A. C. DIXON

A ROMANCE OF PREACHING
A. C. DIXON
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WORKS BY A. C. DIXON

Bright Side of Death, The
Bright Side of Life, The
"Christian Science" Delusion, The
Evangelism, Old and New
Glories of the Cross, The
Heaven on Earth
Jonah, The Prophet
Lights and Shadows of American Life
Milk and Meat
Present Day Life and Religion
Reconstruction: The Facts Against Evolution
Speaking with Tongues
Spiritism: Is It of God or the Devil?
Through Night to Morning
Touches of God, The
True and the False, The
Why I Am a Christian
Young Convert's Problems, The

And numerous booklets and sermons.
Very Cordially,

A.G. Dixm.
A. C. DIXON
A ROMANCE OF PREACHING

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Helen C. A. Dixon

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TO
THE CHILDREN
AND GRANDCHILDREN
WHO ARE HIS DEAR GIFT
TO ME
By the same Author:

Richard Cadbury of Birmingham
Charles M. Alexander: A romance of song and soul-winning.
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A ROMANCE OF PREACHING

INTRODUCTORY

GOD'S MAN

God's work in God's way with God's power to God's glory.

A.C.Dixon's motto for the opening of the twentieth century.

“No, sonny! That was God's man.”

Six-year-old Tommy looked up wonderingly into his mother's face as he trotted along the street by her side. A sweet seriousness stole into his merry eyes at the words, and for a while silence fell between them. The short February afternoon was closing in, and they must hurry home, but the thoughts of both were busy with the scene they had just left.

Tommy's mother was a member of a Women's Meeting held each week on the outskirts of a great city in the English Midlands. This particular Monday afternoon, early in 1924, was one to be remembered.

The meeting had been addressed by an unexpected visitor, a tall American, whose name was well-known to the women, although they now saw him face to face for the first time. They had heard of his valiant service in one of the famous pulpits of London throughout those terrible war-years that were still a vivid memory to all but the children.

Sitting by his mother's side in the meeting, the boy's attention had been riveted upon the magnificent figure that towered above the little platform. The fine head of the speaker was crowned with a mass of silvered hair—face aglow, and eyes alight under their heavy black brows with the joy of the heavenly message that poured from his lips and heart. The little lad seemed spell-bound, drawn by that mysterious attraction which often binds the ingenuous heart of a child to that of a man of ripe age in whom the unaffected grace and sincerity of childhood still predominate.
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The meeting over, the speaker made his way from the platform to give a handshake and a personal word of greeting to the women as they dispersed. Hardly had he taken his place by the door, when he felt a small, warm hand pushing up into his unoccupied left. Glancing down, he saw the little fellow who had listened to his preaching with such rapt attention. He stooped to pat the boy’s cheek with a kindly word or two. Tommy refused to be drawn away, and for half an hour the two stood hand in hand until the long stream of women had filed past.

Once before, on the occasion of the annual Christmas party, Tommy had accompanied his mother to the meeting. The vision of Father Christmas, with snowy beard and flowing locks, had filled his mind with pleasurable awe. Some fantastic connection between the English Saint of Christmas and the silver-haired preacher who had so strangely attracted him was simmering in Tommy’s brain as he walked home beside his mother. “Was that Father Christmas?” he queried. Truer than she realized was the spontaneous reply that had sprung to her lips and with which this story began.

The impression made upon the quick perception of the child did not soon fade. For many weeks thereafter he would run in from his play to question his mother about the stranger who had captured his boyish imagination. But after a while the questions ceased, and the incident seemed entirely forgotten.

Eighteen months had passed when an announcement was made in the Women’s Meeting that the American preacher whom they so well remembered had been called Home. Fearing to sadden the child, Tommy’s mother did not tell him the news. To her surprise, a day or two later, as if by some strange intuition, he asked:—

“Where is God’s man now, mother?”
“We have just heard that he is dead, Tommy.”

A smile flashed over the boy’s face as he said:—
“Then he must be in heaven, mother; for he is God’s man!”

It would be difficult to find a more fitting appellation for the man whose life-story is to be told here than is contained in the
simple phrase—“God’s man.” For if there was one outstanding principle which controlled the life of A.C. Dixon it was the conviction that he was not his own, having been bought with a price, and that the chief aim and only satisfying ambition of life must therefore be to glorify God in the body and in the spirit which belonged to God.

From the hour in which he first became conscious that God was willing to use him as His mouth-piece, he was dominated by one overmastering desire—to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ whenever and wherever possible. He was so genuinely in love with his chosen calling, that there is no exaggeration in describing his life as a “romance of preaching.” There did not lack seductive opportunities to stray into other fields, but he turned a deaf ear to them. The vision caught in early life was too high to let him covet earthly profit or approval, or be content with any lesser ambition than that of pleasing God.

In the letters recovered from various sources, no fact is more patent than his genuine longing to be completely at God’s disposal. When only in his twenties, the newspapers of a great city rang with praise of his eloquence and zeal. But we find him writing, in a letter of so private and sincere a nature that the statement cannot be accused of smugness: “My delight is in the Lord, and not in what man may think or say about me. My constant prayer is that my heart may be perfect toward God.”

Eight years later he was in the throes of uncertainty with regard to a call to service in a new sphere. “I want to act unselfishly,” ran a confidential note, “not seeking my own ease or comfort, but with the glory of God in view. I desire to be Christ’s in body and mind and heart and time and purse.”

At the age of fifty-two he wrote to his wife: “I believe God is with us. May we be so given up to Him and filled with His fullness that He can live and work through us. Such is my ambition and I know you share it with me.” “I want much yet,” he wrote again, “but above all the greatest want is to do the will of God. I believe I can say without any cant that such is my supreme desire.”

It was no striving for rhetorical effect, but a cry from the depths of sincere desire, that once led him to exclaim in the midst of a sermon on Galatians ii:20: “God help me to be as loyal to the Master as Paul was, and as crucified to the world. Crucifixion
is usually a lingering death, and the death of the ‘old man’ to the world and to self is a long and painful process. Don’t mind it, my Master, if I flinch. Let the crucifixion continue, even if I shrink from it, until the old Dixon is dead, and Jesus Christ is alive in every fiber of my being. That is my heart’s desire, that in all things Jesus might have the pre-eminence.”

The solid groundwork upon which his religious faith and all of his preaching were based was the integrity of the Scriptures as the Word of God. “Christianity is a book religion,” he once wrote. “The trite saying: ‘Christianity is Christ,’ is no more than that ‘Christianity is the Bible.’ Those who oppose Christianity, and those who would substitute something else than personal faith in Christ as the condition of salvation, must first get rid of the Bible. The Book is its own best champion, and has a way of taking care of itself. God is its Author, and, like the Christ it reveals, it is perfectly human and perfectly divine.”

The whole Bible, Old Testament and New, was read and consulted at every turn. His mind was richly stored with its contents. “He quoted Scripture with the readiness and alacrity of a lover quoting poetry,” was an editorial comment on one of his addresses at a great denominational Convention. The intimate fellowship with God that came to him through the study of the Bible did not fail to develop a remarkable prayer life, and an unquenchable desire to bring others to Christ.

In summing up the values of human existence, the inspired counsel of the Psalmist was: “Mark the end of that man.” Only from that vantage ground can things be seen in their right proportions. The completed life will tell whether or not it has been justifiable to say of any man that he was in a true sense, “God’s man.” It will also present a fair test as to whether, even apart from the question of eternal destiny, the ideal of surrender to God makes this life worth living. Three score years and ten seem but a flash when they are over. What made them count most to A.C.Dixon was that he could say with the Apostle Paul:

GOD, WHOSE I AM AND WHOM I SERVE.
CHAPTER I

THE HERITAGE OF A PIONEER PREACHER

The world into which Amzi Clarence Dixon entered on July 6th, 1854, was restless with transition and astir with the birth-throes of a new era. The introduction of machinery, the invention of the steam-engine, the dawn of electricity and of applied science were producing upheavals in the social and economic life of all countries, as well as in the international cross-currents of politics and commerce. Newer and swifter means of intercommunication and of transportation were constantly being discovered. Travel had received a great impetus, and movements which had hitherto been local, or at least national, were spreading abroad into world-wide affiliations.

Eighteen-fifty-four was the year of the Crimean War, when the sufferings of the allied French and English forces called forth the unique ministry of Florence Nightingale. Her pioneer service blazed the trail for the great era of feminist activity which spread over the world in A.C. Dixon's life-time and to which in the sphere of unselfish service he gave his chivalrous encouragement. Missionary zeal and philanthropic effort were burning at white heat in the hearts of men who were called to arouse their fellows to the world's crying needs. In England, Lord Shaftesbury was at the zenith of his tireless work for the neglected masses. George Müller was building his famous orphanages at Bristol. Dr. Barnardo was soon to follow with his marvelous work among the destitute boys and girls of London and other great cities.

Just before A.C. Dixon's birth, Hudson Taylor landed in Shanghai to lay the foundation of the China Inland Mission. Within a few months Griffith John became the pioneer of the London Missionary Society in the Yangtse Valley. Livingstone was opening up the unknown heart of Africa. Four years later John G. Paton landed in the New Hebrides.
In every part of Protestant Christendom mighty evangelical movements were springing up which were destined to sweep millions of souls into the Kingdom of God through the sixty years which lay between the birth of A.C.Dixon and the cataclysm of the great World War. Charles G.Finney had already shaken into new life the stolid and respectable churches of New England and the Middle West of America. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, though but a stripling of twenty years in 1854, was electrifying London with his preaching. About that time D.L.Moody was converted, and on leaving the Boston shoe-store where he had been working organized his first Sunday-School class of street arabs in Chicago. A.J.Gordon, A.T.Pierson and Henry Varley were then lads in their teens. William Booth, as an independent evangelist, was just beginning the street preaching from which the Salvation Army sprang. Francis E.Clark of the Christian Endeavor Movement, the evangelists R.A.Torrey and J.Wilbur Chapman, and Reuben Saillens of France, were about the same age as A.C.Dixon. The end of the nineteenth century was to be rich with the fruits of true spiritual revival.

During its early decades the new world of the west had been convulsed by tremendous currents of political and religious emotion. The demoralizing effects of the War of Independence, coupled with the far-reaching anti-Christian influences that followed the French Revolution and were wafted over the world, had borne fruitage in a wave of intemperance that swept over the Southern States of America. Even the great Christian denominations that had taken root there were permeated with this evil, the curbing of which was to become, in A.C.Dixon's life-time, not only a religious but a nationally political issue.

At the very beginning of the nineteenth century a great revival had swept its counterwaves over Tennessee, Kentucky and the Carolinas. It began through the refusal of a young licentiate to ask a blessing at a funeral where spirituous liquors were being freely offered with the provisions, and it spread like wildfire over the whole South and West. Thousands left their homes to attend camp meetings. Both the white and colored people were affected. The ecstasy of religious fervor knew no limit, and its manifestations were often singular and startling. Yet on the whole, in spite of objectionable exuberances, this great revival was distinctly salutary in its effects.
After the establishment of the Republic, the Church of England had ceased to be an organized political influence, and the Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Quakers and other Protestant groups transplanted from Europe, were interspersed over the States on a new basis of equality. All were cradled in an atmosphere of aggressive independence, children and grandchildren of those who had left their home-lands beyond the great ocean in order to escape religious persecution and political oppression.

They had carried their Bibles with them, and revered the Scriptures as the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice. The influence of the Bible upon the pioneer communities is reflected in the very names of the people, and also of their settlements and churches. Such in A.C.Dixon's native district of North Carolina were Antioch, Ephesus, Bethesda, Zion, New Bethel, Bethlehem, Capernaum and Corinth.

Towards the western end of the State, some two hundred and thirty miles from the Atlantic coast, lies the town of Shelby, the county seat of Cleveland County. Round about are rolling hills and fertile valleys dotted with farms. Fifty miles away to the west, like shadows on the distant horizon, hover the nearest ranges of the vast mountain region that divides North Carolina from eastern Tennessee.

Some twelve miles to the south-east of Shelby, and close to the boundary line between North and South Carolina, rise the steep and rugged slopes of King's Mountain, overshadowing the surrounding district with historic memories of Revolutionary days. Frederick Hambright, a great-grandfather of A.C.Dixon, had won distinction in the tremendous struggle that had culminated in the battle of King's Mountain. As a young boy, Frederick had been brought to America from Germany by his parents, and had migrated southwards from Pennsylvania to "the Piedmont section" of North Carolina, to which many of the German pioneers were attracted by the offer of good, cheap land, and the fertile soil of the Yadkin and Catawba rivers.

Those were days of danger and wild adventure, for the Cherokee Indians would often swoop down from their mountain fastnesses in the Blue Ridge and the Great Smokies in murderous attacks upon the pioneer settlements. Hambright had joined in one of the punitive campaigns against them, and when the War of Independence broke out he became a member of
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North Carolina's Provincial Council. After serving with the Revolutionary troops on the frontier and rising to the rank of Colonel, he returned to assist Colonel Isaac Shelby, after whom the town of Shelby was named, in gathering large companies of white mountaineers to resist Cornwallis, the famous British general. Major Ferguson, leader of Cornwallis' left wing, had posted his thousand men on the commanding, spoon-shaped top of King's Mountain, boasting that he was "king of the mountain" and that "all the rebels out of hell could not drive him from it." But his mountaineer foes were expert huntsmen, familiar with forest lore and with Indian methods of fighting. Before dawn on October 7th, 1780, they surrounded the mountain, toiled silently up its rugged sides, and took Ferguson completely by surprise, capturing the survivors of the attack with all arms and supplies. This smashing victory forced Cornwallis to leave North Carolina, and turned the tide of war in the South.

Hambright was wounded in the battle, but lived to a good old age in his home near King's Mountain. Soon after his death, his youngest daughter, Suzannah, was married to David Dixon, a prosperous young farmer of the locality. David's forebears had migrated to America from the North of Ireland, whither they had been driven from their Scottish homes by the Covenanters' persecutions. Suzannah's mother had been a Virginian of Huguenot extraction. It was to be expected that such a mingling of strains in the blood of succeeding generations would produce a concentrated essence of democratic independence.

Thomas Dixon, the eldest son of David and Suzannah, was an outstanding example of it. Loss of the family fortune, and the premature death of his father, robbed Thomas of the educational advantages which his soul craved. But it developed his originality, and his dependence upon the Scriptures.

Converted in early boyhood, Thomas soon shewed an aptitude for preaching the Gospel. Although his schooling had been curtailed, his intimacy with the Bible and its noble phraseology gave him a command of easy and fluent language that astonished his hearers. While working strenuously on the farm to support his mother and three younger children, the impulse to preach burned more and more brightly in his soul, and he gave all of his spare time to the task.

In the Baptist community to which he belonged, the isolated
country churches were bound together by Associations which, while exercising no authority over them, acted as advising Councils on questions of doubtful procedure. Each church was entirely independent and democratic, the minister having no more voice in its government than his fellow-members. Thomas Dixon was a member of the Antioch church in the King's Mountain district, just across the border of South Carolina. The good brethren of the church, recognizing his gift, urged that the young preacher be licensed. To their surprise he at first refused, since he could not find chapter and verse in the Bible authorizing such a procedure. Yet he evidently learned to value the endorsement of the church, for a year or two later he appeared at an Association Meeting as a "licentiate" from Antioch church.

The people soon discovered that there was among them a young evangelist with a soul on fire for God and a passion for the truth of God's Word. Whenever it was announced that young Dixon was to preach a crowd would gather, and while he preached sinners would frequently sob aloud and cry to God for mercy. When he was twenty-three years old he was ordained and became the pastor of a little struggling church in the woods near Catawba Creek. Frequent calls to camp meetings and other preaching engagements soon drew him to a larger field.

Among the many homes to which the young pioneer pastor was hospitably welcomed was that of Abner McAfee, a prosperous planter of York County, South Carolina. In addition to his farm lands, Abner McAfee was the owner of many slaves, and to these simple folk, dependent upon them for everything, both he and his family were bound by ties of affection peculiar to conditions of ownership.

Young Elder Thomas Dixon was a prime favorite with the children of the McAfee household—three charming girls, Emily Jane, Amelia Elizabeth and Amanda Elvira, with their young brothers, LeRoy and Abner Amzi.

Girls of the sunny South are apt to mature early, and in her

1 An Association could decide which churches should be admitted into its federation, and could withdraw from fellowship with any church that might persist in holding corrupt principles or indulging in wrong practices. All the churches were urged to unite with an Association. "Should they stand off, it would argue much self-sufficiency and little or no desire after the unity of the Spirit and mutual edification."
teens Amanda had already developed into a tall, handsome young woman, much overgrown for her age, and brimming over with the spirit of romance which distinguished the old South in its glamorous ante-bellum days. Perhaps the very disparity of age and of disposition attracted her to Thomas, and he on his part fell deeply in love with Amanda. He was at this time pastor of four churches, two on each side of the State border-line. Such devotion to his calling involved self-sacrifice, for preaching was largely a voluntary service, and the ministerial salaries paid by the churches were almost negligible. The records of Sandy Run report that, as late as 1881, the annual contributions to missions and the pastor's salary amounted to nineteen dollars! The preacher must needs support himself and his family by other means. Thrift and hard work had brought its reward to Thomas Dixon, and he was able to provide a fitting home for his future bride. At a corner of the spacious Central Square of Shelby, on the south side, stood a large frame house. This he purchased, with the adjoining general store, which was to be the means of financing what he considered the real work of his life.

Amanda was over young to enter into the responsibilities of married life, but she was initiated into the mysteries of housekeeping by the loving assistance of her mother's sister, Letitia Ferguson, who lived in the big frame house with Thomas and herself for some years at the beginning of their life together. At first Amanda proudly accompanied her husband to all of his preaching appointments, and listened with admiring attention, although, as her children afterwards heard their father say, she heard some of his sermons so often that she knew them by heart.

At one of the camp meetings he attended, Thomas was deeply impressed by the preaching of J. Alonzo Webb, a peripatetic evangelist who called himself "The Wandering Pilgrim." Webb was an Englishman and had come south from Canada. He was a forceful speaker and a man of considerable learning, his study of New Testament Greek having so changed his views on the subject of baptism that he had become a Baptist minister.

Thomas Dixon, as he listened, felt more keenly than ever before his own lack of a college training. If matters of such moment hung on the correct understanding of one Greek verb, how
important was the study of New Testament Greek! Then and there he determined that if God should ever give him children, their education should be his first consideration.

He immediately invited "The Pilgrim" to preach in the churches of which he was pastor. Unfortunately Webb gave way to such harsh denunciation of those who differed from him on the subject of baptism that all other pulpits in the Association were closed to him. But as his arguments were based on Scripture Thomas Dixon stood by him, though he begged him to quit his condemnation of others.

One of Thomas Dixon's charges was the old "Mother Church" at Buffalo, on a hill just south of the State border-line, overlooking peaceful valleys and rich farming country. It was the oldest Baptist church in the entire section, dating back seventy-five years to Revolutionary days. Directly, or indirectly, practically all of the other Baptist churches in the neighborhood had sprung from it. For more than forty years Thomas Dixon served it as pastor, and of all his churches there was only one other that rivaled Buffalo in his affections and in length of service. That was New Prospect, where he preached for fifty-five years.

The story of the constitution of New Prospect illustrates the way in which many of these churches came into being. About eight miles to the north-east of Shelby, near Buffalo Creek, was a hill thickly wooded with oak and hickory. Here the farmers of the locality had established their cemetery, and had built a log house in which to hold funeral services. A prominent member of the community died, and it was evident that the little log house could not hold the people who would attend the funeral. Roughly hewn boards were hurried from a neighboring saw-mill, and benches were made and placed in the grove. To give better protection from the blazing sun, the benches were flanked by rows of forked posts about seven feet high, cross-poles being laid in the forks to form a roof. This frame-work was covered with boughs of trees in full leaf, making a "bush-arbor" which provided cool, refreshing shade. Almost everyone in the community attended the funeral. Thomas Dixon was the preacher, and the people were much moved by his sermon. Sensing the impression made, he announced a service for the following day. The meeting was "protracted" for two weeks, at the end of
which there were more than forty converts. These were bap-
tized in the near-by stream and were included in a charter mem-
bership of eighty-five persons who organized the new church.

A similar process was followed in many other localities. A
meeting would first be called in a home, or a school-house. Then
the bush-arbor would be erected, followed by the organization
of a church and the election of the evangelist as pastor. Thomas
Dixon would usually shoulder the responsibility until he had
raised sufficient money to erect a plain country meeting-house.
Then he would press for the election of another pastor and
would pass on to a new and needier field. When his life-work was
complete he had organized some twenty Baptist churches and led
in the building of as many church-houses, baptizing not less than
six thousand converts.

Two months before the founding of New Prospect an event
that was to have a far-reaching influence on the Christian world
through the coming years took place in the young Baptist
preacher’s home. To Thomas Dixon and his nineteen-year-old
wife was born a son, whom they named Amzi Clarence. Amzi
was the name of Amanda’s younger brother. “Clarence” was
added because she had fallen in love with its romantic sound in
the English novels which she devoured with eager delight to
the sorrowful but unavailing disapproval of her husband.

The names were well chosen after all, for transparent sin-
cerity was to be perhaps the chief characteristic of the life thus
ushered into the world, and A.C.Dixon was to prove himself,
through half a century of Gospel ministry, a Levite indeed—
Amzi,\(^1\) “the Strong,” a priest before God.

\(^{1}\) I Chron. vi, 46.
CHAPTER II
A BOY'S ADVENTURES IN CIVIL WAR DAYS

The heat of midsummer was blazing down upon the Central Square of Shelby on that July day of A.C. Dixon's birth in 1854. Clear sunshine and sharp shadows brought into bold relief the graceful lines of the old Court-house in the middle of the Square. Its plain brick body was flanked on each side by a wide flight of steps, its roof supported by tall pillars in the Colonial style. On the surrounding greensward, in the grateful shelter of a large shade-tree, stood a group of men in their shirt-sleeves, watching the unusual stir of coming and going at the big frame house on the corner. When the young preacher himself emerged, and came towards them, he was greeted with outstretched hands and hearty congratulations.

There was double rejoicing in the Dixon circle over the birth of this babe, for about a year earlier his young mother's arms had been emptied of their treasure. Amanda's first-born, named LeRoy McAfee, after the elder of her brothers, had gladdened the home for only five brief months. Now the subdued quiet of the old house was soon broken by the prattle of a little child. Clarence, as he grew into a bonny, black-eyed, merry little fellow, was the light of his parents' eyes. He was devoted to his "Aunt Titia", and also to his grandparents, who were now living in Shelby in the roomy old McAfee homestead, a few blocks from the Court-house Square.

When Clarence had just passed his third birthday a little sister, Eliza Jane, was born, but before two years had gone by she was fatally stricken with diphtheria. A passion of affection had been poured out upon this small playmate, and her death was the boy's first great grief.

"There is in my memory a scene of the past when I walked into the parlor of the old home at Shelby, and saw the little white casket and the little white face in it—the sister with whom I had romped and played.
I could not understand what death meant. Mother said she was gone, yet she seemed to be there. Mother said we should see her again, and I could not tell how."

Standing at the grave-side, Clarence heard his father say to the sorrowing mother: "Well, dear, we shall see her when we go Home." Through life he remembered how eagerly he had run ahead, expecting to find his baby sister when he reached the house. Bitter disappointment overwhelmed him when the explanation was given, but an impression was made for all time on his childish heart that Heaven was "Home" in the truest sense.

He was now old enough to begin attending school with forty or fifty other small children. His teacher, Mrs. Marks, was a remarkable and consecrated Christian woman whose chief purpose was to influence her pupils for God. Every day she opened her school with Bible-reading and prayer. Having some private means, her fee was but a dollar a month, and that only if the parents were comfortably able to pay.

Clarence's uncles, LeRoy and Abner Amzi McAfee, figured largely in his early life. They were students for several years at the State University at Chapel Hill, some two hundred miles east of Shelby. The journey was still quite an undertaking, although a new railroad had just been built to connect Charlotte with Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina, leaving a long stretch of road at either end.

As a freshman, "Uncle Lee" was a gay, careless fellow, but in his junior year at college he began to turn to spiritual things. Some of his letters have been preserved in the family archives. In one of them he writes to his mother about a fancy-dress ball that is taking place in Shelby that night, and rejoices that he is not at home, lest he should be tempted to attend it. "When I come home next vacation, I shall spend my time differently... I must begin to look to my existence after this life..." Telling of his room-mate, he adds: "After finishing our studies for the night, we both invariably take our Testaments, and each reads aloud a chapter while the other listens. Having finished, we go to bed at ten o'clock and rise the next morning at five." He closes, not only by sending his love to his three sisters, Emily, "Permelia" and Amanda, but "my respects to all the colored people of the family."
When LeRoy graduated in 1859, James Buchanan, the President of the United States, attended the Commencement exercises at Chapel Hill. LeRoy, who was a particularly brilliant scholar, received the highest honors in a class of sixty-nine graduates.

The small boy in the Dixon home at Shelby eagerly drank in the news of “Uncle Lee’s” prowess at the University as his father and mother discussed it across the dinner table. He paid less attention to the conversation of his elders concerning the movements then stirring the religious world, in which he was so soon to take his part.

They talked much and earnestly of the revival sweeping over the business circles of America. A spirit of speculation and of wasteful, extravagant living had followed in the wake of the unprecedented material development of the country. In addition to the cotton boom, this had been due partly to the rapid settlement of the new West with its rich resources, partly to the discovery of precious metals in the territory acquired from Mexico, and also to the immense immigration from Europe. Men had run wild in the pursuit of wealth, and a great commercial upheaval had resulted. But financial embarrassment, bankruptcy and want had proved blessings in disguise, for they drove the people to the remembrance of God.

A noon-day prayer-meeting held daily in the old Dutch Reformed Church at Fulton Street, New York, attracted many disheartened business men, and helped them to face life with a new courage. The example spread, until there were few cities of importance in the United States in which the “Business Men’s Daily Prayer Meeting” was not a flourishing institution.

Many outstanding leaders in the business world sought God’s guidance in their commercial affairs and devoted their wealth to the service of Christ. Some of them were to become friends of Clarence Dixon in later days, but as yet he was too young to understand much about matters such as these of which he heard his father talk.

How often the Spirit of God moves upon the souls of men before the outbreak of a great crisis! Such a crisis was now impending in America, fraught with ruin and agony, especially for the South.

Through forty years the great religious bodies had been
shaken by the deepening bitterness of a controversy which threatened the peace of the nation. With the steady growth in the churches of interest in foreign missionary enterprise, a repercussion had been brought to bear on the question of slavery.

The subject bristled with complications, and rifts began to widen between groups of Christian people from different sections of the country. Those of the Northern States had no personal problems to face in the matter, since there were few colored people in their midst. It was difficult for them to comprehend the conditions in which Christian slave-owners in the South were involved. There the matter could not be treated as an abstract theory. The sudden emancipation of a colored race, which, in North Carolina for instance, formed a third of the population and in many localities outnumbered the whites, presented possibilities of grim danger.

The only safe path, and one which the South had long been trying to find, lay in some gradual method of emancipation. Introduction of negroes from abroad had already been prohibited by Federal statute, although an illegal and highly lucrative traffic in "black ivory" was still being carried on by the shipmasters of Salem and other New England ports. The action of the Quakers in freeing their slaves by simply releasing ownership had formed an example which was followed by many others. But the right attitude to be taken towards the growing numbers of freedmen was a problem hard to solve.

The invention of the cotton-gin in 1793 had given a regrettable check to the drift away from slavery, for it caused such a turn in the industrial tide that slave labor soon became actually remunerative. The possibilities of cotton culture had then been realized for the first time. In 1794 exportation had begun, and the South became the supply center of raw material for the cotton clothing needed by the world.

Swept by strong religious emotions, the Northern States called loudly from time to time for an immediate ending of the institution of slavery. Many Christian slave-owners in the South desired it just as earnestly, but felt that it must be accomplished by some process which would not involve destruction of the whole social fabric. It was practically impossible for either the North or the South to grasp each other's mental attitude towards this question.
All the religious bodies of America were affected. Slavery and anti-slavery men began to draw off on different sides. The Baptists of the North and of the South realized that their missionary work must be carried on under separate organizations. In May, 1845, nine years before A.C. Dixon’s birth, the division took place, and delegates from the Southern States met in Augusta, Georgia, to form the Southern Baptist Convention.

By 1859 the slavery question had come to the fore in every matter affecting politics. The Abolitionist party of the North had been growing stronger every year, and kept the nation stirred to its depths by zealous propaganda. Many Southerners, feeling that the Constitution was being violated by interference with State rights, had begun to declare the need of withdrawal from the Union.

The astounding popularity of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s romance, “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” which had been published two years before A.C. Dixon was born, had aroused a smoldering anger in the South. Written undoubtedly with the purest of motives, and containing incidents based on fact and massed together in a single story, it nevertheless presented an extremely prejudiced picture of the South as a whole. There was small likelihood of that picture, indelibly stamped on the imagination of the world, being replaced by a truer one, for in addition to the thirty-five editions in English, the story was eventually translated into nineteen other languages, to be read by hundreds of thousands who would never see the South for themselves.

To be held up thus to world-wide execration paralyzed the South’s own efforts to deal with its knotty problem, and stiffened its determination to resist dictation from the outside. The bitter misunderstanding between North and South was immeasurably deepened.

John Brown’s seizure of the U.S. arsenal at Harper’s Ferry on the Virginia side of the Potomac River lighted the fuse which led to the explosion of war. His scheme to arm the negroes for a wholesale massacre of their white masters was appalling in its potentialities. It was frustrated, not only by the capture of John Brown, but by the entire lack of response to his call on the part of the negroes themselves.

The passion of resentment aroused in the South by this incident obscured the deeper moral issues of the slavery question, and
when Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States, North Carolina shared the general alarm of the South, fearing lest the Republican party should take Federal action against State rights.

Shelby, like every other Southern town, was aflush with excitement. Clarence Dixon, the Baptist preacher's son, now a tall, slender boy of six, listened eagerly as boys will to the grave talk of the men in his father's house and store, or as they stood in knots about the Court-house Square in heated discussion. Shortly after Lincoln's election, news came that South Carolina had seceded from the Union.

Christmas of 1860 passed. Then they heard that Mississippi had withdrawn, followed in rapid succession by Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. Rumors that a Confederate Government had been formed at Montgomery, Alabama, by the seven seceding States proved correct, also that Jefferson Davis had been elected President of the Confederacy. Their own State still hung in the balance. So anxious were the voters of North Carolina to remain loyal to the Union that they even defeated a call for a special Convention to consider secession.

During this time of ferment, before the actual outbreak of war, Thomas Dixon suddenly decided to migrate westwards to Little Rock, in the Territory of Arkansas. The first great highroad over the mountains into Tennessee, a triumph of engineering skill, had been completed nearly seventy years before, linking the lowlands of the South with the fertile plains of the new West. For more than thirty years an extension of the road across the swamps of the Mississippi had opened up direct communication between Memphis and Little Rock.

Young Clarence was busy from morning to night, helping his mother with her preparations for the long journey. Sometimes his eyes would glisten with anticipation, as he sat, inwardly impatient but outwardly quiet, rocking the old-fashioned cradle in which lay his baby brother, eight months old. It was quite a cavalcade that set out from Shelby, for the Dixons took with them thirty-two faithful slaves, among them "Aunt Barb," the children's devoted nurse. Clarence often spoke in later days of his old negro Mammy.

"She was black as to body, but white as an angel in soul. She taught us to pray and to sing Gospel hymns. Our mother had such confidence in
Aunt Barb’s piety that she gave us over largely to her teaching. I learned many a lesson of trust from the pious negroes as they lived and died in their simple, child-like faith.”

The household goods and provisions were piled into covered wagons, in one of which the mother and baby were ensconced. Clarence proudly rode upon a little white pony beside his father’s big horse. It may well have been the embarrassment of owning so many slaves, whom they had recently inherited from Amanda’s father, that had urged a decision to seek a home where land would be cheap, and where the agitation over slavery might be less acute.

To have turned the poor creatures adrift with an undesired and unprotected freedom in such unsettled times would have been cruelty indeed.

“The most pitiable object in all that country,” A.C. Dixon wrote in a retrospect of those boyhood days, “was a freed slave thrown upon the country without any protection. Benevolent men were slow to free their slaves unless they could get an assurance from somebody that they would be protected and supported. My father did not know what to do with his except to keep and support them.”

The strain of parting from their loved ones was keenly felt by Amanda, but it was with a brave spirit that she accompanied her husband upon the great adventure. Past Asheville they went, following the beautiful French Broad River as far as Hot Springs, then over the mountains into Tennessee, traversing the State from one end to the other. Passing through Memphis and the swamp country, they came at last to the shore of the great Mississippi River, which was crossed by means of an Indian ferry boat. Many an exciting adventure met them as they pushed their way through the dense primeval forests. Clarence became well versed in hunting lore as he accompanied his father and the slaves with their guns to procure the necessary food for the camp. At last Little Rock was reached, and they were settled into their primitive Western home by the time Abraham Lincoln became President.

It was then but a question of a few short weeks before the seething trouble came to a head. In his inaugural address, Lincoln declared that as chief magistrate of the nation, he had
no other course than to "hold, occupy and possess the property and places belonging to the Government, and to collect the [Federal] duties and imposts." To the South these words were a declaration of war, for it was only by force that the President could hold the Southern forts and collect duties from the seceded States.

On April 12th, 1861, South Carolina troops fired on Fort Sumter, which surrendered to them. President Lincoln at once called for seventy-five thousand troops and was overwhelmed by the ready response. President Davis issued a counter-call, determined to resist invasion. Governor Ellis of North Carolina was immediately notified that his State must furnish two regiments for making war on her sister States which had seceded. The Governor's categorical refusal brought North Carolina to the point of decision. Virginia had already withdrawn from the Union and was raising troops in feverish haste. On May 27th the die was cast, and North Carolina also became a member of the Southern Confederacy. The first battle was fought at Bethel, Virginia, on June 10th, to be followed on July 21st by a great Southern victory at Manassas.

Tidings of what was happening soon penetrated west and south. Clarence's uncle, LeRoy McAfee, had gone to Texas and was practising there as a lawyer. His letters contained glowing accounts of the opportunities open to young men, and of the thousands of acres of splendid land for cattle-raising that could be bought for thirty cents an acre. "Texas is my future home" he had written, but the war changed his plans. He went to Shelby, joining the Southern army as a private. Later, he organized a regiment from his home town, and became its Colonel, passing through all the vicissitudes of the war in safety.

Meanwhile sorrow had come into the far-away home in Arkansas. The baby boy, who had been named LeRoy like the first child, sickened and died within a few months of the arrival at Little Rock, and was buried on top of a high hill near the settlement. Once again Clarence became the sole comfort of his parents, the only one left of four children.

On one side of their Western home stretched the open country. The other was densely covered with virgin forest. Many a time Clarence, with other boys, explored the mysterious depths of the woods, looking for berries or birds or hunting
Amzi Clarence Dixon, aged 5
1859

Thomas Dixon, aged 50
1870

Amanda Dixon, aged 35
1870
The Allen Place near Shelby, North Carolina

A.C. Dixon, aged 14
A BOY'S ADVENTURES IN CIVIL WAR DAYS

wild game. One day, when they had wandered far from home, they were startled by a blood-curdling screech. Fifty yards in front of them, lying in the fork of a great sycamore tree, some fifteen feet from the ground, they saw a huge panther.

"I can remember the glare of his eyes looking down upon us, after that terrible scream. What do you think we did, boys? I tell you—we ran! I was made for running and was ahead of the rest when we reached home. Why did we run in that direction? Because we knew that at home it would be perfectly safe. If we could just get inside the door, there would be no more danger from the panther."

"I remember going hunting after night-fall with some colored men and neighborhood playmates, when in the dark forest our light went out. We trembled with fear. Which way was home I did not know, and how to find the way through the pathless forest was more than I could tell. One of the colored men said: 'Don't be frightened, boys. I know these woods,—follow me!' And we followed his dark form and the sound of his steps until he led us home."

Such boyhood experiences as these provided plentiful illustrations for sermons in later years.

For a while the little settlement in Arkansas seemed far removed from the actualities of war, and the current of news was slow and intermittent in reaching it. Yet the bitter strife between North and South was continuing without abatement. General Robert E. Lee had been appointed commander-in-chief of the Confederate army by President Davis, but the early victories of the South proved costly, and there were neither the men nor the means to push their advantage against the overwhelming odds. The tragic death of "Stonewall" Jackson was a loss beyond repair, and the tremendous struggle at Gettysburg in June, 1863, resulted in the defeat of Lee's heroic army. It was the beginning of the end, although the end was not yet.

Away in Arkansas, the settlers began to realize the danger of their isolated position when they learned that Northern armies under General Grant had gained control of Tennessee and of the Mississippi River, and that Sherman had been placed in command of all the troops in Memphis. Then came word that General Steele had been appointed to the command of the Department of Arkansas, and had been ordered to take up his quarters in Little Rock.
A ROMANCE OF PREACHING

It was clearly impossible for the Dixons to remain there with their slaves, yet how could they find their way back to Shelby, and evade the Northern troops? A fresh expectation of motherhood added to Amanda’s difficulties and perhaps hastened the decision to return to North Carolina. Only the courage of desperation could have given her the determination to set out upon such a journey at such a time. Surrounded by their company of colored servants, their goods packed once more into covered wagons, Thomas and Amanda started on their homeward trail with their nine-year-old son.

One of the lights shining in the darkness that had overwhelmed the South was the remarkable faithfulness of the negroes to their white masters and their families. State after State would have practically faced starvation during the terrible war years when most of the bread-winners were away fighting, if the slaves on the home plantations had not loyally tilled the fields so that seed-time and harvest should not fail. While in Arkansas, Thomas Dixon had been offered large sums of money for his negroes, as much as two thousand dollars in gold apiece, but the bond of affection that bound him to them led him to refuse every kind of offer. He reaped his reward in their devotion to himself and his wife and son.

The band of refugees made their way towards the Mississippi River, hoping to find the Indian ferry-boat by which they had crossed when outward bound. But now the river was in the hands of the Union soldiers, and the little company with their wagons did not dare to travel by the frequented road. For nine miles they had to cut their way through thick cane-brake, clearing a rough track over which the wagons could pass. When at last they reached the river, there was no visible trace either of Indians or ferry-boat. Thomas Dixon saw that he must go in quest of them. He left the encampment in charge of his wife, telling Clarence that he must be a brave man and must protect his mother and the rest of the company.

Nightfall came, but the father did not appear, and the following day they listened in vain for his returning footsteps. By the third day the waiting group began to be anxious, knowing the dangers which surrounded them—wild beasts of the forest, lurking Indians, and opposing armies locked in the bitter strife of civil war. Supplies too began to run short, and after four days
of anxious waiting, Amanda began to fear that her husband had been killed. To stay long in their present position was out of the question, and the river formed an impassable barrier to further progress.

Nothing remained but to retrace their weary way through the monotonous tangle of canebrake and to search for a place of comparative safety. Giving up in despair they took a last look up and down the river before striking camp. Just then they saw something moving towards them along the bank of the broad Mississippi. It grew into the outlines of a boat, and the reassuring tones of Thomas Dixon's voice soon banished doubt and fear. He had wandered far before finding the Indians, but now the river was soon safely crossed without detection, and the first obstacle overcome.

The route across Tennessee was closed to them. Even Memphis must be avoided. Wending their way to the south-east, the wagons and horses traveled slowly across Georgia. Thence a north-easterly course brought them to Columbia in South Carolina. Turning now sharply to the north, they completed the last stretch to Shelby, by way of Yorkville. The journey had covered between eight and nine hundred miles and had taken three and a half months to accomplish. It was September when they reached Shelby, weary but safe and sound.

Thomas Dixon's first act was to secure a home, for Amanda needed quiet and protection after the ordeals through which she had passed. About nine miles out of Shelby, on the way towards Marion, was a substantial log house, known as the "Allen Place," which he purchased. It was built on a crest of rising ground, and was surrounded by a grove of magnificent hickory trees which provided thick, cool shade for the hot summer days. Four months after their return from Arkansas, on January 11th, 1864, Clarence became once more the delighted possessor of a baby brother who was named Thomas after their father. In spite of all the changes that had taken place, the latter resumed his work as pastor of the churches at Buffalo and New Prospect as though he had never left them.

The joy of reunion with family and friends was tempered by the serious events of the war, still raging fiercely, although the country-side around Shelby did not suffer devastation. General Grant had been put in chief command of the Federal Army,
which was well supplied with food, clothes, and ammunition, while the Confederate soldiers were ragged, poorly fed, and constantly short of ammunition. Yet with indomitable spirit they jested at their woes, and were proud to be counted among "Lee’s Miserables."

Meanwhile the Confederate armies in the West were being cut to pieces by Sherman. In the midst of all the horror, Christian workers from the North were busy administering comfort to the souls and bodies of the men under arms. D.L. Moody, as a young man of twenty-four, had volunteered as a Chaplain under the Christian Commission. At Cleveland, Tennessee, he acted as Chaplain in the Fourth Army Corps under General O.O. Howard. At a patriotic rally in Chicago, Moody became acquainted with Lieut. (afterwards Major) D.W. Whittle, a youth five years younger than himself whose clear testimony as a Christian won his heart. The friendship between General Howard and Moody and Whittle became staunch and lifelong, and all three were afterwards to become the intimate friends of Clarence Dixon. On Christmas Eve of 1864, Moody organized the Chicago Avenue Church. How surprised the Southern lad at the "Allen Place" would have been, had he known that one day he would become its pastor.

The war dragged on, and poverty and want greatly increased in the Southern States. Money was losing its value, and prices were soaring. Many a home was feeling the pinch of famine. Flour was selling at five hundred dollars a barrel in Confederate money, sugar at thirty dollars a pound, coffee at forty dollars a pound, and sweet potatoes at thirty dollars a bushel. Many of the soldiers in the Southern armies became so distressed by the news from their starving families that desertions began to thin the ranks. Few homes were not mourning their dead. The Confederacy was clearly doomed. Opposition to the continuance of the war began to increase, and "Loyal Leagues" were formed among the anti-war Southerners.

By the Spring of 1865, the conflict was struggling to its close. General Lee, caught between the overwhelming forces of Grant and Sherman, was forced to retreat, and on April 9th surrendered to Grant at Appomattox.

Five days later the whole nation was shocked by the news that the President had been assassinated. Had Abraham Lincoln
lived, the story of the following distressful years would have been a different one. Vice-President Andrew Johnson became President, and although a North Carolinian by birth, he was powerless to prevent the harsh severity with which the South was treated.

The Southern highroads were soon crowded with stragglers from the defeated armies. The "Allen Place" near Shelby was on the main highway from Virginia to the South, and the home-going soldiers passed by in droves. Thomas and Amanda Dixon had thriftily managed to lay by a supply of stores which they were ready to share. Their whole household set itself to the task of doing everything within its power to supply food and refreshment to the weary, broken men on their way to homes which in many cases had been swept bare of all their former comforts. Not infrequently hundreds of poor fellows, ragged and battle-scarred, often with a leg or an arm missing, would be welcomed in a single day to such entertainment as the "Allen Place" could afford.

It was a time of constant excitement and of endless toil for young Clarence, who was eleven years old that summer. "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," and the experiences which had been crowded into the narrow compass of a few boyhood years could not fail to make a lasting impress upon the mind and character that was being forged.
CHAPTER III
THE CHANGING SOUTH PREPARES A WARRIOR

The Dixon family did not stay long at the "Allen Place," for it was far from a school-house, and farming soon became a problem. While the war lasted, their slaves remained with them, planting and working the farm crops. But the period of Reconstruction, by which the Southern States were once more to be settled into the Union, began in May, 1865, bringing with it chaotic conditions, including complete disorganization of labor.

All the machinery for State government had been scrapped. Governor Vance of North Carolina had been arrested and imprisoned, a Northern Army officer being placed in temporary control, to restore order as best he could.

Later in the year, a Convention of the people was called to frame a new constitution which should entitle the State to re-enter the Union. It was composed chiefly of anti-war Republicans, and an ordinance was passed declaring that North Carolina had never been lawfully out of the Union. The Convention voted for repudiation of the State's Confederate debt, refusing to make good either to banks or individuals. As a result every bank in North Carolina was closed and widespread economic confusion followed.

A State election took place, and one of the first acts of the new Legislature was a vote in favor of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which forbade slave-ownership forever.

With sorrowful reluctance the Dixons were forced to part with practically all of their negroes, for the payment of wages was impossible. "Aunt Barb" remained with them, however, until her death a few years later. The freeing of the slaves made a deep impression on young Clarence.

"I shall never forget the day when father called the slaves about him,
and with the Emancipation Proclamation of Abraham Lincoln in his hand, read it, and told them they were free; they could now go where they pleased. There was no hilarity; they smiled, but they did not shout. There was a sense of newness and responsibility that bewildered them.

"The fact is, they were fed and clothed just as well as I was. I think I got more thrashings than the slave boys, because when I got them into trouble I was responsible, and father settled it with me before he settled it with any of them!

"My mother was the one who was liberated most. Many a time I have heard her footfall after midnight, looking after the sick children. She sometimes had five or six on her hands at a time, watching them as well as she did her own.

"It was a pathetic occasion when father told the slaves they were free. But the most pathetic part was nearly a year afterwards when they sent a committee to beg father to take them back on to the plantation on the old terms, and look after them as he had done before. They had found their freedom a burden. As slaves they had been like children; father had done the thinking and the planning for them. They were so weak and helpless that they wanted to come back and let him do it again. But he could not; he might have been arrested and put in jail if he had. So he encouraged them the best he could to be independent and make themselves a place in society."

No other course was open to the enfranchised slaves than to join the thousands who were flocking to Charlotte, Raleigh, and other large centers to receive the support doled out by the Federal Government, a situation which the English people, with their own World-War legacy of "the dole," can now better appreciate. Little wonder that the younger negroes soon became completely demoralized and could hardly be tempted to work, even by the offer of good wages.

About this time Thomas Dixon found an opportunity of re-purchasing his old home on the Court-house Square, with the adjoining store. He sold the "Allen Place" and moved back to town with his wife and Clarence and baby Tom.

"Father loved a trade better than any other form of amusement," wrote one of his daughters, years later. "He would swap a jack-knife, a mule, a horse, a farm or a house, at the wink of an eye. When he left home in his buggy with a big, pretty bay mare, he was liable to return next day driving a skinny gray mule, so 'poor' it could hardly stand, and the third day with a black, prancing colt that had never been driven before."
Shortly after taking up their abode in Shelby, another little son, two years younger than Tom, was added to the family circle and was named Franklin.

Clarence was developing into a capable, self-reliant boy, long and lean of limb, rich in mental qualities, industrious and versatile. He was old enough to render practical help to his father, and was soon able to drive back and forth to the nearest railroad station at Cherryville, hauling supplies for the store. He became a pupil at the Shelby Academy, entering with zest into all the activities of country school life. Owing to the disruption of society caused by the war, some of the full-grown men who had missed years of opportunity, attended school again with the boys and girls. It was a training ground for character as well as an educational center and had a strong religious bias. On Christmas Day the students of the Shelby Academy, old and young, would march in procession around the town carrying a flag and singing hymns.

Clarence gave plentiful evidence of the independent spirit which was his heritage. On one occasion a holiday had been promised for gathering the sweet wild strawberries which abounded in their season. One of the adult scholars preferred his studies to a “strawberry-hunt” and persuaded the principal to cancel the holiday. This was felt to be a serious breach of faith, and Clarence was one of the ringleaders who led the rebels out to the strawberry-hunt with a clear conscience. As a further protest, he, with a group of older boys, actually refused to return for the closing days of the school term, and apparently this action met with his father’s approval. He was a favorite among the younger children. Sixty years afterwards one of them told of her gratitude as a small girl, when after refusing to let her copy his sums, he took time and trouble to help her patiently with her arithmetic. “He had the brightest, keenest, most penetrating eyes I ever saw,” she said.

Even the merry days of school life were overshadowed by the serious race troubles now convulsing the South. A Freedmen’s Bureau had been established to take charge of the four million negroes suddenly thrown on to their own resources, and many millions of dollars were spent by the Bureau for hospitals, food, clothing and schools. In spite of this, confusion reigned.
The young negroes, unwiseley maintained in idleness, became an easy prey for the low type of Northern agitator, nicknamed "carpet-baggers" in the South because they were supposed to own nothing except the contents of the carpet-bags they carried with them. Joined by a few "scallawags," as Southern whites of the same type were called, these men taught the negroes to hate and distrust their former masters. They soon gained control of the "Loyal Leagues," but when membership in the Leagues was thrown open to negroes the Southern whites withdrew.

In April, 1866, Congress passed the Civil Rights Bill, which placed the negroes in a position of equality with the whites, admitting them to all public places. To strengthen the Bill, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution was passed, removing any bar to citizenship on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." This gave the vote to every adult male negro. A special section of the Amendment declared that no Confederate could hold office if he had ever taken an oath to support the Federal Constitution. Numbers of able and experienced men were thus excluded from official service just when they were most needed.

There is a story of an occasion on which three ex-Governors of North Carolina, a former Justice of the Supreme Court, several ex-Congressmen and a number of other distinguished men were dining together. Yet the only person present who could vote or hold office was the negro who waited on them!

All of the Southern States except Tennessee refused to vote for the Fourteenth Amendment, but the votes of the Northern States were sufficient to make it Federal law. The recalcitrant States were severely punished. Their very names were dropped in official papers. Their governments were again overthrown. The South was divided into military districts under generals of the Union Army until each State could once more call a Convention to frame a constitution pleasing to Congress.

The overwhelming troubles caused by the war seemed to increase rather than diminish. Anxious hearts turned to God for comfort, and revivals broke out in many places without much human leadership. The Spring of 1866 saw a remarkable revival in Old Buffalo church. One day Thomas Dixon called Clarence over to him.

"Son," he said, "it is time for you to be thinking about your
soul. I want you to go down to Old Buffalo Church with me next week."

"But I am going to school."

"No matter, I want you to go with me anyhow."

To miss two weeks of school was no hardship, and Clarence afterwards confessed that he was more pleased on that account than because he was to attend the revival meetings, although he had been seriously troubled at times about his sins.

"As we rode together in the buggy along the country highroad, father talked to me about sin and God and heaven and hell and salvation, until I realized that it was an awful thing to be a sinner, and a glorious thing to be saved from sin through Jesus Christ.

"One remark of his gripped my heart, and has done more to mold my life than any other word he ever spoke. 'Son,' he said in the quiet of the woods, with only the gentle footfall of the horse on the smooth road breaking the silence, 'I would like you to know that, whatever you may be, if you will be a Christian you will please me.' In my boyish heart I resolved that I would try and be a good Christian, if only to please him.

"We went on to the little church, and father began to preach. The great Civil War had just closed, and almost every house had in it a vacant chair. The Gospel of God's grace and love was what the broken-hearted people needed, and they responded to its appeals with tears of penitence, groans of contrition, and sometimes shouts of joy. Father's preaching was indescribable, swaying the multitude with a power I have never seen equaled. I saw strong men, noted for their wickedness, fall from their seats with a groan, and begin to cry aloud for mercy. To an unsympathetic outsider the scenes enacted every day would doubtless have given the impression of over-wrought nerves and hysteria, but to father it seemed to bring no agitation and little surprise. After the sermon he would move among the people, speaking to this one, praying with that one, shaking hands with another, his face often radiant with joy.

"The chief books in my father's small library were the Bible, Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress,' a 'Scripture Text Book,' Coleridge's poems, and Spurgeon's sermons. I had read 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' and had the imagery of Bunyan pretty clear in my boyish mind. Conversion meant a heavy load upon you, leaving you all of a sudden so that you could go on your way rejoicing. I thought I ought to be converted like that, but I could not get my burden to suit me. It would not get big enough or heavy enough. I became burdened because I was not burdened. I cried because I could not cry. I was dreadfully depressed because I thought I was not depressed enough.

"That day my father took for his text: 'What must I do to be saved?'
I do not remember a word of his sermon, but the text burned into my soul. There was no feeling of ecstatic joy such as Bunyan's Pilgrim seems to have experienced, and doubts came afterwards because there was no ecstatic joy. But I began by simply resting upon Christ and the promises that He had made. My father came around in the meeting and put his hand on my head. 'Are you converted, son?' he asked. 'I do not know, but I am believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.' Then a lady came up to me and said: 'Are you a Christian?' 'I do not know, but I am believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.' Both of them said: 'That is right! Just hold on to that. That is all you need to do.'

"There I passed my crisis. I believe I was born again when I decided to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

The Buffalo revival resulted in over two hundred conversions. Soon afterwards many of the converts were baptized in a running stream near the old church, Clarence and nineteen others being baptized on the same day.

Literature was scarce in the South in those days, but after his conversion Clarence eagerly devoured any reading matter he could obtain that would help him in the search for spiritual power, for he wanted his life to count for God. Next to the Bible itself came the sermons of Spurgeon, obtained by his father from a visiting colporteur as fast as they were published. A book written by Rev. Legh Richmond, an eighteenth-century rector in the Isle of Wight, deeply affected him. It describes the conversion and triumphant death of a young girl whom the rector visited in her humble cottage home.

"One night I went up to my room with my school books under my arm. I threw them on the table and was sitting down to begin my evening work for the morrow's lessons, when my eye fell on a copy of The Dairyman's Daughter. The book had been placed there by someone, and though I have never known exactly, I suspect it was my mother. After finishing my studies, I picked up the book, and in the light of the white study lamp, with my school books about me, I read the simple story of patient suffering and peaceful joy in Christ. The light of God flooded my soul in a way I had never experienced before. I forgot everything until I had read the book through to the end. The moment it was finished I was on my knees asking God to make me as true a Christian as this poor girl had been. It was my first act of consecration to Christ, and there came into my heart a peace I had never known before."

It was a time when quiet inward peace was sorely needed by young and old, for economic confusion and political unrest
held the South in its grip. A new State Convention which met at Raleigh in January, 1868, included thirteen negro members and sixteen "carpet-baggers" from the North. The Constitution for North Carolina which they framed was accepted by Congress and an era of wastefulness and corruption ensued. Lawlessness abounded everywhere. Under the baneful influence of the Loyal Leagues a madness of lust and violence seized many of the negroes, demoralized already by the sudden reversal of their status in the social order. Barns and houses were ruthlessly burned, and in many places white women and children were afraid to leave their homes. Crime stalked boldly in the open, without fear of punishment.

In the midst of this intolerable situation, the spirit of the Anglo-Saxon race suddenly asserted itself. A cure was found by the adoption of a whimsical device. Some young Tennesseans, realizing the power of fear over superstitious minds, hit upon a method by which crime could be checked and a semblance of rough justice maintained when the law failed to act.

A weird secret society, known as the Ku Klux Klan, sprang into existence and spread rapidly all over the South. Processions of white-robed, masked riders on ghostly white horses paraded the country-side at night, appearing without warning to mete out punishment for crime, and vanishing as mysteriously. The Loyal Leagues soon disbanded when the strange horsemen appeared in any district. At first the Klan was controlled by the best men in the South, for it seemed the only way of preserving order.

Thomas Dixon, with his keen sense of justice, became an early member, and his tall young school-boy son passed through the initiation with him. It was to be Clarence’s only experience of membership in a secret society, and it did not last long. A summons was received to join in a raid upon a negro farm where swift punishment was to be meted out for a dastardly crime. The thought of being a party to a possible lynching was too much for so law-abiding a citizen as Thomas Dixon. He resigned his membership immediately and cancelled his son’s also.

Soon after this, the Ku Klux Klan as a whole came under the control of bad leaders. Other clubs were formed in imitation and were used as a cloak for crime, the original purpose of the Klan thus becoming hopelessly distorted. The new Legislature of North Carolina passed a law suppressing the Ku Klux, and
making the punishment of wrongdoers by masked men a peni-
tentiary offense. Some of the counties were placed under military
rule, and the use of colored troops instituted a reign of terror.

So many acts of injustice were perpetrated by the Governor,
that the people were thoroughly aroused, and at the next State
election a Democratic Legislature was returned to power. Gov-
eror Holden was solemnly impeached before the Senate for his
mismanagement of State affairs, and was removed from office.

While these exciting events were taking place, young Clar-
ence Dixon was approaching a turning-point in his life. Through
his last year at the Shelby Academy, he had been fired with a
new ambition. One evening, when the principal of the Academy
was visiting the Dixon home, Clarence had overheard his father
say that he intended to send his children to college. The thought
of it thrilled him. His father had often spoken with regret of
his own lack of educational advantages, and his inability to read
the New Testament in Greek was a constant trial to his soul.
He was determined that his sons should learn to read the
Scriptures in their original tongues. Arrangements were there-
fore made for Clarence to enter Wake Forest College.

Wake Forest was the Baptist Institution for North Caro-
lina. It had been in existence for thirty-five years, having been
founded almost half a century later than the State University at
Chapel Hill. The University had gained an unenviable reputa-
tion in its early days, and was popularly regarded as catering
chiefly to families of wealth and prominence in the State. Drink-
ing and cock-fighting were common. The gay social events, cul-
minating in the brilliant annual Commencement Ball, created
an atmosphere of worldliness. All of this threw out a challenge
to the churches. The Baptists were the first to respond with
Wake Forest, and two other denominational Colleges arose in
North Carolina in the same decade—Davidson College, a Pres-
byterian institution; and Trinity College (now incorporated in
Duke University), founded by the Methodists.

Before his impeachment, Governor Holden had succeeded
in wrecking the State University, which closed its doors entirely
a few months after Clarence entered Wake Forest. The de-
nominational Colleges, having no political entanglements,
struggled on through these difficult years, in spite of crippled
means and a reduced number of students. In some ways they
actually benefited by the closing down of the State University, for some of the Chapel Hill professors were secured as temporary additions to their Faculties.

Clarence was the first youth to leave Shelby for a college career after the war had ended, and his going was quite an event in the town. It was the first break in the family circle and was loudly lamented by his little brothers, Tom and Frank, who were now five and three years old. To Tom especially, the tall, black-haired brother was an object of hero-worship, and he followed everywhere at his heels.

Wake Forest lies in the center of the State, a little to the north of Raleigh, and about twice as far east of Chapel Hill. The distance from Shelby is barely two hundred miles. Clarence had traveled much further than that on the expedition to Arkansas, but he had never as yet been parted from his parents. His mother had one great concern for him.

"Early one morning in the shadows, as I was leaving home to go off to college, I felt the touch of a gentle hand on my shoulder. I followed my mother through the parlor door, in where the fire was burning. Standing in the dim light before me, with tears running down her face, she said:

"'My boy, you are going away from home for the first time in your life, and I want you to promise me one thing.'

"'Mother, I will do it!'

"I did not hesitate a moment. I did not care what it was, I knew it would be all right.

"'Now,' she said, 'while you live at college, promise that you will never drink intoxicating liquors.' There, in the gloaming of the morning, I promised."

The experiences of the next four years were full of pleasure. It was a pure delight to Clarence to acquire knowledge by vigorous mental exercise. "Plain living and high thinking" was the sturdy atmosphere in which the post-war students of the South prepared themselves for the adventure of life. Although games and recreations were few, the healthful country surroundings provided plenty of outlet for physical energy.

Clarence always looked back on the contacts with his professors and fellow-students at Wake Forest with grateful appreciation. The President at that time was Dr. William W. Wingate, a man of simple dignity and of such sincere piety that the students named him "Wingate the Saintly."
Dr. William Baylor Royall, whose grandfather had been a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in London, was professor of Greek, and was perhaps the one of his teachers whom Clarence loved best of all. Dr. Royall was a remarkable man, and continued to hold his Greek classes at Wake Forest till he was over eighty. Even then the loss of sight and an enfeebled body could not dim the energy of his intellect, nor the brightness of his serene countenance. When Clarence entered Wake Forest in 1869, Dr. Royall was but twenty-five, in the full strength and vigor of young manhood. Clarence took up his studies with zest.

“He had a mind like the stomach of an ostrich,” said one of his fellow-students. “He could assimilate anything. He would stand with his hands in his pockets, and repeat page after page of dry chemistry. Some of us could learn chemistry without remembering the text-book word for word. Clarence could do both.”

Others tell of the keenness and accuracy of this rare gift of memory, and say that it was usually sufficient for him to read over a poem or a piece of prose two or three times, after which he could recite it without a mistake.

“When I entered Wake Forest as a sophomore,” writes Dr. Richard T. Vann of Raleigh, “I found among my class-mates a lad of seventeen from Cleveland County, tall, erect, slender, with a mass of black hair, a strikingly handsome youth. He reveled in every form of sport, relishing jokes keenly. We belonged to the same literary society, and boarded together.”

All the chivalry of Clarence’s nature was called out in his admiration of Dick Vann, whose life was to be a long triumph of the mind and spirit over physical infirmity, the result of an accident in boyhood. In spite of almost empty coat-sleeves, Dick became a champion at croquet, and at the high and long jump.

Debates were the favorite recreation at Wake Forest, arousing never-failing enthusiasm. There were in the College two debating societies, the Euzelian and the Philomathesian. Neither society was permitted to have more than a certain proportion of the students in its membership. The Euzelian—or “Eu” for short—to which Clarence and Dick Vann belonged, was the more popular of the two, and applications for membership in it often had to wait for months until the “Phi” had
its quota. Clarence was a Debater for the Euzelians in his Junior year, and at the time of his graduation was elected Orator. Just before Christmas in his sophomore year, a dramatic incident occurred which set the whole College agog with excitement. A debate was taking place in the old Euzelian Hall. David Summey Ramseur from Black's Station near Shelby, a year or two older than Clarence, was pouring out a verbal torrent on the exploits of Napoleon Bonaparte, when the debate was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the United States Marshal and six soldiers. In spite of remonstrances the young orator was arrested. It transpired that shortly before leaving home, David had joined the "Invisible Empire" and had been active in Ku Klux Klan affairs in the Shelby district. Although he knew that the State was being scoured for members of the Klan, he had fearlessly gone to Wake Forest. He now submitted to arrest without resistance, and was tried before Judge Bond and a jury of eleven negroes and one white man. For six months he served terms in Columbia, Yorkville and Charleston. Sentenced to eight years, he was taken by sea from Charleston to New York, and was jailed in Albany prison.

For several months he was put to making coffins, and became a model prisoner. On July 20th, 1873, after he had been in Albany for a year, a slip of paper bearing the signature of President U.S. Grant was handed to him. To his delight he found himself a free man. It did not take him long to shake off "the dust of Yankeedom" from his feet, and to make his way home to the South. He returned at once to Wake Forest, where Clarence and the other students gave him a rousing welcome.

On Sunday mornings the students attended service in the Baptist Church near by, but on Sunday and Wednesday evenings they conducted their own service in the College. The first sermon Clarence ever preached was at one of these services, and when his long ministry of the Gospel was over, the theme of that first message still stood out clearly in the memory of Dr. Royall: "They shall be Mine, when I make up My jewels."

Early in 1872, news reached Clarence at Wake Forest that a baby sister had arrived in the home at Shelby, and had been named Delia. Some months before, Frank had met with an accident. Like all boys, he loved to ride on a wagon. One day the heavy vehicle lurched into a deep rut, and the little fel-
OLD BUFFALO CHURCH NEAR SHELBY, N.C.

A.C. DIXON
Aged 17

A.C. DIXON
Aged 19
Wake Forest College, N.C.

Graduates of 1874
low was jerked off, dislocating his hip in the fall. The injury did not seem serious at first, but a lameness gradually developed, and became a life-long handicap. Frank met his trouble with a brave spirit and never, either in boyhood or through later life, murmured over it. His weakness drew forth a double portion of chivalrous love from Clarence, who, with his abounding energy and strength, devoted himself tenderly during vacation times to the care of his little brother.

Not long after Delia’s birth, the old home on the Courthouse Square was burned to the ground. Thomas Dixon decided to move away from town and take up farming once more. He purchased a thousand acres of rolling land about six miles from Shelby and settled into the well-built house, known as Buffalo Farm, which stood upon it. Only a mile away was the plantation home of Amanda’s sister, Amelia Dameron, and this was an added attraction to the young folks of both families.

Buffalo Farm was probably the piece of property that Thomas Dixon enjoyed more than any other. He only lived upon it for two or three years, but did not sell it until Amanda died, thirty years after its purchase. He used to say that it was the produce from the old plantation that sent all his children to college.

Clarence often brought Dick Vann home with him in vacation time. Arriving at the little station at Cherryville one summer, they were met by father Dixon with an old two-seater that he had bought from “Stonewall” Jackson’s widow, and which he valued highly for association’s sake!

It was during that summer of 1873, between his junior and senior years at Wake Forest, that an event occurred which changed the whole course of Clarence’s life. One day he was sent by his father to New Prospect church to notify the people that the pastor could not keep his appointment to preach to them, because he was in the midst of a revival in another church.

When he rode up the hill on horseback, Clarence found a group of men standing under the trees in front of the meetinghouse. He gave them his message, and was about to turn and ride home again, when one of the deacons approached and, touching him on the knee, said: “My young brother, will you not come in and lead the meeting for us? It is a pity to let these people go home without a religious service.” Clarence had fre-
quently accompanied his father on preaching tours, but had never actually led any of the meetings. He was only nineteen, and was embarrassed by the sense of inexperience, but he was ashamed to refuse, and consented to do his best.

It was a very informal service. A chapter was read, some familiar hymns were sung, and the deacons led in prayer. Clarence evidently gave an earnest message, and the Spirit of God worked mightily among the people, for some were deeply convicted of sin, and the deacons besought him to return on the following day.

For two weeks he rode out daily to New Prospect, reading the Scriptures and pleading with the people to turn from sin to Christ. On the last day of the meeting his father accompanied him and baptized about forty converts. When the baptismal service was over, Thomas Dixon turned to the crowded congregation and said: "I thank God that He has called one of my sons into the Gospel ministry." This was the first intimation Clarence had ever received of such a call, but from that time his conviction was clear. His studies had all been planned with a legal career in view, but now he knew that he was called to preach. He often said that it was the touch of the old farmer's hand on his knee that turned the current of his life from the law to the Gospel.

The change of his life-ambition sent him back to Wake Forest determined to make the best of every opportunity through his senior year. His fellow-students did not fail to observe the transformation that was taking place, and Dick Vann wrote in retrospect:

"Clarence's deeply religious nature did not appear during his boyhood so as to distinguish him sharply from his fellows. It was not until his last year at College that he definitely heard and heeded the call of God to preach the Gospel. But, his decision once made, he entered into his new work as he played baseball, whole-heartedly, with every power of heart, mind, soul and body. His ministry was to him a Divine commission. Religion became his life—concern for souls his passion. His religious faith was like that of the ancient mystic—a sacred thing, for which he was ready to face the flames."
CHAPTER IV
WINNING HIS SPURS

The closing year at Wake Forest College was marked by the crystallizing of the great purpose that was henceforth to dominate A.C. Dixon's life—to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the summer of 1874 he graduated with the highest honors of his class, taking his A.B. degree. He was almost twenty years old, and mind and spirit were afire with enthusiasm to invest his life in the service of God.

Even as a little boy he had been familiar with the sermons of Charles Haddon Spurgeon. After his conversion he had not only listened with a new attention when his father read them aloud, but had often shut himself up alone in the parlor to pore over them for hours. The first impulse of a desire to preach had come to him then, and it was natural that he should long to be taught further by the man who had awakened it. With his father's approval, he wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, earnestly requesting permission to enter the Pastors' College in London for two or three years of study under his instruction. Dick Vann also applied for admission.

Mr. Spurgeon's reply brought surprise and disappointment, but it demonstrated his sound common-sense. His advice was that if the young theologues expected to live and preach in their own country, where they would surely find as good and even better advantages for study, it would be of greater benefit to them to seek their training in America. The friendships they would form among their own countrymen would be of more value in the contacts of later years than the associations of an English training college. Accepting the wisdom of this counsel, Clarence put aside thoughts of England, and decided to enter the Baptist Theological Seminary at Greenville, South Carolina, in the coming fall, there to prepare himself definitely for the Christian ministry.

The summer of 1874 was spent in preaching with his father
in the district round Shelby. Dick Vann visited his chum again for a few weeks, and was encouraged to make his own first efforts at preaching. He often referred to that visit in "the old country home at Buffalo Creek, to the little boys and the baby girl, and to the father and mother, then in their prime, towering both physically and intellectually, a most impressive pair."

While sharing his father's preaching tours, Clarence received an invitation to fill the vacant pulpit of a country church at Mount Olive. At this call to immediate action he was like the war-horse that "smelleth the battle afar off." He was impatient to get into harness, and decided to defer his seminary course for a year in order to gain some preliminary experience of the problems to be encountered in his chosen life-service.

Mount Olive is in Wayne County, about twelve and a half miles south of Raleigh. Three or four miles away across the border of Duplin County lies the village of Bear Marsh. The Baptist church there was more than a hundred years old. It was also without a pastor and united with Mount Olive in the call, asking the young college graduate to divide his time between the two churches, giving alternate Sundays to each.

Clarence accepted the call, and arrived at Mount Olive in the late autumn of 1874, immediately devoting himself to the spiritual welfare of the people. It was not long before his personality made its mark on the whole region, and to this day it is quite common to find men whose first names are "Clarence Dixon." The warmth of remembrance in which he was held fifty years afterwards was somewhat remarkable, seeing that his pastorate at Mount Olive covered less than a year. In his own memory there stood out clearly the Saturday morning on which he was ordained to the Gospel ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands in the old "mother church" at Bear Marsh. That same afternoon was the occasion of his first baptismal service, which took place at Williams' Mill Pond, about a mile from Mount Olive.

Shortly after his arrival, he began to pray that God would give him a token of answered prayer by permitting him to baptize one hundred converts before going to the theological seminary. This prayer became a great burden—his thought by day, and his dream by night. God's blessing attended his preaching, and there were conversions at almost every service.
Bear Marsh Church, Duplin County, N.C.

A.C. Dixon, aged 21. Pastor at Bear Marsh
WILLIAMS' MILL POND, near BEAR MARSH, N.C.

MOUNT OLIVE CHURCH
Wayne County, N.C.
In his eagerness for the things of the spirit, he was apt to forget the needs of the body, and after a month or two of strenuous activity he fell sick.

"I was thinking of going away for a season of rest, when a country lad came in for a passing visit. Before leaving he told me that, at a certain service a few weeks before, he had come into the church a lost soul, and went out rejoicing in the hope of heaven. Do you know, I got better immediately!"

The delight of soul-winning actually seemed to react upon his mind and body like a tonic as well as to refresh his spirit. There was a genuine outbreak of revival during this first short ministry, and it sprang from a most inauspicious beginning. Within two miles of Bear Marsh stood the Mayesville school house. Some Christian people of the neighborhood invited the young pastor to hold an afternoon service there one Sunday. It was a cold, wet day, and nothing damps the ardor of a Southern congregation like rain. After preaching to some twenty-five people at Bear Marsh in the morning, Clarence decided that it would be useless to go out to the school house through such weather, for no one would be there. On his way home, he heard the rattle of wheels behind him. Looking back, he saw a buggy, driven by a young woman who was beckoning him to stop. She had been urged by her father to follow the preacher and beg him to keep his appointment at Mayesville.

It was with some reluctance that he turned and made his way back through the storm. Only seven men were present at the school house, for no woman would venture out through the pouring rain; even the girl who had called him had gone straight home. His first impression was that it was hardly worth while to preach a regular sermon to so small a group.

"But I repented of that, and gave the best I had. The dew of heaven was upon us. We were conscious of God's presence, and two of the men expressed a desire to be saved. An old farmer arose and said: 'My young brother, God is working in our midst. Will you not preach to-night? The clouds are clearing away, and we will go out and tell the people about it.' I consented, though to stay that night in Mayesville rather upset my plans for the following day.

"There were six or seven enquirers and two or three decisions for Christ. The old farmer insisted that I should preach next day. Again
I consented, and remained there, preaching in the school house and the grove, day and night, for two weeks. There were over seventy conversions, and I baptized about forty new members of the Bear Marsh Church. I could not quite explain it. No one seemed to be expecting a revival or praying for it. I was surprised, and evidently the old farmer was surprised. But the last day of the meetings solved the mystery.

“As I came down the steps of the roughly-constructed platform from which I had been preaching in the open air, a plainly dressed, grey-haired, motherly woman grasped my hand and said: ‘This is my home, though I spend most of my time teaching school sixty miles from here; but when my niece wrote me that you would preach in the school house on Sunday afternoon, I said to myself, ‘I will pray every minute he preaches that God may save my friends.’ And sir, I have come up to see what God has been doing. All of those you baptized this morning were my neighbors, and among them were my brother, nephew and niece’”

With the coming of September, Clarence prepared to leave his first charge for the Seminary at Greenville. He had now passed his twenty-first birthday, and as he preached his farewell sermon in the Bear Marsh church on Sunday morning, he could not but rejoice over the results of the nine months' work. He praised God for the answer to that prayer which had been to him so great a test of prayer's reality. Only ninety-four of the hundred whom he had requested of God had been actually baptized, but many more than a hundred had professed acceptance of Christ. He told himself that his request had been substantially granted and that perhaps God was withholding a literal answer to prevent him from being puffed up with spiritual pride. Yet in his heart of hearts, even while he preached his farewell sermon, he kept saying: “Lord, if there were six baptisms more, I should indeed know that Thou answerest prayer.”

At the close of the service five people came forward requesting to be baptized. With a glad heart he arranged to hold a baptismal service at Williams' Mill Pond that very afternoon. He had already packed his belongings, and was obliged to borrow a change of clothing from one of his deacons. But his soul was too full of joy at the unexpected touch of God's hand to be disturbed by anything.

Now the refrain of his heart was, “O, Lord! if there were one more to baptize, I would know, beyond a peradventure, that Thou answerest prayer.”
They were standing by the edge of the mill pond, the candidates for baptism waiting reverently for the Scripture reading and prayer before going down into the water, when a man approached the pastor, saying: "I have accepted Christ as my Saviour, and I wish you would baptize me with my wife, who is among those to be baptized to-day." With a thrill of consciousness that God had definitely spoken to him, Clarence consented; and the man stood by his wife in the baptismal waters, caring not at all that he must walk two miles home in his wet clothes when the service was over. In this remarkable answer to the prayer laid on his heart for so many months, given in such a way as to test his faith up to the last moment, Clarence experienced as never before the reality of God's presence.

On the following day he left Mount Olive for Greenville, which was only about sixty miles from his father's home. Like Shelby, it lies in the "Piedmont section" between the western mountains and the coastal plains, and was at that time a town of about ten thousand inhabitants.

The Baptist Theological Seminary had sprung out of the self-sacrificing endeavors of Dr. James Petigru Boyce, a former theological professor at Furman University in Greenville. During the second session of the Seminary the Civil War broke out and, as South Carolina was the first State to secede, the students and professors dispersed at once at the call of other duties.

After the war the school was re-opened in face of great difficulties, and when Clarence Dixon entered it, fresh from his labors at Mount Olive and Bear Marsh, the student-body had grown to about ninety. He found the Seminary still housed under more or less primitive conditions, although plans were already on foot for enlarging its scope, and removing it to another location entirely. The Baptists of Louisville, Kentucky, had petitioned the Southern Baptist Convention to transfer it to their city, which was in many ways more suitable as its permanent home than Greenville could ever be. The expectation of these drastic changes filled the air during Clarence's brief sojourn at the Seminary; and Dr. Boyce, who was its President, was absent much of the time on fund-raising campaigns. His place was filled by Dr. John Albert Broadus, and Clarence never ceased to be grateful for even the short time of contact with
these two men, whose names he had already learned to revere.

An abandoned Baptist Church, built of brick, had been adapted at the outset as an improvised Seminary building, and was still in use. It was divided into lecture rooms, one section being set apart for the library. Dr. Boyce had laid a foundation for this with his own collection of books, supplemented by donations from the library at Furman University. Three blocks away was the Goodlet Hotel, which had been transformed into a students' dormitory. From all over the town the young men gathered to take their meals in "Mess Hall," as the former hotel dining-room was called.

To Clarence's delight, Dick Vann, who had just graduated from Wake Forest, arrived in Greenville at the same time as himself, to begin his Seminary course. The dormitory building was already full, and Clarence and Dick roomed together over a store in Main Street. Their furniture was of the simplest, little more than bare necessities. Two chairs they had, a mirror, a table, and a bed for two, which resembled an old-fashioned trundle bed, one sliding out from under the other, to be pushed beneath again when not in use, for economy of space.

Ample compensation for all deficiencies in the matter of bodily comfort was found in the intellectual feasts spread before the students daily. The sacrificial devotion of the men who formed the teaching staff of the Seminary permeated the whole group of young men with enthusiasm for their high calling as spiritual leaders of a future generation. Clarence reveled in the new fellowships with professors and fellow-students as he threw himself eagerly into his first year of theological study.

In the Spring of 1876, to his great surprise, he received a somewhat pressing invitation from the official board of the Baptist Church in Chapel Hill to pay them a "preaching visit." The State University had just sprung to life again after its post-war sleep, and it was a critical moment in its history and in that of the little town. The fame of the spiritual fire-brand that had set the Mount Olive region ablaze in a few short months had apparently penetrated to the Baptist community at Chapel Hill and had set them longing for a touch of his flaming zeal.

In spite of the difficulties of the long journey, and of leaving his Seminary work at the busiest time of the year, the young student-preacher went to Chapel Hill for a Sunday and preached
three times. His visit confirmed the impression made by his reputation, and the Baptists of the town coveted him for leadership in their work. Early in May, they sent him an insistent call, begging him to come to them in June as pastor for seven months, and offering him a salary of a hundred and fifty dollars for that period.

It was a time of fierce mental and spiritual struggle for young Dixon, who was torn between conflicting desires. Duty and responsibility seemed to pull in all directions at once. He longed to finish his course at the Seminary without interruption, yet the opening for service at Chapel Hill made an irresistible appeal. Tidings of great revivals that had swept the British Isles through the past three years gave an added spur to his longing to be in action. While he had been in the midst of his work in Bear Marsh, Moody was closing his English missions with the great London campaign. The religious papers had published descriptions of the meetings and their marvelous results. Missions established in the slum districts of the great cities of England and Scotland, and the "Convention for the Deepening of Spiritual Life" held at Keswick, in the English Lake District, were all symptomatic of a great spiritual awakening. It was a time to be up and doing.

The fact that his call had come from the seat of the State University offered advantages for study which would partially compensate for a broken Seminary course. Another consideration moved him. His young brothers were growing up, and the burden of their education would soon be heavy upon their father, who craved the best for all of his children. If Clarence could become self-supporting, part of the burden would be lifted.

Added to all of this, his mind was filled with anxiety on his mother's account. The years of nervous strain since her youthful marriage had begun to tell upon Amanda. The sorrow of losing three of her first four children, the hardships of the wartime adventure in Arkansas, but most of all the difficulties of the Reconstruction period had undermined her strength. Unused as she had been to performing household tasks in the days when slave-labor was willing and abundant, she had bravely accustomed herself to toil that would have been distasteful to a Southern woman of pre-war days.

Thomas Dixon felt that the time had come to move nearer
town again. He leased out the Buffalo plantation, and as no house was obtainable to meet his requirements, he decided to build on the crest of a hill about a mile from Shelby. Meanwhile the family stayed with Amanda's mother, and it was in her home that the last child, a girl named Addie May, was born on May 4th, 1876.

News of his little sister's arrival reached Clarence almost on the same day as the letter calling him to the pastorate at Chapel Hill. His mind was soon made up to accept the call, and in the meantime he set himself to make the most of the remaining weeks of his Seminary year. But these were cut short abruptly.

The Dixon family had only just moved into their new home when Amanda suffered a complete nervous collapse. The memory of that anxious time became a nightmare to Tom. On his young shoulders fell a share of the strenuous nursing. His mother could not be left alone, for her fever and delirium often ran high. For tragic nights the father watched by his wife's bed-side until midnight, the young son keeping watch through the chill hours from midnight to dawn. The situation soon became unbearable, and Thomas Dixon sent a message to Greenville, calling his eldest son home. Happily, Amanda's condition suddenly improved, and she made a rapid recovery. By the middle of June, Clarence was able to keep his appointment at Chapel Hill, his soul filled with eager expectation and hope as he faced the new problems of his chosen vocation.
CHAPTER V

DECISIVE DAYS AT CHAPEL HILL

Beautiful for situation is the University of North Carolina, set as it is among hills and glades and groves that once formed part of the primeval forests thickly covering the center of the State. Two great highroads cross at this point, one from Virginia to the south, and the other from the western mountains to Fayetteville, the head of river navigation in the eastern coastal section. The town of Chapel Hill which grew up around the University took its name from the ruins of New Hope Chapel, a little brick church which had once stood on the crest of the hill at the intersection of the highlyways—an instrument of spiritual ministry to the passers-by of pre-Revolutionary days.

Its accessibility from every part of the State had led to the choice of this spot as an ideal site for the University, the first to be established in the South. It was almost a hundred years old when Clarence Dixon arrived in Chapel Hill to take up his pastoral duties there. It was, in fact, the first State University in the whole country, and it was here that the first observatory in America had been built by the University’s famous president, Dr. Caldwell, on his return from Europe in 1830. Dr. Caldwell was ahead of his time in his efforts to interest the State in transportation, for on this same journey he purchased in England a model railroad engine and some lengths of track. On his return home the tracks were laid down on the floor of the Senate Hall at Raleigh, and members of the Senate were invited to take a ride on the engine!

The years preceding Clarence Dixon’s pastorate at Chapel Hill had marked a stormy period in the history of the University. Its then president, David Lowrie Swain, a native of the western mountain section, had succeeded Dr. Caldwell in 1835. He had previously served three terms as Governor of North Carolina, and both his title and his political prestige clung to
him, strengthening his influence during the Civil War. When Governor Vance was summarily arrested and imprisoned at the close of the war it was ex-Governor Swain, standing alone before the Capitol at Raleigh, who surrendered the city to General Sherman, and who, by his personal appeal, saved both the city of Raleigh and his beloved University from pillage.

An unfortunate but dramatic incident, which occurred shortly after this, seriously affected the future of the University. General Smith B. Atkins, the handsome young commander of a Northern cavalry brigade, passed through Chapel Hill with his men, four thousand strong, on their way north. While paying a formal call upon Governor Swain, the Yankee general was introduced to the Governor’s daughter, Miss Ellie. The ways of love are strange and unaccountable. To the consternation of everyone, the young couple fell desperately in love with each other at first sight. Governor Swain’s permission to his daughter to marry an invader, and the fine wedding he gave her three months later, brought disfavor upon himself and also upon the University, which was branded in some quarters as “a Yankee concern” although curiously enough it was reviled by others as “a hot-bed of revolution.”

In spite of Governor Swain’s efforts at Washington the University of North Carolina lost its endowment, and its pecuniary resources were wrecked. Barely a score of students remained and only three graduated in 1866. The faculty resigned in a body two years later, when William W. Holden, the Republican candidate, was elected Governor of the State. Somewhat to their surprise, the resignations were all accepted, and Governor Swain was ejected from the presidency. The University was closed, a new Board of Trustees having been appointed, and a guard of negro soldiers was sent to take charge of the deserted buildings and campus.

Governor Swain died soon afterwards, the result of a tragic accident. He was thrown from his buggy by the sudden bolting of a high-spirited horse, which he had accepted as a gift from General Sherman about the time of his daughter’s marriage! The loss of his strong personality led to the disintegration of Chapel Hill society, thirty families leaving almost at once.

The new State government made an unsuccessful attempt to re-organize the University, but all hope of progress was re-
BAPTIST CHURCH, CHAPEL HILL, N.C.

A.C. DIXON
Aged 24
Pastor at Chapel Hill
Col. and Mrs. A.M. Faison of Warsaw, N.C.

Susan Mary Faison ("Miss Mollie")
linquished after two years. Clarence Dixon was a sophomore at Wake Forest when the fiasco became complete, and the doors of the University were closed for a second time. There was some talk of re-opening it as a negro institution, and for a while the solitary and inadequate president clung to his empty office and the deserted buildings. Then he too departed, and desolation reigned.

Almost six years went by before the Alumni of the University took heart to rally to its support, and secured the passage of a bill for its financial re-organization after a long fight in the Legislature. An army of workmen were soon busy repairing the buildings and faculty houses. The re-opening took place just as Clarence was leaving Mount Olive to enter upon his Seminary course at Greenville. Fifty-nine freshmen, representing many families of distinction in North Carolina, set to work with a will, eager to revive the best traditions of the University, and to surpass its former standards.

Edwin A. Alderman, a freshman of the following year, afterwards wrote:

"There was no better place in the world, I think, for the making of leaders than Chapel Hill in the late 'seventies.' The note of life was simple, rugged, almost primitive. Our young hearts, aflame with the impulses of youth, were quietly conscious of the vicissitudes and sufferings through which our fathers had just passed. The unconscious tutelage of defeat and fortitude and self-restraint had cradled us all. We had all seen in the faces of our patient mothers, and grim fathers, something that we knew, if we could not express, was not despair; and somehow, life seemed very grand, and duty easy, and opportunity precious."

The Commencement of 1876—the first after so many dreary years—was a memorable occasion. Mrs. Cornelia Phillips Spencer, daughter of a former famous professor at the University, and sister of two more, herself a leader in the social life of Chapel Hill, wrote with enthusiasm to the widow of Governor Swain:

"I have lived to see another Commencement—have lived to see the Chapel crowded once more and seven hundred and fifty fans in motion at once—have seen the Campus thronged and the procession marching... a long line of carriages and vehicles of every sort, and then the Salisbury band, just a-playing!... Commencement is Commencement. No time is like it."
Into this atmosphere of restored academic activity and social gaiety came young Clarence Dixon, fresh from his Seminary experiences, and fired with ambition to reach the students of the University as well as the people of the town for the Master to whose service his life was dedicated.

The Baptist Church of which he was pastor was a red brick building with a square tower above the entrance, and was set in a grove of trees not far from the University Campus. Only two pastors had served the church through the twenty-two years of its existence, and Clarence, on his arrival, found the work being held together by a flourishing Sunday School. For a while he roomed and boarded at the home of Professor Redd, a member of the University faculty. He took great pride and interest in the beautifying and equipment of his study, and one of his first tasks was to construct a neat set of shelves for his books.

There are two sources of information concerning his early activities in the University town. One is the book of minutes of the Church meetings, carefully preserved in the safety vaults of the Chapel Hill Bank. The other, more intimate and heart-revealing, is a small, well-worn note-book, used as a diary, in which entries were made from day to day between June, 1876, and March, 1877. So far as can be discovered, this short record of his doings, thoughts and prayer-life for nine months is the only diary A.C.Dixon ever kept. There are annual “calendars” where engagements are hastily jotted down, but nothing to disclose his inner life as this little note-book does.

Zeal for the conversion of souls and for the building up of Christian character in his church-members breathes out of every page. There are plentiful indications also of a normal, healthyminded young manhood. Jottings of periodical social engagements, of fishing and hunting expeditions, show a wholesome interest in mundane pursuits, while the detailed entries of expenditure reveal the scanty supply of money upon which he managed to live a full and happy life, and to give systematically and generously.

The experiences of boyhood had drawn him close to Nature’s heart. In later days, his life-work called him increasingly to the places where humanity teemed, with its sin and its need of a Saviour. But for physical refreshment he never ceased to crave the vast solitudes of mountain and forest and open sky. His
whole being responded to the beauty of limpid streams, of over-
arching trees with their varied tints of foliage, of purple vistas,
and the glories of sunrise and sunset. Here at Chapel Hill, his
senses were keenly alert to the wild life about him, and the
sportsman's instinct asserted itself irresistibly, born of days
when the food of the household had depended largely upon
skill with rod and gun and trap.

Squirrel and 'possum hunting, and the shooting of duck and
wild turkey were favorite pastimes. It was the Indians who had
shown the first settlers how to procure the latter delicious game
for their feasts; and for the uninitiated, who know only the do-
mestic turkey strutting pompously about the farm-yard, it is
difficult to imagine the charm of this sport. To enter a still,
sweet grove of beech trees in the deep forest, and to see a large
turkey on the top-most limb of a dead tree suddenly expand his
wings and float away with incredible speed, challenges the skill
of the hunter and gives an impression of almost ethereal light-
ness, belonging to the bird only in its wild state.

So enthusiastically did Clarence follow what were to him
the natural recreative habits of everyday life, that he quickly
earned the nickname of "the sporting parson." As soon as it
came to his ears, he set himself to curb his hunting propensi-
ties, for above all he desired to stress in his life the things of
spiritual and eternal significance.

The theme of his first sermon as pastor, preached on Sunday
morning, June 18th, was taken from Matthew's Gospel: "Go
ye also into the vineyard." He gave a personal illustration of
his message in the house-to-house visitation which he undertook
immediately. Ten visits are recorded in the little diary as the
first Monday's accomplishment, and at night when he met with
his official board, it was decided that the whole church should
work and pray for revival.

At the Wednesday night prayer-meeting one went forward
to request prayer, and the "protracted meeting" began. It con-
tinued for twenty-one successive days with evidences of increas-
ing interest. There were daily prayer-meetings at nine o'clock
each morning, while the daytime was spent by the pastor in
constant visiting. The Methodist minister and two members of
the University faculty, Professor Taylor and Professor Redd,
took part in the preaching at the evening services. By the end
of the special meetings many persons had requested prayer, while thirty-seven had signified their acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord. There were not only thirty-eight baptisms in his own church, but accessions to the Methodist church and others in the surrounding district.

Such a whirlwind of spiritual energy evidently attracted the attention of the University authorities, and the diary records a meeting with President Battle and Dr. and Mrs. Charles Phillips at the home of Professor Redd.

Upon cessation of the first intensive effort there came a steady progress in the regular routine of the pastorate. Eager to keep up studious habits, and to equip himself for future contacts with the University men, now scattered for the summer vacation, Clarence determined to devote definite hours of the long bright days to arduous study. A methodical program was mapped out, in which rising was to be prompt with the college bell, and in which Greek Testament and sermon study, prayer and Bible-reading, courses in other literature and practice in writing were to be punctuated by visiting and regular out-door exercise.

Accustomed as he was to his father's methods as a circuit-rider, he wished to strengthen the work in his own church by aggressive effort outside it. At his first church meeting in June he had asked to be released for one Sunday in each month to visit Kinston, nearly a hundred miles away, not far from his former pastorate at Mount Olive. He believed that responsibility for the services during his absence would be good for his deacons, while an interest in work outside their own church and locality would widen their sympathies and provide new material for their praying. But at first their vision was limited and the request was refused.

Early in October a meeting of the Eastern Association was to be held in Kinston. Clarence was appointed a delegate from the Chapel Hill church, and caught at the chance of accepting the Kinston people's invitation to pay them a ten-days' preaching visit prior to the Association meeting. His own church concurred in this, and at the close of the meetings he baptized eleven persons, afterwards visiting Mount Olive, where he had the joy of preaching to his old friends. At the Association gathering at Kinston next day, he was surprised at being suddenly called upon
to preach the Introductory Sermon. An independent record shows that he acquitted himself well, and the diary yields a delightfully human touch at this point; "Having a pleasant time; met a great many young ladies."

At the end of October Clarence took his first journey north of his own State. Glowing reports of a visit paid by his parents to the far-famed Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia inspired him to spend a few days amid its wonders. The voyage up the coast was an entirely novel experience, in which he was pleasantly surprised at suffering no qualms of sea-sickness. In mid-November he spent a week in Raleigh, representing his church at the Baptist State Convention.

The close of his seven months' pastorate was beginning to draw near, but by this time his church members could not bring themselves to let him go. On November 25th, they met and gave him a unanimous call to remain as their pastor through the following year. To accept would mean an indefinite postponement of his return to Greenville, perhaps the abandonment of his Seminary course. Yet he dared not resist what seemed to be God's plan for him. He accepted the call, sent to Greenville for his church letter, and was received as a member of the Chapel Hill church. Minutes of the church meeting strike a note characteristic of A.C. Dixon in the permission granted him to preach away from his own church on one Sunday in each month!

Turning again to the old note-book, we find against the date of January 1st, 1877, the following list of New Year resolutions:

"By the help of God, I will
Always tell the exact truth.
Visit more during the year.
Be more faithful in preaching.
Be more economical and give more to the cause of Christ.
Read my Bible and pray more.
Strive to make the prayer-meetings more interesting.
Father, enable me to carry out these resolutions and keep me from all sin, and use me to Thy glory. Amen."

We are on holy ground here, for we have penetrated into the inner sanctuary of the young preacher's private devotions. We can almost see the slender form bowed in prayer, face hidden in his hands, fingers running through the thick, black
locks, as he pleads with God in the quiet of his room at Professor Redd’s for power and steadfastness in his work. For in spite of his manly bearing, his eloquent presentation of the Gospel and the fatherly care of his flock, his years are but twenty-two and the “cure of souls” is no light burden on his youthful shoulders.

Except for a few more spasmodic entries, the diary soon ceases its story, and the minutes of church meetings, after-writings and references in sermons of later days, fill out the picture.

The spirit of Wanderlust had been awakened in Clarence as a child, and the habit of constant travel was established early in his ministry, marking it to the end. Long and frequent journeys were all in the day’s work with him. He always declared that he could work and sleep on the train as well as anywhere else, and thought nothing of making his way straight to the pulpit or platform after many hours of travel, appearing as fresh and buoyant and unperturbed as if he had just stepped across the street from his home.

A trip of some eight hundred miles to New Orleans took him farthest from Chapel Hill during 1877. Here, near the delta flat-lands where the great Mississippi river opens many mouths to pour its accumulated waters into the Gulf of Mexico, the young pastor from North Carolina attended the gatherings of the Southern Baptist Convention. While there he received a call, and soon afterwards the minutes of the Chapel Hill church express the relief of his members of their fear that he is about to leave them.

A constant record of baptisms on the church book, shows the result of steady, quiet work, and one or two entries indicate a stringent discipline over the membership.

By the end of the year it became evident that the church could not face any thought of separation from the young pastor who had so endeared himself to their hearts. Several calls had come to him, and the Seminary beckoned more insistently than ever. But a conviction filled his heart that God would have him stay in the University town. He therefore put all other thoughts out of his mind to the joy of his congregation, who pledged themselves to raise the princely sum of six hundred and fifty dollars as pastoral salary for the ensuing year.
According to a custom which he followed more or less consistently throughout his ministry, he began the year with a three weeks' protracted meeting which bore fruitful results.

An appeal had been issued by the State Home Mission Board of North Carolina, asking pastors in every part of the State to give at least ten days free of charge to preaching the Gospel in places where there was no organized Baptist work. Clarence willingly responded to the appeal, and was appointed to visit Mount Airy in the far north-west corner of the State, almost on the borders of Virginia. He set off in April, traveling by rail from the nearest station at Hillsboro to Winston-Salem, and from there for forty miles by the old-fashioned stage-coach to the highland town with its three hundred inhabitants. The whole community was invited to the meetings, and God gave a genuine revival which resulted in many conversions.

Some months later he visited Mount Airy again to assist in the dedication of a beautiful little white chapel erected on a hill-top. This formed the nucleus of a great work, of which he was privileged to see the fruition in subsequent years.

The Baptist State Convention was held that year at Charlotte, the historic seat of Mecklenburg County. Charlotte had always been a strong center of Scottish Presbyterianism. Many of its inhabitants were directly descended from the signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, which, as they proudly remembered, anticipated the national document by more than a year.

A Baptist Church on Seventh Street had for long been the only representative in the city of a weak and somewhat despised cause. There was, in fact, only one other Baptist church in all Mecklenburg County. Clarence Dixon was invited to hold a series of meetings in Charlotte before the Convention. His preaching stirred the whole religious element of the community, and his short visit gave a remarkable impetus to the Baptist cause in that region. The truths for which Baptists stand were brought to the attention of the public for the first time, and many of the Charlotte people who were then converted and became Baptists proved their mettle in after years.

The Seventh Street Church was crowded to hear young Dixon preach on the Sunday morning of the Convention. In the
congregation sat two delighted listeners, his father from Shelby, and Dr. Wingate, from Wake Forest.

Five months later, news reached Chapel Hill that the beloved college president had been called Home. Clarence wrote to a friend:

"In the death of Dr. Wingate, I feel bereaved almost as if he had been my father. He was for four years the best of fathers to me, and the last thing he ever said to me was a word of encouragement, standing at the door of the Baptist Church in Charlotte, just after I had preached during the Convention. One of earth's purest and greatest has certainly left us. May we live so as to leave as happily as he did. To me, dying has become insignificant compared with living. To live with Christ will ensure a death with Christ. 'For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.' I think it is a good motto."

During 1878 Clarence took up his abode in one of the University dormitories, and became responsible for the conduct of services in the College chapel. This was somewhat unusual, as the predominating influence in the University was Episcopalian. Yet it was surely desirable that this all-round athletic young man, with his sparkling mind, his ready wit, his love of clean sport, and his whole-souled devotion to God, should be brought into close touch with the students, a few of whom were turbulent and difficult to control. President Battle believed in appealing to their higher nature by a system of honor and trust, rather than by too stern a discipline, although he had been obliged once or twice to deal out justice with a strong hand.

By this time there were three hundred and fifty students at the University. Clarence had earnestly set himself to reach them through his preaching, and had received scores of letters from mothers: "Pray for my boy; seek his salvation." Much prayer had been offered to this end in the devotional meetings at the church, but so far not a single student had professed conversion, though many of them attended the services.

In February of 1879 a special series of meetings was begun in the Baptist Church. There was a prayer-meeting at ten o'clock each morning, and preaching every night. The young pastor hoped to gain the longed-for result by a definite invitation to the students.

He was somewhat surprised to find a large group of them—
sixty or seventy strong—present on Monday, the very first night of the meetings. A suspicion that they were bent on mischief was quickly confirmed, for a partly successful attempt was made to put out the lights.

It had come to be a life-and-death matter with the youthful pastor, but as his burden for their salvation increased, their opposition grew. They seemed determined to ridicule his efforts and to bring a smile on the face of the community over their pranks in the meetings.

One day, as he was walking through the University campus, he heard his own voice coming from behind a tree, and later from an open window. Some fellow with a talent for mimicry had been to church the evening before, and was reproducing the very words and tones of his sermon and prayer. He could hear the loud burst of laughter with which it was greeted. A sense of utter defeat overwhelmed him. He had used every argument that he knew, and they seemed to get harder and harder under the process. He thought about resigning his pastorate, yet that seemed cowardly.

After a restless night with scarcely a wink of sleep, he rose early, took his Bible, and decided to spend the day with God without troubling about breakfast, lunch or dinner. There was no thought in his mind about fasting; he simply had no desire for food. It was a day of crisis. Through life he remembered the great tree under whose spreading branches he sat down beside a grey boulder and opened his Bible, asking God to search him and shew him what to do. The realization of failure was so keen, that he was ready to leave Chapel Hill, if need be, to make room for someone else who might be able to reach the students in answer to their mothers’ prayers.

On returning to his room, he was almost prostrated by a sense of his weakness and unworthiness, but after a little while there stole into his heart an indescribable calm and an assurance that God Himself would step in where he had failed.

The students were present in force that night. The meeting was unusually quiet, and at its close, the young evangelist felt constrained to invite an outward token of interest, for he was convinced that some were eager to ask for prayer, perhaps even to confess Christ. A score or more of manly fellows responded instantly to his invitation and came forward to the front seat.
Before the series of meetings closed, over seventy-five had confessed Christ as Saviour and Lord.

“As I look back on this experience,” he said later, “it seems clear that the secret of it all was that I was led by the Holy Spirit to turn from dependence on myself to simple faith in God. I had been expecting that preaching would interest and save the young men. I wove into my sermons history, philosophy, poetry—everything that I thought would impress their conscience, their reason or their imagination. I had striven to influence them by argument and appeal. When I began to trust only in God, the influence was not dispensed with, but God worked through it in a way worthy of Himself.”

The Chapel Hill church was greatly revived by this manifestation of God’s power among the University men. A number of the townspeople and visitors from surrounding villages were brought to Christ. Twenty of the newly-converted students presented themselves for baptism, while some joined the other churches in Chapel Hill. One beautiful Sunday morning early in May, there was an unforgettable scene at Purefoy’s Mill Pond, about two miles from the town. Before a reverent gathering of worshippers, twenty of the University men witnessed in the baptismal service to the death and resurrection of their Lord. Some of them were destined to become famous in the annals of their State—two future Governors, a University President, officers of State, and leaders in professional and commercial life.

Chief among them was Charles B. Aycock, who had come to Chapel Hill in the fall of 1877, and within a year had become the leader of the largest and most influential group in the University. His future career was of outstanding value to his native State. After twenty years of untiring service as County Superintendent of Schools, and United States District Attorney, he was elected Governor of North Carolina. His life was dedicated to the task of securing equal advantages of education for every child, rich or poor, black or white. Although he had uncompromisingly opposed the negro rule of Reconstruction days, he upheld the principle that, while the white and colored schools should be kept entirely separate, there should be no discrimination in favor or to the prejudice of either race. So strenuous was his campaign for universal education that he earned the title of “the Educational Governor.”
He was marvelously gifted in reaching the hearts of the Northerners when he spoke of the sufferings of the South. On the other hand his ability to allay the prejudices of his fellow-Southerners was seen in the courage and dignity with which, as Governor of North Carolina, he welcomed President Roosevelt at the Charleston Exhibition. It was in the midst of an impassioned public address in the cause of education that his life closed with dramatic suddenness.

To have led such a man to decision for Christ in the impressionable days of youth was no mean privilege, and A.C. Dixon followed his great career with a thankful heart.

James Y. Joyner, who rendered important service under Governor Aycock and others as Superintendent of Public Instruction, wrote in reference to the experiences at Chapel Hill:

"A.C. Dixon roomed in the College. He was a vigorous, magnetic young man and had great influence with the boys... Aycock and I were among the number who joined the Baptist church in that meeting. Aycock was exceedingly earnest about this as about everything else."

Edwin A. Alderman, the author of various historical works, and president of three Universities in turn, was another who was led to Christ under A.C. Dixon's preaching.

"I remember him extremely well," wrote Dr. Alderman. "I often went to hear him preach, and was greatly moved and influenced by his devotion, enthusiasm and eloquence. He was a picturesque and forceful figure."

Still another of the converts, Locke Craig, became Governor of North Carolina in 1913, and carried his State through a most difficult term during the World War.

From Henry E. Faison, attorney-at-law of Clinton, N.C., comes a reminiscence of the revival:

"I was among the brands that he snatched from the burning. Mr. Dixon was then very thin and tall. His terrible earnestness stuck out from every angle. Had he been a little older and more experienced, the whole college would have succumbed to his influence.

"About ten days before the close of the meeting, some of our Frater-

1 State University of North Carolina
Tulane University, Louisiana
University of Virginia
nity set went over to the Girls' School at Hillsboro, and got into a fight with the Binghamites (students from Major Bingham's famous military academy). The expulsion of the whole Fraternity was demanded, and five were actually expelled. One of them took sick with pneumonia and was unable to leave. His mother came on to nurse him, but he died. The whole student body followed the hearse in procession for about two miles on the Durham road in the snow on a moonlight night.

"Mr. Dixon's sermon on the night following this occasion was one of the most powerful that ever fell from human lips. There was conviction of sin; no escape but the grace and mercy of God. The whole congregation pled for forgiveness. The preacher was a resurrected Elijah, and every man present will carry the recollection of that hour to his dying day. Truly he was anointed of the Most High!"

To A.C. Dixon himself the experience was an assurance of God's seal upon his ministry. Certain it is that no other fruit of it was more remarkable or of greater importance than this which ripened at the educational heart of his beloved native State in the days of his youth.
CHAPTER VI

AN OLD-TIME ROMANCE

It cannot be supposed that a young man in his early twenties, brimming over with health of body, vigor of mind, and a keen ambition to make the most of life, was without the natural desire for the rounding-out of life's full purpose.

In the midst of his busy work at Chapel Hill, and of the contact into which it brought him with every angle of other people's lives, there were lonely hours in which the young pastor poured out the sacred longings of his heart to God. To the end of his life he loved the society of young folks, and when the tides of youth were surging within him, Clarence Dixon was a happy and welcome figure among the young people of his own age. Indeed, there were times when his handsome face and form, and his gifts and graces of mind and manner, made him more popular among some of the young ladies than he cared to be.

He began to realize that not only the satisfaction of his own heart, but the value and stability of his work as a pastor, would some day demand the establishment of a home, with God's best gift of a true help-meet at his side. Yet he determined that nothing less than love deep enough to stand the severest tests of life should induce him to marry. Two years went by at Chapel Hill before he met the one in whom his ideals were realized, and who was able to challenge the best that was in him, teaching him many a lesson of patience and self-control before the prize was won.

The summer of 1877 saw at Chapel Hill the launching of a new educational idea which did much to raise the standard of general education throughout North Carolina. A Teachers' Training School, or Normal School as it was afterwards called, was instituted for a few weeks at midsummer in connection with the University. A far-reaching innovation was the admission of
women students with the men, and this marked the beginning of State aid for the education of women. Short courses of study were provided for post-graduates and for those who did not desire a full University training. Lecturers from the outside were secured to join members of the University faculty upon the teaching staff. The college buildings, emptied of their regular occupants during the long vacation, provided plentiful accommodation for summer visitors.

The first year's experiment was highly successful, and Clarence availed himself of its privileges to the full. At the second Normal School in 1878, one of the visiting lecturers, with Shakespeare as his subject, was Mr. Walter Hines Page, then a young man about his own age. Mr. Page too, was a native of North Carolina, and had recently graduated from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. A friendship began between the two men which was to last until their lives should once more be cast together, many years hence, in the service of a land across the ocean.

The presence of a woman upon the teaching staff of the Normal School introduced a further innovation. Miss Coe, a well-known Northern pioneer in education, came to give a series of lectures on the new Kindergarten methods for the training of young children.

Among the visiting students who came to Chapel Hill in 1878 especially for this course was Miss Susan Mary Faison, a sprightly young woman from a typical low-country plantation home near Warsaw in Duplin County. She was one of a large family, much scattered in age. Her only sister, Cornelia Viviana, two years older than herself, was married to Major De Vane, a lawyer of Wilmington, North Carolina. Of her four brothers, Nathan and Leonidas were a few years younger than she, while a distance of sixteen and eighteen years lay between herself and the two youngest, DeBerniere and Moseley. To these little fellows she was almost maternal in her sisterly devotion, lifting every possible burden from the shoulders of her invalid mother, who was troubled with failing sight.

Mary had resolved to devote herself to a teaching career, beginning with her two small brothers at home. In partial preparation for her life-work she had registered as a student in the Normal School.
On the opening day, it happened that the young pastor of the Baptist church was returning to Chapel Hill from a preaching visit at the very time when the prospective summer students were arriving. The account of his first meeting with "Miss Mollie" is given in his own words:

"The day was hot, and a company of us were on a stage-coach rattling over rather a rough road from the nearby station at Durham. A discussion arose among the passengers as to whether women ought to speak in public, suggested by the fact that a noted woman lecturer from New York was to be among the teachers of the Normal Training School. Among the debaters of this question was a young woman whose quiet yet vivacious manner and intelligent reasoning attracted my attention. She seemed to have a mind of her own, with the courage of her convictions; and when I looked into her face, there was beauty with a charm of personality that fascinated me. As I cultivated her acquaintance during the weeks that followed, I found she was more conversant than I with the best literature, and her ideals of life were deeply spiritual. She loved Christ, the Bible and the Church.

"It did not take me long to decide that she was just the one I needed for a wife. After her return to her home near Warsaw I went down to see her with a proposal of marriage, which was promptly rejected, because it seemed to interfere with her recent vow of consecration to the work of teaching. However, I was encouraged by the permission to visit her again some time, should I feel inclined to do so."

Miss Mollie’s grandfather, William Faison, had been one of the largest landowners in North Carolina, and had bequeathed thousands of acres of farming land in Duplin County to his children. He had owned over five hundred slaves, and knew them all by name. His wealth had been gained partly by raising cotton and corn, and partly by trading in naval stores, landed at Wilmington. But he was noted for his kindness to the poor as well as for his shrewdness in business. When he died, it was said of him, "No one was ever turned away from his barn empty." He made a point of wearing homespun from the local handlooms, to help provide employment for the country women.

His son, Abner Moseley, Miss Mollie’s father, inherited a goodly portion of the estate, including a stretch of farming land known as "Hicks Blanchard,” not far from Warsaw. Soon after his marriage to a distant cousin, he built upon it a large
house of the pillared colonial type, with wide "galleries," or porches, above and below. It took five years to complete, and a landscape gardener from Philadelphia was engaged to lay out the plantation, which received the name of Wood Lawn. This home became a hospitable center for the large Faison clan, and the still wider circle of friends. At times as many as twenty guests would be staying in the house. Entertaining was no problem on a plantation where food of every kind was prodigally plentiful, and where slave-labor made life easy.

In those days Southern girls had no need to spoil their pretty hands or weary themselves with housework. For all that, they were not idle, for there was always much to be done in caring for the welfare of their negroes. There were the cabins to be inspected, weekly supplies to be cut and apportioned for the necessary clothing, advice to be given on the feeding and training of the pickaninnies, large and small, the sick to be visited, and sympathy and help dispensed in general to the human family sheltering under the wing of "the big house." It was customary for the white women of the household to take an active part in the religious instruction of the negroes. Bible classes were often held for the adults and for the children. During the stay of a visiting preacher, the house servants were usually called together for a service. Frequently a large arbor or more permanent meeting-place was erected on the plantation in which the negroes could worship. In other cases they were allowed membership in the white churches, having special seats assigned to them.

Among the slaves there were often preachers who knew how to tell the Gospel story in quaint and vivid language, and one of the greatest delights in "the quarters" was the singing of hymns. Their innate love of rhythm, changing and adapting the melodies caught from their "white folks," produced the weird beauty of the negro spirituals, inimitable by white singers. Those who have ever heard the colored people singing their own music in their own way can never forget the emotion, inexplicable and elemental, that surges through their being at the melodies and harmonies and rhythms, which seem to spring from the heart of Nature herself. Compared with the classic beauty of music produced by the white races it is like the free, rippling current of a mountain stream in contrast with the
liquid splashing of an artificial fountain in its marble basin.

Mollie Faison’s home at Wood Lawn was a household such as this. She was seven years old when the horror of Civil War swept down upon the Southland. Her father, a member of the State Senate, joined the Confederate army and became the commander of one of Lee’s regiments. Wood Lawn shared the desolations of war. One of the slaves who bravely refused to permit a band of marauding Northern soldiers to enter the house was shot on the doorstep. The furniture was smashed, all available food stores were taken, the horses and cattle stolen, even the fruit trees slashed and destroyed.

Colonel Faison’s slaves were devoted to him. When freedom was proclaimed they all refused to leave Wood Lawn except one family who went to Liberia. Old “Uncle Henry” stayed on in his little cabin through all the aftermath of upheaval and change. The faithful old servant was nearly a hundred years old when he died, and members of the Faison clan came from far and near to attend his funeral.

Mollie’s first venture away from home was to attend a girl’s school at Wilson, North Carolina, with a finishing course later on in a Baltimore college. On returning home she went to her pastor, and told him that she wished to make public confession of Christ by being baptized and uniting with the church. This step marked the beginning of a life of whole-hearted devotion to Christ.

It was no wonder that the young pastor at Chapel Hill found it easy to fall in love with so attractive a girl. But, while the attraction was undoubtedly mutual, Miss Mollie had no serious thought in her mind of settling down to married life, least of all as the wife of an impecunious young pastor. Love deep enough to sweep aside all counter claims had not as yet been awakened in her heart. With her lover, however, the determination to win her outweighed every other ambition except that of loyalty to God and faithfulness to his calling.

The courtships of that day were spiced with an intensity, a grace, a vivacity, a seriousness about which the more sophisticated young people of to-day know little. No other chase was half so exciting either to the huntsman or the hunted. The goal to be attained was so high, so permanent when reached! Such fluctuations between depths of despair and ecstasies of bliss! No
girl would dream of allowing the victory to be an easy one, and yet if final surrender was secretly determined upon, the battle-thrusts must not be severe enough to cause fatal wounds.

Miss Mollie's first refusal was accepted then with philosophic equanimity as the first move in the game. Letters telling of everyday activities at Chapel Hill, and expatiating on the beauties of its natural surroundings, began to flow towards Wood Lawn. They contained only enough ardor to indicate that there was no slackening of purpose in the writer's intention. In one of them is a reference to his first contact, thus early, with one of those mechanical wonders which were to revolutionize the coming century.

"After preaching I went to see and hear what is to me the most wonderful invention of the age. You have no doubt heard of it—the phonograph, an instrument invented by Mr. Edison, which records the human voice or any sound, and then reproduces it any length of time afterwards."

By September another visit to Wood Lawn is anticipated with some misgiving.

"I must insist that you tell me before then if you decide against me. I have fully determined to return to the Seminary if you will not consent to marry me. You need not be surprised if you see me driving up about next Monday week. I will be glad to meet your sister if she is there when I come.

"I went hunting again yesterday evening, chased a squirrel, but didn't get it. I wonder if that is prophetic of another chase I am making?"

Postponement of the visit is not easy to bear.

_Monday, September 16th._ "After a day of running about I find myself sitting in my room at twilight and wondering again what you are doing and where you are. I look out into the campus, and the mellow light over everything—trees, grass, well and strolling students—makes a scene lovely enough to satisfy anyone, but it has a shade of sadness over it as I think how happy I might have been if I could have gone to Wood Lawn to-day. I can hardly wait till October, and if I have to wait longer still, —well, I don't want to think about it."

Meanwhile Miss Mollie is not as indifferent as she lets it appear. Torn between the irresistible pull of her heart-strings, and the warnings of her mind that she knows very little of her
lover beyond his personal attractiveness and his repute as a preacher, she determines to make some confidential enquiries of one whose judgment she can trust. Her cousin, Dr. James Dunn Hufham, editor of The Biblical Recorder, the Baptist church paper of North Carolina, was in close touch with his denomination all over the State. His knowledge would be accurate, and his opinion of real value. Dr. Hufham answered her queries promptly.

"Your letter, a very mysterious document, certainly, has just reached me, and I give you a candid reply. The young man you speak of is by all odds the first preacher of his age in the State,—singularly gifted, earnestly pious, and well educated. His father is a man of large round-about common sense and great strength of character; well-off for the mountain region in which he lives; has made money, but has used it freely in educating his children. I know him well, and I know few men whom I admire more. The mother's family have been in some instances exceptionally brilliant people."

In spite of such recommendation, however, Miss Mollie's full capitulation was not easily brought about. She was the adored and petted daughter of a Southern plantation home, worshipped by her brothers, the center of a circle of friends and admirers who were loth to lose her from their midst. Neither must it be forgotten that—as always between mountain and plain—a lack of understanding, amounting almost to antipathy, existed between the comfortable, well-to-do planters' families as well as the fashionable, wealthy city dwellers in the eastern part of the State, and the more rugged, simple folk of the western highlands, though the contrast with the real "mountain whites" was greater still.

The months rolled past without any definite decision being arrived at, and Clarence devoted himself with greater intensity to his pastoral work, ambitious to succeed for her sake, and finding comfort in sharing the joys and sorrows of his flock. But he shrank more and more from the light-hearted social intercourse in which he had formerly found pleasure.

"Somehow, since I met you, I feel differently in company, especially with young ladies. I am constantly reminded of the one I love above all others, and it requires an effort to keep out of silent reveries. . . . Twelve months ago, no one could have convinced me that I would ever love
a human being as I do you. I feel that it has refined my nature and
made me a better man."

And again:

"When I come to my room after supper, I sit down and muse, as I
look into the fire, and wonder where you are, and wish that you may be
sometimes thinking of me. When I take up a book, it must be interesting,
or it can't get my attention. Why, why is it thus? Why do I continue to
love you so dearly, and to feel that without you I can never be happy or con-
tented, unless it be God's will that we should spend life together? Unless
it is to be so, I shall never understand it here, and will have to wait God's
good time to show me the reason for it. For a long time I could not be-
lieve that 'all things work together for good to them that love God.'
There is nothing I believe now more firmly, and I am willing to await
God's time to explain to me how it can be true."

The purchase of a pointer, who became his inseparable com-
panion, eased the loneliness a little, and with "Tasso" curled
up at his feet, some of his leisure hours were spent in elaborate
industry with a scroll saw, making picture-frames and other
knick-knacks.

Having sent him back from another visit to Wood Lawn
with a re-iterated "no," Miss Mollie threw out the teasing hint
of a possible meeting on the occasion of the annual Christmas
Ball at the State University.

"The 'reveries of a bachelor' just now are not to be envied," he wrote
back, "though I thank and admire you for your frankness. After I left you
it was some time before I could pray, and mean it, 'Thy will be done!'

"With my feelings on the subject of dancing, of course I could not
enjoy your visit to the Ball. I don't think I ever told you what was the
first thing that attracted my serious attention to you after meeting you
on the hack between Durham and Chapel Hill last summer. Mrs.Taylor
told a friend of mine that there was a young lady at Mrs.Grist's who said
that she sometimes danced at home, but on hearing that the Baptist pastor
here had requested Baptists not to dance while at Chapel Hill she had
determined not to do so. I then thought you were at Mrs.Kirkland's, but I
determined to cultivate that young lady's acquaintance. What was my
pleasant surprise to find that it was you!

"I would not scold you even if I had the right. I do wrong so much
myself that I do not feel bold to rebuke wrong in others. I wish I had
greater boldness, made by the consciousness of always doing right, and then
I could be more faithful to my friends."
Wood Lawn, the Faison Homestead near Warsaw, Duplin County, N.C.

"The Rose of Duplin"
The singing of his choir and congregation was always a matter of importance to Clarence Dixon, and a choral concert was arranged for Christmas Eve.

"The concert passed off very pleasantly to-night," he wrote, on returning to his rooms. "Whatever else may be done badly by our church, no complaint can be made against the singing.

"I have received an invitation to eat turkey and 'possum for dinner tomorrow. I am sure to go, cold or warm. While I eat the turkey I will think of you, because I went turkey-hunting the other day and shot three times at the same turkey but didn't get a feather. The first two were wing shots, then I sat down and called him up, and shot deliberately, making sure of him; but he flew off merrily. I invited myself to the place where he lit, but he didn't come out to receive me, nor could I persuade him to so much as hint that he was pleased with my presence. I excused him on the ground that perhaps he was wounded and would like to have rest. And I shouldered my gun and wended my way homewards, hoping that the wounds would cure and that he might live to a happy old age in his native woods.

"While I eat the 'possum I shall think of myself, creeping about through the darkness of life, climbing the persimmon tree of old bachelorhood, and eating the grapes of solitude until the hunter, Death, shall overtake me. I do not mean, however, to remain up that green persimmon tree all through life, provided that I shall ever find in the 'possum race one whose company I could prefer to loneliness. I suppose 'possums are in some respects like men; if they can't do as they wish, they must do the best they can, especially if some of them are preachers, and almost convinced that the Scriptures make it requisite, that, to be a pastor, he must not enjoy the sweets of single blessedness.

"Having said so much in Mr.'Possum's name, perhaps I ought to go further. I can truly say that I had no thought of marrying right now until I became acquainted with you. In all my advances to you I have been intensely in earnest.

"It is now half after twelve o'clock and Christmas! I must go to sleep, lest Santa Claus come and find me awake, and leave me empty socks tomorrow. Good night!"

A visit to Wood Lawn in February brought a partial realization of the young pastor's hopes, although there was to be no public announcement of an engagement. It was, however, with buoyant happiness as to his private affairs, that he was able to devote his energies to the notable series of meetings for the University men, described at the close of the last chapter.
Thursday night, March 6th, 1879.

"I have been very busy the last ten days; having to make and preach a sermon a day besides visiting extensively. But I am never too busy to stop awhile now and then and indulge a sweet reverie, in which the 'Rose of Duplin' is the central figure."

His letters overflow with spiritual joy as he reports the daily good tidings of conversion, including that of one of the Ball Managers and of

"Mr. Aycock, whom you doubtless remember as the young man who made such a good speech at the close of the Normal School. I have kept no account of the number of conversions, fearing that I may become too soon satisfied with the work done."

After preaching every day for more than three weeks, the young evangelist felt "as fresh and strong as ever," grateful to God for the privilege of winning souls.

"The Mr. Faison who professed religion is now an active Christian. Talks and prays in prayer meeting. Whoever saw a Faison who did not do well what he undertook? It is in their blood to be energetic; I judge from the two I know rather intimately!"

Towards the end of May, Clarence paid a visit to his parents in Shelby, and broke to them the news of his engagement.

"Father and mother were delighted at the prospect of my getting married soon. Father sets so much by the opinions of Brother Hufham, who told him enough about you to make him like you before he sees you. My little sisters make home very cheerful and happy. Addie, the youngest, loves me so well that she can hardly stay a minute without having her arms around my neck. I know they will love you when they see you."

As the summer of 1879 drew near, Mary Faison fluctuated between her original plan of attending the Normal School once more, and the invitation to join a party of friends for a summer trip to the Western mountains, then just opening to tourists as a national playground. The mountains won her choice, and it was on the summit of Mount Mitchell, as she afterwards confessed, that the overwhelming conviction came to her that life without Clarence Dixon would hardly be worth living.

Yet upon his urgent plea that the marriage should take place before the beginning of a new pastoral year, the thought of
leaving her invalid mother caused her still to shrink from setting a definite date.

"I do think you have made me suffer enough, don't you?" young Dixon wrote her in September. "One whole year in almost continual suspense! I am so constituted that I can stand disappointment, grief, anything better than suspense. If the decision regarding January is to be adverse and you to abide by it, I want to know it as soon as possible. I have no idea at all as to what I would do, whether I would remain at Chapel Hill, or go to some other place in North Carolina or to the West or to London or New Zealand."

Correspondence between the lovers languished in the fall months. But the church minutes of the Baptist Church at Chapel Hill tell us that on Sunday morning, November 7th, the pastor tendered his resignation and that it was accepted.

It is quite evident that the indefinite postponement of his hopes had brought matters to a climax and had led Clarence to decide that he must leave the University town with its many charms and its opportunities. Perhaps in new surroundings it would be easier to blot from his mind the happy visions that had filled it, and forget the heart-hunger that almost unmanned him at times. Calls to important city pastorates in Raleigh, Charlotte, Atlanta and other places had not moved him, though many a man of his age would have felt flattered by the praise and commendation that was beginning to pour in from many sides. But now there was an urge to put more distance between himself and Wood Lawn, and even the memory-laden surroundings of Chapel Hill.

An invitation to accept the pastorate of the First Baptist Church at Asheville in the heart of his beloved mountain country, was like a call of the blood. There, among his own folk, whose ways and thoughts and feelings he understood best, God would surely help him to forget his own troubles and put his whole heart and energy into the great work of soul-winning. But the realization that she was actually to lose him caused a quick revulsion in the mind of Miss Mollie. A farewell visit to Wood Lawn sent her lover back to Chapel Hill with the bounding joy of a new hope, even though he must soon depart for the western mountains.
Asheville, the oldest, largest, and best-known town in the Switzerland of North Carolina, is cradled in the narrow valley of the French Broad River, spreading out over the surrounding hills. Its own elevation is about two thousand feet, and round about on every side stretch countless summits and ranges.

The Pisgah mountains on the south-west are nearest, while the magnificent chain of the Balsams lifts fifteen peaks over six thousand feet high against the glory of sunset. To the north are the more distant Craggies and the Black Mountains. This last short range contains more than a dozen lofty summits, of which Mount Mitchell, soaring 6711 feet, is the highest point east of the Rockies. If the far-away line of the Great Smokies on the Tennessee border be included, the whole region comprises eighty-two mountains over five thousand feet, while those over four thousand feet are innumerable.

Like a jewel in the midst of this marvelous setting lies Asheville. The encircling peaks seem to hover around it like ethereal dreams. A strange sense of elevation, and the boundless expanse of the heavens above, give good cause for naming this region "the Land of the Sky."

The mountain sides are clothed with exquisite beauty. Far up on the heights are groves of balsam fir, aloof and hushed, and fragrant as a temple filled with incense. These shelter the thick carpets of fern-like mosses, dew-drenched by the imprisoned mists. Beneath the moss, the cool moisture gathers into trickling rivulets which unite in crystal streams to carry life and refreshment to the thirsty land below. On the lower slopes are the forests of oak and beech, of cherry and ash, enshrining their treasures of flowering laurel and glowing rhododendron. Azaleas run like flame through the tangle of undergrowth, setting whole mountain sides ablaze with fragrant fire. Underfoot
are spread the wildflowers, like fallen rainbows, intoxicating the senses with their prodigal profusion and endless variety. Can it be wondered at that Clarence Dixon loved his native mountains with the passion of a nature peculiarly sensitive to beauty?

The famous old road, over which he had traveled towards Arkansas with his father and mother nineteen years before, passed right through Asheville, the county seat of Buncombe County. The railroads could not then climb the mountain barrier, but big stage-coaches, in a radius of about sixty miles, connected Asheville with the three nearest rail terminals.

A well-known "Seminary for Young Ladies" and the Newton Academy for boys were early instruments in spreading the fame of the coming mountain resort. Both schools were Presbyterian, as was the first church in Asheville. Then the Methodists began in a wooden school-house, and the Episcopalian followed. The Baptists entered last upon the field, but soon became firmly established in the town. Through their missionary zeal and the simplicity and Scriptural appeal of their doctrine, the surrounding rural population became largely Baptist, or "Babdist" as the country people say.

The whole region was greatly affected by the Civil War. Deserters from both sides fled to the mountains, which became a refuge for desperadoes of the worst kind. But the town of Asheville continued to flourish, and a new wave of prosperity began with the influx of Northern travel. The Blue Ridge range was scaled at one point, bringing the South Carolina railroad as far as Hendersonville, less than twenty miles away.

At the time of Clarence Dixon's arrival in 1880, a more ambitious scheme was on foot to link Asheville by rail with Salisbury and the center of North Carolina. By a marvel of engineering skill another difficult spur of the Blue Ridge was conquered in a series of curves and spirals, and by tunneling through the mountain the railroad was then brought down the Swannanoa Valley to Biltmore. Asheville itself was reached in 1881, five years before the line from the South was completed.

With its glorious natural surroundings, such accessibility was soon to make Asheville one of the leading resorts of the South, a Mecca for tourists from every part of the United States. Banks, hotels, schools and churches began to multiply rapidly. The period of Clarence Dixon's pastorate coincided with this early spurt
of the modern city's phenomenal development. The First Baptist Church in which he was to minister was a substantial building of red brick in the middle of the town. It quickly became a center of live spiritual activity, for the two and a half years of his intensive labors were marked by an almost constant revival.

The initial step was systematic visitation of his people. One day he called upon the household of one of his deacons. While waiting in the parlor for the family to gather for a word of prayer, he entered into conversation with a young carpenter who was boarding in the house, and cordially invited him to attend the Baptist church. As a result, the youth accepted Christ and was baptized. He gave his life to the Christian ministry, and during his early evangelistic work in the mountains he one day led a boy to Christ. That boy was George W. Truett.

"So Truett is my grandson in the Gospel," A.C. Dixon used to say, when illustrating the far-reaching effects of personal soul-winning. "The Lord helped me win to Christ the man who won him."

A large number of men, women and children were brought to decision through personal conversation and prayer, as well as through the impassioned preaching in the church services. Within a few months, more than two hundred and fifty persons had professed faith in Christ, and the surrounding district was deeply stirred.

Clarence's new home was in a comfortable boarding house belonging to Dr. and Mrs. Millard, and known as "The Villa." It was a roomy frame building, three stories high, fronting on Haywood Street—now one of the main business streets of Asheville—and stood on two acres of open ground in which were great shade-trees and gay flower gardens. It was conveniently situated for the pastor, being only a quarter of a mile from his church.

"The western mountains were beautiful beyond description this morning," he wrote to Mollie Faison from his room at "The Villa." "Black clouds were hanging round the heads of the highest, while the sun was shining upon others, making them look like huge banks of burnished silver. I know it would have made you clap your hands with delight. I doubt whether there is on earth a more beautiful spot than this mountain region. May its beauty make me purer and more devoted to the God who made it and gave me a home in the midst of it!"
"If it will take money to make my darling happy, I know she will not be happy with me; but if she is willing to be poor for the sake of Christ, and can be made happy by all the love and devotion of which my nature is capable, she will certainly be happy. The desire to provide for your comfort has come nearer breaking my consecration to the ministry by causing me to devise ways of making money, than has anything else; but, since coming to Asheville, God has given me a stronger determination to devote every energy of my life to the one work to which He has called me, and to trust Him for a supply of my temporal wants. I am certain that God will never let us want for the necessities of life, and He will give us as much of its luxuries as will be good for us. What more ought we to ask?"

The wedding was now set for the last day of June, and the new President of Wake Forest College, Dr. T. H. Pritchard, consented to marry the young couple.

The intermediate weeks were filled with strenuous pastoral activity, which left Clarence little time for the reveries indulged in at Chapel Hill. Here his flock was more widely scattered, and it was not unusual for him to walk ten or twelve miles over the mountains to visit the more distant homes of his members. The great revolt against alcohol, which was to lead eventually to national prohibition, was already stirring North Carolina, and much excitement prevailed in Asheville before election day early in June, 1880. The young Baptist pastor addressed a large mass-meeting in the Court-house, and received an enthusiastic hearing. His church continued to grow and prosper, and he gave much time to careful preparation of his messages. The rapidly expanding Public Library provided valuable help, and the reading of George Whitefield's biography set him afire with determination to develop the evangelistic side of his ministry.

At last the long probation was over. A Sunday's preaching in Salisbury, and then a joyous welcome into the large family circle that filled and overflowed the hospitable Faison homestead near Warsaw. Clarence was accompanied by his brother Tom, who had joined him at Wake Forest after waiting impatiently for two solitary weeks since the close of the college term. Clarence was proud of the strides his young brother had made in his Freshman year, having heard that he had begun to display unexpected oratorical ability, and had been awarded the Orator's Medal.
It is Tom who supplies a reminiscence of the wedding, which took place, after all, on July 1st.

"Clarence and Mollie were married at the end of my first year in College. The event made a most vivid impression on my young imagination. Wood Lawn was a typical old-fashioned Southern mansion with wide-sweeping lawns, fringed by dense forests of untouched original growth. On the wedding day, the grounds were crowded with carriages, buggies and neighing horses from every section of Duplin and the adjoining counties. All the youth and beauty of the county seemed to be there. At the wedding dinner, the long table in the big dining-room was filled with three relays of joyous guests who sat down to a feast of good things which the present generation has forgotten how to make. I was but sixteen, and quite lost my heart to Eliza Faison, one of Mollie's pretty seventeen-year-old cousins. She promised faithfully to write to me, but I waited in vain for an answer to my first effusion. She was married that fall!

"Clarence was the big brother of my boyhood dreams, and his wedding was the first great social event in my life. I won the heart of his bride for life by my tearful account of how much I had always loved him. Especially was she moved by my story of the loneliness of the first three or four days at home on every occasion when he left for College, and how the long nine months before his possible return stretched far out into eternity in my boy's imagination."

A handsome couple they must have made—the tall slender bridegroom, on the eve of his twenty-sixth birthday, hair, mustache and eyebrows black as jet, dark eyes aglow with tawny, golden lights—and the dainty little bride, whose head did not reach his outstretched arm. The wrench of parting from her family almost overwhelmed her when the final moment came and the train began to pull out of the Warsaw depot for Raleigh, the first stage of the long westward journey. During the three hours' break in Raleigh, the staff of *The Biblical Recorder* called in full force upon the bridal pair, and Mollie was amused and somewhat dismayed at being addressed as "Sister Dixon." The last link with her own relatives was severed when she waved a tearful farewell to her brother-in-law, Major De Vane, as the train steamed out of Raleigh for Charlotte. Of her husband's family she knew only Tom as yet.

On arrival at Shelby the next morning, a handsome new equipage with a fine span of horses awaited the young couple.
"My heart was in my mouth," Mollie wrote her mother. "I was wondering what kind of people I was about to meet. My imagination pictured all kinds of things. But my spirits rose as I found myself dashing along in such good style."

The Dixon home was glimpsed several times from a distance as the carriage rounded the curves of the hilly road from Shelby. Parents and children were waiting on the front porch and hastened out to the gate to greet the newly-married pair as they alighted.

"They gave me a cordial welcome," wrote the bride. "Mr. Dixon's father is a decidedly prepossessing man. He is tall and erect, his hair and beard are perfectly white, though he looks strong and vigorous, and has beautiful teeth. He is easy in his manner, and pleasant in conversation.

"Mrs. Dixon is tall and slender, with traces of beauty. She was dressed in black with a lace necktie. Delia and Addie are very pretty children indeed. Frank, the little lame boy, is rather small for his age, pale, with light hair and brown eyes, has a good face and is rather quiet.

"They are all so affectionate to me. The boys both kissed me this morning and called me 'sister.' I am proud of my new relations."

The unexpected refinements of a well-furnished home, with spotless linen above and below stairs, flowers and shining table silver, quickly dispelled Mollie's preconceived notions regarding a Western household. A thoughtful invitation to rest until evening in the cool, sweet guest-room, with luncheon served upstairs for two, helped both bride and groom to look their freshest and feel their best at the evening gathering of relations and friends who came to welcome them. The days flew by in a round of sociability, with music and "ten-pins" and animated conversation for entertainment.

"I am happier than I ever expected to be," wrote Mollie to her parents, "and feel stronger and better than when I left home. The children are sweet and well-behaved. I had no idea I would care for Mr. Dixon's family as I do. He preached yesterday in the morning and at night, and I was introduced to many of his friends. The congregation had a decidedly Western appearance."

But her prejudices were melting fast in the glow of her husband's presence and of actual contact with his native surroundings. Clarence exulted in her delight over the magnificent moun-
tain panorama on the two days' journey to Asheville by carriage through the rugged glories of Hickory Nut Gap.

The comfortable appointments of "The Villa," and the pleasant society of its guests, including some kindred spirits from old-world Charleston, was a satisfying climax. Clarence's collection of pictures—"the walls of our room are just covered with them"—and the enormous quantity of comforts, blankets and quilts, which he had purchased to ensure her protection from any possible chill of the mountain air, greatly amused his bride. Her vivacious letters to the family at Wood Lawn during the ensuing months picture the young pastor at work for his Lord with the new background of a home atmosphere.

The joyous comradeship in work and in play was a good tonic for Clarence, whose passionate spiritual intensity might otherwise have burned up his physical strength. His marriage helped to give balance to his work as nothing else could have done.

From one of his professors at Wake Forest he had learned the habit of complete concentration. On countless occasions it stood him in good stead, enabling him to shut himself in from his surroundings. Many a sermon was thus prepared under difficult conditions. But the habit of abstraction led him occasionally into comical situations. He is said once to have escorted a young lady to a service at which he was preaching, and was naturally expected to take her home again. But so absorbed did he become in his message that when the service was over, he slipped quietly away from the minister's study and returned home. Not until hours afterwards did he remember the young lady who had waited in vain for her inattentive escort. At last she had been forced to realize with indignation that she had been forgotten, and it is said that the neglect was never fully forgiven in spite of contrite apologies.

It may be that Mollie had heard this story; at any rate in their early married days she mischievously put him to the test. One of the deacons of the Asheville church had taken supper with them at "The Villa." As they walked to church together, the two men became so absorbed in conversation, that when Mollie glided away home neither of them missed her. At the close of the service Clarence looked about in vain for his wife, only then realizing her absence.
The young Baptist preacher had already won golden opinions outside his own denomination. Among the Presbyterians and Methodists and Episcopalians his presence was always welcomed, and he was on the friendliest terms with the respective ministers and their families. In the most intimate circle of friends was the family of Mr. Baldwin, a Baptist minister from Philadelphia, who lived opposite "The Villa."

"They are as happy as birds," Mollie wrote to her mother. "We hear them across the street every morning, the mother or one of the daughters playing the organ, and all the children and servants joining in the song. Mr. Baldwin comes over and sits and prays with us. I wish you could be here and enjoy the services on Sunday morning and night at the church, and the open-air service at six conducted by Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Dixon on the top of Battery Porter opposite here. Nearly all the visitors to Asheville go up there to get a good view of the sunset, and in that way many people are reached."

On his constant rounds of visiting, Clarence was usually accompanied by his wife. She loved to hear him talk and pray with the people, and was no small aid in attracting the children from the poor cabins on the outskirts of the town to attend Sunday School. He often drew her attention to the wide-awake intelligence of even the poorest children, to their unfailing love of their beautiful mountain scenery, and their eagerness to point out the prettiest views to appreciative visitors.

As Clarence had prophesied, his wife's health became robust with long walks in the brisk, clear atmosphere and the enjoyment of a life filled with service for others.

Once a whole day was set aside in order to perform a marriage ceremony in a far-away log cabin. They stopped frequently on the long climb to rest and to gather the plentiful chinquapins showered at their feet. When at last the cabin was reached, they found it crowded. Seated upon a bed in one corner were the bridal pair, the bride nervous and half-scared, attended by a group of gigglimg "waiters." Clarence and Mollie could hardly retain their composure, and dared not catch each other's eye during the ceremony. When it was over, they stayed to partake of a surprisingly good repast served in the open air; but a chivalrous offer to lend the pastor's wife a donkey with a cav-
alry saddle for the return journey was declined, as she feared that she might be pitched over his head on the steep descent.

Some distance away from Asheville there lived an elderly woman of saintly character and of considerable wealth. She adapted one of her barns for use as a meeting-house, and invited the young Baptist preacher to hold services there once a month, gathering in the people from all the surrounding district to hear his message. There were many conversions here as well as in the Asheville church.

At the end of the first year's work a needed rest was afforded by a Christmas visit to the Dixon home in Shelby. The journey over the rough mountain roads was no easy one, for the mild winter weather had turned every road into a succession of mud-holes, and three days of steady driving were needed to cover the sixty miles.

The older generation was fast passing away. During the autumn, both of Clarence's grandmothers had died—first Amanda's mother, and then old Suzannah Hambright Dixon in her 104th year. Just before her death, the aged lady had taken part in the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the battle of King's Mountain. In all South Carolina, she was the sole survivor of Revolutionary days, and was given the seat of honor at the ceremony.

January, 1881, saw the first parting between Clarence and his wife, when Mollie paid a few weeks' visit to her parents at Wood Lawn. Redoubled energy in his work made the lonely days pass more quickly. News of a revival in Shelby, and of the conversion of personal friends for whom he had long been praying, set his heart afire with longing for a fresh manifestation of God's power in Asheville. As a member of the Prohibition committee, he sought to stir up the western part of the State on the anti-liquor question. A revival broke out at Old Fort under his preaching, and he superintended the erection of a new church there. He also took a trip over the mountains for some meetings in Hendersonville, riding through the snow on the back of a shaggy, black mule.

Amid his other work, he was busy preparing a little home to which he eagerly anticipated welcoming his wife on her return. In the corner of the tree-shaded yard surrounding "The Villa," and separated from it only by the greensward, stood
a small red brick building which had been used as an estate office. With but little alteration, it was easily transformed into a cozy two-roomed bungalow. Every spare moment was spent in adding to its beauty and comfort, and in this Clarence was aided by Mrs. Millard, who had quite lost her heart to the young couple.

Their re-union was followed soon afterwards by an event which crowned their happiness, for on May 7th a little son was born, whom they named Clarence Howard. The experience of fatherhood was unspeakably sacred and joyful to the young pastor, and no place ever contained more happiness than the brick bungalow at "The Villa."

Meanwhile forces were at work that were to change the current of Clarence Dixon's life. One of his church-members, Colonel Connelly, a distinguished citizen of Asheville, was much in demand as a lay preacher of unusual spiritual power, and gave him constant assistance in his ministry. Mrs. Connelly was a daughter of Mr. James Thomas of Richmond, Virginia, another Baptist layman well-known for his Christian zeal. On visiting his daughter's home in Asheville, Mr. Thomas had been greatly impressed by the evangelistic gifts of her pastor and had written more than once urging the church to spare him for a series of meetings in Richmond.

By the spring of 1882 Clarence saw his way clear to accept the invitation. Undreamed of by him, this was the first link in a chain of circumstances that was to draw him far afield, not only from Asheville, but from his native State, in which he would never again permanently reside. But his love for the South, and for North Carolina in particular, never waned. It would always be home to him and to his wife. They could truly echo the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes:

"Where we love is home,
   Home that our feet may leave, but not our hearts,
   Though o'er us shines the jasper-lighted dome,
   The chain may lengthen, but it never parts!"
CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST CALL OF A GREAT CITY

It is probable that nothing was further from the thoughts of Clarence Dixon, as he made his preparations for the trip to Virginia, than that he was on the verge of momentous changes.

The invitation sent by Mr. Thomas, and shared in by his pastor, Dr. J. B. Hawthorne, was for two weeks of evangelistic services during the month of March.

The historic old First Baptist Church of Richmond was unusually crowded on the opening day. Unknown to the preacher, there was a man seated in the congregation that Sunday morning who had come all the way from Baltimore, Maryland, in order to be present. He represented a movement among the Baptists of Baltimore to establish a new church on the rapidly developing northern outskirts of that city.

The outlook seemed so hopeful that it was a matter of vital importance to secure the right leader for a strong future work. A retired Baptist minister from North Carolina, then living in Baltimore, had suggested the name of the young Asheville pastor, whom he knew and loved, as unquestionably the very man for them. Hearing that Dixon was to preach in Richmond, the committee appointed Mr. George O. Manning, one of their number, to go and hear him in order to obtain first-hand impressions.

From the moment when the young North Carolinian crossed the platform with his quick elastic step, Mr. Manning's attention was caught and riveted by the magnetic power of his personality, and the aroma of physical and mental vigor that exuded from him.

But external things were quickly forgotten in the soul-stirring impression made by the prayer and sermon that followed. Simplicity and directness and fervor revealed such a holy intimacy with God and such a fitness to lead men to Christ that
Mr. Manning could hardly refrain from leaving the church at once to telegraph to Baltimore that the man whom they sought had been found.

Before the day ended, he had invited A.C.Dixon to visit Baltimore at the close of the Richmond meetings, and although the young husband and father was not inclined to lengthen his absence from home without good cause, a tentative promise was given.

For the time being, his energies were entirely absorbed by the work in hand, which quickly grew, under the blessing of God, into a genuine revival. Many conversions took place among the students of Richmond College, and of the "Female Institute", a fashionable girls' school. At the same time the lowest dregs of society were reached, and some of the notoriously bad characters of the town became new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The preacher who knows how to value the right kind of music as a partner to his preaching rather than as a mere framework for it is all the rarer when his own gift is of outstanding worth. From his earliest days in the ministry, although himself untrained as a musician, A.C.Dixon had a keen appreciation of the power of spiritual song. Like D.L.Moody, he perceived its psychological effect upon an audience, and its welding influence when everyone took part in it.

"I am delighted with the congregational singing here," he wrote from Richmond. "Hawthorne believes in it, and has all his hymns for Sunday struck off on slips and scattered over his church, so that all may sing. They have a very large organ, but on Sunday night the organ was literally drowned by the congregation. It was like 'the sound of many waters.' I swam in an ocean of melody—a good preparation for preaching."

The two weeks' meeting in Richmond lengthened out into a month, and meanwhile the committee in Baltimore had not been idle. It was more than a year since they had first met, at the call of Dr. Franklin H.Kerfoot, pastor of the Eutaw Place Church, to organize a Sunday School in the new and growing district around the intersection of St. Paul Street and Boundary Avenue. Many of the residences fast springing up in that region were occupied by Baptists, and plans for erecting a beautiful Gothic Chapel to seat five hundred people were awaiting their fulfillment until the right leader should be found. Mr. Manning's
report on his visit to Richmond was heard with great satisfaction, and Dr. Kerfoot definitely invited the young pastor-evangelist to preach at Eutaw Place early in April.

For the first time there came to A.C.Dixon a dim sense that God might be calling him to a wider field of activity than he had pictured for himself in his beloved Southland. Will a burning call to the life of an evangelist make necessary a renunciation of that settled home-life for which his heart is yearning? Or can his evangelistic gifts be exercised in the pastorate? Are Richmond and Baltimore seeking from him more than a temporary visit? Before leaving Richmond he received an intimation that the Second Baptist Church did indeed intend calling him as pastor; and on reaching Baltimore, Mr. Manning and his committee laid before him their plans for the new church enterprise, asking him to become its leader.

The impression made by A.C. Dixon's short stay in Baltimore was deep and instantaneous. Not only by his preaching, but by his modesty and winsomeness he won all hearts. He, in turn, was greatly drawn to the Baltimore people, and promised to think seriously of accepting their proposition.

By the end of April, he was once more at home in North Carolina, and gave himself heart and soul to the work of his Asheville church, for even if he should decide to go to Baltimore, months must pass before the new chapel could be erected. News reached him in June that the foundation-stone had been laid, and that all would be ready for beginning in December.

But now a new situation arose which threw him upon God in a fresh intensity of prayer for guidance. The Baptists of North Carolina, who greatly out-numbered any other denomination in the State, were stirred into action by the rumor that their outstanding preacher among the younger men was likely to leave them.

Such a loss was not to be thought of. Dr. Pritchard had just resigned the presidency of Wake Forest College to re-enter the pulpit, and believing it to be the surest way of retaining A.C. Dixon in North Carolina, the college trustees, by a unanimous vote, called him to the vacant position. At the same time they wrote an urgent letter to Baltimore, requesting his release from any promise by which he might feel himself bound. This request was courteously but decidedly refused, for the Baltimoreans
had a strong conviction that a young man of twenty-eight with a rare talent for preaching the Gospel was better fitted to exercise his gift in a populous center like Baltimore with its half-a-million inhabitants, than to become president of a college.

For A.C. Dixon himself it was a period of deep heart-searching. It was, as he began to realize, a parting of the ways. Should he dedicate his life to educational work or to preaching? He longed to serve his own beloved State, and the opportunity for influencing hundreds of young men for God in their impressionable years was vastly attractive. He thought of Leonidas Faison and his own two brothers, Tom and Frank, now among the students at Wake Forest.

To step into the presidency of his Alma Mater was a most flattering proposal in view of his age. The prospect of a settled home for years to come, the nearness to the family circles at Wood Lawn and at Shelby, made the proposition all the more tempting. Yet in his heart of hearts there was no hesitation. God had called him to preach the Gospel, and at whatever cost of personal pride and ambition, or of natural desire to ensure comfort for his wife and little son, he must follow the call. He wrote his decision to the trustees at Wake Forest and told the committee in Baltimore that he was ready to come north as soon as he was needed.

As he looked back over his work in Asheville, his heart overflowed with gratitude to God for the experiences which had come to him there. In less than three years he had known the joy of leading hundreds of people to Christ, and of building up a large and active congregation whom he could trust to continue the work of soul-winning. To bid farewell to these people of the Western mountains, so akin to him in spirit and understanding, was no easy task. Yet his heart leaped with a holy ambition as he looked forward to the expansion of opportunity which the future was opening.

Another tempting offer had now to be considered. The Baltimore committee invited him to spend four months abroad at their expense in rest and travel, that he might better prepare for the great work they felt sure awaited him. But this offer was declined. The intervening weeks were spent in evangelistic work, and in September he was called to Baltimore, for the erection of the Chapel was proceeding rapidly. Through the mis-
sionary zeal of its first pastor, Dr. Richard Fuller, the Eutaw Place Church had founded three other churches in twelve years. Now, under Dr. Kerfoot, its second pastor, this missionary church was willing to offer forty-one more of its members for a similar purpose, to be joined by a few from other churches. The constitution of the new Immanuel Baptist Church was framed in mid-October, and A.C.Dixon was formally elected pastor.

With the advent of wife and little son the young pastor’s heart was well content. One morning he opened a letter with the Shelby postmark. It was from his father. The farmer-preacher had a horror of the city milk of those days, which lacked the rich, yellow cream of the country dairy. With a smile across the breakfast table A.C.Dixon read aloud: “My dear boy, whatever you do, keep a cow! Do not risk your life with city milk.” “It would take a good slice of my salary to follow father’s advice here,” he laughed, “but I tell you, Mollie, there’s a good illustration there that will last me for ever. I’ll tell the people we need the nourishment of God’s unadulterated Word.”

At last Immanuel Chapel was ready for occupation, and the opening services were held on the tenth of December. On that Sunday a great storm broke over Baltimore. Only about seventy-five people struggled through the unkind elements morning and evening, and not many more were present at the Monday night dedication service. Rain, snow-storms and blizzards greeted the first four Sundays after the opening. It almost seemed as if Nature was trying to thwart the new venture, but pastor and people were undaunted.

In spite of much prayer and effort, however, the visible results of the first year’s work were disappointing. With the revival atmosphere of his North Carolina pastorates fresh in mind, A.C.Dixon had said to himself: “If it is possible in a small town like Asheville to build up a large congregation and to see between four or five hundred conversions in less than three years, there should be correspondingly larger attendances and more conversions in a great city like Baltimore.”

He soon discovered that the problem could not be worked out by mathematical ratio. The stormy, wintry weather in which the new movement had been launched, and the distance of the chapel from the busy centers of population, had militated against his ardent hopes. The beautiful little auditorium had
never been crowded. There had not been a single conversion during the first six months, and even additions by transfer had not been numerous.

As he prayed and pondered over the situation, he was convinced that progress was being retarded by the system of pew-rents, which tended to attract only a select class of people to the membership. From the first he had disliked and disapproved of this custom, and was led to much earnest private study of the Scriptures with regard to it. He soon came to the definite conclusion that it was un-Scriptural in principle.

From the literature of "The Open Church and Free Seat Association" he learned that the poorer free-seated churches of America gave more per capita than the pew-renting churches. It was plain, therefore, that the pew-rent system was not only un-Scriptural, but was not even good financial policy. With his facts and arguments ready, he called the church together and spoke to them for an hour on the virtues of the free seat. Eloquence and logic were without result. A vote was taken and without a single exception all voted for the rented pew. The deacons were willing to admit the force of the pastor's arguments, but felt they must act on the principle: "All things are lawful . . . but all things are not expedient." They were afraid of losing some well-to-do families from the congregation, in which case they feared the income would not cover expenses. "All right!" said the pastor, "but remember, the flag is up, and when I preach on this subject from the pulpit, you must not consider it a personal thrust, but rather the honest expression of conviction."

The quiet power of this determined stand was soon manifested, for within a few months, without any word from the pulpit, the church unanimously voted for free seats. No instant result was noticeable, but an unobtrusive, steady growth began.

To consolidate and build up the membership, A.C.Dixon relied mainly upon intensive visitation during the first two years. A private note-book, kept in his church study, shows the thoroughness with which this work was undertaken. Some definite share was allotted to every member of the church, from the oldest to the youngest. Even the children were enlisted. The surrounding district was divided into sections. Every new family moving into a particular section was visited and reported upon.
Baptists were sought out and invited to Immanuel if attending nowhere else. A report was made of all children not attending Sunday School, and their names were given to the pastor so that he might visit the parents. A general invitation, verbal, written or printed, was given to every person in each section, with the assurance of a hearty welcome.

Little wonder that the week-night meetings were soon filled with vivid interest and that the membership of church and Sunday School began to make constant progress. At the end of two years, the charter-membership of fifty-three had increased to one hundred and fifty-five, and instead of forty-five Sunday School scholars there were two hundred and fifty-eight.

Temperance work always took a prominent place in A.C. Dixon's activities. It was abhorrent to him to find liquor-dealers on the membership rolls of the churches, and his outspoken views upon the subject were given without fear or favor. This brought him into close relationship with Joshua Levering, a member of Eutaw Place Church, and of a family famous for its good works in Baltimore and among Southern Baptists in general. Mr. Levering was a leader in all aggressive Temperance work. He had just made a stir in the political world by leaving the Democratic party and openly espousing the cause of Prohibition. It was a foreshadowing of the courageous stand taken twelve years later when he accepted the nomination of the Prohibition party for President of the United States.

The brilliant genius of John B. Gough was riveting popular attention everywhere at this time upon the evils of intemperance, and the soul of A.C. Dixon thrilled in response to his challenge that the churches should play their part in the battle for a sober nation.

The enormous responsibility of his calling grew upon him daily as he saw much that was new to his experience in the life and temptations of a great city. "The world, the flesh, and the devil" became more tangible and definite enemies than ever before. He became increasingly aware of the dangerous lure of some of the popular amusements, and took pains to arouse the young people of his congregation to the spiritual peril of entanglement in them.

Such burning zeal as his could not fail to attract attention. His services came to be much in demand outside his own church,
A.C. Dixon, aged 28
Howard, Mary and Faison

During Pastorate at Immanuel Tabernacle, Baltimore
particularly in Brooklyn, whence came an urgent call to one of the most influential Baptist pastorates in the country. Although he declined it, the Immanuel people were so afraid he might leave them, that they determined to secure him by the offer of a larger salary. To their surprise he refused to accept it, insisting that he had enough for present necessities, and that if the church had funds to spare they must be used for the poorer members.

This unselfish spirit was fully shared by his wife, and was all the more striking on the part of both at that particular time, for they were in the midst of furnishing a new home on Charles Street Avenue, near the Church, to meet the demands of a growing family. Two more children had been added since their arrival in Baltimore—Mary Faison, the first daughter, born at that blustering New Year of the first strenuous winter, and a second son, Abner Faison, born eighteen months later.

When the need arose to raise money for altruistic purposes, A.C.Dixon's indifference and unconcern vanished, and he soon showed his ability along this line. At that year's session of the Maryland Baptist Association it was proposed to raise ten thousand dollars for aggressive work. Protests were made that the sum was too large, but A.C.Dixon was quickly on his feet.

"Tell a Baptist to do a big thing and he will do it; he would rather try to do a big thing and fail, than to do a small thing and succeed."

A motion that the money be raised and that Dixon be appointed to raise it was adopted at the meeting, and the responsibility was accepted with the words: "What ought to be done and can be done, must be done!" Within a short time the necessary sum was successfully obtained.

As his church grew in size and spiritual strength A.C.Dixon set himself to widen the horizon of his people's prayer-field. Mrs. Dixon, with her husband's encouragement, was already valiantly at work among the women of the church, rousing them from their apathy on the subject of foreign missions to a most practical spirit of inquiry into the actual facts and needs of Baptist Missions and their personnel. Practically no literature on the subject was obtainable. A determined effort to supply this crying need and to disseminate missionary information among the women of the South, was made by a group of Baltimore
women, stirred to action by Mrs. Dixon under the ardent impulse of her husband's zeal. These small beginnings were the source of a stream that was to swell into the broad, deep river of the Women's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptists.

Active participation by women in any work of a public character was still regarded in the eighties with pretty general disapproval in the South. A.C. Dixon's attitude was ahead of his time. He heartily disliked masculinity in a woman. True-bred Southerner that he was, he desired a field for the exercise of the old-time chivalry where the gentler sex was concerned. At the same time he was distinctly a pioneer in the encouragement he gave to women to try their wings in the atmosphere of public service.

For thirty years groups of Baptist women had met for prayer and had raised funds for foreign missions, but their work had received no official recognition by the Southern Baptist Convention.

When this body met at Augusta, Georgia, in the spring of 1885, there arose a long and fierce debate over the Foreign Mission Board's Committee on Women's Work.

It is difficult for a twentieth-century mind to imagine the strength of the indignant prejudice which was aroused by the mere suggestion that the women be permitted to share control over the expenditure of the very money which they had so largely helped to raise. A.C. Dixon was one of seven men who succeeded in placing on the minutes of this Convention a report gratefully recognizing the Women's Societies, and requesting them to appoint annually, for every hundred dollars paid to the Missionary Boards, "a brother" to represent them on the floor of the Convention. Their reports were to be officially presented each year, and their contributions reported separately. This was a great victory, and it led to the very constitution of the Convention being changed at this time, for the word "members" was substituted for "brethren," whereby the membership of women had been precluded hitherto.

Another illustration of A.C. Dixon's encouragement to women was the help given to his sister, Delia, in her determination to study medicine. Such an ambition, especially for a girl of the South, was ahead of the times, and was vigorously opposed by their father, who was, however, completely won over
when she was successfully launched upon her career, and would be attended by no other doctor.

Meanwhile, A.C.Dixon did not leave the missionary activity of his church to the women only. He organized the men into “committees of information” regarding mission work at home and abroad. The interest of the whole church was quickened by having a missionary of their own in the person of Rev.E.F. Baldwin, the Dixons’ friend of Asheville days, who had given himself to the service of the Gospel in north-west Africa. His work lay among the mountain tribes of Kabylia, a province of Algeria extending inland from the Mediterranean to the Atlas Mountains. Before leaving for Africa, the Baldwin family became members of the Immanuel congregation, and the personal interest taken in their reports added no little to the soul-winning impulses of the church.

Ever since his college days, A.C.Dixon had eagerly drunk in the tidings of D.L.Moody’s great evangelistic campaigns in his own country and in the British Isles. Moody had been in Baltimore when he was in the midst of the revival among the students at Chapel Hill. Early in 1885, Moody again preached in Baltimore, and the young Baptist pastor, listening to him for the first time, was deeply stirred by his sermon on “Grace.”

That summer, A.C.Dixon paid his first visit to Northfield. There, in the uplifting atmosphere of the Christian Workers’ Conference, he formed friendships that were to strengthen his soul through the years. Chief among them, besides D.L.Moody himself, were Dr.A.J.Gordon of Boston, and Dr.A.T.Pierson, pastor of Bethany church in Philadelphia, known everywhere as “Wanamaker’s Church.”

John B.Gough and his friend, William Noble, founder of the Blue Ribbon Movement for Gospel Temperance in Great Britain, were also upon the Northfield platform in 1885. It was a rich experience for A.C.Dixon to meet and commune with these older leaders. It was his last sight of the veteran Temperance orator, for shortly afterwards, John B.Gough, while lecturing in Pennsylvania, was stricken with a paralytic seizure from which he never recovered consciousness. To A.C.Dixon the news brought a fresh challenge to step into the breach, and to re-dedicate his life to the cause of sobriety and godliness.
CHAPTER IX
A CLARION-TONGUED EVANGEL IN BALTIMORE

The influence of the young Southern pastor of the Baptist Chapel on Boundary Avenue was beginning to make itself felt in Baltimore, not only through his preaching but also by means of his pen. A.C.Dixon never forgot that his life was dedicated to evangelism, with the pastorate as a medium of approach to the surrounding community.

Early in 1886, a Prohibition Association was formed in Baltimore, largely through his exertions. The movement was launched with two public meetings, and in three weeks a hundred members had been gained. Following close upon this, the city was stirred by a visit from Sam Jones, the unique evangelist-reformer from Georgia. His fearless attacks upon the liquor interests and other evils had galvanized many a complacent, easy-going Christian community into action. He attracted great crowds in Baltimore, and the Biddle Street Rink quickly overflowed.

It was the ringing voice of A.C.Dixon, foremost among the Baltimore ministers in support of Sam Jones, that carried the message to the throngs in the open air outside the Rink. Accustomed to the old Southern method of holding a "protracted meeting" as long as the response in conversions indicated its need, he urged the continuance of Sunday afternoon mass-meetings after the departure of Sam Jones, in order to keep aglow the fires of awakening.

His proposal was adopted, and more than three thousand people filled the Rink on the first Sunday. The meetings were carried on for three months, both in the Rink and in Kernan's Theater, a rough and ready down-town haunt where "down-and-outers" were easy to reach. Hundreds of wicked men were brought to Christ. Many members of Immanuel, who had rallied loyally to their pastor's call, gained a new vision of the primary
mission of the church, and tasted the joy of going forth into "the highways" with the invitation of the Gospel.

It was clear that a forward move must be made in their own work, for the seating capacity of their beautiful chapel was already overtaxed. To sit with folded hands to enjoy the worship of God for themselves, without any effort to reach the unsaved multitudes around them, seemed no longer possible. But there could be no further expansion without enlarged premises, and to erect the fine stone church they had in mind was beyond their present ability owing to the recent outlay on land and building.

For the first time in A.C.Dixon's life there sprang into being the great question which was to form the crux of almost every ministry of his future experience. He could not be satisfied with a church building from which the poor and sinful were excluded either through inadequate accommodation or by the atmosphere of exclusiveness. He well knew that many of the poorer people hesitated to come and worship even in the beautiful little Chapel. As summer approached he asked his people to provide a tent or wooden tabernacle which might be re-erected in various parts of Baltimore, and thus enable him to reach the multitudes. No matter how plain the edifice, if it had free seats and plenty of room! "I did not come here to fish for gold-fish in a globe," he exclaimed, "I came to be a fisher of men."

Baltimore was in the throes of industrial unrest at this time, an added incentive for reaching hearts with the message of the Gospel. The pastor's plan of moving from one section of the city to another was not adopted; but encouraged by the offer of five thousand dollars as an initial gift from two of its members, the church agreed to erect, on the plot adjoining the Chapel, a large frame tabernacle seating about twelve hundred people. A removable partition connecting the two buildings added the chapel's accommodation for five hundred.

Ground was broken in June, and a plain but attractive structure arose rapidly, breathing a welcome from its open doors and wide flights of steps. Within, it was well-lighted, airy and comfortable, yet not so elegant as to make the poor feel out of place. To avoid even the appearance of a pew-rented church, it was furnished with folding-seat chairs.

By October, 1886, the new Immanuel Tabernacle was ready
for the opening service. Amid rejoicings of pastor and people, the first message rang out to a crowded and expectant congregation: "Enlarge the place of thy tent; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes."

A.C.Dixon was overjoyed at this realization of his hopes. It was practically the only time in his life when the church that he served was willing to concur in his heart’s desire for a building large enough to hold the crowds, and unecclesiastical enough to attract non-churchgoers. God had given him an instrument by which to reach out to the unconverted masses of Baltimore. It was an object lesson to the whole denomination, and focussed fresh attention upon the fact contended for by A.C.Dixon, that the chief business of the church is evangelism, even if it should necessitate the adoption of unusual methods and a departure from rigid conservatism. Not content with his enlarged work in the new Tabernacle, A.C.Dixon could not forget the unchurched multitudes in the heart of the city, and he opened a Saturday evening mission on Baltimore Street as a branch of the Tabernacle work.

Unconscious though he was of his own outstanding qualities, his work was beginning to attract a good deal of attention, especially in the Southland. The Washington and Lee University in Virginia decided to confer upon him, at its Commencement of 1886, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. To accept this clashed with some of his deepest convictions and he promptly declined the honor. "I am convinced," he said, "that the whole D.D. business is out of harmony with the spirit of the New Testament, and partakes of ‘the pride of life,’ which needs to be crucified rather than fostered." The University, however, insisted that its action could not be withdrawn.

Realizing that a public refusal to accept the degree might appear to be a bid for notoriety, while to decline privately would not prevent the use of the title by others, A.C.Dixon refrained from further protest. Yet he maintained with sincere modesty, that quite apart from spiritual considerations, he did not consider himself possessed of the great learning which he felt that such a title should imply. Neither he nor his wife ever made personal use of it, but he was obliged in the end to submit to its adoption by others.

Even in the midst of such devoted men of God as filled
the Baltimore pulpits of that day, A.C.Dixon was conspicuous for his zeal. It was a time of unusual opportunity and enthusiasm in the cause of Christ. Sin and rationalism were rampant as ever outside the churches, but the cold indifference and paralysis within, for which A.C.Dixon afterwards felt that the "higher criticism" movement and the adoption of the Darwinian theory by ecclesiastics was so largely responsible, had not yet pervaded the Protestant churches to any great extent. A mighty tide of evangelizing fervor was abroad in the world, for which God had raised up a number of remarkable leaders. The common purpose of bringing souls to definite decision for Christ, and a common loyalty to the Bible as the Word of God, broke down denominational barriers and opened the way for united campaigns. Hitherto A.C.Dixon had moved almost entirely within Baptist circles. In Baltimore he first entered the wider fellowship, and drew his people into it with him.

Among those who frequently visited Immanuel and who cooperated with him whole-heartedly in later evangelistic campaigns, was that stalwart of the Presbyterians, Dr. A.T. Pierson. When Dr. Pierson and Dr. A. J. Gordon crossed the Atlantic together to carry on a series of missions in Scotland, the hearts of the Immanuel congregation went with them. A constant interchange of preachers and evangelists was doing much in those days to weld the evangelical believers of England and America together in opposing the destructive teachings of the New Theology, now beginning to filter down among the rank and file of church members.

The name of Charles H. Spurgeon was a household word among American Baptists, and Dr. Hatcher of Richmond, who had become deeply interested in A.C. Dixon's new venture, lectured at his request to the young people at Immanuel on "C.H. Spurgeon and his Work." It was just the period when Spurgeon had been forced by the rising tide of worldliness and infidelity in the English churches to launch the discussion which became known as "The Down Grade Controversy," and the religious and denominational press rang with the noise of battle.

The trend away from Biblical authority in the theological colleges of England and America was making necessary the establishment of missionary and Bible schools where future Christian leaders could be trained in an atmosphere of loyalty to the Word
of God. In 1889, D.L.Moody opened a Bible Institute in Chicago, adjoining the Chicago Avenue Church, and appointed Reuben A. Torrey, of the City Mission in Minneapolis, as Superintendent. In the same winter, Dr.A.J.Gordon opened a Missionary Training School in connection with his church in Boston.

All of these currents in the Christian world about him were observed with keen attention by A.C.Dixon. His own soul was more and more stirred with the necessity of taking an unequivocal stand on the things that were right and true. He disliked controversy for controversy's sake, and had no desire for spectacular notoriety. But whenever he saw that credulous minds were being swayed by false teaching, he must needs spring, like a true shepherd, to the defense of the flock.

Early in 1886 he was drawn into another part of the battleground. Dr.Justin D.Fulton, a former pastor of Tremont Temple in Boston, and of the Hanson Place Baptist Church in Brooklyn, visited Baltimore on a lecturing tour. His mission was to expose the doctrines of the Church of Rome. Baltimore has always been a strong Romish center, although the Romanist leaders of Baltimore's early days stood for religious liberty. They were indeed forced to do so by the exigencies of the situation, for without a guarantee of freedom from persecution, Protestant settlers would have refused to leave England in sufficient numbers to aid in founding a colony, and Lord Baltimore would have lost his grant.

Dr.Fulton hired a hall, and had advertised his subject. A day or two before the date of the meetings, the owners of the hall, fearing to offend the Romanists, cancelled the contract. For the same reason, the use of other halls was refused. When A.C. Dixon heard of this, his sense of fair play was instantly aroused. He offered Dr.Fulton the use of Immanuel Tabernacle, which was gratefully accepted. Fearing an outbreak of violence, especially on the part of the foreign element, one of the deacons called upon his pastor, and frankly stated his forebodings. Courteously, but with determination, the young minister replied: "Very well, I will take the responsibility. If the Tabernacle is destroyed I will canvass the country for funds to rebuild it, and I will get them." Secretly admiring his pastor's independence, the deacon, who was acting for the trustees, yielded his point, though not entirely freed from apprehension.
Thomas Dixon and His Three Preacher Sons, 1888
Baltimore, 1888

Howard

Mary

Faison

Mrs. Dixon and Clara
The lecture was delivered, and no turbulent outbreak occurred. A.C.Dixon was, however, severely criticized by some of his fellow-Protestants. Replying through the pages of *The Baltimore Baptist*, he wrote:

“The fact that Justin D.Fulton was shut out of all the public halls of Baltimore, simply because he had something to say against the Church of Rome, was enough to rouse the indignation of every one who believes in free speech. We tendered the Immanuel Baptist Tabernacle to him, and we are glad we did it. The truths he spoke every lover of his country, his church, his home and his God, ought to know... . If he carries on his campaign everywhere as he did here, he deserves a hearing.”

How history repeats itself! The mind flies back to the occasion when his father, Thomas Dixon, had stood in solitary defense of the “Wandering Pilgrim,” placing his pulpit at the Pilgrim’s disposal in the interests of free speech and of what he believed to be the truth.

Feeling the need of a dispassionate presentation of the facts connected with this momentous subject, A.C.Dixon preached a special sermon at the end of February on “The Papacy.” He discussed the question of civil liberty in the lands where the Papacy holds sway. Referring to papal influence upon the general standards of education, he instanced Mexico, where at that time 93 per cent. of the population was illiterate. How he would have rejoiced in the courageous stand taken by the Mexican government forty years later against the foreign oppression of the Vatican! The noble words uttered in 1926 by Deputy Antonio Diaz Soto y Gama in the Mexican Congress would have found an echo in his own heart.

“I wish to close my discourse, as I have opened it,” said Mr. Gama, “by honoring that Holy Name which the church has forgotten—namely, Jesus the Christ. The revolutionary party would like to see all Catholics become Christian once more, and we ourselves would like to be better Christians. Along with the great things we have done, we have sinned—and there is but one Person who can save us, namely, Jesus our Lord. Oh, that the revolutionary party had the courage to raise high His banner!”

But such a day had not yet dawned in Mexico. So much interest was aroused by A.C.Dixon’s sermon that
he published a series of articles in The Baltimore Baptist, and simultaneously gave some carefully-prepared addresses in the Tabernacle. In these he wisely discriminated between Romanists and Romanism, refraining from personalities and taking unusual pains to avoid any heat of prejudice. Every word was carefully weighed, every statement proved, and the sermons memorized so as to agree with the copies furnished to the press.

It was not to be expected that this raising of the standard would pass altogether unnoticed. The able treatment of the subject and the influence of the preacher was a direct challenge. Father Starr, a former Protestant, felt constrained to take up the cudgels in defense of the system and doctrines he had adopted, and a newspaper battle developed.

Nothing was further from A.C.Dixon's mind than the deliberate use of "preaching stunts" for the sake of attracting a crowd. Nevertheless, his fearless protagonism of the Bible as the authoritative basis of Christian belief drew increasing numbers to the Tabernacle. On several occasions, many were unable to get into the crowded building. A great spiritual revival took place, and a number of Catholics accepted Christ.

Two years later, some of the addresses were published in book form under the title of "The True and the False." All that is good in Romanism is there shown to have its source in the Scriptures; while papal Rome is shown to have borrowed much that is bad—such as her pontifex maximus, her vestal virgins, her patron saints, her canonization of heroes, her processions, her cardinals' hats, and her pageantry—from pagan Rome.

Another matter which called A.C.Dixon to the fore in public affairs was the defence of purity in home-life and in social standards. With some of his fellow-ministers he exposed a profligate group of the ultra-fashionable society set, whose excesses were outraging the sense of decency among all good Baltimoreans. Their stern reproof resulted in an immediate lessening of the drinking and gambling and other gross indulgences that had created the scandal.

In spite of the necessary publicity of his work, it was not in A.C.Dixon's nature to love the limelight. He remained the same gentle-spirited, humble-minded pastor of his people, putting their interests first in his thoughts and activities.
The sick, the dying and the distressed found him constantly at their side to cheer and comfort. A neighbor, one of his flock, had been tortured for years by the fear of physical death, but was led by her pastor into an experience of trust and peace. Soon afterwards she fell unconscious on entering her home from the garden, and passed into heaven without even having to face the thing she had so long dreaded.

One day, A.C. Dixon stood by the sick-bed of one of his church members, a beautiful girl of nineteen. He had been commissioned to tell her that the end was near. Many a time she had heard him speak of the joy and brightness of the heavenly home. Yet even he was surprised at her response, when with shining face she uttered the words: "I have heard many things from the pulpit that have cheered me, but nothing so sweet and bright as that." Such moments as these repaid him a thousand-fold for any toil or sacrifice.

Again we find him entering the home of a working man who had been stricken with disease. He was welcomed with a smile of peace. Reaching out his horny hand, the dying man said: "Pastor, the doctor told me the other day that there was no hope, but I said to him, 'Your no hope is the brightest hope you can bring me.' I am going to be with Christ. I commit my family into the hands of a loving God. To depart and be with Christ is far better than to stay here and suffer."

"As I stood by the bedside of this son of toil," said A.C. Dixon, "I knew that I would rather have his hope, with all his struggles, than millions of dollars with only this world as my portion."

People from every rank of life met on a basis of Christian equality within the hospitable walls of the big Tabernacle, and the only aristocracy was a spiritual one. A.C. Dixon used to draw a vivid contrast between two men who occasionally took part in the week-night prayer-meeting. The one, educated and cultured, would have charmed a stranger by his eloquent utterances. But those who knew his private habits were aware that he would take a glass of wine with his worldly friends, and had a doubtful reputation for honesty. When he rose to speak, the crowd soon began to diminish. The other man was a coal-cart driver, who was often too hurried in getting to meeting to make a careful toilet. Sometimes a circle of coal-dust was visible round
his hair. But in spite of this the people leaned forward to listen whenever he spoke, because they knew that he lived every day for God. He would pick up a tramp on the road and give him a ride for a mile in his cart that he might talk with him about Jesus. Sometimes he would offer the same invitation to a boy, and lead him to Jesus. "That man's religion tasted good," his pastor would say.

During the early days in Baltimore, A.C. Dixon was making his way to the Chapel, when he came upon three young men standing on the street corner. He said to himself: "There will be no sinners in there this afternoon except church sinners, so I must try and win someone on the outside." The impulse was almost disregarded, for he was as yet diffident of speaking to strangers on the street. However, he invited them to the service, and asked if they were Christians. Two of them replied in the affirmative, but the other said, "I am not."

"Will you come with me to the Chapel yonder?"

"I am too busy," was the reply, "you must excuse me, for I am preparing for an examination next week at the High School."

"Yes! but are you ready for the great Examination of the future?"

Leaving him with the question, A.C. Dixon went on his way. Fifteen minutes after the service had begun he saw the door open. The same young man entered, took a seat near the door and listened intently to the address, going out quickly when it was over. But the message had found its mark. He soon decided for Christ and became a Baptist preacher. Twenty-two years later, A.C. Dixon attended a ministers' meeting in Boston. Upon entering he saw presiding over the Conference one of the Boston pastors whom he quickly recognized as none other than the "Chris Cox" of Baltimore days.

One more incident of personal work. On his rounds of visitation in Baltimore, A.C. Dixon called at the home of a Romanist named Vick, who had been attending the Tabernacle services. The man had been a hard drinker, but his heart was touched. He begged the pastor to stay for supper. As a result of the conversation round the supper-table the whole family accepted Christ, and Mr. Vick later became the trusted janitor of the Tabernacle. This personal example in soul-winning, even more
than his preaching, inspired A.C.Dixon's church members to active service for Christ. Two young physicians, Dr.Pole and Dr. Latham, established a Medical Mission on West Fourth Street, and a godly woman of the church opened a Home for Friendless Girls. One of the pastor's best helpers was Mrs. Baily, a daughter of Mr.Frederick A.Levering. She was not particularly gifted in public prayer or speech, but her passion for winning men and women to Christ was one of the strongest assets in the life of the Immanuel congregation. The deacons frankly acknowledged that she led more people to Christ and into the fellowship of the church than all of them put together.

Various classes of people were specially provided for in the Tabernacle services. Bicycling was a popular pastime at the period and special services were arranged for cyclists. University students, commercial travellers, railroad men, saleswomen and other groups were invited at intervals, and listened to messages adapted to their particular needs.

A.C.Dixon's energies were not confined to the city of Baltimore. Many of the smaller towns of Maryland felt the impact of his ardent personality. At Glyndon, a few miles to the north of Baltimore, and further afield at Havre de Grace, also across the waters of Chesapeake Bay at Cambridge on the Eastern Shore, he carried on evangelistic campaigns and organized permanent Baptist centers.

One afternoon in February, 1888, as he was busy in his study, he hardly noticed the snowflakes falling outside. Intent on keeping an appointment to preach at Havre de Grace, he set out into the snow-storm on his thirty-five mile journey, with no thought of giving up on account of bad weather. He jumped into a street-car which was still able to run. Only the insistent persuasion of his deacon, Mr.Manning, who happened to enter the car before it reached the railway station, induced him to abandon the journey, and saved him from being caught in one of the worst blizzards that ever involved the country east of the Rockies. Many will remember the tragic death of Senator Roscoe Conkling of New York, who ventured out into it, and was completely bewildered and overcome, his frozen body being discovered within a few blocks of his home.

It was rarely that A.C.Dixon could be held back from fulfilling promised engagements, at whatever personal cost. His
calling provided abundant outlet for all the physical strength with which nature had endowed him, established as it had been in his boyhood and youth by the wholesome open-air life, which had toughened the muscles of his tall, spare frame. The burdens of spiritual responsibility pressed more heavily each year upon his shoulders. But hard work seemed to refresh him constantly in spirit, mind and body. Unbroken communion with God, with the background of a happy home, guarded the secret springs of peace, and kept him steady amid the babel of strife and the pressure of engagements.
CHAPTER X

FIRST CONTACT WITH THE OLD WORLD

With every passing year, as the scope of A.C. Dixon's activities widened, the world about him seemed to shrink. Processes of modern invention and the harnessing of electricity began to overcome the separating barriers of time and space, providing hitherto undreamed-of facilities for communication and travel. New opportunities for human contact and a growing struggle of competition in every field began to exert a strong influence on religious movements as well as on politics and commerce. Federation and amalgamation became more and more necessary to success. National confines were over-spread, until the terms "international" and "world-wide" resounded on every hand.

The wave of evangelical and missionary fervor which marked the latter part of the nineteenth century naturally led to a demand for occasions where Christian leaders could meet to compare notes and exchange views and strengthen each other's hands. Conferences and conventions became the order of the day. Temperance and missionary movements began to "hold hands across the sea." The Evangelical Alliance, the Christian Endeavor Movement, the Salvation Army, the Student Christian Movement, the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations and similar organizations took root, first on one side and then on another of national boundaries, like scattered seed.

The first World's Sunday School Convention had been held in Chicago in 1887. Plans were on foot in 1889 for a second international gathering in London. The good people of Immanuel determined that their pastor should represent them there as one of the Maryland delegation of which he was elected chairman.

The thought of seeing the old world from which his forefathers had come, and which he had so often visited in imagination, was full of attraction to A.C. Dixon, especially on such
an errand. Most of all, he was thrilled by the expectation of seeing and hearing the man whose name had been on his father’s lips since his earliest memories of childhood—Charles Haddon Spurgeon. For the past two years he had eagerly followed Spurgeon’s dauntless stand in the famous “Down Grade Controversy.” Now he was to see him face to face, and absorb new inspiration from personal contact with the doughty combatant.

The spring months were filled with a double energy of service in anticipation of his absence abroad, the spiritual condition of his people being his chief concern. “Make them a force for Christ and righteousness” was his daily prayer. In Work and Worship, a periodical he had recently launched, his New Year’s message stressed the winning of souls to Christ as the goal of all their efforts.

June the eighteenth found him a guest in the home of his brother Tom, who had also been ordained and was pastor of a Baptist church in New York City. On the following day, with other American delegates to the World’s Sunday School Convention, he set sail for England.

The first voyage away from one’s native land is always a memorable event. It was with mingled feelings that A.C. Dixon paced the deck of the S.S. “Bothnia,” watching the Manhattan sky-line, unimposing as yet, recede from sight as his ship glided past the Statue of Liberty, through the Narrows, and out into the open sea.

Away to the South, in North Carolina, were the five who tugged at his heart-strings. There were now four children, for a second daughter, who bore the name of Clara, had been added to the family in the previous August, on the very day on which her grandfather, Colonel Faison, had entered Heaven. At first the enjoyment of the journey was almost obliterated by the overwhelming sense of separation. An experience of mal de mer helped to reconcile him to their absence.

“I cannot say that I wanted you along unless you had been well,” he wrote to his wife in a chastened spirit. “I have a higher opinion of Christopher Columbus than ever before. It took a brave man to keep on until he discovered America!”

Letters to his children sparkle with descriptions of a summer voyage across the Atlantic—less familiar then than in these
days of universal travel. Gorgeous sunsets, gleaming phosphorescence, spouting whales, schools of leaping porpoises, the exquisite grace of a sailing nautilus—all were shared with the eager little minds at Wood Lawn.

On the tenth day the steamer touched at Queenstown, and the emerald hills of the Irish coast were a welcome sight to those who were making their maiden trip.

It was the last day of June, a Sunday morning of bright sunshine, when the voyagers stepped ashore at Liverpool. A.C. Dixon and a group of his friends made their way at once to the Myrtle Street Baptist Church, well-known to them by repute. Arriving early, they received a warm welcome, and were taken to the minister's study to meet the pastor, Dr. John Thomas. He insisted that one of the American visitors should fill the pulpit that morning, and thus within thirty minutes of leaving the dock, A.C. Dixon rose to address his first English congregation.

The Sunday School Convention was to occupy the six opening days of July, and delegates from European and other countries as well as the two hundred and fifty from America began to pour into London on Monday morning, July 1st. Even far-off Australia had sent a contingent.

The first event on the Convention program was a reception in the Mansion House at the invitation of the Lord Mayor. The splendor of the occasion was a novelty to those Americans who were visiting England for the first time. A.C. Dixon noted with a twinkle of half-amused interest the scarlet robe of the Lord Mayor, his triangular plumed hat, and the golden chain of office, with its glittering links, that encircled the dignified shoulders. He noticed also the velvet and gold-laced liveries of the footmen, each over six feet tall, wearing knee-breeches and yellow silk stockings—the colorful costume of a former age. He was not yet aware of the attachment to historic association that means so much to the life and habits of the European. At this stage of his experience it was difficult not to regard it as child's play. But the flowers, the music and the thrill of meeting fellow-Christians from many other lands under such unusual conditions, made the evening one to be long remembered.

One of the new acquaintances in whom he was greatly interested was Count Andrew von Bernstorff, whose father had represented for nearly twenty years first Prussia, then the North
German Federation, and then the German Empire at the Court of St. James. As a boy of eleven, the young Count had been led to Christ through reading a tract handed to him on the streets of London by a Christian worker, and had afterwards become a mighty evangelical power in his own country.

Lord Kinnaird, head of one of the oldest Scottish families, and chief speaker for Great Britain at the Convention, also attracted A.C. Dixon’s attention. He had not expected to find men of title among the keen Christian workers.

To his surprise he was unexpectedly called upon to make the response for America to the Lord Mayor’s speech of welcome.

“We come,” he said in part, “with greetings from millions of Sunday School workers in the United States. It was remarked aboard ship that the ‘Bothnia’ was the ‘Mayflower’ returning to England with the result of the sacrifices and fidelity and prayers of the Pilgrim Fathers. . . . We feel that we are returning to our mother for her God-speed, and we bring with us the open Bible that we received from her. . .

“In the new world we believe in the new, but our hope is still fixed on old Britain. As we look upon these old buildings with their beauty of architecture and their solidity of substance and form, we are reminded of something better in old Britain than her architecture, something with more beauty and more solidity than the English cathedrals. You have been the conservators of truth.”

Sight-seeing must have its place in visiting a new country for the first time, and there is usually an inevitable stirring of prejudice in the first contact with strange ways and customs. Protest against class distinction, monarchical régime and State religion was dominant in A.C. Dixon’s blood as a heritage from past generations. Mingled with appreciation one feels in his letters the quick impulse to resist any attraction by these influences from which his fore-fathers had shaken themselves free.

His first impressions of some of the notable English preachers soon found their way to the home papers.

“Newman Hall speaks with the wisdom and mellowness of ripe old age. John McNeill is a witty Scotchman, and when roused is a cyclone. Joseph Parker, at the City Temple, is said by some to be the personification of pomposity. He did not so impress us. He has a stately manner, but his thoughts are stately. Both of the sermons we heard were thoroughly evangelical, and Christ was held forth with a pathos and a power that melted many hearts. We thanked God for Joseph Parker. The one criti-
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cism we could make is that he puts too much condensed thought into one sermon. It made my head ache to follow him for an hour. Spurgeon is the best of all.”

Mr. Thomas Olney, a trustee of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, had been present at the Mansion House reception to the Convention delegates and had been captivated by the spontaneous address given by the youthful pastor from Baltimore. He spoke to his own pastor about it. Spurgeon promptly sent an invitation to the young American to sit with him at his following Sunday morning service, asking him to offer the “long” prayer before the sermon—a signal honor for any stranger!

The longed-for meeting was to take place at last. Arriving at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in time for the preliminary prayer-meeting of pastor and deacons, A.C.Dixon made his way to the vestry. Through the opening door he caught his first glimpse of Spurgeon, sitting at his study table with an open Bible before him, surrounded by his church officials.

“I felt that I was in the presence of greatness. Spurgeon took me by the hand, and looking me slowly over from head to foot, he said: ‘They carry things to great lengths in America, don't they?’ He laughed and his deacons laughed, but the laughter had scarcely died away before I heard Spurgeon's voice in prayer. He went into the presence of God with a ripple of merriment in his heart, yet it seemed to me not at all incongruous. He poured out his soul before God like a little child dependent upon his father for guidance and strength.”

Numbers of other Sunday School delegates attended the Metropolitan Tabernacle on this occasion. After service they filed through the vestry to greet Mr.Spurgeon, who rejoiced in the fellowship. “There is no 'down grade' among them!” he exclaimed in the next issue of The Sword and Trowel.

Describing this memorable morning, A.C.Dixon said:

“Mr. Spurgeon's voice lacked the fulness we expected to hear, though it has a trumpet-like clearness that thrills the soul, and a penetrative quality that reached every person in the great auditorium. But his power is not in his voice. It is in the fact that he has the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and preaches God's Word, relying on Him to bless it. The music that charms people comes through his voice from a heart in harmony with God in His purpose and plan to save this lost world. There are greater orators than Mr. Spurgeon, but no greater preacher. He is God's mouth-
piece. Satisfied with the old Gospel as he is with the old sun, he attempts no improvement on it, while he tries to make its rays shine upon every living soul."

Monday evening found A.C. Dixon again at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, speaking by invitation at the crowded prayer-meeting. He told of his boyhood home across the ocean, of his father's love for Mr. Spurgeon and his own familiarity with the great preacher's sermons before he was old enough to read the daily newspaper. The hearts of his audience warmed to him on hearing how his first desire to preach the Gospel had been stirred while reading the messages uttered in far-away London. Spurgeon's own eyes dimmed with emotion when the young American exclaimed: "For many years your pastor has been my pastor!" Their souls were quickly knit in friendship.

"Dixon is as great in heart as he is tall in body," wrote Spurgeon in *The Sword and Trowel*. "What prayers were his! His heart bubbled up with a good matter, and overflowed in fervent petitions of affection."

A week later A.C. Dixon was again invited to address the prayer-meeting. On leaving the Metropolitan Tabernacle that second Monday night, he found an open-air meeting in full swing on the front steps. A goodly company had been drawn aside from the swirling crowd that eddied about them on the busy thoroughfare of Newington Butts.

"They were singing, praying and preaching. I soon perceived that it was Spurgeon's own people holding a street-meeting, so common in England. One of them recognized me, and insisted that I should speak. So in a few minutes I was preaching Christ again to the people on the streets. It was good to see how they stood and drank it in. I believe the people here, on the whole, love the Gospel a little better than they do on the other side. Nearly every Christian seems to carry his Bible with him to church."

This was A.C. Dixon's first participation in an open-air meeting regularly organized by a city church. He had been studying this and other methods of evangelism while journeying hither and thither over England during the previous week. At Derby, after addressing a large company of Sunday School workers at night, he had been hurried off early the next morning
to speak to four hundred railroad locomotive builders while they breakfasted.

"While they put into their mouths what they had to eat, I poured some Gospel into their ears, and I never had more attentive listeners. I am learning a great deal about how to reach all classes of people."

A day or two in Liverpool had given him the unexpected sight of an evangelical rector of the Church of England at work in the open air. During a vesper service in the church, he had tried to follow an unaccustomed trail through the Book of Common Prayer, somewhat embarrassed by the well-meaning assistance offered by a neighbor in the pew. All sense of strangeness had fled, however, as he listened to a sermon on "The Prodigal Son" that warmed his heart. Even the inbred prejudice against worshipping in a State church was swept away by a flood of brotherly feeling in the fellowship of the Gospel.

"The surprising part of the service to me was the closing announcement: 'The usual open-air service will be held on the steps of this church to-morrow evening.' Promptly at seven the next evening I saw the rector open a side gate and come out with several young people carrying a little organ. He placed it on one of the great stone steps and began to play. For three hours that Gospel service continued, and not less than twelve hundred people heard enough truth to take them to heaven if they believed and acted upon it. At the close of the service I asked the rector what results came of this. He replied: 'About all the results that come at all. A few children of the church members join as a matter of course, but those who come in by regeneration are nearly all reached in the open air.'"

Throughout that week A.C.Dixon's mind had been at work absorbing new ideas for his church in Baltimore. Now as he stood on the steps of the Metropolitan Tabernacle he registered a silent vow that preaching in the open air should form part of his regular ministry henceforth.

To his utter surprise Mr.Spurgeon made him a proposition with regard to a permanent association with himself in London, but A.C.Dixon felt led to decline it.

"To be thought of in connection with such a work as Spurgeon's is a great honor indeed, and when I think of my unworthiness and lack of fitness to be mentioned with him, it is humbling. God has conferred a high honor upon me by calling me to preach His Gospel, and the place makes
little difference if only I shall be faithful to Him. My field in Baltimore grows on me the more I see of the work here. I am inclined to think that after all, I have about the best field in the world."

One of the objectives of this journey to Europe was a visit to Morocco. A.C. Dixon hoped to see something, if possible, of the work among the Berbers and Kabyles carried on by Mr. Baldwin, whom the people of his church in Baltimore were supporting with their gifts. Mr. Baldwin had settled down on the coast at Mogador, making frequent journeys inland to groups of Mohammedans in the mountain regions. For a year his chief assistant had been another North Carolinian, Rev. Carson L. Powell, who had since left the North Africa Mission to carry on independent work in Algiers.

Before leaving Baltimore, A.C. Dixon had announced his intention of visiting both Mogador and Algiers. But news reached him in London that Mr. Baldwin was away in the mountains, and the lack of a regular steamship line to Mogador put that out of the question in his limited time. Algiers could be reached from the south of France in twenty-eight hours, and a flying visit would therefore be feasible after a glimpse of France, Switzerland and Italy.

With a party of friends, he left London on July 16th to see the famous Paris Exhibition, a great event in France, then slowly recovering from the effects of the Franco-German war. The world-renowned Eiffel Tower had been erected only a few months, and received its due meed of admiration from the Americans, whose own country had not as yet entered upon its era of soaring "sky-scrappers."

Geneva, with its memories of Calvin and of Rousseau, came next; then Rome and Naples, with a long day of thrills spent in climbing Vesuvius and in viewing the ruins of Pompeii. In Florence there was an opportunity of attending a Sunday morning service in a Waldensian church, where a converted Roman Catholic priest preached in Italian. Though understanding but little of the foreign tongue, A.C. Dixon enjoyed the spirit of the service, while his mind turned to the sufferings heroically borne for conscience' sake by the Waldensians of former days. He was struck by the fact that nearly everyone in the congregation had a Bible and opened it to follow the reading of the lessons.
On leaving Florence he parted with his Baltimore friends, and began the journey towards Africa alone, sailing from Marseilles.

Unfamiliar sights and sounds of the Orient surrounded him on disembarking at Algiers. He found it a bustling town of ninety thousand inhabitants, stimulated by French capital and French thrift. Its streets were thronged with turbaned Arabs, white-robed Kabyles, richly-dressed Jews, ebony negroes and busy Frenchmen. A.C.Dixon had forgotten the name of the street upon which Carson Powell—his friend of fifteen years—was carrying on his Mission, and was obliged to defer the search till next day.

Only some two hundred yards from the hotel, Powell was undergoing a time of special testing, for his funds had run so low that he was forced to consider selling his watch in order to buy food for his family. Sitting down to pray and to study his French Bible, he heard a ring at the door-bell. A tall figure entered, and to his amazement and delight Powell recognized his friend A.C.Dixon from Baltimore.

With his wife and five children and the unexpected guest, he was soon sitting down to a dinner at which the guest was host, but at which all felt the presiding presence of the Lord.

Piloted by Carson Powell, A.C.Dixon made his first visit to a Mohammedan mosque. Walking over the marble floors in his stockinged feet, he saw a group of thirty well-dressed men and boys repeating passages from the Koran in a drowsy monotone. Others were sitting alone in deep meditation or praying with constant genuflexions and faces towards Mecca.

The heat of August glared down upon the white houses of the city and its gaily-dressed throngs. In spite of the sultry weather Powell was holding services every night in a well-located hall, which was open for meetings three times on Sundays. He had quickly mastered the French language, and A.C.Dixon was astonished at the fluency and fervor with which his friend preached in a foreign tongue. He was deeply impressed by the genuine sincerity and earnestness of the man, and the news of Powell’s tragic death a few weeks later as a direct result of his privations, came as a great shock.

This first glimpse of missionary work on the field was all too quickly over. Three days in Paris, a flying journey across
England, and A.C. Dixon was aboard the S.S. "Umbria," crossing the Atlantic towards home. He reached Baltimore in time to plunge with renewed energy into preparations for a great winter's work, and was happy to share with the people of Immanuel every experience of his memorable journey. By this time the membership of the church had well passed the five hundred mark and the Sunday afternoon services drew large numbers from every part of the city.

The fruitful results of open-air work seen in England were not forgotten, and A.C. Dixon suggested a venture along similar lines to some of his deacons. They all vigorously opposed the idea, and, his courage failing him, the matter was dropped for a while. But at last, driven by an overwhelming impulse, he announced in a deacons' meeting that on the following Sunday he intended to preach in the open air. His words were received in silence. But one of the deacons, walking home with him, pleaded:

"Pastor, I beg of you not to do this thing. It will never do."
"Why not?"
"In the first place you will lose your dignity, and in the second place the church will lose its prestige."

This time, however, the pastor would not yield.

"The church was only seven years old," was his comment on the incident. "A seven-year-old child talking about prestige! I studied the subject of dignity in the Bible. Coming back to my deacon with the results of that investigation, I told him that the only Scripture passage where dignity is mentioned with emphasis is where Solomon says 'Folly is set in great dignity.' From that time he stood by me."

On the next Sunday afternoon this solitary deacon walked with his pastor and several members of the congregation to an open plot in the neighborhood. They avoided the sidewalk, fearing missiles from the windows above, but a great crowd gathered and the people listened quietly to the Gospel message. Presently the door of a saloon opened, and the saloon-keeper came out, carrying a chair. Momentary thoughts of an attack flashed through the speaker's mind, but to his surprise the chair was offered as a pulpit from which he could be seen and heard by the thronging crowd. The unexpected results of this maiden
effort so stirred the deacon that he soon persuaded his fellow-deacons to support it. In a short time eight open-air services were being carried on simultaneously under the direction of Immanuel Tabernacle, and the message of the Gospel was heard by hundreds of people who would never have been reached otherwise.

One such service was held at the intersection of Biddle Street and Druid Hill Avenue. On the corner stood a brightly-lighted saloon. The saloon-keeper and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. William R. Castle, were English born, from the royal borough of Windsor, and had carried on their business in Baltimore for twenty-four years. One day Mrs. Castle, attracted by the singing, slipped out to join the crowd around the tall preacher. Some tender childhood memory was stirred within her, and her eyes overflowed with unaccustomed tears. One of the women from Immanuel observed her emotion, and spoke to her, with the result that Mrs. Castle was won to Christ. She was soon baptized and became a member at the Tabernacle, but her husband scoffed at all her efforts to persuade him to go with her to the meetings. She finally begged her pastor to come and plead with her husband to give up the liquor business. A.C. Dixon had never been inside a saloon, and did not like the thought of entering one. Mrs. Castle suggested the side door, but he exclaimed, "No; that would be worse still!"

He soon went down, however, and found the saloon-keeper behind the bar. Persuading him to go into the private parlor for a talk, A.C. Dixon spoke to him of his need of Christ, and earnestly pointed out the evils of the liquor trade. But the business was a prosperous one, and Mr. Castle gave no sign of being moved. Realizing that further conversation was useless, the minister suggested that they pray together. As a boy, Castle had attended the services of the Established Church in England, and supposed that he was to repeat the prayer.

"Oh, God! bless this poor fellow and help him to give up the miserable business he is engaged in," began the pastor.

Scarcely suppressing his amusement, Castle repeated: "Oh, God! bless this poor fellow and help him to give up the miserable business he is engaged in," and so on, phrase by phrase, through the prayer. When they rose from their knees, the saloon-keeper was openly shaking with laughter, and it was with
a sense of chagrin and of utter failure that A.C.Dixon left him.

This incident occurred almost at the close of the Baltimore pastorate, and he did not see the man again. But, a few days afterwards, as Castle and his wife sat at breakfast, the man said: "Wife, I have slept none the past two nights. Come up and pray with me, and if you say so, we will give up this business, even if we starve." The resolution was duly carried into effect, and Castle, too, accepted Christ as his Saviour.

Some years later, when A.C.Dixon was in Baltimore for a Sunday's preaching, a fine-looking grey-haired man came forward after the service to greet him with a cordial hand-grasp. "Sir," he said, "I am the man you talked with in the saloon."

Through their remaining years Castle and his wife led fruitful Christian lives, and the thought of them inspired A.C. Dixon to be faithful in seeking to win souls, whether visible results were immediately forthcoming or not.

Numerous conversions had been the rich reward of the work which now extended far beyond the walls of Immanuel Tabernacle. Into the Tabernacle itself such crowds pressed their way, especially on Sunday afternoons, that by the Spring of 1890 the need for a larger auditorium became apparent. A.C.Dixon desired an extension of the Tabernacle in order to seat three thousand people, and an ample sum was actually subscribed for this purpose. Some of the members, however, had set their hearts upon a church building of more ecclesiastical appearance. That would demand a much larger amount of money, even with less seating capacity, and the question was therefore left unsettled.

It was a time of renewed crisis in A.C.Dixon's life. For eight years his heart had been set upon an ever enlarging work for God in Baltimore. His church now numbered almost a thousand members, and some of the people had begun to feel that the time had come for some relaxation from aggressive effort. But the spirit of the pioneer and of the evangelist was in the blood of their indefatigable leader and he could not rest on past attainments.

Once more the question of a building had become acute. To him the chief necessity was a more spacious meeting-place where the forlorn and sinful might be welcomed in increasing numbers to hear the message of the Gospel. But he knew that to many of the people the growing prestige of their church seemed to
demand a building of handsomer proportions than the plain old frame Tabernacle. Perhaps after all the church had reached its limit as an evangelizing force. If so, crystallization would set in, and another leader could help to maintain its present high standard. For himself, it was impossible to stand still and mark time. It might be that God would call him to another sphere, where he would have greater opportunities to reach out to the unsaved. The matter was laid before his Lord in an intensity of desire for unmistakable guidance.

During that summer he took part in the far-famed annual Conference at Ocean Grove, a popular resort on the New Jersey coast. Taking advantage of this for a seaside holiday for his family, he took his wife and lively quartet of children with him. Howard, now a merry, handsome lad of nine and a half years, was the light of his parents' eyes and the joy of their hearts.

On returning to Ocean Grove after a short trip to Staten Island, Howard and his seven-year-old sister, Mary, became ill with diphtheria. The little girl made a good recovery, but the doctor warned the sorrowing parents that Howard, who had sickened last, was slipping away from them.

Could it be that the active, intelligent boy who had filled their lives with happy pride was to be taken Home so soon? Comfort stole into the father's heart as he thought of a talk they had had together in Baltimore a few weeks before. Howard's bright eyes, usually a-sparkle with mischief, had lighted up with sweet seriousness as he had nestled to his father's side to tell of his love for Jesus, and of his desire to confess his faith openly in baptism. Precious in the sight of God was the prayer that followed. A few minutes later the boy's merry laugh rang out as though he had never had a serious thought in the world, but a deep joy filled the father's heart, and a new and sacred bond cemented their affection.

On presenting the matter of Howard's baptism to his deacons, strong objection had been raised to the admission of a child under ten years of age to the full membership of the church. Against his better judgment, the pastor had yielded to the counsel of his deacons, and had told the little lad, with tender regret, that it was thought best to defer his baptism until he was older. Now, as he looked on his dying boy, a determination formed itself in his soul, that no child with whom he had to
do should ever again meet the slightest rebuff when a desire to confess Christ was voluntarily expressed.

On account of the younger children, the poor mother was only permitted to gaze through the open door upon the pale countenance of her first-born son, and to utter her heart-broken messages of farewell as he lay in his father's arms.

"Will there be any children in heaven?" Howard asks, when the news is broken to him of the journey he is about to take. "Yes, my darling," cries his mother, "the Bible says that the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing." Presently he speaks again: "Grandpa is there; he will run out to meet me. I am so glad." A little silence, then: "I am going to be with Jesus—there will be lots of boys there." Once more his lips move: "I love Jesus with all my heart." And again—"When you come, I'll be there . . . . Good-bye." The eyes close, and the bright little life has fled.

It was the first great test of shattering sorrow in A.C. Dixon's life. He had poured out comfort for others—would his own faith triumph now?

On the Christmas morning that followed Howard's death, the family sat around the breakfast table in Baltimore, all too silent and sad for the happy season. Howard had always been the leader of the fun at Christmas time, and the blank was felt even by the youngest. The silence was broken by one of the children: "This is Howard's first Christmas in heaven!" "I should think it is Christmas every day in heaven," said another. Again the Scripture was fulfilled: "A little child shall lead them."

This personal sorrow opened new avenues of ministry to other bereaved hearts, and henceforth there was a new note in A.C. Dixon's preaching.

"On reading your words in The Baltimore Baptist to-day," wrote a friend, "my heart is deeply moved. I too have been down in that valley, and as the rainbow came out of the cloud I felt just what you describe so beautifully. The joy of having children in heaven has been an unbroken strain of music in my life. It was at first a great struggle to put the affliction behind me and turn my face towards the future. Every word you have written touches those chords afresh."
CHAPTER XI

WIDENING OPPORTUNITIES IN BROOKLYN

The uncertainty in A.C. Dixon's mind as to whether God would have him stay in Baltimore or would call him to a new field did not last long. While at Ocean Grove, he was invited to preach in the Hanson Place Baptist Church of Brooklyn, with the reputation and history of which he was already somewhat familiar.

It had been founded nearly forty years before by a pioneer group of Northern Baptists whose missionary ardor was swayed by two strong principles—hatred of the liquor evil and also of slavery, for the country was then seething with the emotions that soon led to the outbreak of Civil War. Clauses were, in fact, incorporated in the constitution of the church, barring from its membership any person connected with, or even approving of the traffic either in intoxicating beverages or in slaves.

Sundered far as the poles in his youthful training from their political outlook and Abolitionist traditions, A.C. Dixon was whole-heartedly one with the people of Hanson Place in the fight against liquor. Through his love of Gospel music, he was interested also in the hymns that had floated out from that church to bless the Christian world. Its second pastor, Dr. Robert Lowry, was gifted as a poet and musician, and was the author of many notable hymns.

One had been written in the midst of a severe epidemic which raged in Brooklyn while the Civil War was at its height. Dr. Lowry was sitting in his study, deep in thought. Disease and war were sweeping away hundreds day after day, and the sorrowful scenes around him raised a question in his mind—"Shall we meet again? We are parting at the river of death; shall we meet at the river of life?" Crossing the room, he seated himself at his parlor organ. Almost immediately the words and music of a hymn that was to become famous formed themselves in his mind. He
began to play softly and to sing:

"Shall we gather at the river,  
Where bright angel-feet have trod;  
With its crystal tide for ever  
Flowing by the throne of God?"

Another of Dr. Lowry's well-known hymns, "I need Thee every hour," composed for words by Mrs. Annie S. Hawks, a member of the church, was a great favorite with A.C.Dixon.

He had accepted the invitation to preach at Hanson Place in the midst of the anxiety caused by the illness of his children. On September 6th, Howard had been called Home.

"Of course we shall excuse you from the engagement next Sunday" was the message from Hanson Place, when news of the boy's death was received there. But the call of duty was not to go unheeded, and on the following Sunday morning, A.C.Dixon stood in the pulpit of the Brooklyn church according to promise. Did thoughts of its historic past float through his mind as he rose to deliver a ringing message? Perhaps there stole upon his inner ear an echo of a familiar boyish treble:

"Yes, we'll gather at the river,  
Flowing by the throne of God!"

That night the pulpit committee presented him with a strong invitation to become their pastor, and throughout the following week continued to urge their request. In the light of the situation in Baltimore, and because he was expecting direct divine guidance, the matter assumed an unusual importance. He determined to go to some quiet place for a day or two, where he could be alone and seek to discover whether the call to Brooklyn might be a leading of God. At Lake Mohonk, near the Catskill Mountains, in a famous hotel founded by Christian people and filled with an atmosphere of peace, he found the needed retreat.

There, apart with God from the noise and bustle of the world, he came to the conviction that the "pillar of cloud" was moving on before him to Brooklyn. Another field had opened in Chicago, but was set aside because it demanded much pastoral work with little opportunity for evangelism. That, to him, was the crux of the whole situation. Brooklyn offered great advantages along this very line. With Jersey City and Hoboken there were, even at that time, nearly three million inhabitants in
Greater New York, with an estimated floating population of about twenty thousand flocking in every week-end from the South and West. Hanson Place was in many ways an ideal strategic center from which to reach out to other parts of the metropolitan area in evangelistic effort. A.C. Dixon’s mind began leaping ahead to possibilities which seemed unlimited.

“The church believes in aggressive work. Their building is comparatively small now, though it seats a few more than our Tabernacle, but they have a vacant lot at its side, and when the time comes for enlargement, it can be done.”

Some problems, it is true, which had already been met and conquered in Baltimore, had to be faced.

“I had a plain talk with the pulpit committee and told them that if I came, it would be with a determination to have free seats in the church sooner or later. Some I found to be strongly with me, while others said they were open to conviction. God will take care of that. . . . There are, of course, worldly elements in the church, but not more so than in most churches, and faithful preaching will convert them or drive them off. . . . I will wait a day or two and go over the ground again in prayer before God before I send my answer. But my conviction is that I ought to go to Brooklyn.”

Up to this point, his wife had been his only confidante, and a week passed after his return to Baltimore before he took any further step. The prosperous condition of the Immanuel congregation in spiritual and mundane things made him feel free to leave them, confident that they would call a good pastor and continue in faith and good works. He was frank to admit that the obstacles placed in the way of his proposition for enlarging the Tabernacle seemed to indicate that his own work there was done. The conviction of the leaders of the church with regard to the type of their future building confirmed him in feeling that the mind of the Lord was with them rather than with him, and that the large, plain auditorium as an evangelizing agency might not be best for Baltimore.

A letter to Mr. Manning gave the first intimation of his departure.

“It wrung the blood almost out of my heart, as I looked into the faces of the friends I love so dearly, while preaching to them last Sunday. Could
I merely follow my feelings, I should abandon all thought of leaving, but I must make the best investment possible of what little there is in me. I know that I am not fitted by nature or by grace to do only the quiet work of a pastor, though I regard that as one of the highest forms of service.

"I seem to have lived more in the last two or three months than in the past ten years. In the midst of my greatest sorrow, I have been pressed with perplexing questions about Mr. Baldwin's work in Africa and my own work. . . I am willing to remain as long as I should, but I think when a pastor resigns, the sooner he gives place the better it is for the church. The pulpit committee can be appointed at once, and search can begin for the right man."

Shaken and startled, Mr. Manning replied:

"Must I drop the name 'pastor'? I had thought I should use it till you or I were called to heaven! My feelings sometimes change, but not for you. . . . You have my love wherever you go, or whatever you do."

The call to Hanson Place was accepted for the first Sunday in November, and A.C. Dixon's official letter of resignation was read publicly to the gathered throng in Immanuel Tabernacle. The people could hardly be persuaded that the decision was irrevocable, but were obliged to accept it with sorrow.

The Tabernacle congregation had become one of the largest of any denomination in Baltimore, and on the afternoon of the last Sunday the big building could not contain the crowds that sought to press their way into it for the farewell service. Doorways, vestibules, aisles, pulpit stairs and Sunday School room overflowed. The sea of faces turned intently towards the platform as the tall figure of A.C. Dixon appeared. Hearts were tender as the strong, musical voice read aloud; "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."

Accusations had not been wanting that the pastor was being lured away by the offer of a much larger salary.

"To my friends," he said, "I need not say a word as to my attitude toward money, or that of my wife. The best part of my life here has not been in receiving. I look into the faces of those who have been led to give themselves to Christ, and it comforts me in this hour of parting. . . . I leave you now to the leadership of God. May God bless you all."

"The church bordered temporarily on despair," said one of
the deacons, "for the people had counted on a life-long union with their first pastor." But faith's foundations had been laid too strongly to admit of demoralization.

A.C.Dixon's transition from one sphere of service to another was swiftly accomplished. On the last day of October, he and his family took up their abode in the unfamiliar surroundings of Brooklyn. It was already known as "the bedroom of New York" and "the city of churches." Separated from Manhattan by the East River, but linked to it by the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn spread out widely over the broad-nosed tip of Long Island which forms the eastern side of New York harbor. Morning after morning the teeming crowds poured into the business centers of Manhattan, returning at night to eat and sleep, to enjoy the refreshing breezes of the open ocean at Rockaway, or at Coney Island, already a popular pleasure resort, or to obtain spiritual refreshment through the ministry of the Brooklyn churches. The phenomenal development of subsequent years has trebled the population of Greater New York, has made it the most populous world-center of Jewry, has brought into Brooklyn a large element of foreign-born inhabitants, has pushed the great buildings of cramped Manhattan up into the air, forming a sky-line that is one of the world's wonders, and has burrowed beneath city and rivers with subways and tunnels.

In the Brooklyn of 1890, wagons rattled noisily over the cobble-stones that were just beginning to give way to asphalt. Many of the streets in the residential district around Hanson Place were lined with trees, and most of the houses were substantial and well-built, with little architectural beauty, but comfortable and roomy. It was a good neighborhood for building up home and family life, and as most of the members of the church lived near by, the pastoral work was simplified.

In accepting the call, A.C.Dixon regarded the church as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Before the eyes of his spirit was a vision of souls away from Christ—not only in Brooklyn, but in the great adjoining group of cities. In Baltimore his task had been to build a church where none existed. Abundant success had crowned his efforts. But when he sought to imbue the church that he had built with his own unquenchable passion for evangelism, he found it unable to go beyond certain well-defined limits.
In Brooklyn he came to a church already established. Some of the leaders shared his vision of its strategic opportunities. But training and instruction would be needed to bring the rank and file of the membership into readiness for united action. Upon this consolidation he determined to concentrate his energies through the first year or two.

The initial problem to be tackled was the vexed question of pew-rents. At the first business meeting he brought forward the promise given by the committee of invitation that pew-rents should be abolished if he would consent to come. When the motion was put, however, free seats were voted down, to the trepidation of some members of the committee who feared that he might consider this a breach of good faith.

But A.C.Dixon's method was to persuade, rather than to coerce. In closing the meeting, he said with quiet dignity, "Well, brethren, the majority rules; I bow before it, but I assure you that you will hear from me continually until you have voted free pews." A quiet struggle continued for more than a year, coming to a head in the Spring of 1892. At the beginning of that year, the pastor preached a series of outspoken sermons on the subject of "Rented Pew or Free Seat." Probably some of the recalcitrant members of the congregation squirmed uneasily as they listened. At any rate, the matter was again brought before the church meeting, and on April 3rd an announcement was made from the pulpit with happy emphasis: "Every seat in this church will henceforth be absolutely free."

Christendom was everywhere aglow with evangelical fervor in this period. Protestant churches of all denominations had been thoroughly aroused through the campaigns of D.L.Moody, and the preaching of Spurgeon and other great leaders. Missionary movements at home and abroad were carrying the good news of salvation to every kindred and tribe and nation. The Bible was honored as the Word of God, while music and singing had a prominent place in all the revival atmosphere.

The death of Spurgeon on January 31st, 1892, was a challenge to those of like faith to be doubly bold in proclaiming it. The memorial sermon preached by A.C.Dixon at Hanson Place when the news reached America was long remembered. About a year later, Thomas Spurgeon, then on his way from New Zealand to take his father's place at the Metropolitan Tabernacle,
broke his journey to visit the Dixon home in Brooklyn and preached at Hanson Place.

Throughout his ministry, A.C. Dixon kept his congregations closely in touch with the triumphs of evangelism all over the world. Preachers, Gospel Song leaders, missionaries and evangelists were welcomed to his pulpit, till the people felt as though they were at the very hub of Christian activity.

One of the earliest opportunities for wider fellowship in Brooklyn was through a conference on the Second Coming, held a few months after his arrival. New interest was stirring everywhere in the subject of Christ's return. A memorable conference of Baptist ministers, the first of its kind, had met in Chicago in 1889 under the leadership of Dr. A.J. Gordon, to study the Scriptures with regard to this doctrine. From that time forward it held an increasingly prominent place in A.C. Dixon's ministry.

At the close of the Brooklyn Conference more than a thousand people rose to their feet to testify to their belief in the personal return of Christ. Gospel singing had been a special feature of the Conference, under the direction of Ira D. Sankey and George C. Stebbins, both residents of Brooklyn, and of Daniel B. Towner, conductor of the great choirs in Moody's campaigns.

Another movement in which A.C. Dixon took a deep interest was the Christian Endeavor, which had been in existence about a dozen years. It had spread to England and other European countries, and a great International Convention was held at Madison Square Garden in New York City on July 7th, 1892. A.C. Dixon was requested to give the address of welcome on behalf of the ministers of New York to the vast concourse of twenty thousand people in the huge auditorium. The physical effort of reaching the ears of so vast a throng by the unaided voice was no easy task, and Dr. Clark, the "father" of the movement, was apprehensive with regard to all of his speakers. "I intend to be heard," A.C. Dixon assured him. He had already arranged for a man to stand on the farthest limit of the crowd, to signal with a handkerchief if his voice failed to carry. At the close of the meeting he was told that every word was distinctly heard.

The needs of the children at Hanson Place were never forgotten by A.C. Dixon, for his own lively household kept him in
close personal touch with the problems of childhood. In addition to the one son remaining he now had three girls, the last daughter, Grace, being added to the family a year after their arrival in Brooklyn. Boston W.Smith, or "Uncle Boston" as the young folk called him, was a frequent speaker at Hanson Place. He had a peculiar gift with children and carried on an itinerating work all over the country by means of a Gospel car which could be attached to a railway train, and was run free of charge by the railroad companies from one place to another. Hundreds of boys and girls in the smaller towns as well as the large cities owed their conversion to "Uncle Boston," and his visits to Hanson Place were always welcome. Fanny J.Crosby, the blind hymn-writer, was another whom the pastor often invited to speak to his young people.

Among the boys of the church who were converted early in the Brooklyn ministry, was Frank Howard Richardson. His father, Mr.William J.Richardson—one of the deacons—was in his quiet unobtrusive way a leader in every good work carried on by the church. A.C.Dixon and his wife were greatly drawn to the lad, for he was about the age of the boy they had lost, and even bore his name.

When Frank expressed a desire to be baptized, the memory of his own boy's disappointment challenged A.C.Dixon's immediate personal interest, and he quickly overcame a similar opposition on the ground of age. To the lad he wrote:

"I was glad to receive your card showing that you have accepted Jesus as your Saviour and that you are willing to confess Him before the world. I know how a boy feels who wants to be a Christian, for I began to trust and love Jesus while I was a boy."

Each week since his arrival there had been a baptismal service, but when on the seventh Sunday A.C.Dixon put his arm about this boy before immersing him, it was all he could do to control his emotion sufficiently to utter the simple words of the service. The congregation knew something of what was passing in his heart, and many were deeply moved. Several caught the glance that flashed between the pastor and his wife as she sat with brimming eyes in her accustomed place in the church. From that day, the child of the beloved deacon was as a son to them both.
"You were the first boy I baptized after my own dear little Howard was taken to heaven. It almost seemed to me that you had taken his place, for had he lived, he would have been baptized about the same time. I shall pray that God may make you just the kind of man I wanted him to be, a pure, happy and useful Christian."

The members of the Hanson Place Church soon found that they had neither time nor inclination to fritter away their lives in worldly amusements. Under their energetic pastor they were kept busy and happy from morning till night, and were abundantly satisfied with the spiritual and intellectual fare provided for them.

"I was frequently asked by other young people of my acquaintance why I did not play cards or dance or go to the theater," said one of them in later days. "I simply told them that Mr. Dixon was my pastor, and that our time was filled with things that were much more important."

Undying memories of these days were cherished by the Hanson Place people. The great Thanksgiving and Watch-night services stood out like mountain peaks in their experience. A novel innovation was the "sunrise service" held at regular intervals through the year. Many a hard day's task was lightened by the inspiration of those early morning hours when a happy throng filled the church to praise God and to feast on His Word.

Among the men a large band of "Minute Men" was organized. These pledged themselves to be ready for service of any kind whenever and wherever needed, in open-air services, in visitation work, or in soul-winning. Should the prayer-meeting flag, the "Minute Men" were always prepared to give a short word of testimony. Many a hesitant speaker learned in this way to overcome the embarrassment which a long speech would have caused, while others who were tempted to become too voluble learned to express themselves in crisp, effective sentences.

One of the chief factors in fitting the membership for service was "The Brooklyn Training Institute for Christian Workers," held for three months in the Spring and fall. There were Tuesday evening classes for younger and older people, with an average registered membership, even in the first year, of about three hundred. The curriculum included New Testament Greek, textual study of the Bible, instruction in public speaking, the
composition of addresses and sermons, and methods of Bible study and of Christian work.

Twice a month, on Thursday evenings, lectures were given by some well-known Bible teacher, and these were thrown open to the public. Such men as Dr. Nathaniel West, who gave a series of addresses on "The Pentateuch and the Higher Critics", took charge of the platform. Other subjects under the fire of critical attack were discussed in order to build up intelligent faith in the Scriptures, and to forewarn against false teaching. Occasionally the pastor himself delivered one of these lectures, but he preferred to bring to his people as wide a range as possible of experts in Biblical knowledge, for he believed that "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." Particular attention was given to training in vocal music, and classes in choral singing enjoyed great popularity.

At the close of each session of the Institute, written examinations were held and certificates were presented to the successful candidates. Members of other Brooklyn churches attended the classes, bringing an enrichment of fellowship that opened the way for co-operation with people of other denominations.

In the midst of the world-wide outburst of missionary fervor and evangelism, an insidious movement was already astir which was beginning to affect the membership of the Christian churches. The Darwinian theory of evolution, later to become the chief gospel of the modernists, was already being skilfully injected into the minds of students in the theological colleges, and was finding its way into sermons and religious literature. A.C.Dixon knew that the members of his church would meet destructive criticism of the Bible on every hand. He therefore set himself deliberately to inform them with regard to the wily tactics of the enemy, stressing personal intimacy with the Scriptures as the soundest form of protection.

A tremendous influence had been exerted upon the faith of the young people of Brooklyn by the famous Dr. Henry Ward Beecher from his pulpit in Plymouth Church. Beecher had died only four years before A.C.Dixon began his work at Hanson Place, and was still the idol of Brooklyn. Some of the Hanson Place people had been intimately acquainted with him through Dr. John H. Raymond, the first President of Vassar College, who was the father-in-law of their deacon, Mr. William J. Richardson.
Dr. Beecher and Dr. Raymond had visited England together during the Civil War, and Beecher's thundering orations had largely modified English sentiment, especially in the industrial centers, transferring much public sympathy from the South to the North.

In his last years Beecher unhappily espoused the cause of evolution and of universalism, and his eloquence did much to undermine trust in the authority of the Bible as the Word of God. Over and over again in conversation with the young people, the pastor would be told: "We believe the Bible, Mr. Dixon, but in the way Mr. Beecher did, and not as you do." He was driven finally to refer to Beecher's teaching in a sermon on "The Power of God's Word."

"I have been led to believe," he said in part, "that as a man, Beecher was all that is claimed for him by his Brooklyn admirers. As an orator, with a theme that aroused him, he was bold and uncompromising. As a philanthropist, he was world-wide in his great-hearted sympathy. As a citizen, he was patriotic and aggressive. But our business with Henry Ward Beecher this morning is as a teacher. In his early ministry he believed the Bible and proclaimed it as the revelation of God with no uncertain accent. But in his later ministry it was almost impossible to learn what he believed as to the inspiration of the Scriptures, future punishment, the Atonement and such doctrines. He declared that his best friends failed to understand him; and no wonder!

"The true explanation of this change seems to me to lie in the fact that in his early days Beecher studied the Bible, while in his latter days he gave most of his time to the study of contemporaneous literature, the spirit of which was largely anti-Biblical. It is evident that in preparing his sermons on evolution, Mr. Beecher read Herbert Spencer more than he did Moses. In early life he believed that the Bible should mold the age. In later years he tried to adapt the Bible to the spirit of opposition about him.

"The kind of unbelief which he did more than any other man to popularize has done much to weaken the power of the pulpit. To charge God with being the Father of all men is a slander upon His holiness. Few illusions can do more harm than that which holds all men to be children of God. It puts men to sleep on the bed of false security. It is the vagary of the broad and sentimental mind, and has no foundation in Scripture or experience."

This sermon was reported in the Brooklyn press, and drew an immediate attack from an intimate friend and fellow-minister,
who had been greatly influenced by Beecher's teaching. A scathing letter published in the *Herald and Advertiser* of New York was quickly copied in the *Brooklyn Eagle*. The first to see it, and to spring to the defense, was Dr. Beecher's own friend, Mrs. William J. Richardson. She immediately wrote a strong letter in vindication of her pastor's position. The reply was characteristic of the writer:

"I love your pastor as much as you do, though I hate his theology. I wish my own church were as full of loyal people as you all seem to be."

The following prayer-meeting at Hanson Place was unusually crowded, but contrary to expectation, no reference was made to the newspaper attack, which had raised quite a commotion. At the close of the meeting, many pushed forward to shake the pastor by the hand and assure him of their loyalty and trust. "Why did you not say something about that awful letter," exclaimed Mrs. Richardson. But A.C. Dixon threw back his head with a good-natured laugh, "Oh, that is just his way of saying we don't agree," was his only comment.

Any man, taking up the cudgels fearlessly against false teaching, is bound to meet with strong opposition. During his second winter in Brooklyn A.C. Dixon found, almost to his surprise, that some of his young people had been led astray by the specious arguments of the infidel lecturer, Robert G. Ingersoll. This led him to give a series of sermons to skeptics, culminating in some warning addresses on "Ingersollism," which drew him unexpectedly into active controversy with Ingersoll himself.

Originally trained as a lawyer in his native State of Illinois, Ingersoll had become immensely popular through the exercise of his brilliant oratorical gifts. He had entered the political field, but, disappointed by his failure to be elected to the United States Senate, he had devoted himself largely to the lecture platform, and had recently come east to resume his legal profession. In 1878, as chairman of the Liberal League, Ingersoll had headed a petition bearing seventy thousand signatures, which urged a repeal of the "Comstock Law." That excellent piece of legislation had been enacted by Congress five years earlier to put a stop to a great movement that was undermining public morals in the United States. A stream of obscene publications had been sent out broadcast through the mails, the use of which, for such pur-
pose, was forbidden by the "Comstock Law." In his lecture, A.C.Dixon made the following statement:

"A few years ago it was found that pictures and impure publications were passing through the mails. Anthony Comstock decided to stop it. On investigation, whom should he find representing the publishers of impure literature but Colonel Ingersoll—paid to pollute the minds of the young of this generation."

He took it for granted that Ingersoll had been retained as a paid attorney to accomplish this work. Some days later, Ingersoll's attention was called to a report of the lecture at Hanson Place Church. A challenge immediately followed. "I write," said Ingersoll from his law office on Wall Street, "for the purpose of giving you an opportunity to retract, whether by stating that you used no such language, or that the statements are absolutely untrue. If you do not make such retraction I shall commence an action against you for having uttered a malicious libel."

The answer to this unwelcome threat was the publication of two and a half columns in the New York World, giving abundant proof that Ingersoll did represent the publishers of obscene literature in their efforts to persuade Congress to repeal the Comstock Law.

Ingersoll then brought immediate suit for five thousand dollars for damages to his reputation. At the close of the following Friday evening service in the Hanson Place Church, the pastor quietly read Mr.Ingersoll's letter, and part of his article of reply. He stated that his only reason for referring to the matter at all was that his people might have the accurate facts, although he did not expect them to support him in any way, but simply desired that they might not be mis-informed.

The church, however, was not to be dissuaded from taking the part of its leader. Mr.William J.Richardson assured him emphatically that, though the affair was a purely personal one, every member of the church would heartily approve of all that their pastor might say or do. A.C.Dixon sought to bring the suit to trial because he felt that the inner workings of infidelity should be made known. But on one pretext or another, Ingersoll postponed the trial for two or three years.

Undaunted by the threatened law-suit that hung over his
head, A.C. Dixon continued his series of warning addresses on the teachings of infidelity. Ingersoll finally wrote through an attorney to say that he was willing to admit that he had represented the publishers of "liberal" literature in their efforts to have the Comstock Law repealed, hoping to save his own writings from exclusion. The chief thrust against which he recoiled was the assertion that he had been paid for his services. If this assertion were withdrawn as unproven the suit would be dismissed. A.C. Dixon replied pressing for the trial to take place, and hoping that Ingersoll, for the sake of his own reputation, could prove that he was the paid attorney of those whom he represented, for, if he did it for the love of the thing, it was a hundred-fold worse from an ethical point of view.

When the suit came to trial, the judge decided that it was not libelous to say that a lawyer was paid for anything—the only question to be settled was, "Did Mr. Ingersoll represent the publishers of obscene literature in their efforts to have the Comstock Law repealed?" One of Comstock's books contained documentary evidence, and Ingersoll's lawyer, knowing that his client had himself admitted the fact, asked that the case be dropped at once. Not only was the accusation against Ingersoll thus substantially justified, but a strong blow had been struck against an influence that was leading many away from God.
CHAPTER XII

NEW YORK ASTIR WITH THE GOSPEL

The year 1893 marked the beginning of a wide expansion of A.C. Dixon's work and influence. After three years devoted largely to internal developments and intensive training the Hanson Place Church had become a strong, organized unit of spiritual power in the community. It was now ready to share his plans for reaching out to the teeming multitudes beyond its own borders. The members were less exclusive, less anxious to preserve their dignity, and many of them had taken part in the open-air services through the summer months.

As an experiment in reaching non-churchgoers, the Brooklyn Opera House was engaged for evangelistic services on Sunday afternoons through January and February of this memorable year. The venture met with instant and growing success. Many who attended the meetings out of curiosity were aroused to their need of salvation, and accepted Christ as Saviour and Lord. It was an easy matter then to persuade them to take a further step by joining some church of their choice. These theater meetings were begun on the sole responsibility of A.C. Dixon, backed by loyal members of his church, but it was not long before the movement grew into an interdenominational effort which ran like a flame of light through the dark places of Brooklyn.

Another union movement, inaugurated by the Hanson Place Church, was in support of Francis Murphy, an apostle of the Gospel Temperance cause. At A.C. Dixon's invitation he conducted a "Blue Ribbon Campaign" in Brooklyn. Hundreds pledged themselves to total abstinence, donning "the bit of blue" as a token of their decision.

The Hanson Place Church soon experienced a rebounding impetus from the work carried on outside its walls. Practically every week there were baptisms, and the church grew in spiritual strength as well as in numbers. Association with workers of other
churches broadened their sympathies and stimulated an interest in the important truths stressed by other branches of the Christian family. Their pastor took them through a regular course of study regarding the foundation principles upon which the great Protestant bodies had been established—not a common practice, surely, on the part of the average minister. But from this time forward A.C.Dixon made constant use of this method of instruction as a means of creating true unity of spirit and a better understanding between Christians sharing the same fundamental beliefs. He felt this to be just as important as to oppose attempted union without a common foundation.

Eighteen ninety-three was the year of the famous Chicago World's Fair, organized to commemorate the discovery of America by Columbus. Only fifty-six years had passed since the future metropolis of the Middle West, springing up from a hamlet surrounding Fort Dearborn, had been granted its charter. Now its population was nearing the million mark, and Chicago was fast developing as the chief transportation center of the continent.

Tremendous preparations were made for the World's Fair, and before it closed more than twenty million people had paid admission fees. D.L.Moody, with his mind always on the alert for openings to preach the Gospel, was quick to grasp the unique opportunities presented. While carrying on his missions in Great Britain, he had enlisted both interest and practical aid for a campaign of evangelism in the midst of the Fair that has no parallel in the history of Christian missions before or since.

Ten churches, two theaters, seven public halls, and five large tents were in constant daily use for six months, while the Bible Institute students were able to reach the people of the thickly-populated tenement district by means of "Gospel wagons."

D.L.Moody gathered around him a corps of several hundred Christian workers of outstanding ability to conduct the campaign under his superb generalship. The repute of the Southern pastor, who had made his mark on the religious life of Baltimore and was now stirring up Brooklyn, had not failed to reach his ears, and A.C.Dixon was invited to take part in the Chicago work. With the consent of his church September was set aside for this purpose, and the people reaped a rich reward through sharing their pastor's experiences.

Upon arrival in Chicago, A.C.Dixon found that Dr.R.A.
Torrey, superintendent of the Bible Institute, and Major D.W. Whittle were among Moody's chief adjutants. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman was another of the speakers, with Dr. James H. Brooks of St. Louis, and the beloved Major Cole. Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, Dr. A. J. Gordon, the Needham brothers, Rev. R. G. Pearson of Asheville, North Carolina, Dr. Wharton of Baltimore, and many another familiar friend and fellow-worker exchanged greetings with A. C. Dixon as he went about the busy work of the day. Every week-day at noon he preached in the Central Music Hall, and every afternoon and evening, including Sundays, in some hall, church or tent.

One of the chief events of the World's Fair was the "Parliament of Religions," addressed by eloquent and impressive speakers, representing every great religion on earth.

"I attended it," said A. C. Dixon, "and it had a very saddening effect upon me. On the platform were some of the prophets of Baal from pagan lands, and side by side with them were representatives of the Jewish Sanhedrim. The single condition of membership in that World's Congress of Religions was a belief in God. A delegation of demons from the bottomless pit could have had proper credentials, for 'they believe in God, and tremble.' When the Lord was blasphemed, there was applause, and when the Bible was cut to pieces and thrown overboard, there was louder applause. The attempt at union was really a weakness. Christian people need to be united in Christ. It is not possible for a Christian to work with those who do not honor the Lord Jesus."

No greater contrast could have been found than the deep unity of spirit which bound together the heterogeneous army of workers drawn to Chicago at Moody's call. From every part of America and from Europe they had come to give the Gospel in their own tongue to the cosmopolitan throngs. Findor of Silesia came to preach to the Poles; Rabbi Rabinowitz of Russia to the Jews; Dr. Theo. Monod of Paris to the French. The Germans were reached through Count Andrew von Bernstorff and Dr. Adolph Stoecker, formerly Court preacher for the old Emperor William, but at this time president of the City Mission of Berlin, and editor of an influential church paper in Germany.

From Great Britain and Ireland came Lord Kinnaird, Lord Bennett, John McNeill—the famous Scottish preacher—Henry Varley, Charles Inglis, Hubert Brooke, J. Monro Gibson, G. H. C.
Macgregor and Charles Inwood. John G.Paton was there from the New Hebrides, with many another missionary.

Leaders of Gospel song, such as McGranahan, Jacobs, Burke, Towner and Stebbins took part in the musical side of the work. The song-leader appointed to assist A.C.Dixon in many of his services was Charles M.Alexander, a tall, slender student from the Bible Institute. Alexander was a Southerner from his own native region, born barely a hundred miles from Shelby on the Tennessee side of the glorious North Carolina mountains they both loved so well. He was just at the beginning of that career which proved him peerless as a leader of Gospel song. In their brief contact, the two men were unusually attracted to each other, conscious of a common devotion to Christ which brought them into immediate spiritual kinship.

Exhilarated by the mountain-top experiences of that memorable campaign, A.C.Dixon returned to Brooklyn determined to work and pray for a great revival there. He began in his own church with daily services in which he portrayed the inspiring examples of "Heroes of Faith" from the Bible records. The ready response of his own people convinced him that the time was ripe for a general forward movement, and he invited Rev. R.G.Pearson of Asheville to help inaugurate it.

For a week Mr.Pearson preached nightly to growing crowds in Hanson Place Church. It was soon evident that the Holy Spirit was moving upon the community, and that a true spiritual revival had begun in answer to the prayers of God's people. On the second Sunday afternoon the Brooklyn Y.M.C.A. hall where A.C.Dixon preached, and an overflow meeting in a local theater, were also crowded out. Major Whittle was then invited, and brought inspiring messages on "The Power of the Holy Spirit," and "The Glorious Return of Christ."

The next move was to call the Protestant churches of Brooklyn to join in fanning the flame of revival. There was an instant and hearty response. Evening services were held daily in many of the churches, with united meetings at noon in some public hall, where Dr.J.D.Burrell of New York, Dr.Yatman and Dr. Cuyler shared the platform with A.C.Dixon. Henry Varley of England and George C.Needham also assisted in the campaign.

By the turn of the year, the Brooklyn churches were thoroughly aroused. Ten evangelists with their song-leaders and two
male-voice quartets were called in to help, while many of the New York ministers took part in the work.

For six Sunday afternoons Niblo's Theater was thronged, and the needs of the poor were not forgotten for it was a hard winter. There were meetings for the unemployed, a labor bureau was established, and wide-spread appeals for food and clothing were responded to generously. Sam Hadley, superintendent of the Water Street Mission, addressed meetings of drunkards and "down-and-outers." All of these efforts bore fruit in numerous conversions.

"There seems to be a genuine revival all over the city," Mrs. Dixon wrote in January, 1894. "Mr. Dixon preaches every night. We had a wonderful Watch-night Service. Mr. Sankey sang for us, also the sister of P.P. Bliss. The unity of the churches here is beautiful; they lose sight of their own denomination in their work for Jesus."

Much distress was caused in Brooklyn in the following winter by a disastrous strike of the street-car men. Mr. William J. Richardson, who was a director of the new Nassau Electric Company, enjoyed the confidence of both sides, and was called upon to arbitrate. But the trouble was long and severe, and much suffering ensued before a settlement was reached.

The church-life of Brooklyn was a good deal affected by the surrounding unrest, and A.C. Dixon brought the facts home to his congregation by a sermon on "The Strike and its Lessons." So severe was the strain on Mr. Richardson that a serious breakdown of health led shortly to his death. His life had been peculiarly full of self-sacrifice and of continual labor for others. The loss was a keenly personal one to A.C. Dixon, for in all his ministries no other friendship had quite the same quality as this.

"To me he appeared to be as much like Christ as any man I have ever met. His face was a model for a master's pencil or chisel. On returning from a prayer-meeting some time ago, a friend said to me, 'Mr. Richardson reminds me of Jesus Christ. Somehow I think that our Lord looked like him.' The last talk he ever made in our prayer-meeting was about seeing Jesus and being like Him. A comparative stranger who was present said: 'his face looked like an angel's.' The ambition of his soul was truly to be like Jesus Christ."

With a pastor after his own heart, Mr. Richardson had lived to see the fruit of his devoted labors in the Hanson Place
Church, which had now become the center of a Bible-loving group of churches strongly influencing the religious life of Greater New York. A.C. Dixon, with his band of trained Christian workers, organized conferences for Bible study, and enterprises for reaching non-Christians.

Cooper Union in New York, founded originally for purely educational purposes, was engaged for Monday afternoon services through several winters, with Saturday afternoon meetings in Carnegie Hall. D.L. Moody and J. Wilbur Chapman frequently took a share in the preaching. Enthusiasm ran high in the cause of Gospel Temperance. Hearts were stirred to holy living. Money was freely contributed to foreign missions and Gospel wagons were hired to carry on open-air meetings.

A Japanese Mission on Sands Street, Brooklyn, attracted A.C. Dixon's keen interest. Many Japanese were employed as cooks on the warships in the harbor, and as clerks in the stores. Mr. Okajima, leader of the Mission, often brought his constituents over to Hanson Place in a body, and a number of them were converted under A.C. Dixon's preaching. On one occasion, eight Japanese converts were baptized together. One of them, working as a clerk in a Brooklyn store, was the son of a rich tradesman in Japan. Returning home to be married, he was offered fifty thousand dollars by his father, with a promise of being set up in a business of his own, if he would give up his "Christian nonsense." "Father," replied the young convert, "Jesus Christ is worth more to me than fifty thousand dollars." Accompanied by his wife, he returned to Brooklyn, assuring A.C. Dixon, his "father in Christ," that he was satisfied and happy to remain in his former lowly position.

For some twenty-five years or more the world had enjoyed a period of comparative peace, but the end of the nineteenth century was marked by upheavals in various countries that were the mutterings of a greater storm to come. The Armenian massacres and the terrible "Boxer" uprising in China drew forth the sympathy of pastor and people at Hanson Place with a ready response to the calls for help.

In 1898, the United States, through her intervention on behalf of Cuba, was drawn into conflict with Spain. When the President called for volunteers, the old differences between North and South were forgotten in the interests of a common
cause, and prayer-meetings for the deliverance of Cuba were held in most of the Protestant churches.

Tampa, on the western coast of Florida, even then a famous pleasure resort, became the embarkation point for Cuba and was soon alive with military encampments. In response to a call for help, D.L.Moody promptly organized a band of preachers and singers to work among the soldiers as they waited for embarkation orders. Major Whittle, Mr.Sankey and Mr.Stebbins were among the first on the ground, and Mr.Moody begged A.C.Dixon to lay everything aside to share in the work at Tampa.

It was not an easy matter to leave the Brooklyn church at such short notice. After seven strenuous years the membership had grown to almost twelve hundred, representing many nationalities. The task of instructing and guiding so large a number of people was no sinecure, to say nothing of the wider work of evangelization. But a month was set aside at once, and Mr. Moody, grateful for the hearty co-operation, devoted a Sunday to preaching at Hanson Place.

Nine regiments of the regular army were in camp at Tampa Heights when A.C.Dixon arrived. He held two services each week-day and three on Sundays, with others at Port Tampa and at Tampa Bay.

"The month I spent preaching to the soldiers before they sailed to Santiago, was a memorable time in my life. The men had their faces towards Cuba, with its miasma and its deadly bullets, and they were solemnized by the thought. I shall never forget the first meeting, when I saw the faces of the boys in the dim light as they sat around on the grass. When I preached to them about the Star of Bethlehem and the Saviour, more than a hundred stood up and said: 'Pray for me: I want to be a Christian.' God came into their hearts with mighty power, and there were many conversions."

The heat was intense during May, averaging 92 degrees. There had been no rain since October, and the dry sand was so deep as to make walking difficult and wearisome. The drought had withered all vegetation—even the tops of the palm trees were wilted. Yet in spite of all, A.C.Dixon often had audiences of five thousand men. Sometimes the only illumination at night was a feeble oil lamp, which threw a flickering light upon the sea of eager faces upturned towards the speaker.
After the first week he was joined by General O.O. Howard and Major Whittle.

"It was an interesting feature of the camp life at Tampa, to see General Shafter and General O.O. Howard, who had led the men in blue during Civil War days, hobnobbing with General Wheeler and General Fitzhugh Lee of the former Confederate Army. Now all were wearing the same uniform, and talked over the past in the most friendly way."

Fortunately, this war ran but a brief course. It was long enough, however, for A.C. Dixon to be deeply troubled by what he saw of the canteen in the camps. On returning to Brooklyn he spoke and wrote vigorously on the subject, and when the war ended he presided over a mass meeting in Cooper Union, at which Dr. Cuyler, Dr. Burrell and other ministers took part with Rear-Admiral Phillips—a great Temperance enthusiast. At this meeting, an indignant public protest was made against the continuance of the canteen in the army in open defiance of the law.

More than a thousand men had taken their stand for Christ under A.C. Dixon's preaching, and when he returned to Tampa for further meetings with the troops on their way home from Cuba, it was encouraging to meet many of the converts, and to find them true to the Lord.

This period was marked by the Home-going of several of the great evangelical leaders who had powerfully influenced A.C. Dixon's life. Spurgeon, A. J. Gordon and George Müller had gone within a few years of each other. Now at the end of 1899 the Christian world mourned the loss of D. L. Moody, who was stricken with heart disease in the midst of his strenuous labors.

While in certain ways neither Moody nor Spurgeon could ever be replaced, there were three men peculiarly raised up to carry forward the banner that had been unfurled. These were R. A. Torrey, J. Wilbur Chapman, and A. C. Dixon. The first two were called upon to leave their pulpits, and to circle the globe with a series of great evangelistic campaigns that continued unceasingly for a period of fifteen or sixteen years, and in which the ministry of Gospel song under Charles M. Alexander was as potent as that of the preached message.

The part played by A. C. Dixon was in the field of pastoral evangelism; and strangely enough he was to be linked during the coming twenty years of his life with the work of the three men
whom he so greatly loved and honored—of A.J.Gordon in Boston, of D.L.Moody in Chicago and of Spurgeon in London.

When the awful cataclysm of World War came, the unprecedented demand for evangelistic campaigns upon a large scale practically ceased. For the present, however, the opportunity for sane and wholesome evangelism was at its height, and A.C. Dixon made every possible use of it during the year that was to prove his last in the Brooklyn pastorate. He was now a man of forty-five, at the very zenith of his physical force and energy. His brothers, Thomas and Frank, both of whom had been for some years in the Baptist ministry, withdrew to launch out successfully upon the lecture platform. Historic romances had begun to simmer in the brain of the former, destined to bring him into prominence in the literary field. Through the dramatization of his novels, and especially through his famous historic film “The Birth of a Nation,” Thomas Dixon achieved wide distinction.

For the eldest of the three brothers there was but one plain goal of ambition—to reach the largest number of people in the most effective way to bring them to Christ. He had inaugurated a weekly church leaflet at Hanson Place entitled The Living Word. Its issue of March 5th, 1900, contains an illustrated description of an immense building, erection of which was being considered for replacing the Hanson Place Church. The extraordinary success of the evangelistic movement in New York had led A.C.Dixon to envision a new way of supplying some of the spiritual needs of Brooklyn with its congested population. The proposed building was to contain an auditorium seating two thousand for regular church services. Opening into a Sunday School hall by means of folding doors, this seating capacity was to be enlarged to three thousand for great mission services and Bible Conferences. A roof auditorium, open on every side to the fresh air, and reached by elevators and stairs, was planned to give at least fifteen hundred people a comfortable place of meeting during the hot summer evenings.

Many of the hotels and theaters of the city were provided with roof gardens which seemed almost indispensable in the great heat. A.C.Dixon had once heard Moody say:

“Things have got to be revolutionized before the masses can be reached for Christ. Every church in New York should have a roof auditorium. We must do real hard work in the great cities during the summer months.
It may mean remodeling our churches—well, let us remodel them! Theaters have been remodelled to suit the popular taste, and why not churches? Christians and sinners both like fresh air, and when Christians and fresh air can be found together, people are apt to take advantage of the fact."

Acting on this practical suggestion, A.C. Dixon presented his scheme to ministers of various denominations, and was greatly encouraged when it met with enthusiastic approval on the part of fourteen ministers in Brooklyn and eleven in New York.

At first he carried his own people with him on the wave of his enthusiasm. The church of his vision seemed almost certain to materialize. More than a tenth of the money needed for its erection was already in the bank. But a difference of opinion arose between the more cautious, older trustees and the younger men of the church. It came to a head at the annual church meeting of June, 1900. A.C. Dixon's ideas for the new building were not particularly conducive to ease or conventionality. They forecast an immense expenditure of time and strength on the part of the whole membership. A departure from ordinary conceptions of church architecture was also involved—a sacrifice of "dim, religious light," and of ecclesiastical atmosphere. The innovation most strongly opposed by a small but powerful group was that of a roof auditorium, the chief asset in ensuring healthful conditions during the stifling summer heat. A much larger group supported A.C. Dixon whole-heartedly in his far-reaching scheme. The minority, however, remained obdurate, and the plans for the new building came to a deadlock.

Again, as in Baltimore, a crisis was precipitated. A.C. Dixon had reached a point where there was no standing still. He must go forward with the purpose that was already a matter of public expectation, or his work in Brooklyn must suffer; yet the thought of leaving it was almost untenable. The inward struggle began to tell upon his health and made him an easy victim of the Spanish influenza that was raging at the time.

Behind the scenes, God was working out another plan for His servant. Perhaps He saw that successful leadership in such a movement might foster spiritual pride or loss of power, or cause the social rather than the spiritual note to be stressed. A practical experience along this line was about to be given to A.C. Dixon in the next few years.
CHAPTER XIII

SUMMER CONFERENCES

Strenuous work in the midst of a crowded city, and the need of country air and exercise for a growing family of sturdy youngsters, made the summer vacation a matter of importance in A.C.Dixon's busy life. The time set aside for his own relaxation was being more and more absorbed by his work in the summer Bible Conferences which were organized in many of the holiday resorts.

From the time of his association with D.L.Moody at the Chicago World's Fair, he had been a regular speaker at the Christian Workers' Conference at Northfield. Several summers were spent there with his family in a rustic cottage among the fragrant balsam pines on the ridge above the Seminary campus. Not far away were the summer homes of Dr.Mabie, Dr.Torrey and Dr.A.T.Pierson, and the intimate family intercourse with friends such as these was mutually refreshing.

Every Bible Conference brought untold enrichment of Christian fellowship, but one of the delights peculiar to Northfield was the presence of Christian workers from abroad, drawn there through Moody's campaigns. Miss Ada R.Habershon, the authoress and hymn-writer, well-known in the Christian circles of London, was one of those with whom a friendship was formed that was to last through many years.

At Winona Lake, Indiana, the Bible Conference presided over by Dr.J.Wilbur Chapman brought A.C.Dixon into contact with a host of ministers from the West whom he would not have met at Northfield or in the South. Testimonies of later days show that many a young minister who heard him preach was set on fire by the impact with his strong spiritual life and zeal for souls.

For some years he was closely associated with the Lake Keuka Assembly in the lovely mid-western region of New York State, about a hundred miles from Niagara. Keuka Lake, called
Crooked Lake on the old maps, being shaped like a "Y," lies in a beautiful setting, surrounded by hills terraced with vineyards.

Three miles from the little town of Penn Yan on the northern shore of the lake are the buildings of a college, founded jointly by the Free Baptists and Congregationalists. Here a Chautauqua was held every summer, the college buildings providing hotel accommodation for the "Assembly" visitors during the summer vacation. Numerous cottages and tents housed other guests, and the lake offered abundant opportunities for recreation. Five hundred people could be seated in the college chapel, and an open-air auditorium in the grove accommodated ten times as many.

The Chautauqua fare usually provided had been intellectual rather than spiritual. With A.C.Dixon's advent in 1896 a new element was introduced into the program, for his "Ten o'clock Hour" and evening lectures were devoted exclusively to Bible subjects. Large attendances evidenced at once an unsuspected hunger for such teaching.

"Those were the days before automobiles became distance shatterers," wrote a minister upon whom A.C.Dixon's preaching left its mark, "but I gladly came fifteen miles to Lake Keuka to get spiritual help. Dr. Dixon contributed greatly to turning the tide there into the channel of Bible study."

By the following summer the time seemed opportune to follow the usual Assembly program with a separate Bible Conference, for which A.C.Dixon agreed to take the entire financial responsibility. In face of much opposition he succeeded in throwing the meetings of the Conference open without charging an entrance fee, as had hitherto been the custom of the Assembly. To A.C.Dixon, this practice in a religious conference was as distasteful as that of pew-rents in a church.

He brought to Keuka Park a group of speakers of the warmest evangelical type—men like R.A.Torrey, Len G.Broughton, Cornelius Woelfskin, Maltbie Babcock, and W.J.Erdman; while a new hymn-book, "Sacred Songs No. 1," just compiled by Sankey and Stebbins, was adopted for use in his Bible Conference.

The bright summer days were none too long for the rich spiritual feasts that were spread. Each morning opened with a nine o'clock children's meeting in the college chapel, and the last session of the day was preceded by a sunset service at the
SUMMER CONFERENCES

lake-side in the cool of the evening, with Gospel singing and missionary talks as the special feature.

The most unusual speaker in these Bible Conferences was the Countess Schimmelmann of Denmark, who visited Lake Keuka in 1900. Reared in the Courts of Europe, an intimate friend of the then Empress of Germany, she had known all that worldly honor, wealth and luxury had to offer. Yet after her conversion, she devoted her life to evangelistic work among the poor, neglected fishermen of the Baltic Sea. She met with bitter opposition from her former social circle. But this did not deter her in the least, and her gentle ministry was used to transform many a wild nature into that of a God-fearing Christian. A.C. Dixon was deeply touched by her earnest spirit, and invited the Countess to hold meetings at Hanson Place during the following winter. Many were led to Christ as a result of her appeals. In one of the Cooper Union meetings, where she also spoke at A.C. Dixon's request, a man who owned six saloons was so stirred by her message that he gave his heart to Christ, subsequently quitting the liquor business entirely.

It was not only because of its memorable Bible Conferences, which continued under his direction for several years, that Keuka Lake held a special place in A.C. Dixon's heart. It was a favorite haunt of his wife and family during the long summer vacation, and it was here that he received one of the most remarkable answers to prayer of his whole experience.

One summer, after a few days' absence at the Northfield Conference, he returned to Lake Keuka late at night. On the following morning he went with his family for a picnic across the lake, and spent most of the day fishing. Going ashore at Keuka Park just in time to conduct the evening service, he suddenly discovered that his pocket-book, containing all the money for the family's vacation expenses, was missing from his hip-pocket. Too late to deposit it in the office the night before, he had entirely forgotten to do so in the morning. When or where it had been dropped was impossible to tell, and he dared not miss the meeting to look for it. Next morning, after searching the lake-shore in vain, he took a boat and rowed back and forth, gazing down through the clear depths in the faint hope of seeing his lost pocket-book. The money it contained was an
absolute necessity, and he took his need to God on the assurance of Philippians iv, 19.

Shortly afterwards, a boy playing by the edge of the lake picked up a five-dollar bill. A counterfeiter had recently been arrested in Penn Yan, and when the boy found one or two more bills floating on the water he supposed them all to be counterfeit. He dried them and took them home to his mother as curiosities. More floating bills were found and when A.C.Dixon heard of it, he hurried to the place where he had landed from the fishing expedition. Taking a boat, he again rowed back and forth, looking through the crystal shallows. Suddenly his eye caught sight of a black object on the sandy bottom near the shore. After several vain attempts he succeeded in hooking it up to the surface. It was his lost pocket-book! When the loose outer flap had soaked through and opened, some bills of smaller denomination had floated out, but all the large bills, safely folded together on the inside with other papers, were not only intact, but perfectly dry! His loss had just been advertised, and in a short time all the missing bills were brought back to him except two for five dollars each. One of these was never traced, and the finder of the other refused to give it up.

Glad as he was to have the lost money safely back in his possession, the chief joy in A.C.Dixon's heart was the realization that in this extraordinary occurrence God had spoken to him directly and unmistakably. He had made a secret pledge that if the money should be restored he would not fail to tell how God Himself had done it. That promise was faithfully kept.
CHAPTER XIV

PROBLEMS OF A WORKING-CLASS CHURCH IN BOSTON

In the midst of the struggle with regard to the proposed scheme for Hanson Place, A.C. Dixon received an invitation that almost startled him. For, as he came to study it, it seemed to embody many of his ideals for practical evangelism and to hold out potentialities that were beyond his reach in Brooklyn.

Two experiences of great city pastorates had taught him that the spiritual work to which he longed to devote himself exclusively must suffer only too often on account of the time and strength spent on the machinery of the church organization. Like the apostles, he desired to give himself to prayer and the ministry of the Word, leaving the equally important business matters to those appointed to care for them.

The invitation which had so aroused his interest came from Boston, where a distinguished Christian layman, Mr. Daniel Sharp Ford, had recently passed away, leaving behind him a remarkable will. In days when millionaires were a new wonder of the modern world, bequests amounting to three and a quarter million dollars, apportioned almost entirely to missionary, charitable and educational work, aroused conspicuous attention.

Mr. Ford, best known as the editor and proprietor of The Youth's Companion, had begun life in extreme poverty, and as wealth came to him the good stewardship of it became his passionate concern. From the time of his conversion in early boyhood, he was active in Christian work, being closely associated with the Ruggles Street Baptist Church in Roxbury, a densely-populated suburb of Boston, consisting chiefly of working-class homes.

Through Mr. Ford's generosity, the church had been equipped along institutional lines. It had a dispensary, a babies' food and welfare center and a large relief department. A training school
provided classes in sewing, cookery, housekeeping, carpentry and other occupations.

Salaried assistants were in charge of the various branches of social service, but for some years there had been no pastor to have general oversight of the whole, devoting himself particularly to the work of preaching and teaching and evangelism. Mr. Ford and his son-in-law, Mr. W. N. Hartshorn, were searching for a man competent to give at least nominal direction to the many social activities of the church, yet to whom the spiritual purpose of the enterprise would be paramount—a rare combination, difficult to find.

In the midst of the search Mr. Ford died; but on hearing A. C. Dixon preach shortly afterwards, Mr. Hartshorn quickly decided that he had found the very man they had been looking for. He laid the matter before A. C. Dixon, begging him to give it his immediate consideration.

By Mr. Ford’s will, a legacy valued at almost a million and a quarter dollars, including The Youth’s Companion building and the land on which it stood, was bequeathed to the Boston Baptist Social Union, on condition that the Union be incorporated and accept the trusts set forth in the will. This huge sum of money was dedicated to “the religious, moral and intellectual improvement of the working people of Boston”; and at Mr. Ford’s earnest desire the Ruggles Street Church was to be its channel as long as practicable. Should the character of the district change, or the church drift from its religious purpose and Baptist views, the Social Union was empowered to transfer the money to uses more in accordance with the donor’s wishes. It was impossible for Mr. Ford to foresee that his benevolences might lead to a distortion of his purpose by the very nature of the scheme. Such large sums of money could only continue to be expended in line with his spiritual aims if continually controlled by men of like mind. Even so, the dispensing of large charities through the church might, all too easily, induce wrong motives for association with it, and lead to various complications. These things, however, could only be found out by experience—the ideal was fine enough.

To A. C. Dixon the project, as explained to him by Mr. Hartshorn, seemed to open up an entrancing vista of possibilities in evangelistic effort, freed from the usual hampering restraint of lack of funds.
An official call to the pastorate, unanimously endorsed by the church, reached him just as the year 1900 was closing. Early in the New Year he paid Ruggles Street a preaching visit. A reporter of The Boston Journal, requesting an interview, was invited to lunch on the following day, but soon discovered that the tables were turned on him, as A.C.Dixon plied him with questions about the churches of Boston and conditions in Roxbury. His greatest surprise, however, was in being asked at the outset: "Are you a Christian man?" It was evident that no matter how important his business with the Brooklyn pastor might be, the latter had business with him that would brook no delay.

It was not long after this that A.C.Dixon was laid low by influenza. Nervously exhausted by the strain of facing a momentous decision, which involved his family as well as himself, he went to the Sanitarium at Clifton Springs for a few days to recuperate. His train was delayed by a blizzard, and it was long after midnight when he entered his room at the Clifton Springs Hotel. Kneeling before his open Bible, his eyes fell upon the words: "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which shall not be removed but abideth for ever." That night he was taken seriously ill, and several weeks of severe suffering followed—an almost new experience to one usually brimming over with energy and health. Recovery was due chiefly to the skilful nursing of his devoted wife, who had flown to his side from the bedside of a sick daughter as soon as she realized that his was the greater need. He always looked back upon this time as one of deep blessing, with which the words that had comforted him in the first lonely hours were always associated.

On returning to Brooklyn, he informed his church that he had decided to go to Boston. The news caused genuine consternation, and excited much public comment, for the wide evangelical circles in Brooklyn and New York were as loth to lose him as was his own church. An editorial which appeared in The Brooklyn Daily Eagle was reprinted and circulated in Boston by the members of the Baptist Social Union. Coming from a secular paper which had often freely criticised the pastor of the Hanson Place Church, the opinions expressed were somewhat remarkable. Referring to the relationship between the church and its pastor, the Eagle said:

"The Hanson Place Church needed the spur, and found it in Dr. Dixon. Dr. Dixon needed the breeching and has found at least enough of it in the moderate and conservative influences of the Hanson Place Church. ... The church will find a less radiant but a more restful pastor.

"We wish to assure the Boston papers that he is a genuine, attractive, square and effective man. If they do not take the Eagle's word for it they will have to find it out for themselves by hunting Dr. Dixon out, for he will neither haunt their offices nor load up their reporters with matter about himself, his services or his sermons. He is neither a puff-seeker, a notice-hunter, nor an editor-chaser. What he says is often reported, for there is that in it that should be printed, but he does not talk or write for 'effect.' He aims at results, a very different thing.

"The Eagle and Dr. Dixon have not often agreed. His pace is at times more rapid than that of a newspaper which understands the need of patience with people, parties and movements. He cannot realize that law is only passed at Albany, and that the enforcement of it in New York depends in a measure on the opinion behind it. He could enforce it in five minutes in his mind, but others are less competent or confident. So we have been critical of his impetuosity, and he has mourned over the Eagle's incredulity.

"We adjure Boston to greet him kindly, trust him implicitly, bear with him gently and quietly, encourage him heartily, and give to him a free hand and a fair chance. He will tone up the torpidity of the town, and the town may, judiciously and by a little, temper the ardor of his mind. There is a real North Carolina basis of incomparable Presbyterianism in him. The top dressing only is Baptist. He should find Boston good missionary ground."

May Day was celebrated by a reception at Ruggles Street to the new pastor, who was greeted by over a thousand persons. The atmosphere in which he found himself was different from that of any church with which he had so far been associated. One of its outstanding personalities was Hezekiah Butterworth, a deacon of the church, and a man of peculiarly lovable disposition. He was assistant editor of The Youth's Companion, and was a popular and prolific writer, his "Young People's Histories" being widely read, and his lyrical text to the music of George F. Root's cantata "Under the Palms" being well-known in England as well as in America.

In the main, however, in accordance with Daniel Ford's purpose, the congregation was composed of wage-earning families, to whom the church with its many departments and ramifications
Hanson Place Baptist Church, Brooklyn, New York

A.C. Dixon, 1895
Pastor of Hanson Place Church

Mrs. Dixon, 1895
Dixon Family Group, 1902

Thomas junr., A.C., and Frank
Addie (Mrs. Ernest Thacker) and Delia (Dr. Delia Dixon Carroll)
was a social and educational center as well as a place of worship. A.C. Dixon knew something of the fluctuating conditions to which the wage-earner is subject, and the practical provision at Ruggles Street for material and cultural needs seemed an almost ideal background for his preaching and soul-winning.

The efficient staff in charge of the various departments would leave him free, he thought, except for general supervision, to devote his whole time to the spiritual side of the work. His vision of the future took a wide sweep, in which Ruggles Street was to be the fulcrum for a much broader evangelistic movement, first in Boston and then far beyond. Almost at once he was elected President of the Evangelical Alliance of Boston, also of Dr. A.J. Gordon's Bible and Missionary Training School, where he taught some of the classes.

His first concern was to press home the need of prayer for universal revival, and six hours of one day were set aside at Ruggles Street for a continuous prayer-meeting for this object. His emphasis upon prayer, and still more his own prayer-life, affected the people vitally.

"I loved to hear Dr. Dixon pray in public," said Mrs. Crowe, wife of the senior deacon, "but best of all when I gave him my visiting reports in the church office. I never left him without a prayer that followed me like a benediction."

At the very outset of this new work, Mrs. Dixon had begged her husband to beware of being drawn into controversy. He had sincerely assured her that nothing was further from his desire. But it was not in him to avoid an issue—and an issue soon presented itself. Boston is the headquarters of that great system of self-hypnotism founded by Mrs. Mary Baker Glover Eddy. It was not long before a reference to it occurred in one of A.C. Dixon's sermons. Preaching on the apostolic method of evangelizing a city, he mentioned three great obstacles to the spread of the Gospel in Boston: "yellow journalism, rum, and the pagan doctrine of Christian Science—a sham and an imitator of the truth, transferred from India."

Alfred Farlow, legal adviser for the Mother Church of the cult, sent an open letter to the press, calling attention to the reference. Questioned on the subject by a reporter, A.C. Dixon replied that he had nothing to say with regard to such a system
of humbuggery, and did not wish to discuss it. Next morning the papers came out with big headlines: "Dixon calls Christian Science a humbug." The battle was on in spite of all!

It was now necessary to give reasons for his statement; and after careful preparation of his subject he preached a sermon on Christian Science that stirred the city. The Ruggles Street church was crowded and the sermon was widely reported. On the following day he met the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal churches and pleaded with them to co-operate in meeting the common foe. Once again he was precipitated into a fight for the truth, laying his emphasis on the positive side rather than on the negative.

On his seventh Sunday in Boston, nineteen persons were baptized at Ruggles Street, with twenty more confessing Christ as their Saviour. Parties of friends came from Brooklyn and from Baltimore to share in the inspiration of the meetings. A real revival had begun. It continued at white heat for several weeks, until the families began to disperse for the summer vacation.

Through the following winter the benefactions of Daniel Ford were poured out bountifully upon the poor of the Roxbury district, two playgrounds for the children being opened in a congested section. The classes for technical training were well patronized. "The Working Men's Bible Class," which at the pastor's suggestion was re-named "The Ruggles Street Brotherhood," had a flourishing attendance.

Many conversions were recorded, and there were frequently twenty or more decisions for Christ at the Sunday evening service. The paid quartet was replaced by a large choir of a hundred and fifty voices, led by Prof.C.C. Case. A children's choir was also organized. The efficiency methods of the Boston Social Union, which had threatened to turn the church into a mere social settlement, were pervaded by a new spirit.

Strongly convinced that the family is God's unit for the race, and home-life the basis of any stable civilization, A.C.Dixon preached a series of practical sermons on "Making a Home"; "Courtship and Marriage"; "Husband and Wife"; "Parents and Children"; and "Enemies of the Home." Another series was on "Types of Unbelief, Ancient and Modern." In these he trained his people to distinguish the infidelity that may lurk beneath the mask of a Christian name and profession.
It was not strange that in Boston the fact of A.C.Dixon's Southern birth should be commented upon when the race question was brought to the fore by President Roosevelt's entertainment of Booker T.Washington at the White House. This event stirred the South from end to end, and produced a countervawe of feeling elsewhere. A.C.Dixon was publicly referred to on several occasions as "the son of a slave-holder." In reply to some current criticisms, he delivered a lecture before the Baptist ministers' conference on "The Race Problem in the South." The occasion bristled with difficulties, unless handled with courtesy and tact.

"I admire Roosevelt for inviting Booker Washington," he said, "yet I may doubt his political sagacity in so doing, and Booker Washington's wisdom in accepting the invitation. It only widened the chasm. The South looked upon it as an effort to force upon them social equality with the negro. Social equality means inter-marriage, which would portend the extinction of the Anglo-Saxon race, and its transmutation into a race of mulattos. That is the feeling of the South."

He did not miss the opportunity of turning such an occasion to spiritual account, and closed with a strong appeal to exalt Christ, and to follow His call "by love to serve one another" as the only solution of the race problem.

Throughout these years, A.C.Dixon had not lost contact with the South, although the personal links were snapping, one by one. At the end of April, 1902, news reached him of the sudden death of his mother at Shelby, after a few days' illness.

"Father was crushed when he knew she was gone," he wrote from North Carolina, "but it is beautiful to see how the promises and hopes he has preached to others for sixty years comfort and sustain him. I am glad he seems eager to keep on with his work."

When they laid his mother's body to rest on the beautiful hill where stands the New Prospect Church, his mind ran back to that day long ago when he had ridden up the hill with his father's message, and on that very spot had been induced by the old deacon to stay and preach his first sermon.

"Since those days I have been separated many miles from the plain country people who wept over sin with me, and then rejoiced with me in salvation. But we have not gone apart in the faith that meets the deep needs
of the soul. When the friends of my childhood wept with me again as they strewed flowers upon my mother's grave, I felt as never before that we had experiences in common which neither life nor death will ever change."

Only a few months after the death of Amanda, Mrs. Dixon was hastily summoned South to her own dying mother's side at Wood Lawn. She had been alone since Colonel Faison's death, and the old home, now vacant, must needs be sold. One of the hardest tasks was the dismissal of the colored people employed on the plantation. A.C. Dixon had often preached to them, with the spacious back porch as his pulpit, and the wrench of parting with the spot around which so many memories gathered was as keen to him as to his wife.

Old Thomas Dixon accompanied his daughter-in-law on her return to Boston. It was a rare pleasure to A.C. Dixon to present his venerable father to the congregation at Ruggles Street. The old Southern pioneer told of the difficulty of obtaining an education in North Carolina in his boyhood days. Then to the delight of his audience, he told of the debt he owed to the familiar "Webster's blue-backed Spelling Book," published so long ago in Boston.

Charles B. Aycock was Governor of North Carolina at this time, and when the State celebration of "Old Home Week" took place in October, 1903, he insisted that the friend and pastor of his University days should come and preach the annual sermon at Greensboro. He also called on him to preach the Commencement Sermon before the State University at Chapel Hill.

Meanwhile the work of evangelization in Boston had been making good progress. Some of the large factories in Roxbury had given permission to hold noon-hour services and there had been some open-air work on the streets.

At South End, on Columbus Avenue, were the National League Baseball grounds. They were silent and empty on Sundays; and as A.C. Dixon looked at the great circular grand stand with its seating capacity of three thousand, it struck him as an ideal place for gathering together a crowd of non-churchgoers for Sunday afternoon services. The management was approached, and granted free use of the grounds to the Evangelical Alliance for the June Sundays of 1902.

The first service was in charge of A.C. Dixon and Mr. John
Willis Baer, secretary of the United Societies of Christian Endeavor. Unfortunately, heavy rain had fallen and the ground was covered with puddles. But though the sky was clouded, and the air damp and somewhat chilly, a crowd of some two thousand people took their seats on the covered grand stand. Only the speakers were exposed to the elements as they stood on the square wooden rostrum below the railings of the grand stand near the home plate. A massed choir of five hundred voices was directed by Professor Case, whose white head and broad shoulders loomed up in front of the singers. A small cabinet organ and the clear notes of a cornet helped in keeping the pitch, and the fresh young voices of the boys and girls in the front seats added vim to the splendid congregational singing.

The tumult of passing trains on the nearby Providence branch railway and the clang of the electric cars on Columbus Avenue made continuous interruptions, but the curiosity of the passengers helped to advertise the services. They looked down with astonishment on hearing the sound of Gospel song rising from the enclosure where the cheering of baseball enthusiasts usually resounded. From the roof of a neighboring tenement house a family party also enjoyed the singing.

Twenty decisions for Christ were registered at the first service, and with this encouraging start, the meetings in the baseball grounds were continued at intervals for several years. Other forms of open-air work were also adopted—a Gospel wagon in Madison Park, and tent campaigns in various parts of the city.

In Boston, as elsewhere, the liquor question was constantly to the fore and was not neglected in the open-air crusades. Across the Atlantic a great revival was sweeping through Wales, and thousands of lives in Great Britain were brought under the control of Christ through the Torrey-Alexander and J.Q.A. Henry campaigns. So marked was the effect of this spiritual upheaval that the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the national liquor bill in England had been reduced by almost seventeen million pounds in five years.

Spurred to greater endeavors by these tidings, A.C. Dixon organized a great parade of over two thousand Gospel Temperance adherents. They marched through the streets of Roxbury, visited all the saloons, and held services at the street corners. Gradually the groups converged on Ruggles Street, and a
final service was held in the church at midnight, during which many decisions for Christ were recorded.

A meeting with Dr. Torrey and Charles M. Alexander on their return from their missionary journey round the world inspired A.C. Dixon afresh.

"How I do long to preach Jesus to the lost, and to see them saved! May God prepare us for our future work. We are in His hands for success or failure, and it is blessed to rest just there. I have a vision of my own selfish, sinful soul, which has crushed me into the dust, but I have also the glorious vision of Christ and His Word."

Through 1904 he carried on a number of short but fruitful union campaigns in New England, Pennsylvania and the South; and in 1905 pledged a part of every month to the work of the Baptist Home Mission Society. One of the many conferences and conventions that he found time to attend was a gathering of unusual historic significance. Sixty-five years had passed since the agitation over slavery had thrust itself as a wedge between Christians of the North and of the South. The old Triennial Convention of the Baptists had then split into geographical divisions, each section taking up its work independently. Through the long interval there had been no fraternal meeting between North and South. Now in St. Louis in 1905 a gathering was held representing the five million Baptists of the United States, together with the Baptists of Canada. Although each group would continue to function under its own organization, all were now united in heart, in purpose, and in prayer.

The movement went still further, for this united body of Baptists on the American continent decided to join hands with the Baptists of other lands by means of a Baptist World Conference to be held in London. To this Conference A.C. Dixon was assigned as a delegate.

He welcomed the prospect of a somewhat lengthened absence from Ruggles Street that he might view the work there from a distance and see it in better perspective. By degrees, a change was taking place in his mind with regard to the wisdom of Mr. Ford's great scheme for confining the membership of the church to a particular class of people, and of the wide-spread distribution of charity through his endowments. The association with the Boston Baptist Social Union put an irksome re-
A WORKING-CLASS CHURCH IN BOSTON

straint upon the spiritual side of A.C.Dixon’s work. He found that no enterprise involving any expenditure could be undertaken without permission of the Union; and a differing attitude towards the solution of the city’s problems on his part and on theirs caused a widening rift between them.

For some time the Union had been discussing the application of a sum of three hundred and fifty thousand dollars, designated by Mr. Ford’s will to provide a central building for the Social Union’s monthly meetings and for conference work. Ruggles Street was in extreme need of a new and more suitable building, but the district was not a convenient center for the Union’s committee work. The Ruggles Street and Dudley Street Churches had been closely associated in evangelistic efforts, and it seemed at this time as though doubly effective work could be accomplished by a union of the two.

A.C.Dixon laid his concern before the Baptist Social Union, and pleaded for the use of Mr. Ford’s legacy to erect on the site of the Dudley Street Church a building such as Tremont Temple, to serve the south side of Boston. At first his proposal was sympathetically received and a sub-committee was appointed to consider ways and means of bringing it to pass. But the Union was drifting from the spiritual ideals of Daniel Ford, and did not wish its philanthropic activities to be too closely associated with evangelistic enterprise.

A.C.Dixon’s plans for amalgamation failed to materialize. Once again the disturbing question of a new building was raised and the shadows of coming difficulties which would eventually bring to an end another fruitful pastorate were thrown across the scene. His attitude towards the points at issue between the Social Union and himself are revealed in the following extracts:

“Social betterment is not salvation. The most indescribable feelings I ever remember were experienced when I heard a preacher in the city of Boston pleading with a group of pastors at a ministers’ meeting to recognize the kind of work that was being done in a social settlement house. One of the fundamental principles of that work was that God should not be mentioned and that Jesus Christ should never be named. The people were invited to send their children to the Kindergarten and to the classes for knitting and weaving and various handicrafts. These things are all well enough, but to let poor little children face death without knowing Jesus made my heart break.”
"I went to Boston," he said elsewhere, "because of the call from a church there that had an endowment of more than a million dollars, the interest of which was to be applied for social service. We were told that if we would feed the hungry man, clothe him, pay his rent, and give him a good doctor and medicine, it would be good preparation for preaching the Gospel to him. That seemed like common sense. I thought that we could win the whole community for Christ in no time, but I found that it did not work. I watched it for three years, and then decided to dispense with the whole business and get back to first principles."

"We had a room at the church set apart for people who wanted employment. The room was constantly filled. Many of the people who came there were out of work because they had been living in sin, and we were not able to get work for drunkards. These would go away cursing us every day. We would find positions for young women in hotels and in private homes; if they ever told a lie or stole, the church was blamed for it. One of my members was a skilled mechanic in a great piano factory, employing eight hundred men. One day I said to him, 'Why don't you get some of your men to come and hear me preach? I am going to give a series of sermons specially for working-men.' 'Well, pastor,' he said, 'to tell you the truth, I have tried my best. But whenever I ask them to come, they say, 'Do you think I am a pauper?'"

Even in Brooklyn the pastor's home and his church office had been besieged by men and women begging for financial assistance. It was a hard matter for A.C. Dixon to refuse the requested help, even though he knew that many who approached him in this way were fraudulent.

"But," as he often remarked after his Boston experience, "I was cured by Ruggles Street. Our very reputation for helping the poor kept away those whom we were most desirous of assisting. I have learned—and it has been a genuine conversion—that it is immensely easier to reach a man's body through his soul than his soul through his body. It takes more power to do it, more tears, more prayer, and more of the Spirit; but it is the best way in the long run."

With the passing of every month he became more skeptical of spiritual results being obtained through broadcast dispensing of charity. For the time being, however, no thought of leaving Ruggles Street had come to his mind, for he was absorbed, not only by his work there, but by the wider evangelizing of New England, for which Boston was an ideal center.
CHAPTER XV

EUROPE RE-VISITED

London was the city chosen for the historic gathering of the first Baptist World Congress in 1905. It was with pleasurable anticipation that A.C.Dixon looked forward to seeing once more the Europe that had seemed so new and strange to him six years before. Already much of the prejudice which had colored his vision then had been modified by closer acquaintance; for in the interim he had made and renewed many friendships with Christian leaders from abroad on their visits to America.

This time he determined that his wife should share the pleasure of the trip. The Baptist Congress was to occupy a week in the middle of July, but an invitation had reached him from his friend, Dr.Sylvanus Stall, the well-known author, to spend the previous month with him in Switzerland. Mrs.Dixon insisted that her husband should take the much-needed holiday, although it would be impossible for her to leave home until the school and University sessions had closed at the end of June, and their four young people had scattered for the summer vacation.

Arrangements were made accordingly, and on the evening of June 6th the S.S."Minnetonka" with A.C.Dixon aboard steamed up the Thames and docked at Tilbury. He was looking forward to having a taste of the great Torrey-Alexander Mission then stirring London. A five months' campaign, planned by the London Evangelistic Council, had exceeded all expectations. Through February and March, the Royal Albert Hall—London's most famous "West End" auditorium—had been filled every afternoon, and packed to capacity at night. Popularity is by no means a sure sign of spiritual weal, but the huge crowds coming day after day for eight weeks to listen to plain, unsensational preaching were proof of a wide-spread interest in the things of God.

The south of London had been reached in April and May by
meetings in a great wooden tabernacle at Brixton, on a site now occupied by the Lambeth Town Hall. For the fifth and last month a similar tabernacle had been erected upon a vacant plot in Aldwych, since covered by immense modern buildings. These final meetings had just begun when A.C. Dixon reached London.

"Within an hour of my arrival I was in the great tabernacle on the Strand, which seats six thousand people. It was a very inclement evening, the rain pouring as it can pour only in London. And yet the thousand choir-seats were full and there was an audience of about three thousand. Alexander, with his superb leadership and cheery smile, which beams out his love for Christ and for souls, made them all forget the dreary weather and think only of the sunshine behind the clouds. Every part of him, from the top of his head to the tips of his fingers and toes, sings 'with the spirit and with the understanding also.' It is something of a musical feast just to look at him while he leads a great audience in song. His voice is clear and he sings a good solo, but he can thrill you with the music of rhythmic life and motion without opening his mouth. A rare child of nature and of grace is Charles M. Alexander, and in the young English woman he has married, God has given him a wife whose love for Christ and His work is an inspiration.

"The thousands in America who have heard Dr. Torrey know the man and his message. He loves the Bible, and, believing it to be the infallible Word of God, preaches it with the fervor of red-hot conviction. He never compromises. He has chosen to be a prophet rather than a mere leader of men, and that is the secret of his power with God and with men."

The following day found A.C. Dixon among the guests at a City luncheon given to the Mission party.

"Presiding at the luncheon was Lord Kinnaird. Both he and the chairman of the London Evangelistic Council, Mr. W.G. Bradshaw, the head of a great banking institution, are brimful of evangelistic fervor.

"All through the luncheon one after another related instances of answered prayer. The banker rose and said: 'At one time we had come to our wits' end, when money could do nothing. The City Council forbade us to erect our building where we wanted it, and it seemed as if that large area of London was not to be evangelized. Do you know what the committee did? We just got together around our Father and told Him about it. When we went out we found that the obstacles had been removed and the building could be erected.' These men of affairs were not trusting to their wealth, but were trusting in God, going forth in the strength of a prayerful spirit."

By that night the weather had cleared. The tabernacle on the
Strand was crowded to the doors. From his seat on the platform A.C.Dixon was glad to observe the rapt attention with which the audience listened to the clear presentation of truth. How he rejoiced when about seventy persons came forward at the close of the service to confess Christ as Saviour and Lord! That alone, to him, was worth the whole trip to Europe.

He was soon on his way to Switzerland with Dr.Stall. Yet even while exulting in the sublime glory of the Alpine scenery, he was keenly on the watch for things of spiritual interest. On the first Sunday they listened to the preaching of Dr.Thomé—"the Spurgeon of Geneva." Though not understanding French, A.C. Dixon enjoyed his fervid oratory and the worshipful spirit of the service, especially the magnificent congregational singing. With Dr.Stall he visited the country home of the German Lutheran pastor, and was surprised to find himself highly exalted in the estimation of their host through his acquaintance with Dr. Stoecker, the old Court preacher of Berlin, whom he had frequently met during the World's Fair campaign in Chicago.

Many a scene and incident of this journey was treasured up for future illustrative use in his sermons, as they viewed the solemn grandeur of the Matterhorn from Zermatt, and passed through Northern Italy, and back through Switzerland and Germany. He had promised to preach to Campbell Morgan's congregation at Westminster Chapel through the Sundays of July, and reached London again in time to greet his wife on her arrival, and enjoy with her the closing service of the Torrey-Alexander Mission, held in the Royal Albert Hall.

"Last night's meeting was one of the greatest I have ever seen. The singing led by Alexander's choir of eleven hundred voices was about as good as I ever expect to hear this side of heaven. The religious atmosphere of London has been charged with the spirit of revival and the fires have crossed to the Continent. In a mining district in Germany there have been not less than a thousand converts during the past three months, and in France too, there are signs of a revival. I returned to the hotel with my heart thrilling with joy in the conviction that the wind of Pentecost is blowing upon the church of God."

A.C.Dixon's presence on the platform of the Royal Albert Hall was not un-noted, and one of the London dailies remarked on the warmth of these American evangelists towards each other, and their evident unity of spirit.
The World Congress of Baptists which opened on the eleventh of July was an epoch-making occasion. Many of the Europeans were filled with astonishment as they realized for the first time the magnitude of the great host of their fellow-Baptists across the Atlantic.

"There are nearly four thousand delegates in attendance upon the Congress, and about one half of these seem to be Americans. Yesterday afternoon, with two or three others, I spoke to a great crowd in Hyde Park. London pastors say it was the largest audience they ever saw at a religious meeting in the Park. The English Christians are an enthusiastic set."

The meeting had been held by the "Reformer's Tree," not far from the Marble Arch. A substantial wagon provided a platform, and a sounding-board above it carried the voices of the speakers out over the crowd.

Dr. John Clifford had presided, and Dr. F. B. Meyer and Pasteur Saillens of Paris were A.C. Dixon's fellow-speakers. The French pastor-evangelist told of the difficulties encountered by Baptists in his own country, and of the new life among French Protestants resulting from the visits of many of their pastors to Great Britain during the Welsh Revival. On this account Pasteur Saillens had relinquished the pastorate in order to give his whole time to evangelistic work, the church in Paris being taken charge of by his son-in-law, Arthur Blocher, a graduate of Spurgeon's Pastors' College.

Every gathering of the Congress teemed with interest. Between the sessions A.C. Dixon found time to take his wife sight-seeing, and delighted in her exuberant enthusiasms. An invitation to dine with Sir Robert and Lady Anderson was her first introduction to an English home.

"Mother was so excited over the prospect that she could not take time to write. She has been in the hands of a London hairdresser, and the way her hair is fixed up is a sight to behold!"

Sir Robert was at the head of the Criminal Investigation Department at Scotland Yard. He was a keen Bible student and a man of outstanding Christian influence as an author and lecturer. The friendship between A.C. Dixon and himself became strong and lasting.
A few days' visit to Thomas Spurgeon at his home in Clapham was a fresh link with the work in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. At Mr. Spurgeon's request, A.C.Dixon promised to preach there on two of the Sundays in August. One night, after addressing the weekly prayer-meeting, he took part in a midnight "drunkards' sweep" organized by a group of Welsh students from the Pastors' College. It thrilled him to see many a poor victim of intemperance thus reached for Christ.

It was in this summer that A.C.Dixon first visited the Keswick Convention of which he had heard so much.

"The little town by Lake Derwentwater is 'beautiful for situation,' and the mountains about it are covered with heather. The crowd here is immense, numbering not less than seven thousand visitors. I am surprised to find so few Americans among the speakers.

"At the last great meeting on Friday evening, two men shared the platform, Rev. E. W. Moore of London, and Dr. A. T. Pierson. Thirty-five hundred people were packed into the great tent, and standing room was at a premium. Mr. Moore made a plain but searching talk on the fire-test of the Christian's work. He only spoke for about twenty minutes, but the blessing fell. A party of Welshmen who were there had been praying all night, and some of them had fasted all day for a crowning blessing on the Convention.

"I never saw A.T.Pierson quite so affected as when he rose to speak. 'Brethren,' he said, 'during this address the Spirit of God has been searching my soul; not much gold and silver and precious stones has been discovered, but some wood, hay and stubble, which I am willing should be burned up. Are you? If you are, won't you stand up with me?' I suppose about three thousand people quietly rose. I never saw the like of it. Men wept like children. I saw Count Andrew von Bernstorff, who had looked as dignified as the German Emperor ten minutes before, wipe away the falling tears. Lord Radstock standing over by the doorway lifted his hand, saying, 'Brethren, pray for me. I am not so good a man as people think I am, and I want you to pray that God will set me right.' Then another and another rose, and sometimes four or five were talking at once. Dr. Pierson never preached his sermon. He said he had prepared the best sermon of his life for that occasion, but God did not want it. The power of God fell upon the people in the manner of Pentecost."

The last days in England were devoted to pilgrimages in and around London.

"We went to Bedford and Elstow, the haunts of John Bunyan, saw the
little cottage where he lived, and the jail door behind which he wrote 'Pilgrim's Progress.' I walked upon the grass where he used to play as a boy, and saw the old bell tower in which is the bell he used to ring for mischief.

"At Stoke Poges, where Gray wrote his 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' we saw the very church he attended, with its 'ivy-mantled tower' in which 'the moping owl' still rears its young. In front of the church is the old yew tree, said to be nine hundred years old.

"From Stoke Poges we went to the old home of William Penn, and to the Jordans Meeting House where he lies buried, his grave marked only by a rough marble slab. One can hardly believe that Penn spent only five years in America, and the rest of his life for the most part in this quiet, out-of-the-way place!

"Then we went to the little cottage at Chalfont St. Giles, where John Milton finished 'Paradise Lost' and began 'Paradise Regained.' His friend Ellwood rented the cottage for him during the great plague of London in 1665. The room in which he wrote is about fifteen feet long and eleven feet wide, with the ceiling so low that I could hardly stand up in it, but had to stoop as I entered the door.

"I have been impressed by the fact that the men whose lofty ideals and high thinking have blessed the world came from very humble places, and that, after their active lives, most of them went back to die amid the surroundings of their earlier and lowlier days."

The old "Majestic" of the White Star Line bore A.C. Dixon and his wife back across the Atlantic.

"We entered New York harbor at evening in the glow of a most magnificent sunset. We saw the friendly lights of the New York shore—yonder the Statue of Liberty. When the pilot came aboard the English flag came down and the Stars and Stripes went up. I declare, as it floated out, I shouted with the rest of them. We forgot the sunset; we forgot the glories of the past; standing under that flag we saw our country's future, its open gates, its millions of people, its liberty—the modern land of promise for the oppressed of the world. As I stood beneath that fluttering flag, I thanked God that I was an American citizen.

"On the dock a letter was handed to me saying that Hezekiah Butterworth had departed to be with God. Then the flag floated out of my vision; the lights on the shore became dim. A vision came before me of another Country, whose symbol is the flag stained with blood—the Country on whose shores are the shining lights to welcome us Home."

So impressed had A.C. Dixon been during this summer in Europe with the stirrings of revival in many parts of the world,
that he speedily issued, through the American Tract Society, a book entitled "Evangelism, Old and New." He began work also on another book, and early in 1906, "The Young Convert's Problems" was published.

Conditions in New England seemed unusually ripe for evangelistic effort. Calls poured in upon him. In Roxbury, however, his work was cramped for lack of proper housing and equipment. The building on Ruggles Street was by no means adequate, even for the social service activities, some of which were proving an actual hindrance to the healthy development of the church. There was entire lack of a preaching auditorium large enough to cope with the growing demand for what he had to give. Once again he laid before the Baptist Social Union his concern for amalgamation with the Dudley Street Church and for the new building indispensable to such a scheme. Mr. Ford's bequest provided ample means for this, and the plan seemed to him to be in exact line with Mr. Ford's purposes. But the barriers did not give way, and just at this time an entirely new prospect opened before him.

Through the past few years of world-wide evangelism Dr. Torrey had nominally retained his position as Dean of the Moody Bible Institute, and as pastor of the Chicago Avenue Church. He was now deluged by so many calls for evangelistic campaigns that he felt compelled to resign both of these charges. At his urgent desire the Chicago Avenue Church laid before A.C. Dixon a call to become its pastor.

The thought of being thus closely linked with the work of D.L. Moody brought with it a thrill of pleasure; yet it appeared impossible to leave the far-reaching work which was developing in New England. Another point involved in the proposition, almost barring it from his consideration as a Baptist minister, was the fact that Moody's church was undenominational. It had been founded as an independent mission church, ready to cooperate in soul-winning effort with any other evangelical group. Yet somehow this very element in the situation constituted a special attraction to A.C. Dixon. There, of all places in the world, he would have an instrument with which as a pastor he might reach out and out continually to those who knew nothing of Christ. For a while the invitation simmered in his mind, but it could not wait indefinitely. It must be accepted or rejected.
He was due shortly to take part in Dr. Len Broughton's Bible Conference in Atlanta, and decided to go south by way of Chicago and to preach at the Chicago Avenue Church. All through the Conference days in Atlanta, the necessity of the choice was in the background of his thoughts; and even in the following strenuous week at Athens, Georgia, when a hundred and fifty of the University men came out for Christ under his preaching, the call to Chicago loomed up before him.

A further complication would be involved—no less grave, because it was partly personal. The old veteran in North Carolina, actively at work in spite of his eighty-five years, had not ceased to be a dominating influence in his son’s life. A.C. Dixon shrank from causing his father unnecessary pain, but he knew only too well that the Chicago proposal would meet with his stern disapproval. To accept an undenominational pulpit would seem to the old man tantamount to leaving the Baptist denomination, and A.C. Dixon was also well aware that this view would be shared by the great majority of Southern Baptists.

For himself, the outlook was widely different. Baptist principles were sacred to him, not only as a result of childhood training, but through mature conviction, after life-long prayer and study of the Bible. He could make no other personal profession of faith; neither could he accept an official position in any church where he would be required to administer the rite of infant baptism.

But the Moody Church represented no particular denomination. All who professed faith in the Risen Saviour, and whose lives testified to the reality of their profession, were welcomed to its membership. Many of the congregation remained members of their own denominational churches. There was no reason why A.C. Dixon, if he became its pastor, should not freely recommend and practice baptism by immersion, and no clash with his Baptist principles would be involved. Should another form of baptism be desired, it would have to be performed by the minister of another denomination. To him would be given in either case the opportunity of stressing the fact that the soul’s salvation depends ever and only upon the finished work of Christ, and not upon the rite of baptism, however administered.

He knew in advance the difficulty of explaining to his father the distinction that was clear to his own mind; but he hoped
New Prospect Church near Shelby, N.C.
Obelisk in background marks grave of Thomas and Amanda Dixon

Thomas Dixon
Aged 86

A.C. Dixon
Aged 52
that a personal visit might accomplish more than letter-writing. The opportunity was now before him, for he would pass through North Carolina on his way home, and his father was expecting to see him.

"I am preaching to three churches," Thomas Dixon had written, "and am going to the Baptist State Convention in Raleigh. How glad I would be to see you there, and to hear about the trip to Europe. I enjoy better health than in ten years. I quit smoking a year ago, and my health has been improving ever since."

Incidentally, the old man had determined to set a good example to some of his grandsons in the matter of smoking! Father and son met, after all, in Shelby, and A.C.Dixon's forebodings were justified to an extent that brought pain to both hearts. The mere suggestion that the one son still remaining in the Baptist ministry could contemplate what seemed to him a desertion of his post, grieved the old man intensely. When the decision was made, Thomas Dixon was so deeply affected that for about two years he could not bring himself even to write to his son, corresponding only with his daughter-in-law and the grandchildren.

After several months of deliberation, A.C.Dixon was convinced that the call to Chicago was the call of God. A storm of protest arose among his Boston friends when they heard that there was even a likelihood of his leaving them.

His people at Ruggles Street begged him to remain "primarily for the sake of God's cause in New England, next for the sake of His cause in Boston, lastly for the sake of this church." Surely they had caught something of his missionary spirit, and they pledged themselves to support him by prayer and work as never before. "You have practised before us what you have preached to us" was the key to their confidence in him.

Letters poured in from every aggressive Christian organization in Boston and from ministers of all denominations.

"You do not belong to Ruggles Street merely, you belong to us all," wrote a Presbyterian minister. "Boston needs you more than Chicago does. You are the one outstanding man at this time who is not afraid to let his voice be heard in the interest of evangelical truth and of sound Christian morals. Men of all creeds have learned that it is a good thing to listen to you."
Some of the letters came from men whom A.C. Dixon had never met, and he was filled with gratitude and wonder at the evidences of such unsuspected depths of Christian fellowship. It was, as he wrote to a friend, "a startling revelation" to him.

As he had done before under similar circumstances, he went apart for a day or two of solitude and prayer, and it was from Minneapolis that he wrote his decision to accept the Chicago call.

Weeks went by before the Ruggles Street Church could bring itself to take any action on his resignation. The parting with these friends was peculiarly difficult, and only the compelling sense of duty, prompted by a conviction that God was leading, held him to his resolution.

"More than an ordinary change of pastorates is involved," was the verdict of The Pacific Baptist. "Dr. Dixon's aggressive evangelism has been helpful far beyond his own parish or city. He has been the champion of religious liberty, sometimes to his own hurt and in behalf of those from whom he radically differed. He has represented the old-fashioned views of the Scriptures, but his valiant stand for the old Book has been an inspiration and comfort to the masses of the people."

In September the rounds of farewell began—a trying ordeal under any circumstances. The printed addresses at a dinner given by some seventy-five Boston ministers of all denominations, testify to the place that the Ruggles Street pastor had won among them. Through sheer indomitable zeal for souls, he had become in five years practically the leader of evangelical forces throughout New England. But now this chapter of his life was closed, and his energies were to be transferred to another field.
CHAPTER XVI

IN D.L.MOODY'S FOOTPRINTS

It was with a curious sense of detachment from his former pastoral experiences that A.C.Dixon reached Chicago alone on a Friday evening early in October 1906. His hansom cab rattled northwards through the busy streets and across the narrow bridge over the Chicago river to the intersection of Chicago Avenue and La Salle Street. The five-storey circular tower of the Chicago Avenue Church loomed up on the north-east corner, the open archways at its base giving an impression of inviting the passer-by to enter. Over the doorway were the words chosen by D.L.Moody: “Welcome to this House of God are strangers and the poor.”

A row of bow-windowed, four-storey dwelling-houses adjoining the church on La Salle Street formed the Women’s Department of the Bible Institute. Fronting on Institute Place was a large brick building, five stories high, which had been erected as the Men’s Department. It contained dormitories for over two hundred students, as well as class rooms and offices, dining hall, kitchen and laundry. Here A.C.Dixon alighted, for in this building he was to make his home for the present until his wife and daughters could join him in Chicago.

Before he had left Boston the whole family, himself included, had transferred their church membership from Ruggles Street to the First Baptist Church of Cambridge, the pastor of which, Dr. John Lorne Campbell, was one of his dearest friends. With his son at Harvard and a daughter at Radcliffe, Dr. Campbell’s ministry was just what he coveted for them, and the fact that for twenty years Cambridge had not possessed a single licensed saloon made it a delightful as well as a convenient place for them to dwell in. His own membership in Dr. Campbell’s church had a particular purpose, for he was determined that, while

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acting as pastor of an undenominational church, his standing as
a Baptist should be maintained without question.

There is no doubt that a gradual metamorphosis had been
taking place in his thinking along these lines.

"When I joined the church at eleven years of age, I thought that only
Baptists were going to heaven; that is the plain truth. My father was
not to blame for this, for he was broad-minded for the section in which he
lived. I somehow believed that a person must be immersed in order to
get to glory. After a while I found that the family of Christ was bigger
than that—immensely bigger—and the warm fellowship of Christian sym-
pathy hatched me out of that belief. I felt all the better for it, and had a
larger liberty of soul.

"The Lord led me into work as a pastor of denominational churches.
In Brooklyn He led me out into interdenominational work. I did more out-
side the Hanson Place Baptist Church than in it. That was a disturbing
element in my church, and some of the people criticised me in a kindly
spirit, but the Lord was leading. When I went to Boston, He led me still
further along the same line, and a still larger blessing rested upon our
work. When the call came to Chicago, I felt that God had been prepar-
ing me for it, though it took me six months to make sure. I was restless
while thoughts were growing into convictions.

"Finally I came to see that each individual must follow the guidance
of the Holy Spirit for himself in the interpretation of the Bible, unin-
fluenced by any other individual on earth. That is sound theology, for
'no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.' Another con-
clusion I reached was that every individual should give the other fellow
the same liberty which he claimed for himself. That is Baptist, Metho-
distic, Presbyterian and all kinds of theology. It is the substance of soul-
liberty before God."

But the question had thrust itself upon him, "Are you willing
to carry out this principle in its practical application?" That was
a poser! I am willing, he thought, that other Christians should
follow their convictions along the lines of church polity, and in
the forms of baptism, but do I prefer that they should keep
across the street, or worship under another steeple? Have I
grace enough to let those in my own congregation follow their
convictions in these things, and love them while they do so,
though I may not agree with them?

"When God gave me grace to say 'Yes, Lord, I will,' I had a sort of
second blessing; perhaps it was a third or fourth or fifth, but I felt an
expansion of soul that greatly comforted me."
Two years later he confessed to his Chicago congregation:

"You did not know that when I came here without my family, knowing but a dozen or two people, I was about the loneliest pelican in the wilderness. I came here against the prejudices of the best friends I have on earth. They were strong denominationalists and thought I had apostatised because I was willing to become pastor of an undenominational church. But I did not long remain lonely, for everybody treated me kindly."

While he unpacked his belongings in his room at the Bible Institute, his mind was filled with a tumult of such thoughts. But he soon tossed back his head and began to whistle a hymn of praise, for the months of struggle and indecision were over at last, and his heart was settled in the conviction, clear-cut and strong, that God had called him to the new sphere.

The situation now to be faced, was in many other ways different from any of his former pastorates. The amazingly rapid growth of Chicago, stimulated by the World's Fair in 1893, had produced a condition peculiar to itself. As the seat of great industries supplying the needs of a fast multiplying population, and as the hub of increasing cross-continental traffic, the great city attracted to itself hordes of workers from every country in the world, particularly from Europe.

With every year and through every port the stream of immigrants had poured into the United States to be assimilated into the muscle and fiber of American life. No city except Berlin had a greater population of Germans than Chicago, and even Rome could not boast so many Italians. Irish Catholics manned the police force and dominated city politics. Scotsmen presided over the banks, Orientals and Jews had their own quarters, Greeks opened shoe-shine parlors and offered fruit for sale in every section. Each element in the mixed multitude brought with it its own social and religious customs and its own moral standards to be cast into the melting pot. Money, quickly made, frequently came into the hands of those who had no background of responsibility, no training in stewardship, no grace of unselfishness. It was inevitable that extremes should result. Great wealth and great poverty, unbridled crime and violence opposed to sturdy militant virtue—at least there could be no pale and colorless mediocrity in Chicago life. Rush, push and go kept the very air tingling with vitality.
There were endless missionary opportunities open to such a church as D.L. Moody had founded, and A.C. Dixon's heart bounded with eager anticipation at the challenge.

"On one Sunday morning," he said, recounting his Chicago experiences in later years, "I gave the right hand of fellowship to forty-one people as new members of the Moody Church. They represented twenty nationalities. A good many of them were English. There was one Irishman, one Scotsman, a Welshman, two or three Swedes, a Japanese, a Chinese, an Armenian, and a Turk. Yet all were one in Christ Jesus. The Irishman and the Englishman had no quarrel; the Japanese and the Chinese were brothers; the Armenian and the Turk sang and prayed together."

Of one thing he felt sure as he looked out upon his future task—the pauperizing methods of indiscriminate charity could solve no such problem as Chicago presented. No mere social reform could meet the deep needs of the people. Only the Gospel of Christ in its pure appeal to the spirit could touch the core of hungry hearts and lead men and women to the source of true satisfaction.

A knock at the door of his room broke into his reverie. Four men whom he had met on previous visits to Chicago and elsewhere came towards him with a welcome in their eyes, and a cordial hand-shake. Mr. A.F. Gaylord, a trustee of the church, secretary of the pastoral committee, and business manager of the Bible Institute, was the first to greet him. Next came Mr. John H. Hunter, a deacon, and chairman of the missionary committee of the church, besides being a member of the Institute faculty. Behind him towered the burly form and familiar face of Professor Daniel B. Towner, head of the Music Department of the Bible Institute, and also a deacon of the church. The last was a blue-eyed Irish lawyer, Mr. A.P. Fitt, who had married D.L. Moody's only daughter, and who was now secretary of the Bible Institute.

With its new Dean, Dr. James M. Gray, A.C. Dixon was already acquainted as a fellow-speaker at Bible Conferences, and for him and for the president, Mr. Henry P. Crowell, head of the American Cereal Company, he had a sincere regard.

The men who surrounded him in the church as trustees, elders and deacons were an unusual group upon whom D.L. Moody's burning loyalty to Christ and the Bible had left its
mark. Among them were Moody’s brother-in-law, Mr. Fleming H.Revell, and “Elder” John M.Hitchcock, who had stood by Moody’s side for over thirty years, and whose face was strangely reminiscent of John Knox. Perhaps the most interesting of the group was William S.Jacoby, who had been Dr.Torrey’s assistant. No one who looked at the radiant, kindly face of this man could have dreamed that he had ever sunk so low as to be turned out of both the army and the navy, and outlawed from his own home town. Converted at the age of forty-four, he had been so transformed by the power of Christ, that he was now loved and honored by everyone that knew him.

The first Sunday was a day full of encouragement to A.C. Dixon. The fine singing of the choir and congregation inspired him to pour out a powerful message on “The Ethics of the Atonement.” It left an impression that was deepened by Dr.Towner’s following solo. About twelve hundred remained for the Lord’s Supper. At the close many came forward with outstretched hands to greet him, among them friends from North Carolina and from the east, one being a young Japanese whom he had baptized in Brooklyn.

“The day is beautiful,” he wrote to his wife in an interval of the busy hours, “and there is sunshine in my soul. I know God will not forsake us, and I feel that I am just beginning the work of life.”

He entered at once upon a systematic visitation of every household connected with the church, but one day of the first week was entirely set apart for praise, prayer and testimony. It was a surprise, even to him, to find more than four hundred gathered in the forenoon, while more than seven hundred were present at the evening service! “People have evidently given up their business for waiting upon God, and great blessing must result,” he wrote. Some of these results were seen in decisions for Christ at the following week-night and Sunday services.

“We are in the beginning of a great revival, both in the church and Institute,” he wrote soon afterwards. “Last Friday the spirit of tenderness so fell upon the people that they could hardly speak in testimony, song or prayer. At the eleven o’clock lecture in the Institute yesterday, such a spirit of confession of sin and of prayer came upon the students that the lecturer could not proceed. They remained there praying and praising for two hours. Everyone seems to be walking softly before God,
and I expect great results in the salvation of souls. Oh! that I may do or say nothing to hinder the work of the Spirit.”

Visits from Dr.W.L.Watkinson, the veteran English Methodist, Mr.D.E.Hoste of the China Inland Mission and Dr. Grenfell of Labrador brought further inspiration both to students and church members, and not least to A.C.Dixon himself.

“Grenfell’s story was worth its weight in gold. The thrilling account of his work among the fishermen makes me feel that I am doing nothing for the Lord.”

The friendly welcome extended by Chicago ministers of various denominations greatly cheered A.C.Dixon and it was not long before a group of ten churches agreed that they would unite for special meetings under his leadership. These were to take place in January, and the last weeks of the old year were doubly busy in preparing for them.

“The work here is moving along gloriously,” he wrote to his old friend, Mr.Geo.O.Manning of Baltimore. “As usual I am looking for still greater things. For ten days I have been preaching with Dr.James M. Gray in the Great Northern Theater at noon, and the audiences have been very encouraging. To-day not less than six hundred men were present.

“As I look back to the time, twenty-five years ago, when you discovered me in Asheville I feel very grateful to God and to you. It was certainly through you that a larger door of opportunity was opened for my life, and your loving friendship has been a joy and strength. I work with less weariness now than I have ever done. Chicago is a great city, and the Lake is a wonderful attribute. Chicago could not exist without it, especially in the summer.”

As elsewhere, A.C.Dixon occasionally held meetings with prisoners in the jail. One Sunday afternoon in February 1907, he stood before the eight hundred men in Bridewell Penitentiary to tell them of Christ and His salvation. As he looked into their faces, he was startled to note the numbers of good-looking young fellows about the age of his own son. “It makes me hate sin to see them there,” he told his wife. “Oh! that God will make our children hate it as it ought to be hated.”

After nine solitary months, during which his work was his comfort, Mrs.Dixon and their three daughters joined him in Chicago. A delightful home was taken near McCormick Seminary in Chalmers Place, a park-like quadrangle, bordered on
each side by a row of commodious houses which faced each other across their smooth green lawns. What it meant to A.C.Dixon to have his family about him once more, and to enjoy the quiet of his library surrounded by his own familiar books, can hardly be described.

By the end of the first year, the names of two hundred and twenty-two members had been added to the rolls of the Moody Church, and the work, both within and without, had shown such an increase that A.C.Dixon felt the need of a regular assistant.

His thoughts turned constantly to a man in whom he had unbounded confidence and who had grown into his heart during the Boston pastorate—Mr.E.Y.Woolley, leader of the young people's work at Ruggles Street. They had first met at Northfield in D.L.Moody's days, and from that time Mr.Woolley had never missed an opportunity of hearing his friend preach. On moving to Boston he became an indefatigable worker in the Ruggles Street Church. He was prosperously engaged in business in New England, and the suggestion of so drastic a change in his life-work as A.C.Dixon now proposed needed prayerful consideration. But he was actually led to give up his business, and became the assistant pastor of the Moody Church, being afterwards ordained.

The comfort of such co-operation lifted part of the heavy load that A.C.Dixon was carrying, freeing him to accept more of the calls to work outside his own church as they continued to pour in.

It was frankly impossible to tie him down to one pulpit so long as there were souls within reach who were starving for the Bread of Life. His people learned to accept the fact that they must share him with others. Long ago his family had learned this lesson, and sometimes his wife would exclaim: "To be married to Mr. Dixon is like being tied to the tail of a comet!"

During the next few years, A.C.Dixon was frequently in the Southern and Middle-Western States for Bible Conferences and evangelical campaigns, ready also to give a helping hand, whenever possible, in the fight for Prohibition. The struggle was at white heat in North Carolina in 1908. For some years past, the conviction had been spreading over the State that the Legislature ought not to permit the sale of intoxicating liquors. Governor Glenn, himself an ardent Prohibitionist, demanded that it be
stopped throughout the State. Under local option many towns and counties had already voted it out. A.C. Dixon's birthplace was one of these, and Dr. John H. Eager of Baltimore wrote:

"The town of Shelby, which is the old family home of the Dixon boys, is unlike any other place I have visited. All through this section we have the pure Anglo-Saxon stock—the real hope of our country, at least religiously. There are no foreigners and no saloons here."

When A.C. Dixon visited the South for a series of evangelistic meetings in the Spring of 1908, he was seized upon by his old friend, Judge Jeter B. Pritchard, to help in the Prohibition fight in Raleigh. Although booked already for three services a day in the First Baptist Church, he managed to sandwich some extra appointments between the others. On this journey he was accompanied by his second daughter, to whom he was showing his beloved Southland for the first time.

"The South is simply grand," Clara wrote her mother. "Raleigh is the prettiest place I ever saw in the Spring. But yesterday I had the disappointment of my life. We were to dine at Wake Forest College with the President, and then father was to speak to the students. Father said he could cut his meeting a little short to go, but he got to tearing around about Temperance, and time and Wake Forest were out of his mind. As I listened, I looked at the clock, and finally heard the whistle blow and the train pull out!"

At Wilson, where Mrs. Dixon had lived as a school-girl, political excitement ran high. The gubernatorial election was imminent, and when it came, Prohibition was legally established in North Carolina by a sweeping majority of 43,000 votes.

"This has been a full day," A.C. Dixon wrote from Wilson on May 11th. "At ten o'clock this morning I went to the Court house to hear a strong speech by the Hon. W.W. Kitchen. Governor Glenn followed with a remarkable speech which lasted for about two hours. It was refreshing to hear a political leader plead for Prohibition on the ground that drinking debauches the body and dams the soul for time and eternity. I preached twice, at four and at eight."

The next day being Memorial Day, a great crowd gathered in the Court-house, under the auspices of the Daughters of the Confederacy.

"After listening to an address on 'the private Confederate soldier' we went to a big banquet and ate barbecued pig with about a hundred and
fifty old Confederate veterans, and I tell you they had appetites that did the subject justice!

"At two-thirty we all formed in procession to visit the Soldiers' Monument. As orator of the day, they put me in a carriage covered with flowers and flags. Only the Confederate colors were used, for on Memorial Day they feel that the Confederate flag should stand alone. It stirs no animosity, but makes them love more intensely the common flag which floats over the united country. They are glad that slavery is dead, and that the new South is on a boom of prosperity which she could never have had under the old conditions.

"Standing on the monument mound for a pulpit, I preached to about six thousand people. The meetings have been successful in deepening the spiritual life of the town, and have resulted in the conversion of some of the prominent merchants here."

One incident of this trip bulked large in importance to A.C. Dixon. At the home of his sister Delia in Raleigh he saw his father for the first time in about two years. The old man's ire over his son's acceptance of the Moody Church pastorate had been gradually evaporating, and in the warmth of the surprise re-union engineered by Delia it now vanished entirely. He was even willing to consider an invitation to come to Chicago, not only to see the Moody Church for himself, but to give the people his testimony of a life-time's experience in the service of a faithful God. Only the long journey prevented this.

"I am well, and am preaching to four churches," he wrote from Shelby a few months later, when he entered upon his eighty-ninth year. "I love to preach the old Gospel of Christ, and would like to come and see you all, but Chicago is so far. I do not think I can venture on such a long trip."

On Easter Sunday, 1909, A.C. Dixon received a sudden summons to his sister's home in Raleigh, where his father had been taken ill. He found the old man restive to return to his preaching work, impatient of the necessary restraint. Only the promise that Clarence would return and spend the month of July preaching with him in the country churches of Cleveland County could pacify him. When father and sister sat together in the First Baptist Church of Raleigh, listening to A.C. Dixon's uplifting message on "Heaven," the old veteran's face was aglow. It proved to be the last service he ever attended. To all but the
trained eye of Delia, the physician, he had seemed to be taking a new hold on life. In fact, he appeared so well that A.C.Dixon returned to Chicago, only to be recalled a few days later for his father's funeral.

At early dawn on May 3rd, A.C.Dixon with his two brothers and two sisters, united for the first time in many years, left Raleigh for Shelby with their father's body. In the midst of an immense crowd of the country people, they laid it to rest beside Amanda's on the hill by the church which Thomas Dixon had founded and to which he had ministered for more than half a century.

"New Prospect is one of the most beautiful spots I ever saw," A.C. Dixon wrote from Shelby. "Only a day's notice of the funeral had been given, but the great grove at the church was full of buggies and horses, and the church could not hold half of the people. It broke my heart to see their devotion, white and colored. When the crowd of white people had passed in single file before the casket, the negroes, who had requested the same privilege, came in from the church-yard. Mother's and Father's graves were covered with flowers. An old woman of ninety brought a little bouquet of roses. As she placed them among the rest she said, "The city flowers are prettier than mine, but that is the best I could do."
CHAPTER XVII

PREACHING THE GOSPEL THROUGH PRINT

From his early days in Baltimore, A.C. Dixon had begun to use as well as to appreciate the power of the printed page in amplifying his spoken message. The marvels of radio broadcasting were as yet far beyond the horizon of practical possibilities, and the printing press was still the chief instrument of publicity. It was almost the only means of reaching for Christ the great host of souls untouched by personal contact, and never did A.C. Dixon lose sight of these in all the years of his ministry.

Shortly after the opening of the Immanuel Tabernacle in Baltimore he had said to the people:

"May the Lord save us from becoming a spiritual dining-room and dormitory. We cannot be too careful to show ourselves friendly and sociable towards one another; but these are the incidentals. The idea that they are essentials causes dry rot in some of the churches. It is our heart's desire to make this church a great soul-saving center.

"We would like to have a printing press in the basement, turning out ten thousand issues a week until this city should be sown knee-deep with evangelical truth. Thousands could thus be reached who are not permitted by the priests to hear the Gospel. This is a busy age, but it is a reading age. Our opinions are now molded by what we read more than by what we hear.

"The weekly religious paper is a power for good but as an evangelizing agency it is next to nothing. Only church people take and read the church papers. What needs to be done is to carry the Gospel to the homes of those who do not attend church. Tracts and leaflets are one way of doing this. To subsidize columns of our daily press, and fill them with saving truth is another. Of course, there is some waste, but shall we stop on that account? Nay, verily! The church of Christ has not begun to realize the power of the press as a means of evangelizing the world.

"Print is mostly used for the publication of books and papers that pay in dollars and cents. If the author or printer does not receive an income from their sale, their publication is regarded as a failure. The men
who most need to read the Gospel message are those who will not buy it. Many of them, however, will read, if the truth is brought to them in short, attractive form."

He frequently referred to the immeasurable influence exerted by John Bunyan and Luther upon subsequent generations by means of the printed page. Little wonder that the monks had said: "If we don't put down this printing press, it will put us down." To illustrate the far-reaching power of print, A.C. Dixon would tell of a remarkable chain of influence through the following series of books: Richard Baxter wrote "The Call to the Unconverted"; Philip Doddridge, reading this, turned to Christ, and wrote "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," which brought salvation to William Wilberforce. Wilberforce wrote his "Practical View of Christianity," which led Legh Richmond to Christ. Of Legh Richmond's booklet, "The Dairyman's Daughter," translated into more than a hundred languages, not less than five million copies were circulated, and more than a thousand persons were known to have been led to Christ through reading it. A.C. Dixon would add his own link of personal testimony: "To that book I owe my first act of consecration to Christ."

"The great object of preaching," he said, "is to move men to action. As in Apostolic times, we must still depend on the pen for indoctrination. It is a sad comment that there is not a religious daily in the world. Even a weekly religious paper that fails to pay a dividend is not apt to live. Rich men need to see the importance of spending money in supporting the printed Gospel as well as the spoken Gospel... It is ours to put within the reach of men not what they want but what they need."

"Evangelization is simply bringing the truth into contact with the people. That is our part—the rest is with God. We cannot convert men through the press any more than from the pulpit. In both cases we can simply proclaim the truth, and leave it with God to make it germinate and bring forth fruit."

In opposing, as he consistently did, the Sunday newspaper, A.C. Dixon was not motivated by mere Puritanical prejudice. He appreciated the fact that there were many who could not leave their homes to attend public worship, and he did not ignore the plea that Sunday reading should be provided for these. His argument was that the Sunday edition of the ordinary newspaper
was not the right vehicle for the purpose. For, combined with helpful material, came a flood of other reading matter likely to divert thought from spiritual things and lead to neglect of public worship.

In each of his pastorates he had devoted much time and thought to issuing a church paper. In Baltimore and in Brooklyn it took the form of a weekly leaflet containing his sermon, to give more permanence to the message and to disseminate it more widely. The Gospel Worker at Immanuel Church developed into Work and Worship. In Brooklyn, for some years, he published a weekly magazine, entitled Gospel, devoted to Biblical exposition and illustration. Through the last years at Hanson Place a sermon was printed every week in a new leaflet entitled The Living Word. In Boston, two or three sermons at a time were published monthly in booklet form.

In Chicago, for the first time, he employed the public newspaper as a vehicle for carrying the Gospel message to non-churchgoers. At the beginning of 1908 a column was taken in the Saturday issue of The Chicago Daily News at a cost of sixty dollars a week, the space being bought at advertising rates in order to ensure full insertion.

"It is the only way to reach the man in the street. Let us put the Gospel into every newspaper we can at white heat and baptized in prayer. We must pay for it too. Do not ask a newspaper to give space for it. It will be blue-pencilled, and the Gospel will be taken out of it."

By this means an unabridged message was sent out into homes all over the city, reaching possibly half-a-million people. In a short time the articles were syndicated and appeared in about a thousand country newspapers. The results were immediate and continuous. Never a week, and seldom a day passed without some letter coming to tell of blessing received through the printed page.

A glance at the titles of these articles gives some idea of the varied subjects with which he dealt. "The Real Jesus"; "Hope, the Soul's Anchor"; and "Saving Faith" are samples of one series. "What is Mormonism?"; "The Truth about Christian Science"; "Learned Unbelief and Miracles"; "Myths and Moths of 'Higher Criticism'"; and "The Passing of Evolution" were
others which grappled with some of the popular stumbling-blocks to Christian belief. One day A.C.Dixon was called to the telephone by a gentleman who thanked him for his article on "The Truth about Christian Science." It had opened his eyes and those of his wife to their foolishness in having wasted a large sum of money in vain upon Christian Science practitioners.

A convict in Bridewell prison sent his thanks for an article on "Sin," saying that it had led him to accept Christ; and that, although sentenced to a term of twenty years, he hoped some day to preach the Gospel. A man from a Western town wrote to say that his pastor was reading the column aloud to his congregation on Sunday mornings, and added that a young couple in the church mailed the column every week to their parents in Scotland.

From the North Side of Chicago came a request that someone from the Moody Church might be sent to talk with a sick man. The visitor found that he had been reading the sermon in the Daily News and had been deeply moved by the teaching about sin. Years before, he had been a member of a Bible Class in the Moody Sunday School, but had gone out West and had wandered into sin, returning to Chicago to continue his wicked course. For sixteen years he had not entered a church. The words "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" had touched his heart afresh, and he could now rest on the promise "him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

Some of the topics selected for the newspaper column dealt frankly with outstanding sources of temptation: "Is the Theater bad?"; "What is the Dance?"; "Marriage and Divorce"; "Ethics of Secrecy"; "Religion and Politics"; and "The Passing of the Saloon." Some of these aroused heated abuse, but the knowledge of lives led back to Christ from compromise and worldliness made ample compensation.

One article, entitled "Is the Bible a sectarian Book?" was reprinted as a leaflet and had a very large circulation. It had been inspired by the action of the State of Illinois, which in the winter of 1908 excluded the Bible from the public schools on the ground of its "sectarianism."

The scheme for newspaper evangelism was continued over a period of several years. It attracted attention in many quarters, not only in the United States, but on some of the mission fields,
A.C. Dixon, 1910
Pastor of the Moody Church, Chicago
With the Open Air Mission at the Races on Epsom Downs, England

Open Air Work in Chicago
especially in Japan, where similar methods were followed with equally fruitful results.

It was during these years in Chicago that A.C. Dixon began to sense, as never before, the actual apostasy developing in the churches. Worldliness and indolence on the part of professing Christians had often grieved him. But now there was within the churches a movement of growing hostility to the true Gospel of Christ that was much harder to counteract than opposition from without. Havoc was being wrought by the “New Theology.” Destructive criticism of the Bible, which had captured the theological seminaries, had now reached the pulpit and was beginning to bear fruit in widespread infidelity.

Mistaught church members became the easy prey of Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritism, New Thought, and other cults, while students in the universities were drifting back to paganism. To A.C. Dixon the spreading apostasy was a sure sign of the “end-time,” heralding Christ’s return as the one hope of the world. It challenged him the more on this account to seek some means of awakening Christians to their danger. He longed to find a way of stressing the fundamental facts of Christianity, which were being so skilfully obscured, but the effective weapon of the printed page was too costly for adequate use.

On almost every Saturday night for two and a half years in Chicago, he had met for prayer with a group of about ten other men asking God to indicate clearly how the flood-tide of modern infidelity might be met, and Christian believers strengthened to resist it.

Quite unexpectedly he was to find an answer to these prayers during a trip to the West coast, whither he was called in the summer of 1909 for a series of preaching engagements.

In Los Angeles, the newest metropolis of the new world in the West, he became acquainted with two remarkable brothers, Milton and Lyman Stewart of the Union Oil Company of California. These men regarded their wealth as a stewardship for God, and were pouring it out in His service. The interests of Milton Stewart were centered chiefly on missionary work in China; while Lyman, the younger brother, had founded a Bible School in Los Angeles similar to the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, and had persuaded Dr. R. A. Torrey to become its Dean.

For almost the first time in his life, A.C. Dixon was obliged
to cancel some of his engagements on account of sickness. "I certainly did not want to lie down," he wrote to his church, "for there seemed so much to be done. But God made me to lie down in a green pasture." The disappointment brought with it an abundant compensation. For three Sundays he had preached at the Baptist Temple, of which Rev. "Bob" Burdette was pastor. Seated in the crowded auditorium was Mr. Lyman Stewart, following intently as A.C. Dixon read and replied to some of the statements recently published by an ultra-liberal professor of Chicago University.

After the last service, Mr. Stewart asked for a private interview. It had seemed difficult to find time for it in the busy days, but owing to A.C. Dixon's illness the interview took place unhurriedly at Pasadena, whither he had gone to recuperate.

"I think the time has come," Mr. Stewart had written in advance, "when there is a need for the fundamental truths of Christianity to be clearly stated. I have put aside a sum of money which I earnestly wish to use for this purpose, and I want you to help me."

With the gentleness and modesty of a rare soul, he now laid before A.C. Dixon a proposal embodying the very purpose so long and earnestly prayed for! It was to compile and publish twelve volumes in which the foundation principles of the Christian faith should be set forth. Men of outstanding ability as teachers, preachers and writers were to be asked to contribute articles on subjects under the fire of criticism. Mr. Stewart felt that the selection of these contributors and their subjects was beyond his own powers, and until now he had not met anyone to whom he cared to entrust an undertaking of such vital consequence.

To A.C. Dixon it was the realization of a desire that had seemed almost unattainable! To collect the material and edit the proposed volumes would necessitate an immense expenditure of time and strength in addition to his already heavy burdens; but with God to lean upon he did not hesitate on that score. Mr. Stewart then unfolded further details of his far-reaching project. He desired the volumes to be sent out at an average of one each month through the ensuing year, free of all charge, to ministers, missionaries, evangelists, Y.M.C.A. secretaries, Sunday School superintendents and other Christian workers
throughout the English-speaking world.

With diffidence, yet with determination, A.C.Dixon accepted responsibility for the stupendous undertaking. Securities worth three hundred thousand dollars were entrusted to him by the Stewart brothers for financing the scheme, and he was anxious that everything should be handled with efficiency and economy, that there might be no waste, and no possible ground for criticism. As a personal contribution, he refused to accept any salary for his part of the work, and was punctilious in seeing that only his bare expenses were covered by the fund.

On returning to Chicago he called together the small, intimate group of those usually with him at the Saturday night prayer-meeting, and told them what had happened. Three able business men, who were also indefatigable soul-winners, were in the group—Mr.Henry P.Crowell, Mr.Thomas Smith and Mr. D.W.Potter. He invited these laymen to serve on an executive committee together with Dr.Torrey, Dr.Louis Meyer, a Christian Jew of considerable learning, Dr.Elmer Harris and himself. Several other names were added later—among them Dr.Melvin G.Kyle, archæologist and president of Xenia University; Dr. Charles R.Erdman of Princeton Seminary; and Mr.Delavan L. Pierson, editor of The Missionary Review of the World.

"The Testimony Publishing Company" was then organized for the express purpose of publishing the twelve volumes; and Mr.Thomas E.Stephens, managing editor of The Moody Church Herald, an active, soul-winning Christian and a man of assured integrity and ability, was appointed as business manager.

To obtain suitable material and edit it, and to compile a reliable list of names and addresses of those who were to receive the books was no small task. It was not until February, 1910, that the first volume of the twelve was actually in the mails. Need for prayer led to the formation of "The Great Commission Prayer League," of which Thos.E.Stephens was the ardent promoter to the day of his death. The whole movement was encircled by prayer.

The names of the first contributors are worth noting, as well as the subjects chosen. Dr.James Orr, of Scotland, sent an article on "The Virgin Birth of Christ." From London came "The Purpose of the Incarnation" by Dr.G.Campbell Morgan; while Dr.Torrey contributed "The Personality and Deity of the Holy
Spirit.” Dr. A. T. Pierson illustrated “The Proof of the Living God” by the prayer life of George Müller; and Canon Dyson Hague, of Wycliffe College, Toronto, sketched “The History of the Higher Criticism”; while “A Personal Testimony” was given by Dr. Howard A. Kelly of Baltimore. Not until later did the editor’s own name appear as a contributor.

Three months were required for sending out the first volume on its mission throughout the world. The first list of recipients contained one hundred and seventy-five thousand names and addresses, but was enlarged in later issues to an average of two hundred thousand. On the neat brown paper cover of the booklet were the simple words: “The Fundamentals: a Testimony. Compliments of Two Christian Laymen.” Everywhere the books were gratefully received; and in a short time letters began to pour in from every quarter. It was a daily spiritual tonic to A. C. Dixon and his assistants to read the glowing testimonies from Christians who had become disheartened because of the apparently overwhelming odds against them. Many spoke of the reinforcement of wavering faith, and of renewed courage to stand for God and His Word. Glad indeed were the hearts of the “two Christian Laymen” who were laying the whole religious world under a debt of gratitude through their generous gift.

The first five volumes were edited by A. C. Dixon, and were completed and mailed within eighteen months. On his departure from Chicago, Dr. Louis Meyer took his place, and worked so strenuously in securing and editing material for the next five issues that his health broke down. When he passed away in 1913, he had partly prepared the material for the eleventh volume, and this and the twelfth were issued by Dr. Torrey in 1915.

“The Testimony Publishing Company” was dissolved on completion of the work, the plates of the books and the surplus funds being handed over to the editorial department of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles for the purpose of issuing a monthly magazine entitled “The King’s Business,” of which Dr. Torrey was to be editor-in-chief. Mr. Lyman Stewart’s gratitude for the way in which the task had been carried through was expressed in a letter to A. C. Dixon in the summer of 1915.

“Now that we are closing up the final details of ‘The Fundamentals,’ I want to thank you for your part of the work. The whole affair has
not only been admirably handled, but in some respects has exceeded our expectations. Its success, humanly speaking, has been mainly due to you."

It cannot be doubted that the publication of these volumes did much to encourage and strengthen Christian faith, and offered some resistance, for a while at least, to the tide of destructive Biblical criticism sweeping over the Christian world. A.C. Dixon looked back upon his part in the work as one of the most satisfying accomplishments of his life.

Through the fifteen years of active service still to come he did not slacken in the use of pen as well as of voice in proclaiming the truth of God and in seeking to combat error. Several volumes of his sermons were published in England as well as in America, and through these and the messages scattered broadcast in magazine articles, booklets and pamphlets, the influence of his spoken utterances were multiplied a thousandfold.
CHAPTER XVIII

STRENUOUS DAYS IN CHICAGO

"I said: 'Let me walk in the field';
   God said: 'Nay, walk in the town';
I said: 'There are no flowers there';
   He said: 'No flowers, but a crown.'

I said: 'But the sky is black;
   There is nothing but noise and din';
But He wept as He sent me back,
   'There is more,' He said, 'There is sin.'

I said: 'But the air is thick,
   And fogs are veiling the sun';
He answered: 'Yet souls are sick,
   And souls in the dark undone.'

I said: 'I shall miss the light,
   And friends will miss me, they say';
He answered me: 'Choose tonight
   If I am to miss you, or they.'

I pleaded for time to be given.
   He said: 'Is it hard to decide?
It will not seem hard in heaven
   To have followed the steps of your Guide.'"

Many a time as he breathed the heavy air of crowded meetings, and walked through the noisy, clattering streets of the city, did these lines float through A.C.Dixon's mind. By nature he was a child of the open spaces. The call of the wild, the bright skies of the South, the splendor of his native mountains, wooed him almost irresistibly at times; but Chicago, with its teeming humanity, its smoke and dirt and its sin, offered opportunities for soul-winning that bound his heart to his chosen sphere.

The winter of 1907–8 was marked by severe industrial depression. For the worst three months the Moody Church, at its pastor's suggestion, provided free breakfasts daily at seven
for the unemployed of the surrounding district. The work entailed a good deal of sacrifice, but it was cheerfully and voluntarily given by members of the church, most of whom were wage-earners themselves. A large staff of men and women were needed to prepare sandwiches and coffee for the early hour, as well as to serve the meal. There were sixty-two guests on the first morning, and the numbers grew rapidly. On one day as many as eighteen hundred loaves had to be cut into slices. In all, 58,500 breakfasts were served by the Moody Church.

The aim of this charitable work was, of course, something more than the provision of food for hungry mouths. Other agencies were at work helping to supply the mere physical needs of the unemployed. Even some of the saloons offered free lunches, but in too many cases men were thus drawn into the slough of drunkenness and despair.

The object of the Moody Church was to give food for the soul as well as for the body. A.C.Dixon gathered about him a group of ministers and workers to help in the meeting that followed the meal. He was at his early post without fail morning after morning, in spite of busy days and regular night services. Students from the Bible Institute volunteered their services, especially with the singing and personal work. A rich reward for every sacrifice was found in the large number of conversions. When spring came the crisis passed, but the souls won for Christ were trophies for eternity.

After the first few weeks, the strain of financing this extra effort had grown somewhat heavy on pastor and people, but they had undertaken it under a sense of divine leading. A.C.Dixon made it a matter of special prayer as he sped south to take part in Dr.Len Broughton’s annual Bible Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, where he did double duty, supplying Campbell Morgan’s place as well as his own.

“Thanks be to God for answered prayer,” he wrote to his assistant a day or two later. “I have received a check today from Mr.Crowell for a thousand dollars, which I am sending for immediate distribution between the free breakfasts and the noon meetings. I rejoice to hear of so many conversions. My conviction is that to have led twenty-five of these men to Christ will mean more to them and to the kingdom of God than
sending five hundred of them out to Western farms. If they really get Christ in their hearts other matters will soon become adjusted."

A union Bible class on Saturday nights and a theater meeting at noon on Mondays, similar to the one he had held in Tremont Temple in Boston, had become part of A.C. Dixon's regular work in Chicago. Conferences for Christian workers, Foreign Missions, Christian Endeavorers, Hebrew Christians and others followed at intervals, making the Moody Church a live center of interest and a meeting-place for the keen soul-winners of all the churches.

It seemed to A.C. Dixon that denominational lines should be regarded less and less as separating barriers and that the vital importance of loyalty to the Bible as the common foundation for Christian belief should be proportionately emphasized. To him, the very core of that foundation was Jesus Christ Himself. Granting that God might lead His children differently in external matters such as church polity and forms of worship, he could not concede the right to tamper with Scriptural assertions of fact, especially concerning the Person of Christ. With all his might he sought to impart this conviction to others.

The unusual background of the Moody Church had developed among its members a strong individualism that often needed handling with tact, but this pastor of theirs enjoyed the challenge of the task.

"You are a church of specialists," he told them. "There are more leaders among you than I ever saw in the same number of folks. You have had so much that is good that your standard is high, and everyone must come up to your standard or dwindle in your estimation. Specialism is the breath of this church, leadership its citadel. But while it is our strength it is also our weakness. It makes us strong along certain lines and weak as a whole. It gives us a great many individuals working intensely and efficiently, yet not always moving together as we should against the powers of darkness which surround us.

"No man under heaven can lead this church. The only leadership possible is that which Moses had on the hill-top when Aaron and Hur upheld his hands and when the soldiers looking up and seeing the hands uplifted, rallied to the conflict. And you have rallied to every great general call in a way that has pleased me wonderfully; to the theater work, to feeding the hungry, and even to the work of which some of you did not approve—of preaching the Gospel through the daily Press."
Each winter's work at the Moody Church was inaugurated by an annual festival. In 1908 this was marked by Jubilee rejoicings, for fifty years had passed since D.L. Moody, then a youthful clerk in a shoe store, had begun his Sunday School in the North Market Hall of Chicago. Elder John M. Hitchcock, whose mind naturally reverted to those early beginnings, suggested a day of memorial celebration. "That is an inspiration from the Lord," said A.C. Dixon when the matter was mentioned to him, "but the home-coming must cover a week instead of a day." Preparations were immediately set in hand for a "Reunion Week" at the end of October.

It was a genuine home-coming for many. Several of the original pioneers were present. Among them was Rev. J.H. Harwood, the first pastor of the church, who in the interim had organized fifty other churches, many Sunday Schools, and had founded three flourishing Christian colleges. Yet, although past seventy, he still seemed in his prime. One of the first scholars of Moody's Sunday School class of 1858 was also present, and many workers of the North Market Hall and Illinois Street Sunday Schools.

On each morning of "Reunion week" a sunrise meeting was led by Major Cole. Noon prayer-meetings and other gatherings filled the days to overflowing. Moody's old-time associates were entertained at a banquet on "Reminiscence Day." The four hundred who established their claim to sit at this feast were referred to by A.C. Dixon, who presided over it, as America's real 'Four Hundred.'"

There was indeed cause for rejoicing in all that had been accomplished through this one church during the passing of half a century. The Sunday School now registered nearly three thousand members, with a hundred and seventy-five officers and teachers. The church itself had a membership of more than two thousand, almost two hundred and fifty new names having been added during A.C. Dixon's second year. Equally remarkable was the progress of the Bible Institute, founded only twenty years before and now numbering five hundred and fifty-three students, two thirds of whom were men.

The impetus of the memorable "Reunion Week" inspired the church to fresh efforts. An outstanding event of the following winter was the watch-night service on New Year's Eve. Instead of the usual midnight gathering in the Moody Church, A.C.
Dixon organized a great festival of Gospel song in the vast Colosseum. Professor Towner, with a chorus choir of twenty-five hundred voices, directed the music. Churches from every part of Chicago united with the Moody Church for the occasion. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman and others addressed the meeting, and scores of people responded to the invitation to accept Christ as Saviour and Lord.

Another special effort took the form of "sixty days of soul-winning," when the whole church set itself to seek out individuals and win them to Christ, bringing reports, and often the converts as well, to the special meetings arranged.

Open-air work had a large place in the program, especially in the summer-time. The most intensive campaign was carried on in July, 1910, when more than twenty street meetings were held each week within a half-mile radius of the Moody Church, in addition to two great Sunday afternoon services in Grant Park during the Army tournament.

Concentration upon his own work did not make A.C. Dixon oblivious to the labors of others. With keen and generous sympathy he rejoiced in the results of Dr. Torrey's work and of the great Chapman-Alexander campaigns, especially in the marvelous awakening under the latter in Boston in the Spring of 1909. His own work in New England through the preceding years was doubtless an important factor in preparing the way for this revival, in which thousands took their stand for Christ. Tremont Temple and then the huge Mechanics Building overflowed night after night. Boston University suspended recitations for a week, and Newton Theological Seminary for several days, that their students might attend the meetings. Never before had Boston experienced so sweeping a revival.

It came at a time when the revulsion against religious revivals was being loudly proclaimed in the educational institutions of the country, a fact to which A.C. Dixon drew attention in The Moody Church Herald. A professor of Stanford University, he said, had pronounced religious revivals to be "a form of drunkenness no more worthy of respect than the drunkenness that lies in the gutter." A Harvard professor of international fame as a philosopher had declared this expression to be too mild. Religious revivalism was, to him, "a social bane more dangerous to the life of society than drunkenness. As a sot, a man falls below
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the level of the brute; as a revivalist he sinks lower than the sot.” Granting the danger of excessive emotionalism, A.C.Dixon protested against the pernicious untruthfulness of such sweeping statements.

“These learned professors, be it remembered,” he added, “referred to revivals like those under Whitefield, Finney and Moody, in which thousands of drunkards were made sober and restored to their homes. The comforting fact remains, that even under the shadow of Harvard University, God has sent to Boston, under the preaching and singing of Chapman and Alexander, a revival which has changed the religious atmosphere of the city.”

The Moody Church heartily endorsed its pastor’s approval of the sane, unspectacular type of evangelism, and contributed nearly seven hundred pledged workers to assist in a Chapman-Alexander campaign in their own city in the winter of 1910.

In the midst of this strenuous effort, which added tenfold to his regular work, A.C.Dixon received an invitation from the official Board of Spurgeon’s Tabernacle in London. They begged him to spare at least a month in the New Year to fill their pulpit, left vacant through ill-health by Rev.Archibald G.Brown, Thomas Spurgeon’s successor. The invitation came at the very time when rest, in the form of a change of work, was what A.C.Dixon most needed; and with the hearty consent of his church he sailed from New York on Christmas Eve.

“As we approached the shores of England, the weight of responsibility for the Tabernacle began to press upon me,” he wrote. “I never felt so small and insufficient in my life, yet I never had such sufficiency in God. The text Mr.Gaylord sent me, ‘I will go in the strength of the Lord God,’ has given me great courage. I go to London in that inexhaustible strength.”

Once again the hand of Providence was guiding in unsuspected ways. Future events that were to bind him for the greater part of his remaining years to a land other than his own were as yet veiled from his sight. A wealth of service and a world of experience had already been packed into the fifty-six years that had gone; yet perhaps the greatest and most self-sacrificing work of his life still lay ahead.
CHAPTER XIX

AFLAME WITH ZEAL IN SPURGEON'S PULPIT

A cold, foggy January morning in London. The huge ellipse of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, looking like a covered stadium, is dim with mist. But the sloping floor and the two great galleries are crowded with waiting worshippers in spite of the unfriendly weather. Even the rising seats behind the circular rostrum are full. High up at the back of them a door opens and down the steps towards the rostrum comes a dignified procession of some twenty-four frock-coated elders and deacons. Behind them, a tall, lean figure, crowned by a mass of black hair streaked with grey. He takes his seat in the preacher’s chair, and the service begins with a full-throated hymn of praise that sets the air athrob with harmony.

A great hush falls as the congregation settles itself to listen to a message on “The Magnetism of the Cross.” The man who stands before them has evidently come to his task with but one object in view—to present a picture of Christ that shall melt their hearts in grateful adoration. In the after-meeting at the close of the service some forty people come forward to make confession of their faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord.

“Dr. Dixon is a born preacher,” wrote the editor of The Life of Faith, “and his own individuality shines through everything he says and does. He glorifies Jesus Christ, and uses all his gifts to bring men in willing subjection to His feet. . . . With a preacher like Dr. Dixon in the heart of London, there would be a new power for righteousness in the world’s metropolis.”

Such a vision soon began to form itself to some purpose in the minds of the official Board of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Twenty-two years had passed since A.C. Dixon’s first visit to London at the time of the World’s Sunday School Convention in 1889. His host on the present occasion, Mr. William Olney,
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was a son of the former deacon who had been so attracted by
the young American's sparkling address at the Mansion House
reception, and who had forthwith introduced him to Spurgeon.
The impression made by reading a sermon of A.C.Dixon's on
"The Holy Spirit," and deepened by the renewed personal
contact, had brought upon Mr.Olney a conviction, which he im-
parted to his fellow office-bearers, that here was the one man
in the world to lead the great work at the Tabernacle. When the
second Sunday's work was done, the deacons urged A.C.Dixon
to stay with them for another month, and to this he consented
after a cabled consultation with his church in Chicago.

Mr.Olney wrote at once to his beloved friend across the
ocean, Dr.A.T.Pierson, to whom the Tabernacle owed an in-
estimable debt of thanks for his ministry during Spurgeon's last
illness and after his death. Pierson was himself at this time weak
in body, and it was indeed only a few months later that he was
called Home. But he hastened to reply: "If I do not misunder-
stand the Divine leading, you have it now at the Metropolitan
Tabernacle. I should say: 'trust God, and call Dixon to the
pastorate.'" Soon after that letter reached London, Mr.Olney
broached the subject directly with his guest.

"Some of the official Board have been talking with me about accepting
the pastorate at the Tabernacle," A.C.Dixon wrote to his wife. "The
Moody Church job, great as its difficulties are, looks easy compared with
this. Only God is equal to either of them. If I should feel it necessary to
decide between the two, I should have to take much time to pray about it."

Once more he seemed to have come to a fork in the road.
The importance of weighing all the issues involved put a differ-
ent complexion upon his visit to London:

"I must make a careful study of religious conditions over here. The
other night I attended Campbell Morgan's Bible Class, and heard him
speak to about fifteen hundred people. It was an hour of Biblical teaching
which required close attention, yet the people listened with eagerness. Such
an audience in busy London is encouraging.

"Yesterday I attended a service in the City Temple, Dr.Joseph
Parker's old church. What a contrast between this and Campbell Mor-
gan's lecture! The preacher warned the people against 'Christolatry'—
a word I never heard before. There was brilliancy of thought in the
address, yet it seemed to fill the house with gloom."
Not long before this, a curious incident had startled Londoners. One morning passers-by saw the word "Ichabod" staring down upon them in bold capitals from the entrance to the City Temple. Dr. Parker had once uttered the words: "Should a time ever come when any message other than the pure Gospel of Christ should go forth from this pulpit, let 'Ichabod' be written across the portals." Remembering this, a sign-painter who ardently admired Dr. Parker had arrived on the scene at early day-dawn, and before the rush of city traffic had begun, the condemning word stood out in brilliant color against the grey stone facade. It was only with difficulty that traces of the solemn reproof were obliterated.

The incident was in A.C. Dixon's mind as he sat there listening in the crowded auditorium.

"Most of the people had doubtless come like myself, because of memories of the past, and went away mourning the fact that 'Ichabod' is really written upon everything.

"The Baptists of Great Britain are lamenting a decrease in membership in their churches and Sunday Schools. Pastors and people need to return to the apostolic speciality of prayer and ministry of the Word. The people are hungry for bread, and they will turn to those who give them the Bread of Life."

A flying visit to Edinburgh in February brought him his first glimpse of Scotland. At the invitation of Rev. Joseph W. Kemp, he preached twice a day for three days in Charlotte Chapel, a surprisingly commodious building hidden away in a narrow lane behind that end of Princes Street which faces the precipitous Castle Rock. He also addressed a conference of the Baptist ministers of Edinburgh and Leith.

"Only one blessed with the strength which he possesses could have undertaken so much in so little time," wrote Mr. Kemp. "He has won all hearts. If we are permitted to say one thing in parting from him, it is:

'Better lo'ed ye couldna be,

Will you no' come back again?"

Between engagements, A.C. Dixon had contrived a visit to the old house in which John Knox had lived. It was to him a veritable pilgrimage, for no preacher in history had impressed him from childhood more deeply than the intrepid Scot who had preached God's truth with such unflinching courage. As he stood
at the small upper window from which John Knox had often addressed the throngs on the slope of the old High Street, a cry went up from his heart that the mantle might fall upon him. He lingered awhile in the tiny oak-panelled room used by John Knox for prayer and Bible study, and it seemed to him that he had reached a milestone marking the beginning of a new stage in his ministry.

“I greatly enjoyed my visit to Scotland,” he wrote. “The English people seem anxious to hear the Gospel, and God has given us conversions every Sunday at the Tabernacle. But the Scotch seem to enjoy preaching even better than the English, and they never look at the clock!”

A definite call to the pastorate of the Metropolitan Tabernacle was laid before him in March, but to this he felt unable to give an immediate reply. Of all the choices that he had ever been called upon to make, none had been as difficult as this, for never before had so many complex issues been involved.

It was at this juncture that he learned the value of friendships formed with some of the choicest spirits in the Christian circles of England. He took counsel particularly with Lord Kinnaird, and with Sir Robert Anderson, finding in both a warm response to his quest for information.

“I am hungry for another talk with you,” wrote Sir Robert. “Lady Agnes joins me in desiring a greater opportunity to ‘be filled with your company.’”

Others with whom he had helpful fellowship were Miss Ada R.Habershon, the hymn-writer, and her sister, and the saintly Bishop of Durham, Dr.Handley Moule. The latter promised to contribute an article on “The Atonement” to the issue of “The Fundamentals,” which A.C.Dixon was then preparing for the press. On writing later to say that illness obliged him to postpone it, the Bishop added:

“This is a most reluctant decision, for I long to write my testimony to the need of the Atonement and hope you will give me a later opening. I trust there is truth in the report that you may undertake the charge of the Tabernacle."

It was just fifty years since Charles Haddon Spurgeon, then but a young man of twenty-six, had opened his great new church on Newington Butts. By a somewhat strange coincidence the
Metropolitan Tabernacle in South London and the Moody Church in Chicago—respectively famed for their connection with two of the outstanding evangelical leaders of the century—celebrated their fiftieth anniversaries almost simultaneously. Strange also that the work of Moody and of Spurgeon was to be so closely linked at this very time by the transference from one pulpit to the other of so loyal a friend of both.

It was to preach the Jubilee sermon on this occasion that A.C. Dixon had further delayed his return to America, for Dr. J.H. Jowett, pastor of the famous Carr’s Lane Chapel of Birmingham, who was to have been the speaker, had been obliged to cancel the engagement through illness. Dr. Jowett had just accepted a call to the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City and was taken ill in the midst of his preparations for leaving.

“They have asked me to take Jowett’s place, and under the circumstances I do not know how to do other than accept. If the sermon is to be at all historical and deals with past controversies, it will take a Solomon to do it without falling into a ditch. However, I think I shall deal with what the Tabernacle has stood for, and leave history alone. We are having bright sunshine and Spring weather to-day, so warm as to be uncomfortable to these English people, but it suits me mighty well.”

By the end of March A.C. Dixon was in Chicago ministering to his people at the Moody Church. The burden of decision as to the future rested heavily upon him.

“My friends in America outside the Moody Church seem to take it for granted that I will go to London. Dr. J.L. Campbell has written from Cambridge as if he thought it was settled, but it is by no means settled. The field in London is most inviting, but the work here has many features that even that does not possess, and I must pray and meditate for a good while longer before fully deciding.”

After a while he was able to spend a day or two apart in the solitude of the woods at Geneva Lake with his tried and trusted assistant pastor, Mr. Woolley. When they returned to Chicago the decision had been made. With a quiet finality that gave no hint of the conflict within, he tendered his resignation to the Moody Church, to become effective on the first of June. At the same time the laconic message: “Yes, June,” was cabled to London.
The Metropolitan (Spurgeon's) Tabernacle, London
A.C. Dixon with the Bust of C.H. Spurgeon in the Vestry of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London
Chapel Hill, Asheville, Baltimore, Brooklyn, Boston, Chicago—his memory ran back over the years! In each place he had expected to invest the balance of his life-time, refusing, one after another, invitations to change the sphere of his activities until there had come, as now, a call that he felt was unmistakably of God, and which must be obeyed.

In the course of each year spent in Chicago, from five hundred to a thousand professions of conversion had been noted on the books of the Moody Church. The membership was larger by eight hundred than when he first took charge. Every church organization showed progress, and the gifts of the people had more than doubled. Such harmony prevailed—such ties of friendship bound him to Chicago—surely no farewell had been harder to face! But the generous sympathy with which his decision was met greatly encouraged him, as did the fact that the people to whom he was going were akin in faith and spirit and purpose to those from whom he must part.

The wrench of leaving Chicago, and especially the home in Chalmers Place, was greater to Mrs. Dixon as well as to himself than any that had yet been theirs. The roots that had gone so deep in Baltimore, seemed to cling even more tenaciously to Chicago.

The business of closing up their home began almost at once. One of A.C. Dixon's chief personal regrets was the necessity of leaving his library behind. As he looked around at the familiar books before packing them away, selecting a few to take with him to England, it seemed almost like parting with living friends. In the midst of this task an experience came to him of such spiritual value that he frequently spoke of it in after-days.

"While sorting a pile of rubbish, I fished out a little dusty, worn diary—it had only cost a dime—which I had kept during my first rural pastorate at Chapel Hill. I read through the entries for every day and my memory carried me back to the little town at the State University of North Carolina.

"Nearly all the entries included a statement like this: 'Visited Mr. So-and-so; found him under conviction.' 'Visited Mrs. So-and-so, prayed with the family; two children accepted Christ.' 'Visited another, found him ready to believe on the Lord.' Day after day there was a record of souls won to Jesus.

"Standing there, in the midst of my confused study, with that little
torn, cheap diary in my hand, I looked up to God and said, 'O, Lord! when I come to London to the Metropolitan Tabernacle, help me to get back again to the primary work of winning souls. I get so busy, leading movements, marking proofs, looking after plans of architecture, and a thousand other things. Help me never to forget the chief work of fishing for men.'

Of all people, one would think that he least needed to have his heart pierced by the arrow of this conviction, for to an outward observer the ruling passion of his life seemed undiminished. But it is those who love Christ with greatest loyalty who feel most keenly, as Peter did, the stab of the slightest reproof from the eye of the Divine Master.

Within a short time the home was dismantled, many things being bestowed with characteristic thoughtfulness upon some of the poorer members of the church.

"I did not follow the crowd to the depot on Decoration Day to see you off," wrote their old friend, Elder Hitchcock, "but went straight up to Chalmers Place to see after the final disposal of your things. I found your maid had been crying until her eyes were swollen. Some of us have felt as if we were at a funeral ever since you left. We all hope the Dixon family are as homesick for us as we are for them."

In a travel-stained envelope, evidently treasured by Mrs. Dixon, lies a mass of letters from Chicago ministers of various denominations expressing their sense of loss in the departure of A.C. Dixon, especially for so distant a post. His evangelistic fervor and the catholicity of his spirit had given him an unusual place among them.

One minister, however, who had assisted in the great evangelistic movements in Brooklyn and New York as well as in Chicago, declared:

"We are not losing him. To go from Moody's Church in Chicago to Spurgeon's Tabernacle in London is only an incident. The South did not lose him when he came North. Brooklyn and Boston did not lose him when he came to Chicago, and America cannot lose him though he must now preach to us from London."

Among the Baptists of the South, always strong in devotion to their denominational cause, there was outspoken satisfaction over the news that A.C. Dixon had been called to Spurgeon's pulpit. To them it was a welcome home rather than a fare-
well. A loyal Baptist he had never ceased to be, even while pastor of Moody's undenominational church. But his brethren in the South breathed a sigh of relief as they thought of him once again in a Baptist pulpit.

His first appearance in London as pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle was on the morning of June 18th, 1911. As he walked down the gallery steps to the rostrum, surrounded by deacons and elders, the great congregation rose to its feet with a spontaneous outburst of song: “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.” Beside him on the rostrum was Thomas Spurgeon, whose brotherly welcome added a crowning touch to all the rest.

The reception given by the press, religious and secular, was generous in its warmth. “It is a long time since the Metropolitan Tabernacle loomed so brightly upon the religious horizon” commented one of the London dailies. “Dr. Dixon carries his height splendidly, standing with soldierly uprightness. His voice is musical and resonant, and”—by way of particular compliment!—“the American accent one expected is not there.” More significant first impressions were: “the extreme simplicity of his preaching,” “he is not argumentative,” and “the ring of sincerity in his voice.” By The Baptist Times he was greeted as “an acquisition to British Baptists,” with the assurance that “everywhere he will be welcomed by our churches up and down the land.”

A.C. Dixon’s induction into the Tabernacle pastorate occurred during a week that was marked by rejoicing throughout the British Empire. London was filled with a cosmopolitan crowd of visitors who had come from the ends of the earth to celebrate the Coronation of King George V. and Queen Mary.

On this account, the formal reception at the Tabernacle was postponed until June 26th, when more than twenty-five hundred people attended the gatherings. Charge of the music for this occasion was in the hands of Charles M. Alexander, who was in his English home for a few months prior to a fourth evangelistic campaign around the world.

It was with a sense of treading in historic footsteps that A.C. Dixon took up the leadership of this London church with its background of two and a half centuries of beneficent influence. He was in line of succession to men of heroic build, eight of
whom had served the church in days before the present structure had been erected by Spurgeon.

The Tabernacle had become the hub of a wide circle of activity. Besides its own network of organizations, it was closely connected with a number of separate institutions. Back of the Tabernacle premises, facing on the courtyard, stood the Pastors’ College. The Stockwell Orphanage with its five hundred children was three miles away on the Clapham Road, with a sea-side home at Margate. A group of almshouses provided a home for seventeen aged women from the Tabernacle membership.

Nearest of all to A.C. Dixon’s heart-interest was the Tabernacle Colportage Association, covering fifty selected districts in various parts of England and Wales. The splendid band of colporteurs conducted missions, and sought to win souls to Christ through personal conversation as they went from house to house, selling Bibles and other Christian literature. It was not long before the new pastor secured one of the best of these men to work in the poor homes and block dwellings of the Tabernacle region, undertaking personal responsibility for his salary and expenses through all the years of his pastorate. “Dr. Dixon was always accessible to us,” said Mr. Geo. B. Wilmot, the secretary of the Association. “He never grudged time spent in helping a struggling soul, however poor and abject.”

Connected with the Tabernacle there were also some twenty branch Missions, and among its office-bearers were several experienced evangelists, particularly Mr. William Olney, the senior deacon. Upon the shoulders of the pastor fell the onerous responsibility of drawing all the threads together, and of giving to every department the cheer of his sympathy, and the inspiration of his presence.

Through the kindly thoughtfulness of a host of new friends A.C. Dixon and his wife were not permitted to feel themselves strangers in London. Among these were Mr. and Mrs. John Hunter, who had been the devoted friends of Charles H. Spurgeon. At “Cap. Martin,” their sea-side estate near Liverpool, named after Spurgeon’s favorite retreat at Mentone, the refreshment of many a short holiday was provided for the Dixons.

Unused to English housekeeping, they took up their abode in the homelike atmosphere of the West Central Hotel on Southampton Row. It was almost within a stone’s throw of the
British Museum, and a permit to the Museum reading room compensated for the loss of a private library. The family was now widely scattered—the only son in India, one daughter teaching in America, another studying at Oxford, and the youngest at school in Switzerland.

Within a few days of the welcome meeting, A.C.Dixon had taken hold of his new work as though he had always lived in London. July was not a favorable month for beginning intensive work except in the open air, but it was a good time for establishing acquaintance with the people and for laying plans for the future.

The first conference held in the Tabernacle after his installation was the annual gathering of the Colportage Association, and this gave him an opportunity of coming into early personal contact with the men who were scattered far and wide over the country for the greater part of the year. They were all interested to hear how his father had delighted in purchasing Spurgeon's sermons long ago from a colporteur traveling through the Shelby district in far-away North Carolina.

The music at the Tabernacle was a matter of genuine interest to the pastor. There had been some agitation for installation of a large pipe organ, for up to this time the singing of the hymns had been led by a quite inadequate harmonium. At the expert advice of Charles M.Alexander, who was in London for a day or two, A.C.Dixon recommended the purchase of a Steinway Grand piano. It was a complete innovation, but his wish was conceded. Not only was the delay necessary for raising a much larger fund thus avoided, but a surprising improvement resulted at once in the pitch and precision of the hearty congregational singing. Hymnleaflets were also used, for a quick increase in attendance at the services had soon outrun the current supply of hymn-books. Later on a choir of children from the orphanage made a great addition to the musical part of the services.

New Year of 1912 was opened with a Bible and Evangelistic Conference that became an annual January event, and was one of the occasions on which A.C.Dixon succeeded in making the Tabernacle a rallying place for the keen evangelicals of the Established and Free Churches. His experiences at the Moody Church had greatly strengthened his contact with other denominations, and while pastor once more of a distinctively Baptist
church, he determined to offer a constant welcome on his platform to all who believed the same Bible and trusted the same Saviour.

February 29th was set apart as a Day of Prayer, and was marked by the presence of Rev. John Harper, who received a double welcome as he had just returned from a period of service at the Moody Church. His words on "Availing Prayer" were hallowed with special pathos in retrospect because of the tragedy which happened soon afterwards. On his way back to Chicago for a further term of service at the Moody Church Mr. Harper was one of the sixteen hundred passengers who were drowned at the sinking of the ill-fated "Titanic." The passion of soul-winning that had dominated his life inspired his last moments of supreme testing.

One of the rescued passengers, speaking afterwards in Hamilton, Ontario, told of his conversion in the dark waters through hearing a voice which he recognized as John Harper's cry out as he floated by, "Is your soul saved?" "No," he had shouted. Back came the reply: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Several times they drifted together and apart again in the turmoil of the waters, and he heard the insistent message ring out again and again to souls on the brink of eternity. In desperation he cried to the Lord to save his sinful soul, and was spared to give thanks for salvation received through the heroic testimony of God's servant in the very hour of death.

A number of American visitors preached at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in the Spring of 1912, among them Dr. James M. Gray, Dr. C. I. Scofield of the "Scofield" reference Bible, and Dr. W. B. Riley of Minneapolis. Dr. Len G. Broughton, who had been led to Christ as a youth by A. C. Dixon, and with whom he had had frequent fellowship, returned to London from Atlanta to accept a second term as pastor of F. B. Meyer's former charge at Christ Church. It was a somewhat strange coincidence that the pulpits of two London churches in such close proximity, famous for their connection with Spurgeon and Newman Hall, should be occupied by North Carolinians. Each was ready to support the other in winning souls for God and in the cause of Gospel Temperance. There was fresh need for younger men to re-consecrate themselves to the evangelistic side of their work,
for the older generation was passing on. Three great Christian leaders were “promoted” — to use a Salvation Army term — just at this time; General Booth himself; Henry Varley, the veteran evangelist; and Griffith John, a pioneer of the London Missionary Society’s work in China.

A call for help came to A.C. Dixon from Wales. The Principality had been plunged into deep gloom by a crisis in the coal industry which had thrown thousands of miners into unemployment, and their spiritual need seemed even greater than the physical distress. In Swansea, with the support of the local ministers, great meetings were held, hundreds remaining at the close to pray for Divine intervention in the deadlock between owners and men. A.C. Dixon then visited Cardiff, Caerphilly, Porth, Pontypridd and Maestag—all mining centers. “Even to so experienced a preacher and evangelist, it has been a very strenuous time,” wrote Principal Edwards of the Baptist College in Cardiff, who was one of the party. Some of the men had come to the meetings prepared to oppose a political address, but A.C. Dixon told them that he was not there to discuss economics with them, but to preach the Gospel of Christ. It did not take long for the atmosphere to change, and there were many conversions. Here and there in the Rhondda Valley the fires of the great Revival were still burning, and in such places the response was warmest and most fruitful.

The importance of open-air work was a matter of growing concern in A.C. Dixon’s mind. He made a strong plea for it before the Assembly of the Baptist Union at Brighton. “We are too apt today,” he said, “to cultivate the restaurant spirit in our churches, two meals on Sunday and one in the middle of the week. We need to give out the Bread of Life every day of the week, and it is only by open-air work in connection with the regular services that we can carry the Gospel to the multitudes.”

In May, 1912, he arranged the first Conference of open-air workers and evangelists ever held in England along undenominational lines, the chief speakers being the great-hearted Prebendary F.S. Webster, Tolefree Parr the evangelist, and Rev. Martin Anstey of the London City Mission. A.C. Dixon himself was to the fore with a ringing message on Epsom Downs when the Open Air Mission carried on an energetic campaign among the crowds which thronged to the “Derby Day” races.
A ROMANCE OF PREACHING

It was the constructive element in A.C.Dixon's work that gave it so much strength and stability throughout. Controversy was never a pleasure to him, and he was not given to personalities. In the midst of an address on "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified," delivered at the annual meeting of the Baptist Union, he exclaimed:

"Controversial sermons may be in order, but I do not think I ever heard of anyone being converted by them. Truth with a flashing sword may simply confuse and antagonise, but truth with a sacrificial spirit will convert."

Yet he felt that it was necessary to warn against false doctrine, especially when promulgated by men trained to preach and teach the Word of God. The deadening effect of the Darwinian theory of evolution, already widely prevalent, seemed to him to be the basic cause of growing indifference to spiritual things, and of a rapidly-diminishing sense of sin. He dreaded apathy. "There is more hope of a man who does wrong enthusiastically, than of a man who does right in a lukewarm spirit," was one of his sayings.

He did not hesitate to state his conviction regarding Darwinism in an address given before the National Free Church Council at its annual meeting in 1912. Immediately became the center of attack. "This section of his address," commented The Christian World, "seemed like a fossil dug out of some stratum of old red sandstone or oolite." It referred to "the grave-clothes of old controversies," and the "theological bats that blunder darkling through our modern day." A.C.Dixon's description of Darwin's "Origin of Species," and "Descent of Man," as "fascinating fiction" was characterized by one minister as "calculated to drive a wedge of disagreement between the churches and thinking men."

It was, alas, between the churches and the Bible upon which they were founded, that A.C.Dixon discovered wedges being driven into every possible opening by the proponents of modern thought. To draw out such wedges and bind up the breach was his earnest endeavor.

Much had been accomplished at the close of his first year in London. The power of the pen had not been forgotten. Several of the religious papers of Great Britain published his sermons,
AFLAME WITH ZEAL IN SPURGEON'S PULPIT 205

and through *The Christian Herald* particularly he became a
familiar friend to hundreds in the villages of rural England.
In 1912 he added to his other work the editorial charge of *The
Sword and Trowel*, the Tabernacle's monthly paper.

Two more years went by with a constant succession of mis-
sions, conferences and spiritual efforts of every kind in addition
to the regular routine of the Tabernacle work. But there was no
monotony in it for A.C.Dixon! His ear was always on the alert
for the cry of a new-born soul, and his eye for that new light that
irradiates not only the lives but the very countenances of those
who surrender themselves to Christ.

Even the summer rest-seasons were largely devoted to
preaching the Good News, and to preparation of future sermon
material. In 1912 the Dixon family were united for a holiday in
Switzerland, for Faison was on his way back to his native land
from India, while Mary had crossed the Atlantic to share in
the re-union. Little did they realize that this would be the last
time to be enjoyed together on earth as an unbroken circle.

Dan Crawford, the missionary author of "Thinking Black,"
was in England that summer with his wife, on their first furlough
from Central Africa in twenty-three years. They and the Haber-
shon sisters shared the pleasures of the trip to Switzerland with
the Dixon family.

On returning to Africa, Dan Crawford told the following
story to a group of native preachers:

"A party of us had gone across the Channel to enjoy the snows of Swit-
zerland in that hot summer weather. One day my dear friend A.C.Dixon
and I sat together on a mountain ledge, with glorious scenery spread out
before us. Picture that man of God preparing day by day a long series of
sermons for one of his special missions at the Tabernacle. There he sat,
beginning to beam with the anticipative blessing, the fire burning in his
very eyes as he mused. His rustling Bible told, as I thought, that he was
tracking down twenty-one different texts for the corresponding twenty-one
sermons. Not at all! 'Dan,' said he, 'I am stuck—gloriously stuck!' This
meant that his soul had been ravished with one verse looming so large that
it defied a rival. He could not go beyond it, and got twenty-one sermons
out of it.

"Though our ways parted and I never heard one of the sermons, I met
him off and on during the special mission, glowing, always glowing over
the great text, and over the souls being saved through it."
These sermons on "The Glories of the Cross" were preached first at the Metropolitan Tabernacle on twenty-one consecutive nights. They were drawn from the inexhaustible riches of the text: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

From Switzerland, A.C. Dixon went straight to the English Lake district to take a leading part in the program of the Keswick Convention. Every house and every hotel in the little town on Lake Derwentwater was overflowing with visitors who had come in thousands from every point of the compass. In the four days of his stay, A.C. Dixon preached seven times in one or other of the spacious tents on Eskin Street and Skiddaw Street. Between-whiles he addressed the meetings for ministers, and took part in a number of smaller gatherings.

The summer of 1913 was spent in America, in a round of conferences in Chicago and the South, from which he returned refreshed in body and spirit to his work in England. During that autumn he organized a series of mission meetings in the Tabernacle and its twelve branch Mission Halls, and was assisted in this intensive effort by Pasteur Reuben Saillens and others, including Madame Annie Ryall and the Jubilee singers. He himself thought nothing of preaching eighteen or twenty times a week.

Meanwhile the stage was being set for a coming disaster of which the world little dreamed, although there was a good deal of internal disquiet in England. Writing to one of his daughters of the great Anglo-American Exposition to be held in London in 1914, A.C. Dixon said:

"Its purpose is to commemorate the hundred years of peace since the Treaty of Ghent was signed. Walter Hines Page, our American ambassador, says that Americans will come over to it in great numbers, so I think I shall postpone my next summer's holiday, that I may not miss them.

"England is in a fevered state of political excitement, but there seems no likelihood of a civil war in Ireland, even though Ulster is drilling her soldiers."
CHAPTER XX

LIGHT IN LONDON THROUGH THE GREAT WAR'S DARKNESS

The fateful year that was to plunge the world into mourning broke without a shadow of the coming catastrophe. Yet with the wild doings of the militant suffragettes, and the threatening of civil war in Ireland, England already had enough problems to face.

There was more than ordinary need of the day of continuous prayer at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The Bible and Evangelistic Conference was held as usual in January, and the messages of Pasteur Saillens and Dr.Dinsdale T.Young brought peculiar refreshment and strength for the tasks that lay ahead. Sir Robert Anderson and Dr.Schofield, the London heart specialist, were also among those who presented the Bible to the people as the unshakable rock of truth in a world of uncertainty and unrest.

Spring and early summer went by, filled with multitudinous engagements, one of which called A.C.Dixon to Norway for the Centennial Exposition in Christiania. Some seventy-five thousand Norwegian-Americans were expected to attend it, and an effort was being made to reach them with the Gospel in their old homeland. Through the generosity of a wealthy Chicagoan a large tent had been erected in Christiania for evangelistic services, and A.C.Dixon undertook the preaching for two weeks in June. He was keenly interested in the progress made by the sturdy little Norse kingdom, but was astonished to find that there were more people in South London than in all of Norway. This discovery sent him back to England with a new realization of the greatness of his opportunities at the Tabernacle.

As the bright twilight of the summer evenings began to lengthen, he and Mrs.Dixon, who had taken her own quiet but helpful share in her husband's work, began to look forward to a family re-union in America.
The Anglo-American Exposition was in full swing in London in July, and the Metropolitan Tabernacle took a share in celebrating the hundred years of peace between the two countries. When the American Ambassador appeared on the platform he was greeted by an outburst of hearty and spontaneous applause. In presenting him A.C. Dixon told how they had first met at Chapel Hill thirty-five years before, when young "Walter Page" was on the lecturing staff of the Normal School, and when he, then at the beginning of his preaching career, had attended his lectures. In a speech that took deep hold of his audience, the Ambassador stressed the importance of the occasion that they were commemorating.

Such strengthening of bonds between the two great English-speaking nations was significant and auspicious in view of the events now over-shadowing the unconscious world, fast heading towards the great cataclysm. The blind sense of security which prevented all but a few from realizing the situation seems almost incredible in retrospect. The attention of Great Britain was occupied with Irish affairs and her own internal troubles. Even the Metropolitan Tabernacle had its share of attention from the suffragettes. A bomb exploded one Sunday afternoon in the gallery. It went off with a violent report, filling the building with dense smoke, but happily the damage was trifling. A charred piece of paper was retrieved, bearing the exhortation: "Put your religion into practise, and see that women obtain their freedom."

News of the assassination of the Crown Prince and Princess of Austria stirred England as well as the Continent, but drew out British sympathy towards the Austrian people, bringing no presentiment of the thunderbolt of war, so soon to fall. When the "Mauretania" sailed, however, on August 1st with the Dixons aboard, events had begun to move fast. Austria's ultimatum to Serbia, the mobilization of Russia, the imperious demands of Germany that mobilization should cease, a wave of sudden horror-stricken realization in France of impending disaster—yet even then the emotions of the English people were scarcely stirred with any expectation of being swept into the whirlpool.

The "Mauretania" was already a day out at sea when the stillness of the usually quiet Sunday afternoons in English towns and villages was broken by the unwonted appearance of Sunday newspapers and the paralyzing cry of the newsboys: "Germany
and France at war.” Almost before the people could catch their breath, Belgium was invaded, its “impregnable” forts were crumbling into ruin, and England, galvanized into an unimagined agony of sympathetic emotion, was hurrying her army of heroic “Contemptibles” to stand side by side with France in an effort to stem the devastating flood of military arrogance and might.

News that Germany had declared war upon France reached the “Mauretania” by wireless, and morning after morning the voyagers eagerly scanned the bulletin board for further tidings. The passenger list contained the names of people from both countries, and all were conscious of an attempt to conceal anything that might cause a disturbance. A statement on Tuesday morning, August 4th, that Great Britain had mobilized her Army and Navy, set the whole ship athrob with excitement. Suspicion quickly spread that war had also been declared between Germany and England. By evening A.C. Dixon was sure of it, when a steward knocked at the door of his state-room, and entering, closed the porthole and drew the curtain across. The only reason vouchsafed was that he was acting under orders.

During the following night, they were almost thrown out of their berths by the vessel’s sudden change of course. Immediately afterwards the whole ship vibrated violently as the throbbing engines drove her through the water at highest speed. It was clear that she was straining every nerve to escape some danger. Only the dense fog through which she raced regardlessly and the speed of “the fastest liner in the world” saved her from capture, for as they afterwards learned a German cruiser was in full chase.

Speculation was rife as Thursday morning dawned, but the announcement that there had been no wireless communication through the night was the only satisfaction offered to the passengers until the liner cast anchor in the harbor—not of New York, but of Halifax, Nova Scotia! Then the truth was learned that England was indeed involved in the war.

The “Mauretania” was soon surrounded by all sorts of steam and sailing craft, crowded with Halifax people cheering and singing patriotic songs. Among the German passengers were twenty-three of military age who were taken ashore and detained as prisoners-of-war. In the evening, a large company gathered in the ship’s lounge to thank God for His protecting care on
the voyage. A.C. Dixon was one of the leaders of this gathering, and voiced the prayers of all for those who were already suffering the horrors of war.

From the beginning of these anxious days, the stately words of the Forty-sixth Psalm rang in his soul:

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth do change, and though the mountains be shaken into the heart of the seas. . . . Jehovah of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge."

This classic note of confidence, echoing down from the days of old, was to bring comfort to himself and to his people at the Tabernacle in the dark days to come. The reassuring words were soon cabled to England, with the announcement of a safe arrival in New York.

Except for the pleasure of a family re-union, A.C. Dixon's outstanding memory of this summer in America, with its busy round of Bible Conference work, was his association with Dr. R.A. Torrey. After the Conference at Montrose, Pennsylvania, Dr. Torrey visited the Dixon home at Clifton Springs.

"A day spent with Torrey cannot be forgotten; his faith, hope and love are contagious. He reads the Scriptures constantly in five languages, English, German, French, Hebrew and Greek. The merciless way he demolishes the sophistries of some of the higher critics makes him unpopular with men of advanced views. They pronounce him cold, dogmatic and unsympathetic, but in his own family, and among his friends, he is the soul of gentleness, courtesy and sympathy. He is the one man I have known to whom praise of his preaching seems positively painful, doubtless fearing that such praise may breed pride and its consequent weakness. His breath is prayer, and he is never too busy to spend a while every day in the inner chamber with God."

All too quickly the summer sped past, and early in September, A.C. Dixon set his face to return alone to the land of his adoption. It was with a grave sense of responsibility that he took up his winter's work in London under conditions that had changed the whole face of society within a few short weeks.

Three times in his life he had been brought face to face with war. As a boy of seven he had his first experience of it. Even now he could recall the anxious tones and faces of his parents as they
discussed the news of the early battles between the North and South. Never would he forget the sight of the wounded, ragged soldiers as they passed by the "Allen Place," near Shelby, after Lee's surrender.

Not until he reached the age of forty-five did the grim terror touch his life again, when he went from Brooklyn to minister to the American soldiers at Tampa, during the struggle between Cuba and Spain.

Now, as a man of sixty, far from his native land, the awful specter of war again overshadowed his life. At the cry of agony from Belgium, and the approaching threat to their own homes and families, Englishmen—largely young husbands and fathers—had flocked by the thousand to the recruiting stations. It was a prodigal offering of the flower of the country's young manhood. Vast training camps on Salisbury Plain were choked with volunteers before any adequate equipment could be prepared. Squads of men in training began to march through the streets of the cities, and the white tents of encampments sprang up everywhere like mushrooms in a night.

In the quiet of his study at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, the American pastor dropped upon his knees by his desk—the fine head with its crown of fast-silvering hair bowed upon his hands—while he poured out his soul to God in a fresh dedication of himself to the service of his fellow-men.

Soon after the outbreak of war, the Church of England and the National Free Church Council had acted together in opening the churches all over the country for a National Day of Prayer. Former political and sectarian differences were forgotten in the face of common danger and suffering. Like other churches, the Tabernacle had been thronged on that day, for the seemingly irresistible enemy hosts were sweeping forward, and it seemed as though no human power could hold them back. It is a matter of history that on the very day following the Day of Prayer, there came a turn in the tide of battle that saved Paris as by a miracle. A.C. Dixon often reminded the people of this, and one of his first actions on returning from America was to establish a daily noon prayer-meeting at the Tabernacle.

The presence in London of his compatriots, J. Wilbur Chapman and Charles M. Alexander, was particularly welcome at this time. After more than a year of evangelistic work in Australasia,
they were in the midst of a series of missions in Great Britain when the war-clouds broke. Many of the meetings in prospect were to have been in east-coast towns and had to be cancelled. A mission for men in the new Central Y.M.C.A. on Tottenham Court Road was carried through in October according to plan; for, although many of those whom it would normally have reached were away in the training camps, London was filled more than ever with men. A.C.Dixon was present at almost every meeting, ready to speak or pray or to point anxious souls to Christ in the crowded enquiry room.

He succeeded in persuading Chapman and Alexander to devote ten days to the Metropolitan Tabernacle after the conclusion of their work at the Y.M.C.A. The ready confidence with which he handed over to them the place of leadership in his own church, sitting at their side in hearty co-operation, was a lesson in the grace of Christian fellowship. It brought a rich reward. The feast of song filled many a heart with cheer and comfort in the midst of deepening shadows, and the earnest preaching of Dr. Chapman led to a large number of conversions.

"The war is getting more and more serious," A.C.Dixon wrote about this time. "The reports that come through seem to show that the Allies are gaining the victory, but it is hard to tell how much is true. London is beginning to be crowded with Belgian refugees. I could hardly make my way through them at the Holborn Restaurant this morning. There are fifty at the West Central Hotel, nice-looking, well-to-do people. The English Government is taking good care of them. London is gruesomely dark at night, but the people do not seem excited. Yesterday as I approached London in an express train from Bristol, the guard came in and pulled down all the shades in the compartment. Evidently the authorities are expecting airship invasion, yet nobody seems to care much.

"The work at the Tabernacle is going on even better than usual. Chapman and Alexander are preaching there this week to great crowds, and as a result of their mission we shall receive a good many new members."

"More than three hundred," he wrote a few days later, "have confessed their decision for Christ. Of these, over a hundred gave the Tabernacle as the church of their choice. The remainder were distributed among more than a hundred different churches in and around London. It has been truly a red-letter experience in the history of the Tabernacle, and we pray God to give us many more like it."
THE GREAT WAR'S DARKNESS

In November there came a flying visit to Scotland to address a conference of ministers at Blythswood, the Scottish home of Lord Blythswood, who was deeply interested in the work at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

"It is good to get out of darkened London, with its woe-begone refugees. The streets grow darker every week. At night they remind me of the dark woods between Warsaw and Wood Lawn. The 'buses and taxis have to move slowly to prevent collisions.

"I noticed on my journey north that the railway stations were pitch dark. All Great Britain is in dread of air-raids. It even looks as if the United States might become involved in the war as suddenly as England. Certainly we ought to help England if she should be in any danger of defeat.

"I am staying in a castle which Queen Victoria used to visit when she came to Glasgow. It is near the river Clyde, in beautiful surroundings.

"At the dining-table last night one of the waiters was dressed in the fantastic Highland costume with kilts and bare knees. He waits on me in my room, and came in at seven-thirty to wake me up, carefully collecting my scattered clothes, and laying them on a chair.

"When we went down to breakfast, we found nothing but empty plates and flowers on the table, the breakfast dishes were all before the fire, or on shelves before the windows. Not a waiter was in sight, and each one of us was expected to select our food, take it to the table and eat it. If we wanted our plates replenished we had to get up and help ourselves. It is apparently the custom over here.

"There were more than a hundred guests at dinner tonight, mostly preachers. The table was laid in the great central hall, built in the form of a cross. Pictures, statues, and trophies of various kinds surrounded us, and it called to mind what one has read of banquets in the old baronial days. Lord Blythswood is an earnest Christian, and holds this conference of preachers three times a year for Bible exposition.

"As I look round on these beautiful grounds, I think of our little cottage at Clifton Springs. It is just as beautiful to me as this, and I am hungry to be digging in the garden and mowing the lawn."

He reached London again in time to lead the closing service in Queen's Hall, which had been thronged for another Day of Prayer, arranged by a union committee of London churches. The majestic phrases of the Forty-sixth Psalm fell upon the ears of the assembly with new meaning as he pointed out the Psalmist's word-picture of God as the Destroyer of that which destroys.
From the beginning of the war he had felt intense sympathy with the British people in their determination to be true to their plighted word at any cost. He now referred with deep regret to the manifesto issued by Professor Harnack of Berlin and other religious leaders in Germany, in which they sought to justify their country’s breach of treaty obligations. He begged his hearers to seize the opportunity of these days of trial for winning souls to Christ, reminding them that, according to historic precedent, religious revival is more apt to occur during the conflict than after it, and that revivals in connection with war periods have usually taken place among the vanquished rather than among the victors. He also pressed home the truth that, without the preaching of the Atonement, and without individual conversion to God, there never had been, and never could be, a revival worthy of the name.

As a leading pastor in the English metropolis, he was forced to think seriously and declare himself plainly on the subject of pacifism. While determined not to use his pulpit as a recruiting office, he stood frankly for loyal obedience to Governmental authority in this time of stress, and earnestly commended the official message issued by the Society of Friends to “men and women of good-will in the British Empire.”

“Coming from such a quarter,” he said, “this frank and full acknowledgment by the Quakers that the British Government strove honestly for peace in the first instance is of peculiar value.”

“Do not misunderstand me,” he said on another occasion. “I was a pacifist up to the moment when war was declared. I believe war is the worst way in the world to settle anything, in family or church or nation, but when someone declares war, there is nothing else to do but to take sides against the disturber of the peace.”

He sincerely respected the honest conviction of men whose conscience genuinely forbade them to bear arms. Into this sacred domain of conscience he held that “authority” had no right to intrude. Such a man might and should be compelled to serve his country, but only in ways that would not violate his religious scruples. To surrender that principle would bring to an end both civil and religious liberty.

Yet he had little sympathy with those who refused to serve
in any non-combatant department. Such men, he exclaimed, would forbid the Good Samaritan to help the poor fellow who fell among thieves, because they disapproved of the way in which the victim had been hurt. They would put an end to all philanthropic and humanitarian work, because it assists those who have been brought to their necessitous condition by agencies of which they could not approve.

It was no easy matter at such a time of confused sentiment to be a wise counselor of the many distraught people who looked to him for guidance in matters practical as well as spiritual. Only constant dependence upon Divine strength held him true to the purpose of his heavenly commission.

The question of pacifism became more acute later, when conscription was forced upon the English nation. A party of anti-conscriptionists once notified him that they would attend the service at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in a body and asked for seats to be reserved. He informed them at once that while they would be welcomed as private individuals, he could not receive them as an organized group. He expressed his belief that, in a great emergency like the present, the Government had as much right to compel its citizens to serve their country as to compel payment of taxes for its support at all times.

But for absorption in his work, and the thoughtful hospitality of his friends, the loneliness of this first winter of the war would indeed have been hard to bear. Yet he almost rejoiced that his wife was unable to join him in war-torn Europe, although the preventing cause—a daughter's prolonged illness—was an added anxiety to them both.

"Last Friday I went to Birmingham," he wrote her, "and spent a night with Charlie Alexander in his English home, which he has named 'Tennessee.' Charlie and his wife simply revel in the joy of their love for Christ and His work. Some of our time was spent in telling stories, talking of old times in the United States, and Charlie and his singers gave many beautiful Gospel songs.

"They insisted that I should come there any time I wanted to, whether they were at home or not, and I am sure they meant it. Many times you were spoken of, and the wish expressed that you could be with us. As I was about to leave, one of Alexander's soloists sang 'God will take care of you,' and Charlie called on Mrs.Alexander to lead in prayer. She did pray for you and the children so sweetly that I am afraid I wept. I could
but say to them as I told them good-bye, 'you have given me a bit of heaven,' and surely it was so. They sail for America in December. I hope you may see them."

Just before Christmas, England was mightily stirred over an early morning bombardment of some of her defenceless east-coast towns by enemy ships which had evaded the British fleet. A week later two Zeppelins came over within a few miles of London, but fortunately did little damage. On going North for some meetings, A.C.Dixon saw traces of the bombardment at Hartlepool—a small Baptist church torn to pieces by a shell that had exploded within it, and several workmen's cottages wrecked by another shell.

The first six months of the Great War had passed, and the world recoiled from the sudden revelation of the black depths of its own heart. People were almost incapable of accepting the terrible facts. Many of the religious leaders, obsessed by the theory of social evolution, were stunned by the materializing of a specter which they had thought existed only in the fevered hallucination of deliberate scare-mongers. But A.C.Dixon was watching the solemn course of events in the light of Scripture prophecy and perceived that it was the darkness preceding the dawn of Christ's return. He was not blinded by the exaggerated worship of human achievement which had led so many to mistake the progress of mechanical science for the moral evolution of society.

Another vital fact began to impress itself more and more upon his mind, and was openly expressed in the hope that the English people might not forget their responsibility as a great Protestant nation. He saw plainly that, back of political and international disagreements, there loomed a mighty religious contest. Papal Rome, weakened in Europe through the past century and shorn of temporal power, had been silently building up her resources in the new world, ready to spring back to the seat of power in Europe at the first opportunity. Czarist Russia as supporter of her chief rival, the Greek Church, and England as the main bulwark of Protestantism, had thwarted her plans, and A.C.Dixon felt that Rome was ready to back any power that would help to crush those enemies of hers, if she could not annex them to herself.
As never before, he tried to awaken those whom he could reach by voice and pen to the value of their possession of an open Bible and freedom of worship. The usual Bible and Evangelistic Conference was held at the Tabernacle in January, 1915, in spite of unsettled conditions and bad weather. The New Year had set in with a rainfall, unprecedented even in London.

"England has never known so much rain as during the last two months. In December alone there was a fall of ten inches. Doubtless the terrific cannonading across the Channel accounts for something of it. My spirit was a little dampened when only one Elder met with me for prayer in the vestry this evening before the service. All the 'pray-ers' told the Lord that they expected very few people out on so stormy a night; yet we had about fifteen hundred, and the results of the after-meeting were good. Some soldiers were there from Canada. London seems now to have as many soldiers as civilians, and the streets are full of men in khaki.

"As I came out of the Tabernacle to-day, a woman gave me a piece of good cheer by saying: 'Dr. Dixon, I must tell you that I have lost my temper under your preaching, and I used to have a bad one!' A young man from Mars Hill, near Asheville, took lunch with me and I surely enjoyed his Southern drawl. He is at Oxford with a Rhodes scholarship and has given me a list of the other Rhodes scholars. I shall send each one of them an invitation to visit the Tabernacle when they come to London."

The rapid disappearance of Americans from England brought him a growing sense of isolation. Especially did he miss Dr. Len Broughton, who was obliged through ill-health to resign the pastorate of Christ Church.

"It makes me feel a trifle lonelier to have them leave. Americans over here now are 'as scarce as hens' teeth.' I have been the only American in the West Central Hotel for two or three months. It is worth making sacrifices to be living at such a time, with such opportunities. I am as safe here as in America, or as in heaven either for that matter, until the work that God has for me to do has been accomplished."

The establishment of a blockade soon affected the prices of food-stuffs, and living expenses began to soar, but there seemed no shortage of food as yet.

"Fruit stores in London seem to be almost bursting with supplies. Everybody can get work and many branches of business are even more prosperous than before the war. Last week over fifteen hundred vessels went in and out of English ports, and only three of them were sunk by submarines or mines."
London was now so crowded that hotel accommodation was at a premium. A.C.Dixon was obliged to relinquish the small room which he had used as a study, but he reckoned this a slight sacrifice.

"There is a foreboding of grim doings when England gets her millions of men into the field. Unless something unforeseen happens to stop the war, I fear that churches and even hotels will have to be used for hospitals. It is almost too horrible to think of. About five hundred of our young men have gone out from the Tabernacle and its Missions. Already one of our best has been killed, and many others wounded.

"We are looking forward to a general evangelistic campaign in London next year. If the war continues, the darkness may be a help in winning souls to Christ. If it closes, we ought to be joyful enough to seek the salvation of others. In any case we look for a great blessing from God."

The stand taken by King George V. with regard to the use of strong drink aroused his warmest admiration.

"It looks as though Prohibition were to be established in England before the United States," he wrote at the beginning of April. "The King and Lord Kitchener have announced to-day that they have banished alcohol from their homes, and many others are following suit. The King is proving himself truly royal in doing what he believes to be right, whether it be politic or not. Moral stamina like this in high places is worth more to a nation than all material resources, however great. It seems as though the Government must follow the lead of Russia and close the public houses during the war. Certainly something of value is being accomplished through the terrible struggle."

The determination to discover any possible good in the dark situation gave a constant note of cheer to A.C. Dixon's ministry. His optimism was infectious, and helped to uplift those about him. He thanked God for the revolt that was taking place against the false philosophy that might is right. A decline in the popular cult of the Superman, the merging of a narrow patriotism into broader ideals, and the hope of abolishing liquor, were to him bright stars that pierced the night.

He had begun the year 1915 by covenanting with some of his members to try and win at least one soul for Christ every week. This purpose was communicated to every other group he could influence, and as president of the London Christian Endeavor Federation he had many contacts with the young people.

Early in May he organized French services in the Tabernacle
for the French and Belgian refugees crowding into London. Pasteur Saillens came over from Paris and took charge of this work for several months, glad of the opportunity to reach his fellow-countrymen in England, for martial law in France was adding to the difficulties of evangelistic work in his own country.

About three hundred attended the first service, and increasing numbers of French and Belgians found their way to the Tabernacle. The results were most encouraging. In a single meeting twenty-seven French people decided for Christ. Pasteur Saillens was, however, greatly shocked by the apparent indifference of the people of London to the seriousness of the situation. In the Paris he had left behind, all theaters had been closed, and to see the places of amusement in London as gay as ever seemed to him utterly incongruous at such a time.

On May 7th, to the horror of all the world, the S.S. "Lusitania," crowded with women and children and non-military passengers—many of whom were American citizens—was torpedoed off the coast of Ireland and sank in twenty minutes with an appalling loss of life.

"That such infernalism should be the expression of scientific education and culture is an awful comment on the depravity of human nature, and shows that there must be something radically wrong with the philosophy of science and life that has led to it.

"I am going to Ireland in a few days to fulfill an engagement made before the war to take part in the annual meeting of the Baptist Union. Some friends think I am taking a risk from submarines. There is, of course, risk everywhere just now in England, but I have such a sense of God's care, that I am saved from all nervousness about it."

As summer approached, he made plans for spending a few weeks in America. His future work at the Tabernacle was much upon his mind. Five hundred and forty new members had been added during his four years of service, and the church as a whole had been strengthened in many directions. In some ways he felt as if his work there was just beginning, but it was hampered through lack of co-ordination between the Tabernacle itself and its branch Missions, and this point must be thrashed out if he should remain.

As president-elect of the London Baptist Association in its Jubilee year, he was occupied to the moment of departure with
organizing two hundred Baptist churches in London for a co-op-
ervative evangelistic campaign in the coming winter.
When the "St. Paul," by which he was to cross the Atlantic,
glided away from the Liverpool dock on July 23rd, the words
"American Line" were emblazoned on her sides in letters three
feet long. This was in accordance with the arrangement between
President Wilson and the German government. As darkness fell
upon the ocean the brilliantly illuminated words were clearly
visible, while a searchlight played upon the Stars and Stripes
floating from the mast-head.

The small passenger list, significant of war conditions, was
composed chiefly of Japanese naval officers, American journalists
and philanthropists, Jewish families joining husbands and fathers
in America, and professors and missionaries, whose study courses
and work in Europe had been rendered impossible.

The voyage was without incident, and a few hours after land-
ing in New York A.C.Dixon was united to his family in the home
at Clifton Springs. The loneliness of the past winter seemed like
a forgotten dream as the happy weeks sped past, punctuated by
preaching visits to Toronto, to the Moody Church in Chicago,
and to Bible Conferences at Montrose and elsewhere.

Before returning to England he officiated at the marriage of
his daughter, Clara, to Frank Howard Richardson, her child-
hood playmate of Brooklyn days, now practising as a child
specialist. When news of their engagement had reached A.C.
Dixon in England he had written to Frank:

"We think of you now as if you were our own boy indeed. When I
baptized you, after the death of Howard, I felt that God had given me
a spiritual child to take his place. Now that you and Clara have become
one, I feel that the restoration physically as well as spiritually has become
almost complete. Your father was one of the noblest men I ever knew.
How he would rejoice if he were here."

Mrs.Dixon was at her husband's side when they sailed away
from New York on the eleventh of September, but little did
either of them dream that four long years must pass before
they would see their native land again.
CHAPTER XXI
DAYBREAK AT LAST

LONDON once again! No leisure now for theorizing about distant events beyond the horizon of a vast protecting ocean, but facts, stern and disagreeable, close at hand, to be faced and grappled with in the patient carrying out of each day's duty. Once more the darkened streets at night, with a new thankfulness for the gloom, and a new dread of star-shine and moonlight; for the air-raids have begun in grave earnest, and London is now part of the battle-front.

Just before A.C.Dixon's return there had been a Zeppelin attack on Leytonstone, to the east of London, where one of the Tabernacle colporteurs lived. All the windows of this man's house were shattered by the explosion of a bomb, and he saw his neighbor's house go down like a heap of cards, the neighbor and his wife and three children all being killed.

Requests for prayer were pouring in at the Tabernacle, and the pastor and his wife were welcomed back with a warmth that spoke volumes. Once again they secured quarters in the West Central Hotel, but what a change it was from A.C.Dixon's lonely sojourn of the previous winter!

"While you and Frank have been enjoying your honeymoon," he wrote to his newly-wedded daughter, "Mother and I have been renewing ours. It is the first time in many years that I have had her all to myself, and we are even happier than before you children came to take her attention. She has been going with me to the meetings, and we are too busy to think of Zeppelins."

He at once set in motion the Jubilee campaign of the London Baptist churches, taking a full personal share in it. From the beginning of October until Christmas he preached at least nine times a week in addition to his administrative and editorial work. Record attendances and many decisions for Christ fully repaid
the effort, but he found it essential to keep himself in good physical trim.

"I have just had the rare experience of playing golf with a red ball on the snow in the bright sunshine. It is the second or third game I have had since arriving in England. It almost makes one feel mean to play at anything while so many are suffering; but in order to live and work well, one must have exercise and fresh air, and I hardly know how else to get it. The air is so full of ozone as to make one almost laugh with delight.

"There are few signs of the United States now in London. No American flags are flying, not even in front of the American Society across the street from the Tabernacle. It seems to me that it is time for the United States to quit haggling over purely commercial matters and to begin to realize that her highest ideals stand or fall with the fortunes of Great Britain and her allies in this war.

"Recruiting goes ahead at a tremendous rate, and it looks as if the soldiers needed may be secured without conscription; yet the country is ready for that if necessary."

The Bible and Evangelistic Conference usually held in January was cancelled in 1916 in favor of the Jubilee Campaign, for at this critical time it seemed to A.C. Dixon more important to concentrate upon actual soul-winning than to hold conferences on the subject.

A New Year's breakfast was given at the Tabernacle for the Campaign workers, when he again pointed out the disillusionment that was likely if they waited for a revival until the war was over. He begged them to seize the present opportunity, which might never recur. He also warned them against the "new evangelism," in which the doctrine of the Atonement and efforts to bring men to a definite decision for Christ were being relegated to the dust heap as a "conventional idea of the necessary character of a revival."

The Jubilee Campaign continued for six months, closing at the end of March.

"It has been very strenuous but we are thankful for most satisfactory results. Hundreds have decided for Christ and have been added to the churches. There are tokens of great revival at the Tabernacle, and I believe God will give us a further harvest of souls. Our congregation on Sunday night numbered about twenty-five hundred in spite of the darkness of the streets, and not less than five hundred attended last night's prayer-meeting."
DAYBREAK AT LAST

Saturday night gatherings for young people, and the formation of a "Youthful Army" among the boys and girls of the congregation, brought the young element into line. The glowing countenance and ringing voice of the indefatigable American pastor inspired young and old to efforts of which they had not dreamed themselves capable. Some of his friends in the United States were struck by his cheerful devotion to his task. Dr. J. J. Hall of the American Peace Society wrote from Atlanta:

"I feel it laid upon me to say how much I admire you for sticking to your post in England at such a time as this. God bless you for staying in London, for you are a tower of strength to many and a comfort to a mighty host."

War conditions in London were proving a trying ordeal to Mrs. Dixon's health, although she was loyally sharing her husband's work. The growing scarcity of food and fuel, added to the winter fog, smoke and noise, made it imperative for her to get away from the city. Some twenty miles to the south-east of London a small Sanitarium was discovered at Caterham in the Surrey hills, and here A. C. Dixon insisted that his wife should stay, to receive the benefit of country food and quiet nights. His own strength seemed undiminished, though his tall, spare form grew leaner as he filled the lonely intervals with more work.

Many a day began with a breakfast meeting. After one of these on a May morning, he preached twice in Nottingham, a hundred and thirty miles away, reaching London again in time for an evening service in the Tabernacle! A large attendance at the annual church meeting gave him satisfaction.

"Not a ripple of discord, all debts paid, and money in the treasury. The anxious forebodings I have sometimes had have disappeared.

"The bad weather somewhat thinned our congregations on Sunday except in the gallery among my 'youthful army.' God bless them, I believe they intend to stand by me through all sorts of weather. They came to tea with me in force the other afternoon. I am sure great good will come out of this movement.

"A letter from Dr. Torrey tells me that he has organized a church in Los Angeles, which he calls 'The Church of the Open Door,' of which he is pastor. He invites me to the Montrose Conference in the summer, but it is becoming quite clear to me that I ought to remain here this year."
Flying visits to Caterham relieved the tension of work. He would take with him his manuscripts of sermons or articles, and read them through with his wife, upon whose criticism he relied greatly. Just now he particularly needed her counsel in dealing with some invitations from America, among which was a proposition for a series of lecture tours for which large remuneration was offered.

"It is evident that we shall have to economize in every possible way, as we are all now urged to do in England," he wrote her after one of these consultations, "yet I feel as you do that it might be a calamity for me to begin to think about making money, even for the sake of the children. We must pray much about it, and God will guide us.

"What a fairy sort of time we have had today! The green hills with the sheep upon them, the road with the cattle, the lark-song from the clouds, the cowslips, violets, bluebells and buttercups, the cottage where we had tea and the nightingale's song make a mental picture I shall never forget. And to be in the midst of all that with the one you love best on earth! I do not remember an afternoon in my life so full of pleasure."

As the air-raids continued, the visits to Caterham became more difficult. At times the night sky was a-flash with search-lights, and more than once the train was held stock-still upon its track for hours, because Zeppelins were expected.

"Mother vows that she won't leave me, but I must try and persuade her to do so. Caterham is a quiet place, and seems safer than London, though I begin to doubt that, since the anti-aircraft defenses have been developed.

"Some of my American friends seem to think that I ought to return to America. But in spite of all the darkness and suffering the spiritual prospects here were never better. It has taken about five years to get the decks of the old ship cleared for action, and it looks as if God were going to give us some great victories. The church was never more united and enthusiastic, and it thrills me to look forward to the greater work that is coming. The American strings so tug at my heart as almost to pull it in two, and Mother feels it even more than I do, though she bears everything so sweetly and patiently.

"When this awful war closes we will not seem so far apart. Then will come greater opportunities for service all over the world. Certainly I cannot leave the people who have treated me so lovingly while they are in the distress and storm of the present experience. They never drank in the Gospel as they do now, and God is giving us increasing tokens of His presence and of His power."
The Fourth of July brought tidings from Brooklyn that inspired an immediate letter of jubilation.

“At 7 a.m. on this ‘glorious Fourth’ there was a knock at our door, and a cable telling of Miss Mary Faison Richardson’s arrival was handed in. A great event on a great day; Mother was so happy at being a grandmother that she fairly cried for joy. We rejoice that it is a little girl, for this is ‘woman’s day.’ In a few years it may be considered almost a misfortune to be a man, and a good woman is worth more than a man anyhow!”

A trip to Scotland soon after this brought the Dixons an unexpected adventure. From the Marine Hotel at Oban, they looked longingly across the water towards the Island of Mull. Beyond its south-western shore lay a goal of cherished desires, the historic Isle of Iona. Argyllshire, of which Mull is a part, was covered by the permit, necessary for aliens in war time, which they had secured before leaving London. Anticipating no difficulty, they boarded one of the little steam-boats. No challenge as to nationality was given as, after crossing Mull, they took ship again for Iona, a tiny dot in the ocean—two miles long by a mile and a half wide—where they expected to spend ten days.

At the hotel they were obliged by a new war-measure to fill in a registration form required of all visitors. An interview speedily followed. They learned that as aliens they had no right on this island without a special permit from the Admiralty, though the blame for their admission lay with others rather than themselves. Although quite willing to take the next steamer back, they found themselves in a curious situation, for they were forbidden to leave the island without official permission, and this the local authorities were unable to give. They almost wondered whether they might have to remain in Iona until the war ended!

A telegram was sent to the proprietor of the West Central Hotel, asking him to try and secure an official release. With loyal promptitude Mr. Smith hurried to the Foreign Office, only to find it closed for the week-end. On his second visit, however, he was cryptically informed that “the matter had been arranged.” Perhaps the friendship of the delinquents with Sir Robert Anderson may have helped in identifying them at Scotland Yard, and in guaranteeing their harmless intentions!

In the meantime they sought to forget their predicament by seeing as much as possible of the famous isle to which Columba
and his twelve companions had introduced Christianity almost thirteen centuries before. After a few days, without any explanation as to how it had been obtained, they received a permit to leave Iona. This was as mystifying as their detention, but they hastened back to London, glad to regain their freedom without asking questions.

In order to be away from the Tabernacle as little as possible—and perhaps to escape further adventures!—A.C. Dixon decided to preach there in August. The rest of their vacation was taken in snatches by excursions to Winchester and other places of interest within easy reach of London. Ruskin’s favorite village of Abingdon, the heather-clad moorland, the yellow poppies loved by Shelley, and the quaint names of the country inns, were full of charm to them both. A trip up the Thames from Kingston to Oxford filled them with delight as they gazed at the masses of flowery loveliness surrounding each lock-house, the gardens of great estates with their shaven lawns running down to the river’s edge, the villages with their thatched and timbered houses and soaring church spires. In the midst of such rural peace the dread fact of war, close at hand, seemed like an evil dream.

“Almost the only thing we have to fear in London is a Zeppelin attack, but we go about our business and think very little about it. The dark streets at night are inconvenient, yet there is a peculiar beauty about London with its dim lights. However it is now to become still more gloomy by the removal of all lights that make streets and pavements visible, and then it may be too dark even for our artistic tastes. In all there is a sort of weird fascination, so that when the Zepps come, everybody wants to see them.

“We are in the hands of our loving and ever-alert heavenly Father, and our lives are hid with Christ in Him for time and eternity. If He should see fit to take us to heaven by the Zeppelin route, it would be quickly done. My theology is that if we are in God’s service, nothing can kill us till our work for Him is finished, and there is heart-rest in that creed.”

A personal pleasure, as great as it was unlooked-for, brightened the October days for them. Their only son Faison, whom they had not seen for four years, and who had been prospecting for oil in Venezuela, had made a rich strike in two places, and was summoned to London for consultation with his Com-
pany. His first impulse had been to enlist in the English Army, but he was told that he could help the Allied cause better by opening up new fields for the supply of petrol. The few weeks in London, when his parents saw much of him, were a mutual delight. Before they saw him again, there was to be another lapse of years, during which he was married to Dorothea Macartney of New York, a gifted young short-story writer.

As the winter of 1916 drew on, the congregations at the Metropolitan Tabernacle actually increased in spite of many handicaps. There seemed to be a rising tide of revival. For the second time in the twenty-five years since Charles H. Spurgeon's death, the membership, with its constant ebb and flow, showed a net gain. Large numbers had been added during recent months, but of the hundreds of young men who had enlisted, many were already dead.

With his unfailing sympathy and deliberate good cheer A.C. Dixon stood like a rock in the midst of swirling torrents of sorrow and anxiety. Occasionally he preached to the men on Salisbury Plain, where now more than a quarter of a million—including Canadians and Australians—were encamped in training. He also conducted short missions in Manchester and Hull, and at Cambridge University; but he felt that his special call was to the people and homes of London.

Early in 1917, he organized a five months' "Trench Campaign" in order to reach the thousands living in the neighborhood of the Tabernacle who attended no place of worship. A systematic house-to-house visitation was undertaken, and a splendid band of men and women pledged all their spare time to prayer and the ministry of the Word. A.C.Dixon's own example was better than mere precept, and he did not fail to lay upon them the vital necessity of communion with God. "Prayer without visiting is worth more than visiting without prayer," he would say.

People came from afar to assist. One enthusiastic woman traveled from Scotland to devote several weeks to the "Trench Campaign," and Rev. Edward Last of Glasgow resigned his pastorate to give his whole time to it. Two helpers even came over from the Moody Church in Chicago. Miss E.W.MacGill, secretary of the Pocket Testament League, was a member of the Tabernacle, and the soul-winning methods of the League were much used in the "Trench Campaign" as in other branches of
the work. Reports of decision for Christ gladdened every service. Many were baptized—sometimes fifteen or twenty at a time—some becoming members of neighboring churches.

As time went on, the longing for America to take her stand with the Allies was becoming almost more than A.C.Dixon could bear.

"It begins to look as if this terrible war had just begun in earnest," he wrote in March 1917. "If the United States does not come in after what has come to the surface in the last few days, I shall not feel very proud of my American citizenship. Of course the English people forget that President Wilson has no right to declare war; only Congress can do that. He can only take steps to defend the country till Congress meets."

When President Wilson did officially declare, on April 2nd, that a state of war existed between the United States and the Germanic powers, and that all the resources of the former would be thrown into the struggle, a great sigh of relief went up from the Allied nations.

America's declaration led to redoubled efforts on the part of Germany to crush her enemies before they were augmented by fresh hosts from the other side of the world. Preparations for air-raids on London were known to be in progress on an immense scale.

In spite of her protest, A.C.Dixon insisted that his wife should leave the threatened area, and took her to Droitwich in the Midlands, that she might benefit by its famous salt baths.

From the loneliness of her exile, Mrs. Dixon poured out some troubled thoughts that had overtaken her, calling forth a reply that gives an intimate glimpse into A.C.Dixon's soul.

"Your letter has stirred me up. I had no idea that the giving up of our Chicago home had come so near breaking your heart. I was never clearer in my life about God's guidance than when I decided to come to the Tabernacle. It may be that the glamor of preaching in one of the world's famous pulpits had something to do with it, but I know it was not the deciding factor. The conviction which possesses my soul is that I have here and now the greatest opportunity in the world, and my only fear is lest I may fail to trust God as I should, and to let Him use me as only He can.

"It looks as if God wants me to stay right here, and witness for Him, though I can see it will mean opposition, if not persecution and suffering. I hope I am willing to fail, if by so doing I can best glorify our Master."
For almost three years his heart had been set upon a great evangelistic campaign in London, in which he hoped the Church of England and Free Church evangelicals would unite as they had done in the Torrey-Alexander Mission in 1905. But conditions had changed since then.

At first his hopes had run high, for the British National Council of the Y.M.C.A. was negotiating with Dr. Chapman and Charles M. Alexander for a continuation of the work in the encampments in and around London to which they had given several months in 1914. But Chapman and Alexander were unable to leave engagements in America, and difficulties arose on the English side. Chief among them was a determination to resist the calling in of outside evangelists—especially of Americans; and indeed a fairly general opposition to a united campaign of any kind.

At the battle-front, the separating barriers raised by political strife between the Established Church and Nonconformity had largely disappeared. But at home, sectarian cleavages seemed to be widening. Besides this, there was a growing indifference on both sides to the "Gospel" message, due to the encroachments of modernism on the one hand, and of sacerdotalism on the other.

A "National Mission of Repentance and Hope" had been carried on exclusively by the Established Church in 1916, but it had been frankly declared that the object was not primarily the salvation of individual souls.

"It is not to be a Mission," said the Archbishop of Canterbury in Westminster Abbey, "of good people to those who are not good, or of the converted to the unconverted. Rather the nation itself is to awake!"

In the face of this announcement, A.C. Dixon labored for a united effort of genuine evangelism on the part of the Nonconformist churches. But his partly organized scheme fell through, although it was not until the end of 1917 that he finally abandoned the project.

He applied himself all the more devotedly to his own particular sphere. To move about in the congested districts of London was becoming more difficult, but he undertook a double amount of pastoral visitation. Much of this work, especially among the sick, had been done heretofore by the deacons and elders and
by a district nurse, but he now set aside two whole days each week for his own share.

His heart went out to the young lads growing up under the abnormal conditions of the time. One of the Sunday School boys from a poor home near the Tabernacle had a strong clear voice, and was often called upon by the pastor to sing part of a hymn as a solo at the prayer-meeting. One day Tom gave his heart to Christ, but after a while there came a period of backsliding, and he was missing from the Tabernacle. He took care to steer clear of all his Christian friends, running to hide if he saw one of them.

A.C.Dixon determined to seek him out in his home. Tom was nowhere to be seen, but the visitor noticed a slight hesitation when a small brother was asked point-blank whether he was out. A search was suggested, and on going down to the coal-cellar, A.C.Dixon found poor Tom hiding among the dirt and cobwebs, crestfallen at being discovered. Comforted by his kind encouragement, the lad was soon won back to Christ and to the church. He developed into a devoted and capable worker, afterwards becoming one of the Tabernacle colporteurs.

July 7th, the day after A.C.Dixon's sixty-third birthday, marked the beginning of a new series of air attacks on London.

"We have just been through a spurt of excitement," he wrote to Mrs. Dixon from his study at the Tabernacle. "I am glad you are not here. The bombs sounded as if they were near the hotel, and smoke is rising toward St.Paul's Cathedral as if there was a big fire in that direction, This looks like war, sure enough!"

"Lively air raid, but all safe," was the message carried by the telegraph wires to Droitwich.

"Mr. Rainey's office was wrecked," he wrote next day. "A bomb fell on each side of it. There is no doubt of the fact that London is now in the war zone, and we are at the Front. If you insist on coming back to me it must be with the determination to face death like a soldier, without flinching. We will plan to go first to the Convention at Llandrindod Wells, and will use the Hunters' gift to take a short holiday together."

As he took his place on the Tabernacle rostrum the following Sunday morning, he received an unexpected smile of greeting from a familiar face. There, with his wife beside him, sat the
Hon. Joseph Hodge Choate, who had been ambassador to Great Britain when A.C. Dixon had first visited London in 1889. Although in his eighty-sixth year, Mr. Choate was still hale and hearty, and was again present at the evening service.

The next night there was another Zeppelin attack.

"Just as the people had dispersed after the prayer-meeting, the police sent word that German aircraft were on their way to London. They cleared the streets, even those which were lined with market stalls. A few of us still at the Tabernacle went into the lower Lecture room as the safest place. We remained there about twenty minutes when word came that the aircraft had been driven off, and we were allowed back on the streets."

They soon learned that a bomb had fallen near London Bridge, demolishing a building and killing six people who had taken refuge under an archway.

More stringent police regulations came into force about this time. As an alien, A.C. Dixon had already been required to report at Bow Street police station for any absence exceeding a month. He must now report before leaving London at any time, and if a night was to be spent elsewhere, he must report to the police headquarters of that place on arrival.

One day he went to South Wales to fulfill a short engagement at Cardiff. With his mind on his work and his message, he completely forgot the new regulations until the next day. Fearing to stir up unnecessary trouble by reporting in Cardiff a day late, he resolved to wait and make a clean breast of the matter to the Bow Street officials.

On returning to London, he took a taxi direct to police headquarters, and was astonished to find that his absence and omission to report were already known there. To his great relief, his candid admission, voluntarily offered, was immediately accepted. "We do not mind overlooking a mistake like this," said the Aliens' officer, "when you tell us about it openly. What we do not like are attempts at concealment and evasion."

The Conference at Llandrindod Wells, which A.C. Dixon addressed, brought the looked-for re-union with Mrs. Dixon, with whom he also enjoyed a short holiday in the lovely Wye valley. At its conclusion, he persuaded her to stay with some old Baltimore friends, Mr. and Mrs. Penn, at Ilfracombe, on the
north Devon coast, far from the danger of air-raids. Well that it was so! for in the following night at the West Central Hotel he was aroused from a sound sleep by the porter’s loud rap at his doors summoning him to the basement.

Explosions, heard at the same moment, sounded like warning signals, but bombs were actually falling with deadly results. An immense crater was made in the street near Charing Cross Hospital. Another bomb fell on the Thames Embankment close to Cleopatra’s Needle, damaging it, and blowing to pieces a small street-car filled with passengers. The agitated guests at the West Central, some of them only half-awake, and all sketchily attired, were kept below stairs for an hour until the danger passed. Next night a terrific thunder-storm was mistaken by many for another air-raid! Londoners soon began to look eagerly for windy, cloudy weather which would keep off enemy aircraft, but through all the unrest, the usual routine of business was carried on.

Some brilliant moonlight nights in September marked the beginning of a bombing campaign more intensive than any before.

"Last night, while we were in prayer-meeting, an air-raid began. The people began to pour in—men, women and children. We spent an hour and a half singing hymns so that we did not hear the bombs, but I was mightily surprised on reaching the hotel to find that one had fallen just in front of the Bedford Hotel next door to us, killing a group of people standing by the doorway, and breaking all the windows in the vicinity. In our South Block they were smashed to pieces. When I sat down to breakfast this morning at our usual table, I found that half of the window beside me was gone, so I changed my seat. The inside of the South Block was a sight to behold. I am glad that you were not here, and that I was at the Tabernacle. It is restful to feel that we are safe in God’s hands.

"A little company of us were at our monthly church meeting to-night when word came that a raid was pending. Our business was interrupted by the people rushing in pell-mell, till about five hundred were present. We turned it into an evangelistic service which continued for nearly two hours, till official word came that all was clear. We have been praying that God would enable us to reach the people of the district, and He is answering our prayers in this unexpected way."

The Tabernacle was kept open every night, and even when there were no alarms, the people flocked by hundreds into the lower hall, seeking not only safety but the good cheer provided
by the singing and the touch of human sympathy. A.C.Dixon had invited Mr. William Thomson, a Scottish evangelist, to conduct a ten-day's Gospel Picture Mission.

On the opening night of the Mission four or five warnings sounded; bombs fell in many parts of London, one near Waterloo Station, and one near Christ Church. About a thousand people were packed into the lecture room at the Tabernacle, and many hands were raised for prayer. Only a few left when the "all clear" signal was given. With what consoling power the words rang out: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear."

Out of eight consecutive nights, six were broken by air-raids, often several in a night. The Tabernacle became widely known as a haven of refuge, and a band of devoted workers assisted their pastor in the midnight services, often staying on into the small hours to soothe and comfort the panic-stricken people, who had rushed in with babies in their arms and older children snatched from their beds. At times A.C.Dixon, as he stood upon the platform, was surrounded by numbers of children fast asleep at his feet.

The reward for such ardent labor was great, for at the end of the year it was found that during the twelve months more than seven hundred people, old and young, had accepted Christ as a personal Saviour in the various services at the Tabernacle. But the nervous strain upon the workers was heavy, although superhuman strength seemed to be given for the task.

Once every two weeks A.C.Dixon travelled a hundred and twenty-five miles and back for a fleeting glimpse of his wife, whom he still kept exiled from London. Mrs. Dixon was doing all she could to help the girls of Mr. Penn's school in Somersetshire, where their own youngest daughter had once spent a happy year.

"I am not surprised to discover what a stimulus you are to the girls in their studies," he wrote her after one of his visits. "I can sympathize with you in feeling that our only home is heaven. One of my brightest visions in coming to London was that we might have an English home, which I have always looked upon as a sort of vestibule to heaven. But since it became plain that that was impossible, the vision has well-nigh faded away, and I have tried to be content in an hotel.

"Surely we are pilgrims, and it is a blessed thing that we can have
our home together in God. Our hearts' desire is to be altogether His, and to dwell constantly in the secret of His presence."

Epochal events occurring in the autumn of 1917 brought him exhilaration of soul—the liberation of Palestine from the Turk, and the famous "Balfour Declaration" issued on November 9th, by which the British Government pledged itself to the establishment of that ancient land as a national home for the Jews.

A.C.Dixon had been active in promoting gatherings of ministers to discuss the Second Coming in the light of current events. He had been associated with a group of well-known ministers of various denominations in publishing a statement known as the "Advent Manifesto." Among other signatures attached to it were those of Prebendary F.S.Webster, Drs J.Stuart Holden, G.Campbell Morgan, Dinsdale T.Young, F.B.Meyer and Pastor Fuller Gooch. They thus bore public testimony to their belief in the future personal return of Jesus to the earth, and to their conviction that the existent world crisis heralded the approaching close of the "Times of the Gentiles."

A counter manifesto was immediately issued by seventeen modernist leaders, but the quick-following events in Palestine were surely an astounding confirmation of the Scriptural prophecies concerning the restoration of the Jew to his own land. Allenby's unostentatious entry into Jerusalem, the subsequent formation of the League of Nations, and the mandate for Palestine entrusted to the Power that guaranteed the Jew his rights, seemed to A.C.Dixon to be unmistakable signs of the times.

Strong as he was, the tremendous output of energy had depleted his stock of reserves, and early in 1918 he was laid low by an acute seizure of neuritis. A time of complete rest at Caterham was ordered by his physician, and in happy re-union with his wife at the little Sanitarium his condition slowly improved. But no amount of persuasion was able to hold him back from his Sunday preaching, and in spite of pain he soon began to return to London every week-end. "Sometimes I think it looks as if the war had just begun," he wrote to Pasteur Saillens. "We may have years of sufferings ahead of us, but the work of the Lord must not be allowed to suffer."

London was more overcrowded than ever, and after a lapse
of almost three years, Americans were beginning to make a noticeable re-appearance. For economy's sake, A.C. Dixon had given up his room in town, and more than once, on his week-ends in London, he was obliged to spend the night in an arm-chair in one of the public drawing-rooms. But the refreshment of the intervening days at Caterham with Mrs. Dixon more than made up for such inconveniences. By the end of May his health was sufficiently restored to permit his return to full work, accompanied this time by his wife, who flatly refused to be separated from him again.

Their son-in-law, Frank Richardson, who had been in training at Camp Wadsworth in South Carolina, sailed for France in June as a 1st Lieutenant in the Medical Corps of the United States Army.

The 27th, or New York National Guard Division with which he served, was detailed for training with a British Field Army, and was one of the only two American Divisions to remain with the British throughout as part of their Field Armies. Frank was Medical Officer attached to the 102nd Field Battalion, serving in the Belgian sector around Ypres and Poperinghe, instead of with the main forces in the Argonne. He was sent to a British Gas School for ten days' instruction as Gas Officer of his Battalion.

"I have been thinking of going to France to preach to the soldiers," A.C. Dixon wrote him, "but it is very difficult to get a passport, and I feel that I can help the boys at the front better by ministering to their wives and children than by going to them. Hundreds are volunteering to preach to the soldiers, while their families at home have been sadly neglected."

In spite of the horror of the daily holocaust, news from the war front during the summer caused a stirring of new hope among the Allied peoples, who were well-nigh spent after the exhausting struggle of four long years. The cooperation of young America, fresh and unwearied, resolute and well-equipped, turned the scale in their favor. Frank Richardson took part in the push that eventually broke Hindenburg's line. He was promoted to a captaincy, and was cited by his commanding general, "for bravery and unremitting attention to the wounded of his regiment."
"The outlook already begins to be hopeful," A.C. Dixon wrote to his son-in-law. "It seems barely possible, though not probable, that the war might be over in 1919. If I should be led to go back to America, you may be ready then to return with us. I think however, that we ought to wait until next June, when my pastorate at the Tabernacle will have rounded out eight years.'

Meanwhile a fresh personal problem arose. No permit for a fire in private rooms could be obtained in London owing to a serious shortage of coal; and the raw, damp autumn weather penetrated the unheated rooms with a chill that threatened both A.C. Dixon and his wife with a return of troublesome rheumatic pains. Fortunately the Sanitarium at Caterham had the privilege of a coal permit, and by this time the air defenses of London had been so well organized that it was easier to travel back and forth. Accordingly they took up their abode there once more.

"The war news this morning looks as if peace might be nearer than we thought possible a few days ago," A.C. Dixon wrote on October 2nd, "but nobody can tell. We shall simply have to be patient and wait God's time."

Never will it be possible for those then living to forget the indescribable ecstasy of relief that set the whole world beside itself with emotion, when at eleven o'clock on the eleventh of November, 1918, the Armistice was signed and the great guns on the battle-front ceased their hellish thunder. The easing of the intolerable strain seemed too wonderful to be true. Even the most sober minds reeled under the re-action.

How often had the sound of exploding maroons, or signal bombs, from the fire stations all over London warned the people of a coming raid! How often had they strained their ears to catch the re-assuring announcement: "All clear," shouted by the Boy Scout buglers between their bugle-blasts!

The ink of the last signature to the Armistice was hardly dry when it was announced in London. Within a minute or two the maroons were once more exploded, followed immediately by the familiar notes of the buglers as they cycled over their rounds for the last time, shouting between-whiles: "All clear for the world!"

A.C. Dixon and his wife had already come into town from Caterham. They hurried to the Tabernacle, which had been in-
stantly thronged with a sobbing, laughing crowd, unable at first to suppress its emotion. Women young and old dropped their house-work and hastened, unbonneted and adorned with their big kitchen aprons, to the place to which they had so often fled for shelter. Workmen downed their tools, and by a common impulse all who could possibly do so rushed to join in the service of thanksgiving which they knew would take place in the dear old Tabernacle. All day long it continued, as the crowd ebbed and flowed, only to be resumed on the following afternoon and evening.

A few days later, the Dixons welcomed their son-in-law, who had been laid low in France with trench fever and was sent to London on leave. After a week of recuperation with them at Caterham and a short time in a London hospital, he returned to the United States, to be mustered out of the Army, and to be united once more to his brave young wife and two bonnie babes.

“How thankful we are that Frank has come through the war safe and sound,” A.C. Dixon wrote to his daughter. “Mother and I have never felt better than we do this winter. I do not see how I can leave the Tabernacle yet. It was never in a more prosperous condition, and I almost feel as if my work there has just begun. If I do leave London, I do not expect to take another pastorate, but will take the world for my field, and devote myself to a ministry at large.”
CHAPTER XXII

ACTIVE SERVICE IN THE OPEN FIELD

Seated by a blazing fire in the spacious drawing-room at Tandridge Hall, enjoying the rare luxury of warmth and complete relaxation, A.C. Dixon opened a budget of American mail. He and his wife were once more the guests of their loyal friends, Mr. and Mrs. John Hunter, who had exchanged their “Cap Martin” estate in the north of England for a home within a few miles of London, in order to be within reach of the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

It was Christmas time, and the early dusk of an English winter afternoon was beginning to fall, but through the long mullioned windows could be seen glimpses of emerald lawns and bare brown trees, with the lovely Surrey hills in the background.

Among the letters was one bearing a Baltimore post-mark. It proved to be from his old friend, Mr. George O. Manning, and told of a new enterprise recently undertaken by a group of Baptists in Baltimore. That city had been growing by leaps and bounds, and a new residential district was springing up on its northern confines, far beyond the limit of Boundary Avenue, now re-named North Avenue. Johns Hopkins University was being gradually transplanted from the heart of the city to beautiful surroundings out on Charles Street, having purchased the fine old Carroll estate for its new campus.

A piece of land on the opposite side of Charles Street had been secured by the Baptists as the strategic site for an important church in some future day. A Board of Holding Trustees had been formed, and a Sunday School established in a small wooden chapel on the open triangle of greensward.

Since the entrance of the United States into the war further development had been checked. Now a forward move seemed possible, and Mr. Manning, whose devotion to his pastor of long
ago had never wavered, begged him to come back to Baltimore to lay a good foundation for a strong future work.

"The assurance of your continued love and esteem could not fail to be pleasant," wrote A.C.Dixon in reply, "but 'the pillar of cloud' still seems to linger over London.

"The work at the Metropolitan Tabernacle never seemed so encouraging and inviting as it does now. The experiences of these past years have bound me closely to the people there, yet I must confess that my heart is to a large extent in America.

"I am coming over for a six months' stay next year, leaving about June 1st. Three months of the time I expect to spend in Los Angeles, and the other three on the wing. Perhaps I can spend a little of that time in Baltimore."

An evening or two after this, having bidden their host and hostess good-night, A.C.Dixon and his wife withdrew early to the privacy of their beautiful room at Tandridge Hall. In the flickering firelight they prayed and consulted together about the future.

For some time there had lain before them a most generous offer by Mr.Lyman Stewart, repeatedly urged and in many ways commending itself to A.C.Dixon as a good investment of his remaining time and strength. Mr.Stewart proposed to take full care of salary and expenses for periods of five years at a time, if A.C.Dixon would devote three months of each year to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, taking the other nine months to preach freely in any part of the world to which he might be called. The conviction grew that this extraordinary opening might be a confirmation of God's call to relinquish pastoral responsibilities for a world-wide field of evangelism.

The first news that greeted them when they returned to London on New Year's Eve was a cable from Charles M.Alexander telling of the death of Dr.Chapman after an operation.

"We feel personally bereaved," was the reply, "and what a loss to the church of Christ! I wish that I could talk with you for an hour about the Metropolitan Tabernacle and the work in Great Britain. With this great auditorium, so centrally located, we ought to be doing immensely more for the Master.

"Since hearing of Chapman's death, as I have thought and prayed over the situation, the question has thrust itself upon me till I begin to think it is from the Lord—'Why not ask Alexander to link up with us for a year,
giving most of the Sundays to London, and holding conventions and missions in the provinces during the week? The thought of it thrills me, for I believe it would mean a campaign of soul-winning in Great Britain such as has not been for years.”

If Alexander should join him, and if his London church should be willing to retain him on a new basis for Sunday preaching without pastoral work, he would take this as God’s leading to remain longer in England. But Alexander was unable to leave his own work in the United States, and the plan did not eventuate.

A.C.Dixon at once penned his resignation of the Tabernacle pastorate, to become effective in June.

“I felt that I could not leave you during the testing time of this terrible war. Now that peace with victory has come, and the church is in a good spiritual condition, I am certain that God would have me enter another door of opportunity. . . . But I shall look forward joyfully to the privilege of returning to Great Britain for periods of evangelism.”

The letter was handed to his church officers after a Monday night prayer-meeting early in January with a brief intimation of its contents. “It came as a staggering surprise,” was all the deacons could write in reply. “We do not feel equal to the task of dealing with the matter this evening, and have decided to take ourselves to prayer.”

A few days later they met in special session, the result of which was a petition to the pastor to reconsider his decision, pledging themselves to co-operate with him to the utmost of their ability in any future plans he might suggest.

Deeply moved by their expressions of love and confidence, A.C.Dixon laid their letter before the Lord. But he felt more strongly convinced than ever that God was now calling him elsewhere. Having imparted this conviction to the church, he set himself to give of his best in the time that still remained.

Almost four years had gone by since he and his wife had looked into the faces of their daughters. Mary, the eldest, had been active for three years as the energetic secretary of the Young People’s Department of the Woman’s Missionary Union among the Southern Baptists. In this service she had traveled hither and thither over the Southern States, covering thousands of miles each year, and interesting herself particularly in the
schools for mountain whites in Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina. Before the signing of the Armistice, she had resigned this position to offer herself for Y.W.C.A. work in France. Although the war was now ended, the need for practical Christian effort among the French girls was all the greater on account of the complete dislocation of industry and of social life. In February, 1919, on her way to Bordeaux, Mary was welcomed in London by her parents, pleasure in the short re-union being tempered with regret that they must so soon be separated again by the Atlantic.

Spring came at last to London, although there were few signs of it in the congested district around the Metropolitan Tabernacle. On April 3rd a great farewell meeting was held there, and as the crowds flocked up its entrance steps the thoughts of many turned back to days and nights when the old building had proved a welcome shelter from the terrors of the skies.

Sir Joseph Maclay, minister of shipping in Lloyd George's war cabinet, and one of the Tabernacle's most generous supporters, presided over the meeting. The great auditorium was filled to suffocation, and when A.C.Dixon rose to reply to the speeches of heartfelt appreciation, he was received by a tumultuous upstanding welcome. At first his words came slowly, for he was fighting to choke back his emotion. Then—with a sudden smile—"I love London," he said emphatically, "dear, dirty, glorious London, fog and all."

During the next few weeks, in fulfilment of promise, he took part in some Pocket Testament League campaigns. Then once more, on June 8th, he stood in his familiar London pulpit, spending the whole of this last Sunday with the Tabernacle people.

Nearly six thousand Canadian soldiers on their way home to be demobilized were fellow-passengers of the Dixons on the "Aquitania." They rejoiced at the splendid results of Prohibition aboard ship, for not a single case of drunkenness occurred on the trip. Owing largely to the powerful influence of Mr. Herbert Hoover, as Food Controller of the United States, the breweries in America had been ordered to cease their manufacture of beer on December 1st, 1918. By the following June all manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor in the United States was to be prohibited by Federal law.

Now June had come, and a still further advance had been
made, for in spite of tremendous opposition on the part of a powerful minority, Prohibition, already imposed as a war-measure, was due to become a permanent part of the Constitution of the United States in January, 1920. To A.C.Dixon this moral triumph was even greater than the military victory which had led to the signing of the Armistice.

Long before the great Cunarder passed up the Hudson River, he and his wife were standing at the deck-rail scanning the projecting dock buildings, thrust out like great fingers into the stream. At last they caught sight of the word “Cunard” in enormous letters upon one of them. Already they could look down upon the surging crowd of indistinguishable figures massed upon the outside of the dock, and peering through its many windows. Then, at last, before the gangways slid across to link them with the shore, they caught sight of familiar faces. There stood Faison and his wife, smiling their welcome, and beside them, Frank Richardson. By this joyful trio they were speedily carried off to Brooklyn, where the two grand-children, Mary and Howard, whom they now saw for the first time, were soon in their arms.

“Wisely or otherwise,” as he said, A.C.Dixon had put the making of his summer engagements into the hands of a small committee, placing himself at their disposal. He found that they had mapped out a full program—covering even the vacation time—until October, when his three months’ work in Los Angeles was due to begin.

The Bible Conferences at Montrose and elsewhere put him into immediate touch with large numbers of ministers and Christian workers from the eastern and southern States. He had much to ask concerning the religious conditions in his own land, and many questions to answer about the effect on the English churches of the long years of war, and of the sinister and wide-spread revival of spiritism. His reports of souls won to God made a picture of light upon the dark background.

Mrs. Dixon was able to join him for a while in North Carolina. Ridgecrest and Montreat, the summer conference centers for the Baptists and Presbyterians respectively, lie a few miles apart from each other, and within fifteen miles of Asheville, in the midst of the mountainous region. What a stirring of old memories was caused by every visit to the familiar scenes!
"Everything here is ready for you," he had written to his wife, "and I am as anxious to see you as I was thirty-eight years ago in Asheville after our first parting, when I went across the mountains to meet you at Old Fort."

The days in these mountain conferences sped past on wings. Before him there now lay a preaching tour of five thousand miles to be covered in less than six weeks, out of which sixteen nights were to be spent upon the train. A few days with the Moody Church in Chicago and in Bible Conferences at Winona Lake and Minneapolis were followed by preaching visits to Des Moines, Iowa; Denver, Colorado; and Great Falls, Montana.

Crossing into Canada, Calgary and Edmonton were visited, and then came his first sight of the wonderland of the Canadian Rockies. The magnificent panorama on both sides of the slowly-moving train stirred him to enthusiasm.

"The peaks seem literally to touch the sky, which is beautifully clear and blue. A few floating clouds, hovering above the mountains, cast their shadows upon the sunlit sides. It is a paradise of scenic glory. The sublimity and beauty of it fills my soul with worshiping adoration and love for Him who was before the mountains were made, and who will live after they have all crumbled to dust."

With stops for short conferences at Vancouver and Seattle, and at Portland, Oregon, he reached Los Angeles by October 1st and immediately took up his work of lecturing to the students in the Bible Institute and of preaching in the Church of the Open Door.

Calls from important churches of his own and of one or two other denominations came to him while he was in California, but the wider field of evangelistic and Bible Conference work now seemed to be God's choice for him.

The work of Pasteur Saillens in France occupied a good deal of his thought at this time. Through the years in London they had been frequently thrown together, especially during the war, and the spiritual needs of France were much on his heart. He had been president of the British Auxiliary at the Tabernacle founded by Thomas Spurgeon in support of Pasteur Saillens' work, and an address he had given on the great events of Huguenot history had stirred his hearers to enthusiastic sympathy with the Protestants of France.
In response to an invitation from the Northern Baptist Convention, Pasteur Saillens had visited America in 1918. A scheme for the establishment of a French Bible Institute in Paris, which A.C.Dixon had talked over with him in London, was presented and awakened some interest. In America the Bible Schools were fast counter-balancing the decline caused by modernism in the theological seminaries, and were increasingly supplying the demand for well-equipped preachers, teachers, missionaries and evangelists. Such a movement was equally needed in France, for the dead hand of formalism had touched many of the French Protestant churches and missions, while reactionary teaching was creeping into others.

No practical result had as yet come from Pasteur Saillens' tour, and it was A.C.Dixon who stirred the hearts of American sympathizers to action. He wrote from Los Angeles asking how much money would be needed for a beginning, and was informed by Pasteur Saillens that for sixty-nine thousand francs, a modest sum in dollars at the current low rate of exchange, a Bible Institute in Paris could be purchased and equipped, with maintenance provided for the first year. On receiving this news, A.C.Dixon laid the matter before Rev. W.E. Blackstone, acting trustee for Mr. Milton Stewart of a large private fund which he had set aside for missionary work. The students at the Institute were also asked to help in prayer. That night one of the girl students told A.C. Dixon that a check received for the sale of her wheat crop amounted to more than she expected and that she wanted to give her unexpected gain of a hundred dollars toward the Bible Institute of Paris. Deeply touched, he assured her that this should be the first stone in its foundation.

At the invitation of Mr. Lyman Stewart, A.C. Dixon and five other men went with him to the top of Mt. Wilson to pray and confer together in that quiet retreat concerning a missionary enterprise of which they were trustees. While there, A.C. Dixon's concern for a Bible Institute in Paris was included in the objects for special prayer. Next day he learned that the Milton Stewart Committee had met while they were up in the mountain, and had voted the sum needed by Pasteur Saillens, appointing A.C. Dixon and Dr. Torrey as trustees for its disbursement.

Too happy to wait for the slow mails, A.C. Dixon cabled

1 Author of "Jesus is Coming."
A.C. Dixon with a Group of Tabernacle Colporteurs
(Rev. and Mrs. Archibald Brown to right of A.C. Dixon)

A.C. Dixon and Thomas Spurgeon with Deacons and Elders of the Metropolitan Tabernacle
The First Grandchild and Her Parents, 1916

Photo. G.P. Abraham

A.C. Dixon, 1912

Mrs. Dixon, 1916
the news to Pasteur Saillens, who at once began to search for suitable premises in the suburbs of Paris. But available houses were scarce owing to war restrictions on the building trade, and fifteen months passed before the right building was found in Nogent-sur-Marne.

Through the early months of 1920, having finished his engagement in Los Angeles, A.C.Dixon joined Dr.W.B.Riley of Minneapolis for a tour of Bible Conferences. To follow them from place to place as they journeyed hither and thither, up into Canada, on to New York and through the Southern States from Florida to Kentucky, with a flying visit back to Minneapolis for a week, almost makes one's head reel.

A few quiet days with Mrs.Dixon in North Carolina gave A.C.Dixon time to arrange for the purchase of a rustic cottage in the Baptist Conference grounds near Black Mountain, for the home at Clifton Springs had been given up some time before.

"Never in my life," he wrote as he sped northwards to Chicago, "did I hate to leave you as much as I did to-day. It is surely a sacrifice to be separated so much, but we are doing it for His sake, and He will give us grace to bear it.

"It rests me to think of being able to move my library to our cottage at Ridgecrest, and to spend a little while there each year to study and to rest. It is the realization of a life dream, and with you at my side, it will be the happiest time of our lives. Even should we not be able to stay there long, it will be a home to go to, and, blessed be God, we have a home in heaven, though we are pilgrims here."

From Chicago, he went to Buffalo, N. Y., to attend the Northern Baptist Convention, and a "Conference on the Fundamentals," which preceded it.

A movement among the evangelicals of all denominations was beginning to make itself felt throughout America under the name of "Fundamentalism." It had received impetus, and doubtless its name, from the wide-spread influence of "The Fundamentals," through which a plain, clear testimony to Christian truth by some of the best equipped minds in England and America had been spread abroad. Its primary purpose was to endorse and continue this testimony collectively.

News had reached A.C.Dixon in London of the first great interdenominational gathering held under the auspices of this movement in Philadelphia in 1918. Frankly announced as a
“Conference on the Second Coming of Christ,” it drew together from every part of the United States thousands of Christians who “love His appearing.” It was marked by a unity of spirit, rare even among fellow-believers. A second “Conference on the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith,” had again met in Philadelphia just before A.C.Dixon’s return to America in 1919, and was also notable in its constructive and unifying effect.

The gathering at Buffalo in June, 1920, was for consolidating the evangelical position within the Baptist denomination. As a result of the deep concern for the younger generation expressed by the Conference, a committee was appointed by the Northern Baptist Convention to make a full investigation of religious conditions obtaining in all the schools in the country under Baptist auspices. Their report was to be presented to the next year’s Convention.

“My heart keeps leaping for joy over the victory gained for the truth at Buffalo,” wrote A.C.Dixon. “I think it means a brighter day for our churches in the future. It certainly does if the colleges can be rid of teachers who are discrediting the fundamentals of the Christian faith.”

Returning from Buffalo to New York, Dr.Curtis Lee Laws, editor of The Watchman-Examiner, prepared a paragraph which was published in the issue of July 1st, 1920. Feeling the need of a more descriptive name for those who stood by the essential doctrines of the Christian faith, he suggested the term “Fundamentalist.” It was forthwith adopted as a protest against the rationalistic “re-interpretation of Christianity” demanded by the extreme radical group, and in the re-alignment running athwart the old sectarian lines the terms “Fundamentalist” and “Modernist” came into general use.

Such a volume of invitations poured in upon A.C.Dixon, especially from the Southern States, that it became clear to him that he ought soon to free himself from his tentative connection with the Los Angeles Bible Institute. Financially, it meant stepping out on faith, but he could trust God’s providing care for material needs.

In these plans for the future, he was counting on the hope of persuading Charles M.Alexander to join forces with him, but while in Los Angeles in October, he was startled to hear that the radiant “Apostle of Gospel Song” had succumbed to a
sudden heart attack at his home in England. Not yet fifty-three, Alexander had poured out his rich life without stint in seeking to win souls to Christ, circling the earth four times on missions of evangelism. The news of his departure brought with it a peculiar sense of personal bereavement to A.C.Dixon.

Just at this time his thoughts were turned in a new direction, for he was invited to take part in a series of summer Bible Conferences in China. The modern attitude towards Christian truth had begun to make inroads even upon the foreign mission fields. Many of the missionaries hungered for strong constructive teaching in the Conference seasons, that their faith might be reinforced in the struggle not only against the heathen influences surrounding them but against the new and more subtle enemy in their midst.

A growing anxiety with regard to the spread of modernism within their own borders had become articulate in the past few months. During the summer of 1920, a group of missionaries from various denominations met at Kuling, the famous mountain resort of Central China, and drew up a statement of their belief in the trustworthiness of the Bible as the authoritative Word of God. A day of private prayer was followed by a meeting at which no less than a hundred and fifty men and women enrolled themselves as members of a new organization—“The Bible Union of China.” It was decided to make the movement national in its scope, and to throw it open not only to the missionaries, but to all Christians, Chinese and foreign.

This action had received its immediate impulse from the inspiring messages of Dr. W.H. Griffith Thomas who, with the editor of The Sunday School Times, was visiting China that summer. Dr. Thomas delivered six lectures during the Kuling Convention on “Grounds of Christian Certainty,” following a series given by special request previously to, and quite independently of the Convention program. This first series included such topics as “The Authority of the Bible,” “Old Testament Criticism,” “Evolution,” and “The Lord’s Coming.”

Soon after the departure of Dr. Thomas from Kuling, the Bible Union was organized with the object of uniting those to whom the faith that had sent Hudson Taylor and other missionary pioneers to China was still precious. News reached A.C. Dixon in Los Angeles a few months later that a similar move-
ment had taken place at Kikungshan, a summer resort in Honan Province. Here also a branch of the Bible Union was formed. In October, 1920, a joint executive committee met in Shanghai, augmented by a group appointed in that city, and discussed the statement adopted at Kuling and Kikungshan. This statement, with slight revision, was submitted to the members of the Bible Union, who already numbered more than four hundred. Following their vote of approval, it was sent out to all Protestant missionaries in China, with an invitation to join the Bible Union, if in sympathy with the position set forth in its basis of belief.

An urgent request was then sent to America for speakers of conservative views to take part in the next year's Bible Conferences. As a result, arrangements were in progress for Dr. Torrey to go in 1921, while A.C. Dixon was asked to place China on his program for 1922.

For the time being, every ounce of energy, and almost every moment was absorbed by the evangelistic campaigns in America, which had been mapped out for A.C. Dixon for months ahead. His work lay chiefly in the Southern States—Louisiana and Texas, Arkansas and Georgia, Tennessee and Kentucky. In each place he was able to give thanks to God for the results—souls won to Christ, churches enlarged and strengthened, and an increased unity among Christians of various denominations.

A short respite from public service was provided by two weeks spent in the Ridgecrest cottage in North Carolina. Cases and trunks from the Chicago storage warehouse had arrived, and memories crowded in upon Mrs. Dixon and himself as they brought to light household treasures, almost forgotten, that had graced the home at Chalmers Place. Row after row of rustic shelving had been provided for the books, which were at last unpacked after their long imprisonment, and placed within easy reach, like the friends they were.

“Our bungalow is more attractive than ever,” he wrote to his daughter in France. “I have already enjoyed the anticipation of working there on three or four books that are now in my brain. Frank and Clara and their three children are here, and we are happy to be so near them.”

Frank Richardson had, in fact, purchased a thickly-wooded hill-top at Black Mountain, comprising some fourteen acres, and crowned by a roomy, comfortable house. From its wide porch
glorious views could be obtained of the surrounding mountains. It was a pretty sight to see A.C. Dixon at work making rustic benches for the new home, urged on by his youngest grandson, Raymond. The small two-year-old tyrant, bringing the tools which fascinated him, would allow no relaxation in the task, and the whole family watched with admiration as the gnarled rhododendron branches were twisted into comfortable seats, such as had won the maker fame on the University Campus at Chapel Hill forty years before.

With Dr. Torrey in China, charge of the Montrose Bible Conference was delegated to A.C. Dixon in the summer of 1921. Dr. Griffith Thomas was one of the speakers, and A.C. Dixon seized every available opportunity of obtaining from him all possible information as to current conditions among the missionaries in China. The recent Bible Union movement in that great land interested them both, for it was along the lines of true spiritual unity—in contrast to the mechanical union too often sought at any cost of compromise in matters of faith. The Bible Union of China was based on a common faith in Jesus Christ as He is presented in the Old and New Testaments.

The remainder of A.C. Dixon's summer was occupied with other Bible Conferences, and by October 1st he was due again in Los Angeles. In response to an urgent request from Mr. Manning, he re-arranged his westward journey in order to give three days to Baltimore. While there he met in consultation with the group of Baptists who were sponsoring the project for a new church opposite Johns Hopkins University. The wooden Sunday School building had been sold early in the year. A permanent stone chapel was in course of erection and would be ready for use in October. The trustees were exceedingly anxious that from its first beginnings the future University Baptist Church should stand firmly for the fundamentals of the Christian faith. To this end they begged A.C. Dixon's definite consideration of their plea, already proffered, that he would serve them as acting pastor for the first few months.

From the train which bore him across the continent to the Pacific coast, A.C. Dixon wrote to Mr. Joshua Levering:

"I have had two quiet days of prayer and thought over the Baltimore proposition, and I must confess it appeals to me more and more strongly."
It renews my youth to think of taking part in this young, vigorous and hopeful enterprise. If the door opens for me to enter it fully, I shall rejoice in putting into it all there is of me, little or much. Its very difficulties are an inspiration."

When he had left London, nothing was further from his thoughts than that he should ever again settle down to the responsibilities of a pastorate. Yet, although he hardly foresaw it as yet, the cycle of his life-work was to be completed with a church at his back in the very city where his pastoral work on a large scale had first begun. To tell the truth, after preaching here and there for more than two years unattached to any group of people that were particularly his own, he was becoming desperately homesick for the fellowship to which he was accustomed. The evangelistic work which had opened up on every side made the permanent charge of a fully established church impossible, but it looked as though the Baltimore proposition might be combined with it.

By the time he reached Los Angeles his mind was made up. The claims of Baltimore were laid before his committee, with the result that they agreed to release him after one more month of service.

At the dedication of the new Chapel in Baltimore at the end of October, announcement was made that Dr. A.C. Dixon would arrive from the West a week later to take up his work as acting pastor through the coming winter.

It was with strange and mingled emotions that A.C. Dixon and his wife found themselves once more residents of Baltimore. A homelike abode had been found for them on St. Paul Street, a few blocks north of their old home of long ago. The district in which Immanuel Tabernacle had stood was so changed as to be hardly recognizable. On the familiar site now stood the Seventh Baptist Church, a handsome Gothic structure of grey stone which had replaced the old wooden Tabernacle.

Two or three blocks further south, between Charles and St. Paul Streets, near the bridges that carry those streets across Jones' Falls, stood the compact square of Union Station, completed eight years before. Above North Avenue, Charles Street was lined by rows of dignified residences, breaking into more or less open country at Twenty-ninth Street, where the trees of
ACTIVE SERVICE IN THE OPEN FIELD

Wyman's Park adjoin the campus of Johns Hopkins University.

The Chapel of the University Baptist Church occupied an isolated position near Thirty-fifth Street, with the wooded campus of the University on the opposite side of Charles Street, and green open spaces on the other three sides. A few apartment houses had just been built in the near neighborhood, and in the distance the roofs of new suburban homes could be seen among the trees of the Guilford section.

When A.C. Dixon stood for the first time before his new congregation on November 6th, there were faces upturned to his with the affectionate recognition of long-established friendship. His church officers represented the professional, scholastic and business circles of Baltimore, and among them were two loyal associates of the earlier pastoral days—Mr. Joshua Levering and Mr. George O. Manning. The desire expressed so long ago by Mr. Manning that he might call his beloved friend "pastor" till one or other of them were called to heaven was thus to find its fulfilment. The task of developing the infant church was altogether delightful to A.C. Dixon. The rapid growth possible in a more populous district was hardly to be expected, but the eighty-six charter members were faithful and full of enthusiasm, and the wide reputation of their pastor brought people from a distance to attend the services.

For two years A.C. Dixon had been studying the religious condition of his homeland. He felt that Modernism had set its eye upon the South, filled as yet with a ministry largely loyal to the Bible as the Word of God. Baltimore appealed to him as a gateway to the South, and when, after a few months, his church begged him to stay with them as permanent pastor, he consented to do so if they were willing to spare him for a generous portion of his time to the evangelistic field.

Engagements already made for the coming summer could not well be cancelled. But if the conditions he had presented should meet with their approval, he expressed his readiness to become the permanent pastor of the University Baptist Church on returning from China in the fall.
CHAPTER XXIII

CHINA AND LIFE’S GREAT SORROW

The early months of 1922 were occupied with evangelistic campaigns in Minnesota, Pennsylvania and Kentucky. Ten days were given to Boston, with Sunday preaching at the old Park Street Congregational Church, and daily services at Tremont Temple on the intervening days. Then once again A.C. Dixon stood in the pulpit of the First Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia, and preached for two weeks amid thronging memories of the revival which had taken place there exactly forty years before.

In a powerful address entitled “World Movements under the Bible Flashlight,” frequently repeated on this tour, he sought to arouse attention to the fast-spreading apostasy which was threatening the churches with spiritual paralysis, teaching Protestantism to be as ambitious as Rome for earthly power and political prestige. His main purpose was never lost sight of—to draw his hearers to a whole-hearted surrender to Jesus Christ. He sought them to hold fast the facts of Scripture concerning Jesus—His Incarnation, His words and works, His death and rising from the dead, and the sure promise of His return to take the government of distraught humanity upon His own strong shoulders.

Early in May, good-byes were said to the family circle and to friends in Baltimore, and for the rest of the month A.C. Dixon was hard at work in Los Angeles, preaching to thousands in the audiences before him, and to thousands more over the radio.

His journey to China had been planned under the auspices of the Milton Stewart Evangelistic Fund. It gave peculiar satisfaction to both the Stewart brothers that the man to whom they had entrusted the great work of publishing “The Fundamentals” was able to take part in the missionary conferences in China in this critical year of 1922.
Stirring events were taking place both in Chinese politics and in the religious life of the country. Early in this very year, General Chang Tso Lin, the War Lord of Manchuria, had emerged to attack the Chinese Republic. He had an army at his command twenty times as large as the little force of six thousand opposing him under Wu Pei Fu. In response to the latter's call for help, General Feng Yu Hsiang, the Christian general, dispatched an advance brigade of five thousand men, who by an extraordinary feat of strategy on the part of their commander, crossed the narrow passes of a high mountain range and swooped down upon the right wing of Chang Tso Lin's great army. Surprise and confusion became a rout, all the Northern forces being swept back into Manchuria.

This overwhelming victory had brought comparative quiet to China for the time being, and presented a great opportunity for a wave of evangelism which carried the message of the Gospel to many parts of the great country in the next year or two.

Just before A.C. Dixon and his wife set sail across the Pacific, the first National Convention of the Bible Union of China was held in Shanghai. A membership of about two thousand was reported, and a directing "Committee of One Hundred" was formed. This included the names of Mr. D. E. Hoste, Superintendent of the China Inland Mission, and Dr. Jonathan Goforth, a missionary evangelist in China and Korea for over thirty years, of which the last four had been devoted to the soldiers of General Feng's remarkable "Christian army."

"We are glad to hear that the war has subsided," Mrs. Dixon wrote to a friend from Los Angeles, "for we are to sail on June 3rd by the S.S. 'Golden State.' I am sure that you will pray that Mr. Dixon's message may be full of the power of the Holy Spirit, and that the missionaries may be comforted and blessed. Without Him we can do nothing."

Never had A.C. Dixon more needed the inspiration of his wife's companionship than on this journey. The prospect of seeing with their own eyes the places and people that for so long had occupied a large place in their thoughts and prayers was a pure delight to them both.

It was something of a novelty to receive a radiogram aboard ship inviting them to spend the night ashore at Honolulu and to take at least one service there. Nothing could have pleased A.C.
Dixon more, and he gladly left a message of the Gospel in the beautiful Hawaiian city. The voyage held its own opportunities also, and he was constantly on the watch for openings to win his fellow-passengers for Christ. A Hong Kong banker returning from San Francisco especially attracted his interest.

"He knows less about the Bible than any man of intelligence I have ever met. He seems never to have read a word of it until I gave him a New Testament. It rejoices me to believe that he is coming out into the clear light of a saving faith in Christ. Today he asked me in all seriousness to pray for him, and said he intended to get the whole Bible and read it through."

On reaching Japan the "Golden State" cast anchor for a long day in the harbor of Yokohama. It was Sunday, and the Dixons were able to gather some passing impressions. They noticed with interest that all the banks and stores, both foreign and Japanese, were closed in the foreign quarters. They also learned that the public schools in Japan were closed on Sunday because the Christians refused to teach on that day.

When he entered the Y.M.C.A., A.C.Dixon was surprised to find a number of young men playing billiards and ping-pong. He had been so struck by the strictness of the business world, and the respect offered by a pagan Government to the conscientious scruples of Christian school teachers, that it seemed strangely incongruous for a Christian organization to be less careful in its observance of the Lord's Day.

Returning to the Y.M.C.A. in the afternoon, however, he and his wife joined a great audience that listened to a two-hours' sermon given by a Japanese evangelist. While the language was unfamiliar, there was a strange sense of being spiritually at home among people whose faces seemed to be aglow with love for Christ. Several enquirers came forward at the close of the meeting, and A.C.Dixon's heart was filled with praise to God, that in Japan as in America sinners were finding the same Saviour precious to their souls.

On Friday, June 23rd, the "Golden State" steamed in to Shanghai, where they were hospitably welcomed. On Sunday morning A.C.Dixon preached in the Christian Free Church of Shanghai. Facing him sat Mr.D.E.Hoste of the China Inland
Mission. Close by were Dr.and Mrs.Howard Taylor, who had recently been kidnapped by soldier bandits.

Another face he recognized was that of the heroic little Chinese woman, Dr.Mary Stone, who had gained a national and international reputation as a surgeon. Her courageous stand with her co-worker, Miss Hughes, had greatly interested A.C.Dixon and his wife. Her refusal to sign an agreement to teach a broader theology as ordered by her Bishop had cost the little doctor an influential position, but God richly rewarded her faithfulness. With foresight, skill and organizing ability she had founded an independent hospital which had soon become self-supporting and a center of strong Christian influence. As he looked down at her and at others who had gone through deep waters for the cause of Christ, A.C.Dixon wished that he could be sitting at their feet to learn new lessons of trust and power.

In the afternoon he preached on the "New Birth" to a large congregation of the "Community Church," which filled the Masonic Hall. His message was of a type his hearers seldom heard, yet they seemed to respond to it gladly. One night was spent at the Baptist College, which, with its five hundred students, stood second among the Mission schools of China.

The glimpses of Oriental life, with its gay variety of color and movement, fascinated both travellers as they explored the streets of Shanghai. Best of all was to see in the midst of it something of the city mission work, as Miss Ruth Paxson piloted them to the Door of Hope and other centers of Christian effort.

The journey to Chefoo was to be by boat through the Yellow Sea. On boarding the S.S."Tan Sang," the Dixons found that another party had taken the cabin reserved for them, and for a while it seemed that they would have to be separated and make the trip by different boats. Some of their friends were deploring this prospect, when Mrs.Dixon cheerily answered, "We have heard of missionary hardships, and we have not yet had any. We will take our share and be thankful." But the sacrifice was not required, for an extra berth was made up in the smoke room.

Two days later they rounded the Shantung promontory and landed in Chefoo. On the outskirts of the city, in the healthful sea air of the Shantung coast, are the great China Inland Mission Schools for the children of missionaries. Always a lover of young folks, it was a particular delight to A.C.Dixon to spend a while
among these boys and girls, and to see their genuine interest as he expounded the Scriptures to them. A revival broke out in the schools, and about seventy-five confessed their acceptance of Christ, several applying afterwards for baptism.

It happened that the annual Conference of the Southern Baptist missionaries of Shantung Province was being held in Chefoo that very week.

"We had the inexpressible joy," wrote Mrs. Dixon, "of meeting fifty-six of our seventy Southern Baptist missionaries. They drank in Mr. Dixon's message like thirsty plants. We never spent two more happy days than in this Conference."

The week in Chefoo fled all too swiftly, and the next stage of the journey was a two-days' sail across the Gulf of Pechili and up the Peiho River to Tientsin. Another long day on the train brought the travelers to Peitaiho, on the sea coast near Peking, where they spent ten days.

A large number of Chinese mission workers and pastors were also at Peitaiho, holding a Bible Conference of their own. Each morning, A.C. Dixon addressed the gathering of foreigners and spoke to the Chinese at night through an interpreter. He was struck by the able leadership, the spirit of prayer, and the eagerness for Bible study that he found among the Chinese Christians. At first the effort of speaking through an interpreter was an embarrassment, but the sympathetic co-operation of Dr. J. Walter Lowrie soon put him at ease, and the responsive light on his hearers' faces assured him that his message was going home.

He was cheered and touched by the testimonies in the final meeting, especially by a speech—interpreted into his ear—made by General Tsien, a four-months-old Christian, whose radiant face was a joy to behold.

With Miss Edyth May Flower, the evangelistic singer of the Conference, and with a grandson of Dr. W. E. Blackstone, the Dixons took a two-day excursion to Shanghaiquan, to see the Great Wall of China at the point where it enters the sea. They were obliged to travel in a baggage car, for Chang Tso Lin, the defeated Manchurian General, had taken over all the passenger cars for his troops. They were packed in with baggage and with Chinese men smoking cigarettes. Mrs. Dixon could scarcely restrain her eagerness to catch the first glimpse of the Wall. Tea
was enjoyed at a small hotel, after which they were jolted in a horse-drawn car along a narrow track to the Great Wall, in the shadow of which they plucked quantities of wild flowers.

The next objective was Peking, where three wonderful days were spent in sight-seeing. Returning to Peitaiho for a busy weekend, A.C.Dixon gave of his best to the Chinese Conference, preaching on his motto text: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Kikungshan, in Hupeh Province, came next on the itinerary. The journey thither was made by rail—a long thirty-hour trip in the burning heat. Soldiers were being moved South from Chi-lij Province and the train was crowded. Friends who bade them farewell in Peking were anxious lest they might suffer from the torrid July weather. Their fears were justified, for A.C.Dixon was taken severely ill on the train, and on arriving at Kikungshan was ordered to bed by the doctor. For a day and a half he was thoroughly prostrate, but recovered quickly, and insisted on preaching at least three times on the Sunday, and twice on the following day.

Some four hundred and fifty missionaries were gathered in Kikungshan for their summer holiday, and few were deterred from attending the Conference meetings, even by the heavy rain which fell. Their general responsiveness and the readiness of the Chinese to hear the Word of God warmed A.C.Dixon's heart. His aim was to be constructive, rather than controversial, yet he was everywhere conscious of a widening rift between the modernist missionaries and those who "kept the faith."

"We must pray a great deal for the Conference at Kuling, for we do not want anything to happen there that will grieve the Holy Spirit," Mrs.Dixon remarked to a friend. "Mr.Dixon and I are praying about it constantly."

God was to answer that prayer in the way of His own wisdom.

Early on the morning of Tuesday, August 1st, the party set off down the Yangtse for Kuling.

"The river trip," said Miss Davis who accompanied them, "was filled
with sweet fellowship of laughter and stories from their lips. They had received a home paper and were reveling in it."

At Hankow, the Manchester of China, there was a short break in the journey, long enough to obtain a glimpse of the great city. Returning to the boat, they were soon gliding down the bosom of the mighty Yangtse towards Kiukiang, the river station for Kuling.

Miss Davis supplies a memory of the last evening aboard the river-steamer.

"I shall never forget our prayer-meeting in the Dixons' cabin. There I understood more deeply the prayer-life of Mrs. Dixon, and how quickly the burdens of her heart were taken to God. She poured out her heart for the Convention, for the coolies, and for a young girl to whom she had spoken about Christ. When we rose from our knees she followed me to my cabin, and spoke with concern about her husband, who had not been well, and who had heavy work before him at Kuling. Her thought was always of others."

About midnight, Mrs. Dixon herself was taken ill, and on disembarking at Kiukiang was taken straight to the home of a missionary doctor, who seemed satisfied that her general condition gave no cause for undue anxiety. The day was the hottest they had yet experienced in China, but beneath the swinging of a punkah, Mrs. Dixon dropped into a peaceful sleep. It seemed advisable for her to stay in Kiukiang under the care of Dr. Jones, and, hard as it was to leave her, A.C. Dixon decided to go up the mountain to fulfil his evening engagement at Kuling, assured that she would be able to follow him the next day, and knowing that she would wish him to go.

In the middle of the afternoon, however, just as he was preparing to leave, his plans were changed, for his wife's temperature suddenly rose to 105 degrees and she became unconscious. Two Portuguese nurses were sent for from a near-by hospital, and through skilful treatment, the fever quickly diminished, to A.C. Dixon's unspeakable relief.

It was then thought best for her to be removed at once to the hospital on Kuling Mountain. In less than an hour, she was being carried by coolies to a barge which took the party a little way up the river, and was then transferred by automobile across
the plain. Once more she was borne by coolies seven miles up the mountain-side, where the freshness of the air so revived her that she begged her husband to gather some of the wayside flowers as they passed.

It always seemed to A.C.Dixon that the sudden inexplicable rise of temperature that led to his wife's removal from Kiukiang that night was a special providence of God, for within an hour of their departure the town was being looted by soldier bandits. It was set on fire, and the house next to that in which Mrs.Dixon had lain was burned to the ground. What a terrible experience it would have been to have looked down from the mountain-side upon the burning city, if his wife had been in the midst of it, and he unable to help!

Shortly before midnight, the climbing party with its burdened stretcher reached the outskirts of the missionary settlement that spreads over a succession of rounded hilltops forming the Kuling ridge. Below them the wooded mountain-sides swept down in soft curves, like the folds of a velvet cloak, to the great river, which gleamed dimly here and there beneath the night sky in the dusky panorama of outstretched landscape. Above them, the slopes of the mighty mountain rose, black and mysterious, towards the star-spangled heavens. The invalid was carried to Dr.Barrie's hospital, where a further consultation removed the haunting fear of cholera.

Next morning, A.C.Dixon was relieved to find his wife's temperature practically normal, and the report of a restless night seemed better than the unconsciousness which had so greatly terrified him. On the way to the hospital, he had stopped to pick a beautiful tiger-lily from beneath the shade of the trees.

"I hope we shall be soon gathering the wild flowers together," he said.

"I long to see them in the woods," she answered, smiling up at him.

She urged him to throw himself into the work about which they had prayed so earnestly, without any anxiety on her account. Knowing well her unselfish spirit, it was with a sense of serving her as well as his Lord, that A.C.Dixon took up his strenuous task as chief speaker at the Convention. More than a thousand English-speaking missionaries, and Chinese pastors
who understood English, thronged the Kuling church morning and evening.

God was with him mightily as he magnified Jesus Christ and His work of atonement for sin, and all who attended the meetings were conscious of a strange sense of the Holy Spirit's presence and power. No trace of a controversial atmosphere marred the gatherings, for news of Mrs.Dixon's illness had quickly spread over the Conference grounds, and any tendency to criticize her husband's testimony was disarmed by sympathy and admiration for the courage that kept him at the post of duty in such a trying hour.

About noon on the second day, he took over to the hospital a batch of letters from America. The fever had entirely abated, and he was greatly cheered. Arousing his wife from the drowsiness that had crept over her, he asked whether he should read the letters. "Not now," she said, smiling her recognition of the familiar hand-writing on the envelopes. With hands clasped together husband and wife had their usual morning prayer, asking the Divine blessing on the loved ones far away.

Visiting the hospital later in the day, he was advised not to arouse her, and sat praying silently by the bedside until it was time to return to his preaching. By the end of the week symptoms of meningitis developed, and Mrs.Dixon became entirely unconscious.

"It is dawning upon me for the first time that she is going to leave me," he wrote. "I have an almost irresistible desire to go with her, for it seems well-nigh impossible to think of bearing the separation, but I turn to Jesus whom she trusted and loved so well, and make a complete committal of myself to Him.

"A great peace possesses my soul. I know she would not have me despair but hope, so I will look up to her Christ and mine to give me strength to bear and to perform the duties here upon me. I can testify that He is all-sufficient."

On Sunday morning at the hospital, the doctor told him that there was little likelihood of an immediate change in Mrs. Dixon's condition.

"Mother, it is evident, is almost Home," are the words hastily pencilled in his traveling journal. "I have an engagement to preach at eleven o'clock. What shall I do? Dr.Barrie urges me to go and deliver my message
Part of Missionary Settlement at Kuling, China

A Hot Day in China, 1922
A.C. Dixon with His Grandchildren
to the eleven hundred people who are waiting. I know what she would say, so I will go and preach the Gospel she loves."

The church was thronged to its utmost capacity when A.C. Dixon rose to preach. His subject—"Why I am a Christian"—met a special need in China at a time when anti-Christian movements were spreading faster than anyone could have dreamed a few years earlier.

"His message," wrote one of his hearers, "was one which will be sounded out all over China through the multitudes of missionaries and Chinese that heard it. It seemed as though we stood in the very presence of God in eternity.

"Towards the close of his sermon, with all the strength of his powerful voice, he cried, 'I am a Christian because even in the darkest moment that can come, I am an optimist, as Paul was when he knew that he was soon to be the victim of the executioner's axe. The most dreaded? No! the most glorious moment for a Christian is when, like Moses, he is 'kissed to sleep' by God.'"

Even as he uttered these words, a message was awaiting him that his wife's spirit had gone Home. At the close of his address, while the heads of the audience were bowed in prayer, the news was conveyed to him by Dr. Tewksbury, with whom he at once left the building.

Universal sympathy pervaded Kuling, and willing hands plucked the wild flowers growing in summer profusion over the mountain-sides and in the woods. The pulpit in the church and the grave in the little cemetery below the town were transformed into banks of fragrant beauty.

The last address of the Convention was to have been delivered by A.C. Dixon, but the gathering was turned into a Memorial Service. The transepts on either side of the church were filled with Chinese Christians, and hymns were sung in both languages. After several addresses, a Chinese pastor rose to speak, first in Chinese and then in English.

"We thank the Father," he exclaimed, "for the grace of God which is upon Dr. Dixon. He has taken his sorrow and has wrapped it up in Jesus. We have seen the sorrow, but in seeing it we have had a vision of Jesus also."

Out among those green hills of Kuling, in the heart of China, more than four thousand feet above sea level, is the little en-
closed cemetery where the body of more than one hero of the
faith has found a last resting-place. It was near the sunset hour
when the funeral procession reached it. The sky had been over-
cast and lowering, and a sudden shower of rain fell as the grave-
side service began. Then the sun burst through the clouds, light-
ing up all the Lushan Mountains with a blaze of glory, which
deepened into the crimson and gold of a magnificent sunset.

A Chinese choir sang "There is a Happy Land, far, far
away," and the Rev. Ting Li Mei, head of the Chinese Student
Volunteer Movement, prayed earnestly in Chinese. A.C. Dixon
then opened his Bible and read in firm tones the reassuring
message of Paul the Apostle to the bereaved Christians of Thes-
salonica.¹

No more powerful witness for Christ could have been
brought to Kuling at this critical time. Many had anticipated
a clash between the opposing elements, but a spirit of tender-
ness pervaded the gatherings, and while A.C. Dixon had spoken
without fear or favor, his courageous bearing under the crucial
test had strengthened his testimony a thousandfold.

Only one who has known a love and a loss like his can fully
understand the next day's short entry in his journal:

"A great empty world! My heart is buried in China, but for the sake
of Christ I must keep on with my work. The Lord Jesus Christ is the
only one who can take the place of everybody and everything that He may
see fit to take out of our lives."

Under medical advice he cancelled any further engagements
in the south of China during the season of intense heat, and
remained in the mountain air of Kuling. There he gave a series
of post-conference lectures, and addressed a Conference of
Chinese Student Volunteers.

On August 25th, he reached Shanghai in time to preach to a
large congregation gathered in the Union Church and at mid-
night was steaming down the river in a launch, past the twinkle-
lings lights of the Bund. He was soon aboard the S.S. "President
Lincoln," bound for San Francisco. Every morning in the social
room he gave a Bible lecture by request. A number of Christian
Filipinos were on their way to various universities in America,

and with all his might he sought to buttress their faith against
the insidious attacks which he knew they were bound to meet.

From San Francisco he went straight to Clifton Springs, where his family had gathered and was waiting to receive and
comfort him. In the sorrow that pressed upon their hearts, each
realized that the one they loved could have desired no better
spot from which to go Home to heaven than from the midst of
the missionaries in China, where her heart-interest had so long
been centered.

Before long A.C. Dixon was once more in Baltimore, deter-
mined by God's grace to make the last years of life the most
fruitful in the service of Christ.

"The Lord seems to be treating me liberally in the way of physical
health," he wrote to a friend, "and I feel like going to work with all the
strength with which He may entrust me. He has given me a new heaven
and a new earth. The new heaven is more attractive than the old one. I
must confess that the new earth seemed at first so empty that I shrank from
remaining in it. But as I think of the work to be done for the Master, at
home and abroad, the new earth into which He has thrust me grows more
attractive. I know that He who has been with me so far will not forsake
me in the future."
CHAPTER XXIV

PASTOR, PREACHER AND EVANGELIST

“And He gave some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers.”  
Eph. iv., 11.

“Dr. Dixon was such an incorrigible, inveterate preacher and teacher of the living truth of God as this world has seldom known. If the early years of his ministry were marked by the same unceasing industry and unremitting evangelistic labor as characterized the latter thirty years, it would be difficult to find a parallel since the days of John Wesley. His motto seemed to be: ‘This one thing I do.’”  
Hugh R. Monro.

It is not often that the qualities necessary for the callings of pastor, preacher and evangelist are combined in one man. Even as a youth fresh from college, there was a latent fatherliness in A.C. Dixon’s nature, a sense of responsibly for the “cure of souls,” that fitted him for the work of shepherding a flock. An inherited gift of eloquence, ablaze with the conviction that it was being exercised for the highest of all ends, made his preaching irresistible. But the predominating urge of his life was evangelism, and it was this that inspired his principles and methods both as a pastor and as a preacher.

“He was the strongest evangelistic pastor I ever knew,” said his old associate, Mr. E.Y. Woolley. “He combined both ministries to an extraordinary extent. During his years in Boston he was doing the greatest evangelistic work of any man in New England. I shall never forget the crowded noon meetings in Tremont Temple, nor the wonderful results of his Sunday night services at Ruggles Street. He always closed his sermon with an appeal to accept Christ. It thrills me to look back on our experiences together in open-air work and in the street parades.”

The unquenchable desire for the salvation of souls saw no abatement as the years passed, but rather grew in intensity. It was this that made it impossible to tie A.C. Dixon down to one
church or even to one locality. The restless, dissatisfied mass of humanity, without God and without hope in the world, so drew out his sympathies that his office-bearers found him restive at times, if they were tempted to monopolize him at the expense of the unconverted.

"He took our hearts by storm," wrote Mr. William Olney, chief deacon of Spurgeon's Tabernacle. "No one who has ever seen his smile could forget it. But the principal impression made upon his English audiences was his faithfulness to the Word of God. His ordinary preaching was evangelistic in tone. In fact he was too much of an evangelist to make a pre-eminently successful pastor. His great heart was too big to be confined to the limited circle of a single congregation."

The treasurer of the Hanson Place Church once said that "he excelled more as a preacher than as a pastor, and more as an evangelist than as a regular minister." This very report states, however, that during the first year of A.C. Dixon's pastorate at Hanson Place, the membership rose to over seven hundred for the first time in the history of the church, steadily increasing year by year until by the seventh year there were over thirteen hundred members. Such an unfluctuating growth would seem to indicate a fair amount of pastoral ability, although it may have been exercised by sharing responsibility and setting the church itself to work along pastoral as well as evangelistic lines. Not one of the churches he served but was enlarged and strengthened in every department when his ministry closed. His plea that a pastor could sometimes actually do more for his own church by reaching out through it to a wider circle rather than by making it a restricted sphere for his own activities does not seem to have been controverted by results.

The abiding trust and confidence which he inspired in his members is surely another criterion by which to measure his success as a pastor.

"Meet one of his members where you will," said Dr. W. B. Riley, of Minneapolis, "and before the conversation has proceeded far, he will tell you he was a member of Dr. Dixon's church, and while he talks, his face will beam with pride of it, conscious of the privilege of sitting at his feet."

That A. C. Dixon himself loved the pastoral side of his work is seen by the fact that he remained in the pastorate through
practically all of his half century of preaching. Only for a short period towards the end did he become a "minister at large." Even then his intention of devoting himself solely to evangelism for the rest of his life was broken down by his willing readiness to help lay the foundations of a new church. It was with this support at his back, such as had always been his stay and comfort in the wider work, that he accomplished a few more years of strenuous preaching. It was as a pastor that he preached the last two notable sermons from his own pulpit.

Dr. John H. Eager, his friend of fifty years from Seminary days, wrote:

"However far we were separated, even during the years of my missionary life in Italy, I kept track of Dr. Dixon through the papers, and on some occasions it was my privilege to hear him. Always, everywhere, the dominant thought of his life was the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, not only to teach and develop Christians, but especially to evangelize and save the lost. I once heard him say with great emphasis: 'My church is not my field where I am to spend the best part of my time, but my force with which we are to work together for the salvation of the world.' To me that proved a seed thought."

Although the pressure of the outside calls might be heavy, A.C. Dixon did not neglect his own flock. If absent from his church on a Sunday, he made it a matter of personal responsibility to secure a substitute whose loyalty to the Word of God was beyond question, and whom he could trust to give wholesome and nourishing food to the people. It was his conviction that the congregation benefited by receiving the truth at times through a fresh channel.

It is true that he did not develop the social side of his pastoral work to any large extent except in connection with the ordinary week-day gatherings, for he felt that time was too precious for many purely social engagements. But he encouraged the spirit of friendliness, and delighted in becoming acquainted with his members and their families in their own homes.

No one more thoroughly enjoyed a game of golf or a fishing expedition than he when the rare chance came. He loved a "hike" with the young people, who had all they could do to keep up with his free, swinging stride. But against the encroaching tide of
worldliness he stood like adamant, calling the members of his church, young and old, to a life of happy, holy separation from anything that would dull their tastes for the Bible and prayer, or injure their testimony for God.

He was aware that there were too many avenues of temptation to be summed up under a few heads, but he deprecated with all his heart the lure of such popular amusements as the theater, the dance and the card-table. Next to alcohol, of which he was as uncompromising a foe as his father before him, he regarded these things as harmful and unwholesome, and did not hesitate to warn his people against them. His method was to expose their subtle threat to spirituality even under the best of conditions, rather than stoop to describe evils which are patent to all lovers of decency and true happiness.

In an article for The Baptist Times of London, showing how much the modern theater has done to cultivate the depraved taste it gratifies, he said:

"The philosophy of all this may be in the very nature of the actor's profession. Acting is injurious to character. The best acting is the worst. Every actor is a hypocrite while on the stage, in the sense that he must pretend to be what he is not. He must feign emotions, good and bad. By merging his personality in simulation as a very essential of his profession, the art of the actor differs from any other. There is nothing akin to it in any other approved sphere of art. A man may portray evil in literature, in poetry, in music, in sculpture, without putting himself into the exhibit, but the actor who would successfully portray the murderer, the seducer, the betrayer of a sacred trust, must strive to think and feel and speak as if he himself were this very evil-doer."

Another point he stressed in the days before "movies" and "talkies" and the radio had still further compressed the experiences and emotions of human life, was rarely, if ever, taken into consideration even then, and would be laughed out of court today. Yet it has an intimate connection with the prevalence of nerve-strain, and the feverish lack of poise that characterizes so much of modern living.

"A play," he said, "is necessarily an over-stimulant. Every play must crowd into an hour the events of perhaps years or a life-time. It is therefore an intoxicant in its nature, and all excessive emotion, even though worthy in character, is demoralizing by reason of its excess."
He felt that no phenomenon more clearly marked the drift of the church from the salubrious and vitalizing influences of the Reformation than the remarkable merging of church and stage that was taking place in his later years. He showed that it was from the decadent church of the Middle Ages that the modern theater had sprung, and regretted that any Protestant church should "open its arms to the intruder, clothe it with its sacred vestments, and protect it with its sanction." No one more clearly showed the utter incompatibility of union between the two:

"The purpose of the stage is to teach men how to act a part. The purpose of the church of Jesus is to teach men how to be real. The purpose of the stage is to amuse; the purpose of the church is to save. The purpose of the stage is to make money, the purpose of the church is to make character.

"The stage gives people what they want, and, sad to say, the worst plays often draw the biggest crowds; the purpose of the church of Christ is to give the people what they need, regardless of popularity. The stage ministers to 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father'; the purpose of the church is to crucify these things. The stage, in its tragedies, glorifies revenge, which leads to murder; the church of Christ teaches forgiveness of enemies and patient endurance of wrong.

"The tendency of the stage is to make people childish in their feverish desire for diversion; the work of the church is to make people childlike in their faith and love and simplicity. The tendency of the stage is to keep the race in its childhood of self-gratifying amusement; the work of the church is to lead the race into the manhood of self-sacrificing achievement.

"In a word, the true Church is the incarnation of the spirit of Christ—pure, humble, self-sacrificing, and forgiving. The stage is the incarnation of the spirit of the world—lustful, proud, selfish and revengeful. And what God hath put asunder let no man join together."

The fanciful representations of the life of Christ, so popular on the stage and in the daring brains of novelists and imaginative biographers, were to A.C. Dixon the most flagrant of modern blasphemies. Of the various Passion Plays and their counterpart on the films he had this to say:

"I can think of nothing that would go further toward breaking down real Christianity than this farcical crucifixion of our Lord in the theaters of the world. To portray the sacred and holy emotions of the soul for the entertainment of an audience is an incongruous proceeding; and to feign
sacred and holy feelings is cant which, on or off the stage, weakens religious character. Miracle plays do not strengthen faith in real miracles.”

With every tender passion of a father’s heart, and with all the zeal of a faithful pastor, A.C.Dixon sought to hold back the young people from being caught in the whirlpool of harmful pleasures. He knew how to meet the specious arguments that are often used to break down the convictions of Christian people.

“The charge that I do not attend the theater and have, therefore, no right to an opinion, is not reasonable. One need not get drunk or tell a lie to know what drunkenness and lying are. People who do not go to the theater may be better qualified to judge of its ethics than those who have accustomed themselves to its atmosphere. The habitual theater-goer is apt to become blunted in his finer sensibilities.

“The plea that Christians should ally themselves with the good that is on the stage as a salutary influence is more specious than convincing. You cannot ally yourself with the good without also being allied to the evil, for on the stage the good and the evil are in close alliance. A drop of pure water will not make much impression upon a goblet of ink, but a drop of ink may ruin a goblet of pure water. The only way to win people of the world to the true Christian life is to show them that we have something better than they have.”

As an evangelist, A.C.Dixon knew the power of the world to keep its votaries so drugged with pleasure as to be insensible to their need of salvation. As a pastor, he dreaded its vitiating breath upon the tender life of a soul newly-born to Christ, and the sinister effect of worldliness in developing a taste that is ruined for the flavor of spiritual food. Speaking of the garlic of Egypt and the manna provided for the Israelites in the wilderness, he said:

“When one of my members absents himself constantly from prayer-meeting and ceases to take a delight in Christian worship and work, I take it for granted that he has been to Egypt for a square meal of onions, and of all the distasteful dishes that can be imagined, a mixture of manna and onions is the worst.”

In his own pulpit and on the evangelistic platform he had to meet many a suggestion for using worldly methods to attract a crowd. But he believed in the power as well as the simplicity of the Gospel.
"In order to do the most good we must reach the largest number. But let not the small congregation discourage if you cannot make it larger by legitimate means. Better preach to half a dozen the pure Gospel with freshness, than draw ten thousand by the clap-trap of sensational methods."

With all his evangelistic intensity, he stood always and everywhere against levity and irreverence, especially when dealing with the welfare of an immortal soul. It grieved him beyond words that a Christian should ever jest about the Bible or sacred things.

"The need of every Christian leader or worker is reverence, especially in these irreverent days," he wrote in 1898. "We need to be taught that the presence of God with us makes every place holy, every garment a vestment, and every meal a sacrament. I wish we might have more quiet in the house of God on Sunday mornings and evenings, and even in the prayer-meetings, before the first hymn is begun. It is well to have a calm mind and a reverent attitude before beginning public worship. We may be familiar with Christ, to be sure, and with God the Father when we pray, as a child with the parent, but that ought not to lessen our reverence."

On one of his evangelistic journeys in 1920 he attended a national gathering of a young people's organization.

"It was the most boisterous religious meeting I ever saw, with college yells and general confusion. When their president was elected the scenes of a political convention took place with noisy demonstrations for half an hour after the name of the candidate was mentioned. What will become of our future churches if they fall into the hands of people who have been trained in their youth after this fashion, I do not know. I tried to imagine the Lord Jesus in the midst of it all, and somehow felt that He could hardly be at home there."

A reference must be made here to his attitude towards financial matters, both as a pastor and as an evangelist. He did not decry the possession of rightly-earned wealth, believing that it could be an asset in liberating its owner for Christian service, as well as a means of joy in supplying the need of others.

"Do I speak to any who by industry and economy have acquired a competence? Perhaps you have enough to keep you from want and to put your children in safe positions without much temptation to luxury. Would it not be a gracious thing for some of you to devote your whole time to fishing for men, while you support yourselves on your income? A number
of missionaries under Hudson Taylor are doing that to-day. I have met
men and women of wealth in England, who devote their whole time to
spiritual work, supporting themselves and co-laborers. Jesus Christ, it may
be, has called you to this higher success. Happy the man who is able and
willing to support himself while he devotes his strength of mind and body
and heart to winning souls for Jesus.”

Again:

“I almost envy the pleasure of the man who has been blessed in making
money when he sees the results of his offerings to good causes. He gives to
foreign missions, and every report of the heathen converted increases his
joy. He gives to Christian education, and the usefulness of the men who
are trained in the colleges adds to his enjoyment. He gives to the poor, and
the consciousness that he is helping the worthy in their struggles is a sweet
satisfaction. He is a ‘worker together with God’ for the salvation and the
building up of his race.”

As a pastor A.C. Dixon laid constant stress on the duty of
stewardship and the privilege of giving. When he left Chicago
after five and a half years in the Moody Church, the treasurer
reported that the people had given “freely, cheerfully, even
hilariously; more than twice as much per year as before his com-
ing.” The confidence inspired by his own example gave him a
power of appeal for monetary aid that was listened to with
respect; all the more so because he used it but seldom, and very
rarely for causes under his own administration.

He was aware that religious workers are often peculiarly ex-
posed to testing in the financial realm, and used to quote D.L.
Moody’s observation that more ministers were injured in their
spiritual work by money-making schemes than by any other one
cause. He did not fail to warn young preachers to be wary of
the subtle and flattering temptation of lending their names to
endorse a financial enterprise as an inducement to other people
to invest in it.

“We know a minister,” he said editorially (and perhaps autobiographi-
cally!) to his London congregation, “to whom a Life Insurance Company
promised a thousand a year for his name on their Board of Managers with
the assurance that he would not be expected to give time and attention to
it. He refused, on the ground that he could not conscientiously appear
before the public as managing a business which he did not manage, for
such a course would be deception.”
With regard to his pastoral salary, or remuneration for pulpit or evangelistic engagements, he was uniformly free from a grasping spirit. He never stipulated payment for his services, and frequently preached without any monetary return. His keen sense of justice rebelled, however, when he discovered, in a rare instance or two, that his name had been used to draw a crowd, and his evangelistic work, sacred to his heart, as a catspaw for money-raising.

How free from greed of gold he remained to the end is seen in the testimony of one of the deacons of his last pastorate, a man prominent in the professional circles of Baltimore.

"We all soon learned that, in a different way from anyone we had known, 'money was no object' to Dr. Dixon. When the fixing of his salary was touched upon, he would say, 'You brethren arrange all that as you think best.' And he gave in an unusually liberal measure to religious objects. A man of his talents would have had large success in big business, but he left almost nothing behind when he died. His treasure was in heaven."

A.C. Dixon's ideals of service were high, both for himself as pastor, and for all who shared with him the privileges of leadership. Laziness and indifference and slip-shod methods had no place in his program. On one occasion he told his deacons that their title was derived from two Greek words, meaning "through dust." He insisted that whether Thayer's explanation is correct, that "a deacon must go so fast as to raise a dust," or the suggestion of another lexicographer that the dust of toil gathers upon those in active service, the term was honorable in either case, and intimated that deacons, from the first, were not to be idlers.

With scarcely an exception, the relations between himself and his church office-bearers were of the warmest, based on mutual respect and affection. Many of these men remained to the end in the inner circle of his truest and most trusted friends. The eagerness with which his return visits to every one of his former pastorates were welcomed spoke volumes.

His frank sincerity, his clear and open dealing, and his freedom from personal ambition, inspired confidence and hearty cooperation. If any differences of opinion arose, it was usually because the pastor's irrepressible longing to reach the people out-
side the church with the message of salvation outran considerations of prestige and permitted no complacent ease. The moment the church became an end in itself and ceased to witness to the unsaved, he felt that spiritual dry-rot was inevitable. Once, after a sermon on "Feeding the Multitudes," one of his deacons demurred. "You have quite enough to do in looking after this historic church," he said, "without wanting to go after outsiders." They had not been long together, but the pastor felt that his work in that place was at an end if this deacon's attitude really represented the spirit of the church. At the time he said nothing, but went to God in prayer about it. After an hour or two he met the deacon again and begged him to stay away from church on the following Sunday.

"Why?" was the surprised query.

"Because you and all who are in sympathy with you will feel uncomfortable. I intend to preach on 'The Lost Coin,' and that sermon will be worse than this morning's."

The deacon was a good man and held his peace. Next Sunday the Spirit of God touched his heart, and the dew of heaven fell upon the church. For the first time in the memory of anyone present, there were conversions at the morning service. Five persons responded to an appeal for decision. At the office-bearers' meeting a few days afterwards, the old deacon came forward with outstretched hand, saying: "Forgive me, pastor! It shall never happen again." Thus did A.C. Dixon strive, not only to win souls to Christ himself, but to impart the same passion to every member of his church.

He made a clear distinction between "feeding the flock" and "fishing for men."

"It is not our mission to feed fish," he said, "that is, to cultivate the natural man until he has so greatly improved that he may be labeled a Christian. The need of the day is re-emphasis of sudden instantaneous conversion, a crisis with a view to the process of growth. There is no growing into it, but there is immense growth in it. It was to a pastor that the Spirit wrote: 'Do the work of an evangelist,' as if He would warn against the pastor's temptation to be content with simply feeding the sheep. However well he might feed the ninety and nine, the one that was lost would never get back into the sheepfold unless someone went after it."

When once a decision for Christ had been made, he did not fail to stress the importance of church membership.
“Too many believers,” he said, “attend churches and fail to become an organic part of any one. They look at the paper and go where the subject or the music seems most attractive. They are spiritual pleasure-seekers. Organization multiplies your influence by ten, for ‘one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight’.”

The care of new converts was always a matter of special concern to A.C.Dixon. He sympathized with those who were diffident in the matter of public testimony, and was quick to discourage love of the limelight, although he believed in open confession of Christ as Saviour and Lord. With regard to the time-honored custom of demanding a relation of “experience” before the assembled church, he said:

“As a test of conversion, such a public recital of experience is a failure. The real babe in Christ has little experience to tell, and the dread of the ordeal has prevented many a genuine convert from offering for church membership and baptism. The immature babe in Christ may also be tempted to color or exaggerate experiences with injury to his spiritual life.”

Natural parents could be no more keenly interested in their children’s development than A.C.Dixon in the growth of young converts.

“We may make our churches so worldly in spirit that proud worldlings will feel at home as members of them. They become adherents, and adherents are barnacles that sink the ship. New converts must be furnished with a spiritual, and at the same time, a natural atmosphere, pure and full of ozone. Love and joy do not banish naturalness, and a spiritual atmosphere need not be drowsy or lugubrious. The ‘holy tone’ depresses like a London fog, and solemnity is not always an index to holiness.

“The best atmosphere, however, will not take the place of food, and Christians, both young and old, need spiritual refreshment. The ‘sword of the Spirit’ is the Word of God, but people do not eat swords. Every sermon should contain food. Yet why should the sheep depend altogether on the cut-feed the pastor brings to them? They have in their Bibles the green pastures into which they can go and graze for themselves.

“Converts ought to be taught how to read the Bible regularly and systematically. They should also be given something to do for Christ, for exercise is essential to growth. The vineyard is suffering for lack of workers, and workers for the vineyard. The two must somehow be brought together.”

Few ministers have been more successful than A.C.Dixon in training his people in team-work. His own energy and enthusi-
asm were contagious. He taught by example more than by precept. As in his personal life, he laid stress on the Bible and on prayer as the essential connecting links between God and the church.

At the beginning of his pastoral experience, the shrewd advice of his father had been:

"My son, have as many prayer-meetings and revivals as you can, and as few church meetings as possible. The prosperity of the churches is usually in proportion to the smallness of the church meeting and the largeness of the prayer-meeting."

Whether or not he had heeded this advice can be seen in the words of a deacon of the last pastorate:

"Dr. Dixon believed that the prayer-meeting was the most important service of the church. It seemed to me that he conducted these meetings with surpassing ability and success. There was never a dull moment."

"Not to be ministered unto but to minister," was the ideal that A.C. Dixon held before his people.

"Could we infuse that thought into our prayer-meetings we should save them from lifelessness. It is the genius of Christianity."

He trained them to be definite in their requests:

"Not praying for everything in general and nothing in particular. In private devotions let us pray and praise as long as we wish, but be brief in public prayer."

He knew the unifying power of prayer:

"Discussions are apt to make divisions. When Christians preach and write they are sure to differ, but when they get down before God together on their knees in genuine prayer, differences disappear."

Ministers have not always a discerning appreciation of spiritual values in music, or of its divine purpose. The message of the music was as important to A.C. Dixon as the message of the sermon, and he believed that in the musical part of the service every worshiper should take a hearty share:

"The solo or quartet which gives its message in psalm and hymn and spiritual song is appropriate; but no individual, or four individuals, or forty individuals have a right to praise God for the congregation. 'Let all the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee!' The choir may
have its function in leading the congregation, but not in assuming a musical monopoly. Let there be no performance in the music, any more than in prayer or sermon. There is no place for any sort of mere performance.

"The most impressive and soul-stirring music I ever heard came from a great congregation, led by a clear, soulful human voice without accompaniment of any kind. But I have no objection to instrumental music, provided that it does not take the place of congregational singing.

"We ought to magnify the great hymns of the church, and it stirs my heart to hear them sung. They are ladders of light upon which we climb up to God; they are the angels that send the shepherds of every age in search of the infant Christ."

But when the purpose of a service was directly evangelistic, Gospel songs, properly rendered, were in his view infinitely more effective than the most beautiful classical anthem. Speaking of the world-wide influences radiating from D.L. Moody’s work, he said:

"Out of it all has come a stream of sacred song that has gone around the globe with the preaching of the Gospel. I find little record of such a thing at any previous time. There were the stately hymns of the church with the great anthems and oratorios. But ‘Gospel song’ had its origin largely in the world movement which God began through Mr. Moody. The anthem appeals to the musically cultured, and I praise God for all the good it has done. But my intense love of Gospel song leads me to emphasize the importance of this kind of music in winning souls to Christ. With Moody and Sankey first, and then with Torrey and Alexander, there went out from Chicago two great tidal waves of evangelizing power that have circled the globe.

"Some one has said that this movement has given us a great many ditties and jingles; that it has lowered and vitiated the standard of music in the modern church. That may be true of an unworthy type, or of an improper rendering. Yet Gospel song with Gospel preaching has carried the truth to people of all tongues and nationalities. Gospel song can create an atmosphere for Christ and His truth, so intense, so pure and so powerful that thousands may be won to God."

One of A.C. Dixon’s outstanding characteristics as pastor, preacher and evangelist was his genuine humility. What a man admires in others is apt to be self-revealing. Unconsciously he pictured his own spiritual development in a character sketch of the Apostle Paul. He pointed out that as a young man Paul
had exclaimed: "I am the least of the Apostles." When he had
grown in grace for several years, he wrote again: "I am less than
the least of all saints," while as a mature Christian, ready for the
crown of martyrdom, the Apostle signed himself "chief of sin-
ers."

Yet while singularly free from personal vanity, A.C.Dixon
had a serious regard for the dignity of his office as an ambassad-
or of Christ.

"The mission of the minister, indeed of every Christian, is to induce
people, in Christ's name, to be reconciled to God, that they may be ready
at all times for an emergency of life or death. The sun does not shine upon
a nobler mission, and let not other good things deflect us from it. The
danger of the ministry is that we may look upon it as a profession which
should yield so much in financial and social returns rather than as a calling
of God to sacrifice and toil.

"All I know of the mission of the minister is found in the Scriptures.
Paul's one theme was Christ and Him crucified. My supreme consideration
must be my relation to Christ."

He was only twenty-five when he wrote from Chapel Hill:

"As a preacher, one's experience is apt to be filled with extremes of
sadness or gladness. We deal with priceless souls, and a mistake, however
slight, may do untold harm, while an impression for good may be felt
through eternity. Is it any wonder then that apparently little things elate
or depress us?

"Some of my happiest moments have been while standing before the
congregation, telling the people the comforting and life-giving truths of
the Gospel. When I see that they are interested and that God is blessing
us, my feelings are indescribably joyous. But when the people look slug-
gish and no impression seems to be made, the other extreme of sadness,
sometimes amounting to anguish, is felt. How many times I have carried
an aching heart from the pulpit to my room, and there spent hours groan-
ing over a failure, and suffering under the reflection that I have not been
faithful to the people or to God."

Indifference to popular approval marked his ministry at every
period. He was unusually alert to the perils of spiritual leader-
ship.

"Every preacher is, or ought to be, primarily a prophet of God, who
preaches as God bids him without regard to results. When he becomes
conscious of the fact that he is a leader in his church or denomination he
has reached a crisis in his ministry. He must now choose one of two courses, that of a prophet of God or a leader of men. If he seeks to be a prophet and leader, he is apt to make a failure of both. If he decides only to be a prophet in so far as he can do so without losing his leadership, he becomes a diplomat, and ceases to be a prophet at all. If he decides to maintain his leadership at all costs, he may easily fall to the level of a politician who pulls the wires in order to gain or hold a position.

"The leader of men must be careful not to get too far ahead of his followers and must in a measure shape his ideals to possibilities and circumstances. He who would prophesy, or speak forth the message of God, is careful of none of these things, but only that he shall speak the message that God gives him, even though he be in a lonesome minority. For myself, I long ago made the choice to seek to speak forth God's message, rather than seek to be a leader of men."

In catholicity of spirit his outlook expanded far beyond the limits of his own denomination. He valued beyond expression the principles of Baptist church polity. But desire for denominational prestige was swallowed up in desire for the spiritual welfare of all the churches; and his sense of the unity of the one true church, the mystic body of Christ, bound him to all believers everywhere. The modern tendency towards mechanical union of the denominations, such as that advocated, for instance, by the ephemeral Interchurch World Movement, met with his vigorous disapproval, for he felt that it would lead to an ecclesiastical dictatorship more baneful than State control. He also felt that the effort to efface sectarian differences was apt to cause a slurring over of the distinctive and precious doctrines which had called the great denominations into existence.

While in China, he learned something of unionism at work on the mission field, and on studying the situation he was more than ever impressed by the loss of spiritual power which seemed to result from the idea that the only truth to be stressed is that which everybody believes.

"The Presbyterian ceases to emphasize the sovereignty of God, the Methodist is silent as to the witness of the Spirit, the Episcopalian avoids the mention of what he believes about worship and ecclesiastical order. The Congregationalist omits the discussion of personal liberty, the Quaker refuses to protest against the use of outward forms, the Baptist does not insist upon strict obedience to every command of Christ."
"In such an alignment of forces, the Fundamentalist must not obtrude his convictions as to the full inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth, the bodily resurrection of Christ, the atoning blood, or the Second Coming of our Lord. Nor must he declare his belief in the supernatural origin of Nature, the Bible, the Church and Christian experience. And when all these things are omitted, we have lost the truth that is really worth while."

Such was his sincere conviction. Yet, side by side with a healthy denominationalism, he believed that there should be unity and co-operation among all evangelicals. As already seen, he spent much time and energy in cultivating among his church members an intelligent appreciation of the good in other denominations.

A member of Hanson Place Church testified:

"The ideal of church unity was what I caught from Dr. Dixon. He believed that the best internationalist was the man who thought most of his own country, just as the best all-round man was the one who thought most of his own wife. Every member of his church could give a reason for the faith that was in him as a Baptist, but at the same time was led by the pastor to have perfect fellowship with those of other churches.

"I do not think there was ever a minister who worked with so many ministers of other denominations. The series of sermons he gave on 'What Methodists stand for,' and 'What Presbyterians stand for,' and so on, helped us to understand the good in other churches, and to be able to work with them in the friendliest manner while being true to our own church."

The very faculty which leaped denominational barriers to claim kinship with all who shared the fundamentals of Christian faith, necessitated cleavage along other lines. A man of intense nature and strong convictions cannot hope to escape the battle when it rages around things that are dearer to him than life. A.C. Dixon's attitude is well described by Dr. Richard T. Vann, his friend of college days:

"His convictions were all pronounced and positive. On every religious question he stood somewhere: where, no one was ever left long in doubt. Compromise had no place in his policy. To him, compromise meant surrender, and the word 'surrender' was not in his book.

"He could not passively believe a thing. What he did believe he had to propagate. So into the religious discussions agitating the Christian world in his last years he entered as a crusader; and as the champion of one side,
he inevitably came into sharp collision with those who could not accept his views. But throughout his entire career, no one ever questioned his sincerity. Followers and opponents alike held his character above reproach. All felt that both in his private and public life he followed without fear what seemed to him to be the call of God."

A former associate, who had drifted apart from A.C. Dixon theologically, once lamented that "he sought to convince rather than to conciliate." He did so indeed. Conciliation seeks a basis that makes agreement possible, and in endeavoring to overcome opposition is almost bound to resort to some pleasing method that involves compromise. In matters of personal preference A.C. Dixon was ready to yield to others, but not where the honor of Christ was concerned, or the veracity of the Scriptures. The foundation truths of Christianity were too vital to him to admit of concessions that would undermine them.

"The battle between revelation and man's wisdom is on, as it has not been since the time of Christ," he wrote in 1923. "There is a world-movement, well organized, against the Bible as an infallible revelation from God and against the fundamentals of Christianity. A few years ago the attack was upon the outposts, but now it is upon the citadel, the very heart of Christianity. It cuts out the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, and the bodily resurrection."

The giant fallacy of the evolutionary theory seemed to A.C. Dixon to be perhaps the pivot of modern divergence from the Christian faith. He did not think carelessly or jump at hasty conclusions, but studied the subject persistently. Doing so, he became more and more convinced that the prevalence of this theory was largely responsible for the breakdown of modern civilization in many directions, weakening the power of moral perception and excusing bestiality in human conduct. His indignation that an unproven theory should be treated as though it were a scientific fact knew no bounds, particularly as he saw the destruction of faith that followed in its wake. In his preaching and in his writings he opposed it with all his might.

He was a clean fighter, not stooping to tricks or subterfuges, and he deprecated the use of violent or sensational methods of attack. He even opposed the holding of public debates upon these questions, for to him God's own revelation of truth was not debatable, and should not be subjected to argumentative wrang-
ling as though it rested upon human opinion or the correctness of human logic. His fire was directed at the teaching rather than at the teacher of false doctrine.

"Theological pacifism is treason. All who are on the fence are now with the enemy. But (and his 'but' is significant), this does not mean that campaigns of personal abuse are justifiable."

Strong and militant fundamentalist as he remained to the end, the notorious tactics and self-glorification of some of those who loudly protested their loyalty to the Bible and to Christ stabbed him more deeply than any other form of disaffection. He pointed out with grave earnestness that to do wrong on the right side was quite as unjustifiable as to do right on the wrong side, and that both were favorite "wiles of the devil," equally effective in obscuring the truth and in bringing it into disrepute.

He certainly found no pleasure in having to dissent from his brethren, and the need for controversy distressed him. He always held that the chief duty of the Christian is to proclaim rather than to defend the truth.

"I preached this morning on 'Christ, the Light of the World,' and enjoyed it," he wrote in 1921. "That sort of preaching is far more pleasant to me than 'contending for the faith once delivered to the saints,' though the contending just now seems to be a necessity."

Such sentences as these, let fall here and there in his private letters, reveal how he shrank from the strife forced upon the churches by the subtle encroachments of modernism. He preferred to meet the enemies of Scriptural truth with the disarming power of a gentle and holy life and with strong constructive teaching. But loyalty to Christ, and to the Bible as the "God-breathed" revelation of Christ claimed first consideration at any personal cost. Like Paul, he was conscious that he was "allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel," and he spoke "not as pleasing man but God." Yet he too had to learn more and more that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."

People in sorrow found unspeakable comfort in his messages. The aged were touched by his thoughtful consideration,
yet the young people also felt that he entered into their difficulties with sympathetic understanding.

"In his democracy of spirit, A.C.Dixon was utterly approachable," wrote Dr.W.B.Riley. "Young men had no fear of him, but fell into easy conversation with him. He was ready to hear the statement of their problems and to find a solution for them. He was even sympathetic with their unbelief, and by his knowledge of the Word was able to lead them out of darkness into light. He was one of those men who did not stale with age, and the young men and maidens found with him a peculiar fellowship that invited confidence and counsel."

Rev.Arthur H.Gordon, son of A.C.Dixon's beloved friend, Dr.A.J.Gordon, corroborates this:

"While Dr.Dixon was at Ruggles Street, I was ministering to a small church at Cambridge. He seemed to take a fatherly interest in me. A group of young ministers used to meet monthly at one of the Boston hotels and we invited him to join us. Thereafter he attended the gatherings regularly whenever he was in the city. My clearest recollection of him is as he sat at the table, a giant among us youngsters, his fine presence dominating the group. He listened good-naturedly to our discussions, but rarely took part except for a word or two, evidently preferring to let us 'have it out' among ourselves. He was a man we all admired and loved."

How many young men were led not only to Christ, but into the Christian ministry through his influence cannot be known this side of heaven. From a sheaf of testimonies one or two may be given. Dr.Len G.Broughton says:

"Dr.Dixon was more than a friend to me. I was converted under his ministry while a lad in High School at Raleigh, North Carolina. It was by his invitation that I did my first preaching in New York, and during his Brooklyn pastorate I was with him every year in his church and in his evangelical enterprises throughout Greater New York. He has meant more to my life than any other man.

"I do not know any preacher who has touched my life and ministry to the extent Dr.Dixon did," writes Rev.Paul W.Rood, of California. "While I was a student in Chicago, he was pastor of the Moody Church. I went to hear him at every possible opportunity. Evangelism was the passion of his life. Even after lecturing on 'Abraham Lincoln,' I heard him close with an appeal, and souls came to Christ. Whatever passion there is in my ministry, I owe it, under God, to the influence of Dr.Dixon."
Another testimony comes from Rev. McKendree Robbins Long, of Georgia:

"I was converted under Dr. Dixon's preaching at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London. I was an art student, part of the time with Philip Laszlo, the famous portraitist. Then God called me into His ministry. Dr. Dixon had the tenderest voice that I have ever heard, and the most Christ-like simplicity in social contacts. To me he was a spiritual father, a blessed guide in Christ."

One thing stands out clearly. For A.C. Dixon life held nothing to compare with the joy of winning souls to Christ. To this end his gift of preaching was dedicated, both as pastor and evangelist.

"This priceless passion for lost men was the peculiar characterizing quality in every period of Dr. Dixon's long preaching ministry," wrote Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, president of the Evangelical Theological College of Dallas, Texas. "I first met him when he was pastor of the Ruggles Street Church in Boston. He had invited me to assist him in evangelistic meetings. I was young and quite inexperienced and the sight of this man, who even in that early day was nationally known as a preacher, on his knees beside a drunken tramp, pleading with him to accept Christ as his Saviour, greatly impressed me. I had been used to such scenes in Rescue Missions, but here was the pastor of a great city church ignoring all ecclesiastical dignity in his desire to bring the lost to Christ. I saw but little of Dr. Dixon during his London ministry, but I count it one of my blessed memories to have had renewed fellowship with him in his later years, and to have appreciated then, as never before, the tremendous power of a life which had never wavered in its devotion to Christ or in its loyalty to the Word of God."
CHAPTER XXV

SOLACE IN SERVICE

Through the winter following his return from China, A.C. Dixon plunged into the work of building up the new University Baptist Church of Baltimore, where he was now installed as permanent pastor. Deacons, trustees and members were with him heart and soul in seeking to establish a movement that should stand for the integrity of the Bible, and for the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

The neighborhood immediately surrounding the church was still sparsely populated, but was beginning to develop rapidly, with new homes and apartment buildings rising in every direction. The close proximity of Johns Hopkins University, and of Goucher College for women a few blocks south on St. Paul Street, opened an avenue of usefulness. Investigation showed that there were a number of Baptists among the students. Most of these were visited, and invited to attend the services. Social evenings were arranged at the church, and homes were hospitably thrown open to them on Sundays. The spiritual needs of foreign students received particular attention and their loneliness in a strange land was not forgotten.

The presence in Johns Hopkins University of the famous Orientalist, Professor Paul Haupt, and his influence among the students and people of Baltimore, was an additional reason in A.C. Dixon's mind for grappling keenly with the question of Biblical criticism. Years before, during his London pastorate, he had discussed with his young people at Spurgeon's Tabernacle the "Polychrome Bible," edited by Professor Haupt. Men of brilliant intellect such as Wellhausen of Göttingen, Driver and Cheyne of Oxford, and George Adam Smith of Glasgow, had collaborated with American scholars in producing the "Rainbow Bible," as the Polychrome was called, yet it had since been discredited by men of equal learning. But reactionary propa-
ganda against the Bible continued more actively than ever.

As a counteracting and constructive influence, A.C.Dixon determined to organize a School of Biblical Research in connection with his church, hoping that some day it might develop into a permanent Bible University. As a beginning, short courses of lectures were planned for the Spring of 1923. The first series was delivered by Professor Robert Dick Wilson of Princeton Seminary on the general subject, "Is the Higher Criticism scientific?" Dr. Wilson was able to speak as a master, being one of the greatest living authorities on ancient manuscripts, speaking and writing twenty-six languages, and having a passing acquaintance with many others. After fifteen years of research work, he had devoted fifteen more to intensive scrutiny of the Old Testament in the light of the ancient documents. Then he had begun to give out his findings, which in every case established the authority and integrity of the Biblical record as a trustworthy document.

Dr. Melvin G. Kyle, archæologist and President of Xenia University, was another of the lecturers. He had just returned to America from some exploration work in Egypt, and gave the story of recent discoveries, showing their corroboration of the Scriptures. Dr. J. L. Campbell, who had become Professor of the Bible at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee, and Dr. W. H. Griffith Thomas, gave other courses of lectures in which the Bible itself was studied, and the modernistic attitude examined in the light of it.

Out of all this activity a phrase gradually formed itself in A.C. Dixon's mind, and from henceforth he took it as a slogan: THE WHOLE CHRIST IN THE WHOLE BIBLE FOR THE WHOLE WORLD.

His visit to the Orient, short though it had been, had made him realize more than ever the futility of presenting Christ to the pagan mind as on a level with human teachers such as Buddha, Confucius or Mohammed. Just as foolish did it seem to him to put the Bible in a class with the sacred books of other religions. He urged with all his strength that it was a pure waste of time and energy to promote Christianity at home or abroad unless Jesus Christ and the Bible were uplifted as supreme and beyond all comparisons.

He felt that one of the most destructive forces at work in
the world was education based on a false philosophy of science which discredits the Bible and distorts the Person of Christ. He was amazed at the zeal (unaccountable unless Satanically inspired) with which the Darwinian theory of evolution was being foisted on the people everywhere, threatening, as he seriously believed, the future of Christian institutions and of civilization itself.

He constantly pointed out the new menace to the world's stability that seemed to be arising in Russia, where the whole structure of Bolshevistic atheism was founded upon the cold calculations of Darwinian evolution. He warned his hearers that the teaching that man evolved from the beast would be followed by increased attacks upon the institution of marriage, the divine appointments of home and family, and upon law and order and beneficent government. It seemed to him bound to result in violence and immorality and the subversion of all things necessary to the welfare of the human race.

Not content with his own utterances on the subject, he secured a promise from William Jennings Bryan to come to Baltimore and give two addresses on "Christianity and Evolution." Already, in accordance with pre-arrangement, his four o'clock service on Sunday afternoon had been moved at intervals from the stone chapel on the greensward to some downtown hall or theater, for he greatly feared lest his congregation should become exclusive and forget its soul-winning mission, especially in its still isolated position. For the occasion of Mr. Bryan's visit in January, 1923, the Lyric Theater was taken, and proved quite inadequate to hold the crowds that thronged it both afternoon and evening to hear the great Commoner.

Not only the matter of right belief, but the matter of right living, so dependent upon it, exercised A.C. Dixon's mind on behalf of the young church. How earnestly he desired that it should keep itself unspotted from the world! In order to feel the pulse of the congregation with regard to some of the popular amusements, he tackled the matter without evasion. A number of questions were printed upon the church calendar, with spaces for written replies. The questions were divided under four heads:

"What about Dancing?"
"What about Card Playing?"
"What about the Theater and Movie?"

"What about Sunday golf, and automobile riding that takes us away from public worship?"

The members were invited to write their answers with the utmost frankness, so that the matters involved might be discussed with better mutual understanding, and that all might unitedly seek to please and glorify the Saviour whose Name they professed. His request was freely acceded to in a way that gave proof of the confidence existing between himself and the members of his church. The replies made interesting reading. With few dissensions, they showed that the majority in the new organism, including a strong band of young people, were determined by God's grace to abstain from worldly entanglements and live a life of surrender to Christ.

Missionary interests were always a live issue at the University Baptist Church. China and its needs lay close to A.C. Dixon's heart, and among other missionaries invited to speak at the church in 1923 were Miss Ruth Paxson of Shanghai and Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor.

A touching gift of hand-made embroidery was sent to him from Kuling by members of the Chinese Leaders' Conference, and pictured the little cemetery among the Kuling Mountains upon a groundwork of crimson silk.

"Though we never knew Mrs. Dixon," the accompanying letter ran, "we feel that she is one of our very good friends. We thank you for your book, 'The Glories of the Cross.' Some of the chapters have been put into Chinese, and they will soon be published. Your voice still rings in our ears. I hope you will come back to China some time and let us have some more sayings from God."

Through the adjustments of this first winter after his great bereavement the companionship of his eldest daughter was an untold comfort to A.C. Dixon. From Duluth, Minnesota, where he was conducting a short evangelistic campaign, he wrote her:

"Your letter made me feel that I was in touch again with the world of love. After all, that is not a very large world, and the real life here consists in keeping in touch with it all the time. But for my busy life, I would be sometimes too lonely to live, but when I remember my children it gives me good cheer."
When spring came, Mary returned to her work in France. The desire to visit her there, as well as to accept several invitations to preach in England and Scotland, and to attend the Baptist World Congress at Stockholm in July, drew his thoughts to Europe for the summer vacation of 1923. He wrote Pasteur Saillens, asking him to make plans for some evangelistic work in Paris and for a preaching tour in the South of France to which they had both long been looking forward.

During the lonely interim in Baltimore he had the unexpected cheer of a visit from his daughter Clara and the merry quartet of grandchildren. One journey only took him far afield from them, to attend the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City, and a committee that preceded it, which met to organize the "Baptist Bible Union." A particular aim of this new organization was to urge upon their Foreign Board the necessity of sending out as missionaries only those who believed with all their hearts "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Two of A.C. Dixon's friends from across the sea contributed much of interest to the gatherings—Dr. John Thomas of Liverpool, and Pasteur Arthur Blocher of Paris.

"M. Blocher gave us a joyful surprise," he wrote to Pasteur Saillens, "by appearing at the Bible Conference in Kansas City. He remained through the Southern Baptist Convention also, captivating everybody by his strong messages and his winsome personality.

"We have heard with great joy that the Southern Baptist Board at Richmond has refused to appoint missionaries who deny the fundamentals of evangelical Christianity."

Early in June A.C. Dixon sailed for Europe, and was welcomed in Paris by his daughter Mary. He was a guest of the Saillens family in the new Bible Institute at Nogent-sur-Marne, happy as a child to see this evangelizing agency, so long prayed for, in actual operation, and pleased to find among the students, whom he addressed several times, a number of Americans preparing for foreign missionary work among French-speaking peoples. Two evening services were held in Paris with Pasteur Saillens in the Salle de Géographie on the Boulevard St. Germain, while two other evenings were given to addressing English-speaking people at the English Wesleyan Church on the Rue Roquépine. Sunday was spent in the Mission Church on the Rue Belliard with Pasteur Blocher.
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Then came the long-anticipated journey South with his daughter and Pasteur Saillens. On collecting his belongings at Nogent-sur-Marne before starting, he had filled both his bags with books and papers, while most of his clothes, piled up and forgotten, were left on a chair in his room! Madame Saillens had fortunately attended to her husband’s packing, but the French pastor seldom changed trains or left a hotel without forgetting the long French cape which he wore over his broad shoulders. To Mary Dixon, who kept a motherly eye upon her father and his friend, it seemed as though she had two forgetful school-boys to look after, but she fully entered with them into the enjoyment of the trip.

Its special purpose was to visit the region which still contained numerous descendants of the Huguenots, a country filled with historic relics recording the heroism of those who had been ready to suffer and to die for their faith in Christ.

From Nîmes, the little party made pilgrimages to surrounding points of interest. Chief of these perhaps was Aiguesmortes, where stands the old Tour de Constance. Here, in days gone by, Christian men and women had been imprisoned for the crime of worshipping God in the simplicity of their Protestant faith. They had often been obliged to walk for miles to some secret rendezvous among the great rocks in the heart of the hill country, where, under the open sky, they could drink in the words of life from one of the brave Huguenot preachers, and partake together of the memorial bread and wine. Even there, they were liable to be discovered, dispersed and arrested by the dragoons. In a large room of the Tour de Constance the word “résistez” is engraved upon the pavement, said to have been done with persistent toil by one of the imprisoned women with her sewing needle. The two veteran pastors, French and American, bowed their heads together above the pregnant word as they prayed that the same courage and perseverance might be theirs under any testing that God might be pleased to send.

Sunday was spent in preaching at Lézan, in the Department of Gard, where they dined with Pasteur and Madame Pic. Next day a journey was taken to the Musée du Désert, high in the Cevennes, to visit the home of Roland, one of the leaders of the Camisards. News of the coming of the American preacher
had been spread abroad in the region, and the Protestants had gathered from the mountain villages for miles around. Near the house of Roland was a group of magnificent chestnut trees, thick with summer foliage. Beneath their shade stood Pasteur Saillens and A.C. Dixon, surrounded by a listening crowd of several hundred people whose faces were alight with spiritual interest. In the distant background lay the quiet village, where long ago their ancestors had risked their lives for their faith. The French pastor, standing close by the speaker, seemed not so much to translate as to give out to the people in their own language the exact thoughts of his friend’s heart. The two were in fact so one in spirit that the people seemed scarcely conscious of interpretation, and drank in the message eagerly.

On another day they stood together within the Reformed Church, an old Protestant Temple in the village of St. Jean-du-Gard, the birthplace of Pasteur Saillens. The long, plain, austere building contained nothing of the comfortable furnishings or harmonious luxury which is to be found in the Protestant churches of America. Members of the Free Church had given up their own evening service to join in the united gathering, and the Reformed Church was crowded. The people were alert with anticipation as the figures of the tall American and the broad-shouldered Frenchman passed through their midst and mounted to the little pulpit high above their heads. Once more a simple and eloquent message was given, conveyed through an interpretation so perfect and so unobtrusive that the people were almost unaware of the barrier of an alien tongue. In the man who addressed them they seemed to sense a spirit akin to their own and to that of their courageous ancestors. Something in the flash of his eye and the passion of his intense loyalty to the truth revealed how ardent a Huguenot he would have been had his lot been cast in France in the days of fierce conflict for the faith.

Soon after this A.C. Dixon happened to see an engraving, illustrating a secret Huguenot service in the open air among the great mountain boulders. It riveted his attention, and he stood gazing at it silently for some time.

“Could you get me a copy of that picture?” he said turning to Pasteur Saillens.

“I will do my best,” his friend answered.
Six months later a long cardboard case reached A.C. Dixon in Baltimore. Eagerly unrolling the picture contained therein and spreading it before him on a table, he drank in once more the scene of fearless determination to worship God at any cost, portrayed so vividly by Leenhardt in "Les Hérois de la Liberté de Conscience." Within a few days the picture was framed, and hung upon the wall of his study, to inspire him with new energy of spirit as he prepared his messages for the people of Baltimore. "It puts iron in the blood to look at it," he would say.

On returning from Nîmes, a Bible Conference was held in the "Institut Biblique" at Nogent-sur-Marne, after which A.C. Dixon crossed the Channel to England. When his taxi drove up to the door of the familiar hotel on Southampton Row in which he had lived for so much of the time during his eight years in London, he had a strange sense of returning home. Nothing seemed to have changed in the four years' interval. Even the faces of the guests seemed familiar. Some of them recognized him at once, as did many of the hotel employes. At the Metropolitan Tabernacle, where he spent a strenuous Sunday, he almost felt as though he had never left his English congregation. A few other engagements were completed in the British Isles before he sailed for Sweden to attend the Baptist World Congress in Stockholm.

More than eighteen years had gone by since he had left Ruggles Street to attend the first World Congress in London. Only one other had been held in the interim, meeting in Philadelphia in 1911, although European Congresses had taken place at Berlin in 1908, and at Stockholm in 1913. No sort of international gathering of Baptists had been possible since then on account of the Great War.

As soon as possible after the Armistice, a committee of the Baptist World Alliance had met in London in July, 1920, to confer upon the policies which should control a united Baptist effort to evangelize Europe, and to administer relief to its sorely distressed peoples. Representatives of the Southern Baptists of America, aware of the "liberal" policies that dominated the London conference, had insisted upon a co-ordinated rather than a co-operative missionary program for Europe. Under this arrangement, a special representative was elected to take charge of the mission work supported by the Southern Baptist Convention,
and subject only to its control. While, therefore, the distinctly religious departments of the work were under separate control, the larger community of interests linked together the modernistic and orthodox elements among the Baptists of the world in a way which A.C.Dixon feared would tend to weaken the testimony of the latter.

He had not hesitated to utter some fearless warnings on the subject, but his stand was unpopular, even in the Southland where he was greatly beloved, for the course of entirely separate action which he advocated on the part of Southern Baptists would be apt to dim the luster of denominational prestige. All the more urgent was his concern to deliver his soul of a short message at the Stockholm Congress, testifying to the need of “the whole Christ in the whole Bible for the whole world.” This testimony he succeeded in giving in face of considerable opposition on the part of a small but influential group.

During the visit to Sweden, he had the pleasure of preaching through interpretation in the Lutheran Church at Södertelje, an hour by rail from Stockholm. Among those who listened to his message were Prince Oscar Bernadotte and his beautiful wife. Through Rektor Johann Rinman, to whom as president of the Pocket Testament League in Sweden he had received an introduction, A.C.Dixon was invited to take tea with the Prince and Princess, and discovered at once that they were congenial spirits.

Although the Prince was a brother of the reigning king, A.C.Dixon found in him a humble servant of Christ and a trusted leader in the Christian circles of Sweden. Desiring to devote his life entirely to Christian service, Prince Bernadotte had renounced his right of succession to the throne, and had chosen for his life-partner the noble woman whose aims were one with his own. It is reported that an old Swedish countrywoman once said to the Prince: “Ah, I see you are the man who lost his crown.” “By no means,” was the response, “I am the man who won it.”

Every autumn for twenty-five years, Prince Bernadotte had organized a Swedish “Keswick” at Södertelje. Through these conferences and his own firm stand on the integrity of the Scriptures the Prince had done much to permeate the Christian community of his country with loyalty to the Word of God. The direct, forceful preaching of the American minister appealed to
him instantly, and he secured a promise from A.C. Dixon to address the Södertelje Convention at the first opportunity.

"Dr. Dixon was quite the fine Christian man and faithful servant of the Gospel that we expected him to be," wrote Rektor Rinman to the Pocket Testament League headquarters in London. "He got us into immediate touch with things vital for the furthering of Christ's cause in the world, and his sermon in the Lutheran Church here at Södertelje was even more to the point and to the heart than we could have possibly expected."

Returning to England, A.C. Dixon boarded the "Berengaria" at Southampton for the homeward voyage. Among his fellow-passengers he soon recognized a familiar face—that of Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin, his beloved comrade of olden days in Brooklyn. Through sheer industry and application, although neither a college man nor trained in a theological seminary, Dr. Woelfkin had come to be counted one of the outstanding preachers of his generation, and was now pastor of the Park Avenue Baptist Church in New York. The meeting caused A.C. Dixon pain as well as pleasure, for the two had drifted widely apart in spiritual outlook since the days when they had stood shoulder to shoulder in strenuous evangelistic campaigns and Bible Conferences. It was with a sense of keen regret that he had seen his friend gradually shift his theological position to that of extreme liberalism.

The bonds of old affection drew the two together as soon as they met. While they paced the decks of the "Berengaria" in earnest conversation during the voyage many a prayer went up from A.C. Dixon's soul that the old allegiance to the Gospel of Christ might be revived in the heart of his friend. Had he lived to see it, how gladly he would have welcomed the letter written by Dr. Woelfkin four years later from the Memorial Hospital in New York during his last illness. The letter was addressed to Dr. I. M. Haldeman, under whose ministry Dr. Woelfkin had been converted, and with whom he had formerly been as closely associated as with A.C. Dixon.

"I trust in that infinite, redeeming grace," the letter stated, "which forgives my sins through the merits of the cross, and cleanses my soul through the blood of Jesus Christ. I acknowledge Jesus as being my divine Saviour, my Lord, my God, my ALL."
A ROMANCE OF PREACHING

About a year after Dr. Woelfkin's death the letter was published in *The Watchman-Examiner* of New York, bringing comfort to many of his friends. Surely we may also believe that it added to the joy of those already in the Master's presence.

Just after the "Berengaria" had left Southampton the electrifying news was flashed through the air of the sudden and tragic death of Warren G. Harding, President of the United States, in the midst of his return journey from a visit to Alaska. As the senior American clergyman aboard, A.C. Dixon was requested by the captain to conduct memorial services in each passenger class of the ship.

In acceding to the request, he at once invited, not only Dr. Woelfkin, and an American Congressman who was aboard, but also a Catholic priest from Rochester, New York, to share the responsibility with him.

It was characteristic of A.C. Dixon that on an occasion where national matters only were concerned, he was prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder with any upright fellow-citizen, irrespective of creed, in paying tribute to his country. Yet a deeper loyalty to the King of kings made it just as impossible to him, when preaching the Gospel, to share his platform with any man who denied the authority of the Scriptures, or put the Church in their place as the repository of God's truth. In this instance he was agreeably rewarded by the ring of sincerity in the prayers uttered extemporaneously by the priest for their country's guidance in such a time of internal crisis.

With the opening of the autumn's work in Baltimore A.C. Dixon decided to use the triangular stretch of lawn upon which the chapel stood for open-air services. Round the wooden pulpit a small but enthusiastic company would gather, composed largely of the young people, from whose voices there floated out on the evening air the strains of familiar hymns. At other times the open-air meetings were held on the entrance steps of the chapel.

Periodic services at the Lyceum Theater were also continued, and every spare moment was devoted by the pastor to visiting the people in their homes. Slowly but steadily, a firm foundation was being laid for the future.

"Our baby church in Baltimore," he wrote to Pasteur Saillens, "is growing rather encouragingly. It numbers now over two hundred, and the
annual reports at the Association Meeting showed that the lusty infant stood at the head of all the churches in Maryland in amounts contributed to all objects."

As a matter of record, the University Baptist Church, strong in its unpretentious simplicity, was making itself felt under the quiet, forceful figure at its head as a power for God among the Baptists of the South.

It was a time in which the "Christian Fundamentals Association," which A.C. Dixon constantly served as a speaker, was playing a useful part among all the denominations. Its aim was to break down indifference and the actual ignorance of Christian doctrine that provided such good shelter for modernist sappers and miners.

"The war in America between Modernism and Fundamentalism waxes hot," A.C. Dixon wrote. "The Modernists who have been under camouflage are coming out into the open, but the sad part is that many who are Fundamentalists at heart refuse to show their colors. There is much need of prayer."
CHAPTER XXVI

THE STRENGTH OF A NEW COMRADESHIP

In his vision of service for God through the remaining span of life, there had been in A.C. Dixon's mind no thought of re-marriage. An unexpected meeting with the widow of his old friend, Charles M. Alexander, suddenly aroused in him, however, a strength of desire for her companionship and co-operation in his work, that was an astonishment to himself.

His first overtures were repulsed almost with indignation, for the thought of re-marriage had been as remote from her mind as from his own. But the mutual understanding of a grief, possible only to those who have scaled the utmost heights of life's most sacred relationship, formed a bond between the two, which upon the common ground of similar interests and ideals quickly deepened into something more than ordinary friendship.

“It all seems like a dream—almost too good to be true—that I am to have my dreary loneliness banished,” A.C. Dixon wrote to one of his daughters. “No one can ever take Mother's place with us, any more than I can take Charlie Alexander’s place with her, but I know that God has given her for a blessing. The fact that my children are pleased about our marriage gives me great pleasure. I feel that I am beginning a new life-work, in which she will be a true helpmeet.”

The fact that Mrs. Alexander was as much at home as himself on either side of the Atlantic was an added bond between them, for they already shared many friendships in common in the Christian circles of England and America.

“Though born in England, Mrs. Alexander is an American citizen, and a hundred per cent American in spirit and sympathy,” he wrote to a sister-in-law. “She is of Quaker family, with wide Christian sympathies, and will be a great help to me in the life-work that remains.”

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The marriage took place quietly in London on January 25th, 1924. Ten days were spent on the coast of Cornwall among the rugged beauties of the British Riviera, which even in winter attract the attention of artists. The picturesque fishing villages, the cliffs crowned with emerald turf or heathery moorland and broken by rocky coves, the clear sand shining like gold in the winter sunshine to the edge of white surf and azure of sparkling water, provided an alluring background for long rambles over the country-side.

The Polurrian Hotel, in which they were staying, stands solitary on the cliffs near Mullion. Before many hours had passed the presence of the visitors was discovered, and A.C. Dixon was invited to preach to a united gathering of Nonconformist congregations in Mullion on the Sunday evening. His name and his message had long been familiar to the villagers and fisher-folk of Cornwall through the pages of The Christian Herald of London and other religious magazines. In some of the little shops at Mullion and The Lizard he was quickly recognized and was given a true Cornish welcome.

One day he went with his wife to the village cobbler's in Mullion for some needed shoe repairs. The old cobbler, a "man of parts" like Hans Sachs, was surprisingly well read and informed, and full of a quaint wisdom and humor that had raised him to a place of leadership in village affairs. Seated on benches against the walls of his little workshop sat the worthies of Mullion—his "parliament," as he liked to call them. Scrutinizing his tall American customer as he presented the faulty shoe, the cobbler asked, "Be'ant you Dr. Dixon from Lon'on?" following his words with a horny-handed clasp of greeting that expressed the warmth of his kindly soul. Between the strokes of his hammer on the last, he uttered ejaculatory remarks showing intelligent appreciation of some of the Doctor's sermons which he had read. The general conversation of the gathered "parliamentarians," old and young, became an animated theological discussion, as this one and that told what had appealed to him in the sermons with which he was familiar. By the time the shoe was repaired and fitted to the owner's foot, the room was filled with a friendly atmosphere and all stood for a word of prayer before the visitors departed.

Next day, they entered a small provision shop to buy some
fruit. "Why, it's Dr. Dixon!" exclaimed the rosy-cheeked old woman behind the counter. "Wait till I get my husband. He would never forgive me if I let you go. We have read your sermons for years." When the grey-bearded old Cornishman came into the room, he rushed up to the American preacher, and clasping him round the waist, danced round and round with him in his delight. "I never expected to clap eyes on ye," he exclaimed. Not a penny would the old couple take, but urged their visitors to help themselves to anything in the little shop. Two of the largest bananas and two of the reddest apples were finally selected to the satisfaction of the generous donors.

At the crowded Sunday service, after some hearty singing which made the roof ring, there was a quiet hush upon the older people and the children as they drank in the glowing message from A.C. Dixon's life-text:

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."

Many hands were raised for prayer, and the congregation dispersed with a sense of having been brought near to the courts of heaven.

"Tennessee," the English home now his, with its melodious memories of the great leader of Gospel song, was a place of spiritual and physical refreshment to A.C. Dixon. Only a short stay there was possible for the present, and after a week-end in Holland, the "Berengaria" bore him back across the Atlantic, this time not alone.

By the first Sunday in March, he stood once more before his congregation in the University Baptist Church in Baltimore. The radiance of his countenance and a new spring in his step bespoke fresh vigor for the work so dear to his heart. Life seemed, indeed, to have begun anew, with enlarging opportunities on every hand.

He literally carried the people of his church upon his heart, for it was his custom to keep in his vest pocket a small loose-leaf note-book containing the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the members. Many a time, at his private devotions or when traveling by train or aboard ship, he would take it out, to go over the names one by one, lifting his heart to God on behalf of each in turn. Through this medium he had already
introduced his wife to her future friends in Baltimore, so that it was almost without a sense of strangeness that she first made their acquaintance.

A session of the School of Biblical Research, in which Dr. Robert Dick Wilson gave a series of lectures upon "The Foundations of the Old Testament," occupied the first week after the return to Baltimore. A month later, Dr. Melvin G. Kyle gave the results of another visit of exploration, this time in Palestine. A.C. Dixon's enthusiasm was contagious. In spite of adverse weather conditions, he succeeded in bringing out a goodly company of people from all parts of Baltimore to hear how the ancient cemetery and the "high place" set up for pagan worship had been discovered at the southern end of the Dead Sea, proving that near by lay the submerged site of the famous "Cities of the Plain," whose very existence and tragic fate had been questioned. The "Bronze Age" pottery and other relics found there confirmed the accuracy of the Mosaic document which had borne its testimony so long alone.

A.C. Dixon's plan for establishing a permanent Bible University in Baltimore had centered largely in the hope that Dr. Griffith Thomas would consent to preside over it, for in addition to his striking presence and lovable personality, Dr. Thomas possessed the needed qualities of ripe scholarship and unwavering loyalty to the Word of God. It was with a shock of deep sorrow that A.C. Dixon, with thousands of others, received news early in June, 1924, that Dr. Thomas had been called Home after a short, sharp illness. His departure meant at least a postponement of the larger scheme for the School of Biblical Research.

For some time A.C. Dixon had watched with regret a narrowing of opportunity for the evangelistic campaigns in which formerly whole Christian communities had united with such magnificent results. Imitators of the great evangelists had used their influence over the crowds to promulgate faith-healing fads and other cults, or to gain personal power and financial benefit, thus bringing evangelism in general under a cloud of suspicion. Evangelistic leaders of the wholesome and self-sacrificing type such as Moody, Torrey and Chapman, were fast being called Home or were drawing near to the end of their labors. Doors were closing on this side and on that.
Meanwhile also, as A.C.Dixon had foreseen, the wide-spread belief in the evolution of the human race from an animal stock had been producing its deadly fruit of disbelief in sin as such, with a corresponding indifference to the need of salvation. In the undying hunger of the soul men were turning to spiritism and other mocking deceptions for elusive comfort and satisfaction.

The faith of A.C.Dixon leaped all the more eagerly to meet the needs of this critical period by any method which would honor the Bible and make Christ known. For he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, and knew that, however applied, it was still the power of God unto salvation to every one who would believe it. In an effort to stir up public interest he secured Dr. G.Campbell Morgan for a three weeks' course of Bible lectures, in various sections of Baltimore, as well as in his own church. The splendid attendances and keen interest aroused in Bible study cheered him immensely.

Beyond these local efforts, he was occupied in a more extensive field. Between March and July he traveled hither and thither, chiefly between Sundays, accompanied everywhere by his wife and comrade in the service of the Gospel. At the beginning of May he was chief speaker in a conference on Rescue Missions in New York. Two days were spent amid the hurrying throngs at the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. Here he came into touch with a host of the friends of early years and appealed to the Baptists of the South to continue an unfaltering testimony to the foundation truths of their faith. A week later he was holding evangelistic meetings in the Baptist Church at Warren, Ohio, traveling North again in June for the annual assembly of the Christian Fundamentals Association in Minneapolis. This was followed by a week-end with the Moody Church in Chicago, where the welcome given to its former pastor was as warm as ever.

A full program for the summer lay before him on the other side of the ocean, but before sailing he found time for a flying visit to his grandchildren and their parents, now established for the hot season of the year in their home at Black Mountain, North Carolina. Even a short time of breathing his native mountain air, and of enjoying the grandeur of forest-clad ranges refreshed him in body and mind.

On arrival in England, he must needs play the part of a busy
host at "Tennessee" for a few weeks to a constant succession of guests. Some hailed from Baltimore and other parts of America, while his wife's sister and her husband, Dr. Neville Bradley of Yunnan-Fu, had come from their missionary work in China to spend the summer with their children, three of whom had made their home for some years with their aunt at "Tennessee."

Three of the August Sundays A.C. Dixon gave to Edinburgh, preaching in Charlotte Chapel. It was the height of the tourist season, and many of the visitors to the Scottish capital found their way to the services. On the last Sunday a great hush fell in the crowded church when fourteen persons confessed Christ as Saviour in response to A.C. Dixon's appeal. His voice was heard also in the old Mission at Carrubber's Close and at the Railway Mission; and from the curtained recesses of the Edinburgh broadcasting station another sermon was wafted out over the British Isles.

The two short intervals between these busy Sundays were spent with his wife and her niece, Helen Alexander, amid the wild beauty of the Scottish Highands to the north of Edinburgh. On a rough golf course at St. Fillans, near the shining waters of Loch Earn, he and his companions followed their flying balls over the breezy links, reveling in the panorama of tumbled mountains that surrounded them on every side and in the fragrance of the heather, glowing purple among the grey rocks. As they motored back to Birmingham a glimpse was caught of the beautiful English Lakes, and then began a series of meetings in various parts of England in connection with the Pocket Testament League.

A more extended preaching tour followed, through Sweden, Holland and France. The voyage from Hull was made with only two other fellow-passengers aboard a tiny steamer that tossed about like a cork in the stormy seas off the rock-bound coast of Sweden. Taking part according to promise in the Convention at Södertelje, A.C. Dixon was enabled through the skilful interpretation of Rektor Rinman to address a large number of Swedish pastors. In Stockholm he and his wife were the guests of Prince and Princess Bernadotte in their palace on the Östermalms-gatan. The gracious hospitality, and the evidences of an ideal Christian home life, were things long to be remembered.
Each morning at family worship, in which the servants of the household joined, Princess Ebba would seat herself at the small organ to accompany the singing of hymns in English or in Swedish, after which the Prince would read the Scriptures, and pour out his heart in petition and praise.

Standing in the drawing-room of the palace one afternoon in conversation with A.C. Dixon, Prince Bernadotte beckoned to his side an old Laplander, Nils Jonasson, who had often been his guide on missionary travels in the north. With his arm laid affectionately across the old man’s shoulders, the Prince told his guest the touching story of Nils’ conversion. The little Laplander in his colorful costume stood between the tall black figures of the Prince and the American preacher, gazing up first at one and then at the other as they conversed in the strange English tongue. All three seemed entirely oblivious to their surroundings while they rejoiced together over God’s goodness in leading a soul into the light of the Gospel.

On leaving Sweden the Dixons were accompanied by Rektor Rinman as far as Holland. Meetings celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Dutch Pocket Testament League were held in Amsterdam, The Hague, and at Dordrecht, and were addressed through interpretation by A.C. Dixon. Large congregations of Dutch people, usually decorously solemn, relaxed from their normal staid behavior in the warmth of the Pocket Testament League atmosphere. Answering the League challenge, the members, many of them dressed in their quaint national costume, lifted their Testaments high in the air as they sang with enthusiasm the Dutch version of the rally hymn: “Carry your Bible with you.”

Pastor Otto Lüdecke, president of the Pocket Testament League in Germany, and Miss E.W. MacGill from the International headquarters in London, had come to Holland to join in the anniversary gatherings. This, with America and Sweden represented, made quite a cosmopolitan platform. Domini Dijs Boeke, president of the League in Holland, and Miss van der Mersch, its secretary, were kept hard at work interpreting for their foreign visitors.

The next objective on the itinerary was Paris, and here the chief matter of personal interest was to see the new home established by Mary Dixon and a French friend as a private Foyer or
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hostel for students in connection with the Union Chrétienne. As in the previous year, A.C.Dixon preached both to English and French congregations, lecturing also to the students at the Institut Biblique at Nogent-sur-Marne.

The outstanding services were those held for a week in the Salle de Géographie. A mixed assembly crowded the hall, including a large number of people who were evidently strangers to any place of worship. Pasteur Saillens was once more the inimitable interpreter for his friend. At the close of the first address, the French pastor invited a public intimation of willingness to take Christ as Saviour, feeling a little doubtful as to his own wisdom in doing so. To the surprise of A.C.Dixon and himself, there was an immediate response in the raising of many hands. At a further invitation, sixty-two persons rose and walked forward to the platform with quiet determination. That such indications of a spiritual revival should be manifested in the heart of Paris as the result of a single meeting was an unexpected favor of God.

Such was the interest created that Pasteur Saillens felt justified in arranging for a weekly service in the Salle de Géographie throughout the following winter. An American friend who was present during the October meetings was so impressed by the results that a gift of fifteen hundred francs surprised A.C.Dixon when he opened a budget of mail just before leaving Paris. It was characteristic of him to forward the entire check immediately to Pasteur Saillens with a note:

"This was sent to me to cover the expense of our work here. My wife and I wish to thank you for this opportunity of testimony for Christ and the truth in Paris. Our work has been a great joy to us, and we hope that it will continue to bear fruit in the future."

Meetings of the Bible League and other services occupied some of the remaining time in England. Not many days were left to enjoy the comfort of home life and of fellowship with the family circle in and around "Tennessee," but they made up in intensity what they lacked in extent. In the quiet of his garden study, A.C.Dixon hastily prepared the material for some new booklets, and sent out a letter of greeting to each member of his church in Baltimore, begging their co-operation in a series of daily services to be held immediately on his return.
With renewed energy of mind and of body, and with spirit refreshed by the summer's experiences, he threw himself into these November meetings at the University Baptist Church, preaching daily on "The Historic Jesus, as revealed in the Acts of the Apostles." More and more he determined like Paul to know nothing among men but "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

Much prayer had preceded this special effort. Some of the students from Goucher College and Johns Hopkins University—several foreign students among them—attended the services. While there were no spectacular results, the few decisions made for Christ were clear and deliberate.

One such was of particular interest, on the part of Mr. Kin Wei Shaw, Dean of the School of Economics and Professor of Public Finance at the Government College of Law and Political Science at Hangchow, China. Mr. Shaw was doing post-graduate work at Johns Hopkins University, studying the constitution of the United States and its legal system.

It was with a thrill of gratitude to God that A.C. Dixon saw this brilliantly educated Chinese scholar lift his hand for prayer during one of the November meetings, and walk firmly to the front when the invitation was given to accept Christ. In the month of December, with several others, Mr. Shaw was baptized, and was received into the membership of the church. Shortly afterwards, he left for New York, carrying in his pocket the small Testament given him by his pastor in Baltimore. While reading for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Columbia University Mr. Shaw wrote:

"I am not so busy as before, so now I will try and study the Bible, chapter by chapter, as the Pocket Testament League advises. By doing this I am sure I shall understand the hidden truths of Christianity more deeply and more fully."

About a year later, an offer of appointment from the Chekiang Provincial Government to the presidency of the Law School at Hangchow recalled Mr. Shaw to his native land.

"Dr. Dixon certainly gave spiritual enlightenment to those who had the opportunity of associating with him," he wrote to a friend in America. "He enabled me to understand Christianity, and his sound teachings and his kindness will always be heartily appreciated."
CHAPTER XXVII

"I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH"

The milestone of "three score years and ten" had now been passed, but there was no flagging in the energy which had characterized A.C. Dixon's long ministry in the Gospel. The flash of his eye, the ring of his voice, the alert uprightness of his carriage, bespoke a physical vigor that seemed undiminished.

His uncompromising stand for evangelical truth, combined with a true knightliness of spirit, and a refusal to be drawn off into extremes or vagaries, caused him to be greatly in demand for his strong presentation of the apostolic message. Invitations poured in upon him, not only from various parts of his own country, but from Europe and other distant regions. Plans were in progress for an extended preaching tour in 1926. From China had come a request that he should take part again in the Missionary Conferences at Kuling and Kikungshan and Peitaho. A series of meetings in Australia and New Zealand were to follow the tour in China.

It was with the unabated zest and enthusiasm of younger days that A.C. Dixon entered into the drawing up of this program, for the opportunity of giving a testimony for Christ around the world had been a long-cherished desire. The year just ahead was mapped out in advance with numerous engagements in America and Great Britain, while the chief burden immediately upon his heart was the development of his Baltimore church. Upon this he determined to concentrate all his available time and strength in view of the prolonged absence in prospect for 1926.

Upon his recent return from England, a new matter had arisen which provoked additional thought and prayer. It concerned the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, now housed for several years in the magnificent block of buildings erected for it by Mr. Lyman Stewart. In addition to the Bible School with its average

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of three hundred and fifty students, and the Church of the Open Door, which had reached a membership of thirteen hundred, the institution had many ramifications. It included a number of independent missions, a book-room, a printing department, with a monthly magazine, a hotel and cafeteria, and correspondence courses connected with the Bible School.

Los Angeles had the curious qualities of a city without a background. Hardly an adult, residing in it at that time, had been born there. Its phenomenal growth, and the mixed elements of its population, provided fertile soil for all manner of social and religious experiments. Good and evil flourished side by side in the vivid present of its rapid evolution, and the Bible Institute had a needy field to work upon.

Through the death of Mr. Lyman Stewart in the fall of 1923, only two months before that of his brother, the Institute had been bereft of a beneficent personal influence. Dr. Torrey had been an important element in its life for thirteen years, but his recent resignation had left the School without a Dean and the Church without a pastor. A. C. Dixon, with his keen interest in the Bible School movement, had followed the career of the Los Angeles School with particular warmth of sympathy.

He had been somewhat uneasy, especially since Dr. Torrey's departure, lest the school might become entangled with a new faith-healing cult of unenviable notoriety that had begun to strike deep root in Los Angeles. It offered to the public the tragic allurements with which such cults are always apt to appeal to sufferers, especially to neurotic minds whose sufferings are largely imaginary. A. C. Dixon's verdict upon the whole subject, then so much under discussion, was: "I believe in faith-healing, but not in faith-healers." Commendation of the new cult by a few individuals connected with the Los Angeles Bible Institute had given color to unfortunate rumors that the School itself was in sympathy with it. As a matter of fact, the official policy of the Institute had been neither to commend nor to condemn, in order to avoid advertising a false system. But the time had now come when neutrality must be abandoned.

In the midst of this difficult situation, the Board of Directors keenly felt their need of a strong, well-poised man of experience around whom the various elements in the composite life of the Bible Institute would rally, and whose leadership would
vouch for its stability to the Christian public. The result was a
letter which reached A.C.Dixon in Baltimore late in November,
1924.

"The members of the Board are unanimous," wrote their chairman,
in their earnest desire that you shall come to us as Dean. You are
familiar with the work and the workers, and the faculty would rejoice at
your coming. We know of no man who could so adequately fill the need
at this time."

Moved by this unexpected call, A.C.Dixon cast himself upon
God for light as to what assistance he might be able to render,
at least by his counsel. The months spent in Los Angeles in for-
mer years had given him some insight into the workings of the
Institute and its many problems. He decided, therefore, with
the consent of his deacons, to take two or three weeks to cross
the continent, leaving Dr.C.C.Cox, the "Chris Cox" of long-ago
days in Baltimore, to fill the pulpit of the University Baptist
Church during his absence.

Reaching Los Angeles just after Christmas, he entered with-
out delay upon his strenuous and difficult task. For a week he was
at work from morning till night, conferring with groups and
individuals, and studying the situation from every angle.

It was with a sense of having accomplished the main pur-
pose of his visit that he set out on the return to Baltimore. Every-
thing which might give color to the rumored connection with
the faith-healing cult was removed from the Institute, and its
other problems must be faced with prayerful patience.

And now, with utter unexpectedness, there came upon this
faithful servant of God the first indications of that fiery trial
which in the mystery of Divine love and wisdom was to work out
for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Dur-
ing the stay in Los Angeles, and on the return journey, he be-
gan to be troubled by severe attacks of pain at the base of the
spine, recurring regularly for an hour or two each afternoon and
then disappearing. So accute was the suffering while it lasted, that
he decided to consult his physician as soon as possible.

January was a busy month, however, for as usual he con-
sidered it one of the best times in the year for special effort.
A session of the School of Biblical Research was held in the
church. Dr.Kyle who gave the results of a new visit of explora-
tion by the Dead Sea, was his guest at the Homewood, and the two enjoyed a rare time of fellowship. Other visitors included his daughter-in-law, his old friend Wm.E.Needham, and Mrs.Go-forth of China.

To Pasteur Saillens, whom he expected to see in Paris during the summer ahead, he wrote:

"It was perfectly clear to me that I could not accept the call to the deanship of the Los Angeles Bible Institute, though I thought it worth while to cross the Continent to give what help I could. My wife and I returned to Baltimore with renewed conviction that we should give ourselves as far as possible to the important work here.

"During the past five or six weeks I have had rather severe attacks of arthritic rheumatism, and it looks as if I may have to suspend work for a while in order to have some teeth extracted, which the doctor thinks are causing the trouble. My general health is good, but the severe pain has not been pleasant."

Alarmed by reports of her brother's suffering, Dr.Delia Dixon Carroll hastened from Raleigh, North Carolina, to consult with his physician and to impress upon her brother the importance of neglecting nothing that might help to preserve his strength.

For three days he entered the new Union Memorial Hospital, within a few blocks of the Homewood Apartments. A somewhat drastic dental operation was performed, eliminating the delay which would otherwise have kept him for a prolonged period from the work he loved. Owing to the skill of the doctors he was only incapacitated from public speaking for a month.

During those quiet weeks he had time to think out to a definite conclusion a matter which had been troubling him. No man was more whole-heartedly at one than he with the confession of faith held by the Christian Fundamentals Association, and with its declared object of seeking to counteract the menace of modernistic education, especially the teaching of Darwinism, everywhere prevalent. In matters of creed he was equally in harmony with the Baptist Bible Union of America, upon whose executive committee his name stood first.

Complications had arisen, however, with regard to the relationship of this latter organization to their own denomination in the South. By many it was felt that since the official pronouncements of the Southern Baptist Convention rang true, and
the great majority of pastors and people were loyal to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, there was little need for a separate organization within the denomination to emphasize a cleavage therein. The growing influence exerted upon the councils of the Baptist Bible Union by a popular Southern preacher had caused A.C. Dixon some concern for a year or two. The methods employed in the name of Fundamentalism did not always savor of the spirit of Christ. On the part of some, there seemed to be a seeking after notoriety and a tendency to vituperative personalities that infinitely harmed the cause for which they stood.

A.C. Dixon was fully aware that his own denomination, even in the South, was not entirely free from the inroads of Modernism. But he preferred to use the method of direct dealing rather than the public pillory. To the president of a Baptist College in North Carolina who had openly espoused the cause of evolution he had written:

"I am sure you are seeking to be a Christian Evolutionist. I hope you will succeed better than a dozen or more educators in the North, who began within my memory by claiming that evolution was God's method of creation and development, and harmonizes with the Biblical record.

"They have ended, however, by flatly denying the Biblical account of man's creation in the image of God, his fall through sin, and his redemption from sin through Christ's atoning death. They are now rationalistic modernists, denying almost every fundamental of historic Christianity.

"This is all traceable to their acceptance of the unproved theory that man came up from the beast, rather than down from God as the Bible teaches. The basal proposition of this theory, that the strong and the fit have the scientific right to destroy the weak and the unfit and to build themselves up upon the wreck, has deluged the world with blood, and is today doing more than any other force in the world to prevent peace and goodwill among men."

The determination to oppose such teaching had strengthened year by year. Yet it was with a real sense of relief that A.C. Dixon now came to the conclusion that loyalty to Christ and the Bible no longer demanded from him the antagonistic attitude towards the majority of his fellow-ministers, which membership in the Baptist Bible Union had come to imply in the South. On February 19th, 1925, he wrote to the president of the Union:
"After prayerfully considering the whole situation as it now exists, I am convinced that the Baptist Bible Union of America has fulfilled its great mission, and ought, therefore, to be dissolved.

"It has raised the danger signal, and has thoroughly aroused the Baptist denomination to the perils of Modernism. It has made it easy for Fundamentalists to bear testimony to the truth within our churches, Associations and Conventions. This work from within ought to continue with increased energy, and I believe that it can now be done more effectively without any other organization.

"I, therefore, resign my position as a member of the Board of Managers and my membership in the Baptist Bible Union of America, believing that God will lead the Fundamentalists to ultimate victory in our beloved denomination."

Only a man with the courage of his convictions could have taken this stand, for he was well aware that his action was likely to be misunderstood, causing possible pain to friends with whom he stood shoulder to shoulder theologically, and perhaps some gratification to opponents of conservative belief.

Some of his associates among the Fundamentalists were at first bewildered and distressed by his resignation, but events occurring within the next few years proved the unerring keenness and correctness of his judgment. In a quick wave of warm Southern feeling, many of his old friends in the South, who were with him in matters of faith, but had regretted his association with the extreme "left wing" of Fundamentalism, expressed their thankfulness. His determination to avoid bitterness and unethical modes of contention greatly strengthened his strong personal testimony to the Divine authority of the Bible.

It was not long before the news of his resignation reached China, where the "Bible Union of China" had been making a firm stand against entanglement with extremists. Rev. E.G. Tewksbury, secretary of the China Conference Committee, was at first greatly puzzled when one of the leading Modernists in China informed him with an air of satisfaction of A.C. Dixon's resignation from the Baptist Bible Union. "Knowing your strong stand for the truth," he wrote in a letter which A.C. Dixon did not live to read, "and your desire to help forward all legitimate measures for maintaining the historic faith, it caused us some anxiety."

It could not be denied that there were some in China, who,
in writing and by word of mouth were proclaiming “another Gospel.” A statement drawn up by Mr. D. E. Hoste of the China Inland Mission clearly showed the “irreconcilable difference” which divided the missionaries on the field. Yet the Bible Union of China was determined not to admit into its membership any who insisted on using unfair tactics even in the cause of truth. The counsel and help of A. C. Dixon was therefore eagerly desired and anticipated.

“Nothing is more needed,” wrote Mr. Tewksbury, “than a revival of true religion through Bible study and prayer throughout the mission fields of the world. . . . The key men and women in the Bible Union are, as you know, eager for anything along this line, but most of them are absolutely weighed down with their own mission affairs. While we are doing nothing but ‘stand,’ Satan and his host—some of them white angels and some black—are undermining the whole missionary movement, not the least by getting control of the higher educational institutions. Would that God would show you leaders at home how to advise us missionaries.

“I was moved by your letter to the Baptist Bible Union to write and see if God was leading you to some clearer view of the position and of the efforts that conservatives should make. I hope you may have some word from the Lord to suggest to those to whom the home churches have given an ambassadorship for Him in foreign lands.”

But God had unexpected developments in store both for His servant and for China. One was to be called Home, and the other cast into the throes of a revolution which would bring drastic changes to the whole missionary situation.

On March 1st, after an interval of but three Sundays, A. C. Dixon stood once more in his pulpit at the University Baptist Church, to give an undying message upon the text: “And ye know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose.” It was an unexpected relief to find that his articulation was as clear and unhampered as before the operation. Without doubt, God had seen fit to make possible the fruitful ministry of a few more weeks.

“Our work here is going on quietly and encouragingly,” he wrote to Pasteur Saillens on March 13th. “It looks as if we might go forward at once with the building of our new auditorium.
"It is a great joy to hear of the good results of your meetings. The people of Paris impressed me as being hungry for the Gospel."

"The pains which were the result of my infected teeth have been even more severe since the teeth were extracted. How long they will last, the doctors do not know, but they give me hope that sooner or later I shall be freed from them; otherwise I am feeling very well.

"Mrs. Dixon and I have taken so many engagements for the summer in England that it looks as if it will be impossible for us to spend a week with you at the Morges Convention. The fact is, I want to rest as much as possible this coming summer, in preparation for a strenuous winter’s work.

One treatment after another was experimented with, and in spite of ever-increasing pain A.C.Dixon heroically continued to carry on the work of his pastorate. Several engagements outside Baltimore were cancelled, however, including one in Jacksonville, Florida, on which he had particularly set his heart. He had determined to devote his Sunday morning addresses for the next year or two to the subject of “Christ in the Bible,” covering the whole ground, book by book. Through these spring months he was presenting “Christ in the Book of Romans.”

It seemed to those who listened that the power and grace of his messages had never been surpassed. Some who had heard him in the ardor of youthful days recognized the same burning eloquence, mellowed with the richness of a life-time’s experience. To those who knew his condition, it seemed no less than a miracle that he should be able to stand upright in public and preach with the apparent vigor and energy of a man in perfect health.

By the middle of March his sufferings had become so intense that the doctors, whose best efforts at diagnosis were baffled, advised him to give up even local engagements, including his Tuesday night Men’s Bible Class at the Y.M.C.A.

“I have been confined to my room for a while,” ran a dictated letter to his old friend, Mr.Manning. “No cure has yet come, though the teeth, which were said to be the cause of my trouble, were removed six weeks ago.

“I am trying to keep up my regular work at the prayer-meeting and of preaching on Sunday, but shall have to beg my friends to excuse me for a while from all outside engagements. Please pray that God’s healing hand may be laid upon me so that I may be restored to full active service.”

Every morning his mail received regular attention. His Bible and Greek Testament and other books were piled around him on the bed, and every spare moment was given to concentrated
I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH

preparation of four sermons which he was determined to preach if possible. In them he desired to make clear the utter difference between a glorious and satisfying faith rooted in Scriptural revelation and belief which is based upon speculative human philosophies. Cards announcing these addresses, for the Sunday afternoons from March 22nd to April 12th, were widely distributed, and attracted a large number of attenders from other churches.

“There is to-day a world war in religion,” the announcement stated, “and every intelligent person ought to know the issues involved. On one side are those known as Fundamentalists, on the other side those known as Modernists.”

In the first of his four themes, the Bible as the bed-rock of faith was compared with the distorted Bible of Modernism. In the second, the fact of salvation by grace through faith was contrasted with the unattainable ideal of salvation through service; while in the third, the doctrine of creation with development was presented in its sublime reasonableness as against the theory of evolution through variation.

The work of three Sundays was bravely accomplished, and God gave to His servant such power of mind and spirit that few who heard him preach realized that he was in the midst of a mortal combat with pain.

On April 6th, the doctors decided to attempt a new treatment, and his body was encased in a plaster jacket. With this added discomfort and encumbrance he rose to preach as usual on the morning of Easter Sunday, April 12th. In a glowing message that seemed to come from another world, he unveiled to his people the majesty of the Risen Christ as revealed in the Epistle to the Romans:

“For whether we live, we live to the Lord; and whether we die, we die to the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord of the dead and of the living.”

Upborne by the strength of an indomitable will, and resting upon God, he succeeded that Easter afternoon in completing the last of his four special addresses. His subject was the Millennium to be ushered in by the Second Coming of Christ, as com-
pared with the vain hopes of a golden age to be attained through human effort. Like a true prophet of God, he "opened the Scriptures," Old and New, which portray the glories of Christ's future reign in Person over the earth. On this Easter Sunday he seemed to speak with more than his usual vigor and persuasiveness, and neither to himself nor his hearers came any foreshadowing that these were to be his last public utterances. Had he been aware of it, he could have made no more marvelous choice of messages with which to close his life-long ministry.

A complete cancellation of all engagements was decreed for a while when Easter Sunday was over. Anxious to help in every way towards recovery, A.C. Dixon relinquished the almost superhuman efforts that he had been making, and allowed himself to relax. But he determined that his people at the University Church should have the best that he could procure for them, and immediately secured speakers for the following three Sundays. He made personal arrangements with Dr. John McNeill, the famous Scottish preacher, then in Philadelphia, not only to take his pulpit for a Sunday, but also to hold noon and evening services in the roof garden of the Garden Theater on Lexington Street. When news reached John McNeill some weeks later that his friend had gone to be with Christ, he wrote to Mrs. Dixon:

"The news has shaken me up all day. Words cannot tell how, through many years, A.C. Dixon has been in my heart, as I believe I was in his. I admired him even physically, and loved to look at him as well as to hear his words. Time did not seem to weaken or wither him, and I looked for long and happy days for him and for you. I was glad to think how fitting it was that your lives should run together, and that you were chosen to be at Dixon's side in what to him must have been the hardest campaign of his life. He was no ordinary man, and he fought no ordinary battle."

As yet, however, no thought had reached A.C. Dixon's mind that, under the blessing of God, his suffering was not curable. Filled with longing to return to the work he loved, he called together his deacons, who gathered round him in his room at the Homewood, and entreated God to heal His servant speedily, with or without means, if that should be His will.

The plaster cast, which had been patiently endured for three weeks, was removed, for it had proved useless for his relief.
Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman and Charles M. Alexander
A Group of Friends

* Photo: Russell and Sons
August 29th, 1924

Dear friends,

I take it for granted that, as a member of the University Baptist Church, you are one of my personal friends, a friend of the church, and of the Lord Jesus Christ. May I not presume upon this threefold friendship to make the following earnest request:

1. That you pray boldly for a revival in our church and city that will result in the conversion of men, women, and children who are not Christians. "There are all with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer." Acts 1:14.

2. That you select one or more persons who, as far as you know, are not Christians and pray daily for their conversion. "Ask and it shall be given you." Luke 11:9.

3. That you so arrange your business and social engagements that you will be able to attend every evening a series of evangelistic meetings which we expect to hold from November 16 to 30, 1924. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33.

4. That you seek to interest your friends and neighbors in these meetings, and as the time approaches, invite them to attend. "Go ye out into the highways and hedges and constrain them to come in, that my house may be filled." Luke 14:23.

Yours cordially,

J. C. Dixon

Letter to the Members of the University Baptist Church, Baltimore
"I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH"

After its removal, even his great natural strength began to collapse under the fierce onslaughts of pain.

Two days later, his four grandchildren and their parents spent a night at the Homewood on the way to their mountain home in North Carolina. As, one by one, they bade him goodbye, and his small namesake was lifted up to pat his cheek with a soft chubby hand, they little thought that they were looking into the beloved face for the last time.

The necessity for constant nursing soon became evident, and on May 4th, A.C. Dixon was taken in an ambulance from his home to the near-by Union Memorial Hospital. His only son, Faison, had just arrived in New York from South America, and came at once to Baltimore with his wife, remaining close by his father till the end. Mary was summoned by cable from Paris and arrived in time to be near her father also for the last week. About this time, Frank Dixon, the youngest of the three well-known brothers, was stricken with pneumonia on one of his lecture tours, and passed away at his home in Brooklyn. A.C. Dixon was not told of his brother's death.

Through a life of seventy years, many a test of faith had been given him. To each he had responded with meekness and courage, and with unquestioning trust in the love and wisdom of the Lord to whom his life had been committed. This final and severest test, lasting for six long months, was a supreme challenge to his faith, but was met triumphantly.

On Armistice Day in November 1923, in a sermon on War and Peace, he had compared the battlefields of war with those of disease or disaster in times of peace, showing that it is only possible to reconcile either with the goodness of God by remembering that man is created an eternal being, and that "death is God's method of colonization."

"There certainly arise conditions in which our heavenly Father knows that it will be best for His children on earth to be removed to another world. This process will continue its work until the Lord of Life shall appear and abolish death for all who are His.

"The kind of death matters little. Personally I have never prayed, 'From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us.' To me, that is the ideal removal. If God should give me the choice between a bullet in battle, and death by lingering disease, I would choose the former without a moment's
hesitation. But I believe when we look back upon the events of life from the heights of glory we shall see that no mistake was ever made in removing anybody at the wrong time, in the wrong way, or to the wrong place."

The weeks of shining Christian testimony in the hospital left a deep impression, not only upon the doctors, but upon his devoted nurses, and the whole hospital staff. The orderlies scarcely waited for the ringing of his bell, and were always on the watch to give their assistance. To each of them and to his nurses A.C. Dixon gave a pocket Testament, with a request to carry and read it regularly.

"To see his wonderful spirit, his thoughtfulness for others, and his great determination to be patient, was a lesson for anyone," wrote one of his day nurses. "Even in delirium, his mind ran along beautiful paths—always prayer on his lips, showing the trend of his thoughts. I remember clearly his first Sunday in hospital, when, at his request, I read aloud to him the first five chapters of Genesis, and he explained them to me."

"I am sure none of us will ever forget Dr. Dixon," said the night nurse, who was with him through all of the six weeks. "He was my ideal of a real Christian."

To the last his mind was subconsciously occupied with the life-work that he loved. About midnight, in the last semi-lucid interval, he inquired the time. A little later his lips moved again. "When does the train start for Boston?" he asked the nurse. She told him it was night, and that he must wait for the morning train. "What day is tomorrow?" he asked. "Sunday," she replied. "I must get that train," he whispered, "for I have to preach in Boston tomorrow."

A glorious surprise was at hand for him, for as earthly sights and sounds receded, he was to hear the transcendent invitation: "Well done, good and faithful servant! enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." At seven o'clock on that bright Sunday morning of June 14th, 1925, the Home-call came.

He had fought a good fight, he had finished his course, he had kept the faith. Henceforth there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give him at that day; and not to him only, "but unto all them also that love His appearing."
AFTERWORD

The preacher for the day at the University Baptist Church was Dr. W. L. Pettingill, Dean of the Philadelphia School of the Bible. Through a leading of God, his theme, already advertised, was: "The Place called Heaven and How to Reach It."

Deep and tender was the hush upon the congregation when announcement was made at the close of the service that the gates had been flung open that very morning to receive their beloved pastor.

Two days later, the church was crowded with a reverent throng gathered for the funeral service. Upon the platform were Dr. J. L. Campbell, Dr. Pettingill, and Dr. Tillman B. Johnson, three of A.C. Dixon's friends and comrades. The first words of Dr. Johnson's prayer characterized the spirit of joy and triumph that pervaded the gathering, and was reflected on the faces of those nearest and dearest to A.C. Dixon. "We thank Thee, our Heavenly Father, that we come today, not to a funeral, but to the celebration of a Christian's victory." In the heart-felt singing of the hymns, and in the exquisite rendering of the solo, "God shall wipe away all tears," the congregation seemed to be carried to the very courts of heaven.

"Remember them which . . . have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their manner of life: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever."

The trenchant words were read by Dr. Campbell, who pleaded with all present to hold fast the faith proclaimed so unalteringly by A.C. Dixon, as prophet and evangelist, pastor and teacher.

"No one was ever left in doubt as to what he believed," said Dr. Pettingill. "I have known him more or less intimately for more than a quarter of a century, and I know that the supreme object of his faith was always and only Jesus Christ Him-
self." Well aware of A.C.Dixon’s dislike of eulogistic oratory, and preferring to let the people hear their pastor’s own words about the great experience upon which he had just entered, Dr. Pettingill gave no address, but simply read aloud extracts from A.C.Dixon’s book, “The Bright Side of Death.”

“There is only one thing better than dying,” came the message, as though floating down from the heavenly places, “and that is to be alive when the Lord of Life shall come in glory.

“I do not desire death, and try to shun it, for I want to do all the good I can, and remain, if possible, till the day of His glorious appearing. But if death does come, I shall welcome it as a vanquished enemy, made to serve its conqueror by setting at liberty the spirit that is now in the bonds of limitation.”

The earthly tenement, asleep in Jesus, was reverently laid to rest at Druid Ridge, some ten miles out of Baltimore. Later in the day, a private service was held at the Homewood Apartments, in the home so vividly pervaded by the atmosphere of A.C.Dixon’s presence. Hymns that he loved were sung, and words of tender remembrance spoken. It was a day to stand out in the memory, befitting the celebration of that glad welcome Home, which the eye of faith had been able to picture even amid the shadows of earth.

No man whose life burns with a steady, unquenchable passion for Christ and for righteousness can expect to find favor with an ungodly world. Yet the world is quick to recognize a worthy foe. Friends and foes alike joined in paying generous tribute to A.C.Dixon’s sterling character, his crystal-clear sincerity, his knightly methods of warfare in upholding the truth he loved.

“For forty years Rev. Amzi C. Dixon has been an outstanding figure in Baltimore church life,” commented The Baltimore News. “He occupied a place of leadership peculiarly his own in the city’s ecclesiastical affairs. The other side of the man, the Dr. Dixon who gathered friends wherever he went, commanded an affectionate devotion such as comes only to fine and gentle spirits.”

The Baltimore Sun, which, in the long years of A.C. Dixon’s association with the city, had been openly hostile to almost every-
AMZI CLARENCE DIXON

BORN IN SHELBY NORTH CAROLINA JULY 6 1854
WENT HOME FROM BALTIMORE MD. JUNE 14 1925

FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS AS PASTOR AND EVANGELIST
HE PREACHED THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD JESUS
CHRIST BY LIP AND BY LIFE IN AMERICA, EUROPE
AND THE ORIENT.

PASTORATES
BEAR MARSH AND MOUNT OLIVE N.C. 1874-5
CHAPEL HILL AND ASHEVILLE N.C. 1876-82
IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH BALTIMORE MD. 1882-90
HANSON PLACE BAPTIST CHURCH BROOKLYN N.Y. 1890-1901
RUGGLES ST CHURCH BOSTON MASS. 1901-06
MORRIS CHURCH CHICAGO ILL. 1906-11
SPURGEON'S TABERNACLE LONDON ENGLAND 1911-19
UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH BALTIMORE 1921-5

HIS MOTTO, TEXT
WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN TO
RECEIVE POWER AND RICHES AND WISDOM AND
STRENGTH AND HONOR AND GLORY AND BLESSING.
REVELATION 5:12

At Druid Ridge Cemetery, near Baltimore
thing for which he stood, contributed an even more striking mark of respect.

"Internationally he was as broad as the map of the world," it said editorially. "He was one of the most aggressive leaders of the church militant. The dictionary contained for him no such word as compromise. He asked and gave no quarter to those whom he considered the enemies of Christianity or of morality, in whatever guise they came, as modernists, evolutionists, spiritualists, or emissaries of alcohol.

"A curious complex of breadth and narrowness, of pacifism and belligerency, he had a magnificent moral courage that nothing could appall or weaken, a splendid sincerity that even devils must have respected. As he passes from us, we stand uncovered in reverent admiration of his brave and unaltering faith."

"He that winneth souls is wise." Prov. xi: 30.

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Dan. xii: 3

THE END
WHICH IS
THE BEGINNING
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