

Spark of Grace:
The story of the Haldane Revival

By
Joe Ridholls

Dedicated to my parents, both of whom knew what Revival was.

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Dear Mr. Ridholls,

...I have completed my reading of your MS [manuscript]
and hasten to express the great pleasure which it has given
me. This must be published...

With warm good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones

Introduction

It is a sound maxim in education that what is most likely to impress you and what you really remember is something that you have come to realise for yourself. I am not quite sure when the significance of the Haldane story dawned upon me although I fancy it came whilst I was reading an article by Geoffrey Williams in the Autumn 1959 Bulletin of the Evangelical library. Having been interested since war-time days in the Protestantism of the French-speaking countries I was acquainted with some of the great names, Monod, D'Aubigné, Neff and Malan. The realisation that the work of these men sprang from a series of bible studies over a period of six months in the Geneva of 1817 aroused in me a keen interest in Robert Haldane who had led these studies. He was clearly at the fountain-head of a profound and influential Revival that spilled out from Switzerland to France and far beyond.

What books I could obtain bearing on this period I read with interest and profit and often used the Haldane story by way of illustration in my preaching. It was, though, whilst describing the events to two young Christians in January, 1967 that I felt I should try to write a book about this man and the fantastic results of his work.

As the months went by and I did more research at Westminster College, Cambridge and at the British Museum, and with the help of the Evangelical Library and the encouragement of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones my conviction deepened. It was remarkable how I discovered that French books I have had for years bore directly upon the subject and led me further as I tried to see what led up to the "Réveil", what actually took place and how it spread.

I head the chapters with quotations from one of Charles Wesley's great hymns. When those who believe in Revival read this story they will take heart in the knowledge that what God has once done he can do again. Then they will join me in the prayer that Charles Wesley's hymn expresses, "O that all might catch the flame, all partake the glorious bliss!".

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Small and feeble.

"When He first the work begun
Small and feeble was His day."

Chenevière was worried. Here was another student approaching. The professor, hidden discreetly and rather self-consciously in the shelter of the tree's overhanging branches peered to identify the newcomer, his pencil poised to add his name to the list. The others had arrived early, in plenty of time for what he'd heard them describe as the "Haldane time". This one was late, it was already five minutes past six. Yes, it was Monod. Sadly he shook his head as he wrote the name. Frédéric Monod! Whatever would the distinguished Pastor Jean Monod, minister in Paris and formerly in Copenhagen, say if he knew of the behaviour of his son? Chenevière waited until the young man disappeared into the building, then he carefully shut his notebook, returned the pencil to his pocket and started to walk away. He had also discovered that these unhealthy gatherings took place three times a week now. They must be stopped.

"They must 'be stopped!" It was unusual for the dry academic to get excited about anything, but the corps of Protestant pastors in Geneva known as the Venerable Company knew that Chenevière was really worried and he had their sympathy. For some weeks now he had been raising this issue with them; this time he intended that some decision should be taken. "I'm sure we agree with the professor and deplore the malign influence of this wretched Haldane but how can we stop their gatherings?" There was a murmur of agreement with the sentiments of the suave cleric who had spoken. The members of the Venerable Company broke into animated conversation among themselves, hands were waved, shoulders shrugged as they discussed the vexed problem. "There's only one way, gentlemen", it was Chenevière again; they became quiet, all listening. "Naturally I've been thinking about this matter a very great deal", he said. "We cannot ban the students going there - they are free to go where they like. what we can and must do is to get this man Haldane expelled from Geneva." "On what charge, professor?" asked an elderly minister. "On the charge that he is a bad influence on the students of this University", replied Chenevière. "Haldane", he spat the name out, "is undermining the work of the school of theology; he is making our fine and liberally minded young men into fanatical bigots like himself; he is ruining everything we are trying to do; he is ..." "Just so, professor", interrupted the presiding pastor with a courteous smile, "we are all aware of the seriousness of the situation and I'm sure that all the brethren will agree that we take whatever action is necessary to expel this dangerous 'Methodist'¹ from our midst". There was a growl of approval and Chenevière who had been rather put out at the interruption of his tirade sat down, gratified that he had won the day.

Geneva in 1817 was very much a family city. It was small, compact and the large number of residents of French ancestry, mostly refugees from religious persecution of former days, helped to bind the city into a tight homogeneous whole. The city's links with France exposed the populace to the disturbance and anxiety of the Napoleonic wars. This also served to increase their insularity so that when peace came renewed contacts with other countries were made with mixed feelings. It was France that exercised the greatest influence upon Geneva; French speech, naturally, French fashions, French standards and, above all, French thought. The heady philosophy which had led to the French revolution had etched itself deeply and defiantly into the thinking and teaching of the people, and even of the Protestant church, in this the city of Calvin, perhaps the greatest Protestant of all time. It was not that religion was dead or even out of fashion. On the contrary, church-going was observed by all classes and much appreciation was expressed for the brilliant ethical teaching, literary and eloquent, of a competent and learned corps of pastors. The Venerable Company was influential and honoured, the pastor's position now guaranteed and protected by the State.

By and large the people were quite content that a basic doctrine like the Deity of Christ was denied

1. The word 'Methodist' is used throughout this book as it was so often used at that time as a derisive term to describe Evangelical Christians. It does not imply affiliation to the denomination of that name.

and now held to be a mistake. The pastors didn't believe it, and said so openly; so why should they? No official exception was taken to the fact that the Bible was read as little as possible in the church itself and practically never outside. After all, the preachers were brilliant men whom it was a pleasure to hear, so why worry about ancient Jewish myths? And the preachers themselves were quite happy that the school of theology had trained them as it had. In their studies they accepted the fact that to be liberal in thought was to be cultured and learned. They were not concerned at the lack of the study of the Bible and received their classical and philosophical diet with gratitude and relish. So the process went on - like student, like pastor, like people.

Yet there were some who were not content. In fact, this awareness of a great gap in the religious life of the city had been in the hearts and minds of a minority for a very long time. Perhaps it was the visit of the famous Count Zinzendorf, some seventy-five years before, which had both awakened this and given it shape. So effective had been his work during his stay in the city that when he left there was a solid Moravian community of about six hundred who met regularly for Bible study and prayer. Unfortunately, as the years wore on, the atmosphere of the city and the cold disapproval of the official church had their eroding effect and Ami Bost records "by 1802 nothing was left of Zinzendorf's six hundred but father and I, four or five poor women and an old man of Piedmont". Bost's father, a simple, austere pietist who had sent his son to the Moravians near Coblenz to be educated, set about gathering this pathetic little group together again. This small movement, said Guers, who joined it later "marks the commencement of the new Awakening" and fixes its date (1802) precisely".

The group, precursor of the better known Société des Amis was certainly not aware of its historic and strategic importance. "We were all ignorant", writes Guers, "innocent of dissidence. The meetings usually took place in the evenings, generally Sundays. There was free conversation, readings and hymns. It was not a real service of worship." So they persevered, struggled and sometimes almost lost heart. During the next three years they saw and welcomed occasional accessions to their number. There came Coulin and later Empeytaz, who was to found the Société des Amis and become its leading spirit. Guers, who chronicled their story, also joined, then Gonthier and later Henry Pyt destined to become the most famous of them all. From this group there sprang the Société des Amis, in which all had the same deep longings for religious reality. They were tired of hearing nothing "but the cold and bare teachings of an entirely human morality". They talked and prayed together, waiting for something to happen which they could dimly sense but were unable to define. This newly-formed Society declared "We believe that the pleasures of the world, especially dancing and the theatre, are incompatible with the spirit which should animate Christians". So they separated from the world. When their views became known bitter abuse was heaped upon them from their families, from the colleges and the general public. But nothing could abate the enthusiasm and Joy of these young men and this they expressed in song. Empeytaz produced a selection of hymns entitled "Christian Songs", compiled for the most part from hymns sung by the Moravians. It was in fact when Samuel Gobat of the Jura district in Berne joined them in the singing of a verse that he was converted. He was later to be the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem. They could not have foreseen this when they sang:

Ruined, blind, the slave of sin,
What a storm I felt within
When the light upon me shone,
Roused me to my state undone!

In 1815 they welcomed an extraordinary, if temporary, ally Julie de Krudener. Artistic, a friend of the Czar of Russia, Baroness of an old Russian Baltic province, she had reached the age of forty-one and "tasted everything" before she entered into the religious experience that made her the formidable character she was when she came to Geneva. One day in Riga she had been shocked to see a young Russian nobleman fall dead in the street. Still in distress as a result of this, she was intrigued and not a little envious to see how remarkably happy her new dressmaker was. She asked

him his secret and the simple religious testimony he gave so impressed her that soon she had found a similar Joy in the personal knowledge of Jesus Christ. From that time she devoted her life and not inconsiderable influence to bringing the same Gospel to other people. Her visit to Geneva made a profound impression on the little group. They were sufficiently clear-eyed to detect a certain tendency to the fantastic in her make-up and they noticed that she seemed to "vaunt herself a little", but they were ready to overlook these defects which were perhaps not altogether to be wondered at in a lady of her background. Certainly her deep and fervent religious convictions encouraged them to continue in their search for some movement of the Spirit of God and the focus of their prayers when she was with them was that God should send them a teacher. She also introduced them to Gospel hymns like the one translated by Marc Dejoux, one of their number, whose future work for the Gospel was to be very effective. It was:

Where is all my treasure stored,
Wisdom, knowledge, wealth, reward?
'Tis in Christ alone who died,
'Tis in Jesus crucified!

Later in the same year Geneva was completely upset by the arrival of the Austrians and the city was surrounded with troops. These circumstances hindered the activities of the Société des Amis and it was in very low waters when peace returned at last. In 1815 there was an encouraging sign. Gausson, one of the group who had been engaged to preach at the daily service in the city at three in the afternoon, with great daring abandoned the custom of reading a commentary on the works of Ostervald and substituted his own exposition of the Scriptures. The congregations grew at an amazing rate. From ten they went to twenty, to sixty, then a hundred and finally more than two hundred. The Venerable Company was greatly alarmed at this! However, the small group saw but little growth in its own gatherings. Wrote Ami Bost in February, 1816 "We're discouraged. Only four today: Guers, Galland, Coulin and myself". But they persevered and a little later he could write "we were seven today and great grace was upon us all."

Until this time the influences upon the pietist group had been entirely continental. Now there was the first visitor from Britain. At the beginning of 1816 Richard Wilcox arrived in Geneva, a Calvinistic Methodist of the school of the great preacher George Whitefield. His ardent spirit enthused the students. Ami Bost wrote, "he helped us; we all wanted to go right out and evangelise but Wilcox restrained us!". This poorly educated artisan was just the man they needed to re-energize the group, preparing them for the coming of the teacher for whom they had been praying. He was to arrive in November, 1816, just as Richard Wilcox was leaving .

In the same month of November, the ardent Empeytaz caused a theological storm by publishing his "Considerations on the divinity of Jesus Christ", addressed to the students of theology in the Church of Geneva. The students held a public protest meeting at the grand hall of the Consistory to attack the "odious aggression of the calumnious Empeytaz" and a letter of protest was sent to the Venerable Company. It is fascinating to learn that two ministerial students who were later to become intimately associated with the Revival opposed Empeytaz on this occasion. They were Frederic Monod and Merle D'Aubigné who chaired the meeting. Support for Empeytaz came from his friends Henri Pyt and Émile Guers, but to little avail. It was partly due to the sharpness of the conflict aroused by this matter that led the Venerable Company to impose the Règlement of May, 1817 which was added to the ordination vows. Among other things it made the ordained promise to abstain "from every species of sectarianism and to avoid whatever might tend in the direction of schism or threaten the unity of the Church".²

The Venerable Company and the professors of the school of theology had for a long time been

2. Empeytaz was refused ordination by the national church but was later consecrated to the ministry at the hands of the famous Frederic Oberlin of Ban de la Roche. He visited the great man in the presence of Baroness de Krudener whose chaplain he became.

aware of this tiresome and awkward group of pietists - Empeytaz especially, of course. The wise course, they had felt, was to let them alone so long as they did not come out into the open. But when the pamphlet by Empeytaz appeared then they had felt bound, rather reluctantly, to act. They had watched with fascinated horror the advent of the strange Baroness and when she had left without apparently achieving very much or stirring up too much trouble they had sighed with relief. The crude Britisher Wilcox had seemed less of a menace because of his lack of class and culture although they knew that it needed little to stir Empeytaz and his friends to excess of zeal. However, the main body of their students had not been touched by this band of awkward people nor their bizarre leaders, and when they knew that Wilcox was going they felt they were probably in for a period of comparative peace.

"Even as he left" - Chenevière was talking to a friend on the way home from the meeting of the Venerable Company - "there came into our city one even worse, a Scot this time, that "météoremenaçant" – Haldane!

Chapter 2: Spark of Grace

"See how great a flame aspires
Kindled by a spark of Grace."

He was about the last man whom a missionary committee would have appointed to work among the students of Geneva in 1817. He had no renown or reputation whatsoever in European circles, and so inadequate was his command of the French language that he needed an interpreter for all but the simplest of purposes. Anyone less like the students in manner it would have been hard to find. This fifty-three year old Scottish ex-naval officer with his powdered hair, his pig-tail and grave old-fashioned clothes, far from being vivacious was rather prim and a little ponderous.

Robert Haldane was what the years had made him; the years, his heritage and the grace of God. He was born in London on the twenty-eighth of February, 1761, the first son of an ancient and noble Perthshire family. His father, the tough, God-fearing sea captain James Haldane had married his first cousin Katherine in December 1762 and had welcomed the advent of a son whom he hoped would, like his father, follow the sea. He lived to see his daughter Helen come into the world three years later and leave it all too quickly in her childhood. The birth of his second son James he was not to see, for he died about a fortnight before the child was born in July 1768. The gentle and devoutly Christian mother cared deeply for her boys and was a profound influence upon their lives until the time when she too was taken from them when 'Robert was only ten years old.

Relatives undertook the education of the boys in Scotland but the suggestion of the youthful Robert that he might become a minister was gently ridiculed. The ministry, he was kindly informed, was much below the station in life to which he had been born. (Though there is no account of James feeling the same way in his youth it was he, in fact, who was to become the minister in later life.)

At last came the time Robert had been waiting for since the dimly remembered sight of his sea captain father had stirred his imagination. In 1779 he joined the Royal Navy and sailed in his first ship, the "Monarch". There followed years of travel and excitement, danger even, for he was involved at times in active service. These were years in which the youngster revelled, but behind him all the time was the pressure of his responsibility as a wealthy landowner, and as elder son being heir to his father's wealth. So it was that soon after attaining his majority (two months after to be exact) he married the eighteen year old Katherine Cochrane Oswald and in the following year settled down, as he thought, to the peaceful life of a country squire in the magnificent family seat at the house of Airthrey near Stirling. His new way of life seemed even more assured when a year after his marriage his first child, (it was his only child) a daughter, was born to the secure and happy young couple.

It is quite impossible for later generations to realize just how explosive was the effect of the French Revolution on most of the civilised world. Most wealthy landowners found it a frightening and threatening thing and locked their doors more carefully at night. But for young Haldane then only twenty five years of age, it came as an exciting, even a promising challenge. The wealth and security of the life he was leading had not deadened him to the stark facts of the inequality of opportunity for men. Perhaps he had observed this during his navy days, and so it seemed to him, as to many intellectuals of the day, that this would mean the dawn of a new hope for mankind. The French revolution may in fact be said to have proved a turning point in his life. As never before he began to think. He thought about life, religion, his place in the world, the value of the life he was leading and he began to be aware of stirrings and feelings that were new and somewhat disturbing. It was in 1794 that his brother James, with whom he was in such sympathy, experienced a deeply moving religious conversion; a circumstance that was not without great influence upon his brother.

Robert had always been a good debater; he had a good, keen, discerning mind. He would have made an excellent lawyer, and there were few things he enjoyed more than a good argument. He

made the acquaintance of a group of thoughtful and devout clergymen near Stirling, and he would frequently travel over to spend hours with them simply to listen, to talk, to argue and thus to learn. The cumulative effect of his thinking, the conversion of his brother, and the prolonged discussions at Stirling were all taken by the Holy Spirit and used to effect in this nobleman a true regeneration, a vital and living experience of the new birth. The conversion of this canny Scot was no sudden emotional ecstasy, but an experience which was deep-rooted and far-reaching, setting him off on a new life. It is worth noting that one of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith which he learnt and accepted in those days was one that he never ceased to teach whenever he had opportunity. It was the doctrine of total corruption, that man is sinful in every part, and cannot be saved from his sins without the mercy and grace of God.

Robert Haldane was now Christ's man and he threw himself into the work of the Gospel with all his considerable enthusiasm, energy, acumen and talent. Those were days when foreign missions were certainly not the fashion, in fact those who wanted to save the heathen were looked upon with some suspicion. So it was not the fashionable thing when Robert Haldane worked hard and earnestly to try to establish a mission in Bengal. Time and again barriers were put in his way but he struggled for about four years in an effort to see this dream realised, only relinquishing his hope when he could see that he was fighting a losing battle. All right, if he could not send a mission to Bengal, why not arrange for children from overseas to be brought to this country to be educated at his expense? This time he won the day and over a period of five years, he arranged for a large number of the children of Tribal chiefs from Sierra Leone to be brought to this country and be educated; a venture which cost him a very great deal of money.

Yes, money, home, position Airthrey. He loved the old place, so did his wife; but they were beginning to wonder if they could continue to live in the style to which they had been accustomed. Was this right for them as Christians? They prayed and talked about this long and often, and at last made their decision. Not only did they quit Airthrey but Mrs. Haldane made the great sacrifice of giving up her carriage. From this time they lived the rest of their life as modestly as they were able whilst using their ample means as and where they felt best for the work of the Gospel. Now Haldane supported every evangelistic effort of which he became aware. He invited Rowland Hill to preach in the Edinburgh "Circus" and travelled round the country with him for two or three years. Although this roving evangelism was valuable, he soon realised that a greater need was for churches in which the gospel could be preached regularly. This led to his erecting Tabernacles, like those of George Whitefield, at his own expense, in six Scottish cities. In 1798 he established a seminary where a number of young men were trained for the ministry. In addition to all this he was active in the founding and support of Sunday Schools and the distribution and printing of Bibles and tracts.

Such a man was not content to leave all the rough work to those whom he supported. Although he must have found it a trial in many ways, he entered with characteristic enthusiasm into the ministry of open-air preaching. On occasion he wore coloured clothing to attract the attention of the passers-by. As time went on he shouted so loudly, and spoke so frequently that he eventually ruptured a blood-vessel in his throat and had to cease the practice! This, then, was Haldane, noble-born, seaman, land-owner, Christian extraordinary, the extent of whose immense activity was sustained and inspired by a life of deepest private devotion and knowledge of the Bible, especially of the letter to the Romans which had been his special study from the first days of his conversion.

For a long time he cherished the idea of work in France, a country he had visited three times as a traveller. The Napoleonic wars now seemed at an end and surely the way was clear for him. Consequently, together with Mrs. Haldane, he left Edinburgh on the ninth of October, 1816 to visit the Continent. A friend asked him how long he expected to be away and he replied, "Possibly only six months". He was not to return home for three years, three eventful years that were to see an immense change in the religious life not only of France, but especially of Switzerland, and indeed in countries much further afield.

He arrived in Paris and finding it in "Egyptian darkness" quickly came to the conclusion that there was little hope of doing the work he wished to do in the French capital. Fortunately he came into contact with a man attached to the American Embassy who had travelled in the French-speaking countries and had garnered a lot of information about the situation of Christianity in the area. He told Haldane that at Geneva there were only two people who would listen to him, as nearly all the other ministers were Arians or Socinians. The names of the probable contacts, he informed Haldane, were Moulinié a pastor, and Galland (one of the Société des Amis of former days) who was not yet a pastor. These were the only two names, and Moulinié, he was told, was an old man. However, they were contacts, so Haldane abandoned Paris and set out for Geneva. When he arrived he found that Galland had now been ordained a pastor and was in Berne, but at least Moulinié was available. He made little progress with Moulinié for the simple reason that the gentle, kindly old man agreed with everything Haldane said, so that "discussion on any point was out of the question and no progress was made!" After this experience which must have proved extremely frustrating for the lively mind of Haldane he went off to Berne to seek Galland. He was relieved to find that this young man was neither an Arian nor a Socinian, although he was still very ignorant of the true Gospel. But his mind was open and the longings which had taken him to that little group in Geneva were now to bear fruit. Haldane's stay in Berne lasted eight days, Galland spending most of each day with him learning the basic things of the gospel from the older man. "I have good reason", Haldane could say later, "to believe that the word spoken was accompanied with the blessing of the Lord." This meeting and its result were significant in showing the pattern of what would happen later in Geneva.

He hesitated whether he should return to Geneva or not, but did so at last because he heard that two Prussian clergymen (Professor Sack and his brother) were passing through the town. Ever keen, he hoped he might have the chance of a conversation with them. Furthermore, Galland told him that he could do worse than try to contact his friend Gausson. He warned Haldane, however, that his friend would "draw himself up and not answer a word".

Back he went to Geneva but found little satisfaction in his conversation with the Prussian clergyman and was not immediately able to meet Gausson. Once again he visited Moulinié; once again he found the encounter frustrating in the extreme, although he learned from the old man that Geneva was "involved in the most deplorable darkness" - a fact of which he was well aware by now. Then came some information that was important. He learned that a small prayer-meeting had for some time been held: "in consequence, I believe, of a visit of Madame Krudener to Geneva". Someone who had actually belonged to the meeting told him that "sensible of their want of knowledge, they had prayed that an instructor should be sent to them and that their prayer, they now believed, was answered.

Impressive as this might seem he still yearned to meet someone with whom he might "converse on the Gospel", so he decided to leave Geneva and go to Montauban where there was a seminary. God, however, had different plans. It transpired that Pastor Moulinié had offered to take Mrs. Haldane on a trip to see the model of the mountains, promising to call on a certain day to conduct them himself. The morning of the projected trip saw a note come from the pastor expressing his regrets that a severe headache prevented him personally from taking them but informing them that he had sent a student of divinity in his place. "On this providential circumstance", wrote Haldane later, "depended my continuance at Geneva which I had been on the point of leaving."

The student was a young man named James de Breda and his coming was a God-given opportunity for Robert Haldane. 'With this student', he tells us, "I immediately entered into conversation respecting the Gospel of which I found him profoundly ignorant, although in a state of mind that showed he was willing to receive information!" Conversation must have been very prolonged for Haldane recounts that the student returned with him to the inn and remained till late at night.

As James de Breda returned to his lodgings his mind must have been in a turmoil, for he had never met anyone like Haldane before. The Professors at the University were sincere and learned but their liberal views inevitably prevented them from presenting an authoritative exposition of the Gospel. For them, a man who held clear and definite views was an enthusiast, even a fanatic, to be dubbed with the rather abusive term 'Methodist'. The formidable character of Haldane was a marked contrast to all this. He was tall, well built, and he had about him the air of a man who knows what he is talking about. He was courteous but absolutely firm in his teaching and young James had never met a man for whom the Bible was such a familiar and precious book. Utterly convinced of its truth he spoke with conviction and authority. It is a fact of church history that when the faith has become diluted and blurred the need is for a man of absolute conviction, a man who in the eyes of large parts of the professing church may well seem to be fanatical and bigoted. In the right place, at the right time, a man of this character cuts through the clogging doubts that stifle the spirit like a sickle in ripened corn. And such a man was Robert Haldane. Giving a prominent emphasis to the necessity of a personal experience of salvation, he maintained the absolute authority and Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, seeking to expound and explain them with an authoritative "Thus saith the Lord..." It can be said that as Calvin was God's man for Geneva in the 1500s, so Haldane was God's man for Geneva in 1817.

Did James de Breda perhaps realise this as he hurried back to his lodgings that night? Soon he was breathlessly explaining to his friend Charles Rieu why the trip to the mountains had taken so long. "Here's a man", he could say, "who knows his Bible like Calvin". In the morning of the next day they went together to see this remarkable Scotsman, who vividly describes their visit. "I questioned them respecting their personal hope of salvation, and the foundation of that hope. Had they been trained in the schools of Socrates or Plato, and enjoyed no other means of instruction, they could scarcely have been more ignorant of the doctrines of the Gospel. They had, in fact, learned much more of the opinions of the heathen philosophers than of the doctrines of the Saviour and his Apostles. To the Bible and its contents their studies had never been directed. After some conversation, they became convinced of their ignorance of the Scriptures, and of the way of salvation, and exceedingly desirous of information. I therefore postponed my intended departure from Geneva".

Chapter 3: In some hearts

"To bring fire on earth He came
Kindled in some hearts it is"

Professor Chenevière, as one might well expect, felt no better when he heard that the attempt of the Venerable Company to have Haldane expelled from Geneva had failed. It is tempting to cast this man as the villain of the piece but some attempt should be made to understand him. In a time of religious vagueness like that in which he lived it is always easy and perhaps excusable for a man who himself has had little, if any, valid religious experience to subscribe to the thinking of his day. That he was well-meaning we cannot doubt; it must have caused him great concern to see young men in his care caught up with a man whom he genuinely believed to be a deluded and dangerous fanatic. As it was he became Haldane's implacable enemy and wrote fiercely against him after he had left the city.

The first building he watched was the Hotel Écu in the Rue du Rhône not far from Caesar's bridge where Haldane hired a suite of rooms. When the work spread Haldane took a set of apartments at No. 19 Promenade St. Antoine, at Place Maurice. These apartments with their magnificent view over Savoie and the Alps were called by D'Aubigné, historian of the Reformation, "the cradle of the second Reformation of Geneva".

Embarrassed and guilty as Chenevière felt at spying on his students his intention was only to discover just who went to Haldane's rooms. And then in a personal interview he tried to dissuade them from what he firmly believed to be a foolish if not dangerous course of action. To his dismay they refused to listen to him and what was worse he soon became miserably aware that the numbers of those attending twice a week had risen to the region of thirty. As far as he could tell Haldane was expounding the Epistle to the Romans. It was particularly annoying to discover that Frederic Monod was now acting as Haldane's interpreter. Secretly he felt rebuked that a stranger knowing so little French could attract the voluntary and regular attendance of so many students, apparently gaining their interest and enthusiasm to a degree he had always found impossible.

It was no satisfaction to Chenevière when the attempt of the pastors to get Haldane banished from their canton failed. His next move was to suggest that Haldane be summoned to appear before the Venerable Company to answer for the doctrines which he was teaching the students. By this time the formidable nature of Haldane's Bible knowledge and grasp of Christian doctrine had become known and one of the Company wryly observed, "You will not gain much by that!". This was the general opinion of the Company and the matter was allowed to drop, much to Chenevière's chagrin. They did, however, do all in their power to prevent the attendance of the students at his suite, an attempt which failed. Haldane was puzzled by this ineffectiveness and asked Gausson for an explanation. It transpired that the students had threatened to leave their professors if they were banned from visiting Haldane and this was a risk the pastors dared not take. The Reglement of May 3rd, 1817, framed partly with Empeytaz' publication in mind was their real answer, but by then it was too late.

Robert Haldane's ministry in Geneva lasted about six months. The meetings continued with steady numbers and unabated interest. Teaching the same truths which John Calvin had preached - emphasising man's total depravity, justification by faith in Christ alone, predestination and the Sovereignty of God, he exercised a tremendous influence. The ground, of course, had been perfectly prepared for him and it is noticeable that his later ministry at Wontauban was not so singularly blessed. The faithful handful of praying people had not been meeting all those years in vain! One by one students were converted - Frédéric Monod, Bonifas, Pyt, James de Breda, L'hui1ier, Merle D'Aubigné, Galland - probably more than a dozen of them and from that group the revival spread far and wide.

Some of these men left a record of what actually happened to them but none tell more of the character of Haldane's ministry than the story of Merle D'Aubigné. He first heard of Haldane as "An English or Scotch gentleman who spoke much about the Bible". This seemed a strange thing to him and to the other students whom it was a closed book. "Afterwards", he says, "I met Mr. Haldane at a private house, along with some other friends and heard him read from a chapter from Romans, about the natural corruption of man ... a doctrine of which I had never heard before. In fact I was quite astonished to hear of men being corrupt by nature. I remembered saying to Mr. Haldane "Now I see that doctrine in the Bible". "Yes," replied that good man "but do you see it in your heart?". That was but a simple question, but it came home to my conscience. It was the sword of the Spirit; and from that time I saw that my heart was corrupted and knew from the Word of God that I can be saved by grace alone."

For a description of the meetings none can tell us more than Frédéric Monod.

"... When that blessed man, whom, under God, I call with a loving and grateful heart my spiritual father, for in Christ Jesus he begot me through the Gospel, came to Geneva, every possible circumstance seemed to militate against the success of his mission of faith and love. If I look to the religious field on which he was entering, it was overgrown with thorns and briars; for too truly have you stated the religious condition of Geneva at that time. If I look to the young men, the special objects of Mr. Haldane's mission, we were most of us thoughtless, deeply tainted with worldly-mindedness, and immersed in gaiety. Though students of theology, true theology was one of the things of which we knew the least. God's holy Word was to use *terra ignota*, whilst Unitarianism, with all its chilling influence, and all its soul-destroying appendages, was the only doctrine taught to us by our Professors. For myself, I may add, as a most astonishing fact, in illustration of these statements, that during the four years I attended the theological teachers of Geneva, I did not, as part of my studies, read one single chapter of the Word of God, except a few Psalms and chapters, exclusively with a view to learning Hebrew, and in that I did not receive one single lesson of exegesis of the Old or New Testaments.

What struck us all, was Mr. Haldane's solemnity of manner. It was evident he was in earnest about our souls, and the souls of those who might be placed under our pastoral care, and such feelings were new to all of us. Then his meekness, the unvarying patience with which he listened to our sophisms, our ignorant objections, our attempts, now and then, to embarrass him by difficulties invented for the purpose, and his answers to each and all of us. But what astonished me, and made me reflect more than anything else, was his ready knowledge of the Word of God and implicit faith in its Divine authority, that Word of which our Professors were almost as ignorant as ourselves, and which they quoted, less as being the only and infallible source of religious truth, than as a means of puffing off their own teaching. We had never seen anything like this. Even after this lapse of years, I still see presented to my mind's eye his tall and manly figure, surrounded by the students; his English Bible in his hand, wielding as his only weapon that Word which is the sword of the Spirit; satisfying every objection, removing every difficulty, answering every

question by a prompt reference to various passages, by which objections, difficulties, and questions were all fairly met and conclusively answered. He never wasted his time in arguing against our so called reasonings, but at once pointed with his finger to the Bible, adding the simple words, "Look here – how readest thou? There it stands written with the finger of God" . He was, in the full sense of the word, a living concordance.

These introductory meetings prepared us for listening with greater confidence to those more didactic teachings upon which he soon entered, expounding to us the Epistle to the Romans, which several of us had probably never read, and which none of us understood. In going regularly through this Epistle, he had an opportunity of laying before us a complete body of Christian theology and Christian morals, which, by the accompanying Spirit of God, found its way to the conscience and heart of most of his hearers who, like myself, trace to this venerable and faithful servant of God their first knowledge of the way of salvation and of Gospel truth. I reckon it as one of the greatest privileges of my now advancing life, to have been his interpreter, almost through the whole of his expositions of that Epistle, being almost the only one who knew English well enough to be thus honoured and employed."³

These memories, still vivid in his memory, were written long after the events described. Monod calls them, "personal souvenirs of thirty six years standing".

There were others, many others, who although not directly converted through personal contact with Haldane were caught up in the revival spirit that broke out in Geneva about this time and were later helped immeasurably in their new-found spiritual life by his ministrations.

Such a man was Louis Gaussen who testified that it was through Haldane that he received the assurance of his salvation. He was also an ordained pastor when Haldane came especially to see him on his return to Geneva. "I had already", Gaussen records, "submitted by faith to the great doctrines of the Word of God but the gravity of Mr. Haldane, the authority with which he always appealed to the Scriptures and his profound acquaintance with them made an impression on me never to be effaced and that just before the time when the Lord, by a sudden stroke took from me all the joys of this world. When I paid him my first visit, it was on the invitation of Charles Rieu; and when he said to me, in the middle of our conversation, that he had returned to Geneva purposely to see me, I looked at him with astonishment, and his countenance became so red. I love to recall these little details because all the souvenirs of that excellent man, and of the good which he did amongst us, are dear and precious. His visit to Berne was blessed to Galland, and his visit to Geneva was blessed to us all".

Another young minister influenced at this time was César Malan. The Bible had meant little or nothing to him. He had tried whilst on a Journey to read a chapter or two from the Bible as a distraction but he found the style so old fashioned that he put it down! The Church of Geneva, he was later to say, did not attack the Bible but simply ignored it, passing it over in silence. But God was at work in his life through the influence of the minority praying group that was certainly the seed bed of the revival. It was Coulin, Galland, Gaussen and old Pastor Moulinié who led him toward the light if not right up to it. When his conversion took place he likened it to a mother awakening her child with a kiss. This young minister, now teaching students, was reading the New Testament at his desk while his pupils were preparing their next lesson. He turned to Ephesians 2:8,

3 pp. 428/9 and 430 *The Lives of Robert and James Haldane* by Alexander Haldane.

"By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God". So deeply was he moved as he realised the truth of the text, that he had to go out into the courtyard where he walked round and round exclaiming, "I am saved, I am saved!" Later came a meeting with Haldane, whom, he said "I love like a father". "That blessing (the assurance of salvation) I experienced," he testified, "while Mr. Haldane instructed me in the way of the Lord more perfectly".

It was through César Malan that true Gospel teaching came dramatically into the open. Until now Malan's brilliant gifts had all been directed to proclaim good morality and salvation by human merit. He always remembers how, in the days before his conversion he had preached in the church of an old Vaudois pastor. "As we were leaving the church, he said to me with a grim and mournful expression, "It appears to me, sir, that you have not yet learnt that in order to convert others you must first be converted yourself. Your sermon was not a Christian discourse and I sincerely hope my people didn't understand it!". Now, deeply imbued with firm beliefs and a vital experience of the Holy Spirit that had changed his life, he had the opportunity of preaching in Geneva again. The date, an epoch-making date, was March 15th, 1817. He describes the occasion. "I preached in a large church which was too small, however, for the congregation which thronged to it. The time was evening and the solemnity of the twilight-glow added its impression to the appeal which I pressed home to the consciences of the unbelieving and self-righteous among my hearers. I was listened to at first in the most profound silence, a silence resulting, however, from surprise and displeasure. Signs of dissatisfaction were speedily apparent as I went on to demonstrate the falsehood of human righteousness and to exalt the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ. There arose murmurs of discontent and movements of ill-concealed impatience and when I pointed with my hand to the right of the pulpit exclaiming "If at this moment the mysterious hand which in Babylon of old ... in the midst of an idolatrous revel, wrote in silence on the wall the death doom of a dissolute king, if that hand were to appear now and trace upon these stones the history of the months and days and hours of your life from the time when you first dedicated it to God; if these mysterious characters spoke forth in betrayal of your deeds and thoughts, wrought and conceived when no eye but that of the Holy One was upon you; tell me which of you would dare to confront the writing? Does not the thought of such a thing make you tremble?" At this point several of my hearers turned unconsciously towards the wall at which I had been pointing, others shrugged their shoulders, while the greater number manifested an impatience which broke loose from all restraint when I exclaimed, "Seek then to know, O transgressor, what it is that keeps thee from Christ?"

The sermon was dramatic, biblical, evangelical, and for Geneva, highly unusual. The preacher left the pulpit and strode through the crowd like a soldier drummed out by his comrades or a criminal marching to execution. His parents deserted him and his wife was distressed. He returned home in his robes, crossed the threshold of his door and was about to retire into his study when he caught sight of a majestic figure. It was Robert Haldane who exclaimed as he shook him warmly by the hand, "Thank God the gospel has again been preached in Geneva!"

Chapter 4: Its widening way

"Now the word doth swiftly run,
Now it wins its widening way."

Chenevière was beaming. "Yes", he asserted, he was talking with some of the pastors, "he's gone! He really has gone, to Montauban". So it was that Robert Haldane left Geneva at the end of June 1817 and was one of the channels by which the revival flowed into the needy land of France. It is interesting to note that just as Haldane had arrived when Wilcox left, so a successor arrived when Haldane was leaving.

Henry Drummond⁴ was also a Scot and 22 years younger than Haldane. He arrived two days before the latter was due to leave, arriving himself as a connexion of Haldane's. This arrival was to bring confusion and dismay to the Venerable Company. A deputation, including Chenevière of course, visited the newcomer, and the Professor demanded to know if he was going to teach the same doctrines that Haldane taught. Drummond's reply was simply to ask for an exposition of their doctrines! Baffled by such impertinence the deputation retired routed, confused and angry.

Soon Drummond was maligned, vilified and commanded to appear before the Genevan Council of State. As a result he moved his residence to a place just outside the city, but under the very noses of the irate Company. He refused to be intimidated and ably supported the students and ministers who were now being persecuted by the Company and their Arian supporters.

Mention has been made of the Reglement of May 1817. It was newly framed and secretly prepared; all ordinands had to sign it and all pastors were expected to adhere to it. The reglement declared, "The clergy of Geneva, in a spirit of humility, peace and Christian love, convinced that the present circumstances of the church committed to their care call for measures of a wise and prudential character, determines, without attempting to prejudice the questions involved and without seeking to encroach on liberty of opinion, to exact of all candidates to the ministry and of all ministers seeking to exercise their function in the church of Geneva, a pledge of which the following shall be the substance. "We bind ourselves, so long as we continue to reside and preach in the canton of Geneva, to abstain from dogmatising, either through an entire discourse or portion of it on: 1. The manner whereby the divine and human natures are united in the person of Jesus Christ 2. Original sin 3. The mode of the operations of grace or the nature and degree of its efficacy 4. Predestination. We bind ourselves also not to attack in any public discourse the opinion of any individual minister on these points and lastly, should we be led to speak on any of these subjects to do so calmly and avoiding expressions foreign to the Holy Scripture and confining ourselves as closely as possible to the language of the Bible."

According to Chenevière the introduction of these enactments was to be attributed to a love of peace, to goodwill and to charity.

This particular act of charity was to result in César Malan being dismissed as both lecturer and minister. It resulted in Guers, Henri Pyt, Ami Bost, Empeytaz, Porchat, L'Huilier and others being driven into secession. And it meant that Merle D'Aubigné, would have to leave his home city to finish his studies in Berlin.

The love of truth and fidelity to Jesus Christ cost these young men dear. Many of them lost good prospects and were faced with acute financial problems. But again God's providence is seen. Not only was Drummond able to stand with them against the Arian, he was also able to support some of them out of his considerable resources.

⁴ H.Drummond – 1786-1860. Not to be confused with the Henry Drummond associated with Moody and author of *The Greatest Thing in the World*.

At the same time he encouraged those ministers who had been rejected by the Geneva church to form a new church. This approach directly contrasted with that of Haldane, who deliberately avoided all ecclesiastical issues. A new church was formed and first met to celebrate the Lord's Supper in the home of Drummond on September 21st, 1817. César Malan officiated and others present included Guers and Henri Pyt. In the biography of the latter there is a description of the work of Drummond. "After Haldane Mr. Henry Drummond came to add new benediction to those we already possessed. He had for the blessed Pyt a particular affection, which he himself reciprocated. In his conversations Mr. Drummond chiefly insisted on the mystical union of Christ and the church, and its glorious results. He spoke little of sanctification, although his example was sufficient. He was indefatigable in his zeal for the glory of the Lord. Labour, watchings, fatigues, cost him nothing. His simplicity, his brotherly goodness, and his affability won all hearts. He had not then the peculiar opinions which he has since exhibited".⁵

The aftermath of the French revolution saw a reaction against the atheistic views of the day, and the revival movement coming from Switzerland must be seen in the context of discernible movements both on the Catholic and Protestant sides. On the Catholic side there was a great growth in members and the founding of numerous new congregations as well as the reconstitution, in 1824, of the order of the Jesuits. Under Napoleon a new alignment of Church and State had given fresh hope to some Protestants; Protestant territories (Alsace, for example) had been added to the nation and some of the elite of the Huguenots had returned to France. Yet these factors, valuable though they were in both preparing for and strengthening the revival, were insufficient of themselves to bring about a radical and lasting improvement in the state of the Protestant church in France.

Samuel Vincent, a distinguished pastor of Nîmes wrote later of the state of the French Protestant church in those days, "After the revolution the Protestants of France were in a state of deep repose which came near to indifference. The Law which took responsibility for worship from them and their pastors did give them opportunity to worship but in fact it also deepened their slumber. The preachers preached, the people believed, the consistories met, worship kept its form but religion was really outside everyone's life". The revival was to change this and it entered France in more than one way. One way was through Haldane.

On his way to Montauban he and his wife went to worship in the French Protestant church in Lyons. He was not impressed, remarking "I heard not a word of the Gospel!", and it was July before he actually arrived in Montauban. The great attraction here, of course, (and he'd had this in mind from the very beginning of his continental project) was the seminary in the town, and its illustrious Professor Daniel Encontre. A century or so before the great restorer of the reformed churches of France, the heroic Antoine Court, had established his seminary, the "School of Martyrs" as many called it, in the Swiss town of Lausanne. The seminary at Montauban was in fact this institution transferred into France. In 1817 there were sixty-four students in training who would either prove a dynamic and much needed reinforcement for the pitiful body of pastors (who only numbered a few hundred in the whole of the country) or would simply serve further to dilute the vital message and ministry of the gospel. Their Professor, a mathematician and President of the Faculty of Sciences, was acknowledged to be one of the outstanding intellects in the country. A leading thinker said of him, "I would not say that I have not met Emcontre's intellectual equal but certainly not his superior".

Haldane saw that to influence these students and this acknowledged leader of thought would be of tremendous value. In this he succeeded although his two years stay in the town was not as productive as his six months at Geneva. He spent some of his time preparing the publication of his commentary on Romans, the fruit of his expositions at Geneva and later in Montauban itself. His wife helped by translating the works of the valued Drelincourt into English.

His chief delight was meeting the students very much as he had done at Geneva. As at Geneva his

5 He was later involved in the Irvingite Movement

work also provoked opposition. When the great savant Pictet who had been appointed by Napoleon to be one of the Inspectors of Protestant churches visited Montauban a few years later he received a disturbing report from Pradel, dean of the Faculty. "Since the appearance at Montauban of that 'météor désastreux' Mr. Haldane, all have been poisoned with his doctrine." A letter from Marzials, President of the Montauban Consistory, states "His influence on Encontre proved great for it was permitted for every student on finishing his studies and leaving Montauban to be furnished with a copy of Haldane's *Evidence and authority of divine revelation and his commentary on Romans*". More personal and intimate though was the impression he made on Encontre by his gift of presenting scriptural doctrine with convincing power. It was during his stay in Montauban that the professor, not long before he died, grasped Haldane's hand and said, "I am a great sinner, but I have a great Saviour".

Another way the revival made its way into France was through students and pastors who had either been expelled from Geneva or who had gone into France as missionaries and colporteurs. Just as a fire stirred up sends sparks flying to ignite other blazes elsewhere, so this happened spiritually in the French speaking countries.

Frédéric Monod, imbued with the spirit of the revival returned to Paris in 1818 where he joined his father as a pastor and was able to occupy a national pulpit from which he sounded forth the doctrines of the revival clearly and convincingly. Twelve years later he became the leading pastor in Paris and also was for forty-three years editor of that influential organ of Reformed theology *Archives de Christianisme*. Ami Bost served as evangelist in France chiefly in the central area and became the brother-in-law of Henri Pyt who married Bost's sister. Pyt himself with his wife Jeanne went in 1818 as suffragan to Saverdun. At the end of that year he saw Haldane in Montauban and after much conversation with him saw that his true vocation was to be an evangelist. He entered the Continental Society and went to Valenciennes where a revival had broken out. Coming to London in July 1821 to be ordained he went on to be an outstanding missionary in various parts of France. Whilst at Bayonne he worked among the Spanish colony there and distributed the Spanish New Testament among them. He had a keen interest in minority races and laboured with Basques and Jews among others. His great ministry took him from the Pyrenees, the "Midi" of France, Berne, Boulogne, Paris and Versailles. At one stage he was in charge of the Institute which Haldane had founded in 1824 at Paris for the training of evangelists to work throughout France.⁶

There were others touched by the revival at one remove, so to speak, who worked with great effect in France. One of the most remarkable of these was Felix Neff with whom we will be dealing at greater length later. He became the apostle of the High Alps. Another, the greatest preacher in France, was the great Adolphe Monod whose acquaintance we will also be making later on. Jean Frederic Vernier who worked in Isère, the Drome and the Pays de Montbeliard, was an indirect convert to the revival, and Louis Vallette and Antoine Vermeil were associated in the founding and widespread work of the Community of the Deaconesses of Reuilly.

Whilst the work of revivalists in the provinces proved effective, some of the most strategically important work took place in the capital itself. Indeed it is recorded that there was a revival in Paris in 1850 largely as a result of the revival spirit and doctrines that flowed from the Geneva revival. What Protestants there were in Paris in these days were composed of two main elements. There were those who had come to the capital from the provinces. The faith of the older among them had suffered as the result of trials and persecutions, whilst the younger generations had little if any first-hand religious experience. Then there was a social elite who had returned from exile and amongst these were some really fervent Protestants. In general though the religious state of the capital differed little from that of the country in general. About 1818 the spiritual climate changed. The Parisian Protestant began to take stock of himself and some great religious societies appeared. This period, too, saw the founding of the *Archives de Christianisme* which Frédéric Monod was later to edit. Certain leading citizens affirmed the Protestant principles; there was a new awareness of

6 Henri Pyt became a Baptist, unlike most of the persons in this book.

religious need and a thirst for prayer. So, from the influence of the Geneva revival of 1817 there was prepared the Paris revival of 1830. Galland from Geneva and Berne conducted mission services in the city, Frédéric Monod started a Sunday school at the great Oratoire itself and the famous Chapelle Tailbout was built to "announce the good news of salvation in its divine simplicity to those whom indifference, the spirit of doubt or prejudice have kept from the church". Here flourished Victor de Pressensé whose lukewarm Protestantism was transformed into an intense personal faith after his conversion through the influence of Frédéric Monod. Another great figure influenced by a Geneva revivalist, Merle D'Aubigné, was Henri Lutteroth who was to wield immense influence.

Over the country as a whole the fruits of the revival were clear to see. The number of pastors rose from 505 in 1829 to 763 in 1845 and a great many new pastoral centres were opened, especially in Paris itself which was to be the home and heart of the movement. The new spirit was manifested in Christian institutions, schools, orphanages, etc. as well as in new publication and enterprising movements of evangelism. 1842 saw the creation of the "Society of the general interests of Protestant France" and 1846 the formation of a French branch of the Evangelical Alliance. Most significant of all perhaps was the setting-up in 1847 at Paris of the "Société Centrale d'évangélisation" to co-ordinate evangelistic efforts throughout the country. All of this flowed from the revival which, even as it spread did not lose its characteristic evangelical spirit. One acute observer of the contemporary scene, Mme. Andre Walther summed it up, "The whole revival is in two words, being converted".

Samuel Vincent, whom we have already quoted, was not a whole-hearted supporter of the revival and in a chapter on "Methodism" in his book he deals with it and its effect in France in detail and with a critical eye. Yet one is able to see, even through the criticism, that he is quite aware of the profundity and power it possessed. With the understandable prejudice of a Frenchman of that era he traces its source, with barely concealed disapproval, to "perfidious Albion". After describing the religious state of his country before the revival he continues "In another country this had given place to action, activist, dogmatic, full of the spirit of the country. The war against Great Britain hid us from this; we thought of this country as it was in the days of Hume and Gibbon, then we realised the existence of this movement". He was referring, of course, to the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century. "First attempts at proselytism in France bore little fruit. The first explosion was at Geneva. It was violent and full of intolerant dogmatism and made things difficult for the clergy of Geneva. Then, to make matters worse, those of Vaud joined the dissidents. This and the writings that arose from it woke the interest of French Protestants. "With obvious disapproval he characterizes the teaching of the revivalists. "They paint sin in sombre colours, they talk of the inevitable fall of the human race and they leave conscience out of the reckoning. They exalt the action of grace so high and debase all human activity so low that man is crushed. The words virtue and justice are scrubbed out of their vocabulary. "What must I do to be saved? ... nothing!" whilst temptation is from Satan outside of man so there is little room for moral endeavour. They exalt heavenly life to the impoverishment of human living and they take a view so absolute that it becomes a new, more inflexible expression of the Roman Catholic doctrine of "no salvation outside of the church"; It is easy to see how this liberal thinker assesses from his angle the sort of doctrines the revival propounded. He goes on to deal with the methods of the revivalists. Their preaching is personal, they say what people feel and this is why they are popular, and so the rest of their system is accented without discussion or examination. "Our usual preachers are too detailed in their discourses, they are always trying to prove the point rationally". Obviously he feels that the regular preachers have something to learn from the "Methodists" regarding preaching. He realises the link between religion and song although he gets it the wrong way round. As we shall see later the revival burst out into song. Vincent imagines that they sing popular hymns and use music to excite religious feeling and he gives little credit to the high standard of Christian living they attain. "They have conquered gross sensuality" he claims "by sacred sensuality". Another lesson, however, which he feels might be learned is their secret of organisation. Some of the regular pastors, he complained, reject "Methodist methods to their hurt!" "What can be done?", he asks; "Much and little" is his

answer. The church, he maintains, can do much to fulfil the need which the people have and which Methodism gives them but outside of the church nothing can be done to stop them. "If you fear an invasion of "Methodists" in your parish, make them unnecessary. Your people want a more profound and living religion than that in which they were nurtured; give it to them!".

He finishes his remarks with a thoughtful and honest enquiry. "Is the appearance of "Methodism" amongst us an evil? In some cases, yes, but when I consider the whole, when I compare the religious state of where we are now with where we were a dozen years ago I cannot help believing that the appearance of "Methodism" has done us good. It has excited interest, provoked religious discussion and indifference has disappeared. There has been improvement in church life, in worship, in school. The improvements of society date from the same time as "Methodism" and have been achieved in a number of cases by the same men". So it spread into France and influenced the religious life of the country profoundly. If it is fascinating to see its spread in a neighbouring land it is equally so to see it spread into other lands, some across the seas, and from individual life to life, like a spark of grace.

Chapter 5: Spreads and grows

“More and more it spreads and grows,
Ever mighty to prevail”

In the mid-twentieth in countries all over the world the church has observed, either with deep gratitude to God or with some misgiving, the phenomenon of people, people in their scores, their hundreds, even their thousands moving out from congregations to some rallying point to express a desire to receive Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Whilst it cannot be denied that many of those so moved to open decision fall sadly away, the indisputable fact remains that thousands of people have been genuinely converted as a result. For many years one particular hymn was sung whilst the “appeal” was being made, one hymn in which the words and music both express the deepest longings of the heart, a hymn which has been the birth-song of myriad souls. That hymn is, of course, "Just as I am" (In French, "Tel que je suis") written by Charlotte Elliott. The hymn and the spiritual impact it has made are traceable right back to the Revival of 1817 in Geneva.

We have noticed the profound change produced in the life and ministry of César Malan and the explosive sermon he preached. His missionary and preaching tours, of which more anon, took him on one particular occasion to England. Through his ministry in England Charlotte Elliott was converted.

This is just one of an extraordinary number of fascinating stories which illustrate how this wonderful revival spread as the sparks of grace were taken from place to place and which demonstrate the innate vitality of the flame of God which kindled it. César Malan was linked with another great Christian. Among those who worked for Malan was young Felix Neff, at that time a soldier in the local garrison, who employed his leisure days in working for private families. One day Neff turned over in the soil a small piece of copper which he carried to Malan. It was a medal, with an effigy of a sower on one side and the inscription "Ejectura lucrum" on the other. Malan recalled the Psalmist's words, "who goes forth weeping bearing precious seed" and wondered if this presaged a spiritual harvest for him. Part of that harvest was to be seen later for he was to give this same Felix Neff, now a sergeant in the Artillery, a tract which was to prove the means of his conversion and dedication to that meteoric life of short-lived but blazing devotion to Christ which will be recounted later.

Another remarkable preacher the revival produced was the formidable Napoléon Roussel. At the time of writing there are Christian workers, his direct descendants, still working in France and Switzerland. Born on the fifteenth of November 1805 his father gave him the name of the Emperor himself. He also went to Geneva and trained for the ministry and although a child of the revival he always adopted an independent course. "I wish to be neither of Paul, nor Apollos, nor Methodist, nor rationalist ... I want to be me!" This sturdy individualist lived a life of tempestuous and highly successful evangelism; he was a pamphleteer of renown, editor and author. In the Midi of France they called him "manjo-missou" the dialect for "mange-saucisson" - sausage-eater. For the travelling evangelist, who went from home to home, had perforce to share the family diet, usually sausages! His fourth wife, whom he married at the age of fifty-two, was Mary Stuart - a Scot, of course. Their daughter, who was only eleven when he died was named Blanche. Blanche Roussel, when she was converted joined the Salvation Army as an officer and was later to marry Albin Peyron of Nîmes who became the distinguished leader of the work in France. One of their daughters, a single lady, was a leading French Salvationist and, among other duties, was responsible for training many of its officers. Two other daughters married Salvation Army officers. One of these became Mrs. Wycliffe Booth (the wife of old William Booth's grandson), and with him headed Salvation Army work in European countries and in Canada. One of their daughters now works in England; another is the wife of a leading officer in Switzerland whilst a son works still in France itself.

We recall that L'Huilier was one of the young men who left Geneva as a result of the disagreement on doctrinal matters that arose from the impact of the revival. The month of May, 1822, saw him as teacher at the newly-opened Institute at Glay in France. There were seven pupils! Among these was a young man Jean Frédéric Vernier. Always the evangelist, instant in season and out of season L'Huilier concluded that alone of his seven pupils, only Vernier was "touched to salvation". So he had long and frequent talks with the young man to try to help him to find the same deep and satisfying experience of Christ he himself possessed. "I was, however", wrote Vernier later, "like Thomas. I wanted to see and touch before believing". Later however, and clearly owing to the influence of the Methodist L'Huilier he was converted. "One day we were dining (I shall never forget that moment!) - but, being unable to eat anything, I left the table and went towards the bedroom intending to lie down on my bed. I tried to pray, to sigh, but nothing helped me in my distress. L'Huilier, who had noticed my absence, came up to me. "Are you ill?", he asked. "It's not my body which is ill" I replied, "it is my soul". This good man tried to help me but my heart remained rebellious". He went out for a walk on his own and it was then he found the peace his soul craved; he was converted. "I had almost got back when, from afar I saw L'Huilier who was coming to meet me and, leaping for joy I threw myself into his arms and said "Dear Monsieur L'Huilier, rejoice with me, give glory to God, Jesus is my Saviour. He's delivered me! I trust him". We went up to his room and he called his wife. "Let us rejoice, dear" he said, "for now we have a brother in Christ. Our friend Vernier has found the peace he has been seeking for so long". We fell on our knees and gave thanks to God for adopting me as his child in Jesus Christ. I had the same happy experience which the words of St. Paul express, "If a man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new". In fact everything became new for me; I seemed to be living in a new world". Here we see the revival flame spreading through a man who had been forced to leave Geneva as a result of its coming. Jean Frédéric Vernier, who lived to the age of seventy-five, became an honoured and greatly used pastor in various parts of France and is regarded as being one of the leading "Methodists" of his day. As in the case of Napoléon Roussel, the influence through this man's descendants is remarkable, as a glance at the family tree will reveal. He had ten children, five boys and five girls. His eldest son, Élie, became a pastor and an agent of the Mission Interieure and of the Société Évangélique of Geneva. Of Élie's five children, his four sons became pastors, one also the father of a missionary. His only daughter married a pastor and had three children; Maurice, a theological student killed in the Great War, Daniel, a pastor and Madeleine a deaconess. Vernier's eldest daughter, Élise, married a pastor as did her only child Éva, two of whose sons entered the ministry. To follow all the family details might prove a little wearisome but suffice it to say that, of his progeny, two daughters remained spinsters while three sons became pastors and two daughters married pastors. The total number of pastors descended from him either directly or through marriage reached the amazing total of twenty-four, this excluding two young studying theology who were killed in the war and the girl who became a deaconess.

For many evangelical Christians in Britain the Keswick movement has proved of inestimable blessing and the Convention not only draws crowds to Keswick itself but has much influence throughout the country. This is yet another link with the Revival for Frédéric Monod's son Théodore was very influential in the early days of the Keswick movement and his ministry both in England and France (he spoke excellent English) was much appreciated. It was largely the Oxford convention of 1874 which gave rise to the Keswick movement and Théodore was greatly influenced by these meetings. Returning to France, his linguistic ability enabled him very effectively to adapt to French minds the exposition of doctrine he heard explained at Oxford. In the following generation the Monod family provided another outstanding Christian leader in the person of Wilfred Monod whose preaching and writings have brought untold blessings to thousands of French-speaking Christians.

The Monod family were also of tremendous help in the formation of the Y.M.C.A. movement, especially in their native France. Clarence Shedd in his "History of the World Alliance of

Y.M.C.A.'s" speaks gratefully of "the preaching, evangelical zeal and friendly help of pastors like Ami Bost, E. de Pressensé, Adolphe Monod and Frédéric Monod." Later, when steps were being taken to organise the Paris Y.M.C.A. the Monod brothers were among the pastors who offered their patronage and the Paris Conference Report of 1855 states that the members were received each Saturday evening at the home of their "friend and spiritual adviser, Frédéric Monod". This "spiritual adviser" was a member of the First World's Conference of the Y.M.C.A. which took place at Paris and clearly had a profound influence on this strategic conference when the famous "Paris Basis" was adopted. This is still the basis of the World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s.

Théodore's brother Jean, another distinguished Monod, became Professor and Dean of the theological faculty at Montauban thus continuing the influence of the Haldane revival in that seminary. It was the influence of Adolphe Monod, Shedd tells us, that was largely instrumental in bringing about the change of the Genevan Young Men's group "Réunion du Jeudi" into a Y.M.C.A. So once again the "Methodist" fire is seen, in ever-widening circles, this time in a movement the value of whose Christian influence upon countless numbers of young men can never be assessed. Involved in this too was John Bost, the son of Ami Bost who was in the revival at the very start. He belonged to the "Society of the friends of the poor" founded in Paris in 1853 by Louis Meyer, a Lutheran pastor (Meyer himself having been converted from the rationalism of student days in Strasbourg by the instrumentality of Jean Monod!). This was one of the most remarkable of the "Y.M.C.A.'s before the Y.M.C.A." and, inspired by Meyer, a man again in the revival line as we have seen, its meetings were devoted to prayer, serious reading and Bible study. Each member was responsible for visiting four or five families and it has been said it was a school of prophets. Certainly John Bost came into this category for he founded the "Institute de la Force" intended for epileptics and other unfortunates in which over five hundred needy people were cared for. Through him the idea spread to Germany and led to the creating of the establishment of the famous "Bethel" hospital by Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, the "beloved "Father Bodelschwingh" , part of whose early training had also been under Louis Meyer!

Due largely to the preaching of Merle D'Aubigné in Berlin and the ministry of Ami Bost the Revival became known and influential in Germany, being one of the sources of the founding of the Free Lutheran Evangelical church which not only exercises an evangelical ministry in Germany itself but does solid missionary work in Belgium and France. Similarly the flame spread to Holland where it produced results that were to fan it even further afield.

The rationalism which had infected Dutch theology was greatly deplored by a circle of earnest minded men among whom were the poet Izaak da Costa and his close friend (like him a convert from Judaism) Abraham Capadose. These men would visit the homes of pious people to give readings and exposition of the Scriptures. But they were in the minority for a wave of unbelief, originating in Germany, had spread over the country. Most pulpits were occupied by men who had to a large extent discarded evangelical doctrine. In theory, their subscription to the formularies of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Netherlands Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of the Synod of Dort bound them to uphold Biblical Calvinism. In fact, they interpreted these formularies with a great deal of liberality. Little belief was attached to the characteristic doctrines of the Gospel and those that were preached were sadly diluted. Conversion was an antiquated word and the Holy Spirit appeared to be replaced by the spirit of the age. Then the influence of the revival penetrated to the Netherlands where it was known by its French name "Le Réveil". At first it was largely confined to the upper and middle classes in literary rather than theological circles. Among the leaders, with Da Costa and Capadose was one of the greatest Dutch poets of the nineteenth century, William Bilderdijk. Some twenty years before this da Costa had written "Grievances against the Spirit of the Age". Preachers denounced him (this is reminiscent of Empeytaz and his publication), there were virulent anonymous letters and pamphlets written against him although he had some good friends who supported him.

In 1843, under the influence of the Revival, students at Utrecht began their meetings known as

“Sechor Dabar” - “Remember the Word” whose object was “to promote the study of the subjects required for the ministerial calling in the spirit of the Revival”. Meetings were held weekly at the house of each member who in turn acted as host for the evening. The first three hours were devoted to study and discussion of theological subjects - in Latin! At about nine o'clock they heard “improvisations and orations” which, perhaps fortunately could not last for long for the study session ended at ten o'clock. The rest of the evening was spent in a relaxed, social manner. Both for reasons of economy and good example no wine or spirits were consumed and this earned them the name of “The Chocolate Club” or “The Prayer Club”⁷. From the students and professors they received the same hostile reaction as had the Société des Amis in Geneva a quarter of a century before and no member of the Sechor Dabar was ever asked to deliver the popular lecture under the auspices of the Netherlands Bible Society.

In this Revival atmosphere a young man from South Africa, Andrew Murray by name, came into a lasting experience of Jesus Christ. Some years earlier he had left home with his brother, spending the next seven years in Scotland where both came under the beneficial influence of W.C. Burns. In June 1845 they went to Holland, where a young student named De Graaf saw what to him were two shy young men, dressed in rather outmoded clothes, out walking in the town of Utrecht. He invited them to his rooms and later in the same year Andrew Murray could write to his father “A process has been going on for the last two or three years ... I think I was led to pray in earnest and I have been led to cast myself on Christ”.

When Andrew Murray returned to South Africa his influence, both in preaching and pastoral work was tremendous. He became a saintly man whose personal example and writings helped to deepen the spiritual life of people far beyond the borders of South Africa and it is believed that he was largely instrumental in saving the Dutch Reformed Church at the Cape from being engulfed by rationalism.

So this work of God spread and grew. The interior of Africa was reached by revival missionaries and it will only be on the Last Day that the full story of this amazing work of grace will be unfolded, but even now we can wonder at what God has wrought.

7 These meetings are reminiscent of *The Holy Club* of the Wesleys and Whitefield at Oxford in the 1730s.

Chapter 6: Your Saviour Praise

"Sons of God, your Saviour praise
He the door hath opened wide".

Great religious movements often coincide with the writing of great Christian books. In other words when genuine religion flourishes, and particularly at times of Revival, there is an outburst, spontaneous and glorious, of creativity in writing and singing.

Most famous in the realm of authorship from the ranks of the revivalists was Merle D'Aubigné. From that challenging moment when Robert Haldane asked him if he saw the doctrine of total corruption in his own heart the life of D'Aubigné was changed.

John Henri Merle D'Aubigné was born in Geneva in 1791 of French origin and Huguenot ancestry. His great-grandfather left his native Nîmes at about the time the treacherous revocation of the Edict of Nantes imperilled the lives of Protestant people. Merle D'Aubigné was educated at the Academy at Geneva and completing his course in Philosophy, started to read Theology. He finished his preparation for the ministry in 1816 and until his encounter with Haldane, shared the liberal views of his colleagues and contemporaries. It will be remembered that he chaired the meeting protesting against Empeytaz' publication.

After his conversion he was forced to leave Geneva and travelled to Germany to continue his studies in the Universities of Leipzig and Berlin. During his Journey to Berlin he passed through Eisenach and visited the Castle at Wartburg which had been the retreat of Martin Luther. While he was actually in the great Reformer's room there came to this newly-enlightened man the great concept of writing a history of the Reformation. From Eisenach he came to Berlin where the lectures of Neander, the great theologian and church historian, who believed in viewing history in terms of people rather than institutions, had a profound effect upon him. The inspiration in Luther's room, the fascination with Neander's lectures, combined to start him off on the major work of his life, his monumental History of the reformation of the Sixteenth Century over whose writing he spent half a century of research and labour.

Having completed his studies he spent five years as minister of the French Protestant church in Hamburg, founded years before by Huguenot refugees. This enabled him to amass a great deal of information as a background for his work and these years were very fruitful in many ways. Then King William of the United Netherlands, invited him to go to Brussels as pastor of the newly-formed French Protestant church. Here through his distinguished ministry and revival preaching he was called "the light of the Netherlands". In 1830 there was a revolution, the Dutch were driven out of Belgium and he had to flee to Holland. He declined the king's offer of a post as tutor in his household, largely because his association with the king had already brought threats against his life. Still working on his great history he decided to return to Geneva.

In 1831 the Geneva Evangelical Society was formed with the object of founding a Genevan evangelical seminary, a project which had been mooted for many years. D'Aubigné played a leading part in the founding of this seminary and was appointed Professor of Church History and head of the seminary. Another "Haldane man" joined him as Professor of Theology. This was Louis Gaussen, a man not only of great gifts and attainments but of some fortune, who devoted himself to this work without payment of any kind. (Gaussen also wrote a notable book "Theopneustia", a treatise on the divine inspiration of the Scriptures). This seminary, supported by laymen and supervised effectively by its distinguished staff, started with three or four young men but later was to have forty students and to fulfil an important role in preparing young men to exercise an effective and greatly needed ministry in the French-speaking countries. Another of the original Haldane group, Galland, also joined the staff and was professor for several years.

Still D'Aubigné continued with his life's great work travelling widely to obtain information from as many sources as possible. He was a well built, handsome-looking man with his pleasing manner, but did not enjoy good health. He suffered with chest complaints, often feeling very ill, but this did not deter him from his travels or his work. The extent of his travels and the value of his work may be judged by the recognition he received as an historian. He was given the freedom of the city of Edinburgh and the degree of Doctor of Civil Law of the University of Oxford. At the invitation of C.H. Spurgeon he gave an address at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London; by royal request he preached before Queen Victoria in St. James' chapel.

His great work, which was to prove immensely popular, was published in Paris during the years 1835-1855 and issued in five volumes. Later he wrote the eight-volume *History of the Reformation in Europe in the time of Calvin*. His work on the Reformation in England was still incomplete at the time of his sudden death in 1872.

The popularity of his work consists in a unique blending of sound scholarship with a flair for making an exciting story live. Here is Church History come alive; the expert writing for ordinary Christian people. In this work of scholarship and literary skill the 1817 revival has flowered untold influence for good in the lives of thousands of people all over the world.

If the Revival was to bring a new interest in the story of God's works in the past through the writing of D'Aubigné, it was also to bring a new burst of song. Empeytaz, it will be remembered, produced a small song-book; and the extraordinary Julie de Krudener brought new hymns to the little pietist group on her visit to Geneva. When a man is converted he wants to sing about it and when a revival takes place it is invariably expressed in song. Although other "Methodists" like Émile Guers not only wrote hymns but translated several Moravian hymns into French this expression, as far as the 1817 revival was concerned, found its outlet chiefly through the compositions of two men, Ami Bost and supremely, César Malan.

If there was any man who could claim to have been in at the revival from the very beginning that man was Ami Bost for it was in his home that the pathetic remains of Zinzendorf's ministry were gathered together and took new hope. A colleague of his wrote of him, "He knows the secret of Christian song; his hymns are sermons. This completely scriptural expression, artistically conceived and executed was introduced into France by him. We search in vain for anything like it elsewhere for he has given us the Gospel in his songs. He has given it its rightful place and endowed it with authority and power". Among other works Bost wrote fourteen hymns based on Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and one of the most popular verses for which he wrote both words and music, was

Hark how the Saviour, Jesus, intercedes
How for His own with fervent sighs He pleads!
O may His prayers in softened hearts awake
Desires of holiness for His dear sake!

It was said of him that his hymn tunes were full of allusions to what was currently popular in the theatre or concert hall. These men were not at all averse to taking advantage of the popular tunes of the day, or indeed of the more classic works, such as Haydn's Austrian National Anthem and a tune by Mendelssohn of which he had previously said that it would never be suitable for a religious purpose!

Before becoming pastor of the Bourg-de-Four and then of Carouge, Bost worked as a travelling evangelist in France and in Germany taking the message of the Revival wherever he went. His biography reveals the sort of life he led. "He left Bâle for Strasbourg, accompanied by his wife and two children. For reasons of economy he travelled in a barge, on the river Rhine. In the evening they stopped in village to spend the night. It was a beautiful evening, moonlit and clear, and Ami Bost wanted to start work right away. He went and sat Beside two , young girls who were seated on

a large tree trunk in the square and offered to read to them from the Bible. Soon there were four young girls, then ten, twenty; some young men arrived and the crowd grew all the time". This was the man behind the song, instant in season and out of season. From Strasbourg he went on an evangelistic tour of Germany after which he returned to Strasbourg where he held up to sixteen meetings weekly over a period of two years. At Colmar his evangelistic work proved full of difficulties but he received considerable help and encouragement from some of the local pastors who invited him to preach from their pulpits. "At this time", he wrote, "my household was particularly aware of the continual presence of God". It was during his ministry at Colmar that he first engaged in the work of colportage, one of the fruits of which was the conversion of a young man in the city gaol. Once again, though, the old enmity was encountered and he was expelled from Alsace and, after a short stay in Switzerland he went back to Germany where, at Offenbach he experienced great success with large congregations and numerous conversions. Yet again there was opposition and he had to leave.

It was on his second missionary journey in Germany, en route to Stuttgart that, feeling desperately tired and rather decreased he wrote one of his finest hymns - *Jesus, now the strife is o'er, Now my heart's my own no more!*

François Coillard, the great missionary wrote, in his account of his youth, several reminiscences of Bost. "All the family was musical. I have often seen Bost in the evening, take off his coat and sit at the piano with his daughter. You can imagine how they played; I was enthralled. Many cultured men of the world would have envied me the little corner of that room of a country house in which I sat enjoying these wonderful concerts."

Coillard tells with affection of the Christmas of 1844. Bost had been away for a long time and his daughter had prepared a surprise for him. Day after day she and her friends practised the Gloria and the Magnificat. Bost returned for Christmas and, at a given signal they stood up and sang the Magnificat. After what was a remarkably fine rendering there was a long and profound silence broken later only by sobs of deep and heart-felt emotion at what had been a memorable experience. Then they sang the Gloria and that crowned an evening; Coillard was never to forget. Bost died at Laforce, the charitable institution founded by his son John. He was eighty-four years old.

So these men wrote and sang. Felix Neff, perhaps the most remarkable revivalist, wrote a hymn to the tune of the Marseillaise and Adolphe Monod, generally adjudged to be revival's finest flower, made his contribution. For hymn-writing in the revival, however, the palm goes to César Malan, the Psalmist of the revival.

Henri Abraham César Malan was born in Geneva on July 7th, 1787 of sound Protestant stock. His forebears, from the ancient valleys of the Waldenses in Piedmont, had moved into Dauphine only to leave when a member of their family suffered death for his Protestant faith. They then settled in Geneva where they speedily became integrated into the life of the city. César, a very precocious boy, gave early indication of his future brilliance when at the age of three and a half he startled his family by reading the story of Gethsemane aloud! After education at the collegiate institute he was sent to Marseilles at the age of seventeen to gain experience in a business house. He attended the Protestant church during the Pastor's absence and was persuaded to read a sermon each Sunday. This two-months insight into the work of the ministry created in him a desire to become a pastor himself, and with this in mind he returned to Geneva to study theology. He was ordained to the ministry in 1810 and preached frequently, although as he later admitted, "utterly ignorant of gospel grace".

We have seen how his conversion took place and the sensation his famous sermon created. He was soon to answer for his temerity; the following day he received a visit from Chenevière. The professor implored him, on behalf of the clerical body in Geneva, to change his doctrine "on account to the mischief that might ensue from the preaching that good works were not regarded as

the procuring cause of salvation". "Such", Malan told him politely, "is my firm belief". After this all city and most of the country pulpits were closed to him.

In May came the secretly prepared Reglement which all ordinands and pastors were expected to sign. Leaving for the meeting where this was to be adopted, Malan's now sympathetic wife pressed a note into his hand. "This is the day wherein you should give glory to God! Abide by your vows to Him, and fear nothing" Of all those present, he alone declared he would never sign it. Persecution and unending struggle with the clerical authorities followed. In November, 1818 he was removed from his collegiate post for being "contentious and disorderly". Four and a half years later he was deprived of his ecclesiastical status in the canton of Geneva. On this occasion and as he was leaving the assembly hall for the last time, he recounts "... just as I had reached the entrance, a pastor left his place and came up to me in the presence of the entire assembly. It was the worthy Gausson - he seized me warmly by the hand". Gausson himself was to receive the same treatment eight years later.

During these struggles Malan resolutely stood against secession from the National Church, refusing a number of invitations and offers to minister among groups of dissenters. In 1820 he erected a chapel in his own garden where he resolved to preach the doctrines as set out in the confession of the National Church. At the opening service some 800 people were present - the first service in a building which was to be the scene of his preaching for the rest of his life. At his direction it was demolished immediately after his death.

But Malan was more than just a preacher. Missionary, evangelist, pastor and writer - he was all these. His evangelistic tours took him throughout France, Britain and elsewhere. He had a remarkable gift of speaking to complete strangers often with remarkable results. On a walk, while he travelled by ship or coach, or at his hotel, no opportunity was lost. As a writer he is known as the author of many tracts, but supremely as a hymn-writer. Certainly no-one else in the Revival left such a legacy of hymns, words and music!

A French Protestant paper could say "Amongst us, with the revival of faith has come the revival of its song. After a silence of more than a hundred years, Malan has re-awakened the lay".⁸ Justly he can be called the greatest French hymn-writer of all. His efforts have been likened to the hymns of Newton and Cowper, the same rich faith, a deep and living Christian experience, but a note of assurance sometimes missing in these two English writers.⁹

Jesus, Thou Prince of life,
Thy chosen cannot die;
Like Thee they conquer in the strife,
To reign with Thee on high.

The first of his hymns were published in 1821, and were intended for use at family worship. Later came the first edition of *Songs of Zion* which eventually contained 300 hymns. They were composed, his biographer tells us, "by epochs" in periods of rest following times of hard work. He wrote them fluently, sometimes whilst walking or on a journey. One of his most popular hymns was found written hastily in a pocket notebook and his original manuscripts often indicate the places or occasions of their writing. With the hymns came the music, also composed by Malan. It is remarkable that although he played the flute and violin as a youth and could accompany himself on the organ he had no professional understanding of music and he had to pick out the notes on an instrument before he could write his tunes. Even whilst out walking he would carry a box in which there was an octave made up of thin layers of steel by which he was able to identify and annotate the melodies that came suddenly to him.

8 *Le Semeur* – Paris, August 1837

9 cf. Dr. J. Julian: Dictionary of Hymnology. Article on C. MALAN

His experience as a teacher probably helped him to compose for children. Certainly the humility he showed as a teacher made a profound impression. It was the custom in those days to interpose "Mon Dieu" frequently in your conversation. This, it was mutually agreed, was not good so teacher and pupils pledged each other their help in trying to stop the habit. One day when he was talking animatedly he saw with bewilderment that the whole class had silently risen. Naturally he enquired the cause and was told, with great respect, that he had just said "Mon Dieu oui"! He thanked them, apologised, prayed with them and never said it again!

This profound sympathy with the young and his understanding of them enabled him to write hymns that earned for him the title of "The children's psalmist". His simplicity of style was exactly suited to children.

Though weak and little, yet I am
In the Good Shepherd's flock a lamb
So I by Him may enter in
With all His sheep and heaven win.

On one occasion Malan's wife asked him to write some children's hymns for her school. He only had a very few, in manuscript form, that he had written for his children on various occasions. So without saying anything or making any promises he set to work, and as was his custom strictly forbade anyone to disturb him. At the end of six weeks of seclusion interrupted only for family prayers and his routine ministerial duties he came down one morning into the dining room where he had not appeared during this whole period. Placing on the table the manuscript of *Sixty hymns and sacred songs* complete with melodies he said to his wife, in the presence of the whole family, "My dear Jenny, this is what God has given me over these six weeks". This collection was published in 1857 and afterwards enlarged to include 127 hymns. Their fresh and charming melodies, their frank expression of confidence and the simplicity of the words assured this collection a measure of popular success that justified many re-editions.

In his hymns, allied to the fervent evangelistic spirit there was sound, biblical teaching as in his "Agneau Dieu, par tes lancements, Tu pris sur toi notre misère ..." This writer of hymns was never happier than when he discovered that one of them had been of help to others. In his biography of his father, Malan's son recounts one such incident. In company with his father he had gone to visit an elderly invalid in a village in the Jura mountains. Malan asked the old man how he had arrived at the knowledge of his salvation. "It was in this bed" the old man told him. "I'd been bed-ridden for many years when I read a book written by a Malan of Geneva!" With thankfulness and enthusiasm the old man went on to say how he wished he might see this Malan before he died. Malan asked him the name of the book but did not reveal his identity. "Look, here it is, I'm never without it" was the reply and the invalid took out from under his pillow a much-worn copy of the *Songs of Zion* and gave it to Malan. The conversation continued, they prayed and the pastor and his son prepared to leave. At the doorway, though, Malan turned and went back to the bedside in great emotion. "My father", he said, "the God whom you will soon be joining has answered your prayers. I am Malan of Geneva, your brother in the faith of our blessed Saviour."

Towards the end of his life he suffered from a distressing malady. The doctor, leaving him one day said, "I've seen something that I have heard about but have never seen before. Now I see it as clearly as this stick I have in my hand". "What have you seen?" enquired the ailing Malan. "I've seen faith", the doctor replied, "not the faith of a theologian but the faith of a Christian. I've seen it with my own eyes". In his last hours, talking to a colleague Malan said "God, Heaven, the Glory ... these are realities, realities my friend." He indicated his thin, paralysed hands - "These", he continued, "are the things that pass". On his last day, May 8th, 1864 his eldest daughter came to greet him. "Father, today the Lord Jesus is coming to seek you to take you home with him". The old hymn writer who revelled in "the free sovereignty of the grace of God", smiled as he heard these words and went to meet the Lord of whom he had so often sung.

Chapter 7: On a blaze

“Jesu's love the nations fires,
Sets the kingdoms on a blaze”.

The lone figure halted. It was a young man, strikingly thin and physically weak. The scenery, "terrible, magnificent", as he later described it, was for the time hidden by the snow which the wind was driving into his face like sand. He was nearing the hamlet of Chazelet, "the highest and coldest in France", at the end of an arduous journey. Up here in the mountains of Dauphiné were the strongholds of an ancient Protestant people known as the Vaudois. All day his slow, painful trek had yielded him not one sign of a human being. Now, as he stopped (these stops for breath were getting all too frequent for his peace of mind) he caught a glimpse of a small group of men approaching. He knew what would happen when they saw him, what always happened when they sighted other human beings. But he still found it a shattering experience and to defer the moment as long as possible he rested in the shelter of an outcrop of rock, waiting for them to approach. And once again it did happen. As soon as they saw him they turned tail and scattered, hiding in crevices and caves just like the marmots who made the mountains their home. Then, with animal caution they peered tentatively out, one ran to speak to the others, and after further careful scrutiny, shielding their eyes against the blinding snow they came furtively, reluctantly towards him. He smiled to himself, they had recognised him ... Felix Neff.

Son of an officer in the artillery, Felix Neff was born in Geneva on October 8th, 1797. His father shared fully in the philosophical views of the age; his mother, interviewed after her son's death confessed that she was an exception to what was usually said of God's great servants, that they had Christian mothers. Cold, with icy self-control, she brought him up strictly. So afraid of showing her feelings, she only ever kissed the little boy when he had fallen fast asleep and something of the stoicism was later to come out in him. He was precocious. At two years of age he knew his alphabet and a year later was reading freely. Enthralled by nature he would do his lessons in the open-air within sight and touch of the flowers and trees he loved. His mother could never recall him saying a bad word but she described him as proud and imperious. This was the boy who refused to go to communion at the same time as the leading man of the village in which he lived. The man's reputation was unsavoury and Felix scorned to communicate with him. Apprenticed to a gardener he was only sixteen when he published a short treatise on the culture of trees. But things were difficult and soon he joined the artillery where his abilities earned him speedy promotion to the rank of sergeant. Although he had attended worship regularly as a boy his favourite authors, Plutarch and Rousseau, did not predispose him to welcome the advent of the Revivalists of whose activities he had heard exaggerated accounts. There was an occasion when the mob were threatening the worshippers in a Revival church and the troops were called in to protect them. The formidable Sergeant Neff drew his sabre, plunged it into the soil and declared, "I'll plunge it into the heart of the first one who defends these wretches".

However, behind this tough façade there was a growing desire to find or be found by God. He often read his Bible and in his longing would pray, "Oh, my God, whatsoever thou art, make me to know thy truth; vouchsafe to manifest thyself to me".

Perhaps it was because he had already become acquainted with César Malan through the work he had done for him in his garden that Felix Neff accepted the tract that Malan offered him. It was a translation from the English, its writer was Thomas Wilcox and this tract, "Honey from the Rock" changed his life. God had answered his prayer, the tract impressed him enormously and when he read, "Go to Jesus with all your impenitence and your unbelief and receive from Him the gift of penitence and faith" this seemed to be the voice of God speaking to his need. Over and again he read it with quickening interest and mounting excitement. "If you know Jesus Christ you would not for all the world wish to do a single good work without Him. If you already know him, you know He is the Rock of salvation, infinitely above any righteousness of your own. This Rock will follow

you everywhere. From this Rock flows the honey of grace which alone can satisfy you. Would you go to Jesus? Renounce all idea of your own goodness, taking with you nothing but your misery and sin. Would you know all the horrors of sin? Do not be content to examine its extent in yourself, go to Jesus on the cross, behold in his suffering the malignity of sin and tremble." This was what he had been looking for. "Watch for the manifestations of Jesus to your heart as they that watch for the morning. He will arise as the morning, He will come unto you as the dew. And then, as nothing prevents the rising of the sun, so nothing shall prevent Jesus, the Sun of righteousness, from shining upon you."

Felix Neff came to a knowledge of salvation in 1818 and from that time his entire life was spent blazing that meteoric trail which was so soon to be put out. Naturally his earliest labours were in Switzerland where he served as a probationer pastor in the Cantons of Geneva, Berne and Pays de Vand. In this capacity he visited the sick, taught catechumens, held meetings for prayer and teaching wherever he went, and sought in every possible way to bring men to a knowledge of salvation. His zeal often brought trouble with the Pastors, and with the worldly Protestants of the day. Meeting a pastor with a worldly wife he says "I had no hesitation in saying before her, that during the present time of Revival, the greatest folly of which a minister can be guilty is to marry, especially a worldly women. It is sad to see how frequently Christians are "unequally yoked" in marriage. I can never resist proclaiming against such a step, and I would exhort those who are so yoked never to place human comfort in opposition to the Gospel, but to persevere in their principles, in spite of their wives and families. I am in consequence but little liked by the ladies, but as I care very little for their affection out of Christ, I am quite content".

By 1821 he was in France, at Grenoble, called to assist the pastor there. Although not ordained he went up into the pulpit garbed in pastoral attire. It made him feel uncomfortable. He wrote to a friend, "If you have a good sense of smell you will. notice that this letter smells of the priest because, only a few moments ago I was enveloped in the black tunic which distinguishes the élite from the crowd."

Grenoble appalled him with its worldly church life and apparent apathy. "I was ushered into a very large salon", he recounts with disgust, "where they were playing cards!" His hearers were like stones; he felt that all his preaching was in vain. The Christian fellowship meetings were little supported, "In the evening I take miserable little meetings where frequently only two people attend". His summing-up was brief and pointed. "The people here are dead twice over, Grenoble is a cemetery". Whether his severe attack of melancholy was the cause or the result of his impressions of the church it is hard to say but it is recorded that at this time he underwent a period of trial and perplexity.

After a stay of four months he moved to Mens in L'Isère. He was no more impressed. "This whole place is dead!" His colleague he recognised as being a good and sincere man but "he wants to see conversions. Yet he does not know what conversion is and prefers the peace of this skeleton they call a church which he thinks is alive". A child of the revival, he frowned on the pursuits of the Protestant people. "Novels, theatres, dances were accented by respected members of the church as innocent distractions". Nevertheless, still uncomfortable, still the spiritual man in non-spiritual surroundings, he worked hard, too hard, striving to bring some deep spiritual life into the church in which he laboured. One of the criticisms levelled at him was that he was not a regular, ordained pastor. This ordination he could not gain in France without being naturalised. This he did not wish so it was to England that he went to seek ordination. At the invitation of Monod he took a service for him in Paris and presided at a meeting of a society which had been formed to foster the work of overseas missions. Leaving the Monod home he travelled over to England where the Continental society (founded by Haldane) had already made his name known. At the Poultry Chapel in London on May 19th, 1823 he received ordination to the pastorate by the imposition of hands. A statement of faith was expected of him and he gave it. "I do not claim the ability to explain how and why evil came into the world. The true faith consists in 1. To become aware of one's state of corruption and

of the justice of one's condemnation 2. To place all one's faith in the sufferings and righteousness of Jesus Christ trusting him for everything and hoping for nothing without him. I also believe that we must preach Christ crucified without entering into unedifying arguments on doctrinal points over which Christians disagree and hold simply to those things directly helpful to our souls in our approach to God and to join with our brethren in the bond of charity."

When he returned to France he was accused of being a British agent! If he was innocent of that charge and the attendant perils this suspicion carried, he now entered at last on his great work which was to prove as arduous, and as fatal, as the career of any spy. In October 1823, when twenty-six years of age, he took charge of a church whose area comprised the district of Embrun, Gap and Briançon. This vast parish in the High Alps measured according to direction, forty, eighty and almost a hundred kilometres across. Now he was in the Vaudois mountains and the time he was to spend here, less than four years, was the fruit and climax of his whole ministry. The letter he wrote to his mother was unconsciously prophetic. "I have taken precautions against the icy climate of the place, I have a knitted vest. It is quite a while now since I felt any pain in my chest. I hope to have rather more of it in the future!" The area was icy, inaccessible and inhospitable. Ideal conditions for the survival of a people who had suffered long and vicious persecution. These Vaudois, so-called disciples of the saintly Pierre de Valdo, had fought twenty three wars of religion. They had been massacred by François 1st and scattered into Switzerland and Italy. The remnants remained in these mountain and valleys, from some of which the sun was hidden for six months of the year.

The historian De Thou had described them in earlier days and they had altered but little. "Good shots, they rarely miss a chamois or a bear. But the disgusting way in which they eat these animals give them such a smell that a stranger can hardly bear to remain near them". Felix Neff tramped from valley to valley, some of his church folk describing him scornfully as "the wandering Jew". He held classes for catechism in houses still without doors or windows. He baptised babies, in the stables in which they were born, stables which the whole family shared with the beasts and which were cleaned out only once a year. He learnt to see this extreme lack of culture as a result of their isolated circumstances, and almost entirely traceable to the savage persecutions to which they had been subjected. "The work of an evangelist in the Alps", he wrote, "is very much like that of a missionary among savages. If the hard rye-bread is running out they bake cakes under the cinders like in the East. If someone falls ill there is no-one who knows how to deal with them properly. I've seen them given, in the height of their fever, wine and spirits to drink. Women here are treated harshly. They rarely sit down; usually they kneel or squat cross-legged. They don't eat at the table with the men who give them scraps of food by tossing it over their shoulders to the women. This pitiful helping they receive by kissing the man's hand and bowing respectfully to his back!"

The plight and darkness of these people wrung his heart. "Their misery is deserving of pity" he wrote, "this is a result of the fidelity of their ancestors who were driven by persecution into this frightful abyss." He desired, he told his friends, to be an Oberlin to these people. Yet it was difficult even to make himself understood. They had few books and scarcely understood them and when they read aloud no sense could be made of the reading because of their tone. This was a task for a man who had the resources of God and Felix Neff, child of the Revival, had just that. Every day he would rise and go to a vantage point, spread his hands over the valleys and bless them in the name of God. He did become an Oberlin to them. Like that great contemporary he helped them in the most mundane and practical of matters. He built schools, roads and churches. He taught them to plant potatoes and apples. He taught them to sing and wrote hymns for them since they knew none before.

It was, of course, in the culture of the spirit that his greatest work, that nearest to his heart, was accomplished. Appreciating from his own experience the effectiveness of the tract which had led him to faith he was diligent in distributing copies of "Honey from the Rock" although at times this tract was torn and mutilated by those who objected to the gospel.

Christian literature of any kind he was anxious to introduce to these people when he had succeeded in helping them to read and there is one famous story of a family who had to choose between spending money on buying a book of printed sermons or a pig! After long deliberation they decided to buy the sermons! This story Neff would tell without a smile for he would see no humour in it at all, nor indeed would the family. "In the Alps", he once observed with approval, "there is no wit".

Gradually his persevering love and prayer began to take effect. Certainly the people began to respond to this utterly sincere and dedicated man. Reuben Saillens talked to a man who had known Neff many years previously. He told how many of the young men grew attached to him and would walk with him through the snow to his preaching appointments although they were utterly unconcerned about his message. "One Sunday night came. He had been preaching all day and, as he preached his last sermon of the day he leant over towards us, his pale, tired face filling with tears. "Dear, dear friends", he said, "you know all about it. I wish you would give yourselves to Christ". That appeal, the authentic expression of the revival of which Neff was a child went straight to the hearts of that group of young men and everyone of them was converted.

A notable result was achieved in the hamlet of Dormillouse in the spring of 1825. The first communion was approaching for some of the young people, (In his work the catechumens had not always been young; such had been the neglect of these valleys that he sometimes had catechumens in their eighties) and it was near Easter. The young people seemed quite untouched by the preparation he had given them. "Very distressed", he recounts, "and giving free rein to the bitterness with which I was filled, I reproached them in the severest terms, for their hardness and their levity. What I said went home for, after the prayer which followed we all stayed quiet and still for a long time. I got up and went to sit by the fire having no more to say. There was silence and no-one moved for a quarter of an hour, then a few young men came to talk to me." This was a start and, in Holy Week on the appointed day there were a hundred catechumens who listened to him preach. As he preached some started to weep, others knelt in prayer by their pews and this wave of religious revival bore right through the parish. The Revival was on the move again.

The fire was burning Felix Neff up and soon he had to leave the mountains and the valleys. To the pains in his chest and the frequent fever and weariness to which he was subject was added a distressing stomach ailment, a result, no doubt, of the unsatisfactory diet he had shared with the people. So in 1827 he returned, a dying man, to Geneva.

For a while he was still active and preached whenever he had the opportunity. It was with distress that he noted the bitter internicene strife that had developed among some of the supporters of the Revival. One of these bigots, hearing Neff preach tried to have him harmed from the pulpit because he considered him unsound! This did not trouble the Apostle of the High Alps over much and he found great Joy in sharing fellowship with old friends. In fact his account takes us back to some of the earliest of the Revival figures ... "Bost is here", he wrote in June 1827, "and being a near neighbour I often see him. Gausson is ill, Galland is still very weak. L'Huilier is gone to the mountains for a change of air and Empeytaz is getting better". His condition worsened steadily and, unable to eat, he obtained relief from the pangs of a devouring hunger as friends, ministered to this invalid, eyes feverish, body pitifully thin, by massaging his stomach. When they came to do this he would smile and say "Come on then, give me my dinner". He often thought of the mountains and valleys, walked over them again in imagination and prayer. Near the end a letter arrived, signed by some of the toughest characters in his old parish. It told him of their conversion. "If only we had accepted Christ before", said the letter, "you would have been spared the rigours that have so affected your health". This was pure joy to Felix Neff who would have given his life a dozen times to receive such news.

To write his last letter to old friends at Mens he had to be supported by two friends. The large, irregular characters told their tale of his failing health and sight but also testified that the inward man was still the same. "Adieu", he wrote, "I am going peacefully to the Father. Victory, victory

through Jesus Christ".

Revivalist to the end his last words were "Believe me, nothing is firm but Him, and He alone is truly lovable". He died on Sunday, April 12th, 1829 and when a visitor went to the High Alps almost a century later the people there still touched their caps at the sound of his name. His Christian name, Felix, was not inappropriate for they called him "the happy man".

Chapter 8: The trembling gates

"Sin's strongholds it now o' erthrows,
Shakes the trembling gates of hell."

If you wanted to be sure of getting in to hear him preach at the Oratoire in Paris you had to queue up for two hours beforehand. He was generally accepted to be the greatest preacher in France. He was eloquent, learned, saintly and deeply respected throughout the Protestantism of Western Europe. His name was Adolphe Monod.

His birthplace was Copenhagen. It was here that his Swiss father, Pastor Jean Monod (himself a Pastor's son), had come as Pastor of the French Reformed church in that city. As a young man Jean had accompanied a relative to St. Petersburg who had been appointed as tutor to the Grand Duchess Helen. Returning to Switzerland he travelled via Sweden and Denmark and in Copenhagen visited the Pastor of the French Reformed Church which had been founded long before by French Protestant refugees. The daughter of a lawyer-member of the congregation attracted him and he married her in 1793. Returning to Switzerland he took up the pastorate at Horges where his son Frédéric was born, but returned to Copenhagen in 1794 as Pastor. Adolphe was born on January 21st, 1802 and Copenhagen was his home until the family moved to Paris in 1808 where Jean was to be one of the pastors.

The cultured, cosmopolitan background of Adolphe's upbringing was continued during the years at Paris where he had his father's close surveillance and guidance, benefiting enormously from the tuition of the distinguished teacher Phillippe-Albert Stapher. Throughout his childhood he enjoyed the fun of being one of a large family. In all there were twelve children but he had a special link with Billy, his brother Guillaume, two years his senior. The College Bourbon, the Sorbonne, the College de France and the Bibliothèque Royale all contributed to the education of this bright, imaginative boy, who from early childhood possessed an ambition to distinguish himself in life. The family heritage of Christian service, his aptness in reading and writing probably played their part in helping him, at a rather early age, to decide what should be his vocation. On his fifteenth birthday he announced his resolution to be a minister by Writing a poem, "My Vocation".

At the age of eighteen (in 1820) as the revival was making itself really felt, he went, with Billy of course, to Geneva to study for the ministry. The two were inseparable and people even teased them by addressing them as one person, Monsieur B.A. Monod! It was the first time they had left home but there were compensations, for at Geneva they had relatives, the Gaussens being among them. They flung themselves with youthful exuberance into the activities of the college and the town. They gave lessons to help pay for their own education, they learnt Arabic and took full part in the students' societies, being very much to the fore in the literary group. The boys dutifully kept a diary for their anxious mamma and noted that they got on well with Professor Chenevière, although it is doubtful whether they recorded that when upbraided by him for some youthful indiscretion, he told them testily, "you are just like your brother Frédéric!"

But it was the work of the ministry for which they were really preparing, and Billy described in a letter home, how Adolphe had preached his first sermon in church. "He looked like a child, but a grave and serious child. Everything about the occasion was small - small church, small preacher, small sermon! Adolphe was only raised two degrees above the congregation. He spoke firmly and appeared confident but he lost his place in the prayer before the liturgy and the pastor had to tell him in a stage whisper where to find the place. The sermon had more warmth than when he preached it before the professors at college. He had made some corrections". His début was reasonably promising, and he was generally happy at Geneva, but all too often he experienced frustration. He was not developing as fast and as well as he had hoped, and he was unable to produce the change which he longed to see in himself. As yet he was not aware that this change could only be effected by the grace of God and not by his own efforts.

It was in 1823 that a strong influence came into his life in the person, strangely enough, of another Scot. He met Thomas Erskine in the October. "He interested me and impressed me. I saw him again on Saturday and we talked for two hours. He made me see many things from a new viewpoint; his system is more moral and philosophic than that of the orthodoxy of Geneva. He is a man of large spirit, there is nothing small, hard or inflexible about him. There is in him a zeal and devotion which interests me. The result of this conversation will be to make me think ..." We can detect here the questioning in young Monod's mind. The "orthodoxy" of the Revival contains a strain of inflexibility which he cannot yet accept, but he is still uncertain of his own convictions - "Orthodox, Methodist, Arian, I am each of these in turn."

The mental strife of this uncertainty also served to accentuate the morbid depression to which he was a prey throughout his life and which now began to affect him severely. This sadness became almost melancholia and his efforts to break through his frustration proved even more frustrating as they revealed the extent of his weakness.

In July 1824, the two brothers were both consecrated to the ministry. Their father travelled from Paris for the service but the rules of the Venerable Company did not permit him to take part in the ceremony much to his and the young men's regret. Although ordained Adolphe was still uncertain and he sought out the company of the Revivalists, Gausson and Thomas Erskine. He wrote to a friend, "I wish you, like me, could get to know Mr. Erskine, a young Scot who is distinguished for his talents and piety. The dogma of the presence of God has struck this young man very forcibly".

Returning to Paris he spent several months with his family and then went on a visit to England to see his married sister. He wrote to his mother from London, "How fortunate a Protestant minister is to work in a Protestant country", a sentiment he undoubtedly shared with his friend Charles Scholl who was the Pastor of the French Church in London. This was a time of reflection, always he was thinking deeply about the church. "The Christianity of the Venerable Company is not spiritual enough, it doesn't give sufficient place to the action of the Holy Spirit. The fault of orthodoxy seems to me to lie chiefly in forgetting what Christianity has in common with other religious systems, and dwelling exclusively upon those doctrines which distinguish it from them. Malan and Gausson seem afraid of not "being far enough from those who are not Christians or who are only imperfect ones."

The October of 1825 saw him in Paris again. His brother Billy had arranged to take his pupil Étienne Gautier to Italy for a few months and he invited Adolphe to accompany them. After some persuasion Adolphe agreed, all unaware that this was to become something more than a holiday visit. At Naples they came across a group of French speaking Protestants, who quickly realising Adolphe's talents invited him to become their pastor and form a church. So commenced Adolphe Monod's first pastorate. Starting in the Spring of 1826 it lasted for eighteen months and was clearly one of the formative periods in his life. Faced with the real work of the ministry for the first time, his sense of inadequacy was deepened and his depression settled blacker and more distressing than ever before.

In the spring of 1827 Thomas Erskine arrived in Naples and once again they had long and serious conversations. "My talks with Erskine convinced me that I need something I have not yet found and that I cannot give myself. I see in him a happiness, a peace, an order, a conviction which I do not possess". Seeing his need the young pastor prayed earnestly and long, always struggling with the melancholia which seemed to increase as the days went on. And then there was sadness in the family. He received a letter from his sister in London with the news that for the third time she had lost her only child. The Christian acceptance of this trial in her life affected him profoundly, as did the appeal she made to him to yield his life completely to God. All these factors combined to bring the crisis in his soul to a climax, a climax which brought the peace for which he had longed.

In August 1827 he wrote to his sister, "... I write to give you better news of myself. You will have learnt from my letters that I have made no progress during the last five months. The resolution

which I had formed, to pay no more attention to my soul's malady, only stupefied me. This stupefaction was removed by Mr. Erskine ... but broke out again after his departure and gained a complete victory over me. Then I saw, as by a flash of light, that my mind had always been in a state of blindness and error which must come to an end before I could have peace ... so I had no resource but that arising from an external influence; I called to mind the promise of (the giving of) the Holy Spirit ... I believed this promise. Happy is the heart over which He puts forth this ruling power ... but that He may use it the heart must agree, God would have this first step to come from man, or at least seem to come from him; for if one looks well into the matter, one will find that all comes from God, even the very beginning, and the beginning of the beginning ... He rewards nothing in us, but only the dispositions which He has put within us, as though His mercy repaid itself. Renouncing all merit, all strength, all resources of my own, and confessing that I had no claim to His mercy but that of own misery, I asked of Him His Spirit, to change my spirit. Since that day, which is now more than three weeks ago, I have had no return of melancholy. The reason is, that I was before without God, and depended for happiness on myself, now I have a God who undertakes to make me happy... I am now in the school of God, where everything is taught, to some more slowly, to others more quickly, but to all according as they need it ...".

The Revival experience had come to him and the following Sunday he preached from the words, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all".¹⁰ "I see here", he said, "the two fundamental points of Christianity, the misery of man and the mercy of God".

The newly-awakened spirit of Adolphe Monod now had to face another dilemma. Before him there lay two possible careers, that of pastor and that of professor. Both had their appeal, and he was eminently fitted for either. The situation resolved itself when he was invited to become Pastor of the Reformed Church at Lyons. Leaving Naples he started work as second Pastor in December- 1827, and only a few months later, on the retirement of the Pastor, he was elected to fill his place. Lyons was a stormy chapter in his life-story. When he arrived in the city there was already an independent, evangelical congregation of Revivalist strain. Soon his uncompromising and vigorous preaching of the gospel at the Reformed Church led this other congregation to rally round him. Not unexpectedly what delighted the "Methodists" was not so warmly received by the Consistory and congregation of his own church. "The Consistory treated me at first with consideration and great respect which its subsequent actions have in no way made me forget. It is only a short time since my spirit was opened to the knowledge of the Scriptures and since I recognized the truth of the "orthodox" doctrine. It was not until February 1828 that I declared openly for the first time the way of salvation in two sermons which I have since printed under the titles, "Man's Misery" and "God's Mercy". Since then my preaching has become clearer and more pronounced in its agreement with the Scriptures and the Confession of Faith. From that time I could see that it started to offend and upset the Consistory". Once again the new wine was straining the old wine-skins to bursting point; by September his opponents in the Consistory were already beginning the debate which would lead to him being dismissed.

But even Lyons had its happier side for in 1829 he married Hannah Honeyman, a woman two years older than himself, from an honourable Scots family which had come to Lyons after the events of 1814-15. They had their honeymoon in Dauphiné. Whilst at Vienne they discovered that the great General Lafayette was passing through and Adolphe Monod wrote to him. "Seeing the honours you are receiving I had a feeling which I doubt if anyone else shared. It was the fear that the glory they are giving you might hinder you obtaining eternal happiness, the only thing worth seeking by a mortal who is not assured of one day of this life". He asked the general to grant him "a quarter of an hour or less if that is too much" for a short interview on this, the one thing needful. He signed it, "A Christian of Protestant faith passing through Vienne on business". The general did not in fact see him but replied courteously. "I am none the less grateful for your advice and your good wishes. I would be glad to receive a letter in which you express what you wished to say to me."

10 Romans chapter 11 verse 32

A man of such lively zeal will always have enemies. Tragically for Monod, those in his own church were unceasing in their opposition and efforts to be rid of him. Finally, in April, by an order of the Government he was dismissed. In later years the only church in France closed to him was his old church in Lyons, a fact about which he never ceased to grieve.

Several courses were now open to him. He was pressed to accept an invitation to Geneva as professor in the Evangelical School of Divinity. He also had an earnest request from his many Evangelical friends to remain at Lyons. Believing that God had given him a work to do he remained, and a new Evangelical Church of Lyons was formed of which he was pastor for four years. In addition to the vast amount of work involved, he now had other difficulties. He was no longer supported by the National Church, and his own church members were mostly poor and unable to give anything, but their prayers and love. In these straitened circumstances great care was exercised in the Monod household; above all they learned to live believing that their Heavenly Father knew their needs and would answer prayer.

During all these years, the old problem, Pastor or Professor, still troubled Adolphe Monod. At last, in August 1856, when he could leave his church in the care of a faithful successor, he accepted nomination as Professor of Moral Theology in the Seminary at Montauban. This was a happy period. His domestic life was blissful, his quiet, self-effacing wife managing with great capability the seven children and solacing him on the death of one of them at the tender age of one year. In his household he also had a few young people, French and foreign, who had come to be educated by him whilst his brother-in-law Édouard lived with them for health reasons. Adolphe wondered later if God had been preparing him for his own suffering by showing him, in Édouard, how a Christian could suffer with patience and serenity.

At Montauban he became completely absorbed in his work, deeply loving the students among whom he achieved great popularity and respect. With an informality uncommon among professors in his day he would invite the students into his home for tea and a chat. At first the students found this innovation embarrassing. They felt they could not refuse the friendly invitation but on the other hand it seemed unseemly to accept anything from a professor and so they left before tea!

Always diligent and fully aware of the great responsibility he bore he made for himself "Rules for a Professor". The instruction was to be as Biblical as possible and as historical as possible. His aim was usefulness. In his particular field of morality his purpose was not so much to complete a course as to deal with important questions. The life of Jesus Christ was to be given the most prominent place and he would encourage the students to read the Bible. These and other "Rules" he laid down for himself showed the stress he put on matters that he would describe as "spiritual". From a letter of 1839 it is clear that one of his text books was "The Christian Ministry" by C. Bridges. There is no doubt that his eleven years at Montauban enriched the lives and ministries of many students, thus enriching the church itself. Adolphe Monod did not stop preaching during his professorship. In fact he was increasingly in demand over an ever-widening area.

He had come through the turbulent wrestlings of his youthful days and the sharp conflict at Lyons. His years at the seminary refined and tempered him into a wise and saintly minister. The discipline of study and preparation for his lectures (he taught successively Moral Theology then Hebrew and finally New Testament exegesis) deepened his understanding and widened his sympathies. These experiences, allied to his natural gifts, now fitted him for the last and most influential phase in his life.

In 1847 he left the seminary to become a pastor in Paris. Now his career reached its peak. Here in the capital itself he brought the fruits of his experience and his well-stocked mind. Here the Revival expressed itself through the brilliant preaching of this man so utterly committed to the Lord whose Gospel he proclaimed. People flocked to hear him and his influence was continental. Once again he set his standard; he worked out a programme for his ministry. He determined to consecrate himself

wholly to this calling. He would be a stranger to committee meetings (except those of the Evangelical Alliance) for a year. He would hold an independent and conciliatory position yet avoid being icily neutral. His preaching he believed needed special attention. It demanded a profound study of "the present state of men and things" if he was to succeed in bringing the gospel to man.

Adolphe Monod never slacked in his ardour. He preached with telling force not only in Paris, nor merely throughout France, but in other countries. He did not slack even after becoming aware that there was something seriously wrong with him. When various cures had failed and preaching became a considerable effort he continued still. But at last in 1855, he had to stop. He had an incurable disease. The doctors confirmed this in September 1855 and in a conversation with one of his children he elicited the truth of what he had suspected. He prayed, "O my God, if Thou takest me hence, I know in whom I have believed; and if my days are numbered I bless Thee for it from the bottom of my heart, because I know that it is much better to leave this world and go to the Father".

His condition deteriorated steadily. Wave after wave of intense pain shook his frame. Throughout the winter he lingered, weak and racked with agony. Every Sunday from the fourteenth of October, 1855 to the thirtieth of March, 1856 there was a gathering of friends at his bedside. He would talk to them, pray with them and join with them in Holy Communion. The talks he gave, published posthumously as his "Farewell" were to become as influential as anything he had ever produced before. At the last of these gatherings he prayed aloud though hardly able to speak through weakness. His prayer was a prayer of thanksgiving and his last words a prayer for others, "Oh, Lord, many of us have sick ones, very dear sick ones; we commend them all to Thee. I bear them all on my heart before Thee. I will not try to name them lest in my weakness I forget one of them and give pain to someone here". He died the following Sunday.

He was buried on Tuesday, April 8th. Despite the torrential rain over a thousand people saw him laid to rest, and over a hundred vehicles were employed in conveying them. Thirty robed pastors, all the ministerial staff, in fact, of every official church in Paris plus all the Pastors of the independent churches came to pay tribute to this man who was the finest flowering of the Revival. Preacher, pastor and professor, hymn-writer and author, the spark of grace blazed at its fiercest, at its purest, in Adolphe Monod. There is little doubt that the wish expressed a few days before his death, a wish so typical of him whose greatest characteristic was love for Jesus, found ample fulfilment - "Never think of me without that making you think of God".

Chapter 9: He alone

"Jesus, mighty to redeem,
He alone the work hath wrought."

When I have read books on revivals I have often been concerned about the completely starry-eyed treatment of the subject. To read certain accounts it would seem that these movements were all perfection and they strike one as being quite unrealistic. Perhaps it is this kind of naive treatment that prejudices the minds of a large number of Christians who otherwise might be inclined to take the fact and theology of revival more seriously. So we have to examine this revival critically and honestly and not assume that it is taboo. The work of the Holy Spirit can never suffer from fair scrutiny.

Much criticism, of course, was levelled at Haldane and the Revival. We have seen how, in the very early days, Professor Chenevière and the Venerable Company were implacable enemies of the movement. When one is writing in favour of a certain movement it is perilously easy to assume that its enemies are automatically in the wrong. It is clear that Chenevière and the others did not discern the working of the Holy Spirit in this nascent movement. As far as that is concerned they were tragically mistaken. We must remember, though, that they were men of their age and the very atmosphere in which they thought and moved necessarily influenced them against a movement of this sort. To the best of their knowledge and belief they were doing what was right in preaching as they did and in training the students to do likewise. Things seemed to be suing along satisfactorily and the advent of Haldane, with the disturbance he created, must have appeared to them as a sinister threat to their work. Haldane knew, of course, that his work would cause disturbance. As he was passing through the gates of Geneva he was in conversation with someone in the carriage who expressed high hopes as to the success of Haldane's work in the city. The evangelist admitted that he had been "pondering on the strife and division which would infallibly ensue if the Lord should see good to make the gospel of his grace the newer of God unto salvation". New wine always shatters the old wine skins but the prospect was a sad one for Haldane who, although he revelled in debate was a most kindly man and always sought to avoid strife. In his work both at Geneva and Montauban he always strenuously resisted any suggestion that he should start a new church and studiously avoided entering into any dispute with those who were attacking him so violently. It does seem a pity that the two sides were never able to get together but perhaps the nature of events simply made this impossible. Their beliefs were so different as almost to appear two different religions. A great measure of sympathy must be accorded to the regular pastors and professors, for the advent of a person or group that threatens schism is a pastor's nightmare; they would feel, quite apart from the threat of a split, that the extreme views of the revivalist group might well prejudice the efforts they were making through the regular pastoral work of the church, inadequate though that work may have been. Ministers dedicated to the work of soul-winning and with the profound and long standing belief in revival can sympathise with them. On my occasions they find that the greatest stumbling-blocks to sensitive and intelligent soul-winning are those doctrinaire and dogmatic sectarians who, gagged by their shlbboleths and blinded by a view of salvation more narrow than Jesus ever knew, inhibit the work of the Holy Spirit and bring the evangelical approach into disrepute.

Certainly the wine-skins burst. The views of the Company and the "Methodists" were quite irreconcilable and this movement, once started, could not be contained within the established church. So it was that young men were expelled from the church or left it of their own free will. It is impossible to foresee whether their ministry would have been as fruitful had they remained in the church of their birth but it is very doubtful. The divisive effect of the movement spread into Vaud and on into France where the Église Libre Évangellque was formed. When César Malan had a chapel built in his own back garden he was simply the precursor of a widening and strengthening schism. In these ecumenical days when unity seems to be the ideal, such a schismatic out-thrust would be condemned by definition but church history shows that, at least in the past, such secession

has been inevitable if men were to worship and serve as they believed God meant them to. If the coming years do bring about an organic unity of the churches its future unity will only be preserved if the wineskin is kept fresh and elastic.

Closely allied to and largely responsible for this divisive tendency was the teaching and doctrine of the revival. It was Calvinism neat and undiluted. Haldane himself wrote later "In studying this Epistle, turned their attention to the great doctrines of the Gospel, so successfully revived at the Reformation by Luther and his associates as well as by Calvin, with whose writings, though the founder of their church, they had no acquaintance, and whose theologica sentiments they had been taught to regard as altogether antiquated. In discarding the instructions of these Reformers, they had been led to understand that they were following the superior illumination of the present age. I did not attempt, however, to make them disciples of Calvin or of any-man, to say "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos", but to bring them to be followers of Christ, to sit at the foot of His Cross and to learn of Him". As Haldane taught them, they must have found this authoritarian approach to be completely different from the liberal views with which they had previously been presented. It must have been very hard for him to offer what he firmly believed to be the true teaching of the Bible and yet avoid the perilous position of the man who considers his teaching to be beyond criticism. He must have come dangerously near this on occasions. He tells us that the authority he annealed to was the "law and testimony", adding that he reminded them that "if they spoke not according to this word it was because they had no light in them (Isaiah 8:20). This, of course, is valid scriptural teaching because it is demonstrably true that the "natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit", but if this view were reported to Chenevière and his associates one can easily understand them considering it the last refuse of the bigot - if you cannot accept or understand what I say there is something wrong with you!

Certainly this was the view Chenevière took. Years later he attacked Haldane in his "Summary of the Theological Controversies which have of late years agitated Geneva". He described Haldane as a "rigid Calvinist who invited a number of ministers and students to his house, where he occupied their minds with the mysterious points in the Christian religion and ... inoculated them with his own intolerant spirit, taught them to despise reason and trample on good works". Although he did not express his view in so many words he clearly put Haldane in the same category as the Pharisees whom Jesus attacked for making their converts twice as hellish as they were themselves.

Haldane, of course, took up the cudgels in reply to this; the reputation of his work and the truth of his teaching needed defending. He could not defend his views without attacking Chenevière's and this he did. He had heard Chenevière preach and comments, "I am free to declare that, never in my life did I hear the work of God so directly contradicted from the pulpit. In your exclamation "Ah! Are we not born pure?", profound ignorance of the work of God was manifested and the whole train of your reasoning proceeded on this assumed principle, a principle not more contrary to the express declarations of scripture, the conduct of providence and the whole plan of redemption than to the universal experience of mankind. And yet, sin, you are Theological Professor at Geneva!"

Haldane, of course, was quite right. It was this unscriptural, naive and totally unrealistic view of man that blunted their view of the Christian gospel. Certainly it could hardly have been more at variance with the Epistle to the Romans. Before we look briefly at the teaching of Haldane according to his own account, and from his commentary to the Epistle which he wrote following the Geneva Revival, we might do well to see what men thought about Haldane and Chenevière. This is evidence which we need to take if we are to be fair and dispassionate. Although Haldane taught authoritatively there is much evidence that he was a very amiable and kindly man.

Dr. Rye Smith wrote defending him against the attack Chenevière made upon him and says "Mr. Haldane is a man of family fortunes and talents who has for many years devoted himself with a generosity rarely equalled, to the most benevolent purposes that can be entertained by a human mind. There are few persons who are more addicted to cool reasoning or who have more correct

views or more consistent practice on the subject, I will not say of toleration, but of the entire rights of religious liberty. Abundant proof that he does not condemn reason but employs the processes of induction and argument in a manner highly judicious, scrupulous and logical, will appear to any one who will read his work on *The Evidence and Authority of Divine Revelation*. I have never had the happiness of knowing a more dispassionate or careful reasoner or one whose habits of mind were more distinguished by the demand and scrutiny of sufficient evidence upon every subject."

Of Chenevière less is known. When young Adolphe Monod went to the seminary at Geneva he was warmly welcomed by the Professor, but it is possible to gather that although he wrote to his mother that he and his brother Billy got on well with Chenevière, he was aware that the man was difficult. There came an occasion later in their stay in Geneva when, upset by something they had done, the Professor accused them of being "just like Frederic!" Daniel Wilson, later to become the Bishop of Calcutta, knew Chenevière and describes him very unsympathetically. "He was a harsh, violent, impracticable man, confessedly Socinian in principle. He really frightened me by his fierce attack on spiritual religion". Here perhaps is a clue. The "spiritual religion" which Wilson accuses Chenevière of attacking was not only unwelcome but almost unknown to the church of Geneva which Chenevière represented. Later Adolphe Monod wrote to a friend: "The Company of Geneva is going to be different ... not because of your talent, though I admire that, but your piety, a piety more evangelical, not to say orthodox, than that of the old Company. You know how to take the middle course between rigorous orthodoxy and the opposite excesses. (I mean the Christianity of the old Company, pure and moral to a high degree but, dare I say it?, not sufficiently humble or spiritual, giving insufficient place to the work of the Holy Spirit; not insisting sufficiently upon doing the will of God; the corruption of man, the necessity of change, the divine and infallible authority of Scripture, especially the New Testament, not talking enough of Jesus Christ)." Orthodoxy has a defect, he adds. It does not recognise what Christianity...

When he replied to Chenevière, Haldane went on to give details of the teaching he had given to the students. Before going on to give an epitome of each chapter of Romans he outlined the main points of his teaching. He directed them, he contended, "to practical godliness and constantly showed them that they must have a right view of God as revealed in Scripture. I drew their attention to the character of God as holy, just, good and merciful; perfections which, in their combination, are all gloriously displayed in the gospel. I warned them against the loose and erroneous notions so generally entertained concerning the way in which mercy is exercised. God is indeed merciful and gracious. He delighteth in mercy, but while justice is an essential attribute, mercy is solely vouchsafed as He sees good. This mercy is never exercised but in strict conformity to justice and mercy is only to be found where justice has received full satisfaction. Here we are led to consider the state of fallen man, and his personal character as a sinner, as well as to examine the holy law of God, both in its perfect precepts and awful sanctions and to see that it is only in Christ we can be redeemed from its curse and eternal condemnation, and born again in order to participate in the blessings of His redemption. In introducing and dwelling on these subjects he followed the course traced out in the epistle. Then we showed that Christ fulfilled the law both in its precept and its penalty. The righteousness provided for man which will place those invested with it nearest the throne is the righteousness of God."

As a Calvinist he dealt, of course, with the sovereignty of God and this is most clearly seen in his summing-up of the ninth chapter. "The doctrine of God's sovereignty is here fully treated of and that very objection which is daily made, "Why doth he yet find fault?" is stated and silenced". His overwhelming awareness of the supremacy of God and his understanding of the primacy of the glory of God is seen as he talks about the eleventh chapter. "There was nothing brought under the consideration of the students which appeared to contribute so effectually to overthrow their false system of religion founded on philosophy and vain deceit, as the sublime view of the majesty of God which is presented in these concluding verses of this part of the Epistle - "of Him and through Him and to Him are all things". Here God is described as His own last end in everything that He does. Judging of God as such an one as themselves, they were at first startled at the idea that he

must love himself supremely and infinitely more than the whole universe and consequently must prefer His own glory to everything beside. But when they were reminded that God in reality is infinitely more amiable and more valuable than the whole creation and that, consequently, if He views things as they really are He must regard Himself as infinitely worthy of being most valued and loved, they said that this truth was in-controvertible. Their attention was at the same time turned to numerous passages of Scripture which assert that the manifestation of the glory of God is the great end of creation, that He has himself chiefly in view in all His works and dispensations and that it is a purpose in which He requires that all His intelligent creatures should acquiesce and seek to promote as their first and paramount duty".

Again and again he returns to the supreme authority of the Scriptures. "I did not instruct them to acknowledge the Bible to be a revelation from God and at the same time to consider themselves at liberty to sit in judgement on its contents. But I showed them the folly and daring impiety of summoning their Creator to the bar of their reason and of receiving or rejecting the different parts of His word according to its proved decisions. I taught them that being convinced that all Scriptures given by inspiration of God they ought to search it with diligence, to study it with prayer that God would open their eyes to behold the wondrous things which it contains and to use them as rules of obedience and as motives and encouragements in the exercise of it and in things evidently mysterious, to bow in humble submission to the divine teaching and to receive with adoring faith and love what they could not comprehend. In one word I reminded them of the declaration of the apostle which it would be well for you to ponder. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down reasonings and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ".

It can be seen that he acknowledged that he talked about "things evidently mysterious" and this constituted part of Chenevière's charge against him. He addressed himself to this objection. "You assert I occupied their minds with "the mysterious doctrines of the Christian religion". I did this in the full conviction that they are conducive in the highest degree to the interests of holiness and that in no respect do they interfere with the responsibility of man. It is the doctrine of divine revelation rather than its precepts which furnishes the chief means of advancing holiness. Love to God is not so much excited by the precept "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" as by the discoveries of the excellences of His character and of the abundance of His grace". The remaining criticism levelled at him by Chenevière was that he had an intolerant spirit. He states his position. "I shall deal with you as frankly as I have done in regard to the "mysterious doctrines of religion". On the subject of what you call an exclusive spirit I hold a very decided opinion. While errors in religion are endless I am convinced that there is but one exclusive system of divine truth; but one foundation which God has laid in Zion; but one Name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved ... Jesus. Hence a mistake concerning His Person as God and Man will, if persisted in, prove fatal. This I inculcated on the students to the utmost of my power. But I am also aware that the apostle Paul in the very place where he affirms that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, has also declared that on this foundation different materials may be built so that many errors may exist in the mind of one who holds the fundamental saving truth. You will accordingly find this sentiment fully expressed in my (French) Commentary Vo. 1 page 1 where it is denied that Arians and Trinitarians can both of them be Christians. Besides an exclusive spirit you impute to me an intolerant spirit. As to toleration, respecting differences of opinion among Christians in articles not fundamental, I taught a system the very opposite to intolerance. To this I was directly led by the consideration of the fourteenth and part of the fifteenth chapters of Romans. You will find a long article in my Commentary which carries forbearance towards all Christians as far as the Christian character can be discerned. The whole of that discussion is summed up in the following rules:

1. To do nothing to preserve communion with our brethren which would mar communion with God.
2. To maintain communion with our brethren as far as we can do it without marring

communion with God."

Haldane here has mentioned his commentary. We may safely assume that the contents of this commentary are substantially the same as the exposition he gave to those students assembled in his rooms in Geneva in 1817 and so they give a first-hand picture of the actual teaching they received. Here is a commentary, in the English version, on a phrase in the seventh verse of the first chapter (probably given at the very first of the meetings in view of how early the verse comes in the epistle). His aim is to impress upon them the deity of Jesus which was not believed in their circles in that day. The phrase is "From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ". He expounds, "God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Father of all who are in Him. Paul here speaks of God as both his Father and the Father of all those whom he addressed, and so constituting one family, whether Jews or Gentiles. God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, are the source of all grace and peace, and can alone communicate these blessings, which are the gracious effects that flow from the covenant of love and favour of the Triune Jehovah. Here again we see an incontrovertible proof of the deity of Jesus Christ; for, if he were not God, He could not without impiety be thus joined with, or involved along with, the Father, to impart blessings of which God alone is the author".

We have seen the criticism of Chenevière, one who was obviously and unshakeably against Haldane and the Revival and we have noted Haldane's reply to this criticism and considered some of the outlines of his teaching. In a previous chapter the views of Samuel Vincent were examined for he had certain criticisms to make although his general conclusion was that the Revival brought great good to France and other countries. Now we shall listen to Adolphe Monod, generally acknowledged to be one of the finest fruits of the Revival. On his installation as Suffragan Pastor in Paris on October 31st, 1847 he preached a famous sermon "The Living Word". In it he deals very faithfully with the Revival. "One particular reason in our epoch to lift high the living person of Jesus Christ is the revival. When the nation abandoned God He visited our protestant churches one by one to work a new reform in the bosom of the reformation itself. This Revival has our sympathies and is worthy of putting alongside that of the sixteenth century, a Revival whose instruments (already disappearing one by one from this world) are worthy of praise as being among the 3 greatest benefactors of our generation; a revival in which the hand of God is visibly imprinted and which gave hope and the seed of a better future to the church. But it was not a perfect Revival, nor yet one which has yet spoken its final word. The contemplation of the living person of Jesus Christ has been comparatively neglected by our Revival. More attention was paid to the written than to the Living Word - the Revival was more biblical than spiritual. It was faithful to the doctrines of human corruption, justification by faith, the divine glory of Jesus Christ, re-generation by the Holy Spirit and, most of all, the free grace of God in the work of salvation. It had a clarity of teaching, a power of preaching never before surpassed or equalled except in times of special inspiration". He quoted Stapfer as saying that if the first century was the era of redemption, the sixteenth was the era of reformation and the nineteenth of the Bible. One grave flaw, though, he detected. There was a lack of teaching about the Holy Spirit. "We are now aware of this have not yet dealt with it". He spoke of a certain malaise now the first flush of the Revival was over, for some were sad, irresolute, discouraged and asking for a revival within the Revival. The answer to this, he believed, would be found in the contemplation of the living person of Jesus Christ. The Revival, in its individual manifestation at least, lacked what he called spiritual life; by this he meant the life hid with Christ in God. Had not the piety of the Revival been too dogmatic in its conception? he asked; too activist in its approach, too extrovert in its trends, too shrill in its works, and too human in its methods? There was much need to let God himself work deeply among them. He commented regretfully that the Revival, in its contact with the church, was apparently lacking in brotherly union and added, surprisingly, that it was lacking in really effective evangelism.

"Never since the apostles has it been tried so hard; certainly it has not been so pure or extensive since the days of the reformers. Yet its success has not been in proportion to its efforts, nothing as great, as the Reformation has taken place in these days. Today's progress is restricted and isolated why? Is it because the Revival has been biblical rather than spiritual? We have offered them the

Bible but to read the Bible you have to be interested in it and to be interested in it you must have read it - a vicious circle. So we must offer Jesus Christ. You have not been able to lead them from the Bible to Jesus, so lead them from Jesus to the Bible."

There is clearly much that is valid in this criticism but its real bite is countered by the fact that the Revival which Monod criticised was, in fact, the movement that produced him. The spirituality which enabled him so clearly to discern the deficiencies of the Revival was the spirituality the movement had engendered in him and the fact that he was able to talk about it, with the obvious implication that his congregation knew what he was talking about, bears its own testimony to the virility of the Revival and the impression it had created.

We shall leave the last contemporary word with Haldane himself. In his reply to the attack of Chenevière he referred to the life and death of young Charles Rieu, the late pastor of Frederica in Denmark, as a clear refutation of the charge that "Methodists" neglected good works. Leading up to this he maintains that good works followed from the reception of the doctrines he taught at Geneva. "It pleased the Lord in His infinite goodness to bless his own words to the conversion of a goodly number of young men who are now preaching the gospel in different parts of the Continent where the French language is spoken. On this subject I have received from several of them the most pleasing accounts accompanied with every expression of gratitude for having had their minds then directed to the words of eternal life". By their fruits, he is claiming, ye shall know them.

The Monod family, as we have observed, remained a distinguished one in French-speaking Protestantism. Wilfred Monod, grandson of Frédéric and great-nephew of Adolphe wrote, many years later, his two-volume "Cloud of Witnesses", a fascinating study of church history. Naturally enough he dealt with the Revival. It is clear that he was fully persuaded of the divine origin and profound influence of this "powerful spiritual movement" but he is not blind to its deficiencies. There were many, he tells us, who deplored the preponderance of methods "imported from abroad", which were ill-adapted to the traditions of the French Reformation; the adherence to the more extreme doctrines of Calvinist theology. Equally to be regretted was the absence of real appreciation of the educative value of ecclesiastical institutions, the lack of respect for the psychological laws of balanced teaching, and the rights of philosophical thought, the discoveries of science and the lessons of history. Some too, he felt, opposed the revival because of its apostolic demands and its moral austerity. (These "Methodists", formidable people in their way of life, plain and austere, were very conscious of the debilitating effect of worldliness). He felt, though, that eventually the passionate, sincere discussions of the liberals and "Methodists" helped both sides to see that they were wrong to judge one another on extreme cases or extremist individuals. In this great debate, he believed, the opponents incarnated two principles equally dear to the truly evangelical soul. These were the truth which saves and the liberty by which one is saved inasmuch as it is a form of personal, living faith, the response of man to the call of God. The religious revival, he endeavours to show in his book, was the start of a process that developed into a theological revival personified in France by the great Alexandre Vinet. This grew, too, to embrace the social revival, one example of which was the English Elizabeth Fry, and finally the missionary revival for which he cites as examples the great missionary François Coillard and the evangelist William Booth.

The Revival, then, must be seen geographically in the perspective of a continent and in time as the starting point of an ever-increasing and developing movement. Certainly it was not a perfect revival. There is no such thing. Any genuine movement of the Holy Spirit is always accompanied by the mischievous, sinister movement of other forces, evil in their intent and disastrous in their result. There are always tares among the wheat and to discern the Spirit at such times is not easy.

Yet, having considered the story of this Revival and taken into full account the criticisms levelled at it, no-one can honestly doubt, that it was a movement inspired by God and sustained by Him. It is strange that it has become known as the Haldane Revival. It would be hard to think of a description

of the movement that would grieve him mope deeply. He would disavow this title passionately and declare, with all his old authority, that this was a work of God and that Robert Haldane was His unworthy servant.

A trite little story, possibly apocryphal, is sometimes told. Whether it was true or not the prayer of the man concerned often comes to me as I think of the Revival, of Haldane the "spark of grace". A coloured Salvationist stood at the grave of William Booth whilst visiting London. For a while he stood in silence, thoughtful. Then he bowed his head and was heard to say, "Lord, let it happen again."

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