family reunion on a dusty wagon road just east of Chestnut Ridge on October 19, 1809, seems scarcely worth remembering. Yet this reunion marks the beginning of an interesting development in American history. Alexander Campbell, then 21, was bringing his mother, two brothers, and four sisters to join his father, Thomas Campbell, who preceded his family by two years in their emigration to America. Thomas Campbell was a Seceder Presbyterian preacher from Ahorey, Ireland, who had the interesting habit of starting a private school wherever he happened to live. His parentage was Scottish even though he was Irish born. His education consisted of a full undergraduate course at the University of Glasgow with the additional seminary training provided by the Seceder Church, which consisted of five terms of eight weeks each. His scholarly nature and discipline enabled him to read widely in the fields of literature and philosophy as well as theology. In two short American years he had not only managed to get himself tried for heresy but also to form an association for the promotion of religion and morality which was destined to become the largest religious body of American origin which today claims three and one-half million adult communicants in its two major branches.

* An address delivered before the Historical Society on January 20, 1958 by Dr. Perry Epler Gresham. Dr. Gresham is President of Bethany College, member of the Author's Club of London, an ordained minister and lecturer in American Biography.—Ed.
His brilliant son, Alexander, was delighted to find his father had broken with the sectarian traditions of the Seceders, since his own spiritual pilgrimage had prompted him virtually to separate himself from the Church in Glasgow by refusing communion. The incidents leading up to the reunion on the road were dramatic. The family had started to America in 1808 but a shipwreck off the Hebrides sent them back to Oban and down the coast to Glasgow where Alexander rounded out his private education with a good solid year in the sciences and literature at the University of Glasgow. The voyage in 1809 was successful. Fifty-four days on the water brought them to New York on September 29 from whence they journeyed by coach to Philadelphia. With Washington, Pennsylvania, as their destination they started on the deliberate journey westward by wagon.

Three days journey from the reunion on the road brought the Campbell family to Washington, which was then a small village of some 500 inhabitants. On the way Thomas told his son of the Christian Association. He was eager for Alexander to read the proof sheets of "The Declaration and Address," a document signed by 21 men, but written by Thomas Campbell, as the principles underlying the newly formed association. The party crossed the Monongahela River into Washington County by ferry at a place then called Williamsport. At their arrival in the village they settled down to a destiny that would start two academies, a college, a state, and a new communion.

Within a short space of two years the Christian Association of Washington County, Pennsylvania, had become a new and separate religious communion with its headquarters in a small country church erected on Brush Run about two miles up from Buffalo Creek; Alexander had been licensed to preach; and "The Declaration and Address" had become an important historical document with a significant destiny. The "Declaration" set forth the ambitious aims of the Association as "to restore the unity, peace, and purity of the whole Church of God." This was followed by Thomas Campbell's "Address" which outlined the principles for restoring the "unity, peace, and purity" of the Church. The first words of the "Address" laid down the fundamental concept that "The Church of Christ is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one." Elaborating principles include the rejection of all human creeds in favor of the
Scripture as the only binding articles of faith with the New Testament as the "perfect constitution" for the Church. Divisions among Christians were viewed as "a horrid evil." The locus of authority was to be Christ as revealed in the New Testament. The reunion of Christendom was to be achieved by the restoration of the New Testament Church. The document reflects Locke's *Letters on Toleration* with overtones of Wycliffe, Meldenius, Stillingfleet, and the Haldanes.

With the establishment of the Brush Run Church June 16, 1811, Alexander Campbell became the leader of the Movement in spite of his youth and somewhat controversial inclinations. He was licensed to preach, which he continued to practice with increasing power and frequency until his death in 1866. Vachel Lindsay captured the genius of his influence when he wrote:¹

He stepped from out the Brush Run Meeting House
To make the big woods his cathedrals,
The river his baptismal font,
The rolling clouds his bells,
The stormy skies his waterfalls,
His pastures and his wells,
Despite all sternness in his word
Richer grew the rushing blood
Within our fathers' coldest thought.
Imagination at the flood
Made flowery all they heard.
The deep communion cup
Of the whole South lifted up.

Who were the witnesses, the great cloud of witnesses
With which he was compassed around?
The heroes of faith from the days of Abraham
Stood on the blue-grass ground—
While the battle-ax of thought
Hewed to the bone
That the utmost generation
Till the world was set right
Might have an America their own.
For religion Dionysian
Was far from Campbell's doctrine.

He preached with faultless logic
An American Millennium:
The social order
Of a realist and farmer
With every neighbor
Within stone wall and border.
And the tongues of flame came down
Almost in spite of him!

Alexander Campbell must have had a way with women. He called at the home of John Brown, who lived in a substantial farm house located on Buffalo Creek just over the Virginia border. John Brown's only daughter, aged 18, looked with an interested eye on the tall Irishman from Washington. Within six months the couple repeated their vows "till death do us part." Within two years Mr. Brown had deeded his farm and home to his son-in-law as an incentive for Alexander to stay in the community rather than take his family to Zanesville, Ohio, where Thomas had moved. Alexander and Margaret soon followed the family custom of founding private schools. In 1818 Buffalo Seminary was in operation. Dorothea Campbell married Joseph Bryant of Washington and stayed in the community. Not to be outdone by her brother, she soon started a seminary for girls at West Middletown, which continued until her death in the latter part of the century. Archibald W. Campbell became a physician in the tri-state area. By mid-century his son, Archibald, Junior, was fighting editor of the Wheeling Intelligencer. It was this nephew of Alexander Campbell who called the Convention which made West Virginia a state in 1863. Alexander, however, was the great prophet and public figure of the Campbell family.

In 1829 The Old Dominion called a constitutional convention at Richmond. Some of Campbell's friends urged him to serve as one of the four delegates from the western section of the state. Philip Doddridge of Wellsburg was the natural leader of the Panhandle area. He expressed himself as eager to have Campbell as a colleague. As the canvass for votes began, however, Samuel Sprigg, a Wheeling lawyer, announced that Doddridge backed him against Campbell. This prompted the otherwise reluctant Campbell to fight for the nomination, which he won in a walk. The Convention enabled him to debate the issue of universal white suffrage against the East Virginian inclination to allow slave owners a substantial political advantage and thus perpetuate themselves in office. The audience for Campbell's political addresses included Chief Justice Marshall, former Presidents James Madison and James Monroe, John Randolph, and Philip Barbour. The west was defeated in the vote which eventually split the state in two. Campbell returned to urge his county to vote against the new constitution which gave political advantage to the slaveholder. Brooke County, where Campbell lived, was the only county unanimous against ratification. This
represented, however, only 375 votes. There were only 646 votes in Ohio County which includes Wheeling. Three Ohio county voters favored ratification—slave holders, no doubt.

Campbell was not only a success at religion and politics. He was a highly successful farmer and business man. Preaching responsibilities did not keep him from covering the hills with sheep and the meadows with hay. His trading abilities led him into the wool market as a considerable broker. He established a printing press which turned out, first, The Christian Baptist, and later, the Millennial Harbinger, each of which was a monthly magazine with wide circulation. The press also produced a hymn book for the churches, which publication returned a handsome profit. He served as postmaster at Bethany, which enabled him to propagate his religious views without expense for postage. He was a shrewd land speculator in a time when values were rapidly increasing. He bought Monticello, home of his hero, Thomas Jefferson, and held it for his son-in-law until visitors became such a nuisance that the Barclays were forced to sell. In spite of great family expense and major gifts to education and religion, he developed a substantial estate in his lifetime. His boundless energy and natural gifts of eloquence and common sense enabled him to become the world’s heavyweight debater with such notable opponents as Robert Owen, the socialist; Bishop Purcell of Cincinnati; and N. L. Rice of Paris, Kentucky. Henry Clay presided at the last of these debates. His popularity as a lecturer carried him to the most celebrated platforms of America. Mark Twain records an amusing episode with reference to his lecture in Hannibal, Missouri. The Senate and the House heard him preach in the chambers at Washington.

History has a strange way of treating heroes. Daniel Webster, for example, is better known and more honored than he was in his lifetime. Campbell was widely celebrated in his day, but not adequately remembered outside his religious Movement in subsequent years. There is today, however, an inclination to recover some of his merited stature. When the work is complete, Campbell will stand forth as a reformer and educator. In the latter capacity he will be best known as the founder of Bethany College, which in turn became the mother of eleven higher institutions, including Texas Christian in Fort Worth, Butler in Indianapolis, and Drake in Des Moines.
The educational views of Campbell deserve considerable review. He launched the *Millennial Harbinger* with the avowed intention of expounding his views on education. His first prospectus, published January 4, 1830, is as follows: "This work shall be devoted to the destruction of sectarianism, infidelity, and anti-Christian doctrine and practice. It shall have for its object the development, and introduction of that political and religious order of society called the millennium, which will be the consummation of that ultimate amelioration of society proposed in the Christian scriptures." Of the specific objectives listed under this, the second one is: "To show the inadequacy of the present systems of education, literary and moral, to develop the powers of the human mind, and to prepare man for rational and social happiness." It is to be noted that his conception was that of a "secular" millennium. The subsequent volumes show his success in carrying out his intention, for in an early issue he wrote, "I have doubted for at least fifteen years whether the present mode of training the human mind in common schools—whether for infants or young men—was not almost antipodes to reason, and sailing against the wind and tide of human nature." His reason for saying this, he explained, was the fact that "the 'natural' sciences in the present course are for young men at the last of their academic, and 'unnatural' are for children!" He further observed that "More than one-half the time spent in the collegiate way was lost—which, under a rational system might be obtained at the age from sixteen to eighteen."

Editorials and printed addresses in early issues gave much attention to educational matters. He was of the firm conviction that the only way in which common school teaching could be reformed was by improvement in the colleges where teachers are trained. He gave hearty approval to the diatribes of Smith Grimke of South Carolina who launched a verbal campaign against devotion to Greece and Rome in higher education. He contended that schools should have more regard for current affairs and less for the classics. His conception of education as outlined in these early comments revealed two fundamental principles which influenced all his subsequent thought: namely, that education should begin in infancy and last all through a life-time; and, second, that it should be for everyone. In the year 1840 this interest led him to the founding of Bethany College. He set aside $15,000 of his own money for the enterprise,
assembled a few well-trained men, procured a charter, and made ready to begin instruction. The new institution was to present "a system of education founded upon all the demands of our nature in the ratio of their importance, developing a human being to himself, his physical, intellectual, and moral constitution, his position in the universe, and corresponding obligations and duties, his capabilities and sources of enjoyment, inducting him into those sciences and moral habits essential to his usefulness and true excellence." He further described the purpose of the institution by saying, "It is intended to lay a broad, as well as a deep and permanent, foundation for eminent usefulness in every department of Bethany College. For this purpose it is contemplated to have a very liberal and extensive course of scientific studies—and to give to the sciences, both physical and mental, a space proportioned to their relative value and importance in the intellectual and moral development and improvement of the human faculties." The first teaching staff consisted of A. F. Ross from New Athens College, Ohio, professor of ancient languages and ancient history; Charles Stuart of Kentucky, professor of algebra and general mathematics; R. Richardson, professor of chemistry, geology, and the natural sciences; W. K. Pendleton, of the University of Virginia, professor of natural philosophy "and such of the natural sciences as come not in the course of Dr. R. Richardson." The president himself was to teach mental philosophy, the evidence of Christianity, morals, and political economy. A sixth man was to be added, as a professor of English literature, and as many tutors as were needed. Of this faculty, Mr. Campbell said, they are "young men under thirty years of age, of highly respectable attainments, of much force of character, of exemplary morals, and ardent devotion to science, literature, and the advancement of education."

The college was founded as a liberal arts institution. While Campbell was eager to train ministers for the rapidly multiplying churches he was interested also in the education of men for the secular vocations. His appeal to the churches for support in the Millennial Harbinger of 1841 reads: "Popular education is dependent on liberal education, as lakes and rivers are dependent on oceans and seas for their periodical and full supplies. The Family, the State, the Church, with a hundred voices demand a number of such institutions as that in contemplation. And can we not, friends of humanity, civilization, morality, and religion, that we are—I say, can
we not, shall we not, erect and establish one or two such institutions, and thus contribute our mite to the advancement of the great cause of human redemption from ignorance, immorality, superstition, and error!"

Campbell understood the liberal arts as follows: "They are called liberal arts and sciences, not merely because they free the human mind from vulgar prejudices, ignorance, and error which they certainly do; but because they are general in their character and application, and open to us an extensive acquaintance with literature, science, and art; and thus furnish us with the means of extending our acquaintance with nature, society, and the Bible, to any extent commensurate with the wants of our nature and the limits of our existence."

The scheme of the curriculum was much like that of the University of Virginia. Campbell was an admirer of Thomas Jefferson and was undoubtedly familiar with the work of the great school which was the pride of Jefferson. It is not surprising that the University of Virginia afforded its share of Bethany's first faculty. The school of sacred history and moral philosophy required four years for its completion and included such studies as the evidences of Christianity, sacred history, Biblical literature, ecclesiastical history, and moral philosophy. Over this school the president himself presided. There was also a school of mathematics and astronomy which required three years for completion and had a rich offering of algebra, geometry, trigonometry, surveying, astronomy, etc. The early announcements clearly indicate the purpose of these studies which was "the development of the intellectual powers, the formation and cultivation of correct habits of thought and investigation, but a rigid regard to the logic and philosophy of mathematics, are made the paramount object of every recitation. Freedom of thought and inquiry, in harmony with the laws of analysis and synthesis, is encouraged; original modes of demonstration are highly estimated in the grading of scholarship, and every proper stimulus is employed to inspire in the student a generous love of science." The school of natural, intellectual, and political philosophy could be completed in two years. This corresponded to what we call physics and social science, and included psychology in addition to political economy and government. It is commendable that this pioneer educator made efforts to equip the school with the best possible laboratory, of which
he said, "Nature is presented as she seems to the senses, and her phenomena explained in the language and to the comprehension of the popular mind. For this purpose the institution is provided with an extensive philosophical apparatus, affording the means of experimental demonstration of all the leading and more interesting phenomena of this department of science." His interest in American government led him to include courses in constitutional and international law. Of this he said, "In no country on the globe is it so important that every citizen should understand the great and fundamental principles of government, as in America, and yet the study of these has, hitherto, been almost totally neglected in the literary institutions of our country." A two-year course was also offered in chemistry and belles lettres. The chemical division was prepared to offer laboratory studies to supplement the lectures and textbooks. The applied aspects of the study of physiology and agriculture were specifically mentioned in the aims of the course. The department of belles lettres within this school was the customary literary course. A preparatory school and a school of Hebrew and modern languages completed the curricular offering. It is interesting to compare this arrangement of studies into seven schools with the eight schools which made up the curriculum of the University of Virginia at its beginning in 1825. In that catalogue were presented (1) the ancient languages, (2) the modern languages, (3) mathematics, (4) natural philosophy, (5) natural history, (6) medicine, (7) moral philosophy, (8) law. The influence of Thomas Jefferson on Campbell would make an interesting study. He spoke of the work of Jefferson as "the emancipation of the human mind from the shackles of superstition." He made frequent reference to the University of Virginia in his addresses, and in describing the "bill of fare" offered at the Stewards Inn, where the students were boarded, he said that "the food diet was that which was offered at the University of Virginia." In keeping with the practice of that school, he permitted the student to elect schools and even certain courses. Modern languages and Hebrew were offered on an elective basis. This is significant because the general idea of election had not yet been accepted.

The hallmark of a Bethany education, according to its founder, was to be "man's recognition of his responsibility to carry on the great American institutions, such as the school, the church, the state, the home, and the professions." He, therefore, demanded that all
academic procedure be in accord with "the genius of humanity and the wants of society." In an apostrophe to the college, he said:

Men, and not brick and mortar, make colleges, and these colleges make men. These men make books, and these books make the living world in which we individually live, and move, and have our being. How all-important, then, that our colleges should understand and teach the true philosophy of man! They create the men that furnish the teachers of men—the men that fill the pulpit, the legislative halls, the senators, the judges and the governors of earth. Do we expect to fill these high stations by merely voting or praying for men? Or shall we choose empirics, charlatans, mountebanks, and every pretender to eminent claims upon the suffrages of the people? Forbid it, reason, conscience, and Heaven!

The influence of this stalwart reformer and educator still lives in the churches and schools which his genius developed. His fifteen hundred acre farm is now the campus of Bethany College. His old home is becoming an American shrine to take its place with Monticello and Mt. Vernon. Western Pennsylvania is beginning to realize that here in these tumbled mountains a Scotch-Irish immigrant inspired institutions and influences which have a significant bearing on the destiny of western civilization. An admiring poet sensed this fact before the historians began their deliberate work:

Let a thousand Prophets have their due
Let each have his boat in the sky
But you were born for his secular millennium
With the old Kentucky forest blooming like heaven,
And the redbirds flying high.