the Reverend Doctor Berg, publisher of the *Banner*, organ of anti-Roman Catholic prejudice, preached the last in a series of seven sermons entitled, "Temptations of Great Cities," sending his congregation forth into the night with a renewed feeling of the need for penitence.<sup>59</sup> Monday morning the *Inquirer* commented upon the increased attendance and interest at the Jayne's Hall meetings, particularly the presence of many of the leading citizens of Philadelphia and of clergymen of various church affiliations who were giving visible evidence of their dependence on God while at the same time giving encouragement to the sponsors of the meeting. The paper also suggested that the Philadelphia experience was part of a movement which had its beginnings in London among the "Dissenters" and had spread rapidly to other

<sup>57</sup> Reinhard H. Luthin, *The First Lincoln Campaign* (Cambridge, Mass., 1944), 96.

<sup>58</sup> *Press*, March 6, 1858.

<sup>59</sup> *Public Ledger*, March 8, 1858.

lands.<sup>60</sup> By Tuesday, only about half of those who attempted to attend the meeting at Jayne's Hall were able to get in. Prominent and influential citizens, normally reserved and conservative in their form of religious expression, were welcomed and provided with a tract headed "Sinners Come," and met with an appeal for earnest conversion.<sup>61</sup> The meetings were conducted by Mr. Stuart or some other layman in an atmosphere of calm peacefulness, broken only by a prayer or a testimony never more than three minutes in length. Intercessions were requested and offered for those as yet unmoved by the current spirit and familiar hymns were sung as time and opportunity afforded. Then punctually at one o'clock a clergyman came forward, pronounced the benediction, and the congregation filed out quietly. In a near-by room others of the clergy waited, prepared to give spiritual counsel to those who sought it.<sup>62</sup> An undated entry in the diary of the aged Philadelphia philanthropist, John P. Crozer, reveals the reaction of at least one participant. "I have, I think, never been present at a more stirring and edifying prayer meeting," it reads. "The room quite full, and a divine influence seemed manifest. Many hearts melted, many souls were devoutly engaged. I felt it was good to be there."<sup>63</sup> Day by day the enthusiasm mounted; other halls and two near-by churches were opened to accommodate the overflow. The Mariner's Church, Water Street above Walnut, opened its doors to sailors, laborers at the wharves and businessmen in the neighborhood, so that each noon found gatherings in at least six separate places.<sup>64</sup> The telegraph companies lent their cooperation to the movement by permitting "revival messages" to be sent without cost during the noon hour, and distant communities spurred each other on with reports of accomplishments in attendance and conversions.<sup>65</sup> From the floor in testimonials men reported the postscripts to business letters which enumerated con-

<sup>60</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, March 8, 1858. This is apparently a confusion with the movement led by Lord Shaftesbury in London to make theatres and public halls available for religious services among the poor of England.

<sup>61</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, March 11, 1858.

<sup>62</sup> *Pentecost*, 1858.

<sup>63</sup> J. Wheaton Smith, *Life of John P. Crozer* (Philadelphia, 1868), 167.

<sup>64</sup> *Pentecost*, 1858.

<sup>65</sup> Grover C. Loud, *Evangelized America* (New York, 1928), 221-222.

versions in the cities of their origin on the day of posting.<sup>66</sup> Such informality and boundless enthusiasm could not but produce features of which some would be critical; there was, for example, a rather strong reaction against the stock-market quotation aspect of the telegraphic reports.<sup>67</sup> The *Catholic Herald and Visitor*, official organ of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Philadelphia, sympathetic in its evaluation of the revival, expressed itself as puzzled that men should think it unusual when God was worshipped daily.<sup>68</sup>

As if not to be outdone by the prominence of laymen in positions of leadership, the cooperating clergymen began to conduct preaching services in the various halls and churches in mid-afternoons and evenings; and in the evening one rarely passed an evangelical church without seeing lighted auditorium windows that gave evidence of some religious meeting in progress.<sup>69</sup> Prayer meetings in homes replaced the usual games of cards or kindred amusements; young men sallied forth in deputations from the Y. M. C. A. to visit neighboring communities for the purpose of conducting prayer meetings; and the monthly meetings of that organization while receiving and pondering reports of activities, were frequently the scenes of such fervor that the whole order of business was suspended and the meeting transformed into a religious exercise.<sup>70</sup>

Toward the end of March the spirit of excitement began to wane; the curious were surfeited; the sincere and determined alone remained.<sup>71</sup> But by this time the Y. M. C. A. had begun to expand its field of activity. On Sunday night, February 7, 1858, the Association had sponsored a service for the members of the Fire Department of Philadelphia in National Hall, Market Street above Twelfth, which was attended by 1804 firemen and was addressed by the Reverend Newton Heston, Pastor of Nazareth Methodist Episcopal Church. He delivered an evangelical discourse on the subject, "What Is Man?" in which he besought the congregation to a man to accept Jesus as their model, their Redeemer, their only Savior.<sup>72</sup> By Feb-

<sup>66</sup> *North American and United States Gazette*, March 13, 1858.

<sup>67</sup> *American Presbyterian*, March 25, 1858.

<sup>68</sup> *Catholic Herald and Visitor*, March 27, 1858.

<sup>69</sup> Talbot W. Chambers, *Noon Prayer Meeting* (New York, 1858), 277.

<sup>70</sup> *Fourth Annual Report of the Y. M. C. A.*

<sup>71</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, April 3, 1858.

<sup>72</sup> Reverend Newton Heston, *The Dignity, Duty and Destiny of Man* (Philadelphia, February, 7, 1858).

ruary 22, the Association had made its decision to begin the evangelization of the firemen.

The Volunteer Fire Department had been the cause of much concern to the people of Philadelphia. In the early days, staid Quaker householders, doctors, lawyers and even clergymen had combined in volunteer societies for the protection of their own property. The tremendous growth of the city, the development of mercantile and industrial establishments had enlarged the responsibilities of these voluntary groups beyond the ability of busy persons to respond, and the composition and character of the fire companies had changed so that their ranks were now filled with those to whom such uncertain demands were less serious, and whose association together provided both relaxation and recreation. As an institution, the Fire Department was significant enough to attract the attention of foreign visitors, one of whom reminds us that a newspaper, *America's Own and Firemen's Journal*, was devoted exclusively to the interest of firemen and to the promulgation of facts and opinions relating to the fraternity throughout the Union.<sup>73</sup> Since remuneration was in direct proportion to the service rendered, it was a matter of importance to the organization which arrived first upon the scene of action. Based upon a well-developed *esprit de corps* a keen rivalry developed in which more effort was expended in preventing a prior arrival of another company than was exerted in reaching the fire. Having been outwitted, it became a point of honor to seek opportunity for redress of grievances.

Frequently the companies ran recklessly up and down the streets, especially at night, for their own amusement, and in answer to alarms they themselves had given; and the occasion when two groups met or collided was a never-to-be-forgotten event, day or night. There ensued a battle in which the ammunition was anything that could be wielded, with pistols, knives, and sling-shots in reserve, to the discomfort of spectators and passers-by and the defacement or destruction of adjacent property. As many as seventeen young men were sentenced to imprisonment in a single day for crimes committed at or returning from fires. These actions were condemned and ridiculed while at the same time the heroism of the Department was lauded and debts of gratitude to it often seriously professed. In this

<sup>73</sup> Charles Mackay, *Life and Liberty in America* (New York, 1859), 55.



mood of "can't do with them; can't do without them" the firemen levied blackmail upon the community through the sale of tickets to their balls and by appeals for money with which to repair their apparatuses. As a political factor also, the members of the Fire Department were appreciated by ward leaders, for their votes might and could be delivered in blocks where expedience and advantage so dictated.<sup>74</sup>

Mayor Henry and Fire Marshall Blackburn had vainly struggled with the task of reducing such turmoil into a state somewhat resembling order.<sup>75</sup> Committees of responsible citizens had met again and again to study the question and report on the advisability of instituting a paid fire department, but nothing that could be suggested was able to overcome the entrenched position of the firemen in their vocation, nor dull the feeling of indebtedness with which the populace recalled their valor, courage and service.<sup>76</sup>

On the evening of March 30, the Association began its first prayer meeting for firemen in the Hall of the Phoenix Hose Company. Within two weeks several company houses were offered, of which three were chosen for immediate effort, and the rest gradually organized until in all the organization was soon responsible for seventeen meetings among the firemen.<sup>77</sup> In addition they provided a regular series of Sunday evening services with sermons for corporate groups such as the firemen, medical students, and the like, and to which they invited especially the strangers in the community who were guests at the city's hotels. One gathers the impression that these were fairly well-attended meetings and that because of the emphasis which had been placed upon work with the Fire Department, there was hope that a permanent reformation would take place among the members of that body and thus solve, without struggle or conflict, one of the city's problems.<sup>78</sup>

Taking a cue from the Association's work with firemen, a group of Sunday School teachers from the Green Hill Presbyterian Church began to sponsor gatherings on Sunday and Thursday evenings in

<sup>74</sup> Scharf and Westcott, III, 1912.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 729.

<sup>76</sup> *Report of a Committee to Consider the Propriety of Organizing a Paid Fire Department. December 3, 1852* (Philadelphia, 1853).

<sup>77</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, April 19, 1858.

<sup>78</sup> *Fourth Annual Report of the Y. M. C. A.*, November 2, 1858.

a public house at the intersection of Girard and Ridge Avenues, especially for the omnibus drivers in the city.<sup>79</sup> On Easter evening, April 3, more than three hundred young boys were gathered in Concert Hall to institute a prayer meeting for boys;<sup>80</sup> quietly an effort was made to organize the older young men of the Central High School, but the Roman Catholic Church entered a protest, indicating the impropriety and inconsistency of such an effort, and it was abandoned.<sup>81</sup>

As the movement settled into its more prosaic task of sponsoring and supporting prayer meetings, tragedy came to one who had been among the most loyal and dynamic of the leaders. The Reverend Dudley Atkins Tyng, rector of the Episcopal Church of the Covenant, suddenly and violently met his death. This young clergyman was a native of Maryland, the son of a New England family, and had spent almost all of his boyhood in Philadelphia where his father had been rector of the Church of the Epiphany. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, class of 1843, he had prepared for Holy Orders at the Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, Virginia. After ordination he had ministered to congregations in New York City, western Virginia and southern Ohio, and had been called to the parish of his boyhood and the church which his father had served.<sup>82</sup> In the spring of 1856 he had been deeply stirred by the Kansas question and the attack of Preston Brooks on Senator Sumner, and, determined no longer to be a party to the conspiracy of silence, had preached a well-advertised sermon in which he ascribed our national problems to slavery, condemned that institution, and predicted that God would visit the nation with a period of dire economic distress.<sup>83</sup> Aside from the public commotion in the service itself, the newspapers had criticized political comments in the guise of sermons. His resignation requested, Mr. Tyng left during the next fall, after which a part of the congregation of the Church of the Epiphany withdrew to form the Church of the Covenant. A little later with the stipulation that he be free to speak when and as he was impelled, Mr. Tyng accepted their call as rector. He had been one of the more generous supporters

<sup>79</sup> *Philadelphia Evening Journal*, April 24, 1858.

<sup>80</sup> *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, April 6, 1858.

<sup>81</sup> *Catholic Herald and Visitor*, May 15, 1858.

<sup>82</sup> Charles Rockland Tyng, *Life of Stephen H. Tyng* (New York, 1890), 267.

<sup>83</sup> Dudley Atkins Tyng, *Our Country's Troubles* (Philadelphia, June 29, 1856).

of the Y. M. C. A. at the time of its inception in Philadelphia, being among its founders; he had shared in the religious exercises of the Association, and when after March 8 the noon-day prayer meeting had become so prominent, he had provided a goodly share of its leadership and in the preaching services which accompanied it.

At his home in the suburbs of the city on Saturday, April 17, while watching the operation of some farm machinery, driven by a treadmill powered by a mule, the right side of his study gown was caught and his arm gradually drawn into the gears of the machine which mangled his right side before the burden beast could be halted. Neither amputation of his arm, nor any available medical care could prevent his death which occurred on Monday, April 19. His parting words to a fellow revival worker, the Reverend George Duffield, Presbyterian minister, were in the interest of the revival participants. "Tell them," he said, "to stand up for Jesus."<sup>84</sup>

Tyng's funeral was held in Concert Hall on the following Thursday. It was attended by the members of his congregation of the Church of the Covenant and followers of the prayer meetings, and conducted by that staunchest of Evangelicals of the Episcopate, Bishop McIlvaine of Ohio, assisted by fellow clergymen and workers in the revival.<sup>85</sup> Its high note was the emphasis placed upon the last words of the deceased which Duffield reduced to verse and incorporated in his sermon on the next Sunday. Shortly published in a Baptist periodical, the poem was set to music and quickly became popular with the soldiers of the Union Army as the hymn, "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus."<sup>86</sup>

By May 1, the Association had purchased a huge tent capable of seating about two thousand people. Designated "The Tabernacle" the tent was started on a journey about the city. The revival was thus carried to divers points where services were held through the day and in the evening, addressed by participating clergy of the community. From that time on until the summer of 1861, it became the chosen task of the first of the tent's converts, George Mingins, to supervise and further the use of this vehicle of evangelism.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>84</sup> *Episcopal Recorder*, May 1, 1858, and May 8, 1858.

<sup>85</sup> *Last Hours and Funeral Service of Reverend Dudley A. Tyng* (Philadelphia, 1858).

<sup>86</sup> Henry Wilder Foote, *Three Centuries of American Hymnody* (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), 212.

<sup>87</sup> *Fourth Annual Report of the Y. M. C. A.*

The people of Philadelphia, when they stopped to think about it, were conscious of a change in the social morality of the city. Not only had there occurred a quickening of interest in religious organizations, particularly in the Young Men's Christian Association, but there was hope that a permanent reformation had taken place among the firemen. This hope seemed to find confirmation in the statistics of the public press which indicated a substantial decrease in arrests for drunkenness, disorderly conduct, and other offenses, serious and trifling, though there was accompanying evidence that the integrity of the Police Department was such that its members did not pursue the matter of police authority too rigidly.<sup>88</sup> The religious press recounted the social and political benefits of the religious experience and related the worthy efforts of the Young Men's Christian Association in the salvation of men's souls. Some even spoke of the Association as the religious organization of the future, uniting in its common efforts all Christian men and eventually supplanting the organized churches.<sup>89</sup> John Wanamaker, despite hemorrhages from the lungs, drove himself relentlessly, at noon-day prayer meetings by day and every evening in a fire house, Sunday morning at the Independent Church, Sunday afternoon nurturing Bethany Sunday School on South Street.<sup>90</sup> By the annual meeting of the Y. M. C. A. in 1858, he could face the members and urge the Association to give definite consideration to the fact that it had earned its way into the hearts of the community and ought to be looking forward to an adequate, permanent home of its own.<sup>91</sup>

By now the revival was living on its organized features. The prayer meetings at noon continued to be advertised and held daily but with diminishing attendance which by summer had fallen quite low.<sup>92</sup> A slight increase in interest in the fall was climaxed by an Anniversary Service on November 23, when a large number of people observed the beginning of the second year of that gathering.<sup>93</sup> In December, however, the Jayne's Hall meeting had again shrunk

<sup>88</sup> *Inquirer*, September 1, 1857, November 1, 1857, February 1, 1858, March 1, 1858.

<sup>89</sup> Doggett, 285.

<sup>90</sup> Gibbons, I, 34.

<sup>91</sup> *Fourth Annual Report of the Y. M. C. A.*

<sup>92</sup> *Presbyterian*, July 31, 1858.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, November 27, 1858.

to a small group, a mere tithe of the number who had participated in the early days of March.

Similar also was the story of the Christian Society at the University of Pennsylvania. This group, organized in January, 1857, had patterned its meetings largely on the program of the Y. M. C. A. In a program of prepared papers, prayer, and religious discussion, they had marked the poor estate of religion and the lack of increase in clergy and churches proportionate to the increase of population. By December, 1857, they achieved their largest numerical attendance; in July they had discussed the "Present Religious Interest," in the fall they had sponsored a College Prayer Meeting with very indifferent results, and by June 30, 1859, unable to muster a quorum, the Society apparently ceased to function.<sup>94</sup> Some smaller groups which had been organized in various churches continued to hold together until early in 1861.<sup>95</sup>

The organized churches also felt the effect of the revival and noted gratefully the increased attendance at their stated services. Never again were they to achieve such a high ratio of accessions.<sup>96</sup> The Baptists, in Convention, expressed "deepfelt gratitude to God for the rich and glorious outpouring of His Spirit so generously on the Churches the last year." In their reports this Church recorded 1,997 baptisms for 1858 as compared with 757 in 1857.<sup>97</sup> The Society of Friends, which had not formally participated in the religious exercises of the revival, had noted and commended the use of silent prayer in the meetings, and added the hope that some of the fifteen thousand estimated as sharing in the movement would find a permanent place in some religious society and a place of prayer in their respective business quarters.<sup>98</sup> Their Yearly Meeting in 1858 had been attended by larger numbers than at any time since 1827 and had been marked by the increase in middle-aged attendants.<sup>99</sup> The Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, diminishing rapidly in interest

<sup>94</sup> Unpublished Reports, The Christian Society, U. of P., 1857-59, in possession of the Christian Association of the University of Pennsylvania.

<sup>95</sup> Unpublished Reports, Young Men's Prayer Meeting, Second Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, in the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>96</sup> H. C. Weber, *Evangelism, A Graphic Survey* (New York, 1929), 115.

<sup>97</sup> *Minutes of Philadelphia Baptist Association*, October 5-8, 1858.

<sup>98</sup> *Friends Intelligencer*, April 10, 17, May 1, 22, 1858.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, May 22, 1858.

and support, reserved its judgment on the movement and suggested, "If its results are seen in an awakened sympathy for the slave, and an acknowledgement of his rights of manhood, and in a testimony worthy of a Christian Church against the chief sin of the nation, it may claim to be a revival of Christianity."<sup>100</sup>

This comment must have recalled to the minds of some at least, the fact that little, if any, thought had been given to the twenty thousand Negroes who lived within the limits of the recently enlarged city. The note of freedom, "free" men, "free" speech, "free" thought, which had been struck in the Republican National Convention of 1856, had been re-echoed in religious gatherings during the weeks of the revival in terms of the freedom promised by Christ: freedom to be men, and freedom through the forgiveness of sins. But none of this had been projected toward the people of color. The nineteen Negro churches in the community had continued in their solemn course, no doubt sensing the spirit which was abroad, but not sharing, insofar as any record reveals, through special religious services stemming from the revival. Though revivalism had decreased in importance in the life of the white churches, it had been preserved as an annual program in the colored churches whereby Negro youth were converted and brought into mature membership.<sup>101</sup> In other cities of the East, Boston and Baltimore, revival services in Negro churches were considered as curious spectacles by the white populations who visited them only to comment upon the presence of excessive emotionalism. Many years later a Southern writer concluded that the "great revival" of this period "affected the Negro population so benignly as to give a security from insurrection during the War and a great help in the solution of the 'race problem' since 1865. Never in the history of the race were so many Africans brought to Christ; and after all subtractions from the sum of good are made for the faults and sins of the Afro-American people, it remains true that the sons of Ham have attained their greatest elevation in the United States, and that the Christian Churches of the country have done the most and best that has been done for them."<sup>102</sup>

<sup>100</sup> *Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, Annual Report*, 1858.

<sup>101</sup> W. R. B. DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (Philadelphia, 1899), 303.

<sup>102</sup> W. H. Candler, *Great Revivals and the Great Republic* (Tennessee, 1904), 224-225.

On the basis of such an evaluation Philadelphia's share appears to have been quite meagre. By chance in the fall of 1857, a seventeen-year-old student of the University of Pennsylvania, William David Stuart, oldest son of Mr. George Hay Stuart, President of the Philadelphia Y. M. C. A., learned that some colored children had been denied admission to the white Sunday Schools to which their neighborhood was solely accessible. Young Stuart, a member of the Christian Society of the University, felt impelled to meet this challenge. Selecting a room at the corner of Thirteenth and Carpenter Streets he opened on Sunday, December 6, 1857, a mission Sunday School to which twenty colored children found their way, despite the pouring rain. Next he inaugurated a prayer meeting for Negro adults on Sunday and Wednesday evenings which, beginning with an attendance of about forty, was thereafter limited only by the size of available accommodations. On Friday, January 1, 1858, Stuart moved his little group to a room above a tavern at Thirteenth and Mariner Streets, where he celebrated the advent of the New Year by feeding his charges on mince pie and raisins. A subsequent move was made to the basement of the discarded edifice of the First Reformed Presbyterian Church on St. Mary's Street between Sixth and Seventh Streets, which by now was surrounded by a dense and needy colored population. Here the effort continued to develop and prosper under the faithful and devoted leadership of its founder who made both the physical and religious needs of his people his concern so long as a body, wracked with tuberculosis, could carry on. At his death in 1863, his father bought the property and helped to continue the venture as a missionary project.<sup>103</sup> But for the most part the Negro and his status continued to be considered only as an academic question of the day.<sup>104</sup>

During 1859-1860, as times began to improve financially, but to grow more tense politically, the Young Men's Christian Association wrestled with the task of keeping enthusiasm alive for the prayer meeting tradition of its organization, and for the fulfillment of the

<sup>103</sup> James McMillan, *Memoir of William David Stuart* (Philadelphia, 1865), 19, 20, 105; Thompson, ed., *Life of George H. Stuart*, 104, 176.

<sup>104</sup> *Ought Slavery To Be Perpetuated. Debate*—Rev. W. G. Brownlow and Rev. A. Pryne. This debate occurred in Philadelphia in September, 1858, in the presence of a goodly audience and was a moderate financial success.

responsibilities which had been assumed among the firemen.<sup>105</sup> The "Tabernacle" continued to circulate during the summer months mainly through the untiring devotion of its first convert, Mr. Mingins,<sup>106</sup> whose persistence led some to suggest employing him as general overseer of all sponsored meetings thus releasing them from liability. This step, however, did not meet with approval.<sup>107</sup> There seemed to be no desire to pursue an active program nor to assume further responsibility for one. One senses here the loss of Mr. Wanamaker's drive and direction, for by this time he was engaged in the personal tasks attendant upon the beginnings both of family life and commercial venture.

On January 23, 1860, a communication from the Young Men's Christian Association at Alexandria, Virginia, was read to a monthly meeting of the Philadelphia Association recommending the appointment of "a day of special prayer to Almighty God for the preservation of our Union." Without deliberation the communication was ordered to be placed on file.<sup>108</sup> The revival was over. Weariness in well doing had replaced energy.

The traditional evaluation of the revival of 1858 generally notes the exceptional increase in the membership of the evangelical churches; the development of the Young Men's Christian Association into an organization which temporarily attained a wider acceptance by the people of the community; the renewed emphasis on the work of the Sunday School Association, Religious Tract Societies, Missionary Societies, and other agencies of evangelization. All of these though marked by the unusual prominence of laymen in positions of leadership, are but the result of the stimulation given to the traditional programs of existing institutions. The onset of the Civil War so altered the sequence of events as to deny more than this casual summation.

One might well ask why the revival occurred when it did; whether there is any apparent relation between the disturbing political realignments of 1856, the financial tragedy of 1857, and the religious experience of 1858 which formed a trinity of shocks visited upon the

<sup>105</sup> *Minutes of the Philadelphia Y. M. C. A.*, April 25, 1859, May 9, 1859.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, June 27, 1859.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, January 23, 1860.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, January 23, 1860.



people in rapid succession. The change in the tempo of life in the first half of the nineteenth century, moreover, occurred almost at the rate of geometric progression, so rapidly as to be unrealized in its entirety, little understood or absorbed. Symptomatic of the uncertainty of the period is the expression of resentment embodied in the spirit of economic, social and religious reform, in the nostalgia for a day that seemed almost, but never fully, to have been achieved. The decades of struggle had resulted in no permanent fulfillment of this dream world; Protestantism seemed to have failed utterly to meet the challenge; urbanization emphasized the vulnerability of the age to unknown and unconquerable forces; romanticism drew men to one of the features of life that could be recalled in a familiar form as of old. None seemed to have the magic words to make the dream real; no power was generated to effect such a move. Attention turned inward in a mood of corporate introspection toward self and toward each one's shortcomings.

Accentuated by the Panic of 1857, the movement, long in the making, stirred; but it might not have succeeded in freeing itself except for the fortunate synchronization of the renewed revival tradition in the Y. M. C. A. with the unusual leadership of John Wanamaker which made that organization the vehicle of the revival and won for it a measure of acceptance in the face of prejudice. In turn, the outward manifestation of the revival movement was remarkable for its calm austerity, its emotional control and urban decorum, and for the simplicity with which it fitted into the life of the community without disrupting the routine of daily business activities in their struggle for economic rehabilitation.

In Philadelphia the revival was decidedly a minority movement, primarily concerned with the noon-day prayer meetings in the financial district and among the commercial personnel of business houses. Those who were the accepted leaders in the city, shopkeepers and clerks, might easily be fitted into the categories of "upper" and "upper middle" classes, or aspirants thereto. As the movement spread through the churches, reached out through the agency of "The Tabernacle" and sponsored meetings such as those for the firemen, it must have touched many of the unfortunate and suffering working people. One can only speculate how the economic vicissi-

tudes of the less fortunate, the absence of adequate means and dress, may have limited their participation.

Embedded in the spirit of the revival and expressed in the emotional catharsis of reforming energies, was a counter-movement against the exaltation of man's potentialities expressed in Unitarian theology. Rare was the occasion when one of that persuasion was moved to make public his recantation of the Unitarian faith and to embrace the revival with its emphasis on man's utter dependence on God—a theme which precluded any attempt to analyze and deal with the realities of the times. Social and economic problems were to be left to God; man was to renew a deep sense of otherworldliness which would suffice to overshadow the great issues facing the nation. By many of the participants this mood was retained until the eve of warfare; others succumbed to disillusionment; more turned to the satisfaction which came from the restoration of better economic conditions. Gradually the people girded themselves for the emotional and physical conflict for which the times seemed destined. The revival had been a pause which brought no real refreshment nor fulfillment of the hopes of those who looked forward to the great day of brotherhood which it had seemed to promise. The experience became shortly a vague memory; the Young Men's Christian Association lost incentive and had to be resurrected for further service on the field of battle.

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