

ABSTRACT

A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PREACHING OF BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY

by Mark Brooks Lloyd

From 1771 to 1816, the period in which America was emerging from colonialism, Francis Asbury traveled by horseback from settlement to settlement on the frontier over the rough terrain of mountains and valleys influencing numbers of people with a significant message. The many people responding to his message were organized, first into religious societies, and later into churches, which became the Methodist church in America.

The purpose of this study was to discover some of the factors in the preaching of Francis Asbury which made him the dynamic force he apparently was in American history from 1771 to 1816.

The investigation of the preaching of Francis Asbury was limited to his biographers and to his Journal in which he recorded about two hundred outlines of sermons. Some were brief, others were more complete, but, in no case, was there a written manuscript of any one.

In a rhetorical analysis of Francis Asbury's preaching, the purpose of his speaking, the qualities found in him as a speaker, the sources of these qualities, the results of the possession of these qualities, his preparation for speaking,

and the delivery of his sermons were dependent upon and limited by what he said about himself in his Journal and by what biographers said about him. The same limitations were imposed upon the analysis of Asbury's message: the most severe being in the evaluation of the materials of development, materials of personal proof, materials of experience, structure, and style.

The following conclusions emerged from this study. First, because of his ability to preach a simple and direct message that his listeners could understand, to persuade his listeners to respond to his message and become Christians, and to persuade the new converts to persevere in their new experiences, Asbury was an effective and a persuasive speaker.

Second, on account of his devotion to God, his faithful prayer life, his diligent study of the Bible, and his great love for people, Asbury was a great Christian.

Third, by reason of the fact that he took the initiative to itinerate in order to preach his message to as many people as possible, that he possessed an unconquerable zeal and faced many perils as an itinerant, that he traveled over the entire nation by horseback and carriage annually, that he persuaded many young men to enter the itinerant ministry, he can be acclaimed the foremost itinerant.

Fourth, because of his ability to organize, to master and dominate events, marshal men, direct with authority and

to inspire his subordinates to strive to reach goals, Asbury was a good leader.

Finally, because of his ability to pull the struggling Methodist societies together before, during, and after the American Revolution, because of his ability to govern the preachers and the churches, because of his concepts of church government and of the episcopacy, and because of his ability to build a great ecclesiastical empire from six preachers and 600 members in 1771 to 700 ministers and 200,000 members in 1816, Asbury was an outstanding churchman.

These five conclusions are interdependent in the following manner. Because Francis Asbury was a great Christian, he had a message that fulfilled the purpose for which he came to America: "I am going to live to God, and bring others so to do."¹ Because he communicated his message in such a way that many people accepted it and became Christians, he was an effective and a persuasive speaker. And, because he was an effective speaker, he was a foremost itinerant, a good leader, and an outstanding churchman.

¹Clark, I, p. 4.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From the time of the early Hebrew prophets to the present day there have appeared itinerant preachers with messages that have made lasting contributions to the people and to the culture of their times. If these men could be listed, there would appear the name of Francis Asbury, who was perhaps the greatest itinerant preacher in eighteenth-century America. He discerned the needs of the people who were in the process of developing a new social order as they adjusted themselves to the physical conditions of the land, braved the elements of nature, fought the Indians, and struggled against the pains of becoming a new nation. Not only to the colonists but to that ever increasing number of people pushing westward on the American frontier, he adapted his message.

From 1771 to 1816, the period in which America was emerging from Colonialism, Francis Asbury traveled by horseback from settlement to settlement on the frontier over the rough terrain of mountains and valleys as he took his message to the settlers and pioneers. He preached to the people, won converts to the Lord, and organized them into "Societies" that later became churches.

A man, who spent so much of his life itinerating in the primitive wilderness of America, who influenced numbers of people with his preaching, and who organized many churches in the new republic, must have had a persuasive message. A study of the preaching of this man should reveal a greater understanding of his message and of its place in public address.

Statement of Problem

While standing at his blacksmith's forge as a young man in England, Francis Asbury meditated upon the Scripture: "Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and as ye go preach, saying, the kingdom is at hand; heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give." Matthew 10:7-8. He believed this to be the call of God into the ministry. Throwing down his leather apron, this young man left his blacksmith shop, and became the great herald of the gospel in America, visiting practically every community in the nation from Canada to Georgia as far west as Kentucky, and traveling an estimated 270,000 miles by horseback and carriage over almost impassable roads.¹ Everywhere he stopped on the road he preached: sometimes to a family with a few friends or to a group of neighbors gathered in some home, or in a courthouse, a barn, a barroom, or in an occasional meetinghouse.² It is estimated that he

¹H. K. Carroll, Francis Asbury in the Making of American Methodism (New York: The Methodist Concern, 1923), p. 235.

²Ibid., pp. 65-66.

preached a total of seventeen thousand sermons in these places to many kinds and sizes of audiences during the forty-five years of his itineracy.¹ Therefore, the purpose of this study is to discover some of the factors in the preaching of Francis Asbury which made him the dynamic force he apparently was in American history from 1771 to 1816.

Significance of this Study

There must be reasons for the acclaim given to Francis Asbury. If it is true that he was a dynamic force in American history as the following quotations assert, it is a significant study to attempt to discover the factors that made him great.

"In regard to the Church, it may be said no man ever lived who projected himself further into the future of all that pertains to her genius, government, and institutions than did Asbury."² "Francis Asbury was apparently the only man equal to the situation in America."³

His contemporary, itinerant preachers looked upon him with wonder and admiration, regarding highly his simplicity and dignity in preaching.⁴ "He seemed like a great military commander who had been crowned with many victories."⁵

¹W. P. Strickland, The Pioneer Bishop: or The Life and Times of Francis Asbury (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1858), p. 495.

²Ibid., p. 166.

³Carroll, p. 117.

⁴Strickland, p. 11.

⁵Carroll, p. 123.

"Asbury was a good sermonizer. He knew how sermons ought to be made and how they should be preached. His comments on sermons and preachers were keen."¹

Duren, in his Francis Asbury, introduced his book with several quotations, some of which follow:

"Francis Asbury is the most distinguished man that the Methodist Episcopal Church has ever produced, and the most important ecclesiastical personage that our country has ever seen."

--Coggshall, in Methodist Quarterly Review

"What a wonderful experience he must have had, this prophet of the wilderness! Who shall say where his influence, written upon the immortal souls of men, shall end?"

--President Calvin Collidge

". . . the tale of the way in which Francis Asbury dragooned Methodism into becoming the thing he wanted it to be is a tale worth telling. As a study in personality, this imperious Marshal of the early circuit rider hosts offers a chance for a memorable 'psychograph'."

--Hutchinson, in The Christian Century²

These are but a few among the many comments made about Francis Asbury. When one writer claims he was almost indispensable to Methodism and another, that he was an arrogant

¹Ezra Squier Tipple, Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1916), p. 222. [Future references will be Tipple: Asbury.]

²William Larkin Duren, Francis Asbury: Founder of American Methodism and Official Minister of State (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1928), p. 2.

Marshal dragooning Methodism into his mold, he must be a person worthy of consideration. The significance of this study is to discover some of the factors in Asbury's preaching that apparently contributed to the force he was in American society.

Review of Literature

A review of the literature relating to Francis Asbury revealed that nothing has been written on the analysis and criticism of his preaching. Biographers have written descriptive evaluations of it, with little actual criticism of the sermon itself. Since a survey of the literature does not disclose the factors of the message that made Francis Asbury the dynamic force he apparently was in American history from 1771 to 1816, a study attempting to determine these factors is in order and is justified.

The literature about Francis Asbury can be categorized in the following manner. First are the primary source materials including the Journal that Asbury wrote himself, the revision made in 1904, known as the Heart of Asbury's Journal, the more recent revision made in 1958 known as The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury, and the "Emory Collection of Manuscripts." The secondary source materials contain two early histories where direct attention was given to Asbury, the biographies which have attempted to capture the spirit of the man and to make him live anew, the recent research in the form of two doctoral dissertations, and a novel.

Primary Source Materials

The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury contain a record of his life and works in America from 1771 to 1815. It is probable that he kept a journal for several reasons, suggested in some of the entries. The first of these is recorded September 12, 1771: "I will set down a few things that lie on my mind."¹ These words were written a few days after sailing from Bristol, England. In his entry of July 24, 1774, he referred to this experience when he said on "September 3, 1771, I embarked for America, and for my own private satisfaction, began to keep an imperfect journal."²

Perhaps another reason for writing a Journal was to communicate to the world and to his friends the manner in which he spent his time in America.³ Again, a further reason was that he believed that his Journal would be a contribution to Methodist history.⁴ He realized that his itineracy was closely related to the founding, organizing, and developing of Methodism in the New World. From this entry it is suggested that the life of Francis Asbury would in many ways be the life of Methodism as he knew it. Asbury's belief that his Journal would contribute to Methodism has been verified because it is practically the only record of the early days

¹Elmer T. Clark, Editor-in-Chief, The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury, Volume I (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), p. 4. [Future reference will be Clark I.]

²Ibid., p. 125.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 519.

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of Methodist history in the United States.¹ During the lifetime of Francis Asbury parts of the Journal were corrected and printed by him, and the remainder was revised under his direction up to the year 1807. The Journal was then published from time to time, becoming the only memoir of the work of Francis Asbury for about seventy years.²

About ten years after the death of Francis Asbury, a quantity of material was assembled on him by Rev. Robert Emory. Presumably he may have intended to write a biography, but for some unknown reason this did not materialize. However, these collections became quite valuable and are known as the "Emory Collection of Manuscripts," now in the possession of the Drew Theological Seminary.³

In 1904 Ezra Squire Tipple attempted to revise Asbury's Journal. Not having the original manuscripts that had been destroyed by fire when the Methodist Book Concern burned in 1836, he used all the available materials, correcting as many errors as possible by consulting the publishers of Hurst's History of Methodism. Hoping to make the work more accurate and readable, he omitted unnecessary details. This is known as the Heart of Asbury's Journal.⁴

¹Ezra Squire Tipple, Heart of Asbury's Journal (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1904), p. x. [Future references will be Tipple, Heart.]

²Ibid., p. xi.

³Tipple, Asbury, p. 12.

⁴Tipple, Heart, pp. xi-xii.

Perhaps one of the greatest contributions to the literature on Bishop Francis Asbury is The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury in three volumes, edited by Elmer T. Clark, J. Manning Potts, and Jacob S. Payton, published in 1958. They did not have the original manuscripts, but took the available printed materials that had been edited by several persons, and attempted to produce Asbury's Journal as accurately as possible and in a more readable form. The events as recorded in the Journal and the copies of the letters along with the many footnotes are likely the most accurate materials available at the present time on Francis Asbury.¹

Secondary Source Materials

The secondary source materials can be classified as histories, biographies, dissertations, and a novel.

Histories. -- Two histories of the Methodist church emerged, the first one written by Nathan Bangs in 1838, to be followed by a more extensive work by Abel Stevens in 1864. Both of these histories contain an account of the labors of Francis Asbury in America.²

Biographies. -- Francis Asbury requested that no biography be written of him, because he believed the materials

¹Clark I, p. xix.

²George G. Smith, The Life and Labors of Francis Asbury, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America (Nashville: Publishing House, M.E. Church South, 1896), p. v.

in his Journal were sufficient for posterity. However, at the Annual Conference held in Baltimore, one year after Asbury's death, 1817, Bishop McKendree suggested that a comprehensive life of the late Bishop be written. The conference concurred with his suggestion, appointed a committee, and gave authority to accomplish this important task. For seven years the matter rested in the hands of the committee, who did not get the biography written. The task then was given to Rev. William Beauchamp, who was one of the leading men of the conference at that time. But before he could commence the writing of the biography, he died.¹ Another effort was made by appointing Dr. S. K. Jennings, a scholarly man of the church, to write the biography. But the fact that some of the men of the conference disliked his interpretation of Francis Asbury created a dispute and finally resulted in the discontinuance of the work.²

In 1852 William C. Larrabee wrote Asbury and His Co-Laborers, a two-volume work on the general but graphic events of Francis Asbury's life and the lives of some of his co-laborers.³

Six years later, 1858, William Peter Strickland wrote another biography, The Pioneer Bishop. This was a more

¹Tipple, Asbury, p. 12.

²Smith, p. v.

³William C. Larrabee, Asbury and His Co-Laborers, Vol. I (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1852), p. 3.



complete work and gives a clearer picture of Asbury and the people with whom he labored in the building of an ecclesiastical empire, known as Methodism, in the New World. Strickland had the decided advantage of personal resources in some of the contemporaries of Francis Asbury, particularly Henry Boehm who traveled with Asbury for about five years.

In 1872 Dr. Edwin L. Jones published The Character and Career of Francis Asbury, Illustrated by Numerous Selections from his Journal, Arranged in Chronological Order.

In 1879 Briggs wrote Bishop Asbury: A Biographical Study for Christian Workers.

Dr. George C. Smith, a Bishop for the Methodist Episcopal Church, felt that Francis Asbury should have a new biography. In 1898 he published his book under the title, Life and Labors of Francis Asbury, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. He relied heavily upon the Journal and the other available materials written on Francis Asbury at the time. In this biography he attempted to be as objective as possible; he was neither an apologist nor an advocate.¹

A brief biography, appearing in 1909, titled Francis Asbury, was written by George Preston Mains, who attempted to give the salient characteristics, but not an exhaustive account, of the life of the Bishop.²

¹Smith, pp. v-vi.

²George P. Mains, Francis Asbury (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1909), p. 7.



During the same year, 1909, Dr. Horace M. Du Bose published his book, Francis Asbury: A Biographical Study. Believing that the life of Francis Asbury and the early history of Methodism are entwined, and that the name and work of Francis Asbury have been neglected in both national and church history and that a study of the biographies in early Methodist history would help to preserve Methodist ideals and develop a new evangelism, Du Bose attempted to write a biography to accomplish these goals.¹ His book is more exhaustive than any of the previous works on Francis Asbury.

The centennial year of Francis Asbury's death stimulated Ezra Squire Tipple to write a book known as Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road. Believing that Methodism had distinctive characteristics that differentiate it from other denominations and that Francis Asbury was one of the leading figures in the development of the church, he attempted to write an estimate of the man, not another biography, and published it in 1916.²

During the same year, 1916, Edwin Du Bose Mouzon wrote a small but comprehensive book with the title: Francis Asbury, A Pioneer Bishop of American Methodism. In this the

¹Horace M. Du Bose, Francis Asbury: A Biographical Study (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, 1916), pp. 5-8.

²Tipple, Asbury, pp. 13-14.

author purports to portray the almost forgotten bishop as a great Christian, preacher, bishop, pioneer, and martyr to Methodism during the centennial.

In the year 1923 Dr. Henry King Carroll authored Francis Asbury in the Making of American Methodism. He wrote this from the point of view of church history, as the development of each chapter indicates. He was keenly interested in Asbury as a man, but his greater interest was in the church to which he was related.

In 1927 Herbert Asbury, probably a distant relative of Francis Asbury, wrote A Methodist Saint: The Life of Bishop Asbury, because he felt that Francis Asbury had been neglected throughout the years, that he had not been given the place that rightfully belonged to him in history, and that his human attributes and his unusual powers as an itinerant had not been known.¹

In the same year, 1927, James Lewis wrote another biography titled Francis Asbury, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Lewis endeavored to portray Asbury as realistically as possible, placing him in the world of his time, and in so doing he used the words of Asbury when he could, believing that Asbury could describe his world best.

Francis Asbury: Founder of American Methodism and Unofficial Minister of State is the title of William Larkin

¹ Herbert Asbury, A Methodist Saint: The Life of Bishop Asbury (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927), pp. vii-viii.

Duren's biography of Asbury that appeared in 1923. He believed Bishop Asbury had not received his rightful and proper place in history as a great churchman and as a great national leader of his time.

Perhaps the most recent biography is Francis Asbury written in 1966 by L. C. Rudolph. By careful and thorough research and with a balanced interpretation of the man as he discovered him, the author attempted to reveal Francis Asbury's character and personality and to depict him as traveler, preacher, evangelist, educator, and bishop.

Dissertations.--Donald Delbert Douglass, in 1957, wrote his Ph.D. dissertation at Boston University on the "Psychological Aspects of the Pastoral Ministry of Francis Asbury." As the title indicates the author was primarily interested in the psychological aspects of Asbury's pastoral ministry, referring only to his preaching ministry when needed. About the same time Donald M. Mauck wrote his Ph.D. dissertation at Boston University on Francis Asbury in dramatic form: "Glory for the Land, A New Play Based on the Life of Francis Asbury."

Novel.--Norman E. Nygaard in 1962 wrote a brilliant biographical novel, Bishop on Horseback, revealing Francis Asbury as a missionary of striking contrasts, who was dictatorial yet dedicated, who was despotic yet devoted, who was stubborn yet affectionate, and who was ill yet vigorous.

Limitations of the Study

This study of the preaching of Francis Asbury does not include the period of his early life in England where he served as a local preacher and as an itinerant under John Wesley. Rather it is limited to his preaching in America as recorded in his Journal, in his letters, in his biographies, and in the histories of the Methodist church.

These limitations need to be considered carefully in the development of this study. Practically everything that is known about Francis Asbury, as a man, came from his Journal and his biographies. The time and place of his speaking can be established with little question because British and American church history, and perhaps political, social, and intellectual history can support these. But the purpose of his speaking, the qualities found in him as a speaker, the sources of these qualities, the results of the possession of these qualities, his preparation for speaking, and the delivery of his sermons are limited to what he said about himself in his Journal and to what others said about him in their biographies.

Likewise there are limits that need to be considered in the analysis of the audiences to whom Francis Asbury spoke. The most objective evaluation of the audiences is that of the historians, although such evaluation is general in nature. The evaluation of the audiences by individual persons, who heard him speak, is limited to his biographies

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and to his Journal, and the evaluation of the audiences by Asbury himself is limited to the Journal.

Furthermore, greater limitations are imposed on the study of Francis Asbury's message, because practically everything known about it is contained in his Journal and in the biographies. Since he preached extemporaneously from a text or an outline, he never wrote his sermons in full; at least there are no known manuscripts of his sermons in existence. However, there are two extant addresses, the "Valedictory Address to William McKendree," written in 1813, and the "Address to the Conference of 1816," written just before his death. Both are epistolary in form and were read posthumously at the Annual Conference that convened in May, 1816. These are not included in the analysis of the preaching of Francis Asbury because they do not represent nor are they typical of his preaching. In his Journal almost two hundred outlines and about seven hundred Scriptural texts of sermons are recorded. The limitations are not as noticeable in the theological content and the choice of topics because Asbury was rather vocal in his expression of these. But the limitations are the most severe in the evaluation of the materials of development, materials of personal proof, materials of experience, arrangement, and style. This study could employ only the available information and draw conclusions based upon implications that were apparent in the texts and outlines. The method of operation

in this study, therefore, has to be within the bounds of these limitations.

Plan of Study

Chapter I will introduce the study and present the problem. Chapters II and III will give the time, the history, and the circumstances of the period in which Asbury lived. Chapter IV will introduce Asbury, the man. Chapter V will present him as a speaker. Chapter VI will discuss the audiences that heard Asbury speak. Chapter VII will analyze and evaluate the message including the theological content, choice of topics, materials of development, materials of personal proof, materials of experience, arrangement, and style. Chapter VIII will conclude the study.

CHAPTER II

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

Political Conditions

Francis Asbury was born in a century filled with changes that almost completely altered the social, political, economic, and religious life of England. At the opening of the eighteenth century, England, Ireland, and Scotland were three separate countries; at the close of the century they were united, at least nominally. Three silent revolutions had swept across the British Isles: an agricultural, an industrial, and a religious. This was a period of confusion, tumult, and rebellion among the people. England was engaged in war during most of the century: the War of Austrian Succession, the Seven Years War, the war with the American colonies, and the first part of the war with France.¹ As a result of these wars she lost the American colonies and gained Canada, India, New Zealand, and Australia.

In the days of Queen Anne, politics were looked upon as a game, with little regard to principles or the ultimate consequences of breaking them. Treason was not uncommon;

¹J. H. Whiteley, Wesley's England (London: The Epworth Press, 1945), p. 25.

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treachery, corruption, and bribery were usual practices that continued well into the eighteenth century. For instance, members of the House of Commons obtained their seats by owning or managing rotten boroughs. "The spirit of political honesty and freedom, as the term is now understood, had not by 1720 begun even to glimmer upon the counsels of statesmen."¹

The period of Walpole and the Pitts was a heyday of unchallenged abuses in all forms of corporate life. Holders of ecclesiastic, academic, charitable and scholastic endowments had no fear of enquiry or reform. Schoolmasters could draw their salaries without keeping school. Universities could sell degrees without holding examinations or giving instruction. Parliamentary boroughs and municipal oligarchies could be as corrupt and ridiculous as they liked; it was enough that they were old. "Whatever is is right--if it can show a charter" seems the watchword of the Eighteenth Century.²

In the course of the reigns of George I and George II a political aristocracy arose known as the "Whig Oligarchy." This was a period in which the House of Commons gained more power, but the people had less because of the inconsistent representation. Later, when George III began his long reign in 1760, he further corrupted the House of Commons through his system of patronage. Also, during the first twenty years of his regnancy he attempted to restore the lost power to the Crown.³ In the process of his rule events led to the last struggle between an absolute monarchy and a parliament

¹Ibid., p. 169.

²G. M. Trevelyan, History of England, Vol. III (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1956), pp. 12-13. [Hereafter referred to as Trevelyan III.]

³Ibid., pp. 16-17.

that was responsible to the people. A new commonwealth was in the process of formation. "The four decades from 1765 to 1806 were gloomy, reactionary, distraught--but at their close the new liberalism had gained a force it was never thereafter to lose."¹

Social Conditions

Statistics are unreliable concerning the population during the eighteenth century, but it is estimated that there were between five and six million people in England at the opening of the century, 1700, and over eight million in 1801. The nation was enriched by the coming of the Huguenots from France. Numbers, perhaps around 50,000, fled from their country because of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, migrated to England, and brought with them their skills in industry such as textile, glass, paper, and jewelry.² Another account of the population is an increase of from seven and one-half million to above fourteen million during the Reign of George III, a period of sixty years. This increase in population was due not only to immigration but also to improved standards of living, particularly noticeable the latter part of the eighteenth century.³

¹Robert T. Oliver, Four Who Spoke Out (Syracuse, N. Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1946), p. 3.

²Whiteley, p. 52.

³Trevelyan III, pp. 134-135.

In the eighteenth century three fairly well defined classes of people inhabited England: the wealthy patricians, the yeoman farmers, and the poor workmen. The wealthy class exploited the other two classes in order to obtain wealth, power, and prestige. The practice of patronage kept the wealth within a selected group who had a growing contempt for the lower classes. For instance, some of the nobility were given army and navy appointments; friends and poor relatives were given posts that yielded incomes. A person could hold more than one post, each one paying an income. One duke held fourteen income-producing posts during the same period of time. Furthermore, the social life of the court became the pattern for the nobility where principles of ethics and moral decency were ignored. "Broadly speaking these aristocrats were gay, superficially intellectual and mainly godless throughout the entire century, and undoubtedly the majority frivelled away their time in refinements of luxury and vice which they cultivated with excessive assiduity."¹ Virtue was not expected of a woman of fashion nor was fidelity expected of a man. It seems that the social and economic corruption of the rulers contributed to the ineffectiveness of many of the statesmen, legislators, landowners, and churchmen.²

To say that the nobility contributed little or nothing to the social structure of eighteenth-century England would

¹Whiteley, p. 76.

²Ibid., pp. 79-81.

be erroneous, because they were interested in culture and they befriended, encouraged, and fostered it. For instance, the nobility granted considerations and kindnesses to such men as Isaac Watts, John Locke, Hershel, Benjamin West, Buffon, Adam Smith, and Samuel Johnson. Members of the noble class loved beautiful architecture--such as large many-gabled houses with projecting porches--symmetrical forms of landscape gardening, elegant furniture and china, great and good music, and famous pictures of art. Both the men and the women of the nobility dressed elegantly and extravagantly, the men exceeding the women.¹

In this same England the lower social levels--those of the poor working class and the yeoman farmers--ignored by the nobility except as a source of revenue, eked out a scanty living, in most cases, a mere existence. Their homes almost defy description. They lived in unsanitary cottages usually built of stone or brick with dirt and occasionally stone floors. A cottage contained a living room and one bedroom for the entire family. It seems most of the people were accustomed to, and not disturbed by, foul smells, flies, vermin, pigs, and chickens in their homes.² However, this statement of resignation or partial contentment of the lower classes changed with the immigration of large numbers of people to the urban areas, because

¹Ibid., pp. 81-103.

²Ibid., pp. 118-119.

of the need of employment in the new industrial centers, and the enclosure of the commons and the open fields, where the yeoman farmers each had small plots of land to farm. These enclosures, or the collecting of the small plots of land to make larger farms, eventually benefited many people.¹ Land-owners brought in better machinery for farming, introduced new crops, imported better breeds of cattle, sheep, and horses, all of which greatly improved agriculture in England.²

Since the enclosure of the land deprived the yeoman farmers of their small plots of land to farm, they were forced to cast their lots with the poor who were rapidly increasing. Work houses were established for them, where overseers were to provide raw materials for their employment. Oftentimes, though, the men and women were hired out to the farmers or factory owners and the children and youth were collected by contractors to work on the farms, in the mills, or in the mines.

"The relative misery of the poor at this period as compared to that of their forebears is hard to estimate, for want of facts about earlier times. The absolute misery of many of them is a fact incontestable."³

The work houses were not much more than pens. Crabbe in "The Village" pictured the occupants of a workhouse in the following manner:

¹Trevelyan III, pp. 141-142.

²Whiteley, pp. 126-127.

³Trevelyan III, pp. 140-141.

Theirs is yon house that Holds the Parish Poor,
 Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door;
 There, where the putrid vapours, flagging, play,
 And the dull wheel hums dolefully through the day;
 There Children dwell who know no Parents' care;
 Parents who know no Children's love dwell there.
 Heart-broken Matrons on their joyless bed,
 Forsaken Wives, and Mothers never wed;
 Dejected Widows with unheeded Tears;
 And crippled Age with more than Childhood fears;
 The Lame, the Blind, and, for the happiest they,
 The Moping Idiot, and the Madman Gay.¹

This picture is incomplete: food was not provided regularly and discipline usually was cruel. In addition to the responsibility of the inmates of the workhouses, the overseer had to contend with that innumerable group of beggars and ruffians who made their way in life by begging and stealing.²

The working conditions in the new factories were horrible. Overseers whipped their workers unmercifully as they labored in hot, unventilated rooms. For fourteen hours a day, except for two periods of thirty minutes each for lunch and tea, men, women, and children stood on their feet working.³

The plight of the children in this period was sad and almost hopeless if they lived. Mortality of infants was very high because they received such ill treatment from

¹A. S. Turberville (ed.), Johnson's England: An Account of The Life and Manners of His Age, Vol. I (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 304.

²Whiteley, p. 187.

³Ibid., p. 129.

birth. As a result about three out of every four children died before they reached their fifth birthday.¹ Those who survived were placed into some kind of labor, starting at four or five years of age as chimney sweeps or becoming members of the children's work gangs.²

"Child-slavery" and "industrial-slavery," with all the evils associated with the industrial era and the factory system were bad enough in the eighteenth-century England, but "the slave trade, with its concomitant evils, was the root cause and nursing mother of the worst industrial and commercial evils that grew up both around it and beside it."³ A tenant, who had been lured to incur a debt, when unable to pay, would be given the choice of prison or service on a slave ship; a sturdy young man, who had been enticed to run up a gin bill, when unable to pay, would be given the same choice. Then when Negroes were obtained from the African coasts in the most cruel manner and sold for slaves, the institution of slavery became more ruthless. After the second ship-load of Africans was sold as slaves at a great profit, the Stuarts recognized slave-traffic in commerce on high seas. The shameful means of capturing the Negroes and the barbarous treatment on the slave ships did not deter

¹J. Wesley Bready, England: Before and After Wesley (London: Hodder and Stroughton Limited, 1939), p. 42.

²Whitely, p. 131.

³Bready, p. 101.

those who were plying this cruel trade to make exorbitant amounts of money.¹ However, the importation of slaves made a marked impression, economically and socially, on England the early part of the eighteenth century.

Numerous planters, having made fortunes out of "the Institution"--then complacently described as "the great pillar and support of the British plantation trade in North America"--returned to England, bought large estates, and brought over Negro slaves as their servants and menials. But more: being covetous of social and political power, and prepared to pay handsomely for both, they soon entered the market as bidders for "pocket" and "rotten" borough seats in Parliament, with the result that finally the price of marketable constituencies rose from around 1,000 pounds to even 5,000 pounds.²

Notwithstanding, the slave holders had their problems in England, because a slave soon sensed the desire of all Englishmen to be free, so oftentimes ran away. The owners would advertise for run-away slaves, offering to pay handsome rewards for their apprehension, but the efforts were unfruitful. Consequently, owners were forced to obtain more slaves to replace the fugitives who had escaped. "The net result was that slavery on English soil substantially increased."³ The institution of slavery was not arrested until 1772 when

Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, in the famous Somerset case, . . . ruled that "slavery is not tenable in England," and that "as soon as any slave sets

¹Ibid., pp. 101-104.

²Ibid., pp. 103-104.

³Ibid., p. 104.

[illegible]

foot upon English soil he becomes free." This verdict, supported in 1778 by a large majority of the Lords of Session, put a peremptory stop to the bringing of slaves to England; but meanwhile, on Lord Mansfield's own admission, there were already between 14,000 and 15,000 slaves in the country, and open slave sales had actually taken place in England.¹

Sometimes concomitant evils are as great or greater than the first evil. Negro slavery had its effect upon the life of England; likewise kidnapping had just as great or perhaps a greater effect upon her life. The worst of this traffic was the kidnapping of hundreds of people, taking them to America, and selling them to plantation owners in Maryland and Virginia as indentured slaves for a period of from three to seven years. Redemptioners and convicts were sold in a similar manner.²

Another social evil of the eighteenth century was gambling, practiced by all and particularly by the wealthy class. Even the English government held lotteries to raise money to build Westminster Bridge and to found the British Museum.³ Perhaps the best example of gambling was "a mania of speculation, known as 'the South Sea Bubble,' [that] swept over all classes with peculiar ease in that first era of stock-jobbing."⁴ The South Sea Company had been organized for the sole purpose of selling stock, a scheme that proved

¹Bready, p. 105.

²Ibid., pp. 105-108.

³Ibid., p. 155.

⁴Trevelyn III, pp. 46-47.

to be successful. Within a year stocks soared, rising over 1000 per cent. The gambling craze inspired people who had little money, to organize companies of ridiculous natures, sell stocks, and become wealthy. For instance, one promoter claimed he had a marvelous invention, the nature of which he would disclose later. Offering 100 pound stock for two guineas, he filled his bag with gold in one day and fled the country that night.¹ The South Sea Company openly voiced its objections to these fraudulent schemes, which in turn, brought about an investigation of the sale of stocks of the South Sea Company. When it was discovered that these stocks, likewise, were fraudulent, the South Sea Bubble burst and left England in bankruptcy.²

Another social evil that pervaded English society was hanging. It seemed that for almost any violation of the law, the offenders, adults or children of both sexes, could be hanged. For instance, the following violations were punishable by hanging: to pick a pocket for an amount greater than one shilling, to steal a sheep or a horse, to snatch goods from someone and run away with them, to break a young tree, to snare a rabbit if on a gentleman's property, to blacken one's face and appear on the road, and many others, totaling about 160.³

¹Bready, p. 113.

²Trevelyn III, p. 47.

³Bready, p. 127.

Often there were from seven to fifteen executions at the same time and place. At Tyburn, West London executions were held regularly every six weeks, known as "Hanging Shows," where spectators paid to have the best seats to see the event, and where multitudes crowded into the streets to see the procession of the victims to their death. Bready gave his impressions of the hanging shows and gallows processions in this manner:

Always there is depicted a roaring sale of "sots comfort" (gin) from street barrows; always a drunken brawl; always a number of women with infants trampled down by the ruffian throng; always a troop of hawkers, pickpockets, fakirs, and prostitutes; always a rabble of leary-eyed and tattered urchins, looking for pelf; always a bevy bawling out the sale of "Dying Speeches." . . . The march from Newgate to Tyburn took about three-quarters of an hour. For a "good show" all the route partook of an extended carnival or fair. Hats, sticks, clubs, cloaks, and kerchiefs were waved high in the air; dogs barked and yelped; the half-inebriated roared and sang; swaggering men and women pushed around the death-carts to grasp the culprits' hands and commend their high spirits.¹

Muralt, a traveler from Switzerland, gave his impression of the gallows procession:

The criminals pass through the streets in carts dressed in their best clothes, with white gloves and nosegays. . . . Those that die merrily, or that don't at least show any great fear of death, are said to die like gentlemen; and to merit this encomium most of them die like beasts, without any concern, or like fools, having no other view than to divert the crowd.²

¹Ibid., p. 128.

²Ibid.

An additional social evil that "reveals the thinness of the cultural veneer disguising the deep savagery of much of the eighteenth century"¹ was the prisons. People of all ages and both sexes were thrown into dungeons or damp pits for debt, revenge, and pride, and were most cruelly treated. John Wesley reported a prison holding French prisoners in 1759: "About eleven hundred of them, we are informed, were confined in that little place, without anything to lie on but a little dirty straw, or anything to cover them but a few foul, thin rags, either by day or night, so that they died like rotten sheep."² Oglethorpe, Wesley, and Howard did much in revealing and relieving the torture and horrors in the prisons.

Furthermore, the social evil of lawlessness prevailed on the high seas where ships were raided and plundered by pirates and on the land where people were robbed constantly.³

The sports of this period, such as the torture of animals in bull and bear baiting, in cock-throwing, and in cock-fighting, reveal the coarse nature of the people.⁴

This period in English history was not only coarse, cruel, dishonest, and crime-infested, but it was also a drinking age when liquor flowed freely. A thirst for alcohol

¹Bready, pp. 126-127.

²Ibid., p. 131.

³Botsford, English Society in the Eighteenth Century (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), p. 194.

⁴Ibid., p. 222.

had developed the previous century when the upper class drank toasts at their festive occasions. Consequently eighteenth-century England became a drinking nation consuming millions of barrels of beer, brewed in England, and great quantities of wine and brandy imported from France. Partly because of hostility toward France and partly desiring to stimulate the brewing of liquor in the home distilleries, the British government in 1689 prohibited the importation of liquor and asked for a small duty from the home distillers. Unwittingly, the legislators ushered into England, within a generation, the "Gin Age," which is characterized by cheap alcohol flowing everywhere. In 1684 liquor distilled in England totaled 527,000 gallons; in 1750 it totaled 11,000,000 gallons. Since gin could be purchased for as little as a penny a pint, it became the national drink consumed by men, women, and children. The drinking habit tied itself to practically every part of life. For instance, Parliament adjourned early because the members were too drunk to continue business; and marriages were performed in the morning to insure sober senses of both the contracting parties and the parson. Also, liquor laid its corrupting hand on both industry and business. A person who attempted to be honest at his job soon became the prey of his drunken fellows, until he was forced to succumb to the same degrading practices of drinking and dishonesty.¹ "The cardinal cause of

¹Bready, pp. 145-194 and Botsford, p. 70.

the admitted social retrogression between 1720 and 1750, was the multi-headed liquor traffic, with its fiery spirits and strong beers, and its innumerable ramifications in the nation's work-a-day life."¹

Immorality could be expected in a careless, cruel, gin-drinking age. It was found everywhere because the church and state not only condoned but made sport of immoral practices. The poorer classes avidly read pornographic literature and indulged in immorality.²

The following quotation summarizes the sordid aspects of the eighteenth century in its succinct style:

It was a century when people seemed to live to eat rather than eat to live, and when England qualified herself for her sad preeminence as the most drunken nation in the world. It was a time when many aristocrats were sodden lumps of flesh preserved in alcohol, and when crudeness, unchecked passions, bitter feuds and love of cruel sports characterized the majority of mankind. The century's sports, fairs and public entertainments were coarse beyond words. Its most popular books, poems and songs were mere licentious pictures; a kind of literary photography of all that we avert our eyes from in Nature. Adherents of parties and sects, representatives of different classes hated, loathed, despised, decried and calumniated one another. Religious strife and political differences were remarkable for the unredeemed, gratuitous vulgarities, clashing factions produced. In vain the really cultured protested against the prevailing practice of cursing and swearing; verbal refinement was not even thought of by the educated till the century was half spent. Its earlier journalists and pamphleteers freely indulged the blast and counterblast style of expressing their clashing opinions, whilst its later practitioners indulged in vulgar familiarity, nauseating innuendo, and were simply pert and fatuous, when they thought they were arch and facetious.³

¹Bready, pp. pp. 149-150.

²Ibid., p. 163.

³Whiteley, pp. 29-30.

Figure 1 consists of 15 scatter plots arranged in a grid. The first 14 plots show a positive correlation between the number of children and the number of parents, with the number of parents increasing as the number of children increases. The 15th plot shows a negative correlation, with the number of parents decreasing as the number of children increases. The x-axis for all plots is 'Number of children' and the y-axis is 'Number of parents'.

Intellectual Conditions

The coffee house had a more constructive function among the many changes in eighteenth-century England, playing an important role in the life of the business man, the professional man, and the politician. The coffee house usually contained "boxes" that were high backed benches--one on either side of a long table running between them. Here men of kindred interests would meet to discuss problems, transact business, to fellowship, and to entertain guests. Business organizations grew out of these meetings, debate societies were organized, and a number of leading men of this century acclaimed the value of the coffee house.¹

Perhaps it is not too much to assume that from the coffee houses came men who were thinking and planning for the betterment of the social, economic, and intellectual life of England. Such thinking and planning was evidenced by a number of profitable changes which took place during the latter part of the century: improved standards of living came about because the factories made goods and clothing more available, the advancement of medical science resulted in better health, and people were becoming more humane and sensed the value of cleanliness. Improved transportation came first with the building of canal systems and later with the constructing of hard-topped roads. Perhaps one of the greatest industrial advancements was the replacing of charcoal with coal in iron-smelting.²

¹Whiteley, pp. 112-114.

²Trevelyan III, 134-138.

Not only was the social, political, and economic life undergoing a radical change, but so too was intellectual life in England. Garrick and Mrs. Siddons in drama; Addison, Steele, Pope, Swift, Richardson, Fielding, Sheridan, Campbell, Coleridge, Scott, and Southey in literature; Kneller, Reynolds, Wilson, Romney, Gainsborough, Raeburn, and Goerge Morland in art; Arne, Boyce, and Attwood in music along with the foreigners Handel, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, attest to the fact that greatness in the fine arts emerged from eighteenth-century England. Furthermore, in architecture the nation built Radcliffe Camera at Oxford and the Senate House at Cambridge. From science came the names of Davy, Newton, Priestley, Cavendish, Dolland, Hadley, and Harrison. In medicine there were the two Hunters, Cruikshank, and Haller. In the Parliament were Chatham, Burke, Pitt, Fox, and Sheridan. In religion there were John Wesley, Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield.¹

Education as a concept did not exist in the minds of most of the people of eighteenth-century England, particularly during the first part of the century. Because the poor looked upon their children as a means of added support for the family, they put them to work, often at the age of five or six years. The wealthy looked upon their children somewhat as a disease: they got rid of their presence by obtaining ill-paid nurses and tutors to care for them.²

¹Whiteley, pp. 26-27

²Ibid., p. 268.

Apparently on account of this perverted attitude toward the education of children, some people were concerned. John Locke in 1697 wrote Thoughts on Education that influenced some of the professional people. Among other books written throughout the years was Emile by Rousseau, published in 1762. Rousseau advocated that all children should be nursed by their mothers, that all boys should be taught a trade, that parenthood was important, and that education should start with the children's needs. For the first time in history, children were recognized as individuals in society. Rousseau's ideas and those of other Frenchmen were influential upon English educational theory, but were not accepted by all.¹

During most of the eighteenth century strict and harsh discipline was considered the major part of the education of the young children.

The teachers and parents for the most part remained convinced that what is good for the young must be unpleasant, and that the ideal child was the one who showed marked signs of premature manhood. The old sour doctrine of "breaking their wills early", of "a child should be governed by fear" rather than by love were followed. Even a sensible, affectionate mother like Mrs. Wesley could give such advice as: "Let a child from one year old be taught to fear the rod and to cry softly; from that age make him do as he is bid if you whip him ten times running to effect it."²

Education in the universities in the eighteenth century was almost a farce. The only two universities for England

¹Whiteley, pp. 271-273.

²Ibid., p. 293.

and Wales were Oxford and Cambridge, which were not well attended because of poor teaching.¹ In spite of this, there were some eminent English scholars in this period. In addition to these, there were also scholars in the countries of France, Germany, and Russia where academies of science, medicine, letters, art, and music thrived.²

Since children of wealthy Dissenters could not attend either Oxford or Cambridge university, Dissenting academies were organized, which served England well and gave a number of boys a good education for that day. John Wesley founded a school of this type known as Kingswood.³ However, the exclusion of the Dissenters from Oxford and Cambridge may account for part of the decline of these universities.⁴

Since the grammar schools were so inefficient during the eighteenth century, many of them had to close their doors. However, there were Girls' seminaries, sometimes referred to as "polite prisons," where parents could send their girls to be trained largely in deportment and the domestic arts.⁵

Perhaps the greatest gain in education in the eighteenth century was that of the Charity schools and the Sunday School. They attempted to give an education, consisting of reading,

¹Trevelyan III, p. 33.

²Whiteley, p. 276.

³Ibid., p. 278.

⁴Trevelyan III, p. 33.

⁵Whiteley, p. 280.

writing, arithmetic, and the catechism, to the children of the working classes.¹ It is estimated that the Anglican church in 1702 had 350 Charity schools with about 8000 students enrolled.² Although good, these schools were limited because they were only for the poor. Sons whose fathers were in the trades and crafts had to seek their education elsewhere, if schools could be found. Millions of eighteenth-century children never entered a school of any kind, and those that did hardly received an education to make them capable for apprenticeship to a trade.³

Although others used the Sunday school idea, Robert Raikes has been given the credit for its founding in 1780. The school met one day a week both morning and afternoon to train children in the mere rudiments of education, the catechism, and the Bible, with emphasis on teaching the children to read.⁴ So popular was his school that the London Society for Sunday Schools was founded. After a period of ten years this society reported 1000 schools with an attendance of 65,000 children.⁵

Since no secondary schools were available for most of the boys in the eighteenth century, the old apprentice system of the previous century proved to be useful for those boys who wanted to learn a trade.⁶ Francis Asbury became a

¹Trevelyan III, p. 34.

²Whiteley, p. 286.

³Bready, p. 168.

⁴S. C. Carpenter, Eighteenth Century Church and People (London: John Murray Albermarle Street, W., 1959), p. 228.

⁵Whiteley, p. 290

⁶Travelyan III, p. 35.

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blacksmith apprentice and worked for several years in a foundry near his home.

So far in this chapter an attempt has been made to describe the political, social, and intellectual life of eighteenth-century England. Politically, many corrupt practices were condoned and practiced. Socially, the nobility and the poor people lived in a society infested by immorality, gambling, drinking, coarse sports, slavery, lawlessness, and poverty. The economic conditions were mentioned as they related to the social. Intellectually, many children were deprived of an education because of the social conditions; on the other hand, Charity schools and the Sunday school were created and became great benefactors to the children of the poor class of people. Furthermore, Dissenting academies were organized and served England well. In spite of the poor education in England a number of scholars emerged and contributed to the political, social, and intellectual life of England. Attention is now directed to the religious conditions as they were related to each of the above, but particularly to the social.

Religious Conditions

The Church of the eighteenth century received severe criticism by many people, among whom were Horace Walpole and Lord Hervey, who claimed the Church was corrupt, guilty of pluralism, and fostering proud and dishonest prelates. Critics censured the Church on account of the traffic in

livings, rapacity, and avarice practiced among the bishops and prelates on the one hand and the poverty and non-residency of the clergy on the other hand. Cathedrals lacked care: halls and rooms were cluttered by monuments; gardens were grown on graves; churchyards were turned into pastures.¹ The Church became a waxen image of a once true religion, sunk in political insignificance, with powerless bishops and ambitionless prelates. The clergy were looked upon as the most lifeless people on earth.

In 1738 . . . Bishop Berkeley in his Discourse Addressed to Magistrates and Men in Authority, declared that morality and religion in Britain had collapsed "to a degree that has never been known in any Christian country. Our prospect . . . is very terrible and the symptoms grow worse from day to day." The accumulating torrent of evil, "which threatens a general inundation and destruction of these realms," Berkeley attributed chiefly to "the irreligion and bad example of those . . . styled the better sort."

If, however, his fears seem extreme . . . we turn to the writings and records of his contemporaries. . . . Wittingly or unwittingly, and from vastly different angles, Fielding, Defoe, Swift, Bolingbroke, Pope, Steele, Gay, Addison, Butler, Sterne, Walpole, and Johnson offer evidence of the moral and spiritual eclipse with which the earlier half of the eighteenth century was seriously threatened. Historians, too, of widely divergent schools, on this particular issue are singularly agreed. Examine Lecky, Stephen, Ranke, Macaulay, Rogers, Green, Overton, Abbey, Robertson, Trevelyan, Halévy, and Temperley and it will be found that none would seriously dispute either the justification for, or the relative accuracy of, Bishop Berkeley's verdict.²

The fact . . . of a phenomenal social and moral degeneracy at this period is disputable."³

There were many causes of this degeneracy, but three seem to be more unmistakable. Bready called them the "triple

¹Whiteley, pp. 295-297.

²Bready, p. 19.

³Ibid.

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tragedies." The first "tragedy," or cause of the decline, was the anti-Puritan purge, which included several acts: the Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, the Conventicle Act, and the Five Mile Act. All of these acts "stabbed at the very heart of Puritan religion, Puritan ideals, Puritan education, and Puritan culture."¹

In 1662, the Prayer Book was revised with many alterations, having a definite anti-Puritan slant, by the Act of Uniformity. There were clauses in this act which required every clergyman and schoolmaster to "delcare his unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things in the said book contained and prescribed, in these words and in no other."² As a result of this Act nearly two thousand men were purged from the ranks of the clergymen, one-fifth of the total in England, because they could not for conscience'sake subscribe to the requirements in the act and give absolute allegiance to the King. Some of the best men of the church were turned out, those whose zeal and labor had been felt across the country.³ "'The Church of England,' says Green, 'stood from that moment isolated and alone among the Churches of the Christian world . . . it sank into immobility . . . with the expulsion of the Puritan clergy all change, all efforts to reform, all natural development, suddenly stopped'."⁴ It is

¹Bready, p. 21.

²Ibid., p. 21.

³Ibid., pp. 21-22.

⁴Ibid., p. 22.

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evident that the anti-Puritan purge was a real "tragedy" to the Church of England, because most of the men, who were forced to leave, sought employment in vocations other than the church.

The second "tragedy," or cause of moral decline, was not as serious as the first, but had an effect for many years. It was the expulsion of a group of dissenting High-Church clergy, known as the non-jurors, in 1689 and 1690. They claimed that James II was "the Lord's Anointed," even though he had ingloriously fled, and that the Crown did not belong to William III who was only a pretender. In order to give religious liberty to the Puritan Dissenters, William proposed a compromise, hoping it would be acceptable to the clergy. If the clergy would agree to the abolition of the Persecuting Code (Corporation Act, Act of Conformity, Conventicle Act, and the Five Mile Act) he would excuse them from taking the Oath of Allegiance. However, the hierarchy and the squirearchy objected because they said it was tainted with treason, so the oath was administered to the clergy, with the omission of the words, "rightful and lawful." Since the clergy would not accept William III as the ruler of England, four hundred of them refused to take the oath, even though the words "rightful and lawful" could be omitted. They were turned out of their offices. Among this group were eminent church men, such as Sancroft, the Primate; Bishop Ken, the hymn-writer; and William Law, the famous

[illegible]

mystic.¹ Bready summarized the condition of the Anglican Church by saying:

With this second tragedy the Church found herself shorn of both left and right wings. Zealous priest and flaming prophet were now cut off. The "moderate," "reasonable" men, the time-servers, self-seekers and pluralists--these all were left: but the wings of faith were gone.²

The third "tragedy," or cause of moral decline, was the suppression of Convocation, which followed further controversies among the clergy, the Crown, and leaders of the nation. The tension broke when Bishop Hoadly, in 1717, preached before the King on the "Nature of the Kingdom, or Church, of Christ." In the sermon "he claimed that Christ had not delegated His authority to any ecclesiastical system, and that the spiritual, invisible Church was the only true representative of Jesus Christ."³ Pressure came upon the King to censure Hoadly. Consequently the King granted the request to suspend Convocation by prorogation which really meant suppression of Convocation of the bishops and representatives of the Church until the middle of the nineteenth century.⁴

Bready said the "three tragedies" causing the decline of morals were completed: "Not only was the 'National Church' shorn of left-wing prophet and right-wing priest, even her vocal organs were torn from her."⁵ The implication is that

¹Bready, pp. 24-25.

²Ibid., p. 25.

³Ibid., p. 29.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

if the Church could have been strengthened instead of weakened by losing many good men and if her voice could have been heard instead of silenced, the moral decline would not have been so great.

The foregoing can give the impression that the Church of England was so evil and corrupt that no good could come from the organization. If the majority of the clergymen and leaders of the church are corrupt, and if the minority are not corrupt but are doing good, the conclusion can be drawn that the church is corrupt, when in reality it is only partially true. At any rate, some good did come from the eighteenth-century Church of England. Near the beginning of the century, about twelve new churches were built; perhaps there should have been many more. Religious societies were formed from which sprang the Charity Schools, parochial libraries, missionary societies, and tract societies. There were many kind-hearted curates who served in the local parishes. Some of the influential men, such as Johnson, Smollett, and the Wesleys, remained members of and supported the Church. John Wesley saw good in the Church in spite of ignorance and inconsistencies. He commented: "In the present time, the behavior of the clergy in general is greatly altered for the better."¹ Again, in 1780, he affirmed: I am fully convinced that our church (of England) with all her blemishes, is nearer the Scriptural plan than any other

¹Whiteley, p. 303.

Church in Europe, and to speak freely, I myself find more life in the Church prayers than in any formal extempore prayers of Dissenters."¹

Perhaps the belief in latitudinarianism, more than any other one concept, influenced eighteenth-century churchmen, such as John Locke, John Toland, Anthony Collins, Thomas Woolston, and Matthew Tindal, who wrote on various aspects of Diesm.

They stripped Christianity of Christ, removed revelation from the Bible, ignored Christian experience, and denied the reality of prayer. All questions pertaining to religion were to be answered by reason, making it the guide to living. "Diesm accordingly merged into rationalism, rationalism into scepticism, and scepticism into cynicism,"² making religion an intellectual discussion containing very little moral fiber to guide the actions of men.

Following the Deists another group of men, the apologists, sprang up. They attempted to deny the philosophy of the Diests and to defend the faith as revealed in the Bible.

Would the church of the eighteenth century have met the social, economic, and political problems of another century? Or would the Church of any other century, say the twentieth, have met the deplorable conditions of the eighteenth century any better than the eighteenth-century Church

¹Whiteley, pp. 303-304.

²Bready, p. 40.

did? These are unanswerable questions. It seems that the corruption of the Church of England influenced, if it did not cause, the decline of morals in the eighteenth century. The Church did some good in the organizing of religious societies that sponsored worthwhile enterprises, and in the serving of a number of parishes by faithful curates. Deism emerged in this century and was answered by the apologists. All of these conditions became a prelude to the Evangelical Awakening.

Evangelical Awakening

Since the early days of the Christian Church, revivals have been recurring factors in revealing and demonstrating the power of God working in the hearts of men. A need, the climate, and the leadership apparently accompany a revival, all of which were evident in the eighteenth century.

The Pietist movement may or may not be a part of the Evangelical Awakening, depending upon the historian's point of view. Pietism, paralleling the Evangelical Awakening, if not a part of it, was dissatisfied with institutional Christianity and sought the original spirit of the gospel which was a personal experience with God, instead of a formal adherence to an institution.¹

The relationship of the Puritan revolution to the Evangelical Awakening cannot be overlooked. The roots of

¹A. Skevington Wood, The Inextinguishable Blaze (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1960), p. 28.

both seemed to be linked. Even the enemies of Methodism recognized this factor. Horace Walpole said, "This non-sensical New Light is extremely in fashion and I shall not be surprised if we see a revival of all the folly and cant of the last age."¹

A third factor promoting the Evangelical Awakening was the formation of societies, or small groups of people meeting for the purpose of enriching spiritual life, the first organizations dating back to 1678. In the midst of all that occurred in eighteenth-century England, the number and quality of societies grew. There is a direct link between the Evangelical Awakening and such societies as S. P. C. K. (Society to Promote Christian Knowledge), the one that Samuel Wesley founded at Epworth in 1701, the London societies where George Whitefield preached in 1737, and the Fetter Lane Society, the birthplace of Methodism and Moravianism.²

It may be difficult to believe that the Deists had a part in the chain of events leading to a revival. They did in this manner: Apologists arose in defense of the Christian faith, writing a number of books and articles which met the Deists through their own method--the use of reasoning. William Law, a non-juror and a Christian apologist, insisted

¹Wood, p. 29 (Quoted by Wood from Horace Walpole's correspondence, ed. G. S. Lewis, Vol. IX, p. 73).

²Ibid., p. 32.

in his two books Christian Perfection and the Serious Call on "that essential doctrine of the Gospel, the necessity of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost."¹ He was a link with the Revival in that he believed the truths of Christianity were "being proved triumphantly against all the assailants of that day; what was most needed was an appeal which would stir men's hearts and set them aglow."² Through these two books he wielded a tremendous influence upon the leaders of the Evangelical Awakening. Many of the leaders of this movement refer to him and give credit to him for his part in the revival. John Wesley went so far as to acclaim him the "John the Baptist" of the Evangelical Awakening.³

Unexpectedly the dawn of the Revival in 1662 appeared in Wales, perhaps one of the most unlikely places for it to begin. Such names as Hugh Owen, Thomas Gauge, Griffith Jones, Howell Harris, Daniel Rowland, and Pryce Davies were among the eminent leaders of the Welsh Revival. Griffith Jones, even though known as an educator, "was a pioneer of field preaching. He anticipated the circuit system which was to become a leading feature of the Methodist section of the Movement."⁴

The next contribution to the Evangelical Awakening, although indirect, came through the publications reporting

¹John Overton, The Evangelical Revival in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph and Company, 1886), p. 8.

²Ibid., p. 9.

³Wood, p. 34.

⁴Ibid., p. 45.

the revival held in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1734-1735 under the preaching of Jonathan Edwards. Revivals had been held in Northampton by Solomon Stoddard and in New Jersey by the Tennent brothers previously, but the peak was in this revival, known as the First Great Awakening. Isaac Watts and John Guyse published Jonathan Edwards' account of the Revival, and John Wesley did likewise later. These publications, which were widely read in Great Britain, were the next definite influence in the Evangelical Awakening in that country.¹

But another contribution to the British Revival needs consideration: The Moravian. Seven years prior to the Awakening in America, the Moravians, a group of people at Herrnhut in Moravia (now a province of Czechoslovakia) were experiencing a modern Pentecost. These people became quite missionary in spirit, sending missionaries to Great Britain and America, an action which proved to be one of the main factors in the early part of the Revival.²

Count Nicholas Zinzendorf, who formerly was a Lutheran nobleman, holding an important legal post in the court of Saxony, became one of the prominent leaders of the Moravians at Herrnhut. As a mission of goodwill, he sent letters to the King, to the Queen, and to the University of Oxford relating the proceedings of the Moravian Revival at

¹Wood, pp. 56-62.

²Ibid., p. 67.

Herrnhut. Later, in 1735, ten missionaries, under the leadership of Spangenberg, established a Moravian settlement at Savannah, Georgia. After receiving the sanction of Oglethorpe, the Moravians sent another group of twenty-six missionaries to Georgia, sailing on the same ship, the "Simmonds," as John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Benjamin Ingham, and Charles Delamontte, who likewise were bound for Georgia. In the meantime, James Hutton, influenced by the preaching of John Wesley, organized a society in London for prayer and praise to the Lord. Other societies sprang up in London, which proved to be among the major factors that brought about revival in Great Britain.¹

Two years later, 1737, John Wesley, who had just returned from Georgia a disappointed and rejected man, met Peter Böhler, a Moravian missionary. Before Böhler sailed for South Carolina, he and Wesley drew up the plans and rules for the organization of the Fetter Lane Society that became the headquarters of the Moravian Church in Great Britain.²

Apparently revival was beginning in Great Britain in the religious societies. One significant conversion was that of George Whitefield, in 1735, while a member of the society, named the Holy Club. Soon after his conversion, which proved to be the next important step in the Evangelical Awakening, Whitefield was ordained deacon, began preaching, and had phenomenal success in England and later in America.

¹Wood, pp. 70-72.

²Ibid., pp. 73-75.

He has been given the credit for founding Methodism because he was the first eminent evangelist in Great Britain and he was the first man to inaugurate a number of projects that accompanied the Revival: (a) to use the aggressive type of preaching; (b) to use the open air to preach the gospel; (c) to gather converts into large crowds; (d) to employ lay preachers; (e) to itinerate; (f) to hold the first Conference (a meeting of the preachers) in Wales, 1743; (g) to go as a missionary to Scotland; and (h) to go to America to become a part of the Awakening there. Considered the master evangelist of his time, for four months he took the city of London by storm, winning many converts by his preaching.¹ He was the orator of the Movement. But he had neither method nor system. A great preacher he was, but not truly a "Methodist" from the point of view of organization.²

The next event to be considered, and perhaps the most significant in the development and progress of the Evangelical Awakening, was the conversion of John and Charles Wesley in 1738. Both had served the Church before this time: John, two years as a curate, Fellow of Lincoln, two years as a missionary in Georgia, but the Aldersgate experience for John Wesley was not only the turning point in his life but likewise in the history of the Revival. Throughout his whole career, John Wesley emphasized the necessity of helping and doing good for other people, which may have led him to stress

¹Wood, pp. 81, 89.

²Overton, pp. 32-33.

the doctrine of "Christian Perfection," defined in this way: "Loving God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves."¹ Wesley had his weaknesses, differed with some of his contemporaries, made enemies with some of them, but he continued to show a spirit of love toward them.

Take him for all in all he towers above all the leaders of the Evangelical Revival, not so much in saintliness, or in intellectual power, or in eloquence, or in sound judgment, or in singleness of purpose, but in general force. If one man had to be picked out as the Reviver, that man's name would assuredly be John Wesley.²

Charles Wesley likewise held a prominent position in the Revival. The people of England, accustomed to liturgical worship, found it difficult to make adaptations in the more informal type of worship found among the Methodists. The hymns of the Wesleys took the place of the liturgy to some extent. The Methodists then became known for their singing. Charles was likewise a preacher in his own right, perhaps more diplomatic in his ministrations and more skillful in handling people than his brother, John. Often he was the link between George Whitefield and John Wesley.³

Another facet of the Evangelical Awakening is in Scotland. When George Whitfield arrived as a missionary, he discovered that a revival was in progress. However, he made his contribution as a revivalist. Later, starting in 1751, John Wesley visited Scotland for twenty-two years. His impact upon the country, particularly in the spheres of

¹Overton, p. 25. ²Ibid., p.29. ³Ibid., pp. 34-36.

belief in the Christian doctrines and of practice in Christian living, was permanent.¹ "Perhaps the most significant contribution of the Evangelical Movement to the continuing history of the Scottish Church lay in the impetus it supplied to the missionary awakening."²

To be considered next in the segment of the Evangelical Awakening is the revival in the established Anglican Church. This revival, not an aftermath of the Methodist Movement, but independent of it, transpired simultaneously with the Wesleyan revival. The approaches of the Anglicans and Wesley were different: the Anglican revivalist said that the parish was his world; Wesley said that the world was his parish.³

Names prominent in this movement are George Thomson, John Bennett, James Harvey, Samuel Walker (the leading exponent of evangelism in the Anglican Church), William Romaine, Henry Venn, and William Grimshaw. None of these men were related in any way with the Wesleys. Each one preached a message denouncing sin and proclaiming the new birth, exemplifying the change that had taken place in his life. "The frivolity and moral looseness of former days disappeared. The playhouse and the cockpit were each compelled to close down for lack of patrons."⁴ This is the description of the change in the community where Samuel Walker preached.

¹Wood, p. 125.

²Ibid., p. 126.

³Ibid., p. 133.

⁴Ibid., p. 140.

The cause of Anglican Evangelicalism was fostered in various parts of the country. Although the leaders were separated from one another by long distances and had little means of communication with each other, they were nevertheless united by the same Spirit who inspired the whole Revival movement. . . . We are compelled to conclude that their collective achievement is to be explained only in terms of their submission to God.¹

It seems the major factors contributing to the Evangelical Awakening in Great Britain were the Pietistic movement, the Puritan revolution, the organization of religious societies, the apologists, the publications of the First Great Awakening in America, the Moravian revival, and the Anglican revival. The Methodist revival will be considered next.

Methodism

The name "Methodist" was ascribed to all who were connected with the revival movement: the Moravians, Anglicans, Calvinists, and the followers of Whitfield and the Wesleys. The real "Methodists," the followers of John and Charles Wesley, are under consideration now.

The real starting-point of Methodism lay . . . in the conversion of the Wesleys. . . . But from the constitutional aspect it could be argued that the significant date was the 1st rather than the 24th May, 1738. That was when Wesley and Böhler drew up the rules for the Fetter Lane Society. Indeed Wesley himself traced the genesis of Methodism to this Moravian source. Its "first rise," he said was at Oxford in 1729, when the name Methodist was minted and cast at the members of the Holy Club. The second stage of development was in Georgia in 1736 when the Savannah society was formed. But the final and determinative step was taken in 1738 with the founding of the Fetter Lane Society.²

¹Wood, p. 147.

²Ibid., p. 162.

Perhaps, one of the reasons for the success of the segment of the revival movement strictly termed "Methodist" was the open air preaching in the fields. Whitefield tried it with marked success. Wesley reluctantly assented to preaching in this manner, and to his amazement thousands came to hear him preach in this most irregular way.¹ After a year of this kind of preaching both Wesley and Whitefield recognized the need of following up their work, for they discovered many of their apparent accomplishments were lost in a few weeks or months. So Wesley contrived the method of organizing the new converts into societies, to be revisited later by the itinerant preachers for instruction and encouragement. "Wesley had the genius of making adaptations at the right time to accomplish desired results. He was more of an adapter than an innovator."²

This method of revisiting the societies soon became exceedingly difficult for the three main preachers, Whitefield, John Wesley, and Charles Wesley. When John Wesley discovered that lay preachers could instruct and encourage the new converts, he employed them to do the work. The traveling from society to society led to the creation of an itinerant preacher, who would cover a circuit containing a certain number of societies, usually from ten to twenty.³

¹Matthew Simpson, A Hundred Years of Methodism (New York: Nelson and Phillips, 1876), p. 21.

²Wood, pp. 164-165.

³Bready, p. 217.

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Each of the societies was divided into classes, and the classes into bands. The lay preachers assumed much of the responsibility of leadership in the societies during the interim between the visits of the itinerant preachers. John Wesley drew up rules to control this unique organization and each member in it.¹

Wesley withdrew from the Fetter Lane Society because of his disagreement with some of the theological concepts of the Moravians. The first truly Methodist Society was the Foundery Society in Moorfields, London, organized the latter part of the year, 1739.

The Foundery Society represents Methodism in microcosm. The Rules of United Societies were simply an extension of this localized polity. Within the space of a few brief years there emerged all the main features of Methodism as it was to be. Not only was the condition of membership laid down and bands and classes formed, but the Love Feast, the Watchnight and the Covenant service were transplanted. . . . Lay preaching was regularized. . . . The first Methodist conference was held at the Foundery.²

Wesley insisted on a "conexional" system in order to keep his societies united. In spite of all the opposition the movement received, particularly during the first ten years of itinerant preaching, Methodism grew.

The simple but exacting rules of the organization, the forceful leadership of John Wesley, and the cooperation of his followers contributed much to the rapid growth of

¹James M. Buckley, A History of Methodism in the U. S. Vol. I (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1897), p. 103.

²Wood, p. 169.

Methodism until it became the largest and most influential of the segments of the Evangelical Awakening in Great Britain.

One more division of the Evangelical Revival needs attention, though briefly, to complete the pattern of this movement in eighteenth-century England: The Calvinistic mission under George Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon. This section grew out of Methodism and separated from it over "the age-old controversy as to whether absolute sovereignty of God's purpose is compatible with the freedom of man's will."¹ The division did not apparently hamper the spread of the revival for great benefits were received from the labors of both groups.

It is evident that the political situation, the social conditions, the changes in economic life, the decline of morals, the demoralization of the Church of England, the anti-Puritan purge, the expulsion of the non-jurors, and the proroguing of the Convocation, all contributed to the Evangelical Awakening. All three of the major divisions--Moravian, Calvinistic, and Methodist--left a tremendous impact upon the life of Great Britain and upon the American colonies.

Near the middle of this exciting century, Francis Asbury was born, reared, and spent several years working as a lay preacher and as an itinerant in Methodism under the leadership of John Wesley.

¹Wood, p. 177.

CHAPTER III

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

Political Conditions

Adventure, the prospect of finding wealth, the hope of economic security, the urge to obtain political freedom, the anticipation of religious liberty, and other motives impelled men into the unknown regions beyond the ocean. Those that could withstand the cold bitter winters wresting a livelihood from the soil, sometimes bleak and stony, usually bettered themselves economically. From this beginning a long stream of migration continued until all the thirteen colonies were established.¹

Each colony struggled in the formation of a government that would be satisfactory to both the colonists and Great Britain. Some colonies, such as Rhode Island, had a theocracy with church and state and ruled themselves as they desired. Another type was the proprietary colony, as Maryland, where religious freedom was achieved by the granting of a charter to colonize and govern according to certain stipulations found in the charter. Because of the distant location of the

¹Samuel McKee, Jr., American History to 1865 (Ames, Iowa: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1958), pp. 17-21.

[illegible]

American colonies from the parent country, and because of so many different aspects of a frontier culture, compared to seventeenth and eighteenth-century culture of England, the colonial governments grew and developed year by year in a manner that met their own needs and desires rather than those of the Crown or Parliament. Slow and difficult communication contributed to this. Usually it took several weeks for correspondence to reach Great Britain, and sometimes months to receive an answer, a fact which forced the colonists to make decisions to meet their immediate needs. This growing independence made the new settlers feel that they were capable of handling their own affairs, politically and economically.

A nation assuming an imperliastic policy, as Great Britain did, apparently ignoring or not realizing how shortsighted her demands were, could expect difficulty in enforcing those demands. The Tories in America were in the majority before the Revolution, and would have supported the Crown had it not been necessary to choose either self-interest and profit on the one hand or loyalty and sentiment on the other.¹ Britain's doctrine of mercantilism forced the issue. Theoretically a favorable balance of trade would result in self-sufficiency: the colonies would supply raw materials to Great Britain and the colonies would buy the manufactured

¹Vernon L. Parrington, The Colonial Mind 1620-1800, Vol. 1 (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1927), p. 189.

goods. To enforce this doctrine a number of navigation acts and other regulatory acts were passed, starting in 1650, and continuing to 1764.¹

During this same period Great Britain was in conflict with France. In the early part of the seventeenth century, France established and monopolized the fur-trading business with the Indians. Settlers and missionaries were sent into Quebec and later into Montreal. Explorations accompanied by fur trading opened up more territory to New France until, at the opening of the eighteenth century, fur-trading posts, mission stations, and towns dotted the valleys of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi from the Great Lakes, south, to the Gulf of Mexico. For about three-quarters of a century, 1689-1763, the two nations, Great Britain and France were at war, each one attempting to obtain possession of the New World. The last struggle, known as the French and Indian War of 1754-1763, finally ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Great Britain gained everything east of the Mississippi and practically all of Canada.²

The war left England with a heavy national debt. She believed that her American colonies should help pay some of this indebtedness since they benefited largely from the war. But Britain failed to sense that the American colonies were gradually moving away from the controls of the Crown and

¹McKee, pp. 31-32.

²Ibid., pp. 36-40.

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Parliament and were becoming more independent so, when the British government attempted to stop the widening of the gap between the theory of mercantilism and the actual relationship to her in trading, by the Greenville legislation, 1764-1765, she met resistance. The goal was to raise half of the cost of the war, 300,000 pounds annually, by revising the previous navigation acts and by adding several new ones, including the Stamp Act. Resistance in the American colonies increased. Then came the Townsend Acts of 1767, another renewal of effort to raise the revenue to pay the Americans' share of the debt. These acts of taxation met with severe reaction. John Dickinson's Letters from a Farmer, discussing their injustice, Samuel Adams' Circular Letter, urging the colonies to defend their natural and constitutional rights, and finally, the Boston Massacre in 1770, are examples. The Townsend Acts were repealed that year and quiet prevailed for a period of about three years.¹

The importation of tea renewed the conflict. The British East India Company made consignments of tea, with a tax of three cents a pound, to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston. The principle of being taxed and the virtual monopoly the British East India Company would have on the tea market greatly incensed the Americans. The Boston Tea Party followed by the accompanying punishments that Great Britain inflicted upon Massachusetts. In sympathy with their

¹Ibid., pp. 42-45.

sister colony, the other colonies rallied at the First Continental Congress, held at Philadelphia, September, 1774, to discuss the necessary measures to be taken. The position of the colonies was drawn up in the Declaration of Rights and Grievances. The next May, 1775, the Second Continental Congress convened. The Battles of Lexington and Concord had been fought. Tom Paine's Common Sense, published in January, 1776, which clearly presented the issues precipitating the quarrel, seemed to crystalize the movement for independence. On June 6, 1776, a committee was appointed to draft a declaration and on July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was formally adopted by the Congress convening at that time for that purpose.¹ "The Declaration was . . . at least to most patriots, a convincing apologia for separation."²

The next five years of war were most painful and trying. At the beginning of this period it looked as though the patriots would be defeated. If George III could have had the power, the Americans would have lost, but the mainland of Great Britain was threatened by invasion; Ireland was revolting; and national bankruptcy threatened Britain. When the British won battles in America, she could not hold the conquered territory because of an inadequate number of men in her army. If there had not been troubles at home,

¹Ibid., pp. 45-47.

²John Richard Alden, The American Revolution (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 83.

Britain likely would have brought the rebellious colonies back under her control.¹

The American colonies had their problems and difficulties during the war. An army had to be raised under most difficult circumstances: the farmers were not military men and did not want to be; they had to give their time to the army because there was no money to pay them; and they would serve for only a short period of time. Each colony issued its money, making exchange of doubtful value. It looked as though, during the first part of the war, the American effort was doomed to failure. Credit should be given to General George Washington for his leadership throughout the war. Defeat and victory followed one another until the triumph at Yorktown in August, 1781, when Cornwallis and his army were forced to surrender.² This decisive victory of the patriots and their allies led not only to the independence of the American colonies, but it also set the pattern for other colonies to seek their independence from European control. Furthermore, the new United States gave to the nations of the world the example of a republican system of government that undermined the whole monarchical system that had prevailed for so many centuries in Europe. Hence, the Peace of Paris, 1783, became a turning point in history in

¹Ibid., p. 248.

²McKee, p. 51.

more ways than one: it not only gave the American colonies their independence but it gave to the world an example of a republican form of government.¹

The independent colonies had their problems as they struggled toward statehood. Immediately following the war was a depression. The Articles of Confederation, adopted in 1781, had weaknesses: the central government was feeble because the colonies were reluctant to grant too much power to a central authority; the central government could levy taxes but could not collect them; it could not raise money to pay the national debt or to maintain an army and navy; it did not have power to regulate either foreign or domestic commerce; and it could not command the respect of foreign powers.²

However, the new nation did make some progress under the Articles of Confederation. For instance, the federal government regulated weights and measures, devised a coinage system, created a system of surveying public lands through the Ordinance of 1785, created a territorial government for all new territories, divided the Northwest Territory into states, and extended civil rights to all the inhabitants of territories through the Ordinance of 1787.³

During the period from 1787 to 1789, the new constitution was drafted, debated, and finally adopted. Washington was elected the first president of the new United States and

¹Alden, p. 268.

²McKee, pp. 53-54.

³Ibid., p. 54.

was inaugurated into office, April 30, 1789. For eight years the Federalists held the national offices: Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State; Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury; Henry Knox, Secretary of War; and Edmund Randolph, Attorney General. Alexander Hamilton, an ardent Federalist, was quite influential, first, as the leading financier of his time, and second, as a foremost politician. He was largely responsible for the creation of the two major political parties, based upon the economic interests of the nation: the planting-shareholding-farmer group who became the Republicans, and the mercantile-shipping-financial group who became the Federalists.¹ Thomas Jefferson became the leading figure in the former group and Alexander Hamilton, in the latter group. The Federalist program funded the national debt, assumed the state debts, established a national bank, established a mint, and imposed an excise tax on liquor. When Jefferson was elected in 1801, the exponents of Jeffersonian Democracy rejoiced. In his inaugural address Jefferson "emphasized the equality of men before the law and the right of all men to participate in the control of the government."² However, as a result of the previous administration of eight years under George Washington, the policies of the Federalists were firmly imbedded in the new federal government. Consequently, under Thomas Jefferson's administration,

¹John C. Miller, The Federalist Era 1789-1801 (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), p. 101.

²McKee, p. 67.

there was more of a shifting of attitude toward the federal government instead of changing old policies or initiating new ones. Many of the old Federalist policies were retained. For instance, the new administration continued to pay the national debt, to perpetuate the United States Bank, and to reduce the army and navy.¹

Jefferson, his cabinet, and Congress faced a different problem involving relationships with Great Britain. The British were impressing American sailors into their service, taking them from American ships, and interfering with American commerce on the high seas, which agitated the American government. Later, some imperialistic minded men, known as War Hawks, elected to Congress in 1810, desired to invade Canada and Spanish territory to annex it to the United States. War was declared on Great Britain. After two years of fighting, the Treaty of Ghent was signed and ratified by the United States Senate on February 15, 1815. The United States and Great Britain restored peaceful relationships as had existed prior to the war; the United States lost her Newfoundland fishing rights; and the American public lost its imperialistic ardor after the military reverses in the war.²

The War of 1812 stimulated an era of nationalism, starting about 1815. The various sections of the United

¹Ibid., pp. 57-67.

²Ibid., pp. 72-77.

States were tending to unite because of an emotional pride in a struggle common to all of them. Patriotic devotion conditioned the economic needs to the national welfare; men in politics attempted to advance the power and prestige of the new nation. The government strengthened the army and navy, established a second national bank, continued a high tariff to protect manufacturers, requested internal improvements for both agriculture and manufacturing, and built roads and canals to promote prosperity.¹

Politically, then, the American colonies had struggled to create a colonial government that would meet the needs of the colonists, and the desires and demands of Great Britain. The distance, slow communication, and lack of mutual understanding had driven a wedge between Great Britain and the colonies, making a gap so wide that the colonies had declared their independence and fought for it until they had won it from Great Britain. The new nation created the Articles of Confederation, and later the Constitution which had become the law of the land. George Washington had served as the new president, under whom strong Federalist policies had been enacted by the influence and leadership of Alexander Hamilton. Under the second president, Thomas Jefferson, a form of democracy that attempted to vest more power in the hands of the people had been introduced. After another war with Great Britain in 1812, in which the

¹Ibid., pp. 78-80.

Americans had been victorious, the nation attempted to build a spirit of nationalism.

Physical and Economic Conditions

America was still a primitive wilderness during the eighteenth century. With the exception of small strips of land cleared for farming, forests were everywhere, and minerals were hidden beneath the rocks and soil, ready to be discovered and mined. Two-thirds of the people lived along the Atlantic seaboard within fifty miles of the tidewater. Travel was most difficult. Only three wagon roads crossed the Alleghany Mountains: one from Philadelphia to Pittsburg, a second from the Potomac to the Monongahela rivers, and a third through Virginia to the Holston River and to Knoxville, Tennessee, with a branch running through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. Nearly half a million people penetrated the wilderness, using these roads and blazing new trails until a wedge of sparse settlements had been driven into Indian territory. Incensed by this encroachment on their lands, the Indians were a constant threat to the colonists who had settled on the fringe areas of the frontier from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.

Since communication was very difficult between towns and communities, and the best was very slow, people learned to live unto themselves and developed a rugged individualism as they adapted to their frontier environment. Even on the seaboard, people could not communicate too well when the

average speed of travel was four miles an hour. Not only was travel difficult, but it was expensive--six cents a mile per person by stage. In no country were there so many physical difficulties to overcome, and apparently no conviction that they could be overcome.¹

Economic conditions paralleled the physical conditions in eighteenth-century America. Plenty of cheap land provided every American with a farm from which he could raise his living. The New England farmers contended with sterile and rocky soil as they attempted to grow their crops in the same manner and to use the same type of crude machinery that their forefathers had used many generations before. Livestock was unimproved and had to rustle for pasture. The middle colonies had more favorable climate and could raise better crops, while the southern colonies had a climate where tobacco, rice, indigo, and cotton were produced, mainly on large plantations.²

Most of the manufacturing came from the New England colonies, although some came from the middle group. To the advantage of the American colonies there were marks of maturity economically, to the extent that they were the world's leading center of iron production, held a leading position in shipbuilding, and did a profitable business in

¹Henry Adams, The United States in 1800 (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1958), pp. 1-11.

²McKee, pp. 22-44.

fish, pottery, agricultural products, rum, tobacco, lumber products, furs, and skins.¹

This degree of maturity in the leaders of the respective colonies evidently aided them in dealing with both the immediate problems and the long-range ones. During the Revolution, luxury, extravagance, high prices, and profiteering were evident. With the war came changes: liberalizing of franchises, emphasizing democratic political equality, abolishing of quit rents, breaking up and selling large confiscated Tory landholdings, removing of restraints on trade and industry, moderating the severity of penal codes, deploring the lax morals, strengthening liberalism, and creating a spirit of independence and nationalism.²

The eighteenth-century town in America was crude and unimproved. Boston, for instance, had narrow, winding, almost unlighted streets paved with cobblestones, giving it the appearance of an old-fashioned market-town in England with little or no police protection.³ Philadelphia, on the other hand, was considered the most beautiful city in the world. The inhabitants apparently used their natural resources to a greater advantage than the people in the other colonies. It was the capitol until 1800, contained the national bank as well as a private banking system, and advanced the promotion and building of canals and roads for improving travel

¹Lawrence Henry Gipson, The Coming of the Revolution (New York: Harper and Row, Publisher, 1962), p. 13.

²McKee, p. 52.

³Adams, p. 17.

and communication. Other prominent towns of that day were New York, Baltimore, and Charleston.¹

Social Conditions

The customs, manners, and characteristics of the people of America in the eighteenth century are worth noting. Because most of the people were farmers, who grew and manufactured practically everything they needed, nearly everyone had an ample supply of the necessities of life: food, clothing, and shelter. One observer described Pennsylvania life, as he saw it, in the following manner:

There is a contrast of cleanliness with its opposite which to a stranger is very remarkable. The people of the country are as astonished that one should object to sleeping two or three in the same bed and in dirty sheets, or drink from the same dirty glass after half a score of others, as to see one neglect to wash one's hands and face of a morning. Whiskey diluted with water is the ordinary country drink. There is no settler, however poor, whose family does not take coffee or chocolate for breakfast, and always a little salt meat; at dinner, salt meat, or salt fish, and eggs; at supper again salt meat and coffee. This is also the common regime of the taverns.²

Many of the travelers marvelled at, but enjoyed, the abundance and variety of foods served for breakfast. In addition to coffee and salt meat there were all kinds of vegetables and Indian corn, the latter being the bread of the day and eaten at every meal. As to cleanliness, some of the critics failed to observe carefully. As a whole the people were neat and clean compared to the standards of other parts of the world.³

¹Ibid., pp. 20-26.

²Ibid., p. 30.

³Ibid., p. 33.

Americans were not temperate. Throughout the whole nation every grown man usually took his noon toddy, while in the South and West, excessive drinking was common. Although men were seldom seen drunk, yet they were affected by the continual use of alcohol.¹

The state of manners and morals in this period has been disputed. Dr. Dwight described the entertainment of the people in the following way:

The principal amusements of the inhabitants are visiting, dancing, music, conversation, walking, riding, sailing, shooting at a mark, draughts, chess. . . . A considerable amusement is also furnished in many places by the examination and exhibitions of the superior schools; and a more considerable one by the public exhibitions of the colleges. Our countrymen also fish and hunt. Journeys taken for pleasure are very numerous, and are a very favorite object. Boys and young men play at football, cricket, quoits, and at many other sports of an athletic cast, and in the winter are peculiarly [*sic*] fond of skating. Riding in a sleigh, or sledge, is also a favorite diversion in New England.²

The Virginians have been charged of being fond of horse racing, betting, drinking, cock-fighting, and the rough-and-tumble fight. The latter was somewhat like boxing today, with one exception: there were no rules.³

Whatever may be said of the manners and customs of the American people, one characteristic is found: the average American was active and industrious. No immigrant could come to America and be a loafer; most of them came for much higher motives.

¹Ibid., p. 33.

²Ibid., p. 35.

³Ibid., pp. 36-37.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle facing the American people of the eighteenth century was the human mind. Too often conservative thinking people refused to deviate from the status quo or to accept new ideas. One example is the steam ferry-boat invented and operated by John Fitch. After observing the success of its operation, the people refused to believe and accept it. Another example is given by Dr. Dwight, who, criticizing Rhode Island because of her failure to complete a turnpike across the state, wrote:

The people of Providence expended upon this road, as we are informed, the whole sum permitted by the Legislature. This was sufficient to make only those parts which I have mentioned. The turnpike company then applied to the Legislature for leave to expend such an additional sum as would complete the work. The Legislature refused. The principal reason for the refusal, as alleged by one of the members, it is said, was the following: that turnpikes and the establishment of religious worship had their origin in Great Britain, the government of which was a monarchy and the inhabitants slaves; that the people of Massachusetts and Connecticut were obliged by law to support ministers and pay the fare of turnpikes, and were therefore slaves also; that if they chose to be slaves they undoubtedly had a right to their choice, but the free-born Rhode Islanders ought never to submit to be priest-ridden, nor to pay for the privilege of travelling on the highway. This demonstrative reasoning prevailed, and the road continued in the state I have mentioned until the year 1805. It was then completed, and free-born Rhode Islanders bowed their necks to the slavery of travelling on a good road.¹

American life was influenced greatly by the nearness of the people to the soil. This created an obsession for land that had a bearing on the social structure of the

¹Ibid., p. 45.

colonies and the social history of the period. For instance, the farmers in New England and the middle colonies raised crops that could come from that area only; and they developed a yeoman society using England as their pattern or base. In the southern states, Virginia, Maryland, and South Carolina, an upper planter class arose where the planters consciously attempted to imitate the county families of England. The ownership of land, with the use of slaves to cultivate it, was the key to social status. There were not many in this upper aristocratic class, but they were very influential as business men and as leaders in politics. William Byrd II, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington are examples of this rich planter class. Numerically there were many more small farmers than there were plantation owners in the South. It can be said that the soil was influential in the structuring of society in America.¹

Another characteristic of the society in eighteenth-century America was the dignity of labor and the aristocracy of trade, particularly in the middle and northern colonies. Since work was scarce, the returns for labor were high. This created a relatively constant social and economic status. Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac, expressing the philosophy of work, was quite influential. Religion likewise did much to foster thrift. The Puritans, claiming that industry evidenced godliness, had little sympathy for the

¹Louis B. Wright, The Cultural Life of the American Colonies 1607-1763 (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), pp. 1-22.

indolent person. This doctrine either invented or promoted the capitalist system. Many of the industrious Puritans had been in the mercantile business in Britain. When they came to the New World they soon rose to prominence, becoming the aristocracy in the north and producing a number of leaders for the nation.¹

Several non-English elements entered America, influencing the social structure to some degree. The Dutch brought craftsmen, cabinet makers, and architecture. The French contributed a diversity of skills in the trades. The Germans gave the country better agriculture and handicrafts. The Jews provided business acumen. The Scots, tough, energetic, restless, and fearless, aided the pioneers in the conquest of the Indian territory and contributed to American education and religion.²

Intellectual Conditions

The Puritans took the lead in educational endeavors, for they believed the Bible had to be read by everyone in order for him to understand the way of salvation. Hence, it was essential that their children learn to read. Elementary schools were founded in New England. However, it was more difficult to educate the children in the South because of the distances between plantations. As a result, children were either sent to England to be educated or taught by tutors at

¹Ibid., pp. 23-33.

²Ibid., pp. 45-71.

home, the greater number receiving their training the latter way. The poorer children suffered for the want of an education; the slaves received none. However, every colony had some kind of education: elementary school, Latin Grammar school, Dame school, or private school.¹

America inherited four distinct educational traditions from the Old World. The first was the idea that education should produce the gentleman-scholar; the second was a scientific and utilitarian ideal that education should be a means of mastering the physical world; the third was the ideal that education was the means of ethical, moral, and religious development in the church; and the fourth was the ideal that education should train citizens for the state.² The early colleges were founded primarily for the purpose of meeting the third ideal: to train young men for the ministry in order to perpetuate religious development. However, during the eighteenth century a shift from this ideal was evident, as the secular curricula of the various colleges reflected.³

Treasured among the colonists were books that they managed to bring with them or could obtain from England. Many of them were theological in nature, particularly those owned by the settlers in New England, and many were of a

¹Ibid., pp. 98-116.

²Russel Blaine Nye, The Cultural Life of the New Nation 1776-1830 (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 150-151.

³Ibid., p. 173.

practical nature, dealing with Christian living, although there were others of great value: encyclopedias, histories, books on medicine, and science. During this early period there were a number of book collectors, the most noteworthy being Cotton Mather, William Byrd II, and James Logan. The impetus for a subscription library came from Benjamin Franklin who organized the Library Company of Philadelphia, which, according to Franklin, was the beginning of subscription libraries in North America. Gradually, books were brought together in other towns, but the most notable libraries started with the organization of the colleges during the Colonial period.¹ "These libraries have improved the general conversation of Americans, made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries."²

The writing of literature had a slow beginning. The early settlers were so occupied with clearing forests, raising crops, and conquering foes that there was little time for literary pursuits. However, in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, quite a body of literature came from the New England states, mainly of a religious nature.³

After the American Revolution, writers searched for an American ideal upon which their literature could rest. The first great factor was the search for materials that the new

¹Wright, pp. 126-153

²Ibid., p. 148.

³Ibid., pp. 154-174.

American author could write about. Then came literature about the Indian, the frontier, the history of the United States, events, opinions, American nature, and the like. The second factor was the drift to Romanticism in American Literature. During the eighteenth century a new form of writing became popular: the poem, novel, drama, and the essay. Of less importance to the reading public were the sermon, autobiography, travel narrative, and the journal.¹

American literature from 1776 to 1830 was in large part derivative, imitative, dependent upon Britain for its standards and inspiration. It was, however, increasingly nationalistic in spirit, and consciously committed to the use of native materials and the expression of native attitudes. It was still ridden by a colonial complex, lacking in confidence of its own literary tastes and ideas, fearful of not conforming to presumably superior British literary norms. It was also primarily moralistic. Americans still believed that novels should instruct, dramas draw moral lessons, satires discover and castigate error, essays debate and argue, poetry please and teach. Few American artists attempted to create a literature for its own values.²

Little was done in drama to further culture in America. The first theater appeared at Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1716 or 1718. Strolling players appeared from time to time, but they were not welcomed in many places because of religious convictions against drama. By 1740, opposition to the theaters was gradually breaking down so that good productions, such as Shakespeare, came to Yorktown, Virginia, and Charlestown, South Carolina. Amateur groups appeared with their

¹Nye, pp. 242-251.

²Ibid., pp. 261-262.

productions. The first and only American drama written was the "Prince of Parthia" by Thomas Godfrey and was produced in the spring of 1767.¹

The architecture of the homes of the early colonists had to be functional and simple, because they only had hand tools for construction. Brick houses gradually came into existence; stone houses were lacking, for the settlers had no lime to make mortar. The Dutch houses were the most distinctive with high gabled ends. Public buildings, taking their designs from those found in England, multiplied rapidly during the eighteenth century. College buildings followed the same Georgian style.²

Science influenced all areas of life in Colonial America and in the United States. Discoveries in the New World stimulated scientific observation, speculation, and experimentation. The abundance and variety of flora and fauna aroused much curiosity, hence the first scientific investigations were in natural history. It was thought that the new herbs found in America had medicinal qualities and that they had the power to cure all ills, which aroused the optimism and hope of scrofulous and gouty Europeans. An English merchant, John Frampton, capitalized the idea by giving the following enticing title to a translation of Nicholas Monardes' work on medicine: Joyful News out of the

¹Wright, pp. 176-186.

²Ibid., pp. 196-202.

New Found World Wherein Is Declared the Rare and Singular Virtues of Diverse and Sundry Herbs, Trees, Oils, Plants, and Stones, with Their Applications for Physic as Chirurgery the Said Being Well Applied Bringeth Such Present Remedy for All Diseases, as May Seem Altogether Incredible (1577). "This book, widely read by Elizabethans, stimulated an interest in collecting American products that persisted until the end of the colonial period."¹

Both the cultural and intellectual patterns of America were greatly influenced by science for the reason that the people believed that it would determine a solution to the social, religious, and political problems of their day. Again, they believed that science possessed nationalistic qualities, that it would be the instrument by which the United States would obtain leadership morally, politically, spiritually, and materially. The fact that Europeans looked upon American science as inferior, stimulated the scientists in America to make greater improvements in order to cope with their critics.²

The scientific method in America proved to be the adoption of the eighteenth-century Newtonian method used in Britain, which included the three basic components: experimentation, induction, and empiricism.³ A characteristic attitude of eighteenth-century science was the general acceptance of four basic principles:

¹Ibid., p. 217.

²Nye, pp. 54-56.

³Ibid., p. 57.

A belief in the inductive method as opposed to simple authority; a belief in the Newtonian doctrine of a mechanistic universe governed by immutable, discoverable laws; a belief (tempered, but nevertheless pervasive) in the efficacy of scientific method as applied to the study of human relations and human problems; and a belief in the unity of science, implying a mechanistic relationship among all branches of knowledge.¹

This faith in science became a buttress upon which rested contemporary belief in progress. Furthermore, science made a tremendous impact upon orthodox theology, particularly Newtonian science, which led to the belief that God was the First Cause or was an Intelligent Agent.²

The war impeded the growth and development of science, but after it was over, the old scientific societies were re-activated and new ones created. The branch of science that experienced most confusion was that of medicine, because the medical scientists possessed no body of theory or research techniques that were reliable. Experimentation was slow on account of the hostility against the use of the human body for experimental purposes. Some doctors believed in methods that were used as far back as Aristotle's time, the most popular, among the doctors in the eighteenth century, being the "Cullenian" and "Brunonian" theories, which held that disease was caused by too much or too little tension emanating from the brain. The cures to reduce this tension were opium, bleeding, wine, and aromatics. The cures to increase tension

¹Ibid., pp. 59-60.

²Ibid., pp. 60-61.

were fasting, cathartics, and sweating. It was stated in 1819, that the majority of the doctors at that time believed in and practiced "bleeding" and "sweating."¹

Communication in Colonial America was both slow and uncertain. Under the most favorable circumstances it took from four to six weeks to cross the ocean. The colonies did not communicate between themselves until common foes thrust them together, such as the Indians with their concerted attacks, and their fight for independence. On account of bad roads the postal system functioned poorly, operating at a deficit, until Benjamin Franklin and William Hunter became deputy postmaster generals in 1753. Facilities were then improved and time for dispatching mail was cut down.²

Printing was likewise slow because effective circulation of newspapers was dependent upon the postal system. The News Letter, published at Boston, in 1704, was the first successful newspaper. Others appeared and were published with degrees of success; but the most thriving of the newspapers was the "Gazette" edited by Benjamin Franklin. By the end of the colonial period every region had newspapers to inform the colonists of happenings across the water and at home. The various parliamentary acts preceding the Revolution, particularly the Stamp Act, and other political controversies, stimulated publications.³

¹Ibid., pp. 73-76.

²Wright, pp. 240-242.

³Ibid., pp. 242-246.

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Another part of American life needs to be considered in order to obtain a clearer concept of the "man" that eighteenth-century America was producing. It is the "man" that emerged from the process of conquering, expanding, and settling the frontier.

The fur traders and trappers were the first to penetrate the forests to obtain furs and skins, killing and trapping animals themselves and establishing a trade with the Indians by exchanging trinkets for furs. They returned with their treasures and sold them to European buyers at good prices. These fur traders attempted to understand the Indians and their way of life. Because of the valuable fur trade, the traders desired to disturb the Indians' economy of life as little as possible.¹

Stimulated by the stories and descriptions of the West, miners struck out to find gold by panning the streams all the way from Georgia to California. When gold was found in the bed of a stream, a mining camp mushroomed into existence in that area.²

As the farmers in the settled communities fenced their fields, the cattlemen were pushed back into the undeveloped lands to find pastures for their herds. This third class of

¹Thomas D. Clark, Frontier America (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1959), p. 10. [Future reference will be Clark, Frontier.]

²Ray Allen Billington, The Westward Movement in the United States (Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1959), p. 9.

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people did little more than the other two groups in developing permanent settlements, but all three were a part of the pattern of settlement.

The speculators, knowing that land was wanted by many people, followed the other groups and usurped large tracts of land with the expectation of selling at high prices. Along with the speculators a fifth group of people, the pioneer or "squatter" farmers, pushed westward until they found suitable spots for homes and farms. These American nomads built rude cabins, started to clear the land, and held it until neighbors moved in. They then sold out to the next group of pioneers--the more stable farmers moving west to built permanent homes, while the pioneer farmers moved farther west to repeat the same operation. The sixth group, the stable farmers, built their homes, cleared the land, grubbed out the stumps, built fences, and improved roads in order to communicate with the world east of them. Over these roads came the last group in this pattern of settlement: the millers, distillers, merchants, lawyers, doctors, country editors, ministers, and many others. All of them were alert to the immediate and potential profits in the new town.¹

This pattern, repeated over and over hundreds of times with variations, produced a "man" who was peculiarly an American. This new product, forged by the frontier, was not a man who adopted European culture, but was a man possessing

¹Ibid., p. 10.

a culture based upon democratic ideals and at the same time upon a rugged individualism. This frontier philosophy, that attempted to explain the kind of "man" an American was, moved eastward to the Atlantic seaboard until the whole of America was influenced by it.¹ This concept holds that the American intellect is indebted to the frontier for its striking characteristics.

That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom--these are traits of the frontier, or traits called out elsewhere because of the existence of the frontier.²

Religious Conditions

Another important part of colonial life is religion. Sunday was far more than a day to perform certain rituals. In the seventeenth century religion was a part of life seven days a week, its vitality permeating the whole social structure throughout the Colonial period. The seventeenth century was an age of faith; the eighteenth did not deviate too far from it, as a whole, and some groups--for instance, the Presbyterians--made religion a crusade for devotion.³

The opportunity of owning land in the New World beckoned minority groups from Europe to come and to build

¹George Rogers Taylor (ed.), The Turner Thesis (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1956), pp. 1-16.

²Ibid., pp. 17-18.

³Wright, p. 72.

communities where they could worship as they desired. They did not seek religious toleration; they sought freedom from civil authorities or from opposing sects. In many cases, after the colonists became established, they were just as zealous, if not more so, in uprooting and driving from their colonies any one who differed from their established religious decorum.¹

Wherever members of the Church of England (Anglicans or Episcopalians) colonized in America, they took their church with them. They did not migrate in large numbers, but were scattered among the colonies, with Virginia having the greatest number.² The country gentlemen of the South were usually members of the Anglican Church, which was tax supported in America, as it was in England. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts sent more than three hundred missionaries to America during the first seventy-five years of the eighteenth century.³ The Church of England was important in Colonial America, having four hundred fifty churches and two hundred fifty clergymen at the close of the Colonial period. The Revolution seriously divided the Anglican Church. While no other one church had as many Loyalists in it, the majority of those who signed the Declaration of Independence were members of this same church.

¹Ibid., pp. 72-73.

²Nye, p. 197.

³Wright, p. 115.

Furthermore, just as many revolutionary leaders came from Anglican Virginia as from Calvinistic New England, and more Anglican Tories came from New England and New York than from Virginia.¹

From the point of view of time, the Roman Catholics labored longer than any other one group in America. They established missions and did a noble work among the Indians. The Catholics faced two major problems in their settlements in the New World. England was Protestant and attempted to establish the Church of England as the religion in the colonies. Most of the colonies, although some of them far from being Anglican, were anti-Catholic, with the possible exception of Maryland. Therefore, Catholic settlements were scattered throughout all of the colonies, wherever they would be tolerated. The other problem was the lack of guidance from the Church at Rome. The Catholics did not leave a religious impact upon Colonial America. In 1782, there were about twenty-five priests in the United States,² and about the same time there were fifty churches.³

A dynamic religion, that influenced American History for many generations, came from New England Puritanism. Massachusetts Bay Colony was founded upon Calvinistic theology with the belief that all religious and civil

¹Nye, p. 197.

²Ibid., pp. 198 and 200.

³J. Franklin Jameson, The American Revolution Considered As A Social Movement (Boston: Beacon Press, 1956), p. 85.

questions could be answered in the Bible. As a result a holy commonwealth identifying church and state emerged, with membership restricted to those who could prove they were converted. This looked ideal. But trouble arose when unconverted people and those who were converted, but differed in their interpretation of the Bible, wanted suffrage and a voice in the government. These people were not tolerated but were excommunicated. Nevertheless, New England and Puritanism had a tremendous effect upon many people who settled in America. During the thirteen-year period from 1629 to 1642, approximately 20,000 Englishmen migrated to America, and practically all of them settled in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The impact of Puritanism lasted for many years and could be felt as far south as South Carolina.¹ The Puritans, in New England, as a whole, had become Congregational and at the end of the Colonial Period had about 658 congregations.²

Another strong and influential church in eighteenth-century America was the Presbyterian, numbering about 543 congregations.³ The Scotch Presbyterians proved to be industrious, fearless, energetic, and thrifty. Consequently, they became wealthy. Churches and schoolhouses, becoming landmarks of religion and learning, were built from the eastern seaboard to the western frontier. John Witherspoon,

¹Wright, pp. 77-81.

²Jameson, p. 85.

³Ibid.

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a minister for some time of the Presbyterian church in Paisley, Scotland, came to America to become one of Princeton's most effective presidents, proving himself to be a statesman in both church and state. For instance, he obtained the respect of the two factions existing in the Presbyterian church: the Old Side and the New Light. The latter group, who were the revivalists resulting from the preaching of the Tennents, were expelled from the Presbyterian church in 1741. The new group organized the College of New Jersey in 1747 and grew so rapidly that they were about three times the size of the remaining group, known as the Old Side, in 1758.¹ At this time John Witherspoon united the two factions and changed the College of New Jersey to Princeton, becoming its first president. Also, he was asked to be a member of the First Continental Congress and to be a signer of the Declaration of Independence. His contribution to both church and state was great. It would be difficult to overestimate the influence the Presbyterians had on colonial life, particularly in their part of converting the frontier into a civilized life.²

The Baptists, numbering 498 congregations,³ date their origin to 1639, when a group of the followers of Roger Williams banded together and formed a Baptist church in

¹William Warren Sweet, Methodism in American History (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1933), pp. 17-18. [Future reference will be Sweet, Methodism.]

²Wright, pp. 67-71.

³Ibid.

Providence, Rhode Island.¹ Baptist churches of various kinds were organized with the greatest number in Pennsylvania about 1707. The Baptists had suffered through the years as one of the minority groups in both New England and Virginia. When the Revolution came they supported it wholeheartedly, feeling that they had nothing to lose and might gain with independence. At this time they were much stronger than in earlier colonial days because they were the chief ones to reap benefits from the First Great Awakening in New England Congregationalism and Virginia Anglicanism.²

Since the Baptists did not have an organized ministry, and since the congregations were rather loosely organized, their religion almost became a folk religion and was welcomed by the frontier people. The Second Great Awakening, occurring during the close of the eighteenth and the opening of the nineteenth centuries, had a tremendous influence upon the life of the nation. In New England revival started under the leadership of Beecher and Finney. On the frontier there was James McGready, Barton Stone, and many others engaged in camp meetings. The Cane Ridge, Kentucky, revival of 1801, started by the Presbyterians, kindled revival throughout the whole frontier. Both Methodists and Baptists welcomed this approach to religion.³ The Second Great Awakening made a tremendous impact upon the churches and the life of America, achieving two lasting effects:

¹Ibid., p. 84.

²Gipson, p. 11.

³Nye, pp. 216-218.

First . . . it meant that the Methodists and Baptists became the two most powerful American sects. During the period 1800-1830, Methodist membership increased sevenfold, Presbyterian quadrupled, Baptist tripled, and Congregational doubled. The Methodists gained 6,000 new members in the Western Conference in two years during the height of revivalism, and the Baptists added 10,000 to their rolls in Kentucky alone in three years. Presbyterian gains, while large, were more than offset by the divisions and schisms that beset them. Second, the Awakening meant that the United States, despite the shocks of eighteenth-century rationalism and 'infidelity,' remained predominantly a religious-minded nation, with one emotional, pietistic, moralistic spirit that would color its social, political, and economic thinking for generations to come.¹

Other religious groups coming to Colonial America were the Quakers and other pietists, Mennonites, Dutch Reformed, and Reformed Lutheran. The Quakers and pietists settled mainly in Pennsylvania and the others were scattered throughout the other colonies. Their contributions and influence on American life were not as great as the Anglicans, Puritans, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists. The Methodists will be considered next.

Methodism

Sometimes movements and organizations have strange beginnings, which can be said of Methodism. Samuel Wesley, the father of John, spent the last days of his life publishing a ponderous book of six hundred pages titled, Dissertations in Librum Jobi, dedicated to Queen Caroline. After the death of his father, John was appointed to deliver a copy to the Queen who received it with little enthusiasm. While in

¹Nye, p. 219.

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London, John met General James Oglethorpe who was in the process of organizing the fifth company of settlers to sail for Georgia. Looking for a priest to minister to the colonists and to serve as a missionary to the Indians, Oglethorpe offered the position to Wesley.¹

John Wesley became one of the three hundred missionaries the Anglican church sent to America. John met with little success while in the New World, due largely to his inability to understand the needs of the colonists and the ways of the Indians. He attempted to mold the people into a society patterned after the Holy Club and he was tactless in his attempts to enforce the rules of the society. However, Whitefield later referred favorably to the missionary work that Wesley did in Georgia, for it was there that he organized his first class meetings. During these two years in Georgia, from 1735 to 1737, Wesley fellowshiped with Moravians and learned much that influenced his theological thinking.² The first seeds of Methodism were sown on American soil.

George Whitefield is the next link in the chain of events leading to the planting of Methodism in America. After a year of very successful preaching in England, he came to America in 1737, to continue the work in Georgia.

¹Sweet, Methodism, p. 31.

²Frederick E. Maser, The Dramatic Story of Early American Methodism (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), pp. 14-16.

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He proved to be as successful among the colonists as Wesley was a failure. The third visit of George Whitefield took him into New England where he met Jonathan Edwards and preached several times. This was at the peak of the First Great Awakening, about 1742.¹ The message that George Whitefield preached was one of a conversion experience, the part of Methodism that he brought to America. However, in justice to the Tennent brothers, the men coming from the Log College, and to Jonathan Edwards, the message of personal salvation was preached by each one of them. Because of Whitefield's great oratory and because he was the first voice to be heard coming from the group that later became Methodists, he has been acclaimed the founder of Methodism. He did not bring to America a system of prayers and fastings but the message of Methodism.² George Whitefield's organization of his converts was like a rope of sand. He had no means of following his evangelistic work; his converts either drifted back into their former ways or were absorbed by other churches. As an organizer, he was not a true "Methodist." Emphasis needs to be placed upon the message that Whitefield and Wesley preached. It was the effectiveness of this message that created the movement that became Methodism.³

¹Sweet, Methodism, p. 14.

²Meser, p. 18.

³Sweet, Methodism, p. 38.

(continued)

Almost twenty years elapsed and it looked as though the chain of events, leading to the establishing of Methodism in America, had been broken. Perhaps one reason is that the type of immigration coming to America had changed--comparatively few Englishmen migrated to the New World between 1708 to 1775. Most of those entering during this period were German and Irish.¹

Here again, the chain of events leading to the establishment of Methodism in America took a devious route in the following manner: John Wesley itinerated into Ireland regularly each year from 1747 to 1789. These Irish visitations were the most fruitful of his ministry,² perhaps for the reason of a discovery he made on one of his early tours. He visited Limerick county, where he found a colony of German Palatinates, who had been driven from their homes because of the advancing of Louis XIV's army into Germany. They were a rough and wicked people but they responded to the gospel message. However, they were not happy in Ireland; so, a number of them migrated to America landing in New York in August, 1760.³ In this group were Philip Embury and his wife, two of his brothers, his brother-in-law, Paul Heck and his wife, Barbara.⁴

¹Sweet, Methodism, pp. 48-49.

²Ibid., p. 49.

³Halford E. Luccock, Paul Hutchinson, and Robert W. Goodloe, The Story of Methodism (New York: Abington-Cokesbury Press, 1949), pp. 144-145.

⁴W. J. Townsend, et al. (eds.), A New History of Methodism, Vol. II (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1909), p. 57.

Following is a graphic picture of Embury as he and his fellows embarked for the New World:

He is . . . a tall, dark, lean figure standing in the center of a group of emigrants on the deck of a vessel leaving Limerick, Ireland, and preaching a farewell sermon to those on the dock, many of whom are in tears. The vessel begins slowly to move from the wharf. The hoarse shouts of the captain drown out the voice of the preacher. Sailors, their hair in pigtails, their brown feet bare, race about the deck, tugging at the ropes. The broad white sails catch the breeze, billowing out with a report like a cannon. The preacher can no longer make himself heard. He raises his arms in benediction. Many on the dock sink to their knees, remaining in that position for as long as the vessel is in sight.¹

With Philip Embury, licensed to preach under John Wesley, and placed on the reserve list for traveling preachers, in 1758,² it looked as though the broken link in the chain of events leading to the establishment of Methodism in America was about to be forged. But Embury was a diffident fellow. He united with the Trinity Lutheran Church in New York, likely because his forefathers in Germany were Lutherans. For six years he worked as a carpenter and a school teacher manifesting none of the Methodist ardor he had formerly experienced.³

The little group of Methodists became more and more identified with the nonreligious Palatinates until their Methodist resemblance and living were gradually disappearing.

¹Maser, pp. 24-25.

²Ibid., p. 25.

³Sweet, Methodism, p. 53.

It took someone like Barbara Heck to awaken them. One evening while visiting her brother, Paul Ruckle, she discovered him and several others sitting around a table gambling. In her indignation she swept their cards from the table into her apron and into the fire and started to exhort them to leave their evil ways. She then went to her cousin, Philip Embury's house and exclaimed, "Brother Embury, you must preach to us or we shall all go to Hell, and God will require our blood at your hands." "But where shall I preach?," he asked, "or how can I preach, for I have neither a house nor a congregation?" "Preach in your own house and to your own company first," replied Mrs. Heck.¹ It is likely that Barbara Heck assembled that first congregation consisting of five persons. Undaunted by discouragement the small congregation met regularly in Embury's home. Each week a few more were added to the group until it became so large that an empty room nearby had to be rented. In a short time a Methodist society was formed in New York.²

The next winter, 1767, one Sunday morning, a British officer dressed in full uniform attended the worship service. A chill fell on the congregation; fear pervaded the atmosphere. Had this British stranger come to dismiss them? But to their amazement he participated in the songs and prayers. At the close of the service he marched forward and introduced

¹Townsend, p. 56.

²Maser, pp. 25-26.

himself as "Captain Thomas Webb, of the king's service, and also a soldier of the cross and a spiritual son of John Wesley."¹ Soon he was preaching. Before he left England he had been licensed to preach under John Wesley. The voice of Philip Embury gathered a congregation; but the sight of this army officer in full uniform placing his sword beside his Bible, and then preaching with Methodist fervor, drew large crowds. A second time the meetinghouse was too small to hold the people, consequently an old rigging-loft, where sails had been repaired, was rented.² The Methodists in New York were becoming embarrassed, as the crowds continued to grow, because the loft was too small and the congregation was too poor to build. However, under the aggressive leadership of Thomas Webb, who was both wealthy and generous, a church was built large enough to accommodate the crowds. It was called Wesley Chapel,³ later to be known as Old John Street Church. On October 30, 1768, Philip Embury preached the dedicatory sermon. Methodism was established in New York.

Thomas Webb continued to preach and started to itinerate, going to Jamaica, Long Island. Later, he toured New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. He usually organized a class of Methodists on the first visit and on succeeding visits he would perfect the organization into a Methodist

¹Sweet, Methodism, p. 146.

²Ibid., pp. 147-148.

³Maser, pp. 26-27.

society. In a number of instances he appointed someone to care for the new congregation.¹ He did his best work in Philadelphia, drawing large crowds as he did in New York. As a preacher some said he was second to no one except George Whitefield. Although not the first one to preach and organize Methodist societies he has been considered the principal one in the founding of the Methodist church in America.²

John Adams, from Massachusetts, while attending the Continental Congress in 1774, at Philadelphia, heard Webb preach at St. George's. He described him as a speaker thus:

In the evening I went to the Methodist meeting and heard Mr. Webb, the old soldier who first came to America in the character of a quartermaster under General Braddock. He is one of the most fluent, eloquent men I ever heard; he reaches the imagination, and touches the passions very well, and expresses himself with great propriety.³

The next link in the chain of events leading to the establishment of Methodism in America was the preaching and itineracy of Robert Strawbridge. He was another one of Wesley's, Irish local preachers. This energetic, zealous preacher was not received in his home town, but was persecuted until he had to leave. Later he came to America and settled on Sam's Creek, about 30 miles from Baltimore, Maryland. The exact date of his coming has been a subject of controversy, but probably it was between 1760 and 1765. As soon as he

¹Buckley, pp. 135-136.

²Townsend, p. 59.

³John Lednum, A History of the Rise and Progress of Methodism in America (Philadelphia: John Lednum, Publishers, 1859), p. 60.

built his cabin he held preaching services in it. Soon the crowds overflowed it making it necessary to build a log meetinghouse about a mile away.¹ Not only did he preach here but he itinerated and organized societies structured after Wesley's plan. It has been claimed that these were some of the first Methodist societies organized in America.² Perhaps, the greatest tribute should be given to him for recruiting preachers. For example, the following entered the itinerant ministry because of his preaching: William Watters, the first native born American traveling preacher; Robert Owen, the first native local preacher; Freeborn Garrettson; Philip Gatch; John Hagerty; and many others.³

Because of his independent spirit, Robert Strawbridge was somewhat of a thorn in the flesh to both Thomas Rankin and Francis Asbury. As a result, full credit is not given to him for the great pioneer work he did as a preacher and as a stimulus to young men to enter the itinerant ministry.⁴

By 1766, Methodism had come into Virginia at Leesburg under the leadership of Strawbridge or one of his itinerants. A society was formed and a lot purchased upon which was erected Old Stone Church. It was completed in 1770, and dedicated twenty years later as a Methodist church by Joseph Pilmoor.⁵

¹Sweet, Methodism, p. 51. ²Maser, p. 22.

³Wade Crawford Barclay, Early American Methodism 1769-1844, Vol. I (New York: The Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church, 1949), p. 23.

⁴Sweet, Methodism, p. 52.

⁵William Warren Sweet, Virginia Methodism (Richmond, Virginia: Whittet and Shepperson, 1955), p. 46. [Future reference will be Sweet, Virginia.]

With the consent of John Wesley two local ministers, Robert Williams and John King, arrived in America to work with the Methodists. Williams helped Embury for a short time in New York, until Boardman came, and then went south to assist Strawbridge in Maryland. Soon he plunged into new territory, preaching and winning converts, among whom was Jesse Lee. Taking William Watters with him, he went to South Carolina where they both succeeded in their preaching.¹ When Robert Williams died in 1775, Francis Asbury, preaching his funeral sermon, made this tribute to him: "Perhaps no one in America has been an instrument of awakening so many souls, as God has awakened by him."²

To John King has been given the credit of introducing Methodism into Baltimore. His excessive fervor seemed to preclude him from the service he might have rendered. It was to him that John Wesley admonished, "Scream no more at the peril of your own soul."³

In answer to the many appeals from the Methodists in America, John Wesley sent two missionaries Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor, the first official Methodist missionaries, who landed at Philadelphia the fall of 1769. To their surprise Captain Thomas Webb handed over a plan of the American circuit showing where Methodism had been established in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland.⁴

¹Sweet, Methodism, p. 58.

²Clark I, p. 164.

³Sweet, Methodism, p. 59.

⁴Ibid., p. 59.

Boardman went to New York. Little is known about his missionary work there, because all the available information is in his letters to John Wesley containing a record of his travels and information about his labors, which seem to be meager. He wrote about the eagerness of the people to listen to his preaching. One of his converts, John Mann, became the leader of the New York society during the Revolutionary War and later was among those who founded Methodism in Nova Scotia.¹

Pilmoor remained in Philadelphia. Here he soon attracted large crowds until their meetinghouse had to be replaced with a large shell of a building that had been partially constructed by a German Reformed congregation. The Methodists purchased it at the low price of 650 pounds.²

Pilmoor became restive under Boardman's plan of exchanging pulpits every three months between New York and Philadelphia. After additional help came from England, he made an extensive preaching tour in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. He formed a new society of twenty-six members at Norfolk, Virginia. Everywhere he preached great numbers came to hear him.³

Wesley's Conference in 1770, names for the first time the appointments of four preachers in America: Joseph Pilmoor, Richard Boardman, Robert Williams, and John King.⁴

¹Maser, p. 40.

²Ibid., p. 39.

³Sweet, Methodism, p. 61.

⁴Ibid., p. 63.

Methodism thrived in America. Pilmoor enthusiastically wrote to Wesley pleading for more helpers, claiming there was enough work for two preachers in every place. At the next Conference, 1771, Wesley sent Francis Asbury and Richard White to America.¹

The links in the chain of events leading to the establishment of Methodism in America were forged: Wesley's Mission to Georgia; George Whitefield's preaching; the non-English sects and their preaching; Philip Embury, Captain Thomas Webb, and Robert Strawbridge's preaching and organizing of Methodist societies; Robert Williams, John King, Richard Boardman, and Joseph Pilmoor's labors. This was the status of Methodism when Francis Asbury arrived in America, October 27, 1771.

¹Maser, p. 44.

CHAPTER IV

FRANCIS ASBURY, THE MAN

Biography

Francis Asbury was born in the parish of Handsworth near the foot of Hamstead Bridge about four miles from the city of Birmingham in Staffordshire, England, August 20 or 21, 1745.

His parents, Joseph and Elizabeth Asbury, stable Englishmen of the yeoman class, gave Francis a heritage and an environment that were among the best for their social class. Joseph was a frugal gardener, supplementing his scanty income, received from his hire to the wealthy families of his community, by cultivating a few acres of land near his humble cottage. This gave him enough to meet the needs of his family so that they experienced neither riches nor poverty but were comfortable and contented.¹

Although not particularly pious, the Asburys attended the Church of England and became a part of the religious community. However, a change came about in Elizabeth when their first child, Sarah, died. The mother grew solemn, started to attend evangelistic services, held by the sects, and sought fellowship of pious people. Consequently, she invited

¹Carroll, p. 16.

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evangelical groups into her home to have services, particularly the Methodist classes and bands, which were smaller groups--subdivisions of the classes. Grief, which seemed to overwhelm her, and zeal, which seemed to possess her, caused Elizabeth Asbury to become a religious enthusiast--almost a religious fanatic. She spent hours reading, meditating, and praying. It took a number of years for her to overcome her grief. During this period Francis was born.¹ Referring to this experience of his mother, Asbury wrote in his Journal: "When a child, I thought it strange my mother would stand by a large window poring over a book for hours together."²

The following tribute to his mother, written in his Journal, upon her death January 6, 1802, revealed some of her characteristics and the influence she must have had on Asbury's life:

How would the bereaved mother weep and tell of the beauties and excellencies of her lost and lovely child! [sic] pondering on the past in the silent suffering of hopeless grief. This afflictive providence graciously terminated in the mother's conversion. When she saw herself a lost and wretched sinner, she sought religious people. . . . Many were the days she spent chiefly in reading and prayer; at length she found justifying grace, and pardoning mercy. . . . For fifty years her hands, her house, her heart, were open to receive the people of God and ministers of Christ; and thus a lamp was lighted up in a dark place called Great Barre, in Great Britain. She was an afflicted, yet most active woman, of quick bodily powers, and masculine understanding; nevertheless,

¹Asbury, pp. 3-4.

²Clark I, p. 720.

'so kindly all the elements were mixed in her,' her strong mind quickly felt the subduing influences of that Christian sympathy which 'weeps with those who weep,' and 'rejoices with those who do rejoice.' As a woman and a wife she was chaste, modest, blameless; as a mother (above all the women in the world would I claim her for my own) ardently affectionate; as a 'mother in Israel' few of her sex have done more by a holy walk to live, and by personal labor to support, the Gospel, . . . as a friend, she was generous, true, and constant.¹

It is apparent that Asbury's mother was the one who made the greatest contribution to his life. There is no record that his father was ever converted, although he did not oppose his wife in the evangelistic teaching she gave to her son. While Francis was still an infant, each day his mother read Bible stories to him, prayed on hour for him, and sang hymns, all of which became a part of his early training. Little wonder it was that he could read the Bible at the age of six years.² While a boy, he was always afraid he would displease God. Later referring to his childhood days in his Journal, he said:

I have neither dared an oath nor hazarded a lie. The love of truth is not natural, but the habit of telling it I acquired very early; and so well was I taught that my conscience would never permit me to swear profanely.³

Like any normal child he loved to play and attempted to satisfy this desire by associating with boys of his age. After playing with them he would return home uneasy and depressed. He said, "My foible was the ordinary foible of

¹Clark II, pp. 333-334.

²Asbury, pp. 1-2.

³Clark I, p. 720.

children--fondness for play; but I abhorred mischief and wickedness."¹ It is most likely that he classified play and mirth as mischief or perhaps wickedness. In his Journal he recorded a number of times that he had been too jovial and was grieved because of it. When a child he was ridiculed often, perhaps because of some of his attitudes. He was called "Methodist Parson" because of his mother's inviting any one, who appeared to have religion, into her home.²

At the age of seven years Francis, who was much concerned about spiritual matters and had remarkable piety, was sent to school by his parents to receive a secular education. This strange, solemn child, whose ecclesiastical destiny seemed cut out for him, was misunderstood by a harsh and cruel schoolmaster. Unmerciful and cruel whippings from this tyrant drove him into despair until Francis not only dreaded but hated school. After three or four years of this treatment he left school, ending his formal education at the age of eleven years.³

In England, eighteenth-century children had to work in order to supplement the meager incomes of families. Francis' father would have gladly kept him in school, but when he dropped out, he had to work to earn his own living. He started by hiring out as a servant to a gentleman of rank and means in Staffordshire. He said that as he worked and

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Asbury, p. 8.

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lived with this family, "one of the wealthiest and most ungodly families we had in the parish," that he "became vain, but not openly wicked."¹ However, this training provided him with the gracious manners of the elite, and with the knowledge of how to stand against the wickedness of his environment, in much the same way as Joseph of old did in Potiphar's house.

Francis, after working as a servant in this wealthy home for almost two years, wanted a change. His father desired that he go back to school and receive an education, but he refused on account of his former school experience. The next step for him was to apprentice in a trade. It was natural that the first place to turn for such an opportunity would be the famous forge in their neighborhood, a short distance from Asbury's home. "At night the lurid flames, flashing up from its furnaces, could be seen along the whole valley, and by day its ponderous machinery and huge water-wheels aroused interest."² It was at this forge, or foundry, that he obtained an apprenticeship to work with Mr. Foxall, who was the foreman of the smith's department where they made and repaired tools used in other parts of the foundry. Mr. Foxall and his wife, who were Methodists, were intimate friends of the Asburys and treated Francis more like a son than an apprentice in a blacksmith shop. For six and one-half years he worked with Foxall in this relationship.

¹Clark I, p. 721.

²Tipple, Asbury, p. 47.

Surely, God was in all this. What better training for future work could this Methodist lad have received? If God had designed him to do John Wesley's work in England, he would have needed John Wesley's university training; but for the pioneer work which God had in mind for him to do in America the years which he spent in the blacksmith's shop of that Old Forge, during which his muscles were strengthened and his bodily strength increased, were infinitely more valuable to him than had they been spent in a university.¹

The contribution of Mr. Foxall to Asbury's conversion is unknown. Likely he had some influence upon Asbury, even though he wrote later that his awakening came as a result of talking and praying with a pious man who was not a Methodist, a man who had recently moved into the neighborhood. This happened just before he was fourteen years of age.²

The Asbury family attended the Great Barr Episcopal Church, but Francis was not satisfied with the church, referring to the clergyman as the "dark priest." He left Barr Episcopal to attend the parish church of West Bromwich, where Rev. Edward Stillingfleet and his curate, Mr. Bagnall, preached plainly and enthusiastically.³ At this church he heard other notable preachers as Ryland, Venn, Hawes, Talbot, and Mansfield. Along with the concern that these Calvinistic Methodists aroused in the heart of Francis Asbury, his reading of Whitefield and Cennick led him to make further inquiry about the Methodists. His mother directed him to Wednesbury, about ten miles north of Birmingham to hear them there.⁴

¹Ibid., pp. 48-48.

²Ibid., p. 48.

³James Lewis, Francis Asbury (London: The Epworth Press, 1927), p. 18.

⁴Asbury, p. 9.

Through the ministry of John and Charles Wesley, a group of about three hundred fighting, gin-drinking people had been converted and organized into a Methodist society in Wednesbury. It was to this village that Francis Asbury went to attend his first Wesleyan Methodist services, hearing John Fletcher and Benjamin Ingham.¹ Later John Wesley preached at the same chapel, which proved to be a memorable day for American Methodism, for it was in that service that Francis Asbury was "greatly touched of the Lord."² At the age of fifteen years, all of his religious training seemed to culminate.

While he and a companion were praying in his father's barn, he was definitely converted. It was then that he was able to believe that God had pardoned his sins and justified his soul in believing. From that moment he was, as described in his own words, 'happy, free from guilt and fear, had power over sin, and felt great inward joy.'³

Francis Asbury's Christian experience filled with joy, rapture, and enthusiasm, was a characteristic Methodist conversion. Soon he began to sing:

O, that the world might taste and see
 The riches of his grace!
 The arms of love that compass me
 Would all mankind embrace.⁴

Asbury's passionate desire to share "the riches of his grace" was encouraged by his mother when she asked him to read the Scriptures and lead the singing in the bi-monthly women's

¹Ibid., p. 11.

²Luccock, p. 96.

³DuBose, p. 4.

⁴Tipple, Asbury, p. 50.

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meetings. In these same meetings, he would explain the Scriptures and exhort his hearers to make decisions for Christ. Encouraged and inspired by the decisions made, he started to hold services on his own, first in his friend's houses, and later in his father's house. As people were converted, he organized them into societies according to Wesley's pattern. At the age of sixteen years he had launched out into his life-work, that of soul-winning.¹

Asbury continued to work at his job as a blacksmith, and at the same time, to hold services four or five evenings a week. As he prayed and exhorted, the people were amazed at his eloquence and fervency. Encouraged by this, at the age of seventeen years, he obtained a local preacher's license "from the preacher in charge of the circuit,"² and expanded his ministry to the Methodist chapels, where he spoke to multitudes of people. Night after night he itinerated in the circuits of Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Worchestershire. Little is known of his preaching on these circuits or how often he visited the societies.³

At the age of twenty-one years, in 1766, leaving his trade for the full-time ministry, he replaced a traveling preacher who had become ill, and itinerated for him nine months. The following year he was admitted on trial, in the Methodist organization, and was appointed to the

¹Asbury, pp. 14-15.

²Strickland, pp. 38-39.

³Du Bose, p. 37.

Bedfordshire Circuit. After itinerating on this circuit for a year, he was admitted into full connection and appointed to serve the following circuits: Colchester in 1768, Bedfordshire again in 1769, and Wiltshire in 1770, his last circuit in England. He seemed to have served the societies of these circuits well and made many friends in each one.¹

The following year, 1771, he attended his first conference at Bristol. When John Wesley called for volunteers to go to America to serve as missionaries, Francis Asbury and Richard White offered themselves, and they were accepted. Asbury went back to his home in Staffordshire to say good-bye to his family and friends. While there he preached his last sermon in England--the only one of which a part has been preserved. It was on Psalm sixty-one, verse two: "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed." Following is the outline:

1. Where should the missionary herald be?
The end of the earth.
2. And whose heart should be overwhelmed, swallowed up, if not the heart of him to whom a dispensation of Gospel is committed?
3. And whence should he look for succour but to Christ, the Rock that is higher than he?
4. How should he obtain that succour but by constant, fervent prayer?²

Preparations for leaving were soon made. On September 4, 1771, Asbury and Wright set sail for the New World. With no more training than Asbury had, it seemed he was almost

¹Clark I, p. 722 and xii.

²Asbury, p. 18.

naïve to attempt such a task. Doubtless it was his fortitude, determination, and motive that impelled him forward, as he expressed in his own words.

I will set down a few things that lie on my mind. Wither am I going? To the New World. What to do? To gain honor? No, if I know my own heart. To get money? No, I am going to live to God, and to bring others so to do. . . . If God does not acknowledge me in America, I will soon return to England. I know my views are upright now; may they never be otherwise.¹

Asbury landed in Philadelphia, October 27, 1771. On the evening of his second day in America he preached his first sermon on foreign soil. The next day, accompanied by Pilmoor, he visited and became acquainted with the Methodist work in that area. In a short time he traveled north to New York to meet Boardman, who was in charge of the Methodist societies in America, expecting to receive his assignment and to start itinerating. However, he was disappointed when asked to remain in New York for the winter. Soon Asbury discovered that his concepts of itineracy did not harmonize either with his superior or with the people of New York. Boardman was weak in leadership, lacked resourcefulness, and had little initiative.

Asbury recognized Boardman's failings, and his own restlessness, his genius for organization and administration, and his passion for spiritual perfection to be gained through holy works, would not permit him to be long content with the conduct of the New York society.²

¹Clark I, pp. 4-5.

²Asbury, p. 74.

He expected trouble and he found it. He became incensed over the idea of all three of them, Boardman, Webb, and himself, remaining in New York to serve the one congregation. Even though Boardman, his superior, insisted on this arrangement, Asbury refused. He claimed the New World was hungry for the plan of salvation as taught by the Methodists, and he determined that he would not sit in the city where he felt there was no need. On his own and with no permission, he borrowed a horse, and rode to Westchester to preach. Then he rode to West Farms, back to Westchester, then to New Rochelle, Rye, East Chester, Mamaroneck, Philipse Manor, and to other villages, preaching as he went. He claimed that he would show the other preachers they had to itinerate and that he would lead by doing it himself. This journey was the beginning of a circuit and a life of itineracy that lasted for forty-five years. It was on this trip that Asbury became ill, because he refused to care for himself properly in the cold winter months in New York. He never fully recovered from this illness.¹

Even when he was ill, he continued to preach. Dissatisfied with the conduct of the members of the New York society, he scolded and berated them more than once for breaking the Methodist rules. As soon as he was well enough to travel, he rode to Philadelphia, where Boardman was stationed (Boardman and Pilmoor exchanged pulpits every three months).

¹Ibid., pp. 75-77.

Asbury preached along the way holding services anywhere he could find a place. When he arrived, Boardman made the appointments for the next year, 1772. He, himself, would go to Boston, Pilmoor to Virginia, Wright to New York, and Asbury to Philadelphia.

"Asbury was now alone in Philadelphia, with full power, and he began immediately to criticize the manner in which the society was conducted, and to rule its members with characteristic severity."¹ Concerning this he wrote in his Journal:

I heard that many were offended at my shutting them out of society meeting, as they had been greatly indulged before. But this does not trouble me. While I stay, the rules must be attended to, and I cannot suffer myself to be guided by half-hearted Methodists.²

Asbury and Boardman exchanged in July, 1772. This pleased Asbury because he believed the preachers should change often. He preached each day as he traveled to New York. Soon he encountered trouble there when he insisted on the enforcement of the Methodist rules. His indomitable will remained unchanged, threatening to expel some of the members if they continued to disobey the rules. Wesley strengthened this acquired power by appointing him general assistant, and at the same time demoting Boardman to a helper. This pleased both Asbury and Boardman, for the responsibility of the oversight of the Methodist work irked Boardman.³

¹Ibid.

²Tipple, Heart, p. 19.

³Asbury, p. 79.

The next year, June 3, 1773, Asbury met Thomas Rankin, George Shadford, and Joseph Yearby at Philadelphia. These men were sent by Wesley in response to the many pleas coming from America for more help. Because of Thomas Rankin's experience and maturity, he was appointed to take Francis Asbury's position. Rankin, shocked at the irregularities among the societies and the preachers, called the preachers together to correct the situation. There were discussions and debates. Asbury was displeased with the waste of money and energy among the preachers. He believed they should itinerate. He likewise was disturbed over the breaking of so many rules. It is probable that the deliberations of this Conference of 1773 led to the birth of the Methodist church in America.¹

Another conference was held in 1774 in which there was trouble among the preachers. They were dissatisfied with the administration of Rankin who insisted that the rigid discipline of the English societies had to be practiced in America. The preachers in America claimed there had to be adaptations. Furthermore, Rankin and Asbury were in conflict because Rankin did not understand Asbury and Asbury did not want to obey Rankin's demands. Rankin's correspondence to John Wesley concerning the problems resulted in the calling of Asbury back to England, but the order from Wesley

¹Tipple, Asbury, pp. 118-119.

did not reach Asbury for two months. In the meantime, political problems between the American colonies and Great Britain had been aggravated so that Asbury felt that he should remain in America to care for the three thousand Methodists scattered over the colonies.¹

On account of illness, Asbury was unable to attend the Annual Conference held in 1776. This conference was a most solemn occasion because of the tension between the colonies and Great Britain and because of the position of the Methodist clergy in America. John Wesley's publication of his "Calm Address to the American Colonies" had created prejudices against the Methodist preachers. In the minds of many Americans they were Tories. To make matters worse for the Americans, some of the Methodist preachers spoke freely against the rebellious colonies. Francis Asbury contended that eventually both the American colonies and American Methodism would have to separate from Great Britain. Perhaps it could have been his foresight of the conditions of the nation and church, or it could have been an expression of his opposition to the actions of his English brothers in the ministry. Taking this position caused him to suffer. One by one the English ministers returned to England. By 1778, Asbury was the only English missionary left in America.²

Since many of the English preachers were Tories and all, except Asbury, had returned home, he was suspected of

¹Tipple, Asbury, pp. 122-126.

²Ibid., pp. 127-128.

being one. Then when he refused to take the Maryland State oath, for conscience' sake, he was forced to flee as a refugee to Delaware. Here he took asylum in Judge White's barn, his refuge for almost two years. His ministerial efforts would not be thwarted, however, because he had time for reading and writing, and furthermore, he soon discovered it was possible for him to itinerate within the state. During that period he won about eighteen hundred converts, established the Methodist work in Delaware, and proved that he was a loyal patriot.¹

Since he could not go to conference in 1779, part of it came to him. Asbury became the self-appointed superintendent, directed the preachers, and assigned them to their circuits. He contended, at this conference, that American Methodism would have to separate with English Methodism just as the States had to separate from England.² Methodism struggled and had a number of reverses during the war, with the possible exception of Virginia where the movement was thriving.

One of the significant events of Asbury's life occurred in the year 1784. John Wesley, on September 18, ordained Thomas Coke and empowered him to ordain ministers in America, including Asbury. Wesley likewise despatched a message that became the "Magna Charta of American Methodism, the earnest of independence of Wesleyan societies in the United States."³

¹Ibid., pp. 129-131. ²Ibid., p. 131. ³Ibid., p.135.

A conference of all the American preachers was called to meet December 25, of that year, at Baltimore, Maryland. Sixty of the eighty-three ministers were notified.¹ At this conference Francis Asbury was ordained deacon one day, elder the next, and elected and consecrated a superintendent, with Dr. Coke as the other. Asbury also witnessed the formation of the Methodist Church in America, independent of the Wesleyan Methodists of England.²

Almost immediately, January 4, 1785, Francis Asbury started his first Episcopal tour. He went south into Virginia, North and South Carolina preaching everywhere he traveled; and he held his first Annual Conference in the new church at the home of Green Hill on April 19. From there he itinerated north through Virginia, to Mount Vernon where he, with Bishop Coke called upon George Washington, and then rode on to Baltimore, arriving June 1.³

As a bishop, Asbury's responsibilities and area of service increased. In 1789 he with three other Methodist circuit riders addressed the new president, George Washington. Later, 1797, Asbury was forced to succumb to his old illness and did not recover for over three years. Then in 1802 the death of his mother was a severe blow to him, for he had a very deep affection for her. In 1803, he adopted the camp meeting technique of evangelism that proved to be a forward step for

¹Asbury, p. 159.

²Tipple, Asbury, pp. 143-153.

³Ibid., p. 154.

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the Methodist church on the frontier. The General Conference held in 1812, the first delegated conference of Methodism, was the last one Asbury attended. On March 24, 1816, Francis Asbury preached his last sermon; and on March 31, 1816, he died.¹

Itinerant

When Francis Asbury arrived in Philadelphia October 27, 1771, America received an experienced itinerant who proved himself to be the most ubiquitous person in America during the eighteenth century.

Since itineracy was a part of Methodism from its inception, it likely influenced the speaking and the messages of the early Methodist preachers. If this be true, an investigation and an understanding of the system of itineracy should render a greater understanding of the preaching of Francis Asbury. One meaning of the word "itinerate" is "to travel from place to place preaching."² This practice has prevailed throughout the centuries in one form or another. For instance, St. Francis of Assisi, in the thirteenth century, traveled from town to town in central Italy preaching to the people, praying for them and asking alms from them. The manner of his visitations was somewhat of a circuit.³

¹Asbury, pp. 304-305.

²James A. Murray (ed.), A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, Vol. V (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1901), p. 524.

³Luigi Salvatorelli, The Life of St. Francis of Assisi, trans. Eric Sutton (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928), pp. 169-172.

There were some circumstances present in eighteenth-century England that seemed to lay the foundation for itineracy during the Evangelical Awakening, particularly among the Methodists.¹ One of these conditions was open-air preaching that George Whitefield and John Wesley employed successfully. Preaching in this manner forced them to travel to new areas. Since there was no physical plant, a church or meetinghouse, to centralize their efforts, much of their labor was in danger of being lost. Realizing this, John Wesley adopted the "society" as the means of holding the new converts together. Periodically the three Evangelists: George Whitefield, John Wesley, and Charles Wesley returned to instruct and encourage the converts. In an unbelievably short period of time the numbers of these societies grew to such proportions that the three men could not meet their needs. A few of the Evangelical ministers of the Established Church helped, but they were limited because they could not leave their parishes to itinerate. Near the end of the year, 1739, Thomas Maxfield, a young convert, offered his services to Wesley. With reluctance and much misgiving, Wesley accepted him, instructing him that he was to exhort only and not to preach. Soon afterwards two other men offered their services and were accepted.

When he returned from a tour of inland England, Wesley received the news that Maxwell had been preaching. Scandalized by his conduct, Wesley's first impulse was to dismiss

¹Bready, p. 217.

him, but before acting he paused to consider his action. Three items arrested his attention: "First, his Mother's caution in young Maxwell's favor; second, the fruit of Maxwell's preaching--for men and women had been converted under it; and third, his own unanswerable logic--namely, that "'those who were called of God, and not of man, have more right to preach than those who are only called of men and not of God.' 'It is the Lord,' he said at last; 'let him do what seemeth good'." ¹

Another instance of a similar nature took place with John Nelson, a stone mason. After his conversion, he returned home to communicate his experience to his friends. Night after night people came to his home to hear him tell the story about his conversion. Before he realized it, he was exhorting and preaching to the people. Alarmed at the outcome, he sent for John Wesley to come to one of the meetings to hear him speak. As he sat at Nelson's fireside listening to a divinely inspired message, Wesley had to conclude again, that God can use laymen for witnessing, exhorting, and preaching. "The evidence that a new dispensation had dawned was overwhelming, and the question of lay preaching in Methodism was settled for all time." ²

Since lay preaching became an integral part of the Methodist organization in England, John Wesley divided the

¹Du Bose, p. 34.

²Ibid., p. 35.

lay preachers into two groups: the assistants and the helpers. Inasmuch as the itinerant preacher could meet any one society only periodically, because he had from ten to twenty societies on his circuit, the assistant was given charge of the society, to hold the regular class meetings, to exhort, and to instruct the people during the absence of the itinerant preacher. The helpers were to aid the assistants in any manner where they were needed. The assistants were required to attend the annual conferences that John Wesley held; the helpers were not.¹

This system made it possible for John Wesley to recruit the best lay preachers for the traveling ministry. In this development of preaching, circuits, comprised of several societies, were created. Over each circuit was placed a traveling minister, or an itinerant, who regularly visited the societies, preached, instructed, and aided the lay preachers. Once a year all the itinerant preachers and the assistants met for the Annual Conference.

Heretofore consideration has been given to the part of the definition of "itinerate" meaning: "to preach to the various congregations within the circuit to which he is appointed."² But there is another part of this definition of "itinerate": "to go periodically from circuit to circuit as appointed."³ One of the purposes of the Annual Conference

¹Ibid., p. 35.

²Murray, p. 524.

³Ibid.

was to appoint the preachers to the circuits. These preachers, known as circuit riders, were appointed by Wesley in England to serve for one year, and in America by Asbury to serve for three or six months on a circuit. No minister could be appointed to the same circuit for any two consecutive periods. This had its advantages. Both Wesley and Asbury believed a preacher could be more effective if he changed often. John Wesley said concerning this: "I know, were I to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep."¹

The circuit rider was distinctively a part of the Methodist plan. It is evident that itineracy and Methodism were so ingrained that they were almost inseparable. The Methodist plan of itineracy was wonderfully adaptable to the spreading of the gospel in the New World because the circuit rider's goal was to take the gospel message to every man. The circuits were naturally quite large, containing between fifteen and twenty-five societies or preaching places. It usually took from four to six weeks for the circuit rider to visit all the societies on his circuit once. He preached every day, possibly with the exception of Monday, when he wrote letters and prepared for the week ahead of him.²

¹Richard C. Underwood (ed.), Together Magazine, November, 1961, p. 20.

²Sweet, Methodism, pp. 144-145.

The home of the circuit rider was on his horse and among the people he served day by day. His sole possessions were rarely more than a change of clothing, a Bible, a hymnbook, and perhaps a few books for sale--all packed in his saddle bags.¹

In the new communities of Kentucky and Tennessee, and later Ohio and Indiana, the Methodist circuit-rider was more familiar than the doctor; ten times more familiar than the governor. Astride a horse which could be depended on to plod ahead, day after day, for months on end, even if it seldom cantered; wrapped in a cloak which might be--and generally was--patched and patched and repatched until the confines of the original were not distinguished . . . the Methodist itinerant rode every trail, reached every cabin, and lifted new standards in every community of that magically expanding frontier.²

The itinerant found somewhat of an atmosphere of religion in many of the homes, in that a Bible was owned. In the schools it was read and prayers were offered at the beginning and end of the school day. But there was little real religion among the people. Wide-spread immorality was prevalent; gambling and intemperance were found everywhere.³ Francis Asbury, in 1797, commented on the life of the people:

I am of the opinion that it is as hard or harder for the people of the West to gain religion as any other. When I consider where they come from, where they are, and how they are, and how they are called to go farther, their being unsettled with so many objects to take their attention, with the health and good air they enjoy, and when I reflect that not one in a hundred came here to get religion; but rather

¹George T. Ashley, Reminiscences of a Circuit Rider (Los Angeles: New Method Printing Co., 1941), p. 12.

²Luccock, pp. 217-218.

³Asbury, p. 245.

to get plenty of good land, I think it will be well if some or many do not eventually lose their souls.¹

The heroic itinerants not only faced a careless people seeking material gain, but they also braved all the handicaps that nature had placed before them in an unconquered wilderness. An example is the Cataloochee Trail, now called the Asbury Trail, over a section of the Great Smoky Mountains where North Carolina and Tennessee meet. The twenty-three rugged miles of dense forests and mist-veiled peaks from Davneport Gap to Clyde taxed Asbury and other circuit riders more than once.²

It is most difficult to visualize the physical handicaps the circuit riders encountered as they rode their circuits. Following is a description given by Francis Asbury when he crossed the mountains in 1790 to hold his first conference in Kentucky:

I was strangely outdone for want of sleep, having been greatly deprived of it in my journey through the wilderness. . . . Our way is over mountains, steep hills, deep rivers and muddy creeks; a thick growth of reeds for miles together; and no inhabitants but wild beasts and savage men. Some times, . . . my ideas would be leading me to be looking out ahead for fences; and I would . . . try to recall the houses we should have lodged at in the wilderness. I slept an hour the first night, and about two the last; we ate no regular meal; our bread grew short, and I was much spent.³

¹Clark, II, p. 125.

²Underwood, pp. 35-36.

³Clark, I, p. 636.

A further description of the perils encountered by itinerant preachers is given by Asbury when he recrossed the mountains, May 24, 1790. He wrote in his Journal:

We set out on our return through the wilderness with a large and hapless company; we had about fifty people, twenty of whom were armed, and five of whom might have stood fire. To preserve order and harmony, we had articles drawn up for, and signed by, our company, and I arranged for people for travelling according to the regulations agreed upon. Some disaffected gentlemen, who would neither sign nor come under discipline, had yet the impudence to murmur when left behind. The first night we lodged some miles behind the Hazel Patch. The next day we discovered signs of Indians, and some thought they heard voices; we therefore thought it best to travel on, and did not encamp until three o'clock, halting on the east side of the Cumberland River. We had gnats enough. We had an alarm, but it turned out to be a false alarm. A young gentleman, a Mr. Alexander, behaved exceedingly well; but his tender frame was not adequate to the fatigue to be endured, and he had well-nigh fainted on the road to Cumberland Gap. Brother Peter Massie was captain; but finding I had gained authority among the people, I acted somewhat in the capacity of an adjutant and quartermaster among them. At the foot of the mountain the company separated; the greater part went on with me to Powell's River; here we slept on the earth, and next day made Grassy Valley. Several of the company, who were not Methodist, expressed their high approbation of our conduct and most affectionately invited us to their houses. The journeys of each day were as follows: Monday forty-five miles; Tuesday fifty miles; Wednesday sixty miles. Thursday, 27. By riding late we reached Capt. Amis's where I had a bed to rest on.¹

Francis Asbury encountered many hardships and privations. In addition to the almost impassable roads over which he traveled, he often had no food, or now and then wild berries, or, at other times, corn that he boiled over

¹Clark, I, pp. 640-641.

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his camp fire. Occasionally he had to sleep in a crowded ten-by-twelve-foot log cabin on the floor or on a pile of dirty skins.¹ Sometimes "he stopped at inns where his ribald travelling companions, with their swearing, card-playing, and disregard of religion, distressed him more than the terrors of the road."²

One day, during the American Revolution, he calmly rode between the British and American soldiers who were firing at each other. Unaware of his danger, he occupied his time reading the Bible and praying, according to his custom. It was not until the next day, when he discovered a hole in his hat, that he realized some one had shot at him.

Francis Asbury constantly faced dangers, perils, and deprivations. Following is another instance: "We have had rain for eighteen days successively, and I have ridden about two hundred miles in eight or nine days; a most trying time indeed."³ At another time his means of transportation failed him: "I found both saddles broke; both horses foundered; and both their backs sore--so we stopped a few days."⁴ About a week later he continued the description of his difficulties:

After getting our horses shod, we made a move for Holston, and entered upon the mountains; the first

¹Asbury, p. 269.

²Ibid.

³Clark, I, p. 512.

⁴Ibid., p. 568.

of which I called steel, the second stone, and the third iron mountain: they are rough and difficult to climb. We were spoken to on our way by most awful thunder and lightning, accompanied by heavy rain. We crept for shelter into a little dirty house, where the filth might have been taken from the floor with a spade. We felt the want of fire, but could get little wood to make it, and what we gathered was wet. . . . Coming to the river next day, we hired a young man to swim over for a canoe, in which we crossed, while our horses swam to the other shore. The waters being up we were compelled to travel an old road over the mountains. Night came on--I was ready to faint with a violent headache--the mountain was steep on both sides. I prayed to the Lord for help. Presently a profuse sweat broke out upon me, and my fever entirely subsided.¹

Such indigence would assess the strength of any strong, robust man enjoying normal health. But Asbury was sick much of the time, in constant personal danger and pain. He never did regain his health after the prolonged illness he encountered during his first winter in the New World.

He suffered terribly from boils, fevers, inflammatory rheumatism, sore throat, weak eyes, bronchitis, asthma, toothache, ulcers in the throat and stomach, neuralgia, intestinal disorders, swollen glands, skin diseases . . . and finally galloping consumption.²

The speaking and the message of a man, who was a victim to so many diseases, must have been affected by them. Likewise he had to adapt to the political, economic, social, crude, and irreligious life of the frontier. In spite of all the difficulties and handicaps, Asbury literally went into every possible place that a man could go, as he journeyed from state to state, year after year. Nearly

¹Ibid., pp. 568-569.

²Asbury, p. 262.

every entry in his Journal referred to preaching at a certain place, to accomplishing some worthwhile endeavor, to suffering on account of his ailments, or to searching for more of God in order to be more holy.

For example, on May 20, 1784, having ridden fifty miles that day, Asbury arrived in Baltimore, where he held a conference five days later. After this he traveled west to cross the Appalachian Mountains for the first time.

When he arrived at Sharpsburg, an Irish woman who had ill-treated some of the Methodists was put under conviction. She summoned Asbury to come to pray with her. Asbury said of this experience, "God grant that the impressions made may be lasting."¹

From Sharpsburg he went to Shepherdstown where he preached, and from thence he went to the home of Mrs. Boydstone's where he was graciously entertained. He declared she was one of the kindest of the Virginia women. He thanked God for this refreshing of both body and spirit. (A number of places mentioned in Asbury's Journal were the names of people who lived on the frontier. Boydstone is an example of this.)

On June 17, Thursday, he preached during the day at Martinsburg to more than a hundred people, traveled to Stroud, and preached there that night. The next morning he had a number of the workmen out for prayer. When he left

¹Clark, I, p. 460.

Stroud a mother and her two daughters wept as he left. He wrote in his Journal this comment: "Who knows what God may do for them?"¹

He then attempted to preach at Newton, the present site of Stephens City, Virginia, where he met with little success. Of this preaching experience he recorded in his Journal: "I raged and threatened the people, and was afraid it was spleen."²

On Friday, June 25, he reached Strader's, after hard work crossing the mountains, likely the Great North and South Branch Mountains in Hardy County, West Virginia. He seemed to preach effectively to bout 400 people assembled to hear him.

Two days later, Sunday the 27th, he was much tried in spirit, speaking three times during the day. The first time he preached on Titus 3:2-5 at Hyder, the home of Adam Hyder, near the present Morefield, West Virginia; the second time to several people at the Isaac Van Meter's home; and the third time at Conrad Hofman's home. About ten that evening he arrived at Samuel Dew's for lodging, quite weary. About this day he commented: "I hope this day's labour will be useful to my own soul and the souls of others."³

The next day, the 28th, he preached twice, at Samuel Dew's and Richard Williams. So expressive were his words

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 461.

about these preaching experiences: "Speaker and hearers too dull. Alas!"¹

On Wednesday, June 30, he preached more successfully, during the day to a large congregation gathered at Joseph Cresap's, and that evening at Barratt's.

The first of July Asbury and his traveling companion started to ascend the Alleghany Mountains, going through Little Meadows, and for twenty-two miles followed Braddock's Road, which had been cut through by Braddock and his 300 men to reach Fort Duquesne just before the tragic campaign and defeat in 1755. On this trip he became ill with a fever, but in spite of it, he continued his journey and preached on July 2. The place of this preaching is obscure, but it seems to be where a Robert Wooster, a Methodist local preacher, had labored, for a man by that name lived on Braddock's Road at that time.

Sunday, July 4. This entry is worth quoting.

At Cheat River we had a mixed congregation of sinners, Presbyterians, Baptists, and it may be, of saints: I had liberty, and gave it to them as the Lord gave it to me--plain enough. After me brother Bonhan spoke with life and power. I think God will bring a people to himself in this place. Blessed be the name of the Lord for a Plentiful rain after a long drought!

Three thick--on the floor--such is our lodging--but no matter: God is with us:--

Labour is rest, and pain is sweet.

Whilst thou, My God! art here.²

On Wednesday, July 7, Asbury had a large, attentive congregation, almost 700, at Beeson Town, now Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., pp. 462-463.

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On July 8 he preached at Dennis', a little southwest of Washington, Pennsylvania, which was the farthest west Asbury traveled on this trip. At the close of this day he recorded in his Journal: "Since last Friday we have ridden one hundred and sixty or more miles, on rough roads, through a rough country, and with a rough fare: I trust our labor will not be lost."¹

On Tuesday, July 13, he preached to an intemperate people at Old Town, and the next day at Bath with no success. Sunday, the 18th, was more encouraging, for he preached to quite a number of both town and country people at Fredericktown. On Wednesday, July 21, many heard him at Winchester. "They appeared to be orderly and solemn, and I hope it will appear that some were convicted."² The next Sunday, the 25th, he was at Reisterstown, preaching on the text: "Take heed that the light which is in you be not darkness."

Tuesday, July 27, he preached to about thirty people at Rock Chapel, which later became the first Methodist church built in Adams County, Pennsylvania, the corner-stone of which was laid in 1773.

Saturday, July 31, Asbury opened this entry in his Journal thus: "I praise God for health of body, peace of mind, and desire to be holiness to the Lord: I am led into a deep and sweet union with God."³ He hastened on to Daniel Worley's where about one hundred and fifty people were waiting to hear him.

¹Ibid., p. 463.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 464.

Asbury traveled to Philadelphia, preached Sunday afternoon, August 1, and remained in this vicinity for about two weeks, preaching practically every day. On Sunday, August 15, he addressed almost a thousand people.

Monday, August 16, he went to Burlington, and the next day to Trenton, preaching at each place. Tuesday, August 25, he preached at Mr. Ogden's and then at New Market Plains to about one hundred people. On Friday, August 27, he arrived in New York, completing his first journey across the Appalachian Mountains.¹

This first trip across the Appalachian range of Mountains explicates the many circuits that Francis Asbury made as he itinerated, penetrating the frontier wilderness with his message. Asbury was the foremost among the itinerants "of defiant energy, unyielding tenacity of purpose, and matchless courage, who laughed at hardships, and welcomed perils, and triumphed over the indescribable difficulties of an unsettled and undeveloped country."²

Bishop

Questions usually are postulated concerning leaders in almost any century of history. For instance, did the men of the eighteenth-century America possess greater talents than men of other centuries? Or was the public arena such that a Washington, or a Hamilton, or a Jefferson had to spring forth to meet the political situations and to solve

¹Ibid., pp. 466-467.

²Tripple, Asbury, pp. 193-194.

the political problems of the day? Or were the intellectual enlightenment and the education of the eighteenth century reasons for leaders being created?¹

Whether these factors were or were not contributing forces in the development of leadership, it is apparent there must be a time, a place, and conditions present for the creation of leaders and speakers. It is probable that some of the same factors contributed to the development of Francis Asbury as a bishop and as a speaker. He appeared on the American scene during the period of intense political unrest and tension, 1771, during a time when people were seeking solutions for major political and economic problems. The enlightenment may have affected him in his development. It is evident that his careful attention to the learning of his day contributed to his ability as a leader. He was an avid reader. He taught himself to read both Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Bible in the original languages. Furthermore, it is probable the hardships and perils of the wilderness and the problems of frontier life, which he was forced to meet and solve, helped to make him the religious leader he became.

During his life time he was responsible for founding the evangelical movement known as the Methodist Church, and for molding the religious faith of thousands of Americans

¹Henry Steele Commager, "Leadership in Eighteenth-Century America and Today," Excellence and Leadership in a Democracy, eds. Stephen R. Granbard and Gerald Holton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 25-33.

in the last part of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries.¹ Such an achievement required ability as an itinerant preacher, an educator, an administrator, a leader fashioned into the one personality: Bishop Francis Asbury.

"In regard to the Church, it may be said no man ever lived who projected himself further into the future of all that pertains to her genius, government, and institutions than did Asbury."²

If this is true, a question is posed concerning the leadership of Asbury as a bishop and as a speaker. Was he the leader that Strickland and others said he was?

Leaders exist so that there may be better organization, better adaptation, or greater individuals. They are viewed as essential in that they formulate theories, policies, and ideals that give direction and character to an age and their presence and character help to define the character of society. The quality of their contribution is such that history is substantially changed.³

Leadership "is the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal which they come to find desirable."⁴ The leader should always realize that he achieves only as

¹Norman E. Nygaard, Bishop on Horseback (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 183.

²Strickland, p. 166.

³Eugene E. Jennings, An Anatomy of Leadership (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 8.

⁴Ordway Tead, The Art of Leadership (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1935), p. 20.

he is in a situation where those he leads can achieve."¹

A leader is one who has "the capacity and the will to rally men and women to a common purpose, and the character which will inspire confidence."² It is probable that a leader is made, although it is apparent that the capacity of some leaders is innate.

It seems as if Asbury possessed natural ability and that it was trained in order to draw men and women to him and to inspire confidence.³ Soon after his arrival in America he became distressed and dissatisfied with the organization of early Methodism in Philadelphia and New York. He discovered that some of the policies, theories, and ideals, as prescribed in the rules of John Wesley, were either being ignored or glossed over. Recognizing the inability of his superior, Richard Boardman, to perceive the need of itinerating in order to get the gospel to the people, and perhaps sensing his own ability to itinerate and to preach in new situations, he refused to agree with his policies. Boardman contended that preachers should have long tenure in a society or a church. He further wanted Asbury to remain with him and Webb in New York to minister to the one society. Against the wishes of Boardman, he left New York, independent and on his own, to itinerate, to

¹Ibid., p. 25.

²K. G. Montgomery, Field-Marshal the Viscount of Alamein, The Path to Leadership (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1961), p. 10.

³Nygaard, pp. 7-8.

preach, and later to form societies and circuits according to the Methodist doctrine.¹ In his Journal he wrote about making this decision stating his reasons and justification for making it.

I remain in New York, though unsatisfied with our being both in town together. I have not yet the things which I seek--a circulation of preachers, to avoid partiality and popularity. However, I am fixed to the Methodist plan, and do what I do faithfully as to God. I expect trouble is at hand. This I expected when I left England, and I am willing to suffer, yea, to die, sooner than betray so good a cause by any means. It will be a hard matter to stand against all opposition, as an iron pillar strong, and steadfast as a wall of brass: but through Christ strengthening me I can do all things.²

This was his entry of November 19, 1771 in his Journal.

Two days later he wrote:

At present I am dissatisfied. I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethern seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way. I am in trouble, and more trouble is at hand, for I am determined to make a stand against all partiality.³

By partiality he meant the disagreement he had with Boardman and Pilmore over itineracy. Then he continued:

I have nothing to seek but the glory of God; nothing to fear, but displeasure. I am come over with an upright intention, and through the grace of God I will make it appear: and I am determined that no man shall bias me with soft words and fair speeches: nor will I ever fear (the Lord helping me) the face of man, or know any man after the flesh, if I beg my bread from door to door; but whomsoever I please or displease, I will be faithful to God, to the people, and to my own soul.⁴

¹Asbury, p. 74.

²Clark, I, p. 10.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

The attitude of this twenty-six year old Francis Asbury toward his superiors in position, age, and experience is difficult to understand. Was it uncontrolled zeal or was it an intuition of leadership he had discovered in himself during the early years of his itineracy under John Wesley in England? With scanty experience, he had to rely on his own judgment, strength of mind, and personality to itinerate, to organize societies, and to pull the existing societies together under the Wesleyan plan of union.¹

To attempt such a gigantic task entails leadership and leadership requires the knowledge and possession of a body of principles. One basic principle that can be applied to the work and leadership of Francis Asbury is the possession of truth and character. Montgomery expressed his opinion concerning this principle of leadership when he said: "leadership is based on truth and character. A leader must himself be the servant of truth, and he must make that truth the focus of a common purpose. He must then have the force of character necessary to inspire others to follow him with confidence."²

The principles, the doctrines, the commandments, and the exhortations in the Bible were truth for Francis Asbury. In fact he believed everything that was recorded in the Bible. To him the Bible revealed truth, and this truth

¹Carroll, p. 158.

²Montgomery, p. 11.

literally obsessed his soul.¹ Consequently, he became a student of the Bible, reading and studying it in the English, Hebrew, and Greek languages. He could read many portions from memory; he stated at one time he believed he could give the entire New Testament from memory. That he was a student of the Bible is evident from the extant outlines of his sermons which are expanded verses of Scripture. To him truth was that found in the revealed Word of God--the Bible.

His character is disclosed through his constant referring to his relationship with God. Such statements written in his Journal are frequent:

My soul is breathing after the Lord at all times.²

May the Lord direct me how to act, so as to keep myself always in the love of God!³

My heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.⁴

My soul possesses peace and purity in Christ my Redeemer.⁵

My soul was happy in God, and sweetly engaged in prayer and reading.⁶

My desire is to live more to God today than yesterday, and to be more holy this hour than the last.⁷

My soul is in travail to be holy in all manner of conversion and godliness.⁸

¹"Truth" used hereafter in this study will be within the framework of this explanation.

²Clark, I, p. 359.

³Ibid., p. 244.

⁴Ibid., p. 164.

⁵Ibid., p. 176.

⁶Ibid., pp. 177-178.

⁷Ibid., p. 207.

⁸Ibid., p. 460.

I was enabled to speak pure living truth on Titus 3:2-5.¹

I leave no company without fears of not having discharged my duty.²

So concerned was he to communicate the truth and to convince his hearers and associates of it, that he became a living example of truth and honesty. But despite this, his enemies accused him of exploiting the people. In a letter to John Dickens, the book agent for the Methodist Book Concern, he sought to vindicate himself of these accusations.

I have lived upon the Providence of God and the charity of a few friends. My method for many years has been to keep an account of what has been given me without solicitation. I have also kept an account of what I have expended annually, charging the connection with my salary of sixty-four dollars per year and my travelling expenses, as another preacher. When I have wanted a horse or carriage my friends have provided for me.³

He answered the criticism of his enemies concerning the book and ministerial funds this way:

From the Preachers' Fund the conferences can witness for me I have taken nothing. Of the book interest you can witness I have received nothing. Of the Chartered Fund I am independent, and wish to keep so. Of money brought to conference, or collected publicly at times; it has been appropriated with the nicest equality to the wants and deficiencies of the preachers, but not any to me.⁴

¹Ibid., p. 461.

²Clark, II, p. 70.

³Elmer T. Clark (ed.), The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury, Vol. III (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), p. 171. [Future references will be Clark, III.]

⁴Clark, III, pp. 171-172.

John Dickens replied to this letter verifying everything that Asbury claimed. He said in part:

I have frequently settled his book and private accounts, in which I have always found that he has charged himself with the donations of his friends, or whatever money he has received, and credited himself with nothing but twenty-four pounds a year and his traveling expenses, and at the close of the year the balance has been carried to the proper side of a new account for another year. And when he left this city last he had not money enough to bear his expenses for one month. . . . From my long and intimate acquaintance with him I think I never knew so disinterested a man as Mr. Asbury.¹

It is apparent that he was not only a man concerned about truth and his own integrity as a leader, but he also possessed the capacity and the will to draw men and women together for a common purpose--that of accepting Christ. With this capacity he seemed to possess a character that inspired confidence in his followers. This was manifested when he wrote in his Journal about his friends: "They would love us to death, in company and in labours too: they cannot do too much, it would seem, to express their kindness."² Again, his force of character inspired men to follow him in confidence, else he could not have written:

I tremble and faint under my burden:--having to ride about six thousand miles annually; to preach from three to five hundred sermons a year; to write and read so many letters, and read many more: all this and more, besides the stationing of three hundred preachers; reading many hundred pages; and spending many hours in conversation by day and by night, with preachers and people of various characters, among whom are many distressing cases.³

¹Strickland, p. 197.

²Clark, II, p. 380.

³Ibid., p. 210.

Despite his failures, this first principle of leadership, the possession of character and a steadfast belief in truth, inspired many to follow him. For instance, years later, July 28, 1803, in a letter written to Dr. Coke he said: "You will see by returns that our number is increased about 17,000 this year."¹ From the beginning of his leadership to his death, there was a steady growth in the number of members, societies, and preachers, with the exception of the period during the O'Kelly schism when there was a loss.

A second principle of leadership is that

the leader must have infectious optimism, and the determination to persevere in the face of difficulties. He must also radiate confidence, relying on moral and spiritual principles and resources to work out rightly even when he himself is not too certain of the material outcome. He must have a sound judgment in which others will have confidence, and a good knowledge of humannature. He must be able to see his problems truly and whole. Self-control is a vital component of his make-up.²

The application of this principle of leadership to Francis Asbury is problematic. After working in America for over twenty-four years, much of this time as a bishop, he wrote: "I was deeply dejected. I have been lately more subject to melancholy than for many years past."³ Then he complained about conditions in South Carolina and justified himself in his complaints: "And how can I help

¹Clark, III, p. 267.

²Montgomery, p. 11.

³Clark, II, p. 41.

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it; the white and worldly people are intolerably ignorant of God . . . I fear there is hardly one who walks with God. . . ."¹ He apparently had mixed feelings concerning Wilkes County in North Carolina when he said:

I feel awful; I fear lest darkness should be left here. Ah, Lord, help me to go through good and evil report; prosperity and adversity; storms and calms; kindness and unkindness; friends and enemies; life and death, in the spirit and practice of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!"²

At another time, the anniversary of his twenty-eight years in America he asked this question: "Do I wish to live them over again? By no means: I doubt if I could mend it in my weakness and old age; I could not come up to what I have done; I should be dispirited at what would be presented before me."³

There is another side to the Bishop's preaching and leadership. On one occasion he said: "I preached . . . I felt strangely set at liberty, and was uncommonly happy."⁴ At another time he wrote: "It seemed as if I was let into heaven, while I enlarged on, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, . . .'."⁵

It is evident that his determination to persevere in the face of difficulties radiated a confidence to many of the people with whom he worked. For instance, during the latter part of his life he had much trouble with his feet,

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 47.

³Ibid., p. 209.

⁴Ibid., p. 69.

⁵Clark I, p. 552.

being unable to walk for weeks. At one time they were so sore that he could neither stand nor walk. But preach he must! He was carried to the front of the meetinghouse and placed on a chair in a kneeling position. On his knees he preached to the congregation.¹ Francis Asbury was a leader "with qualities of heart and mind, of courage and will, that could stand the severest test; of patience and perseverance never inactive, of clear perception and understanding, of conviction and faith that never wavered, and of a trust in God that the hosts of evil could not shake nor weaken."²

A third principle is that the leader "must be a good picker of men, a good selector of subordinates . . . a good judge of character."³

Francis Asbury's knowledge of men and his ability to select them for their respective positions was amazing. It was almost divination. He seemed to be capable of searching the depths of personality, discovering hidden powers and human frailties. Those who knew him best stated that he seldom made a serious mistake in the appointment of the preachers, relying solely on his judgment, and not on that of the presiding elders who were never consulted. His experience of thirty years appointing itinerant ministers on the circuits and his ordination of over four thousand men to the ministry revealed his ability to select men.⁴

¹Clark, II, p. 365.

²Carroll, p. 24.

³Montgomery, p. 12.

⁴Carroll, p. 159.

Following are two instances that illustrate his ability to understand and select men. The story is told that Henry B. Bascom troubled his fellow preachers on account of his eccentricities and dress. They wanted to dispose of him. But Asbury replied: "Give me that boy; I will be responsible for him."¹ The Bishop apparently discerned untapped capabilities in the young man, for later he became a great preacher, educator, and statesman of the church.²

Another instance occurred at one of the conferences in the West. Two educated and well-to-do young men came highly recommended for the traveling ministry. The conference accepted them unanimously. Bishop Asbury, appearing as though he were half asleep, and seeming to awaken after they were received exclaimed, "Yes, Yes! in all probability they both will disgrace you and themselves before the year is out."³ He was right. In a short time one was carrying weapons to shoot or knife the rowdies on his circuit. The other one was caught in a misdemeanor. Before the year closed they were both out of the church.⁴

A fourth principle of leadership is that "the true leader must be able to dominate, and finally to master, the events which surround him; once he lets these events get the better of him, those under him will lose confidence and he

¹Edwin Du Bose Mouzon, Francis Asbury, Pioneer Bishop of American Methodism (Nashville, Tennessee: Publishing House of the M.E.Church, South, Smith and Lamar, Agents, 1916), p. 43.

²Ibid.

³Strickland, p. 141.

⁴Ibid., pp. 140-141.

will cease to be of value as a leader."¹ It is apparent that Francis Asbury possessed the ability to dominate men and to master circumstances. It seems evident that he won the confidences of people through this one characteristic more than any other one. This is illustrated by the way he handled the dissention over the administration of the ordinances. Some of the preachers in the Virginia Conference wanted to split from the Methodists because they desired power to administer the sacraments instead of asking the people to go to the Episcopalian Church to receive them, which the people refused to do. When the Virginia Conference convened on April 17, 1782, Asbury

proposed to such as were so disposed, to enter into a written agreement to cleave to the old plan in which we had been so greatly blessed, that we might have the greater confidence in each other, and know on whom to depend: this instrument was signed by the greater part of the preachers without hesitation.²

Asbury preached the following morning. The message seemed to be effective because "with the exception of one, all the signatures of the preachers present were obtained."³

He possessed the ability to marshal men and to direct them with authority.⁴ When he returned from Kentucky on one of his journeys, he organized and directed the whole company. Many of his letters contained advice and directions.

¹Montgomery, p. 12.

²Clark, I, p. 424.

³Ibid.

⁴Carroll, p. 167.

For instance, he wrote to Nelson Reed, the presiding elder advising him: "Be prudent how you speak and act . . . Oh my dear Brother, drink deeper into God, and push on the blessed work more and more. . . ." ¹ He then referred to the preachers.

Examine your preachers at every two months, like a conference, of their growth in grace, and walk with God and be very particular to know how the classes' meetings are, and establish bands. . . . Inquire of local preachers about their congregations and work under them. . . . If you have any doubts of an exhorter or local preacher desire him to bring a recommendation from the society where he lives, of his piety, and do not proceed to authorize any unless recommended, if doubtful. If the societies have to complain, let them send their witness or sign their letters of complaint to the elder. Any local deacon, or elder, must come before such a court, if unfaithful. It would not be amiss to list their names, and if they do not appear inquire if they stand clear, so you must judge Israel as Samuel did.

Push prayer meetings. You have always obeyed and we must keep good order and close discipline. I want to improve daily. . . . Go on my dear Brother with great courage and diligence and prudence, Thine
F. Asbury ²

The tone of this letter, with its advice and directions, exemplifies the type of leader he was and the great concern he had for other people. Asbury's great love for men kept him from making malicious decisions even though he was an autocrat and used the power his position gave him. His sole aim in life was to please God and to help others so to do. His many friends recognized this in his leadership, claiming he was not arrogant and tyrannical but that

¹Clark, III, p. 100.

²Ibid., pp. 100-101.

he respected the rights of others and of the preachers in discussions and decisions that were within their province. "But his knowledge, force of will, and character, all so evident, made an impression of competency which few hesitated to recognize and accept. . . . His moral force was well-nigh irresistible."¹

His enemies attacked him, claiming he was the biggest villain in America. They said he preached to empty the churches, he sought power to enslave men, he determined to rule, and that he solicited honors, calling himself a bishop when he was elected a superintendent.² He was called the Methodist Baltimore Bull because of his autocratic powers.³

Asbury believed in a strong general superintendency refusing to yield any of his power to anyone, not even to Dr. Coke who was also elected a Bishop at the Christmas Conference of 1784.⁴ His dominant character remained unmoved when O'Kelly challenged the power of the episcopacy, opposed his work as a bishop, demanded that he, the elected bishop, should obey his (O'Kelly's) orders, and then wrote against him to Wesley.⁵

Doubtless Francis Asbury

was an autocrat (so was John Wesley), but an autocrat was needed to bring order and discipline out of

¹Carroll, p. 168.

²Ibid., p. 24.

³Clark, III, p. 22.

⁴Ibid., p. 362.

⁵Ibid., p. 113.

chaotic and inchoate conditions; but Asbury exercised autocratic powers firmly, and not harshly, and was so saintly in his austere life that it was not always hard to bow to his will.¹

Thus it is evident that Asbury had the ability to dominate men and to master events. This is further verified by his Journal entry of May 8, 1786, when he said: "Our conference began at Abingdon, where love, candour, and precision, marked our deliberations."²

A final principle or test of a leader is the feeling you have when you leave his presence after a conference or an interview. Have you a feeling of uplift and confidence? Are you clear as to what is to be done, what is your part of the task? Are you determined to pull your weight in achieving the object? Or is your feeling the reverse?³

Asbury ostensibly inspired his preachers. When they learned to know his simplicity of living, his utter honesty in all relations of life, his love for God, the church, and people, his self-abnegation, his willingness to suffer for the Lord and for them, his knowledge of men, his confidence in his judgments, and his commanding personality tempered with humility, their hearts were won.⁴ They were uplifted and had confidence in him. They left his presence determined to do their part in implementing the work of the church as outlined by their bishop. His sole desire was to be engaged in the work of God, and if at any time he discovered he was otherwise employed, he immediately sought God's pardon

¹Carroll, pp. 85-86.

²Clark, I, p. 511.

³Montgomery, p. 12.

⁴Carroll, p. 163.

and grace. It was God's cause and God's kingdom above everything, that he wanted established in America. This attitude doubtless had its effect upon the ministers.¹

It is evident that he led all the other itinerants in every possible way. He did not spare himself, would not stop for illness and pain except when bedfast, would preach under all kinds of circumstances, read many books, and wrote hundreds of letters, refusing to stop working up to the last moment of his life.² Eight years before his death, 1808, William McKendree, elected bishop at that time to share the work of the episcopacy with Bishop Asbury, wrote:

I am favored but little with Father Asbury's company. As soon as Conference is over we part, and go with all speed from one appointment to another by different routes to meet at the next Conference. The old soldier (Asbury) travels sometimes on horseback and part of his time on crutches. He preaches standing, sitting, and on his knees, as the necessity of the case requires. He seems determined to labor more than any of us.³

His invincible will and tireless spirit doubtless fired the young preachers to go forth and to accomplish much in the building of the Kingdom of God through Methodism.

Another instance of Asbury's meeting this final test of leadership is evidenced by Nicholas Snethen, closely related to early Methodist history, when he spoke

of the great moral courage of Asbury and of the 'mighty energies of his mind.' He was 'a star of the first magnitude,' with 'the directing mind

¹Carroll, pp. 163-164.

²Ibid., p. 164.

³Ibid., p. 165.

and animating soul necessary to direct and move the whole body' of the ministry. The impulse he gave to experimental and practical religion was one of his greatest achievements.¹

Another evidence attesting the leadership of Francis Asbury is found in an excerpt taken from a letter Edward Dromgoole wrote to John Wesley concerning the displacement of Asbury:

The preachers are united to Mr. Asbury, and esteem him very highly in love for his work'[s] sake; and earnestly desire his continuance on the continent during his natural life; and to act as he does at present, (to wit) to superintend the whole work, and go through all the circuits once a year. He is now well and has a large share in the affections of both; therefore they would not willingly part with him, or submit to any other to act in his place, until they have good proof of his integrity.²

Following is a portion of the reply that John Wesley gave concerning Asbury: "I am persuaded Brother Asbury is raised up to preserve order among you, and to do just what I should do myself, if it pleased God to bring me to America."³

In addition to the five principles used to analyze the leadership of Bishop Francis Asbury, another aspects needs to be considered: the relationship of leadership to communication. Leadership is

interpersonal influence, exercised in situation and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals. Leadership always involves attempts on the part of

¹Ibid., p. 166.

²Sweet, Virginia, p. 96.

³Ibid., p. 97.

a leader . . . to affect . . . the behavior of a follower . . . or followers in situation.¹

It is evident that leaders cannot operate in isolation, nor can they have followers that are not within a physical, social, and perhaps a cultural context.² This definition stresses interpersonal influence that is effected through the communication process. Communication is

the sole process through which a leader, as a leader, can function. The objective of a communicator, as communicator, is to transmit a message from himself to a communicatee which the latter will interpret as the former desires. The communicator's goal is to convey meanings, or ideas, without distortion.³

It is apparent that Bishop Francis Asbury excelled as a communicator. He constantly communicated with God, praying many times a day for his preachers and for those he met on his daily trips through the country. Prayer seemed to be the means he used to communicate to people, as he was a good conversationalist when he could pray with people. In his Journal he wrote, "Every family shall know me by prayer."⁴ "I make it a rule where I stop to pray after every meal."⁵ By this means of communication he drew men to himself as a magnet draws iron filings. Following are instances, as recorded in his Journal:

¹Robert Tannenbaum, Irving R. Weschler, and Fred Massarik, Leadership and Organization: A Behavioral Science Approach (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), p. 24.

²Ibid., p. 23.

³Ibid., pp. 27-28.

⁴Clark, II, p. 554.

⁵Ibid., p. 559.

We seldom lodge at a house without the company of preachers; we are pleased to see them.¹

Many a time and oft the preachers crowd us; and sometimes we are wedged among the people so that we can neither write nor think.²

Here now am I, and have been for twenty nights crowded by people; and the whole family striving to get around me.³

As a leader, Bishop Asbury not only communicated by face-to-face conversations with people, but also he communicated to his preachers, presiding elders, and many of his friends by letter. Entries found frequently in his Journal reveal his heavy correspondence and manifest his concern for this type of communication: "I have eighteen letters to answer."⁴ "I have at least twenty letters to answer, and but one day,"⁵ "I have . . . thirty letters to answer and but a day to stop."⁶ He must have communicated well or he could not have written so many letters to so many people.

In this communication process Francis Asbury was determined to communicate, not only through conversations and by letters, but through preaching to as many people as he could possibly reach. His ultimate goal was to communicate the gospel to his audiences and to establish an organization, the Methodist Church, that would perpetuate the

¹Ibid., p. 593.

²Ibid., p. 611.

³Ibid., p. 618.

⁴Ibid., p. 623.

⁵Ibid., p. 611.

⁶Clark, III, p. 411.

message of the gospel. He claimed in 1807, after many years of experience as a bishop and as an itinerant, that bishops must "visit the seventeen states and ten territories as oft as possible, and have their eyes and ears in every part of the Connection."¹ This he attempted to do as long as he could travel, making the circuit from Charleston, South Carolina, to New Hampshire and as far west as Ohio and Kentucky, and back to Charleston. It took him a year to travel the circuit. On December 3, 1808, after arriving at Charleston, he wrote:

In a journey of 2000 miles I had to attend conference, camp meeting, eight or nine meetings by encampments, and as I was on crutches like an old soldier not in garrison, but on the fields where victory over sin, sinners, and Satan was gloriously gained. God in his Providence and my own impudence, travelling 70 mountainous miles in 24 hours and drinking cold water gave me an awful fit of rheumatick pains, and rendered me unable to stand,² walk or kneel, but I sat down, and taught the people.²

He believed he had to communicate to all the churches in a face-to-face situation by preaching, and this he would do at any cost, that of life itself, which he gave in 1816 while on the road attempting to meet appointments to preach.

¹ Ibid., p. 377.

² Ibid., p. 399.

CHAPTER V

FRANCIS ASBURY, THE SPEAKER

The Time of His Speaking

By 1761 the revival in the Methodist segment of the Evangelical Awakening in England had prospered for over twenty years. At this time Francis Asbury, sixteen years of age, started his speaking by exhorting and praying in public. He expanded his speaking to nearby communities as a local preacher and later as a traveling preacher during a period of ten years, accommodating himself to the Methodist plan of revivalism which made a lasting impression upon him. He became an ardent follower of John Wesley and strived throughout his life to adhere to and to teach Wesley's precepts for Christian living. In the course of these ten years, the framework for his thinking and the pattern for his activity of forty-five years in America were formed.

When Francis Asbury landed in America in 1771, he entered and soon became a part of a society embroiled by the many parliamentary acts of Great Britain. With little success Parliament had attempted to control trade and to enforce England's imperialistic policy upon the colonists. In succession came the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, First and Second Continental Congresses,

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Declaration of Independence, hostilities, peace, Articles of Confederation, the New Constitution, and the birth of a new nation with a president and a congress. Then came the rapidly expanding frontier, the industrial growth of the nation, the steamboat, the expansion of power, the Louisiana Purchase, the War of 1812 along with the emerging spirit of nationalism. During this period of political, economic, and social development Francis Asbury itinerated over the new continent preaching his message.

Religiously, the First Great Awakening under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield had taken place. Methodism had been established by Embury, Webb, and Strawbridge, and was under the leadership of Boardman, when Asbury arrived in America. During his lifetime were the Virginia revival, the Second Great Awakening, and the camp meeting movement.

The Place of His Speaking

Both John Wesley and Francis Asbury seemed to have unlimited vision, heeding the command of Christ, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." (Matthew 28:19) John Wesley interpreted this command to mean the whole world, hence he declared that the world was his parish. Francis Asbury interpreted the same Scripture to mean America, hence he declared that America was his parish. In 1771 this included the thirteen colonies; in 1815, seventeen states and ten territories. When Asbury became a part of the Methodist

movement in 1771, the centers of Methodist activity were in four major societies, later to become churches, located in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and a meetinghouse near Robert Strawbridge's home, on Sam's Creek, about thirty miles from Baltimore.

Year after year the Methodist domain expanded until in 1815 it extended from Canada in the North to Georgia in the South and from the Atlantic seaboard in the East to Ohio and Kentucky in the West. Francis Asbury attempted to itinerate over this vast expanse of American wilderness, not once, but annually. When he was sixty-six years of age, he itinerated over the following states in this order: South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, New York, Vermont, New York, Canada, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Georgia, and back to South Carolina. The next year he covered practically the same circuit.

Later, on September 13, 1812, he wrote in his Journal: "I shall have travelled six thousand miles in eight months, and met in nine conferences, and have been present at ten camp meetings."¹ Two months later, on November 21, 1812, he wrote "If we meet the Mississippi Conference, as appointed, in November, 1813, we shall have gone entirely around the United States in forty-two years."² Literally it can be

¹Clark, II, p. 708.

²Ibid., p. 713.

said that the place of Francis Asbury's preaching was the entire nation of the United States of his time.

Kinds of Speaking

Asbury's speaking can be placed into two categories: the deliberative which includes the preaching of the gospel message, and the ceremonial which includes the funeral, sacramental, ordination, anniversary, conference, love feast, dedication, and college sermons. His Journal reveals that most of his speaking was the preaching of the gospel message. Apparently the funeral sermon was preached more frequently than the other types of ceremonial speaking because a funeral address would be given a number of times for the same person to different congregations. This happened at the death of John Wesley and Bishop Whatcoat, particularly the latter who was well known to many of the American Methodists and a life-long friend of Asbury.

Purpose of Speaking

The general purpose of Asbury's speaking was to persuade. The specific purpose and definite objective was to win his hearers to accept Christ. If a sermon failed to reach the unconverted, if it failed to bring conviction upon the sinner, if it failed to win a decision for Christ, to him it had failed. He looked upon every unconverted person as one asleep at night in a burning building. His purpose was to awaken, warn, and rescue him from his impending danger. He

was resolute, determined that his sermons contained the means of accomplishing his purpose.¹

Asbury believed a sermon should be plain, not involved or confusing, and it should be "pure," meaning that it must be Biblical throughout.² He commented further on the purpose of his preaching: "I find no preaching does good, but that which properly presses the use of the means, and urges holiness of heart; these points I am determined to keep close to in all my sermons."³

One of Asbury's critics commented on the purpose of his preaching in the following manner:

His great knowledge of the Bible enabled him to prepare his talks with great accuracy, and he always preached close to his text. But when he exhorted, he resorted to typically Methodist invective and denunciation; hell and damnation were terrible realities to him, and he used them as a club to belabour his flocks along the path of righteousness. He rejoiced to see his congregations writhing and groaning in emotional torment, such sufferings being accepted as a true sign of God's love and goodness. Many of his texts were peculiarly designed to strike terror to his hearers, and were chosen for that purpose. In his early days he preached principally from the Old Testament, glorying in its horrors and unmentionable cruelties, but in later years the New Testament was the source of his most important sermons, except when he wished to prophesy as well as preach. He then resorted to the howling threats of Isaiah and Jeremiah.⁴

¹Carroll, p. 119.

²Clark, III, p. 230.

³Clark, I, p. 420.

⁴Asbury, pp. 280-281.

Qualities Found in Asbury as a Speaker

The effectiveness of a speaker is determined in part by personal proof, which is fully as important as the use of logic and evidence in the development of a speech.

"Research has shown, beyond doubt, that personal experience, personality, character, age, competence, and related personal traits do affect the success of all efforts to communicate."¹

Personal proof, coming from the speaker himself, is that element of proof that gives credibility to the message. "It influences the total speaking situation; it affects the listener's attitudes toward the speaker and his point of view, and therefore affects also the amount of information the listener receives."²

The three elements of personal proof, presented by Aristotle in the fourth century B.C., and still accepted today, are good character, competence, and good will.

"Good character is made up of honesty, integrity, sincerity, fairness, and similar qualities that meet the standards of the listeners."³ "Competence is the quality that grows out of a combination of mental ability, know-how, intelligence, understanding, experience with the subject, and knowledge."⁴

¹Kenneth G. Hance, David C. Ralph, and Milton J. Wiksell, Principles of Speaking (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1962), p. 38.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

"Good will consists of friendliness, likableness, rapport, warmth, and being 'in' with the audience."¹

These three elements of personal proof will be examined in the discussion of the qualities found in Asbury as a speaker, using good character, competence, and good will as the main divisions. Under good character will be considered: devotion and sincerity, integrity, honesty, and fairness; and similar qualities, such as self-control, purity, humility, patience, moral courage, industry, and self-discipline. Under competence there will be two sub-divisions: intelligence, which implies mental ability, knowledge, and know-how, and understanding, which includes wisdom and experience. Under good will the discussion will consist of friendliness, likableness, rapport, and warmth.

Good Character

Devotion.--Since Francis Asbury was consistently sincere in his religion, sincerity will be implied and included in the discussion on devotion. In early life he formed the habit of rendering to God and to man their due. As a child he was truthful, obedient, and prayerful. Soon after his conversion he started to preach the message he believed the Lord was giving him. From his early Christian experience, marked by seriousness, emotion, and self-denial, he sought the higher Christian experience, known as Christian perfection or heart purity, taught by John Wesley.² Early

¹Ibid.

²Smith, p. 301.

entries in his Journal manifest the struggle he had with himself and with carnal or inbred sin. Such statements as these are common:

I have had many trials from Satan, but hitherto the Lord hath helped me against them all. I stand a miracle of mercy!¹

This morning my mind was composed and serene; fixed, I humbly hope, on God alone. My desire is, to be more constantly devoted than ever: yea, to talk in holiness before the Lord.²

This morning I arose with more spiritual strength, and felt a great desire to do the will of God with all purity of intention, desire, and thought; that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.³

Satan assaulted me this day, but the Lord helped and delivered me, for his mercy⁴ and truth's sake, and granted me life in my soul.

I preached . . . with some power. But still I am not entirely holy in thought, word and deed. Will not the Lord get the victory? He surely will, and I shall be holy.⁵

I felt a great desire to live more to the glory of God.⁶

O that my soul could be more intimately and sweetly united to the Lord.⁷

I felt a measure of peace and stronger confidence in my soul towards God. I am now twenty-seven years of age, and have had a religious concern on my heart about fourteen years; though I felt something of God as early as the age of seven.⁸

My mind was troubled today: but I earnestly desire to renew my covenant with God.⁹

¹Clark, I, p. 17.

²Ibid., p. 25.

³Ibid., p. 31.

⁴Ibid., p. 32.

⁵Ibid., p. 34.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p. 39.

⁸Ibid., p. 44.

⁹Ibid., p. 45.

. . . I found my mind in peace. My greatest concern is to be altogether holy in heart.¹

I enjoy peace and life in my soul; and am determined, through grace, to love and seek nothing but God.²

Lord, my soul thirsteth for holiness in myself and others.³

My soul is in travail to be⁴ holy in all manner of conversation and godliness.

I want to be spiritual; seeing that it is by continual prayer alone this state is to be attained, I will⁵ endeavour to watch thereunto with all perseverance.⁵

On August 3, 1870, Asbury wrote:

This day nine years past I sailed from Bristol, Old England. Ah! What troubles have I passed through! What sickness! What temptations! But I think, though I am grown more aged, I have a better constitution, and more gifts; and I think much more grace. I can bear disappointments and contradiction with greater ease. Trials are before me, very great ones, but God hath helped me hitherto. I can with greater confidence trust him! And, indeed, what have any of us to trust in for futurity, except the living God?⁶

Searching for God and struggling against sin continued for several years until on August 6, 1786, he exclaimed: "A pleasing thought passed through my mind: it was this, that I was saved from the remains of sin. As yet, I have felt no returns thereof."⁷ But on October 5 of the same year he said: "My soul is under deep exercise on account of the deadness of the people, and my own want of fervour and holiness of heart."⁸

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 52.

³Ibid., p. 456.

⁴Ibid., p. 460.

⁵Ibid., p. 464.

⁶Ibid., p. 376.

⁷Ibid., p. 518.

⁸Ibid., p. 521.

The search for a holy heart continued, year after year, but there were fewer notations made of it in his Journal.

His affections never varied; his devotion to duty knew no intermission; his prayerfulness and his attention to his religious duties never slackened: but his introspection was to a large degree interfered with by the demands of his work upon him. His sky grew brighter as the years passed on, and during the days of his long invalid life there was a constant serenity.¹

It was on January 10, 1803, thirty-two years after his arrival in America, at the age of fifty-eight years, that he wrote:

I feel it my duty to speak chiefly upon perfection--and above all, to strive to attain unto that which I preach.²

Two months later he stated:

I find the way of holiness very narrow to walk in or to preach; and although I do not consider sanctification--Christian perfection, commonplace subjects, yet I make them the burden, and labour to make them the savour of every sermon.³

But it was at the close of the Baltimore conference in 1803, that he made the clearest statement concerning his possession of this state of grace in his religious experience when he said:

My mind is in a great calm after the tumult of a Baltimore conference, and the continual concourse of visitors and people to which my duty subjected me: I have felt deeply engaged, and much self-possession; indeed, age, grace, and the weight and

¹Smith, p. 303.

²Clark, II, p. 376.

³Ibid., p. 383.

responsibility of one of the greatest charges upon earth, ought to make me serious. In addition to this charge of the superintendent, to preach, to feel, and to live perfect love!¹

It seems that Francis Asbury exemplified a life of holiness, advanced beyond many, and rarely equaled by any man in this world.²

Even though Asbury struggled for years in his attempt to find the religious experience he was seeking, he possessed a settled faith that knew no fear and that refused to yield to discouragement when he knew that his course of action was under the direction of God and that it was sanctioned by his own faith and conscience.³ When he came to America, he inspired the new Methodist societies by putting a new spirit into them. They needed his warm, evangelical faith, his pioneering spirit, his simple and winning character, his deep piety, his pithy manner of expression, and his administrative power.⁴

Not only did Francis Asbury have a settled faith but he also lived in constant fellowship with his God.⁵ In his Journal he made constant reference to his need for more private prayer in order to be more serious and more holy.

¹Ibid., p. 387.

²Smith, pp. 304-305.

³Stevens, p. 91.

⁴Leslie Stephen, Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. II (New York: Macmillan Company, 1885), p. 149.

⁵Mouzon, p. 27.

During the sacramental controversy between the preachers in Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland, and the preachers in the north, Asbury succeeded in winning the confidence and respect of the northern men. They were particularly impressed with his refusal to return to England at the opening of the American Revolution, his constant quest for holiness, his piety, his sufferings, his zeal to serve God, his consistent fellowship with God, and his preaching.¹ "When he rose in the pulpit he was the prophet fresh from an audience with the King of kings, and spoke the message given him by his God."²

Prayer was a master trait of his religious experience. When he stopped for the night he prayed. When he dined he prayed. Whenever he visited a friend, called on the sick, or approached a conference, he prayed. When he was reviled or mistreated he prayed. "In a word, the vital element of his soul was prayer--He preached well; he counseled ably; he planned with the sagacity and sweep of a great general; but he prayed best of all."³

One who personally knew Francis Asbury said of him:

Who of us could be in his company without feeling impressed with a reverential awe and profound respect. It was almost impossible to approach him without feeling the strong influence of his spirit and presence.

¹Asbury, pp. 122-123.

²Carroll, p. 118.

³Mouzon, pp. 28-29.

There was something in this remarkable fact almost inexplicable and indescribable. Was it owing to the strength and elevation of his spirit, the sublime conceptions of his mind, the dignity and majesty of his soul, or the sacred profession with which he was clothed, as an ambassador of God, invested with divine authority? But so it was; it appeared as though the very atmosphere in which he moved gave unusual sensations of diffidence and humble restraint to the boldest confidence of man.¹

"Religiously Asbury was one of the most devoted and knightly warriors for truth and righteousness that ever wielded the weapons of Christian warfare in any land."² He was never behind the front lines of attack, nor was he on the side lines. Obedient to God and faithful in his warfare, he never spared himself but was always in the midst of the conflict leading his fellow preachers in the battle against evil, in open combat with it many times, in all areas from New Hampshire to Georgia.³

Integrity.--Integrity, honesty, and fairness are a part of the character of Francis Asbury. In dealing with a controversial issue in the New College Church in Philadelphia, Asbury was honest, just, and fair to all concerned when he wrote to the pastor:

I know but one way for peace. That is to appoint meeting after meeting of both the warm men on both sides, and let them bleed one another freely; and answer face to face as to that I hear. I have two

¹Stevens, p. 92.

²Duren, p. 111.

³Allen Johnson (ed.), Dictionary of American Biography Vol. I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), p. 382.

ears, one for each party, but if I could hear them make good their charges one against another, like men, . . . I should hope for better times.¹

To say that Francis Asbury did not err in his judgments would be unfair and unjust to him. As a whole he was as honest and fair with his men as he knew how to be, but he was not infallible in making his appointments. Inference is made in one of his letters that he would have been wiser in appointing Valentine Cook on the North Cumberland Circuit, where a number of Dutch had settled, since Cook could speak the Dutch language. Asbury said that he believed "there are several young men who will do as well on Clarksburg"² circuit as Cook. Asbury justified his mistake, when he changed Cook's appointment by writing, "Every occurrence gives an opportunity of information. These frontier circuits here suffer the want of my presence to see the state of matters."³

On another occasion Asbury refused money offered to him by a poor black woman who made her living by picking oakum and by the charity of her friends. Although the giver insisted that Asbury take her French crown, he exclaimed, "No! Although I have not three dollars to travel two thousand miles, I will not take money from the poor."⁴ This is another example of his integrity.

¹Clark, III, p. 248.

²Ibid., p. 120.

³Ibid.

⁴Clark, II, p. 120.

Self-control.--Self-control and self-denial seemed to be an inseparable part of the character of Francis Asbury. He loved his preachers and would deny himself of anything he possessed for their well-being. He loved and had a concern for the homes, the children, the widows, and the aged in America. His self-control led him to develop a religious concept free from narrowness and sectarianism.¹

Self-control is discovered in his indomitable will that drove him forward to accomplish the desired goal of his life--to preach. His willpower was so strong that he literally punished himself by refusing to let any unpleasant experience deter him. Travel he would and preach he would in spite of the hazards of inclement weather, almost impassable roads, and men who opposed him.²

This characteristic is observed in his dealing with O'Kelly, who bitterly opposed him because he felt Asbury was creating and assuming power in the episcopacy that did not belong to him. Also, Asbury had organized an advisory body called a Council, which O'Kelley fought. He went so far as to forbid Asbury to go ahead with the functioning of the Council and to submit it to all the preachers before it became operational. O'Kelley communicated his complaints to John Wesley, who later reprimanded Asbury for his assumption of power and exaltation of himself as the "bishop" in

¹Clark, III, p. xi.

²Carroll, p. 122.

the highest office of leadership in the Methodist church in America. Asbury consented to have the decision of creating the Council and the questionable issues concerning the powers of the episcopacy decided by the General Conference.¹ The resolution that caused the greatest concern was:

Resolved, that after the bishop appoints the preachers at the conference to their several circuits, if any one thinks himself injured by the appointment, he shall have liberty to appeal to the conference and state his objections; and if the conference approve his objections, the bishop shall appoint him to another circuit.²

This resolution specifically involved the episcopal acts of Bishop Asbury. After withdrawing from the conference and leaving Dr. Coke to preside, he forwarded a letter to the conference. His self-control, adroit approach, and indomitable will are evident in this letter.

My dear Brethren,--Let my absence give you no pain; Dr. Coke presides. I am happily excused from making laws by which I am myself to be governed. I have only to obey and execute. I am happy in the consideration that I never stationed a preacher through enmity or as a punishment. I have acted for the glory of God and the good of the people, and to promote the usefulness of the preachers. Are you sure that, if you please yourselves, the people will be fully satisfied? They often say: 'Let us have such a preacher;' and sometimes, 'We will not have such a preacher; we would sooner pay him to stay at home.' Perhaps I must say, 'His appeal forced him upon you,' I am one, ye are many. I am willing to serve you as ever. I want not to sit in any man's way. I scorn to solicit votes. I am a very trembling, poor creature, to hear praise or dispraise. Speak your minds freely, but remember you are making laws for the present time. It may be that, as in some other things, so in this, a future day may give you further light.³

¹Clark, III, p. 113.

²Strickland, p. 267.

³Ibid., p. 268.

The vote was cast. When the decision went against him, O'Kelly withdrew from the Methodists, taking over a thousand members and some preachers to form his new Republican Methodist Church that later became the Christian Church.¹ After the organization of the Republican Methodist Church, O'Kelly wrote a book, Christicola, in which he accused the Methodists and Francis Asbury. In a letter to Ezekiel Cooper, Asbury vindicated himself when he wrote,

I want to confront that wonderful man. [He meant O'Kelly.] Brother Lee and some others, with myself, premeditate to attend the Republican Conference and demand the author of the book entitled Christicola, and controvert the charges as false.²

Another instance of his vindication reveals Asbury's self-control in dealing with his enemies. He wrote in his Journal, on December 15, 1803:

I will make a few observations upon the ignorance of foolish men, who will rail against the church government. The Methodists acknowledge no superiority but what is founded on seniority, election, and long and faithful services. For myself, I pity those who cannot distinguish between a pope of Rome, and an old, worn man of about sixty years, who has the power given him of riding five thousand miles a year, at a salary of eighty dollars, through summer's heat and winter's cold, traveling in all weather, preaching in all places; his best covering from rain often but a blanket; the surest sharpener of his wit, hunger--from fasts, voluntary and involuntary; his best fare, for six months of the twelve, coarse kindness; and his reward suspicion, envy, and murmurings all the year around.³

¹Clark, III, p. 113.

²Ibid., p. 174.

³Clark, II, pp. 416-417.

Asbury maintained self-control and exhibited an indomitable will as he dealt with his presiding elders and with his preachers. A minister in the Baltimore District gave some trouble by reacting against the proceedings of the General Conference. In writing to the presiding elder about him, Asbury declared, in part, "Opposition to the laws, union, and government is treason against the church: to defame the Conference."¹ Then he ordered, "I hope you will give fair warning that you will put the law in force against such."²

Instance after instance reveals Asbury's ability to control himself as he dealt with people who were in controversy or with people who were his enemies. About some of these people he wrote:

Perhaps some of them may think with Hammett, in Georgia, that I am the greatest villain on the continent; I bid such adieu, and appeal to the bar of God. I have no time to contend, having better work to do: if we lose some children, God will give us more. Ah! this is the mercy, the justice of some who, under God, owe their all to me, and my 'tyrants,' so called. The Lord judge between them and me!³

It seemed as if Francis Asbury sensed that he had been born to perform the extraordinary task of pulling the loose strands of Methodists together when he came to America, and of establishing a great ecclesiastical empire known as the Methodist Episcopal Church. There was no job too great for him nor was it ever completed if there was anything remaining to be done. There was no apparent

¹Clark, III, p. 109.

²Ibid.

³Clark, I, p. 752.

horizon in his work and plan of evangelizing the America of his day. His vision went far beyond that of ordinary minds. Hence, he drove himself many times as he traveled an average of six thousand miles annually over rugged mountains, and through valleys and swamps in all kinds of weather, summer and winter.¹

He pitied every being but himself. The poorest slave, who was so much the object of his pity, was better treated by the cruelest master than Asbury treated his poor, frail, emaciated body. Fasting when he was barely able to walk, facing bleak winter when God's laws called him to shelter, riding in hot suns when he needed shade, rising from a bed when exhausted nature bade him stay, he suffered when God would have spared him.²

The reason for this self-abnegation can be found in his strict obedience to the set of rules he set up for himself. He believed it was his religious duty, when it was physically possible for him, "to read about a hundred pages a day; usually pray in public five times a day; to preach in the open air every other day; and to lecture in prayer meeting every evening."³

Purity.--This quality is closely related to the religious faith of Francis Asbury. Throughout his life he desired to be holy and pure. "I want to live to him, and for him; and to be holy in heart, in life, and in conversation: this is my mark, my prize, my all--to be, in my measure, like God."⁴

¹Strickland, pp. 142-143.

²Smith, p. 305.

³Clark, I, p. 195.

⁴Ibid., p. 444.

This concept of heart purity had a profound influence upon his speaking. Asbury said that he found preaching does little good "but that which properly presses the use of the means, and urges holiness of heart; these points I am determined to keep close to in all my sermons."¹

Humility.--The quality of humility, in the character of Francis Asbury, is perhaps one of the most difficult to analyze. In his relationships with people, in his preaching, and in his governing as a bishop, questions such as these are raised: Was he proud and haughty? Was he arrogant and assertive? Was he timid? Was he despondent? Was he abnegating self? Was he humble? Was he a martyr? He was said to be proud, haughty, and arrogant, even by John Wesley, who accused him of arrogance when he allowed himself to be called a bishop instead of a superintendent.² O'Kelly claimed that he was too assertive and that he ruled the church like a dictator with a rod of iron.³

In June, 1794, while travelling in Virginia, he wrote in his Journal:

I stopped awhile at John Hite's, and then came on to Shepherdstown. It was a very instructing time to me; I cannot pretend to preach, yet I talk a little to the dear people, who flock to see and hear me by hundreds. I hope to be as much resigned to a life of affliction as a life of health; and thus may I be perfect and wholly crucified with Christ.⁴

¹Ibid., p. 420.

²Asbury, p. 16.

³Ibid.

⁴Clark, II, p. 16.

In this preaching experience there appear to be conflicts. When Asbury said, "I cannot pretend to preach," humility seems to be manifested. On the other hand, when he continued by saying that the people "flock to see me and hear me by the hundreds," pride seems to be expressed. Then, when he said, "I hope to be as much resigned to a life of affliction as a life of health," he presumably was abnegating himself, perhaps as a martyr. Whatever qualities may be implied in this experience, there is one certainty: he was determined to preach. He arose from his bed, ill with a fever, walked feebly up the hill to the place of worship, and preached on I John 1:6-7. After preaching he said he "felt strengthened, having a clear view of the word of God."¹ Even though he said this, he was forced to return to his bed on account of weakness.

Asbury was sensitive to criticism throughout his life, but he would not let his critics dominate him, standing for his rights with an indomitable will. This is exemplified by the Bishop's immediate and ultimate reaction to a criticism that Morell, who was not too friendly with him, made concerning his decisions in 1799. Asbury replied by letter:

I have only to say I am writing my resignation, and apology to the General Conference for every part of my general conduct. I firmly believe I have delayed too long. . . . I wish the preachers and people to take warning I am about to come down from a 'joyless height' and stand upon the floor with my brethren.²

¹Ibid., p. 16.

²Clark, III, p. 182.

At the next General Conference Richard Whatcoat was elected bishop and was to have equal responsibility of and authority over the Methodist church with Francis Asbury. In his letter to Morrell he seemed willing to yield his authority to another, but when the time came to share it equally with Richard Whatcoat, he refused. In reality Whatcoat became an assistant to Asbury while Asbury maintained his position as the senior bishop with the final word and authority for the Methodist church in America for a period of about sixteen years, until his death in 1816. Was his letter to Morrell an act of humility and was his refusal to resign and give his power to another an act of arrogance? Or did he possess the discernment that his knowledge of all the Methodist work and that his ability to govern the preachers and their churches surpassed that of any other one man living at that time?

In 1811 Asbury wrote a letter to one of his preachers, probably Stith Mead, appealing to him to preach the gospel. In this he seemed to reveal humility in preaching when he wrote:

May the great Head of the church prepare us all to preach all the gospel doctrines in their order; to saints, sinners, backsliders, legalists, deists, and hypocrites. Alas! What little have I done, what little have I suffered! Me, who am less than the least of all saints, not worthy to be called a preacher, much less a Bishop, and an apostolic successor. I want to live to make the best of a poor day's work.¹

In his early life Asbury showed humility when he wrote to his parents in 1768:

¹Ibid., p. 459.

If you have given me to the Lord let it be a free will offering, and don't grieve for me. I have cause to be thankful that such a poor, ignorant, foolish, unfaithful, unfruitful creature should be called to the work, chosen of man, and I hope and trust, of God; though I have done enough to both to cast me off forever. I wonder sometimes how anyone will sit to hear me, but the Lord covers my weakness with his power.¹

A number of years later, in 1784, he further revealed his attitudes in a letter he wrote to his mother:

If I ever had any ambition to be great, it is somewhat cooled; a less publick [sic] station would be more acceptable to me. A man may be suspected of pride and folly if he wants to rule. Upon the whole, I have reason to praise God, who has kept me from publickly [sic] dishonouring him, His cause, the Connexion [sic] I am in, and the calling I am of; and to enjoy more of His power and love to my soul, that I am not puffed up nor fallen into the condemnation of the devil.²

Five years before his death, October 20, 1811, the anniversary of his arrival in America, Asbury wrote in a letter to Dr. Coke: "O how short, on review, does all the time appear since I landed in America! And Oh! how great have been my unfaithfulness and unfruitfulness!"³

The last three examples seem to manifest the trait of humility in the life of Francis Asbury. However, it appears that his humility led to undue self-depreciation. According to his Journal he was constantly feeling his spiritual pulse and taking his spiritual temperature. At times this led to hope and encouragement for him.⁴ For instance he wrote on December 28, 1802, in his Journal:

¹Ibid., p. 4.

²Ibid., p. 36.

³Ibid., p. 456.

⁴L. C. Rudolph, Francis Asbury (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 145.

My general experience is close communion with God, holy fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, a will resigned, frequent addresses to a throne of grace, a constant, serious care for the posterity of Zion, forethought in the arrangements and appointments of the preachers, a soul drawn out in ardent prayer for the universal Church and the complete triumph of Christ over the whole earth.¹

On another occasion he wrote, "The Lord graciously blessed me with sweet peace."² A further instance reveals the encouragement he received from introspection:

My affections were warm, and my words flowed with ease last night in town. . . . My body is in a feeble state; but glory to God, when I am weak, then am I strong. Though this mortal frame is shaken by repeated afflictions, my soul is supported by that peace which passeth all understanding. Lord help me always.³

My soul is much humbled, and brought into close communion with God.⁴

O Lord, help me to watch and pray! I am afraid of losing the sweetness I feel: for months past I have felt as if in the possession of perfect love; not a moment's desire of anything but God.⁵

In these examples Asbury's introspection seemed to give him hope and encouragement, but this was not always the case. Many times it led him to despondency and discouragement. For example, found in his Journal are these expressions:

I do not sufficiently love God, nor live by faith in the suburbs of heaven.⁶

¹Clark, II, p. 372.

²Clark, I, p. 99.

³Ibid., p. 295.

⁴Ibid., p. 695.

⁵Ibid., p. 696.

⁶Ibid., p. 136.

My body is weak; but this does not concern me like the want of more grace. My heart is too cool towards God: I want to feel it like a holy flame. I am also, sometimes afraid that I shall never do any more good.¹

For my unholiness and unfaithfulness, my soul is humbled: were I to stand in my own merit where should I be or go, but to hell?²

. . . Some of my friends were so unguarded and imprudent as to commend me to my face. Satan, ready for every advantage, seized the opportunity and assaulted me with self-pleasing, self-exalting ideas. But the Lord enabled me to discover the danger, and the snare was broken, may he ever keep me humble and little, and mean, in my own eyes!³

I have lately been grievously haunted by the temptations of Satan; but my desire is to die rather than live to sin against God. Lord, stand by me in the day of trial, and every moment support my feeble soul! On Saturday also my mind was much harassed by my spiritual adversary; and my study and devotion were interrupted, so that I could do but little either for God or myself. My mind was strangely twisted and tortured, not knowing what to do. It seems I know not how to fight, nor how to fly: but I am persuaded there will be a speedy change in the wheel of Providence, either prosperous or adverse. Others are now free, but I am bound. . . . Satan hath a desire to destroy, or at least, to disturb my soul. . . . On Wednesday my temptations were so violent, that it seemed as if all the infernal powers were combined to attack my soul.⁴

My mind was deeply exercised, not knowing what to do. . . . My exercises were still grievous; but I am persuaded that all these trials will contribute to the spiritual advantage of my soul.⁵

It would appear such a state of mind and soul would affect his preaching; undoubtedly it did. However, when he spoke, the people and the occasion seemed to stimulate him

¹Ibid., p. 162.

²Clark, II, p. 79.

³Clark, I, p. 115.

⁴Ibid., p. 269.

⁵Ibid., p. 270.

to the degree that he could speak effectively. After days of this despondency, during his asylum in Delaware, he preached and recorded his experience thus: "I met a small congregation, and my soul was blessed in speaking to the people, as it usually is on such occasions."¹ Then, the very next sentence he continued in despair, "O my God! when wilt thou turn again my captivity?"² He felt terribly cramped, although he had freedom within the bounds of the state during the time he was accused of being a traitor to the American cause. It seemed that preaching was the major release for him. He described his predicament: "I still attend to prayer, study, and teaching the children; but cannot be fully satisfied without preaching the Gospel, which appears to be my particular province."³

It appears there were conflicting traits in the character of Francis Asbury. He possessed the ability to control himself in practically every situation in which he found himself and, at the same time, he was unable to control his own moods, becoming despondent. To one congregation he could preach with freedom of mind and spirit; to another he could not because his mind was bound in chains. He could plunge fearlessly into the heart of the American wilderness, penetrating it with a message he felt impelled to deliver and simultaneously suffer from the tortures of timidity. The

¹Ibid., p. 270.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

pain was at its peak in the presence of unbelievers and opponents who criticized him. When called upon to preach on March 14, 1777, he recorded:

My natural timidity depressed my mind at the thought of preaching in Annapolis, where many people openly deny the Holy Scriptures, as well as the power of inward religion. But the Lord inspired me with a degree of evangelical courage; and I felt a determination to adhere to the truth, and follow Jesus Christ, if it should be even to prison or to death.¹

This is one of many times he referred to his timidity, relating or associating it with his mental depressions.

On his trips from New York and Trenton to Philadelphia, Asbury frequently took the stage where coarse, crude, and profane men were always present. These trips distressed him. He described one such occasion:

I sat still as a man dumb, and as one in whose mouth there was no reproof. They appeared so stupidly ignorant, skeptical, deistical, and atheistical, that I thought if there were no other hell, I should strive with all my might to shun that.²

If Asbury could have adapted himself more readily to such circumstances, he could have won some of these rough fellow travelers.³

Patience.--Patience was a quality of character Asbury did not always possess; in fact his Journal indicates that he sought to control and to curb his impatience. His ill health, his disciplined life, and his fortitude all contributed toward the development of patience in his life, which in turn

¹Clark, I, p. 233.

²Ibid., p. 35.

³Carroll, p. 108.

was expressed in his dealings with the preachers and the people that he loved.¹

Perhaps the group of people who tried his patience most were those outside the Methodist fold, particularly the Calvinists. He assumed that everybody who heard any preaching would experience salvation and find God the Methodist way. Most of the frontiersmen were unchurched and since he believed he was an apostle sent to America by God to proclaim the message through the Methodist channel to those people, he was impatient with anyone who preached otherwise.² For instance, it was difficult for him to be patient with and have a good word for the Baptists, particularly those in North Carolina who were spiritually dead and worldly and needed the Methodists to awaken them. Again, he ridiculed them for their doctrine of immersion: "If plunging-baptism is the only true ordinance, and there can be no church without it, it is not quite clear that ever Christ had a Church until the Baptists 'plunged' for it."³ If the Baptists were friendly to the Methodists, it was because they were spiritually dead and needed his message; if they were active in a community, they were wrong. "Why anyone would be a Baptist when he could be a Methodist was never clear to Asbury."⁴ Upon finding a Baptist preacher distilling whiskey he declared, "It is no wonder that those who have

¹Ibid., p. 159.

²Rudolph, p. 186.

³Clark, I, p. 458.

⁴Rudolph, p. 194.

no compassion for the non-elect souls of people should have none for their bodies."¹

The Calvinists infuriated him. He had little patience with any one who claimed he trusted in God on account of election of perseverance. "He preached the terrors of backsliding. He demolished them with his battery of texts insisting on the present assurance of personal conversion and the present yearning after holiness of life."²

It seems that Francis Asbury struggled for the quality of patience and that he achieved it to some degree as he dealt with his preachers and the churches throughout Methodism. He was intolerant of those who disagreed with him, particularly if they differed from him in his doctrinal belief. Patience was developed as he encountered the trials of ill health and the rigors of travel over all kinds of roads, in all kinds of weather. He said in 1813, the latter part of his life as he traveled in Pennsylvania, "We bear our trials patiently."³

Moral courage.--The preachers among the early pioneers of Methodism seemed to have energy that defied everything, a tenacity that yielded to nothing, a purpose that would accomplish their desired goals, and a courage that was undaunted. Those preachers, of whom Asbury was the leader, gave every sign of laughing at hardships, welcoming perils, and

¹Clark, I, p. 369.

²Rudolph, p. 199.

³Clark, II, p. 239.

triumphing over indescribable difficulties in the unsettled and underdeveloped New World.¹

Usually Francis Asbury did not lack courage. "Disconcerting men could not come into his presence without perceiving that his soul was essentially heroic, and that nothing committed to his agency could fail, if it depended upon conscientiousness, prudence, courage, labor, and persistence."² This courage may be due, in part, to his belief that he was called to suffer. In 1801 Asbury wrote a letter of encouragement to Mrs. John Dickens who had lost her husband and whose children were unconverted. In this letter he referred to his own suffering as a means of strengthening her courage: "I must be made perfect in suffering, this the Lord hath shown me. I am called to do and suffer more than any others in America."³

Another instance of his courage was shown when he delivered a congratulatory address to President George Washington who had been elected as the leader of the new nation. The action of the General Conference to send this message to the new executive was a bold enterprise because the Methodist church was weak and was looked upon with disfavor on account of the British ministers who were suspected as Tories, and in many cases were Tories. Asbury, an Englishman, the leader of Methodism in America, accompanied by Dr. Coke, another

¹Tipple, Asbury, pp. 193-194.

²Abel Stevens, Centennary of American Methodism (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1866), p. 92. [Future references will be Stevens, Centennary.]

³Clark, III, p. 226.

English preacher, met the new president and "with great self-possession read the address in an impressive manner."¹

President Washington received the men and delivered a gracious reply to the bishops and to the Methodist church.

This moral courage may be due to selfish ulterior motives of which he had been accused. Devereux Jarratt, who was not too friendly with Asbury and his work in Virginia, stated:

Mr. Asbury is certainly the most indefatigable man in his travels and variety of labours, of any I am acquainted with: and though his strong passion for superiority and thirst for domination may contribute not a little to this, yet I hope, he is chiefly influenced by more laudable motives.²

Moral courage was evident in Asbury's reaction to a letter he received from John Wesley who accused him of arrogance. The General Conference in America decided to call the preachers by names to designate their rank: elder or deacon. Since Asbury was their elected superintendent, and since it was understood by the people of America that the leader of a church was a bishop, the conference chose to call him bishop. When Wesley heard that Asbury was being called a bishop, he wrote to Asbury:

I study to be little; you study to be great. I creep: you strut along. I found a school; you a college, nay, and call it after your own names! . . . How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called a bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never by my consent call me Bishop.³

¹Stevens, Centennary, p. 50.

²Clark, III, p. 25.

³Clark, I, p. 594.

Concerning this letter Asbury wrote "I received a 'bitter pill' from one of my greatest friends. Praise the Lord for my trials also--may they all be sanctified."¹

However, Asbury did not always show moral courage as a speaker. When people, opposed to his message, were in his audience to reprehend him, he became despondent and discouraged. In 1791 when at Windsor, Connecticut, he lodged with a Mr. Strong, who welcomed him and his traveling partner, but was careful to let his guests know that he thought lightly of them and of their principles. To this situation Asbury reacted, as recorded in his Journal: "Here my feelings were very gloomy, and I secretly wished myself out of the way."² Several days later he preached in the Episcopal church at Lichfield, Connecticut, "with very little faith." Two days after this experience he was asked to preach in an old Presbyterian church at Canaan, Connecticut. Of this experience he wrote:

I reluctantly complied, . . . I offended, and was offended: the people seemed uneasy, and wished to be gone. This is the first, and I expect will be the last time I shall speak in that house, if not in that place. Twenty-five years ago the people in this place had religion; at present, it is to be feared, there is little or none. How it is I know not; but at such places I feel dreadfully,--as if such people were the worst under the sun, and at the greatest distance from God.³

It seems that Asbury had two forces within himself, both attempting to give expression: a strong moral courage and

¹Ibid., p. 594.

²Ibid., p. 688.

³Ibid., p. 689.

a despondent timidity. He acknowledged that his constitutional weakness was to be gloomy and dejected, but after meditation and prayer, he would preach and receive new courage to go forward. He said, "The work of God puts new life into me--and why despond? The land is before us, and nothing can hurt us but divisions among ourselves."¹

To say that Asbury had great moral courage is true, and to say that he lacked moral courage is likewise true. Another instance in his life illustrates this conflict within himself. Within him there seemed to be a drive that impelled him forward hundreds of miles crossing rivers, creeks, and valleys, penetrating the wilderness in order to preach. On February 23, 1785, he stated: "We arrived at Georgetown, South Carolina, where we met with a kind reception. I felt my mind solemn, and devoted to God, but was in great doubt of success."² He courageously withstood the rigors of the winter weather as he slowly traveled by horse and at the same time his courage sometimes failed when he came face to face with the people in a preaching service. However, it can be said, to his credit, that preaching usually stimulated him and seemed to revive his spirits so that afterwards he could attack almost any problem. As he grew older his courage increased. During the latter part of his life he wrote to Dr. Coke concerning the illness of Bishop Whatcoat. His reaction to the work to be done seems to reveal more of his moral courage. He said,

¹Ibid., p. 422.

²Ibid., p. 483.

"I go on, sick or well, lame or blind, sometimes not able to mount or remount, without help in my rheumatic complaints. But we must be at home everywhere, if it be under a tree, and prepared to meet death at any place with pleasure, thro' grace."¹

Industry.--The industry of Francis Asbury amazes one as he attempts to compare it with that of other pioneers of his day. To travel six thousand miles over the roughest of roads and paths on horseback and carriage annually for over forty years to preach the gospel challenges the industriousness of any man. He can be compared to Ceasar who believed his work was not completed if anything remained to be done. "His penetrating eye measured the ground over which he intended to sow the seeds of eternal life, while his courageous and active mind cheerfully embraced all the difficulties engrafted upon his labors."² His mind seemed to reach beyond the minds of ordinary men; his mind seemed to envision the work of reaching lost humanity for Christ and of organizing the Christian believers into the Methodist church. His love for souls became the consuming passion of his life, which apparently accounts for his willingness to face the grim hardships he encountered daily as he traveled over the thousands of miles through the wilderness of frontier America. "For him Methodism was evangelism."³

¹Clark, III, p. 268.

²Strickland, p. 142.

³Tipple, Asbury, p. 183.

Self-discipline.--Francis Asbury practiced self-discipline to the extent that he was almost cruel. "He flagellated his mind as he did his body, taking a grim satisfaction in doing the hard thing."¹ His time was so rigorously scheduled that he would meet his appointments regularly, except when severe illness kept him in bed. As soon as he could move, after an illness, he would be on the road again. He said, "Live or die, I must ride."²

There had to be a method for everything. He followed John Wesley's methodical manner of living, perhaps even going to greater extremes than Wesley; and if he did not have a method, or if he did not know the way to proceed, he created one. There was a schedule for his daily study, Bible reading, and prayer; a method of procedure for his daily travel, preaching, and writing; and a means of organization and operation of the societies, bands, and classes. His whole life was one of constant discipline.³ He spent one hour in the morning and another in the evening praying for the churches and preachers, calling each one by name, until they became too numerous. At one time in his life he prayed seven times a day for the men and churches. At another time he rode one hundred miles in three days, preached five sermons, taking five hours for this, prayed in public and with families using ten hours, and read two

¹Johnson, pp. 382-383.

²Clark, II, p. 126.

³Clark, III, p. xii.

hundred pages in the works of Young. This is an example of his busy, disciplined life.¹

At the age of fifty-two he lamented the fact that he was unable to spend ten hours out of sixteen in reading the Bible in English, Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, or in reading other books, or writing letters. He declared he was getting weak, but relieved his mind by stating he could give more time to prayer and to speaking to men about their souls.²

"The rigor which his disciplinary predilections imposed upon others was so exemplified by himself, that his associates or subordinates, instead of revolting from it, accepted it as a challenge of heroic emulation."³

In view of the fact that Francis Asbury was a deeply religious person possessing the qualities of integrity, self-control, humility as well as arrogance, patience as well as impatience, moral courage as well as timidity, and forasmuch as he was a self-disciplined, industrious man, this part of his personal proof seemed to be effective when he preached to his audiences in frontier America. For instance, "There were occasions when under the rush of his utterance people sprang to their feet as if summoned to the judgment bar of God."⁴ A preacher who was capable of persuading an audience in this manner, as Francis Asbury was, must have been an effective preacher.

¹Carroll, p. 111.

²Ibid., p. 113.

³Stevens, Centennary, p. 92.

⁴Tipple, Asbury, pp.238-239.

Competence

The second element of personal proof, competence, is discovered in Francis Asbury through his mental ability or intelligence and through his understanding or wisdom.

Intelligence.--It seems that Francis Asbury entered the world with sufficient mental ability or intelligence to preach an effective message to the people of his generation. Manifestly the mother of Francis Asbury stimulated and awakened in the young mind of her son a desire for reading and a thirst for knowledge. In early life he became an avid reader and formed the habit of reading that followed him throughout his life. By means of his reading he discovered the sermons of Whitefield and Cennick which led him into Methodism. This intellectual sense seemed to direct him to Wednesbury, where he heard several preachers among whom was Fletcher who "Impressed him deeply and indeed fixed in his mind the ideal of a completed Christian experience."¹

He became a studious young man, although introspective and inclined to melancholy. His mind was one that had to be active and could not rest unless it was occupied in labor.² This no doubt accounts for the fact that he read much all through his life as an itinerant preacher. How he managed to keep to his schedule of reading one hundred pages a day, on the average, in the areas of theology, history,

¹Du Bose, p. 24.

²Stevens, Centennary, p. 9.

and science and of learning the Latin, Hebrew, and Greek languages in order to read the Bible in the original tongue, in addition to his preaching, visiting, writing, and travel is a marvel, and somewhat beyond our comprehension.

There is an aspect of his intellectual curiosity that needs to be considered. Even though he read much, his primary concern was the preaching the message which he believed God had given him. During the American Revolutionary War he made reference to it occasionally, but the war never became his concern only as it hindered his work and the growth and development of the Methodist churches. He was ill at ease when in the company of people who incessantly talked about the happenings in the world. He explicitly stated in his Journal, "As I am not a man of the world, the most of the conversation about it is irksome to me."¹ This is exemplified further in 1783, after America and England stopped fighting, when he said,

I heard the news that peace was confirmed between England and America. I had various exercises of mind on the occasion; it may cause great changes to take place amongst us; some for the better, and some for the worse. It may make against the work of God: our preachers will be far more likely to settle in the world; and our people, by getting into trade, and acquiring wealth, may drink into its spirit. Believing the report to be true, I took some notice of it while I treated on Acts 10:36, at Brother Clayton's, near Halifax, where they were firing their cannons, and rejoicing in their way, on the occasion.²

¹Clark, II, p. 129.

²Clark, I, p. 140.

In view of this fact, one critic claimed that he was not intellectually alert because he did not give attention to the events that were happening about him.¹ Undoubtedly Asbury was interested in, and alert to, any information that pertained to the building of the Kingdom of God in America through Methodism, and he was disinterested in any part of learning that did not contribute in some manner to this cause, so dear to his heart.

Asbury's intellectual sense led him to rely heavily on all available source materials, even though he was a man of prayer and believed in inspiration. In his reliance he depended largely on the Bible and literature concerning the Bible. His habits of study, which included much of the Bible, and his preaching which was largely Biblical, indicate that he had a thorough mental preparation for preaching the message he believed he was inspired to preach.

Understanding.--It is apparent that Francis Asbury possessed understanding, which includes prudence, wisdom, discernment, insight, the capacity to apprehend relations of particulars, and the power to make experience intelligible by applying concepts. Understanding and its implications were a part of his Christian philosophy of life. He was understanding, prudent, or wise when he used his ability to refer all matters pertaining to his life and to the church to God in order to obtain divine guidance. For

¹Johnson, p. 382.

instance, he disliked controversy and refused to be drawn into it if he could avoid it, because he believed controversy was not prompted by his Lord. He said, "We have better work to do, and . . . it is too common that when debates run high there are wrong words and tempers indulged on both sides."¹

His wisdom was manifested in his dealing with the sacramental controversy that made its first appearance in a quarterly conference held in Strawbridge's section. He, O'Kelly, and several others refused to follow the rule adopted at the first conference at Philadelphia, which declared that only ordained ministers could administer the sacraments. Asbury did not compel the recalcitrant preachers to obey the rule but did his best to win them to his point of view. The men in the North favored strict obedience, but the preachers of the South refused to cooperate. It looked as though the church would split, for the Southern states demanded authority to administer the sacraments and to ordain their ministers.²

When the conference met at Leesburg, Virginia, in 1778, Asbury could not attend because of his isolation in Delaware.³ Through correspondence he adroitly influenced the preachers of the southern conference to defer their decision on the sacramental controversy for one year.⁴

¹Tipple, Heart, p. 310.

²Carroll, pp. 168-169.

³He was considered a Tory by the authorities in other states and, furthermore, he refused to take the oath that the state of Maryland imposed upon him. As a result he was forced to take asylum in Delaware.

⁴Asbury, p. 122.

Asbury seemed to realize this was only a temporary victory and that trouble lay in the path before him. Before the southern conference convened the next year, May 18, 1779, he called an unofficial conference of all the northern preachers on April 28, of the same year, in order to strengthen his influence and to avert possible defeat in the future. It appears he took drastic action in calling and holding this private conference. Since Asbury could not leave Delaware, the men came to him and met in Judge White's barn. Attending were seventeen northern preachers and one Southern. Prudently he received reports and stationed ministers as though it had been a regular Annual Conference. As shown in the minutes of this conference, the sagacious Asbury let it be known that he was ready to assume this control. Following are the questions that pertain:

Question 12. Ought not Brother Asbury act as general assistant in America?

Answer. He ought; first on account of his age [he was 33]; second, because originally appointed by Mr. Wesley; third, being joined with Messrs. Rankin and Shadford by express order from Mr. Wesley.

Question 13. How far shall his power extend?

Answer. On hearing every preacher for and against what is in debate, the right of determination shall rest with him, according to the Minutes.¹

William Watters, the southerner, who met in the conference in Delaware, attended the southern conference at Fluvanna with instructions from Asbury to defer the sacramental matter

¹Ibid., p. 124.

for another year. After much discussion the southern preachers withdrew from the Episcopal organization of Methodist societies, declaring they would administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper and they would ordain ministers.¹

For one year it appeared that Asbury had lost his influence in the South. But when the northern conference met at Baltimore in 1780, Asbury manifested wisdom again. After deliberation he offered the following conditions of union:

- I. That they should ordain no more.
- II. That they should come no farther than the Hanover circuit.
- III. We would have our delegates in their conference.
- IV. That they should not pressure to administer the ordinances where there is a decent Episcopal minister.
- V. To have a union conference.²

The southern preachers believed the requirements were too severe, and, as a result, many withdrew from the Methodists in order to administer the sacraments and to ordain preachers. This condition prevailed for one year.³

When the northern conference convened the following year, Asbury, Garrettson, and Watters were commissioned to meet with the southerners in their conference at Manikintown, Virginia, in order to bring the straying Methodists back into the fold. After hours of conference, personal conversation, and prayer, a decision was reached: the

¹Ibid., p. 126

²Clark, I, p. 347.

³Asbury, p. 127.

performing of the ordinances would be suspended for one year, and Asbury would communicate with John Wesley to obtain his advice and directions concerning the whole matter.¹ In these negotiations "Asbury proved himself an adept at conciliation, procrastination, and compromise."²

Before the conference adjourned Asbury was careful to see that a minute was adopted, giving him general oversight of the southern work as well as the northern work among the Methodists. This occurred five years before he became the head of the church. It was a complete victory for Asbury, personally, and for the northern preachers.³

"He could plan sagaciously, seldom pausing to consider theories of wisdom or policy, but as seldom failing in practical prudence."⁴

Was it wisdom or shrewdness on the part of Francis Asbury when he refused to accept the appointment of John Wesley at the Christmas Conference of 1784, and asked for a vote of all the preachers before he would accept the superintendency with Dr. Coke? He wanted the will of the American Conference, with his appointment from them instead of from John Wesley.⁵ The history of Methodism seems to prove that Asbury showed wisdom in this request.

¹Ibid., pp. 128-130.

²Johnson, p. 381.

³Ibid., p. 381.

⁴Stevens, Centennary, p. 92.

⁵Johnson, p. 382.

But to claim that Francis Asbury was understanding, wise, and tactful in his relationship with all people would be too ideal. That he was imperious cannot be denied; he was a dictator in his own domain. However, his dictatorship was not for selfish interests but for the interests and for the good of others. Nevertheless, when he commanded, he expected obedience, even though the implementing of his commands seemed next to impossible to perform. On the other hand, he would ask no man to do anything that he was unwilling to do himself.¹

He was always sure he was right in his decisions. If a preacher disagreed with him, that preacher usually received severe treatment. Not always did he use tact in dealing with all men. His petulance and severity were manifested to a group of preachers at one time when he put one single preacher in equal value to three married preachers. "I ask a location, sir," said one; "And so do I," said another; "And so do I," said another of the men who were married. "Why, brethren, what do you mean?" replied the perplexed and alarmed bishop. "Why, sir, you said you had rather have one single preacher than three of us." "Did I say that?" "Yes, sir, you did." "Then I'll take it back; I'll take it back."²

Even though these traits of character are found in the Bishop, there was no malevolence present in his heart.

¹Smith, pp. 308-309.

²Ibid., p. 309.

He had never come in contact with a strong man without a contest, but it was the brave tilt of a stainless knight, and always in defense of what he believed to be right. He was as devoid of selfishness as he was of fear, and as ready to forgive as he was quick to strike; and while his course was unswerving in the prosecution of duty, personal rancor had no place in his heart.¹

Toward his antagonists, Wesley, Rankin, Lee, Coke, and O'Kelly he showed no animosity or resentment. Perhaps the greatest trial of his life was the schism in the Methodist church caused by O'Kelly when he left the church and took thousands of Methodists with him. Years later Asbury, preaching in the same town where O'Kelly was ill, sent two men to call upon him and to inquire if Asbury could visit him. O'Kelly replied that he desired to have Asbury come. The Bishop recorded in his Journal: "We met in peace, asked of each other's welfare, talked of persons and things indifferently, prayed, and parted in peace. Not a word was said of the troubles of former times."²

It is apparent that impartiality dominated his character and influenced his speaking. "He had no petty jealousies, no grievances, no dislikes to be avenged; he bore attacks, misrepresentations, and abuse with patience and remembered none of them in stationing the preachers."³ In a letter he wrote to Ezekiel Cooper on July 26, 1805, he said, "I have no unjustifiable partiality for men of any nation under heaven; I love all; they have nothing to gain or lose from me."⁴

¹Ibid., p. 311.

²Clark, II, p. 359.

³Carroll, p. 161.

⁴Clark, III, p. 323.

Taking into account that Francis Asbury had the intelligence or mental ability to know men, situations, and subject matter, and had the understanding or wisdom to discern the needs of people, to apprehend the relations of people and situations as they pertain to preaching, and to make experience intelligible by applying his religious concepts to life, it would seem that he possessed the qualities of competence.

Good Will

Good will, the third element of personal proof, which includes friendliness, likableness, rapport, and warmth, is discovered in the manner in which Asbury handled his audiences and the people with whom he worked and visited.

Seemingly he was friendly with his audiences and had good rapport with them, or he could not have recorded in his Journal on October 2, 1799:

At Lowe's meetinghouse a large congregation attended; I spoke upon Isaiah 40:1. . . . I suppose we congregate from three to six thousand souls weekly; thus, if no more, I can say that my travelling hath brought thousands to hear the Gospel, who, probably, would not otherwise have heard it.¹

Asbury made many friends and kept them because of his interest in them and his love for them. As he re-visited communities, he often sought out friends who had been kind to him. In 1804, after a serious illness lasting over a month, he wrote in his Journal a description of his

¹Clark, II, p. 207.

treatment in the home of Harry Stevens. Of the people who nursed him he said: "Kinder souls than this family I could not wish."¹ He then mentioned a continual stream of people who came to see him. His friends loved him and "he loved his friends with a real passion."² He loved children, and they loved him. This is an example: "'Mother' breathlessly shouted a little boy as he ran into the house, 'I want my face washed . . . for Bishop Asbury is coming and I am sure he will hug me up!'"³

He seemed to draw men to himself and to make friends with many of them.

Having once companied with him, having seen the lines of care on his face, and heard the vibrant, passionate call of his soul to self-abandon for the sake of Christ, having warmed oneself with the fires of his heart and felt the power of his rare devotion, one was ready to die for him, or go to the uttermost parts of the earth without a murmur of his command.⁴

It seems apparent that good will existed when Francis Asbury was unanimously selected by the conference of 1784 to Preside over the Methodist work in America. "This was a notable tribute of personal affection and esteem and also a recognition of the man's sterling character as an impartial and able executive."⁵

Asbury loved and sympathized with the men who worked under him as their leader. "He appreciated their works--

¹Clark, II, p. 443.

²Duren, p. 83.

³Tipple, Asbury, p. 317.

⁴Ibid., p. 319.

⁵Carroll, p. 85.

they were the fighting force of the church; if they succeeded, the church advanced; if they failed, the church lagged--they must have the first consideration."¹ He listed all his preachers, prayed for them regularly, and wrote to them in order to encourage them and to give them suggestions and advice. As the preachers answered his letters, he felt that he knew them better and that he was obtaining information about them and their circuits. When the men came to conference, he listened with intent personal interest to each report, and he was not satisfied until every man had the opportunity of giving a full account of his work. He labored along side each one of them as a co-worker and fellow-laborer, refusing to receive any more salary than they received, sixty-four dollars, later eighty dollars, a year and traveling expenses.² These attitudes and relationships with the preachers created goodwill.

"He had no petty jealousies, no grievances, no dislikes to be avenged; he bore attacks, misrepresentations, and abuse with patience and remembered nothing of them in stationing the preachers."³ The good will he established with men is exemplified in the appointment of Ezekiel Cooper as book agent. Cooper did not want the appointment, particularly, but acquiesced to the wishes of Asbury who wrote to him thus:

¹Ibid., p. 160.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 161.

I had no doubt but you would feel like wishing to be out of the business of book-making; but, my dear, it is not so easily done. . . . I say in all company, when I speak, that you are deeply concerned for the interest of the connection. . . . You are easy of access, I have found; readily pacified by a word or a line; you are a man of intrigue, but open, and therefore I love you. The very thought that I gave you a nomination to your appointment is enough; those that dislike me will disapprove of you. I advise you, as a friend, to retire into your own business as much as possible. I only wish that those who think hardly of you or me could, if it were right, be punished with our places they so much envy.¹

It would be difficult to ignore the goodwill of a superior who was willing to lie down and be trampled upon rather than injure one person.²

It appears that Asbury was not intentionally contentious with others in his speaking and writing. He and Dr. Coke did not agree on a number of issues, but he strived to create and maintain goodwill in this important relationship. In his Journal of the date of April 25, 1791, he wrote: "I found the Doctor had much changed his sentiments since his last visit to this continent; and that these impressions still continued. I hope to give up all I dare for peace' sake; and to please men for their good to edification."³ This ability to make concessions, when principle is not involved, further contributed to his ability to create goodwill.

When Asbury thought that principles were involved, it was not easy for him to forgive. He thought that if he

¹Clark, III, p. 194.

²Mouzon, p. 48.

³Clark, I, p. 672.

should grant his forgiveness, an ethical principle would be violated by him. Again, if people did wrong and he was asked to forgive them, he was reluctant to grant his forgiveness because he feared he would be understood as acquiescing to the wrong. For instance he stated in his Journal, "I received a healing letter from Thomas Morrell; but matters will not easily be done away with me: if it were one or two only that were concerned, it would be but little; but it is hundreds, yea, thousands of travelling and local preachers and official men; and thousands of people too."¹

It seems the greatest trial and the heaviest burden of his life was the defection of O'Kelly, who led thousands of Methodists with him to create another church. Asbury failed to get the goodwill of O'Kelly, principally because of his beliefs and practices concerning the episcopacy. O'Kelly believed that the Annual Conference should have the power to rescind the appointments of ministers, if they were dissatisfied with the decisions of the Bishop, and ask him to re-appoint them.

Asbury's actions were also questioned by Devereaux Jarratt in a letter written to a man by the name of Coleman:

O'Kelly does great things in the devisive way and I dare say he will make Asbury's Mitre set very uneasy on his head, so as to give sensible pain to his heart, and it may be to such a degree, that he may sincerely wish Dr. Coke had never given him a Mitre

¹Clark, II, p. 198.

at all. Indeed I never expected that Mitre would set easy for any considerable length of time, as it was but a cobbled piece of work at first. . . . The divisions and animosities now subsisting are greater, perhaps, than you can conceive, and yet all these may be but the beginnings of sorrow. In a word I have seen and heard so much party zeal, party interest and party spirit of the people called Methodists, and the nefarious methods made use of to put down one and set up another, that I really doubt whether there would be any propriety in giving them the epithet of a religious society.¹

Even though Asbury did not create and maintain goodwill with all the people to whom he spoke, he did possess this virtue and manifested it on many occasions. The esteem with which he valued goodwill among his preachers is exemplified by his reaction to a letter he received from Dr. Coke asking him to uproot some preachers in order to serve about two hundred people in Charleston, South Carolina. Concerning this request he wrote to one of his ministers:

The presiding elders are afraid of moving a preacher, and yet urge me to turn them over like a ball among nine-pins. I do not station the preachers among the people as if they were school boys, and the people our servants or slaves. I do not trifle with my office in that manner, this is not the way to magnify it, we must hold the confidence of the preachers and people very sacred.²

Francis Asbury created good will in most of his relations with people as a result of his love for them, his friendliness, and his warmth of personality. Good will linked with the other two elements of personal proof, good character and competence, contributed much to the impact of his message upon his hearers.

¹Clark, III, p. 138.

²Ibid., p. 280.

Sources of These Qualities

Personal Religious Experience

The first source of the qualities that made Asbury the preacher he was can be found in his own personal religious experience and in his realization of the value of a human soul. It is likely that his concept of a deep religious experience had its origin in the teachings of his mother during his early childhood days. A hunger for God had been created during those days and it increased throughout his whole life. Many entries in his Journal reveal his thirst for more of God and His holiness. Coupled with his search for holiness was the realization of the value of a human soul. When he gave himself to be a missionary in America, he clearly declared: "I am going to live to God, and bring others so to do."¹ So consuming was this passion to live for God and to win others to Him that he literally went beyond any human expectation in the development of the virtues found in his character and in the building of the religious empire, the Methodist church.

Prayer Life

A second source of the qualities of the character of Francis Asbury was his prayer life. Inasmuch as he had learned to pray in early life, it was natural that he should perform his first public services in the form of prayer

¹Clark, I, p. 4.

meetings. The habit of praying continued with him throughout his life. When he arrived in America, knowing he would meet new situations and problems, he fortified himself the first day by praying five times.¹ This was the beginning of his life of prayer in America. Daily he prayed for the ministers and the people in the churches.

His prayer life was one of the distinguishing characteristics of his ministry. . . . He was constantly in the saddle, but he found time to pray in private three hours a day. When he could have no privacy in the cabin homes where he was entertained, he went into the woods, sometimes in the cold and rain, and there he agonized with God alone. He prayed in homes, and even in taverns where he stopped. One of the most beautiful resolves ever uttered was expressed by Asbury in the words, 'Every family shall know me by prayer'; and no man ever came nearer to living up to such a purpose than did he.²

Bible Study

Complementing Asbury's devotional and prayer life, as sources of the qualities of his character, was the reading of the Bible and other books on religion and theology. He accepted the Bible as the record of the divine revelation of God to man, and he believed it contained all the truth that man needed for his salvation. Furthermore, he believed it contained the precepts necessary for Christian living. Consequently, he studied it thoroughly, not only the English, but the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin texts in order to obtain the exact meanings of the various writers. His major concern was to discover the messages in the Scriptures and to

¹Asbury, p. 72.

²Duren, p. 119.

know the mind of God for his life, as well as for the lives of the ministers and for the churches. The various interpretations did not disturb him; he carefully pondered them and accepted those that he believed would contribute to his knowledge of God and discarded those that he felt did not contribute but were hindrances.

Inevitably Asbury read and studied his Bible; at one time he mentioned that he had read it through in four months. His traveling companions said that he knew his Bible so well he could preach at a moment's notice and the Scripture would fit the occasion. Not only did he study the Bible himself, but he urged others to do the same particularly the preachers. At an ordination service in Albany, New York, he held his Bible and exclaimed, "This is the minister's battle-ax; this is his sword; take it therefore, and conquer."¹

He set as noble an example for the ministry of the church of his day as was ever set by any man. One can easily believe that no single fact contributed more to the devotional spirit and purpose of his ministry than did this determination to know what God really meant to teach in the Scriptures.²

Results of the Possession of These Qualities

Simple and Direct Preaching

Certainly a man possessing the qualities of personal proof: good character, competence, and good will, and a

¹Ibid., p. 121.

²Ibid., pp. 121-122.

man possessing the sources of these qualities: a personal religious experience, a consistent prayer life, and a knowledge of the Bible, should be an effective preacher. Such was Francis Asbury. When he preached his first sermons in the New World at Philadelphia, this comment was made concerning his preaching,

His first ministrations impressed the Church in that city that he was a minister of no ordinary stamp, evincing by the manner in which he treated his subjects, and the depth and fervor of his feeling, that he was a workman eminently qualified by training and experience to divide the word of truth, and give to saint and sinner their portion in due season.¹

This beginning exemplifies the ministry that Francis Asbury was to have during the forty-five years he itinerated over the United States. Preaching became the controlling passion in his life. To achieve this consuming desire, he left his native land, refused to marry, and denied himself the joys of a home and home life.²

During the first years of his itineracy in America, Asbury was licensed a local preacher, not a traveling preaching, which included ordination as a deacon and later as an elder. Consequently, a minister from another denomination, thinking Asbury was unqualified for the work he was doing, challenged him and forbade him to continue preaching. To this Asbury replied:

¹Strickland, p. 85.

²Tipple, Asbury, p. 211.

I came to preach and preach I would. I told him I had authority from God. I began to preach and urged the people to repent, and turn from all their transgressions, so iniquity should not prove their ruin.¹

His preaching was simple and direct. In his Journal are recorded nearly two hundred outlines of sermons and about seven hundred texts. Because of his knowledge of the Bible he preached with great Biblical accuracy and always close to his text.² Henry Boehm, who traveled with Asbury for some time and who heard him preach over fifteen hundred times, said he was a good Bible expositor and that he gave meaning to the Scriptures.³ Of his own preaching Asbury wrote in his Journal: "I was . . . plain and pointed."⁴ "I was long and loud, warm, and very pointed."⁵ "I was led to speak with life and power."⁶ "Lord, keep me . . . from preaching empty stuff to please the ear, instead of changing the heart."⁷ His themes were simple and his preaching was earnest, bringing conviction that resulted in great numbers of men and women changing their lives and living for Christ.⁸

There is no evidence that he threw his hearers into those religious frenzies in which his itinerant preachers saw the working of Providence. Yet he preached on the same themes with profound conviction--sin and redemption with hope of Heaven and fear of Hell.⁹

¹Ibid., p. 211.

²Asbury, p. 280.

³Carroll, p. 125.

⁴Clark, II, p. 23.

⁵Ibid., p. 43.

⁶Ibid., p. 48.

⁷Clark, I, p. 116.

⁸William Benton, Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. II (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1963), p. 560.

⁹Johnson, p. 383.

Asbury's messages were direct, making a solemn call to life or to death. For instance, he wrote in his Journal: "I preached some awful truths."¹ "Take heed, brethern, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief."² "I was assisted to be very alarming, and hope not all in vain: . . . on Romans 6:23, 'The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life'."³

Asbury, with Coke, charged the ministers of Methodism to preach a simple and direct message in this manner:

Convince the sinner of his dangerous condition. . . . He must set forth the depth of original sin, and shew the sinner how far he is gone from original righteousness; he must describe the vices of the world in their just and most striking colours, and enter into all the sinner's pleas and excuses for sin, and drive him from all his subterfuges and strongholds.⁴

The time element complemented the directness of Asbury's preaching. Every sermon had a tremendous emphasis on now. Now was the time to heed; now was the time to be warned; now was the time to be converted. Since he was an itinerant, and since there were many dangers lurking on every side on the frontier, he took every advantage of pressing his hearers into an immediate decision.⁵

Unconquerable Zeal

Francis Asbury seemed to be obsessed with a religious drive, apparently one of the results of his possessing the

¹Clark, II, p. 694.

²Ibid., p. 12.

³Clark, I, p. 317.

⁴Rudolph, p. 154.

⁵Tipple, Asbury, p. 220.

virtues of Christian character. If it were personal power he was seeking, it is doubtful whether he would have withstood the hardships and undergone the trials of a Methodist itinerant preacher. If his zeal had impelled him forward for America, or for Methodism, it is also questionable whether he would have gone forth to conquer the wilderness as he did. Asbury, in his Journal, and also his biographers testify that there was a motivating force within his life that impelled him forward to conquer every foe at any cost. The reason was that

he was engaged in a work of God which dared not be denied. The power he wanted was not for himself but for his mission. That mission was clear: all America was to be won to saving confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and then to produce the fruits of holiness. There must be no delay. Everything else was less important than souls.¹

An indispensable characteristic of the itinerant preachers was this unconquerable zeal and a passionate energy which was expressed in a flaming fire of evangelistic fervor.² Asbury's concern for the spiritual life of others impregnated with courage, holy venturesomeness, and consecration, carried tremendous powers that resulted in conviction of sinners and in persuading them to accept Christ as their Savior.³

In February, 1784, Asbury manifested this unconquerable zeal when he wrote:

"I found my heart let out in prayer for those I cannot preach to. The Lord is my witness, but if my whole

¹Rudolph, pp. 143-144.

²Tipple, Asbury, p. 193.

³Ibid., pp. 169-170.

body, yea, every hair of my head, could labour and suffer, they should freely be given up for God and souls."¹

This apparently indefatigable man, in addition to his regular trips across the nation, became a man of many affairs, both great and small. For instance, he organized a Book Concern for the publishing of literature; he established missions as he traveled; he organized Sunday Schools; he founded educational institutions, Cokesbury College being one; he distributed Bibles, tracts, and other literature; he visited and preached in camp meetings.

In spite of periods of despondency, his unconquerable zeal would not let him remain long in defeat. In December, 1804, when in South Carolina, he wrote of his victory and hope for the churches as he projected his prayers to God for them:

We had snow four inches deep: I felt thankful that I had a house, and all things necessary to temporal enjoyment and comfort. Next day it cleared away; my soul is happy in God--purity of heart is my joy, and prayer my delight. I feel as if God would sanctify all the conferences in the South: O may it, in answer to my unceasing prayers, be a great time with the Lord's prophets.²

Governing Power

Governing power is a third result of the possession of these qualities of character. In his address to the General Conference, written January 8, 1816, Francis Asbury depicted

¹Clark, I, p. 456.

²Clark, II, p. 450.

the kind of bishops he thought should be selected for the Methodist church. Unknowingly he was giving a portrait of himself as a bishop, when he was about twenty years younger.¹

Following is this description, his ideal of a bishop:

Your governors shall come forth out of yourselves, and the Holy Ghost shall direct your choice as in the Antiochian Conference. . . . They must be formed in all things after the pattern shewed us in the Mount, able ministers of the New Testament, real Apostolic men filled with the Holy Ghost. But what does our order of things require of them? Not such as can be performed by superannuated or supernumerary preachers, but by men just past the meridian, that have already proved themselves not only servants but mere slaves, who with willing minds have taken with cheerfulness and resignation frontier stations, with hard fare, labouring and suffering night and day, hazarding their lives by waters, by lodging indoors and out, and where Indian depredations and murders have been committed once a month or perhaps once a quarter. . . . They ought to be men who can ride at least three thousand miles and meet ten or eleven Conferences in a year, and by their having had a charge of local Conferences from sixty to an hundred Official characters, to have presided in and to have directed well all the business of the whole with every member, having received and graduated exhorters, preachers, deacons, and elders in the local line, ready to all the duties of their calling, always pleasant, affable, and communicative,--to know how to behave in all company, rich or poor, impious or pious, ministers and professors of our own and all denominations, but more abundantly to remember to the poor the gospel must be preached, and always to condescend to men of low estate.²

This person that Asbury described apparently was the only person equal to the situation, that person being Asbury himself. As a governor, he seemed capable of projecting himself into the future of the church and imprinting the image of his genius upon its structure so deeply, that he actually

¹Rudolph, p. 175.

²Clark, III, pp. 540-541.

had the same relationship to American Methodism that John Wesley had to English Methodism.¹

Asbury was more than equal to any man in religious strategy. As a result, he knew how to rally his spiritual army of preachers and how to send them forth to battle against the great Adversary into the remotest parts across the rugged Alleghenies, the hazardous frontiers of Kentucky and Ohio. Again, it was masterful strategy when he and Dr. Coke appeared before George Washington, the first president of the United States, to present a congratulatory address from the Methodist church. When Washington acknowledged this gesture, the first to come from a religious body in the new nation he gave a gracious reply to the Bishops, a reply that in reality, recognized the Methodists as loyal Americans instead of Tories.²

Asbury seemed to possess an amazing ability to communicate his goals, and the means of reaching them, to his preachers. It is possible that Asbury understood well the plight of eighteenth-century man in the New World, and his need for the message the itinerants were proclaiming. "If he did not generate the vital force of Methodism, at least he channeled it to such a multiplication of ministry and such a unity of membership and method as to put a stamp on the whole history of America."³

¹Carroll, p. 117.

²Johnson, p. 382.

³Rudolph, p. 144.

A man who was capable of governing his preachers and of controlling the spiritual forces in the churches throughout Methodist America could easily become a tyrant. Asbury's enemies accused him of being one. For instance, Pilmore disliked being bossed by Asbury; Coke proclaimed that his work in American Methodism was always directed by Asbury; and O'Kelly declared that Asbury was making himself a pope of the Methodist church in America. Furthermore, Devereaux Jarratt wrote:

Mr. Asbury is certainly the most indefatigable man in his travels and variety of labours, of any I am acquainted with: and though his strong passion for superiority and thirst for domination may contribute not a little to this, yet I hope, he¹ is chiefly influenced by more laudable motives.

Perhaps the one thing that prevented Asbury from becoming a ruthless autocrat was his religious faith and devotion. His zealous motives, permeated with love, kept him from becoming the tyrant his enemies accused him of being. His sense of his own unworthiness kept him humble and prevented him from becoming arrogant.²

Asbury believed the attacks upon the presiding eldership were attacks upon the episcopacy. He said that he was appointed as the leader of Methodism in America by John Wesley before the conferences were created and before many of his preachers were born. (This was in 1810.) If the General Conference, which was to meet in 1812, should remove him from the episcopacy, or should limit the powers of this high

¹Clark, III, p. 25.

²Rudolph, p. 145.

office, he declared, concerning his preachers, "I cannot cast them off. I cannot do without them, if they can do without me. I must continue in the ship, storm or calm, near the helm, or before the mast. As long as I can, I will be with them."¹

Francis Asbury seemed to possess the ability to communicate directions clearly, and usually they were followed, because his commanding personality impregnated with love seemed to demand obedience. He was particularly concerned about the spiritual growth of the ministers and the laymen in each one of the Methodist churches, hence because of the infrequent visits to each church, usually about once a year, he wrote many letters to them, governing in this manner. For instance, he wrote to a presiding elder,

O, my brother, preach fully upon holiness in every sermon, where there is but one believer. I feel, seriously, that such multitudes of young converts have been born since the gospel came to the continent; and so few old people are changed, and so few old believers are sanctified. We must urge them to go on to possess the land.²

In another letter he wrote to the first woman class-leader in the church at Philadelphia concerning prayer. His concern is manifested as he directed in this letter:

I shall be pleased to represent you to your old friends, as being as ever and more than ever given up to God. I charge you before God be much in prayer, spend when able not less than an hour in the morning and the same in the evening in solemn private meditation and prayer with God every day and step aside at noon to speak with God if you can. Seek perfect love, seek it now.³

¹Clark, III, p. 439.

²Ibid., p. 224.

³Ibid., p. 157.

Another instance of his ability to govern is discerned in the following letter to the book stationer and minister of the church at Baltimore in 1796:

I have felt an uncommon impression on my soul concerning the society in Baltimore, I am afraid they are sinking into formality. My wish is that prayer meetings should be established in every part of the town where they can be admitted two nights in the week, six or seven on the same evenings. The women, also in equal number, might be for them. I would advise short sermons, and two or three join in prayer after, in the Church. . . . I am sure the women could have a prayer meeting. . . . And if any of the old line, are sick and cannot come out, 'we will come to you,' must be the answer.¹

Not only did Asbury direct the spiritual life of preachers, class-leaders, and the church, but he also gave instructions concerning the organization and conduct of the ministers at a camp meeting. He wrote:

I judge you will find it best to have two stands. If the work should break out at one, you can go to another. I wish you to be singularly careful of order: sixteen or twenty men as watchmen, to have their hours of watching. I would have them bear long, white, peeled rods, that they may be known by all the camp, and be honored. Let them be the most respectable elders among the laity. Keep the preachers, travelling and local, listed; and call all upon duty.²

The following summary epitomizes the results of the qualities found in the character of Francis Asbury:

He was an incessant preacher, of singular practical directness; was ever in motion, on foot or on horseback, over his long circuits; a rigorous disciplinarian, disposed to do everything by method; a man of few words, and those always to the point; of quick and accurate insight into character; of a sobriety,

¹Ibid., p. 139.

²Ibid., p. 300.

not to say severity, of temperament, which might have been repulsive had it not been softened by a profound religious humility, for his soul, ever aspiring to the highest virtue, was ever¹ complaining within itself over its shortcomings.

Preparation for Speaking

Reading and Study

When Francis Asbury volunteered to come to America as a missionary, he did not have the educational qualifications that one would expect to find in a preacher, inasmuch as his formal training had an unpleasant and abrupt ending when he left school at the age of eleven years. With no college or university background, it seemed that he was a candidate ill-prepared for such a gigantic task. However, before and during the years of his itineracy in England, he learned the habit of reading and study. Wesley's standards of Bible study and reading particularly impressed Asbury and had a great influence upon him. Wesley's rule for reading was:

Fix some part of every day for private exercises. You may acquire the taste which you have not. What is tedious at first will afterwards be pleasant. Whether you like it or not, read and pray daily. It is for your life. There is no other way; else you will be a trifler all your days and a pretty superficial preacher. Do justice to your own soul; give it time and² means to grow; do not starve yourself any longer.

Asbury became a most faithful follower of John Wesley, imbibing his spirit more completely, perhaps, than any other person. He did not become a servile imitator, but he worked

¹Stevens, Centennary, p. 91.

²Du Bose, pp. 42-43.

out a system of study, using Wesley as his example. As a result, in his regimen of study he had qualities of greater excellence than his model.¹ On the day of his arrival in America he prepared himself for the day by praying five times, reading three chapters in the Revelation, reading one hundred pages of Wesley's sermons, and reading one hundred pages of the history of the great revival in New England under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards.² This was the beginning of a long life of study under the most adverse circumstances.

At the end of six years in America he made an entry in his Journal that he was reading the Scriptures in both Greek and Hebrew, which he had learned during that period of time with no formal training. He became an avid reader, delving into history, biography, politics, philosophy, and poetry. It was the rule of his life to read at least one hundred pages a day. When he was not traveling on the road, he would rise at four o'clock in the morning, have his devotions, and then spend two hours in reading and study. After a short time for recreation and conversation, which became a transition into the fuller work of the day, he spent ten of the sixteen hours in reading and study. When he was traveling, he carried his meager library in his saddle bags or in a small chest that he stowed away in his sulky or chaise. When the heavy foliage and brush did not interfere,

¹Ibid., pp. 38-19.

²Johnson, p. 380.

he would study and read as he traveled over the primitive roads on horseback or by carriage.¹

Even though Asbury read in all areas of knowledge of his day, he centralized his study on the Bible, attempting to obtain the message contained therein. He became the leader of a great troop of itinerants who believed they were called of God, who were dead in earnest, who were men of one book--the Bible, who lived in the Book, who accepted the divine revelation of God through the Bible, who preached sermons that were biblical through and through.² He memorized much of the Bible, particularly the New Testament. This gave him the ability to use numerous texts and Scriptural passages for supporting materials in his messages. He was capable of proclaiming, "Thus saith the Lord" in answer to cavils, disputations, and doubts. This preparation gave him such a fund of biblical information that he was never at a loss for a text of Scripture to use at the appropriate time.³

Knowledge of Men

Another segment of Asbury's preparation for speaking can be found in his understanding the mind of man. During childhood and early manhood he seemed to acquire a keen intellectual sense, with a definite religious bent. With this he seemed to acquire the ability to discern the motives and characteristics of men that led them to act as they do. He saw the greatest need of man was release from mental and

¹Du Bose, p. 45.

²Tipple, Asbury, p. 224.

³Carroll, p. 119.

spiritual bondage caused by sin. He believed his message, taken from the Scriptures, was the only means whereby man could be released from his bondage. This message and his incessant desire to communicate it to others became the drive that thrust him into the wilds of America to preach.

When he arrived, he soon discovered the necessity of the preachers' leaving the towns and itinerating. His insight into the needs of men on the frontier impelled him to take the initiative, hoping other preachers would follow him, which they did in time. When he assumed the leadership among the itinerants and later when he was appointed to superintend the Methodist work in America by John Wesley, he seemed to have acquired an understanding of men and the societies in the infant church. He soon manifested this ability, both in his speaking and in his governing, which were closely related.

Those most familiar with him say his estimate of the preachers, whom he always appointed solely on his own judgment, without consultation with the presiding elders, was seldom wrong. He had an eye that seemed to search the depth of personalities and discover hidden powers and frailties. As his responsibility for stationing the itinerants covered a period of more than thirty years, in which he ordained over four thousand men, his knowledge of their individual qualities and abilities must have¹ been pretty accurate to escape serious consequences.

Intimate Relationship with God

An intimate relationship with God, induced by communion with God and a steadfast faith in Him, became perhaps the greatest part of Asbury's preparation for speaking. Had it

¹Ibid., pp. 158-159.

not been for this intimate relationship with God his message would have been futile and his preaching would have been in vain. Many entries in his Journal reveal his concern about this element of preparation. For instance on November 23, 1802, he wrote: "My mind is occupied in reading, writing, and exercises in prayer, in which I have intimate communion with God."¹ Another example of his relationship to God is observed in his reaction to difficulties. On January 20, 1801, he stated in his Journal: "I have had many and great exercises of mind respecting men and things, but my soul enjoys great resignation: I take the bitters of life as things which medicine my soul, producing caution, humiliation, and sanctification."²

Discipline

Francis Asbury's discipline and self-control were doubtless contributing factors in his preparation for speaking. When he adopted Wesley's concept of study habits, he had to discipline himself in order to do the reading, organize the societies, and govern the entire Methodist church in America. The quality of self-control and its influence upon his speaking are treated elsewhere in this dissertation.³

Delivery

Inasmuch as Francis Asbury was particularly concerned about the content of his message, he presumably did not place

¹Clark, II, p. 369.

²Ibid., p. 279.

³Supra, pp. 167.

as much emphasis upon the effective delivery of it as might be desired, even though he often referred to his preaching in his Journal. In the development of the delivery of Francis Asbury there will be two divisions. The first will attempt to describe the visible code which includes appearance, bodily movements, and facial expressions. The second will attempt to give the audible code which includes articulation and pronunciation, loudness, pitch, vocal quality, and timing.

Visible Code

Since "listeners form definite impressions of the speaker before he speaks, as well as during and after the time he speaks,"¹ it is important to know something about the appearance, bodily movements, and facial expressions of Francis Asbury as a speaker.

Appearance.--It seems likely that Francis Asbury grew into a strong, robust young man as he worked in the foundry near his home in England. There he must have developed a muscular body as well as the beginning of a strong constitution as he labored at the forge and anvil as a blacksmith. This supposition would account for his ability to withstand the labors and incessant hardships which he endured as he traveled back and forth over the rough terrain of the American continent covering five or six thousand miles a year for about forty-five years.²

¹Hance, p. 201.

²Du Bose, p. 18.

Francis Asbury became a familiar figure as he traveled from church to church throughout Methodist America. He usually dressed in light blue clothing instead of the conventional black for ministers. His full, fresh, and noble-looking countenance revealed refined feelings and emotions. Behind the countenance of this man existed a personality that was gracious and dignified, and that commanded the respect, confidence, and affection of those who met him.¹

Several pen pictures have been left that depict the man as others knew and saw him. Henry Boehm, who was his traveling companion for five years, gave this description:

Bishop Asbury was five feet nine inches high, weighed one hundred and fifty-one pounds, erect in person, and of a very commanding appearance. His features were rugged, but his countenance was intelligent, though time and care had furrowed it deep with wrinkles. His nose was prominent, his mouth large, as if made on purpose to talk, and his eyes of a bluish cast, and so keen that it seemed as if he could look right through a person. He had a fine forehead, indicative of no ordinary brain, and beautiful white locks, which hung about his brow and shoulders, and added to his venerable appearance. There was much native dignity about him as any man I ever knew. He seemed born to sway others. There was an austerity about his looks that was forbidding to those who were unacquainted with him. In dress he was a pattern of neatness and plainness. He could have passed for a Quaker had it not been for the color of his garments, which were black when I traveled with him. He formerly wore gray clothes. He wore a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, a frock coat which was generally buttoned up to the neck, with a straight collar. He wore breeches or small clothes with leggings. Sometimes he wore shoe buckles. Indeed all the preachers, and I among the number, wore breeches and leggings until 1810, then several left² them off, which Bishop Asbury heartily disapproved.

¹Stevens, Centennary, p. 93.

²Rudolph, pp. 221-222.

Another pen picture, given by Marsden, reveals still further the appearance of Francis Asbury:

In his appearance he was a picture of plainness and simplicity, bordering upon the costume of the Friends; the reader may figure to himself an old man, spare and tall, but remarkably clean, with a plain frock coat, drab, or mixture, waistcoat and small cloths, [sic] of the same kind, a neat stock, a large broad-brimmed hat with an uncommonly low crown, while his white locks, venerable with age, added simplicity to his appearance, that is not easy to describe; his countenance had a cast of severity, but this was probably owing to his habitual gravity and seriousness; his look was remarkably penetrating: in a word, I never recollect to have seen a man of¹ more grave, venerable and dignified appearance.

Bodily movements.--There seem to be contrary opinions concerning the bodily movements and gestures used by Francis Asbury during his preaching. Those who knew and heard him preach stated that he gave a "dignified appearance" and had a "solemn and commanding manner."² From this an inference can be obtained that he stood before his audience preaching with little bodily movement and perhaps few gestures. Then again, he has been referred to as "a son of thunder or of consolation."³ From this an inference can be drawn, that if his preaching gave the impression that he was "a son of thunder" then he probably moved a great deal, using many gestures to express animation and emotion.

On the other hand, if he was a "son of consolation," he seemingly was a quiet preacher and moved very little.

¹Ibid., p. 222.

²Strickland, p. 11.

³Mouzon, p. 31.

Nicholas Snethen, who also traveled with Asbury, said, "Though his pulpit exhibitions were the admiration and delight of those who heard him the most frequently, yet it must be admitted that he was not in general so edifying to strangers."¹

Describing his own preaching, Asbury said, "I preached in the court house. I took cold by coming out into the open whilst in a profuse perspiration; and this I seldom fail to do, if I preach to a large congregation in a close, warm place."² It is possible for a speaker to perspire as he stands quietly speaking in a close, warm room. But since he perspired profusely, the suggestion is given that he probably used bodily movement and gestures while speaking. Even though he may have been active and possibly used too many gestures, he detested speaking that revealed any sophistry. He wrote in his Journal May 29, 1774, "Lord keep me from all superfluity of dress, and from preaching empty stuff to please the ear, instead of changing the heart!"³ Six years later he wrote about his experience as the second speaker in an afternoon service: "I spoke after him on Luke 13, 23-25: was fervent; but the people thought I must speak like thunder to be a great preacher. I shall not throw myself into an unnatural heat or overstrained exertions."⁴ What Asbury meant by this statement is problematical. Either his

¹Asbury, p. 282.

²Clark, I, p. 498.

³Ibid., p. 116.

⁴Ibid., p. 383.

audience had heard and seen him preach before when he did speak like thunder and moved excessively with many gestures, or his audience expected this because it was the custom of preaching during that time. Probably a concluding assumption can be made that Asbury, in the vigor of his manhood, used many gestures and much bodily movement when he preached the evangelistic, gospel sermon and that he used fewer movements, or none at all, when he preached the funeral, dedicatory, or sacramental sermon.

Facial expressions.--From the record of the men who heard Francis Asbury, the supposition can be made that he used eye contact effectively and that he had impressive and striking facial expressions. "Thomas Ware found something in his person, his piercing eye, his impressive mien, . . . which compelled the attention of all who saw and heard him."¹ Henry Boehm, who heard Asbury preach many times, said that his eyes were "of a bluish cast, and so keen that it seemed as if he could look right through a person."² Joshua Marsden, also having had the opportunity of listening to Asbury preach, made this comment: "His countenance had a cast of severity, but this was owing probably to his habitual gravity and seriousness: his look was remarkably penetrating."³

These witnesses seem to agree that Asbury's facial expressions and eye contact were probably effective in his delivery. It is implied that his impressive countenance

¹Tipple, Asbury, p. 315.

²Ibid., p. 302.

³Ibid., p. 304.

prevented the severity of his eye contact from becoming an obnoxious hindrance to his audience. Presumably, he used his eyes in this manner in order to increase the effectiveness of his persuasion in his evangelistic appeals.

Audible Code

Of the four modes of speaking, impromptu, extemporaneous, manuscript, or memorized, the extemporaneous was the most adaptable to frontier preaching and was used almost exclusively by the itinerant preachers, including Francis Asbury.

Articulation and pronunciation.--The information that is available on Asbury's speaking suggests that his enunciation was clear and distinct, and that his pronunciation was understandable. He was fluent and

powerful in his delivery, as well as remarkably pointed in his appeals to the consciences of his hearers. His attitude in the pulpit was graceful, dignified and solemn, his voice full and commanding; his enunciation clear and distinct; and sometimes a sudden burst of eloquence would break forth in a manner which spoke a soul full of God, and like a mountain torrent swept all before it."¹

Loudness.--Not only was Asbury clear and distinct in his articulation and pronunciation, but he was loud in his speaking. He said of himself many times: "I was loud . . . and not very pleasing."² "I injured myself by speaking . . . too loud."³ "I spoke very loud a part of the time."⁴

¹Mouzon, pp. 31-32.

²Clark, II, p. 78.

³Clark, I, p. 446.

⁴Ibid., p. 603.

"I was animated and spoke loud."¹ "I alarmed the town by the excessive noise I made and thereby enlarged my congregation."² Here is one instance of the use of loud speaking in order to draw a crowd. However, it may have been necessary for him to speak loudly in some of his services in order to be heard by all the hearers in large audiences. Furthermore, he may have spoken loudly for emphasis, regardless of the size of his audience.

Timing.--In Asbury's long sermons it is difficult to discern the timing of his sentences and the pauses between thoughts. Seemingly there was little pausing in his preaching. When "a sudden burst of eloquence would break forth . . . like a mountain torrent,"³ there is suggestion of little pausing. Then Asbury's own attestation is that he spoke rapidly. For instance, "I talked away to them very fast."⁴ "I spoke with great rapidity for nearly two hours."⁵ "I am not prolix; neither am I tame; I am rapid and nothing freezes on my lips."⁶ Manifestly he had a "rush of utterance" that moved people and a "burning intensity" that struck the hearts of his hearers with awe and terror.⁷

¹Ibid., p. 460.

²Ibid., p. 679.

³Mouzon, pp. 31-32.

⁴Clark, I, p. 678.

⁵Clark, II, p. 105.

⁶Carroll, p. 125.

⁷Tipple, Asbury, p. 218.

Pitch.--Pitch, as well as vocal quality are implied in the following description: Asbury was "equipped with a clear, musical voice which could be stern with warning, firm with authority, soft with entreaty, [and] melting with pathos."¹ This description of Asbury's voice alludes to his ability and practice of changing the pitch of his voice in order to create the mood he desired to communicate in his message. Ezekiel Cooper, who knew Asbury so well, in his funeral address at the death of the Bishop, said the following:

His language was good, his manner agreeable, his matter excellent, and his voice melodious. But his eloquence did not usually consist in the splendor of pompous language, nor the artificial flowers of refined and polite oratory, but in the grandeur of the sentiments and the sublimity and excellence of the divine truths uttered."²

Vocal quality.--From the foregoing descriptions there are implications that the quality of Asbury's voice was full, resonant, forceful, melodious, and energetic. There are no references to indicate that he had a harsh, breathy, hoarse, husky, dull, or flat voice. Consequently, his voice was presumably effective in communicating his message.

Francis Asbury spoke during one of the most exciting periods of American history, from 1771 to 1815, in every colony of Colonial America and in every state of the United States. His speaking was mainly deliberative for the purpose of persuading people to accept Christ and to become a part of the Methodist church. The qualities found in Asbury

¹Carroll, p. 117.

²Mouzon, p. 37.

as a speaker were under the rubrics of character, which include devotion, integrity, self-control, purity, humility, patience, moral courage, industry, and self-discipline; of competence which include intelligence and understanding; and of good will. The sources of these qualities were in his personal Christian experience, his prayer life, and Bible study. The possession of these qualities resulted in simple and direct preaching, an unconquerable zeal, and his governing power. The preparation for his speaking was discovered in his reading and study, his knowledge of men, his intimate relationship with God, and in discipline. His delivery, influenced by his intense interest in his subject, was discerned through both the visible and audible codes.

As a preacher Asbury sounded the gospel trumpet with energy, earnestness, and divine unction of a Peter, and sinners were cut to the heart by the sword of the Spirit. He encouraged and comforted the weary, troubled saints by glimpses of the heavenly rewards that await the faithful; and he charged the young preachers, as Paul charged Timothy, with solemnity and power, as a father in the gospel.¹

¹Carroll, pp. 128-129.

CHAPTER VI

THE AUDIENCE

"Experience has shown that there are specific ways of analyzing the members of an audience: by discovering what they do, what they like, what they believe, what they want, through finding out about the details that make up their lives."¹ An attempt will be made to analyze Francis Asbury's audiences by examining the factors, as far as possible, that made up the lives of the people in his audiences. The following items are employed in making this analysis: first, the characteristics of Asbury's audiences--including the social and economic, psychological, and physical--to reveal what his audiences did, what they liked, and what they believed, and second, the types of audience occasions--including the circuits, city churches, conferences, and camp meetings--to reveal what they wanted by their response to the message they heard.

Characteristics of Asbury's Audiences

Social and Economic Characteristics

Demographical.--When Francis Asbury arrived in America in 1771, he found a mixture of people who had come from all

¹Hance, p. 211.

parts of the British Isles and Europe. At this time there were no accurate figures on the number of people in America, but it is estimated there were almost 2,000,000 including the slaves. The people lived, mainly, in the open country, villages, and small towns. Cities were beginning to emerge: Boston with a population of 22,000, Newport with 10,000, New York City with 18,000, Charleston with 10,000, and Philadelphia with a population larger than Boston.¹ After the American Revolution the population increased rapidly, reaching about four million people, including about 700,000 slaves, by 1800. Even though the cities grew, they were few in number and they did not represent the life of America, because the greatest number of the people lived in the country on small farms. America was essentially rural.²

Political.--Politically, according to Gipson, the young Americans were ahead of the average colonials of their day. Since a good number of the leaders understood problems of statecraft and since they were well developed in law and in applying it at the local levels, they were capable of making application at the state and federal levels. These leaders struggled through the processes of framing a constitution that became the backbone of the country and the bulwark of the new democracy emerging into existence. This process developed political leaders.³

¹Gipson, pp. 10-11.

²Adams, p. 42.

³Gispon, p. 27.

Industrial.--Another characteristic that influenced Asbury's audiences was the industrial development in the new nation. Several factors contributed to this achievement: the availability of sufficient capital, managerial personnel, and technical power. Furthermore, the new nation was free from many handicaps that ordinarily thwart development. For instance, an abundant supply of charcoal, iron ore, and markets close by, contributed to the marked growth in the iron industry, making the United States the world's leading center in the production of iron.

Other industries entered the life of the people in America. Not only was the manufacturing of lumber and agricultural products consequential, but shipbuilding became prominent because of the available timbers found in the New England states. Fishing became an important industry along the Atlantic coast, and the fur trade continued to thrive. Commerce increased as new products were manufactured and as new markets were developed.¹

Agrarian.--During the period of Francis Asbury's itineracy in America, a limited number of people were occupied in public service, a larger group in industry, and a much larger group in agriculture. This importance of agriculture is to be expected, because the first settlers were forced to clear a spot in the wilderness, build homes of the logs, and raise crops from the soil. Each succeeding

¹Ibid., pp. 13-19.

generation followed the same pattern. Consequently, the great majority of the people were farmers, owning small tracts of land consisting of a few acres, only occasionally as much as a hundred acres or more. Accordingly, fewer of the people were artisans and merchants.¹

A part of the growth of the agrarian society in the South can be attributed to the importation of slaves. The more wealthy and influential settlers in the South acquired large tracts of land and used them for its cultivation. This institution of slavery developed through the years and had a profound influence on the social structure of the South.² In this section of the nation, Asbury's audiences consisted of a few of the aristocracy, numbers of the yeoman farmers, and the slaves.

Psychological Characteristics

Beliefs.--"In the tradition of American life, few ideas have received greater prominence than the notion of the dignity of labor and the virtue of diligent application to one's job, whatever it might be."³ In the New World, where work was plentiful and laborers scarce, the returns for labor were unusually high, and, with diligence, a man could rise from a relatively low economic and social status to one that was higher. "The cult of the self-made man had its American beginnings in the colonies, where success early came to be

¹Wright, pp. 1-4.

²Ibid., pp. 4-5.

³Ibid., p. 23.

measured in material prosperity."¹ "If the Protestants, especially the Puritan elements in Protestantism, did not invent the gospel of work, they adopted it with such enthusiasm that it became a cardinal point in their social doctrine."² Asbury's audiences, from New England to Georgia, were evidently permeated with this concept.

Work naturally prompted Americans to believe in the theory of progress and the probability of perfecting man in this new society. Jefferson claimed that "no definite limits could be assigned to the improveability [sic] of the human race,"³ and John Adams believed that man was "capable of great things."⁴ Consequently,

surveying the past, observing man's steady advance from savagery to civilization, the men of the later eighteenth century found ample (though sometimes qualified) proof that there existed in man and the universe an inherent drive toward perfection--though they agreed that if men were to improve they needed education, self-discipline, experience, rational⁵ thinking, and the help of science and democracy.

During the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries, the American Puritans, or Calvinists, "had constructed a comprehensive theological system which encompassed, in an integrated intellectual unit, all the affairs of science, politics, ethics, economics, and social life."⁶ By the middle of the eighteenth century this whole philosophical structure had begun to crumble.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 25.

³Nye, p. 30.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., pp. 30-31.

⁶Ibid., p. 205.

Eighteenth-century philosophical thought was mainly Lockean empiricism. But there was much dissatisfaction with Locke, particularly among the theologians, who claimed his philosophy led to skepticism. A disintegrated Calvinism and a philosophy of skepticism forced the American thinkers to search for an epistemology which they found in "the Scots philosophy of 'common sense,' which did not conflict with science and rationalism on the one side, nor with orthodox Protestantism on the other."¹

John Witherspoon, the first president of Princeton, became the foremost emissary of the "common sense" philosophy to come to America. The American adaptation and interpretation of this philosophy was given by Samuel Stanhope Smith, Witherspoon's pupil, and later, president of Princeton, when he said:

Men possess two sets of senses, external and internal. External senses provide knowledge of the outside world, which passes through the nerves and becomes ideas in the mind. These ideas group by association, and are made into new ideas by rational organization and synthesis. Internal sensations are of three kinds: first, those of the mind itself, which originates first principles such as the idea of God, the existence of the soul, or the certainty of will; second, those of beauty and taste; third, those of morality, or ideas of good and bad. These senses are common to all men.²

This philosophy provided a means for the American man to establish operable standards of aesthetic, moral, and religious truth.

¹Ibid., p. 32.

²Ibid., p. 35.

Furthermore, an image had been created that the United States was an asylum, that it was a haven of freedom, and that it had for its purpose "to exemplify and spread concepts of liberty, equality, and justice throughout the world."¹ The Americans of this period "believed that they had a firm foundation of ideas on which to build their state and society . . . and that human nature was essentially trustworthy, or at least capable of improvement within limits."²

The social, cultural, and intellectual aspect of the audiences of people from 1776-1820 "may be best understood in terms of an orderly, controlled development of thought-patterns and institutions, motivated by nationalism and belief in progress, assisted by science, within the framework of certain selected ideas of the Enlightenment and of the early phases of Romanticism."³

Interests.--The audiences of Francis Asbury consisted of these new Americans who had certain characteristics that were developing and becoming trends in their society. First was a strong sense that they were a nation that possessed its own past. Europeans taunted them for claiming any heritage of their own, but in spite of this, the Americans respected what they did have, and refused to pattern their society after the social structure of the European world. They had

¹Ibid., pp. 46-48.

²Ibid., p. 50.

³Ibid., p. 53.

an intense interest in the present, and particularly the present in the development of the new nation. Second, closely related to this concept of the past, was a strong "feeling of breaking away, of leaving behind, of beginning anew."¹ After 1776 the Americans were keenly aware of their separation from England and of the necessity of placing their society in the proper relationship and perspective with the nations of the world. Third, a distinctively American attitude toward the future, was that the people of America constituted a society that was superior to any society in the world. "American society had a sense of commitment to the future which produced a peculiarly American kind of social dynamism."² Fourth, America was mobile in every way: physically, socially, and ideologically. If problems became too great, they were solved, or postponed, by moving to another part of the frontier. America was on the move partly because of the frontier and partly because of rapid technological changes. Fifth was "a combination of unity with diversity, in aim, tone, and detail."³ American interests were divided in practically all parts of American society, but with this division came the desire for unity. The individual was important, so was the group.

Unlike any other western nation, the United States was by 1830 a tangled skein of loyalties to sentiments, symbols, sections, localities, groups, political divisions and subdivisions, and to economic,

¹Ibid., p. 147.

²Ibid., p. 148.

³Ibid.

ethnic, ideological, and other interests, all of which held the individual citizen in a sort of loose social orbit.¹

As stated above, the American people were chiefly rural, not more than four or five per cent of the population living in towns over 8,000. Most of these people had been a part of a rapidly growing frontier that was expanding west, returning to the primitive conditions of life, conquering these conditions, building homes, and forming a new primitive society. The constant repetition of this expansion has been acclaimed the reason for the emerging of the American who was mainly agrarian.²

Basically, the frontiersman was a hospitable individual who welcomed the arrival of a stranger and was as generous to him as conditions would permit. He would give up his place at the table, his side of the bed, and even turn his favorite horse out of the stable so that his guest might be hospitably treated. With childlike curiosity he asked endless questions, but he never intended to be impudent or offensive. His tone of voice, and his colorful language with its rich colloquialisms, was highly communicative at its best and hopelessly illiterate at its worst.³

Segments of the political, industrial, commercial, and agrarian society constituted Francis Asbury's audiences, but the major part of it was agrarian.

Types of behavior.--To discover the behavior of Francis Asbury's audiences, it is necessary to go to his Journal, where he depicted it graphically: first, "apathetic," including the "quiet," "dry," and "hard"; second, the

¹Ibid., p. 149.

²Taylor, p. 2.

³Clark, Frontier, p. 310.

"disorderly," including the "careless" and "mocking"; and third, the "well-behaved" and "serious" audiences.

Apathetic: The behavior of the apathetic audiences caused Asbury much concern. For instance he said: "I met with a dull congregation."¹ "The congregation . . . showed too much appearance of spiritual insensibility."² "They were very dead."³ "The people appeared inattentive and their minds full of the present troubles."⁴ "I preached to a very unfeeling people. . . . I lectured to some inanimate souls."⁵ "I preached to a lifeless people."⁶ "The people are very still, and very lifeless."⁷ "The people showed but little affection for the word."⁸ "I had a very still and unfeeling congregation."⁹ "I preached to a quiet people, and had a small stir."¹⁰ "There appeared to be very little devotion among the people."¹¹ "I preached to a few insensible people."¹² "There seems to be a judicial hardness of heart amongst many of the people."¹³ "The audience appeared to be proof against

¹Clark, I, p. 232.

²Ibid., p. 274.

³Ibid., p. 363.

⁴Ibid., p. 364.

⁵Ibid., p. 384.

⁶Ibid., p. 404.

⁷Ibid., p. 514.

⁸Ibid., p. 518.

⁹Ibid., p. 627.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 629.

¹¹Clark, II, p. 62.

¹²Ibid., p. 85.

¹³Clark, I, p. 275.

the power of the word."¹ "They will in appearance be religious, but not in heart."² "There was an insensible, but attentive people."³ "Here I had a dry meeting with a few people in the court house."⁴ "I had an unfeeling audience."⁵ "I made an attempt to preach . . . a marble-hearted congregation as well as Marbeltown."⁶ "A cold day, and a cold people in the fullest sense of the word."⁷ "The people have more trade than religion, more wealth than grace."⁸

Disorderly: The people in the disorderly audiences not only concerned Asbury, they troubled him. "I preached . . . and had a wild, staring congregation."⁹ "They seemed in general careless."¹⁰ "The people looked almost as wild as the deer in the woods."¹¹ "A company of young men diverted themselves under the trees, laughing and mocking while I discoursed."¹² "Was a high day--one thousand or fifteen hundred people attended; sinners began to mock, and many cried aloud; and so it went. I was wondrously led out . . . and spoke, first and last, nearly three hours. O, how the wicked contradicted and opposed!"¹³ "We had a

¹Ibid., p. 277.

²Ibid., p. 390.

³Ibid., p. 442.

⁴Ibid., p. 561.

⁵Ibid., p. 589.

⁶Clark, II, p. 199.

⁷Ibid., p. 317.

⁸Ibid., p. 382.

⁹Clark, I, p. 99.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 350.

¹¹Ibid., p. 368.

¹²Ibid., p. 378.

¹³Ibid., p. 607.

warm sermon . . . at which many were highly offended."¹
 "The people were wild and unfeeling."² "The people appeared
 wild and stupid."³ "We had as wild and disorderly a congregation
 as could be without words and blows."⁴ "A group of
 sinners gathered around the door, and when I took the pulpit
 they went off with a shout: I felt what was coming. In the
 evening there was a proper uproar."⁵ "The young people seemed
 very wild; there was an old drunkard too, who stood up
 and spoke once and again: perhaps they will behave better
 the next Sabbath I give them."⁶

Well-behaved: It would be erroneous to conclude that
 Asbury's audiences were all apathetic or disorderly. There
 were many that were well-behaved and serious, and responded
 to the message as he preached. The following examples
 describe his better audiences: "Sometimes great solemnity
 has rested on the congregations."⁷ "There appeared to be a
 considerable moving under the word."⁸ "There was a gracious
 moving amongst the people."⁹ "There appeared to be some
 small awakenings amongst the people."¹⁰ "About seventy souls
 sat under the word this evening, and some of them were deeply

¹Ibid., p. 646.

²Ibid., p. 665.

³Ibid., p. 669.

⁴Clark, II, p. 45.

⁵Ibid., p. 184.

⁶Ibid., p. 351.

⁷Clark, I, p. 86.

⁸Ibid., p. 89.

⁹Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 93.

affected."¹ "There was a very serious congregation."²
 "The hearts of the people were greatly melted under the
 word."³ "The people were attentive."⁴ "I addressed myself
 according to my audience; the people were greatly alarmed."⁵
 "We had a solemn time . . . and a full house."⁶ "We had a
 feeling, gracious season."⁷ "Almost the whole town came
 together to hear the word of the Lord."⁸ "I preached . . .
 it was a time of refreshing."⁹ "Our brethren shouted whilst
 I enlarged on We had a profitable time. We had a
 shaking time."¹⁰ "I preached to a considerable number of
 quiet hearers."¹¹ "There was a great melting."¹² "The
 people were very attentive."¹³ "Was an alarming time . . .
 a number of serious people--no trifling here now: how many
 dead souls restored from a backsliding state! and their
 children converted too!"¹⁴ "We had a great move and noble
 shouting."¹⁵ "There was a shaking among the people: some
 were alarmed; some professed to be justified, and others
 sanctified; whilst the wicked brought with them much of the

¹Ibid., p. 158.

²Ibid., p. 242.

³Ibid., p. 272.

⁴Ibid., p. 341.

⁵Ibid., p. 354.

⁶Ibid., p. 506.

⁷Ibid., p. 516.

⁸Ibid., p. 535.

⁹Ibid., p. 582.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 590.

¹¹Ibid., p. 600.

¹²Ibid., p. 601.

¹³Ibid., p. 604.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 608.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 611.

power of Satan."¹ "I had an attentive, well-behaved congregation."² "Sinners were serious."³ "The word was felt by the parents."⁴ "It was a serious, powerful meeting."⁵ "The women crowded the house, whilst the men stood at the door, with patient attention, in the rain, which indeed many seemed scarcely to perceive."⁶ "The people were tender and attentive. It has been said, 'The Eastern people are not to be moved': it is true, they are too much accustomed to hear systematical preaching to be moved by a systematical sermon, even from a Methodist; but they have their feelings, and touch the right string, and they will be moved."⁷ "Some people were moved in an extraordinary manner, shouting and jumping at a strange rate."⁸ "I had a large and very serious, weeping congregation."⁹ "We had great decency in the congregation."¹⁰ "We had a very decent, attentive, well-behaved congregation."¹¹ "I admired the attention and solemnity of the people; many of the men standing in and out of the house the whole time."¹² "I was often interrupted by

¹Ibid., pp. 613-614.

²Ibid., p. 647.

³Ibid., p. 655.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., p. 664.

⁶Ibid., p. 691.

⁷Ibid., p. 725.

⁸Ibid., p. 757.

⁹Ibid., p. 770.

¹⁰Clark, II, p. 49.

¹¹Ibid., p. 239.

¹²Ibid., p. 250.

singing and shouting."¹ "Judges, counsellors, doctors, and ministers attended our preaching."² "The truth was felt."³ "I met a congregation . . . a number of United States' officers came up; I invited them in. . . . They behaved with all the propriety I expected of them."⁴

These descriptions seem to indicate that some audiences contained people who were disorderly, and some audiences contained people who were well-behaved and serious. If the growth in membership in the Methodist church, during the period of his preaching, can be an indication of the general behavior of most of the people in his audiences, it would seem they were well-behaved and serious.

Physical Characteristics

Size of audiences.--Little is known about the numbers of people in Asbury's audiences apart from his own description of them: "The congregation today was very large."⁵ "I preached to six or seven hundred souls."⁶ "I preached . . . though the congregation was small."⁷ "I had a large congregation."⁸ "I preached to a large congregation."⁹ "I preached to a large, wild company."¹⁰ "We had . . . a

¹Ibid., p. 316.

²Ibid., p. 326.

³Ibid., p. 427.

⁴Ibid., p. 621.

⁵Clark, I, p. 90.

⁶Ibid., p. 202.

⁷Ibid., p. 241.

⁸Ibid., p. 419.

⁹Ibid., p. 449.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 485.

full house."¹ "I had a crowd of careless sinners."² "I presume I had nearly seven hundred hearers."³ "A few of the great and many of the poor attended."⁴ "Had very few to hear, so I gave them up."⁵ "We had a large collection of people."⁶ "I found multitudes of people . . . I attempted to preach."⁷ "I have a thousand or twelve hundred hearers."⁸ "A large congregation attended."⁹ "Many attend."¹⁰ "I spoke to a large congregation."¹¹ And so run many entries concerning the size of the audiences that heard him. It is difficult to know what he meant by large or small, because he gave no descriptive definitions, but it is evident that many people heard him preach during the forty-five years of his itineracy in America.

Appearance of audiences.--While Asbury said little about the physical appearance of the people in his audiences, it seems fair to conclude that many came to the services dressed in their frontier clothing, perhaps not always too clean. Often Asbury would ride up to a farm house, become acquainted with the people, preach to them, and then pray for them. The people in this audience would be dressed in their daily work-clothes. The people in the church audiences probably appeared in better

¹Ibid., p. 506.

²Ibid., p. 532.

³Ibid., p. 543.

⁴Ibid., p. 547.

⁵Ibid., p. 548.

⁶Ibid., p. 672.

⁷Ibid., p. 677.

⁸Clark, II, p. 78.

⁹Ibid., p. 207.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 371.

¹¹Ibid., p. 378.

clothing, as mentioned in the description of one service, "I had a very well-dressed, serious, attentive congregation."¹ The members of his conference audience consisting of preachers were dressed in the ministerial garb for itinerating preachers, comparable to that which Asbury wore himself, made up of "a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, a frock coat, which was generally buttoned up to the neck, with straight collar," and of "breeches or small clothes, with leggings. Sometimes he wore shoe-buckles. Indeed, all the preachers . . . wore breeches and leggings till 1810."²

Types of Audience Occasions

The audiences that heard Francis Asbury can be classified into four general types: the circuits, the city churches, the conferences, and the camp meetings.

Circuits

Soon after Asbury arrived in America, he discovered that the preachers were reluctant to leave the cities and ride into the country to preach. Taking the lead himself, he spent much of his first winter in New York blazing a trail for an established circuit of the future. Asbury was thoroughly convinced that he had been called of God to itinerate in the New World, so found the greatest number of his audiences along the road he traveled. The circuits he established for himself and for the men who itinerated with

¹Clark, I, p. 668.

²Tipple, Asbury, p. 303.

him, usually covered a territory that took five or six weeks for a man to travel over once on horseback. On the average there would be from fifteen to twenty-five preaching points on a circuit.¹

Since most of the people lived on farms and since they were usually some distance from one another, the people were glad to see anyone coming their way. If a preacher had a message from God, as Asbury did, he would soon have a hearing. His audience might be a family with additions of neighbors and relatives that could be summoned in a few hours. When the message was preached, the people in his audience usually listened and many responded to the invitation to become Christians. Then these new Christians would invite their friends to come to the next meeting, several weeks later. It was no wonder that when that preaching appointment was met, that the audiences had increased. This system of multiplying the efforts of an itinerant, such as Asbury, caused the Methodist church to grow rapidly.²

Asbury preached any place he could get a hearing. Many times his audiences were in barns, houses, taverns, inns, under trees, and on the steps of courthouses. In fact he preached anywhere to any audience, regardless of its size, but usually the audiences on his circuit were small. He was primarily concerned about communicating his message

¹Sweet, Methodism, pp. 144-145.

²Tipple, Asbury, p. 204.

to those who came to hear him, and then riding on to the next appointment.¹

City Churches

Included in the preaching itinerary of Francis Asbury were the city churches with more sophisticated audiences that were usually well-behaved and serious.

In one church in Winchester, New Hampshire, the audience followed him so closely and were so impressed by his message that they literally arose from their seats.² In another church, Nathan Bangs heard the Bishop preach and gave the following reaction to the preacher and to the audience of which he was a part.

I remember, that in the city of Baltimore in 1808, while he was preaching on a Sabbath morning in the Eutaw St. Church, in the presence of many members of the General Conference; and amongst others, the Rev. Mr. Otterbine sat by his side in the pulpit. The Bishop was discoursing on the duty of parents to their children. Having uttered a severe reproof to those who neglect this duty and indulge their children in the frivolities of the world, he suddenly paused and then said: 'But you will say it is hard. Alas,' he added, letting his voice, which had been raised in a high, commanding tone which gave such a majesty to what he uttered, suddenly fall to a low and soft key, 'It is harder to be damned!' These words dropped from his lips in a manner which indicated the deep sensations of his heart, and fell on the audience, now wrought up to the highest pitch of interest by what had preceded them, like the sudden precipitation of a cloud on the mown grass, and they were in a moment melted into tears. Sobs and groans were heard all over the house. The venerable Otterbine, noble and dignified in his appearance, was turned into a little child, tears furrowed³ his cheeks, bespeaking the deep feelings of his heart.

¹Ibid., pp. 215-216.

²Mouzon, pp. 38-39.

³Ibid., pp. 39-40.

Conferences

Francis Asbury not only preached every day, and sometimes several times a day, to the audiences of people who came to hear him as he traveled on his episcopal tours from circuit to circuit, but he also preached to the conferences that were held on each circuit. The audiences at the conferences were all traveling ministers, for local ministers were not asked, and the laymen were not permitted to attend. The audiences that made up the conferences were usually friendly and responsive to Asbury, except during times of controversy, the most obvious being the contention over the powers of the episcopacy, led by O'Kelly. Even during those controversies the audiences were respectful. Asbury's friends loved him, listened to his council, and took their appointments willingly. His enemies, always in the minority, accepted him, perhaps unwillingly, or rebelled as did O'Kelly and his followers. But the great majority of the preachers followed him loyally.¹

Camp Meetings

Perhaps the largest of Asbury's audiences were the camp meetings, which were really extended revivals with a greater number of preachers participating, and with more people attending. A number of descriptions of the camp meetings have given the abuses, neglecting the good that came from them, and, on the other hand, descriptions have shown only the good, ignoring the abuses.

¹Clark, I, p. xiv.

Among all the descriptions of the camp meetings, which aroused so much curiosity at the time of their existence, and interest since, the one given by Captain Frederick Marryat is perhaps the most just and more informative than the others. Following is his description of a Methodist camp that he attended:

The camp was raised upon . . . a piece of table-land comprising many acres. About one acre and a half was surrounded on the four sides by cabins built up of rough boards; the whole area in the center was fitted up with planks, laid about a foot from the ground, as seats. At one end, but not close to the cabins, was a raised stand, which served as a pulpit for the preachers, one of them praying, while five or six others sat down behind him on benches. There was ingress to the area by the four corners; the whole of it was shaded by vast forest trees, which ran up to the height of fifty or sixty feet without throwing out a branch; and to the trunks of these trees were fixed lamps in every direction, for the continuance of service at night.

Outside of the area, which may be designated as the church, were hundreds of tents pitched in every quarter, their snowy whiteness contrasting beautifully with the deep verdure and gloom of the forest. These were the temporary habitations of those who had come many miles to attend the meeting, and who remained there from the commencement until it concluded--usually a period of from five to ten days, but often much longer. The tents were furnished with every article necessary for cooking; mattresses to sleep upon. . . . At a farther distance were all the wagons and other vehicles which had conveyed the people to the meeting, whilst hundreds of horses were tethered under the trees. . . . Such were the general outlines of a most interesting and beautiful scene.

The major portion of those not in the area were cooking the dinners. Fires were burning in every direction; pots boiling; chickens roasting, hams seething; indeed, there appeared to be no want of creature comforts.

But the trumpet sounded as in the days of yore, as a signal that the service was about to recommence, and I went into the area and took my seat. One of the preachers rose and gave out a hymn, which was sung by the congregation, numbering seven or eight hundred. After the singing of the hymn was concluded he

commenced an extensive sermon; it was good, sound doctrine and, although Methodism, it was Methodism of the mildest tone and divested of the bitterness of denunciation, as, indeed is generally the case with Methodism in America. . . .

In front of the pulpit was a space railed off, and strewn with straw, which I was told was the anxious seat, and on which sat those who were touched by their conscience or the discourse of the preacher. On . . . one side . . . about twenty females, mostly young, squatted down on the straw; on the other a few men; in the center was a long form, against which some men were kneeling, with their faces covered with their hands as if occupied in prayer. Gradually the number increased, girl after girl dropped down upon the straw on one side, and men on the other.

At last an elderly man gave out a hymn, which was sung with peculiar energy; then another knelt down in the center and commenced a prayer, shutting his eyes and raising his hands above his head; then another burst into prayer and another followed him; then their voices all became confused together; and then were heard the more silvery tones of women's supplication. As the din increased so did their enthusiasm; handkerchiefs were raised to bright eyes, and sobs were intermingled with prayers and ejaculations. It became a scene of Babel; more than twenty men and women were crying out at the highest pitch of their voices, and trying apparently to be heard above the others.

Every minute the excitement increased; some wrung their hands and called for mercy; some tore their hair; boys lay down crying bitterly, with their heads buried in the straw; there was sobbing almost to suffocation, and hysterics and deep agony. One young man clung to the form, crying: 'Satan tears at me, but I will hold fast. Help! Help! Help! He drags me down.'

It was a scene of horrible agony and despair; and, when it was at its height, one of the preachers came in and raising his voice above the tumult entreated the Lord to receive into his fold those who now repented and would fain return. Another of the ministers knelt down by some young men, whose faces were covered up and who appeared to be almost in a state of frenzy, and putting his hands upon them, poured forth an energetic prayer, well calculated to work upon their overexcited feelings. Groans, ejaculations, broken sobs, frantic motions and convulsions succeeded; some fell on their backs with their eyes closed, waving their heads in a slow motion, and crying out--'Glory, Glory, Glory!'¹

¹Luccock, pp. 253-256.

The institution of the camp meeting swept over the frontier like fire on a dry prairie, fulfilling not only a religious but also a social need of the frontiersmen. It gave them an opportunity to see old friends and to make new ones. People became excited over coming into a large crowd and becoming a part of it for the first time in their lives.¹ Consequently, people of all ages and of all kinds went to camp meeting. Rough people, scoffers, bullies, and the intoxicated, mingled with the great masses of the stable frontiersmen, comprised the camp-meeting audience.²

Francis Asbury, realizing the great evangelistic opportunity on the frontier through the medium of the camp meeting, encouraged their organization from the onset of it until the camp meeting became a Methodist institution of that day. In his Journal, on October 21, 1800, he briefly described one of the earliest camp meetings at Drake's meetinghouse.

Fires blazing here and there dispelled the darkness and the shouts of the redeemed captives, and the cries of precious souls struggling into life, broke the silence of the midnight. The weather was delightful; as if heaven smiled, whilst mercy flowed in abundant streams of salvation to perishing sinners. We suppose there³ were at least thirty souls converted at this meeting.

¹Clark, Frontier, p. 231.

²Luccock, p. 229.

³Clark, I, p. 257.

Influences of Audiences on Asbury's
Preaching and Message

The study of the audiences of Francis Asbury reveals, in the first place, the influences of the social and economic life upon him as a preacher and upon his message. Demographically, the audiences influenced him through the rapid growth in population, the mobility of the population, and the expanding frontier. He was forced to itinerate over more territory in order to reach the maximum number of people with his message; presumably he was forced to adapt both his preaching and message to many new audiences; and, manifestly he was forced to adapt himself to a mobile, frontier society in order to communicate his message.

Politically the audiences influenced his preaching and message, particularly during the period of the American Revolution. Since practically all of the Methodist ministers were Englishmen with Tory beliefs, and since John Wesley issued his "Calm Address" in which he declared the colonies and the Methodist societies should be loyal to Great Britain, a conflict arose between most of the American Methodist audiences and the Methodist preachers. It seems then, in view of the fact that many of his audiences were patriots, and that he had patriot beliefs himself, that Asbury would have no difficulty in preaching. But, he also had Tory beliefs. However, he seemed to have "had sense enough to keep his sentiments to himself,"¹ and not to dabble in the

¹Luccock, p. 154.

political situation. In spite of this he was a Tory suspect and had to remain in hiding in the state of Delaware. In this case the audiences of the American colonies influenced his preaching by curtailing and forcing it, temporally, underground. However, in a short time, Asbury discovered he had more freedom to preach in Delaware than he had anticipated. In less than two years this political aspect of his audiences ceased to influence his preaching or message.

How much the industrial life of the people in his audiences influenced his preaching and message is questionable because few of the industrialists were in his audiences, except in the New England states, where the Methodist work was weaker than in other parts of the nation.

It seems the agrarian population of his audiences had the greatest influence upon Asbury's preaching and message. Thousands of his audiences consisted of frontiersmen who were hospitable, to any stranger, generous with his meager possessions, and curious about anything that was different or new. Seemingly the life of these people influenced the preaching and message more than any of the other aspects of the life of his audiences.

The study of the audiences of Francis Asbury reveals, in the second place, the influences of the beliefs, interests, and types of behavior of the people upon him as a preacher and upon his message. It is improbable that eighteenth-century, philosophical thought influenced him in any way through his audiences. The two beliefs, Calvinism and

Antinomianism, when present in the minds of people in his audiences, influenced and disturbed him most. The reasons for this were that the Calvinistic doctrine of election struck at the heart of the Methodist doctrine of sanctification, and the Calvinistic belief in the congregational form of church government destroyed the Wesleyan concept of the episcopal form. This belief ruined Asbury's concept that the American Methodist church was a revival of the early church as described in the book of Acts, that the apostolicity of the early church had been lost, and that he himself was called to be an apostolic successor.¹ The doctrine of Antinomianism, which claimed the moral law is of no use, because faith alone is necessary for salvation, Asbury associated with Calvinism, attacking them both with emphasis on Calvinism.

The study of the audiences of Francis Asbury reveals the influences of the interests of the people upon him as a preacher and upon his message. When the treaty of Paris, granting the American colonies their independence, was signed in 1783, he commented on the possible influence in the following manner:

I heard the news that peace was confirmed between England and America. I had various exercises of mind on the occasion: it may cause great changes to take place amongst us; some for the better, and some for the worse. It may make against the work of God: our preachers will be far more likely to settle in the world; and our people, by getting into trade, and acquiring wealth, may drink into its spirit. Believing the report to be true, I took some notice

¹Rudolph, p. 217.

of it while I treated Acts 10, 36, at brother Clayton's, near Halifax, where they were firing their cannons, and rejoicing in their way, on the occasion.¹

Again, he said, "Among too many of the citizens the spirit of politics has, in whole or part, eaten out the spirit of religion."²

A few years later, 1797, he reacted to the interests of the people as they moved westward on the American frontier:

I am of the opinion it is as hard, or harder, for the people of the west to gain religion as any other. When I consider where they came from, where they are, and how they are, and how they are called to go farther, their being unsettled, with so many objects to take their attention, with the health and good air they enjoy; and when I reflect that not one in a hundred came here to get religion, but rather to get plenty of good land, I think it will be well if some or many do not eventually lose their souls.³

Manifestly he feared the interests of the people in building a new nation, in developing industry, and in acquiring land would deter their response to his message and to the building of the Kingdom of God through Methodism.

Furthermore, this study reveals that the types of behavior of the people, who heard Asbury preach, influenced him more than any of the other audience factors. When people in his audiences manifested apathetic or disorderly behavior, he was troubled and sometimes became despondent because he felt he had failed in his preaching. Here is one reaction:

¹Clark, I, p. 440.

²Ibid., p. 413.

³Clark, II, p. 125.

I was crowded with stupid sinners of various descriptions, to whom I preached on Joshua 24, 19: 'Ye cannot serve God,' etc. It was a matter of surprise, that I not only refused to stay a night, but that I did not eat bread nor drink water in that place.¹

Concerning the influence of sinners in his audiences, he commented further: "We had a meeting in the evening . . . for prayer and exhortation; at which about twenty people attended. My spirit was grieved within me at the conduct of poor sinners; but in Jesus my Lord I had peace."² "My soul has been daily grieved by the practices of poor blinded sinners."³ "My spirit was grieved to see so little of the fear of God, and such a contempt of sacred things as appeared in many of the people in this place. An enmity against God and his ways reigns in the hearts of all the unawakened, from the highest to the lowest."⁴

However, the great majority of his audiences contained people who were serious and responded to his message. For instance he said of some of these audiences: "We had a solemn time in the day, and a full house and good time in the evening. My heart was much taken up with God. Our congregations are large."⁵ "The people were attentive to the word."⁶ These, with many similar reactions to well-behaved and serious audiences, reveal that Asbury needed

¹Ibid., p. 87.

²Clark, I, p. 193.

³Ibid., p. 197.

⁴Ibid., p. 195.

⁵Ibid., p. 506.

⁶Ibid., p. 521.

audiences containing believers and serious-minded people in order to bring forth his strongest points as a preacher. Again, the study of Asbury's audiences reveals that the favorable reactions from his well-behaved audiences seemed to challenge his indomitable will to preach, regardless of the unpleasant circumstances accompanying some audiences. He said, "Live or die, I must ride,"¹ and there was only one reason for riding--to preach.

The study of the audiences of Francis Asbury reveals, in the third place, the influence of the types of audience occasions on the circuits, in the city churches, at the conferences, and at the camp meetings, upon him as a preacher and upon his message. In general, the occasions on the circuits were somewhat the same. When he rode out of the woods, into a clearing, and up to a frontiersman's house, Asbury was usually warmly received. The members of the family were called and came immediately, because it was an important occasion for any one to come to their place. It may have been weeks since the last visitor called. If this was Asbury's first call, he would soon become acquainted and go directly to his mission: read the Bible, preach, and pray. Since the people were eager to hear another voice, and particularly one that communicated a message, this became an audience occasion that manifestly influenced him to do his best preaching and to give his best message, regardless of the number of people present. Before leaving,

¹Clark, II, p. 216.

he frequently made an appointment for his next visit, asked his new friends to tell others about his coming again, and, then, rode on to the next frontiersman's house, perhaps a number of miles away. On succeeding visits crowds grew, societies were organized, and meetinghouses were built for worship. These audience occasions, multiplied hundreds of times, created a general frontier, audience occasion that was peculiar unto itself, and one that seemed to have influenced Asbury's preaching and message.

The audience occasions in the city churches were somewhat different from the frontier audience occasions, in that the congregations were more stable and less mobile, the people were different from one another occupationally, and the people had more of a community spirit. It is probable that audience occasions in the city churches influenced him to do some of his best preaching. Two inferences point in this direction: first, he seemed to need believers in his audience to stimulate him to preach, and second, he seemed to record in his Journal a number of the more developed outlines that he preached in churches. However, in fairness to both Asbury and his audiences, the same can be said of the conference and camp-meeting audience occasions. Following is the outline of the sermon he preached on August 16, 1801, in the Baltimore church, where he had preached many times before, on Matthew 5,8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

- I. The character of those who by justification are, in a 'special' manner, called to be pure in heart; called by promise, by privilege, by duty.
- II. The purity of the Gospel in authority, in example, precept and spirit; in its operative influence on the understanding, conscience, intentions, will, hopes, fears, joys, sorrows and affections, producing the sanctification of the soul in a deliverance from all sin.
- III. The visions: in what manner the 'pure in heart' should see God; they shall see him in his perfections, in his providence, in his words of nature, and the operations of his grace, and they shall see him in his glory!¹

This seems to be an appropriate sermon outline for the occasion of a Sunday service in the Baltimore church, which audience occasion presumably influenced him to select this subject.

The conference audience occasion was different because of its nature: constituted of preachers meeting for the purpose of conducting business, of giving reports, of ordaining preachers, of receiving appointments, and of hearing sermons delivered by the Bishop. Manifestly, such an audience occasion must have stimulated Asbury to do his best preaching and to give his best message.

On January 1, 1800, the Charleston, South Carolina, conference convened, conducted the regular business, and adjourned the business session on Saturday, January 4. On this same day the news of George Washington's death on December 14, 1799, reached Charleston. The conference and the sad news of the death of the first president were all a part of the audience occasion that seemed to influence Asbury in his preaching and in his message. He described the

¹Clark, II, p. 302.

conference, Sunday service, held the next day, in the following manner:

After the burden of care was thrown off, I again resumed the pulpit; and in order the better to suit my subject to meet the conference, the new year, ordination of elders and deacons, and the General's death, [George Washington] I made choice of Isaiah 61,2: 'To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.'

I. The acceptable year of the Lord.

II. The day of vengeance of our God.

III. To comfort all that mourn.

The congregation was large, decent, and solemn; the ordination was attended with unction from above, and the sacrament with tenderness of heart. . . . After encountering many difficulties, I was able to settle the plan of stations and to take in two new circuits.¹

The camp meeting, audience occasion was similar to a revival held in a meetinghouse or a church in many respects. Both had services held over an extended period of time ranging from a week to two weeks, and sometimes longer, with one preacher in a church revival and several in a camp meeting. Usually only the local people attended the revival, whereas, hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of people attended the camp meeting, coming prepared to camp for a number of days. Frequently the people were excited over renewing friendships and making new friends, and some were excited over the anticipation of attending the services. This audience occasion manifestely influenced the preachers, including Francis Asbury.

On September 4, 1812, he preached a sermon in a camp meeting held in western Pennsylvania to a company of soldiers

¹Ibid., p. 222.

enroute to Buffalo, New York.¹ Prior to Asbury's arrival at the camp meeting, the commanding officer of this company, the Union Volunteers, had requested a minister to address his soldiers. An answer was communicated complying with his request.

Accordingly, the officers and men marched out in rank and file to the encampment, where they were met and conducted to seats prepared for them. The bishop gave out a hymn 'Soldiers of Christ arise, and put your armor on.' He then addressed the throne of grace, and prayed most fervently for the President of the United States, the Cabinet, the Senate, the House of Representatives. His text was, 'And the soldiers likewise demanded of him saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages.' Luke 3, 14. In his discourse he dwelt impressively on the evils of war, its destructive influence upon commerce, the arts of life, and the wealth of nations, but more particularly its pernicious effects in relation to religion and morals. He showed that war should, if possible, be avoided, and never should be declared only as a dernier resort. If Christian nations should be embroiled in war, they should only act on the defensive. He also enlarged upon the importance of good discipline in an army, and showed that the government or military discipline could at the same time be strict and mild, and that the officers should be kind and generous to their men. In a word, he said that the commanding officer should be as a father to his soldiers, and they in turn be obedient to all his military commands. He concluded by giving a fatherly advice to the soldiers. After his discourse he descended, and took a position where the company passed in review before him. As the commanding officer approached he placed his hands upon his head and prayed for him most fervently, blessing him in the name of the Lord; then each of the officers; and as the soldiers passed he took each one by the hand and gave them a parting blessing. Tears flowed from every eye of the thousands gathered there.²

¹Ibid., p. 707.

²Strickland, pp. 446-447.

From the description of this audience occasion it probably influenced the preaching and the message of Asbury. He seemed to have delivered his discourse effectively or there would not have been the evident response of his audience. He seemed to adapt his message to the audience occasion by the selection of his Scripture and in the development of his sermon, all of which manifestly indicates that this particular audience occasion influenced both his preaching and his message for this particular audience and occasion. It can be presumed that he was influenced by other camp-meeting, audience occasions in a similar manner.

The study of the audiences of Francis Asbury has shown, in the first place, that the social and economic conditions of the nation influenced his preaching and his message, demographically, because he was forced to itinerate over larger areas of territory in order to take the message to the "last man"; politically, for a short time, because he was a Tory suspect; industrially, very little or not at all; agriculturally, probably more than any other social or economic influence, because the great majority of the American people were agrarian.

The study of the audiences of Francis Asbury has shown, in the second place, that the beliefs, interests, and behavior of his audiences influenced his preaching and his message. The most noticeable influence of beliefs was the presence of people in his audience who believed in Calvinism

or Antinomianism, because he would preach sermons on back-sliding, on sanctification, and on apostolicity. It seemed Lochean philosophy and the "common sense" beliefs did not influence his preaching and his message.

The interests of the people, to whom he preached, seemed to influence him more. After the separation of America from Great Britain, the Americans were interested in creating and developing a nation for Americans. Another interest was the belief in work and its rewards resulting from diligent labor. A final significant interest is found in the people's striving for ownership of land, which made the great majority of Americans agrarian.

Again, the study of Asbury's audiences has shown the kinds of people that came to hear him. Some of the people, working in the public service, heard him preach. He was personally acquainted with practically every state governor and many national figures including George Washington. Although his audiences had a heterogeneous quality, this study has shown that Francis Asbury's audiences can be roughly classified into those that were primarily apathetic, those that were primarily disorderly, and those that were primarily serious. No one description can suffice for all of his audiences because they were different from one another. The study has shown that many people in his audiences were interested in his message and responded to the persuasive, evangelistic appeals of his preaching.

Furthermore, this study has shown that Asbury's audiences were of diverse sizes and met under all kinds of circumstances and occasions. They varied from a family of father, mother, and children in a frontier home to several frontier families meeting in a larger home, hall, barn, or meetinghouse. The greatest number of people were reached through these frontier audiences and the greatest number of people responded to the gospel from this group, as manifested by the hundreds of Methodist meetinghouses and churches built across the nation during Asbury's life time. Even though his audiences in the city churches, the conferences, and the camp meetings were important, the most significant were the frontier audiences.

The study of the audiences of Francis Asbury has shown, in the third place, that the audience occasions on the circuits, in the city churches, at the conferences, and at camp meetings did influence his preaching and his message. He seemed to be adept in accommodating both his preaching and his message to the audience occasions as they influenced him.

The study of the audiences of Francis Asbury has revealed, in the fourth place, that there were at least three significant influences upon his preaching and message. First it seemed that he needed the well-behaved audiences with people who responded to his message to stimulate him to do his best preaching; second, it seemed that he needed the apathetic, disorderly audiences with people who challenged

him to be a better preacher and to communicate his message more effectively; and third, the audience occasions seemed to influence him to preach sermons that were well adapted to the occasions where he preached.

CHAPTER VII

THE MESSAGE

Since "the very nature of a specific investigation . . . requires that the critic conceive his understanding within a certain frame of reference,"¹ the following framework will be used in the critical analysis of the message of Francis Asbury. The first division will investigate the authenticity of the texts. The second division will deal with the materials of speaking, which cover the choice of topics; the theological content; the kinds of sermons; the materials of development, including evidence, reasoning, and explanation; materials of personal proof, including good character, competence, good will; and materials of experience, including motive appeals, attention, and suggestion. The third division, the structure of the message, will deal with the introduction, including attention and orienting materials; the body of the speech, including plan of the speech, main points, sub-points and supporting materials; the conclusion, including the types: purpose sentence, summary, appeal, and illustration-quotation; and transitions, including the kinds: sign-post, flashback-preview, and internal summary. The fourth division, language and style, will deal with the requirements and characteristics of style.

¹Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism (New York: The Ronald Press, 1948), pp. 295-296.

This outline will be the framework used in the critical analysis of the message of Francis Asbury as discovered in his sermon outlines recorded in his Journal.

Authenticity of Texts

Francis Asbury, aspiring to authorship, fell far short of his lofty ambitions because itineracy as a Methodist preacher demanded practically all of his time, leaving little opportunity for writing. How he succeeded in collecting sermons for his preachers, starting a Short History of the Methodists, (which was never completed), and the publishing of a small book entitled The Causes, Evils, and Cures of Heart Divisions is a marvel to most people today. This book, primarily a collection of extracts taken from the works of Baxter and Burroughs, was reprinted in 1849, and is now very rare. Asbury tried to write poetry and had a manuscript ready for publication, but when his friend, Rev. Philip W. Otterbein, read the poems, he persuaded Asbury not to publish them, declaring, "Brother Asbury, I fear you was [sic] not born a poet." Asbury burned the manuscript. The extant writings of the Bishop are the Journal, holograph letters and documents, insertions and additions to the Methodist Discipline, and eulogies, found in the minutes of the conferences, of the deceased itinerants.¹

¹Asbury, p. 283.

Although Asbury attempted to edit his Journal himself, and had others edit and eventually publish parts of it, he and other editors made mistakes and errors. In 1958 when Elmer T. Clark, Editor-in-Chief, J. Manning Potts, and Jacob S. Payton published Asbury's Journal, they did not have original manuscripts but had to rely upon materials that had been edited by several persons before them. A tremendous amount of research by these editors resulted in the most accurate and readable publication of his Journal and Letters to date.¹ This text will be used in the analysis of Francis Asbury's message. Although he preached extemporaneously, and did not write manuscripts of his sermons, he did record in his Journal almost two hundred outlines and about seven hundred Scriptural texts of his sermons. These extant outlines contain the message of Francis Asbury. Therefore, the analysis of the message is restricted because there are no extant written sermons. Consequently, the analysis is limited to the sermon outlines recorded in his Journal.

Materials of Speaking

The method of analyzing Francis Asbury's sermon outlines includes the following procedures. All of the sermon outlines, approximately two hundred, were read carefully a number of times in order to discover the materials of speaking used by Asbury. For instance, after reading the outlines, it was discovered that Asbury preached expository

¹Clark I, p. xix.

and textual kinds of sermons more often than the topical and inferential kinds. Then examples of each one of these kinds were selected as representative outlines of the approximately two hundred and were critically analyzed, using definitions of the topical, textual, expository, and inferential sermons, as guide lines in the analysis. Furthermore, pertinent information from other sources was used where applicable and when needed.

Each one of the materials of speaking was treated in a similar manner. From the analysis of the outlines and reading other information, Asbury's choice of topics and the theological content of his message were found. After the outlines were examined the materials of development, such as the evidence he used in speaking, the kinds of reasoning he employed, and the manner in which he used explanation were noted. Representative outlines were selected and analyzed, using acceptable definitions as guide lines for each one of the materials of development. The same procedure was used in the analysis of the materials of personal proof and the materials of experience. Finally, the same method was used in the analysis of the structure and the language and style of the outlines.

In the analysis of the message in all of the foregoing, it was feasible, at times, to construct a chronological substance outline, or a logical outline, or both, in order to make a clearer analysis of the item under consideration. A chronological substance outline is the reducing to an

outline form what the speaker has said, or in the case of Asbury, what he has written in his Journal in paragraph form. The logical outline is another organization of the same materials, as used in the chronological substance outline, but in a more logical form. It is an attempt to arrange the materials used in the reasoning process of the speaker as revealed in his written speech, or in the case of Francis Asbury, the outline of his sermon. The chronological substance and logical outlines were aids in determining what Asbury did in the selected, representative outlines of his sermons.

Choice of Topics

The great love of God for man and the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ can be found at the heart of Asbury's message. Since Asbury was a Biblical preacher, his message was evangelistic, his purposes were evangelistic, his manner of preaching was evangelistic, his teachings were evangelistic, and his topics were evangelistic. The topics of his preaching contained the Wesleyan doctrines of the Methodist church. One classification of his topics is: conviction, repentance and justification, perserverance in works, and sanctification.¹

Each one of these topics can be subdivided into other topics that are relevant. For instance, under conviction are the topics of the judgment, death, heaven, hell, and

¹Rudolph, p. 85.

sin. It seems as if he chose texts that would cause the hearer to sense the negative part of the gospel-- the terribleness of sin, the horrors of death without God, and the terrors of hell. On Sunday afternoon, September 26, 1779, he preached on Psalm 7:11-13:

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordained his arrows against the persecutors.

After preaching this sermon Asbury said, "I was alarming, as the people appeared to me to be careless."¹

Another text he used, cited eighteen times in his Journal, was I Peter 4:17-18: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Again, he stated:

We stopped at Chester, where I preached from these piercing words of our Lord, 'Thou knowest not the day of thy visitation.' There are but little hopes of this place at present. Though, if they do not fill up the measure of their iniquity, the time to favour them may come. The Lord hasten it, before the present generation drops into eternity!²

The second general classification of his topics, repentance and justification, perhaps received the greatest

¹Clark I, p. 314.

²Ibid., pp. 149-150.

emphasis in his preaching. Asbury's favorite text was I Timothy 1:15 and the central theme, or topic of his preaching was the gracious gift of salvation to man.

The third classification of topics, perseverance in good works, was emphasized in his preaching in order to help the new converts become established in their faith. After sinners were convinced of their need of salvation, and received it from God through Jesus Christ as their Savior, they were encouraged to tell the good news of their personal salvation to others. Believing this was one of the best antidotes for backsliding, as well as a means of communicating the gospel, Asbury preached this aspect of his message, particularly during the earlier years of his preaching.¹

Later, he discovered the best way of preserving the work of salvation was to preach the deeper Christian experience of sanctification, the fourth general topic found in his preaching. If the new converts would start seeking holiness, or sanctification, soon after their regeneration, they would not likely fall back into sin again. After receiving the Holy Spirit in the experience of sanctification, if they told others about it, exhorting them to seek and accept the divine gift, they not only would establish themselves in grace, but they would be rendering a service both to man and to God.²

¹Luccock, p. 125.

²Ibid.

Other topics found in Asbury's preaching are the special occasion subjects such as Good Friday, Easter, Christmas, prophecy, and the eulogy. Practically all of his topics were based upon the Biblical doctrines, according to the Wesleyan interpretation: salvation in Christ, salvation is a free gift, repentance, conversion, regeneration, sanctification, judgment, death, heaven, hell, immortality, the fall of man, sin as actual transgression, and original sin.

Theological Content

The Biblical doctrines were the major theme in the message of the American itinerant preachers, including Francis Asbury, a theme which can be traced back to John Wesley and his doctrinal position. The de-emphasis of these fundamental tenets of Biblical theology in the preaching found in the Established Church of England led John Wesley and others to preach a Biblical message with the hope of purifying the church. Even though this message was new to the people of eighteenth-century England, it was as old as Christianity itself. The rediscovery of these Biblical truths and the preaching of them won many converts who went on their way rejoicing. In his message, Wesley clearly differentiated his position from that of the preachers in the church, and just as clearly, he claimed to adhere to the doctrines of the church.¹

¹Carrol, p. 61.

Concerning this Wesley claimed:

First, they speak of justification, either as the same thing with sanctification, or as something consequent upon it. I believe justification to be wholly distinct from sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it. Secondly, they speak of our holiness, or good works, as the cause of our justification. . . . I believe, neither our own holiness nor good works are any part of the cause of our justification, but that the death and righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole cause of it. . . . Thirdly, they speak of good works as a condition of justification, necessarily previous to it. I believe that no good work can be previous to justification, nor consequently a condition to it. But that we are justified . . . by faith alone, faith without works, faith (though producing all, yet) including no good work. Fourthly, they speak of sanctification, or holiness, as if it were an outward thing, as if it consisted chiefly, if not wholly, in these two points: 1. The doing no harm; 2. The doing good . . . that is, the using the means of grace and helping our neighbor. I believe it an inward thing, namely, the life of God in the soul of man; a participation of the divine nature; the mind that was in Christ; or, the renewal of our heart after the image of Him that created us. Lastly, they speak of the new birth as an outward thing, as if it were no more than baptism . . . a change from a vicious to a virtuous life. I believe it to be an inward thing; a change from inward wickedness to inward goodness; an entire change of our inmost nature from the image of the devil . . . to the image of God . . . from earthly and sensual to heavenly and holy affections.¹

These doctrinal positions of Wesley and other leaders of the Great Awakening in England greatly influenced the thinking of Francis Asbury. During the first ten years of his itineracy, which were in England, he read everything he could find that Wesley, Fletcher, and other leaders of the evangelical movement in England and continental Europe wrote. Consequently, he became thoroughly steeped in Wesleyan Arminianism, mastered its system of theology, and

¹Ibid., pp. 61-62.

adopted it as the foundation of his belief and practice. To strengthen his theological concepts, he attempted to explore these doctrines from the point of view of the apostles and the Pauline epistles in the New Testament. Furthermore, he read and studied much of the sermonic literature and heard England's greatest evangelical preachers who were contemporaneous with John Wesley. As a result, Asbury developed a faith that was thoroughly grounded in the New Testament doctrines, a faith that was next to impossible to shake.¹

The effectiveness of the Methodist Evangelism was the result in part of the preaching of the Methodist doctrines. This was one of the distinctively vital forces of Methodism operating for the achievement of her success. The earlier preaching of the itinerants was markedly doctrinal.²

Further, this fact that the experience into which the early Methodists entered under the preaching of these fundamental Christian truths was a joyous experience of grace in Jesus Christ was a large factor in the success of Methodist Evangelism.³

Consequently, the effectiveness of the preaching of the Methodists was due largely to the doctrinal contents of the message. Asbury exemplified this in his message, inasmuch as it was mainly a restatement of the fundamental doctrines or truths of the gospel. He and the other itinerants were zealously in earnest in the business of saving souls and in answering the one question asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Thus he preached the infinite holiness

¹Du Bose, p. 39.

²Tipple, Asbury, p. 201.

³Ibid., pp. 202-203.

of God, the fall of man into sin, the real love of God in providing the gracious gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, repentance, regeneration, sanctification, immortality of the soul, heaven, hell, and the justice of God in judgment. These cardinal doctrines prevailed in the message of Francis Asbury.¹

Since Asbury was not a theologian, he did not present an argument or an apology for any one of the doctrines. Accordingly, he accepted each one as he found it in the Bible as the revealed Word of God. For instance, he recognized the holiness of God, the creation of man in his sinless state, and the fall of man into sin. His message often repeated the great love of God manifested in Jesus Christ as a personal Savior from all sin. He experienced personal salvation himself and preached this theme until it became paramount in his message, his favorite text being I Timothy 1:15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Another text he frequently used was Acts 13:26: "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent." From these two texts it is evident that the central doctrine of his message was the gracious gift of salvation to man.²

¹Ibid., pp. 201-202.

²Ibid., pp. 230-231.

Again, found in Asbury's message were repentance, conversion, or regeneration. He wrote in his Journal: "I gave them a discourse on the nature of conviction for sin from John 16:8,"¹ which reads, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." This, with many other texts used by Asbury, struck at the heart of the controversy between the Methodist doctrine, that anyone could be saved, and the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, that only a selected group, the elect, would be saved. The Methodist doctrine, the Wesleyan position, declared that God was constantly seeking men in order to give the free gift of redemption to anyone who would respond. When man responds, repents of his sins, accepts the free gift of salvation, then conversion, regeneration, or justification takes place in the heart of the believer.² This doctrinal position, found in Asbury's message, supported the doctrine of the freedom of the will, which made the message of the Methodists far more acceptable to the masses of people in his audience, particularly the frontiersmen. Calvinism, as preached by the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, the Reformed Church, and the Baptists did not appeal to, nor attract the people, because of its selectivity through the doctrine of election.³ The "whosoever will" may come, that Asbury and the Methodists preached, appealed to the people.

¹Clark I, p. 484.

²Rudolph, p. 156.

³Carroll, p. 67.

Also, another doctrine found in Asbury's message was baptism. He held that any person who had been awakened and converted should have the privilege of receiving baptism, and also, that infants should be included in this rite. He amplified his doctrinal concept of baptism in a sermon he preached on Matthew 18:19-20 in which his second division dealt with the persons who should receive baptism and the form it should take.¹ In reviewing over seven hundred Scriptural texts of sermons that he used in preaching, it is evident that he did not stress this doctrine in his message.

Furthermore, found in the message of Asbury was the doctrine of sanctification, holiness, or Christian perfection, which received a great deal of his attention. Since he had imbibed the Wesleyan doctrines of English Methodism, it was natural that he should include John Wesley's explanation and interpretation of this doctrine.

1. By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions. I do not include an impossibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole. . . . And I do not contend for the term sinless, though I do not object against it. 2. As to manner. I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently in an instant. But I believe in a gradual work both preceding and following that instant. 3. As to time. I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body. But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before.²

¹Clark, II, p. 369.

²Rudolph, p. 157..

During the earlier part of Asbury's preaching, it is likely that he emphasized backsliding until it became a frequent theme. For instance, on July 4, 1794, his message on II Peter 2:20-21 contained the following outline:

- I. I showed that all real Christians had escaped the pollutions of the world.
- II. That it is possible for them to be entangled therein again and overcome.
- III. That when this is the case they turn from the holy commandments delivered unto them.
- IV. That the last state of such is worse than the first: for God is provoked, Christ slighted, the Spirit grieved, religion dishonoured, their understanding is darkened, the will is perverted, the conscience becomes insensible, and all the affections unmoved under the means of grace; they keep the wisdom of the serpent, but lose the harmlessness of the dove.¹

However, as he progressed in his preaching, it seems as if his emphasis shifted to the preaching of the doctrine of sanctification, which, apparently, was more efficacious in keeping the new converts from drifting back into their old ways than was the preaching of the doctrine of backsliding. The message of the Methodist evangelists corroborates this point of view. When Devereaux Jarratt wrote his letter to John Wesley describing the Virginia revival of religion, he said in part the following:

One of the doctrines, as you know, which we particularly insist upon, is that of a present salvation; a salvation not only from the guilt and power, but also from the root of sin; a cleansing from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that we may perfect holiness in the fear of God; a going on to perfection, which we sometimes define by loving God with all our hearts.²

¹Clark, II, pp. 18-19.

²Clark, I, p. 211.

It was normal that the message containing the doctrine of sanctification should be adapted to the environment of the New World and to the new man that had emerged from this environment. In America the emphasis of the message pressed the believer to seek sanctification as soon as possible after his conversion. Asbury believed that the people, who were enjoying the religious experience received after conversion, should have the message of sanctification given to them during the time of their joyous ecstasy. Christ had redeemed them; hence, he believed they should press on to holiness. John Wesley did not stress the need to seek the experience immediately after conversion in England as Asbury did in America.¹

Asbury witnessed to the emphasis he placed on the preaching of the doctrine of sanctification when he said: "I find the way of holiness very narrow to walk in or to preach; and although I do not consider sanctification--Christian perfection, commonplace subjects, yet I make them the burden, and labour to make them the savour of every sermon."² "I am divinely impressed with a charge to preach sanctification in every sermon."³ "We were careful to pray with the families where we stopped, exhorting all professors to holiness."⁴ "I feel it my duty to speak chiefly upon perfection--and above all, to strive to attain unto that which I preach."⁵

¹Rudolph, pp. 161-162.

²Clark, II, p. 383.

³Ibid., p. 751.

⁴Ibid., p. 753.

⁵Ibid., p. 376.

Even though Francis Asbury's message contained primarily the gracious gift of salvation and sanctification, he did not neglect the doctrines of the justice of God, a judgment, and a hell for all unbelievers. These doctrines Asbury preached to combat the doctrines of Universalism, that contained a hope after death, which he believed was a terrible heresy, because the Scriptures give no hope for the impenitent after death. The most lurid characters and the most horrible tortures of hell were pictured in his preaching in order to persuade the unbeliever to accept salvation. He supported this doctrine with many Scriptures, as he did all of his preaching. Did not Christ clearly teach the eternal state of the damned, and did not St. Paul state "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men?" Asbury seemed to believe it was necessary to preach the negative side of the gospel in order to retain the true meaning of salvation.¹

A summary of the theological position of Francis Asbury can be made by stating he embraced all the truths taught in the Scriptures. The Bible was his guide, the Book of books, and the confession of his faith.²

Kinds of Sermons

Francis Asbury recorded in his Journal that several people were awakened and converted as a result of his first

¹Carroll, p. 65.

²Tipple, Asbury, p. 227.

preaching. It can be assumed that his early sermons were crude, following the types of sermons preached by both the lay preachers and the itinerants: Bible readings, homilies, and exhortations. It is unlikely that those sermons would measure up to the standards of good speech.¹

Since Asbury left no manuscripts of his sermons, and since there was little reporting of speeches at that time, one has to rely on the descriptive characteristics of the preaching of his day and on the information obtained by reading the opinions written about his preaching. The Rev. Nicholas Snethen, who traveled many years with Francis Asbury, should be qualified to evaluate his preaching. Said he of Asbury:

He was a good preacher; he was a better preacher than he was generally supposed to be. The extent of his pulpit resources was not generally known. He was master of the science of his profession. He knew the original languages of the Bible. His mind was stored with the opinions of the most eminent biblical writers and commentators. He was what is called an orthodox preacher; his faith in the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ never wavered.²

Francis Asbury's major concern was that his message be clearly understood by his hearers in order that he might achieve the sole purpose of his preaching--to save souls; and "if a sermon made no stir among the unconverted, brought conviction to no sinner, led to no decision, it had failed its chief purpose."³ Presumably, he infrequently

¹Du Bose, p. 38.

²Asbury, p. 282.

³Carroll, p. 119.

preached the topical sermon, because it is not the type used to achieve a purpose such as his, but he frequently preached the textual, expository, and inferential sermons, because they are the types more likely to fulfill his purpose.

This classification of sermons can be defined in the following manner:

The topical sermon is one in which a subject is deduced from a text, but discussed independently of the text. The textual sermon is one in which the text is the theme, and the parts of the text are the divisions of the discourse, and are used as a line of suggestion. An expository sermon is one in which the text is the theme, and the discussion is an explanation of the text. The inferential sermon is one in which the text is the theme, and the discussion is a series of inferences directly from the text: the text is a premise, a series of inferences is the conclusion.¹

Asbury did not ordinarily use the topical sermon, as defined by Phelps. However, the following sermon outline, "Peter's denial of his Master," probably can be classified as topical:

1. He was self confident
2. Followed afar off
3. Mixed with the wicked
4. Denied his discipleship, and then his Lord.²

This sermon is not deduced from any known text, but is a series of four steps forming the divisions, of the subject, "Peter's denial of his Master," a series of which seem to categorize it as more of a topical sermon than any

¹Austin Phelps, Theory of Preaching (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881), p. 31.

²Clark, I, p. 562.

other one in the classification of sermons. From the manner in which Asbury developed most of his sermons, it can be assumed that he used exposition, primarily. But this would not make it an expository sermon, according to Phelps' definition.

Asbury frequently preached the other three types of sermons, textual, expository, and inferential, and particularly the expository. Taken from his Journal are the following examples of each:

On February 23, 1775, Asbury preached a textual sermon using Romans 1:16 as his text: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." This was his outline:

- I. Of what he was not ashamed
 - A. Of the Gospel
 - 1. The experience
 - 2. The precepts
 - 3. The blessings
 - B. To preach it in its purity
 - C. To suffer for it
- II. Why he was not ashamed of this
 - A. Because it is the power of God to salvation
 - 1. From the guilt of sin
 - 2. From the power of sin
 - 3. From the remains of sin
 - B. The power of God is displayed in preaching the simple truths of the Gospel
- III. To whom it became so
 - A. To them that believe
 - 1. Threatenings
 - 2. Precepts
 - 3. Invitations
 - B. Then in Jesus Christ for this present salvation.¹

For these reasons, this outline meets the requirements of a textual sermon, which have been defined by Phelps. First,

¹Clark, I, p. 149.

the Scriptural text was his theme because he included practically all of it in his outline. Second, the divisions of the outline were parts of the text. The first division with its subdivisions, "Of what he was not ashamed . . . " came from the part of the text: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." The second division with its subdivisions, "Why he was not ashamed of this . . . " came from "for it is the power of God unto salvation." The third division, with its subdivisions, "To whom it became so . . . " came from "to every one that believeth." Presumably he met the third test of a textual sermon, that the materials of his outline were used as lines of suggestion or argument. It is reasonable to assume that he did develop his message in this manner, because a characteristic of his preaching is that "every proposition, argument, illustration, [and] incident led directly to the selected passage."¹

On February 19, 1797, he preached an expository sermon on Isaiah 55:1-7;

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. 3. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. 4. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. 5. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Isarel; for he hath

¹Carroll, p. 124.

glorified thee. 6. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: 7. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

About this Scripture, Asbury said,

I made an explanatory discourse. . . . My leading heads were,

- I. The spiritual blessings held forth in the temporal good things, water, wine, milk. Water to quench the thirst, cleanse, and heal, as to drinking, bathing, etc.; all expressive of the grace of God to our souls--comforting, cleansing, healing. Wine for the sickly, tempted, dispirited ones. Milk for babes.
- II. The grand qualifications--thirst and no money; and to come, no merit, no righteousness.
- III. The reasoning--'Wherefore do you spend your money,' etc.; that is, make great sacrifices for pleasure, and yet are disappointed; such is the case of those who seek after ceremonial righteousness.
- IV. His offering Christ.
- V. The promise of the increase of the kingdom of Jesus Christ among distant and unknown nations.
- VI. When they are to come to seek the Lord, viz., 'while he may be found.'¹

This outline meets the qualifications of an expository sermon for these reasons. First, the text, Isaiah 55:1-7, was the theme of his discourse, which could be expressed as "a call to repentance." Second, the divisions came from the text: Division I, "The spiritual blessings . . . ," came from verse 1; Division II, "The grand qualifications . . ." came from verse 1; Division III, "The reasoning . . . ," came from verse 2; Division IV, "His offering Christ," came from verses 3 and 4; Division V, "The promise of the increase . . . ," came from verse 5; and Division VI, "When

¹Clark, II, p. 120.

they are to come . . .," came from verses 6 and 7. Since Asbury selected these divisions, that came directly from the text and presumably developed each division by explanation, the second test of an expository sermon, according to Phelps, is met.

However, Phelps' definition, "An expository sermon is one in which the text is the theme and the discussion is an explanation of the text,"¹ needs to be amplified and explained further, for at least one reason: Asbury preached expository sermons more than any other kind. Andrew Blackwood said that

Expository preaching means that the light for any sermon comes mainly from a Bible passage longer than two or three consecutive verses. This kind of message differs from a textual sermon chiefly in the length of the Bible passage. In any case the wise interpreter begins with a human need today, and chooses a passage that will enable him to meet this need.²

Even though Blackwood's definition is for twentieth-century preachers, in many ways it is applicable to eighteenth-century preachers.

Perhaps one of the most difficult tasks to achieve in an expository sermon is a unity that distinguishes it from a verse-by-verse explanation that seemingly has no unity or purpose. Blackwood enumerates several ways to insure unity in the expository sermon. They are:

1. Secure unity by setting up a definite goal for each sermon.

¹Phelps, p. 31.

²Andrew Watterson Blackwood, Expository Preaching for Today (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1963), p. 13.

2. Secure unity by singling out and stressing a short text from the passage.
3. To make unity trebly sure, phrase a clear topic to interpret the passage.
4. A sense of unity also depends much upon what a man puts first in the sermon.
5. Unity comes also through phrasing and stressing a definite theme. A 'theme' here means a proposition, or key sentence, which embodies the substance of the entire sermon.
6. A preacher can help to ensure unity by setting up a few conspicuous guideposts [transitions].
7. Unity may likewise come through intelligent repetition.¹

It seems as though, from the foregoing, that an expository sermon is one based upon a passage of Scripture, usually two or more verses, that will meet the tests of unity, as far as possible, that will depend largely upon the Scriptural passage with its setting and co-texts for explanation and exegetical treatment, and that will meet a human need in the audience.

Since the greatest number of Asbury's extant, sermon outlines are expository, it seems necessary to have another example of his preaching for analysis, using Blackwood's frame of reference. This sermon, typical of Asbury's expository preaching, was delivered on September 5, 1802:

I preached upon Matt. 25, 34-37. 'Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?' My meaning upon the text was, First, To show

¹Ibid., pp. 78-96.

the 'blessedness' of the people of God, as subjects of the kingdom of grace and glory. Secondly, The evidences of their being 'blessed' to others in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, in a hospitable reception of the stranger, visiting prisoners and the sick, doing good to their souls as well as their bodies: and when the subjects of this love, and mercy, and benevolence, are pious, persecuted saints, the children of God would not hesitate to take them into their houses, or visit them in their distress, although this labour of love might subject themselves to persecution and death. It was observed, that it was not national fellow-feeling, the hospitality of politeness, nor family attachments; no, nor yet the more pure, though too partial affection which one religious society may feel for another, which may be the motive--it is because they are the suffering members of their common Lord--'Ye have done it unto me.'¹

The question can be posed, "Is this an expository sermon?" If the last Scriptural portion of his outline, "Ye have done it unto me," can be the text and the theme, which apparently it can be, this requirement is met. However, there is a violation of the expository principle of selecting the text--that it should be within the selected portion of Scripture, which this is not as it is the last clause of verse 40 of the same chapter. He may have included the intervening verses 37-40 when he preached the sermon, because the service was four hours in length.

In the second place, not only was there a text for a theme, but there was an explanation of the Scriptural passage with the use of two major divisions: first, "to show the 'blessedness' of the people of God," and, second to show "the evidences of their being 'blessed'," and it is assumed that the major part of the development of the sermon was

¹Clark II, p. 361.

exposition on the verses of the selected Scripture. The other parts of the outline imply this.

In the third place the sermon met some of the tests of unity set up by Blackwood. Asbury seemed to have a definite goal or purpose; he had a short text, but not from the passage; he may have had a clear topic to interpret the passage, but it is doubtful; he seemed to arrange his two divisions satisfactorily for unity; he manifestly did not have a theme phrased for the entire sermon, only for the second division, which was "Ye have done it unto me;" he had but two guideposts, or transitions, which are the numerals, "First" and "Secondly" to introduce the two divisions; and, finally, he gave no evidence of repetition in the outline.

In the fourth place, he presumably met a human need of his congregation. This presumption is reinforced by the study on the audience, which revealed that the audience and audience occasion influenced both the preaching and the message of Asbury.¹ Furthermore, he seemed to have the ability to discern the needs of the congregation and to select the Scripture to meet those needs.

The last class of sermons preached by Francis Asbury, the inferential, will be considered next, and is exemplified by this outline:

I preached on James 1,22: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deciving your own selves."

¹Supra, pp. 254-267.

By introduction, I collected the words of our Lord, and those of the apostle Paul upon the same subject and brought them to one point. In opening the subject, I observed, 1. What we are taught in the preaching the Gospel: First, Christian experience; Secondly, Christian tempers; Thirdly, Christian perfection; Fourthly, Christian duties. 2. General head: How people should hear the word--constantly, seriously; in faith, in prayer; as believing it promises all that is good, and threatens the most dreadful evil. 3. To be doers of the word is to seek for the immediate experience and practice of the word.¹

This sermon meets the test of an inferential sermon, at least in part. In the first place, the text is the theme of the outline, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only." In the second place, the discussion is a series of inferences that are partially implied. The first division, "What we are taught . . . ," and the subdivisions are manifestly inferences from the first part of the text, "Be ye doers of the word." The second division, "How people should hear . . . ," comes from the next part of the text, "Not hearers only," and the subdivisions of this second division are more inferential. The third division is more inferential than the other two divisions, because the first two come more directly from the text than the third. If the divisions of the outline can be considered parts of a premise, and if the subdivisions can be considered as conclusions, then this is an inferential sermon, according to Phelps' second requirement in his definition of inferential preaching.

¹Clark II, p. 411.

Consequently, these four sermon outlines exemplify the topical, textual, expository, and inferential classes of sermons which Asbury preached. The expository and textual examples are more typical of his preaching; the inferential and topical are less typical.

Materials of Development

There are several kinds of materials of development which can be roughly classified, first, as materials of examples, narratives, statistics, quotations; second, as materials of repetition, restatement, comparison, and contrast; and third, as materials in relation with evidence and reasoning.¹

Evidence.-- Evidence may be defined as facts and opinions used as the basis of reasoning. Facts are cases, statistics, and similar materials--phenomena that are observed, described, classified, and reported. Opinions are points of view--interpretations and evaluation of facts--held by persons other than the person doing the reasoning.²

Francis Asbury did not struggle in a search for truth upon which to base his facts, because he believed the Bible contained the truth, a body of facts, which to him, were indisputable. The veracity of the Scriptures was a settled question for him, hence, he accepted the Biblical doctrines as truth, and the Scriptures as the revealed will of God for man. With simplicity of faith in God and in Christ as his Savior, he preached a message that contained this truth,

¹Hance, pp. 52-59.

²Ibid., p. 59.

and he handled the Scriptural texts as truth. Because of his deep conviction that the Bible is the Word of God, he became "a preacher of more than ordinary power."¹ Consequently, the greatest evidence that Asbury used in his preaching was that found in the Scriptures. Not only did he obtain his texts from the Bible, but he also wrested from its pages the substance of his sermons. All of the Scriptural passages, the Old Testament stories, the parables, and the life of Christ, along with the witnesses of the apostles, were accepted and used as factual evidence to support his message. This was a natural consequence for "he knew his Bible thoroughly . . . pouring over its pages daily for spiritual illumination and exegetical material. . . . His sermons . . . abound in Scripture quotations, their phraseology is flavored with the sacred dialect of the English Bible, biblical illustrations are numerous."² Asbury mentioned, many times, in his Journal, the need for a minister to know his Bible thoroughly, for he believed the contents to be the best, available evidence to support selected Scriptural texts. For instance, he said: "I see the need of a preacher's being well acquainted with his Bible, . . . the Word of God is one grand dispensatory of soul-diseases in every case of spiritual malady."³

Not only did Asbury utilize accepted facts for evidence, but he also used reliable opinion evidence, particularly, the

¹Carroll, p. 117. ²Tipple, Asbury, pp. 225-226.

³Clark I, p. 403.

opinions and interpretations of the Biblical scholars and commentators, in order to develop his message and to lead his hearers into a more meaningful understanding of his text. He also used materials concerning the people and events he encountered on his circuits, expressly the testimonies of people who had heard his message, had become converted, were living the victorious Christian life, and were witnessing the same to others. Asbury accepted such experiences as reliable opinion evidence and used them in his sermons.¹

Reasoning.--Reasoning may be defined as the process of inferring conclusions from evidence or from other conclusions. In the first instance (inferring from evidence), reasoning consists of using facts and opinions to reach a conclusion beyond that embodied in the evidence itself. . . . In the second instance (inferring from other conclusions), reasoning consists of joining two or more ideas or propositions to form a new idea.²

Types of reasoning: The types of reasoning are reasoning from cause, sign, example, and analogy. These four types will be explained with the analysis of selected outlines of sermons preached by Francis Asbury.

Causal reasoning. "Reasoning from cause may be defined as the process of inferring that a certain phenomenon (a cause) has produced another phenomenon (an effect); or conversely, that a certain phenomenon (an effect) is the result of another phenomenon (a cause)."³

¹Carroll, p. 120.

²Hance, p. 61.

³Ibid., p. 63.

Since the Scriptures contain many cause-to-effect and effect-to-cause relationships, it is normal to expect Francis Asbury to use this type of reasoning. For example, he preached on the text: "Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." He outlined his message in this manner:

- I. In justification we have peace
- II. In sanctification we are without spot
- III. In perfect love we are blameless
- IV. Wherein we must be diligent.¹

In the first division "peace" is the result or effect of the cause "justification." In the second, "we are without spot" is the effect of "sanctification." In the third, "we are blameless" is the effect of "perfect love." In the fourth division, "we must be diligent" is the result or effect of the "wherein"--the possession of justification, sanctification, and perfect love.

Sign reasoning. Reasoning from sign may be defined as the process of inferring associations between two phenomena that are not causally related. This kind of reasoning assumes that the presence of one thing (an attribute) indicates the presence of another (the substance), or that the absence of the one indicates the absence of the other.²

Asbury seemed to use sign reasoning less frequently than the other types of reasoning. Nevertheless, the sermon he preached on December 18, 1806, from Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,"

¹Clark I, p. 59.

²Hance, p. 64.

apparently contains sign reasoning. This is his outline:

- I. The 'light' of your principles and doctrine
- II. The 'light' of your experience
- III. The 'light' of your tempers
- IV. The 'light' of your practice
 - A. That they may see it manifested in virtue and piety
 - B. And be converted to God¹

Presumably, the word "light" in the outline is a sign, because it is not causally related to "principles and doctrines," "experience," "tempers," or "practice," as these are the effects of a cause, God, of which "light" is the sign.

Reasoning from example. "Reasoning from example may be defined as the process of inferring conclusions from specific instances, cases, illustrations, or examples."²

The outline of his sermon preached on December 14, 1800, illustrates to some degree his reasoning from example. His subject was a portion of Matthew 17:5, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

Introduction. These words were in part spoken at his baptism; see Matt. 3, 17; Mark 1, 11; Luke 3, 22: that there were three witnesses present to hear, and four had recorded it; to wit, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Peter. First, the Divine Father acknowledged the sacred and mysterious union-- 'This is my beloved Son': a relation infinitely above that of angels, of Adam in his primeval standing, and the souls of any regenerated sanctified, or glorified soul, on earth or in heaven--co-equal, co-eternal, and co-essential with the Father. 'Well-pleased!' that is, in the whole of man's redemption by this 'beloved Son': 'well-pleased'--in his preaching, living, dying--in every part of his official character. "hear ye him"--Mark and Luke have omitted 'ye.' Secondly, The

¹Clark II, p. 417.

²Hance, p. 61.

particular characters who should hear him in his word, Spirit, and operations. His ministers should hear him--this was designed in the text, by "ye": hear him all his sanctified souls; hear him all who are justified; hear him all ye seekers; hear him all ye sinners--hear his awful warnings: all ye backsliders, hear him as Peter heard him, and repent, and turn to him; hear him ye apostates, as Judas, and despair.¹

If Asbury, in his introduction, took the three witnesses and the four recorders as specific instances and inferred a conclusion, then this is an example of reasoning from example. On the other hand, if he referred to the three witnesses and the four recorders as background material, in order to explain the message more fully, then this is not reasoning but explanation or exposition. From the apparent development of the message it seems to be explanation. To say that Asbury used no reasoning from example would be erroneous, because he would almost have to use some in his preaching. But to discover an outline where he likely employed it largely in the development of his sermon has been very difficult because of the limitations imposed on this kind of development.

Reasoning by analogy. "Reasoning by analogy may be defined as the process of making a comparison between two cases that are similar in many respects, and inferring that they are similar in further respects."² It seems that Asbury used more of this type of reasoning than he did of some of the others, perhaps because Jesus used it in his

¹Clark, II, p. 270.

²Hance, p. 62.

preaching and teaching. The following illustrates his use of analogy:

Many people attended this evening, while I described an honest and good heart, under the similitude of the good ground which received the seed and brought forth fruit. This was free from the hardness of the way-side, from the shallowness of the stony ground, and from the obstructions of the thorny ground. The honesty of the heart in its conduct towards God, towards all mankind, and towards itself. As our Lord is pleased to denominate such a heart good as well as honest, is it not very wrong for a Christian to say he has a bad heart? Is not all that the Holy Ghost produces good? And so far as that blessed Spirit has changed the heart of a believer, is it not good? Through the unmerited grace of God, I have no desire to seek¹ anything but Him, and that which may lead me to him.¹

In this sermon Asbury compared the honest and good heart to good ground that received the seed and bore fruit. By implication, he may have mentioned that the heart had received the good seed of the Word and that it had transformed the heart. He then mentioned that fruit would come from the plant that had grown in good soil, free from shallowness--plenty of good top soil--free from stones, and free from thorns. Reasoning by analogy he probably said the honest heart can be compared to the fruit from the good soil, and since the good heart was free from anything that would compare to shallow, stony, or thorny ground--by implication--the good heart will have honesty of conduct towards God, towards all mankind, and towards itself. From this analogy he concluded that it was wrong for a Christian to say he had a bad heart because the Holy Ghost had produced a good heart by changing the

¹Clark, I, p. 78.

heart of the believer into a good heart through the unmerited grace of God. This analogy seems to withstand the tests for validity, because there are points of similarity, there are no apparent points of dissimilarity, and there is no reason for explaining any differences.¹

Structure of Reasoning: The four types of reasoning: cause, sign, example, and analogy "are used in argumentative discourse for two purposes: (1) to develop a conclusion immediately from facts, and (2) to develop a conclusion from other conclusions or propositions."² The first is called inductive reasoning and the second deductive reasoning.

Reasoning by induction. Inductive reasoning "is the process of drawing inferences from facts, evidence, and experience. It is the means by which we make generalizations or formulate conclusions about phenomena that we see, hear, or perceive in any way."³

A possible example of inductive reasoning is in this sermon outline: "I enlarged on Peter's denial of his Master. 1. He was self-confident. 2. He followed afar off. 3. Mixed with the wicked. 4. Denied his discipleship, and then his Lord."⁴ If Asbury used these experiences of Peter to draw some inferences, then this is an example of inductive reasoning. But he did not give any inferences in his outline. Looking at the outline as it actually is,

¹Hance, p. 62.

²Ibid., p. 65.

³Ibid.

⁴Clark, I, p. 562.

it seems that each one of the four points is a division of the explanation of Peter's denial of his Master in a topical sermon. But it seems difficult to assume that Asbury preached this sermon for explanation or exposition only; he must have drawn some conclusions from Peter's experience, that he wanted his hearers to do or to avoid. It would seem then, that he could have used, at least in part, the inductive process of reasoning in the development of this sermon.

Reasoning by deduction. "Deductive reasoning is the reverse of inductive reasoning; by means of it, we proceed from the general principle to the specific instance. . . . It is the process of proceeding from one proposition to a second proposition, then to a third proposition (the conclusion) that is the necessary result of the first pair."¹

The ensuing outline illustrates the categorical syllogism, one of the kinds of deductive reasoning, which contain a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion. Asbury commented:

I spoke . . . on Hebrews 9, 27, 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment;' was much assisted in showing my hearers; first, What it is to die; second, The judgment, with the certain consequences of both; third, The appointment for all men once to die; and controverted the argument against being saved from sin, drawn from death--that it is not a punishment to the righteous; that their constitutions being subject to decay, makes it necessary, and in imitation of Christ, to suffer as he did in death, without sin.²

¹Hance, p. 66.

²Clark, I, p. 318.

This outline is not structured syllogistically, but it seems to contain deductive reasoning. "The appointment for all men once to die" is a major premise because the appointment includes all men. Deduced from this could be the meaning of death--"What it is to die," the judgment, and the consequences of both death and judgment. The most nearly perfect syllogism is in the latter part of his outline: The appointment for all men is once to die; The righteous person is a man; Therefore, the righteous person must die. It is probable that he frequently used deductive reasoning, and particularly the enthymeme.¹

Another example of Asbury's deductive reasoning contains a hypothetical syllogism, a syllogism in which "the first proposition presents an 'if' clause (antecedent) followed by a 'then' clause (consequent), which is supposed to be a necessary result of the 'if' clause."² This is the outline:

At Bethel church I took my text Rom. 12, 9-12. I observed that the text contained evangelical Christian duties, promises, and marks, by which we might judge ourselves as Christians. That if these marks, and this experience, were not upon us and in us, we could not be Christians.³

He expresses the "if . . . then" clauses in the negative, which probably would have been more effective if he had expressed them in the positive, so that the hypothetical syllogism would read, "If these marks, and if this experience were upon us and in us, then we would be Christians."

¹Carroll, pp. 124-125.

²Hance, p. 66.

³Clark, II, p. 486.

Explanation.--Explanation implies the process of making plain or intelligible what is not immediately obvious or entirely known. Applied to homiletics, this definition of explanation would be "that part of a sermon which comprehends all those remarks of which the object is to adjust the meaning of the text to the homiletic use which is to be made of it."¹ Since many of the Scriptures are difficult to understand, it would seem the preacher's primary function is to explain the Scriptures in order to make them understandable to the hearers in his audience. Insofar as the explanation of a Scriptural text is concerned, its exegesis may suffice. But if this is insufficient in making the text intelligible, then narration and description can be used.²

In addition to the explanation of a text, many times there is need for explanation as one of the means of developing the subject. Broadus said this could be done, first, by definition, which "marks the limits of an idea";³ second, by dividing the subject; third, by exemplification; and fourth, by comparison.⁴

Francis Asbury seemed to be concerned about the plainness of his message, hence the reason for his using explanation as a means of development. About this he said: "On

¹Phelps, p. 138.

²John A. Broadus and Jesse Burton Weatherspoon, On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), pp. 158-162.

³Ibid., p. 163.

⁴Ibid., pp. 163-166.

the Lord's day I preached twice with great plainness . . ."¹
 At another time he declared: "I found I could not speak
 plain enough to them."² To one of his ministers he wrote:
 "I advise you to preach . . . very plain and pure."³ Writing
 to Ezekiel Cooper concerning preaching in the city churches,
 he said: "Sermons ought to be short and pointed in town,
 briefly explanatory . . . "⁴

This outline illustrates Asbury's use of explanation:

I gave a gloss upon Joshua 14:8: "Nevertheless, my bretheren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord My God." In the introduction peculiar attention was paid to the dealings of God with Israel from the beginning to the end; the influence pious characters had in the case before us, two prevailing against ten; that the well-being of future generations required that a decided tone to the morals, manners, and religious opinions should be given by the first settlers of the country. The weight of the discourse was opened in two divisions: First, what God had done for many Christians; Secondly, Their unfaithfulness and complaints (like the Israelites), and their bad influence upon the camp of Israel, as at the present day.⁵

Asbury used explanation in his introduction, first, by explaining the dealings of God with the nation of Israel, which may have been by definition--the limiting of his ideas, and, second, by the use of comparison between the early settlers of Isarel and of the United States. Presumably he used narrative for explanation, particularly in the reports of the twelve scouts who had been sent ahead into

¹Clark, I, p. 85.

²Ibid., p. 305.

³Clark, III, p. 230.

⁴Ibid., p. 66.

⁵Clark, II, pp. 215-216.

Canaan. Then, he probably explained the ultimate influence of the pious characters, the two who returned with the minority report, upon the nation of Israel. Manifestly, he compared this positive, pious influence on Israel with the influence of the Christians on the new American nation, for he said, in his introduction, "that the well-being of future generations required that a decided tone to the morals, manners, and religious opinions should be given by the first settlers of the country." After explaining the materials of his introduction, Asbury then explained the body of his discourse by dividing it into two parts: first, following the Lord: "what God had done for many Christians"; second, not following the Lord: "Their unfaithfulness, complaints, and bad influence." In the second division he explained his method of development by subdividing it into three parts and then explained them by comparing the unfaithfulness, complaints, and bad influence of the Israelites with the unfaithfulness, complaints, and bad influence of the Americans. It is probable that he used explanation in the development of the entire sermon.

Another example of Asbury's use of explanation is in the outline of the sermon he preached on James 1:22: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

By introduction, I collected the words of our Lord, and those of the apostle Paul upon the same subject and brought them to one point. In opening the subject, I observed, 1. What we are taught in the preaching of the Gospel: First, Christian experience;

Secondly, Christian tempers; Thirdly, Christian perfection; Fourthly, Christian duties. 2. General head: How people should hear the word--constantly, seriously; in faith, in prayer; as believing it promises all that is good, and threatens the most dreadful evil. 3. To be doers of the word is to seek for the immediate experience and practice of the word.¹

In this sermon outline Asbury used explanation mainly by telling his hearers how he would divide and develop his sermon. In the introduction he explained that he collected the words of Christ and Paul on this subject to one point, and then proceeded by saying "In opening the subject, I observed," and then explained his subject by divisions and subdivisions.

The foregoing has been an examination of Francis Asbury's message from the point of view of the materials of development which have included evidence, reasoning, and explanation. This study of the materials of development reveals that Asbury used Biblical truth for factual evidence, expert opinions from religious writers and Biblical commentators for opinion evidence, and, also, the experience of other people he heard in testimony for opinion evidence. Again, this study reveals that Asbury probably used reasoning by cause and analogy more than the other two types. Furthermore, this study reveals that he presumably used the deductive process of reasoning more than the inductive. Finally, this study reveals that he used explanation a great deal as one of the materials of developing his message. There is a

¹Clark, II, p. 411.

manifest reason for this--the greatest number of people in his audiences were frontiersmen who were receptive to the explanation of the contents of the Bible. It seems that other materials of proof were used by Francis Asbury in order to communicate his message. These will be considered next.

Materials of Personal Proof

Materials of personal proof are used by a speaker, in addition to the materials of development and the materials of experience, in order for him to communicate his message more effectively to an audience.

Personal proof is that kind of proof--or the element that lends credibility to the message--that arises from the person of the speaker. It influences the total speaking situation; it affects the listener's attitudes toward the speaker and his point of view, and thereupon affects also the amount of information the listener receives.¹

Materials of personal proof include the elements of good character, competence, and good will. Because each one of these has been analyzed elsewhere in this dissertation, from the point of view of the speaker,² reference will be made to this analysis because of the close relationship of a speaker to his message.

Good character.--"Good character is made up of honesty, integrity, sincerity, fairness, and similar qualities that meet the standards of the listeners."³ The qualities of

¹Hance, p. 38.

²Supra., pp. 159-203.

³Hance, p. 38.

devotion, integrity, self-control, purity, humility, patience, moral courage, industry, and self-discipline, treated above,¹ relate not only to Francis Asbury as a speaker, but also to his message. It seems that Asbury was constantly striving to obtain these qualities throughout his life, because he incessantly sought a deeper life with Christ. He believed, that when a person became more Christ-like, he would be more holy and would obtain these qualities, at least to some degree. This attitude must have influenced his message as it manifestly did his character, else he could not have written: "I seek nothing but him; and fear nothing but his displeasure."² "My spirit . . . longs for God. I do humbly and confidently hope to live more to God than ever. Lord keep me every moment!"³ "For some time past, the Lord has blessed me with abundant peace and love; but my soul longs for all the fullness of God, as far as it is attainable by man. O, when shall it once be? When shall my soul be absorbed in purity and love?"⁴ This testimony he wrote in 1773, about two years after his arrival in America. About eleven years later, in 1784, in a letter of John Wesley he wrote:

As to myself, I can say, the Lord gives, and wonderfully preserves my natural and spiritual health. My soul is daily fed: and I find

¹Supra., pp. 159-188.

²Clark, I, p. 71.

³Ibid., p. 72.

⁴Ibid., p. 90.

abundant sweetness in God. Sometimes I am ready to say, he hath purified my heart; but then again I feel and fear. Upon the whole I hope I am more spiritual than ever I have been in time past. I see the necessity of preaching a full and present salvation from all sin. Whenever I do this, I feel myself, and so do also my hearers. I find it is good to use frequent fervent prayer; without which a man cannot continue qualified to preach the Gospel.¹

Since Asbury's fervent desire was to be a preacher with the qualities of good character, it seems his message would possess the same qualities, which manifestly it did. In 1791 he said about his preaching on one occasion: "I was clear not to keep back any part of the truth, whilst I enforced Luke 7, 23."²

To illustrate character from the point of view of the message, still further, one of Francis Asbury's sermon outlines has been selected:

I preached . . . from Rom. 1, 16: 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,' etc. And showed, First, Of what he was not ashamed: the experience, precepts, and blessings, of the Gospel; to preach it in its purity; to suffer for it. Secondly, Why he was not ashamed of this: Because it is the power of God to salvation from the guilt, power, and remains of sin; the power of God is displayed in preaching the simple truths of the Gospel. Thirdly, To whom it became so: to them that believe, first, the threatenings, precepts, and invitations; and then in Jesus Christ for this present salvation.³

A chronological substance outline has been prepared for this sermon outline, the materials of which are placed in the same order as the recorded paragraph outline, with the use of the exact words as nearly as possible. The

¹Clark, III, p. 34.

²Clark, I, pp. 688-699.

³Ibid., p. 149.

reason for the preparation of this outline is to have the parts related to the conventional symbols for convenient reference in the analysis of this sermon for personal proof. This is the outline.

- I. Of what he was not ashamed
 - A. The Gospel
 - 1. Experience
 - 2. Precepts
 - 3. Blessings
 - B. To preach it in its purity
 - C. To suffer for it
- II. Why he was not ashamed
 - A. It is the power of God to salvation from
 - 1. Guilt of sin
 - 2. Power of sin
 - 3. Remains of sin
 - B. It is the power of God displayed in preaching the simple truths of the Gospel
- III. To whom it became so
 - A. To them that believe
 - 1. The threatenings
 - 2. The precepts
 - 3. The invitations
 - B. In Jesus Christ for this present salvation

Asbury may have used the Scriptural text as the opening statement of his sermon. Assuming that he did, the words, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth," in all probability, called the attention of the audience to him as a speaker. Thereupon, an attempt at increasing his personal proof was started at the beginning of the sermon. Then, as he made the transition from himself to St. Paul in the first division, "Of what he was not ashamed," the qualities of devotion, sincerity, fairness, and perhaps others, were beginning to become a part of the speaker through the manner in which he handled his subject. It seems that an analogy, by means of suggestion, may have been made

between himself and the Apostle Paul, from the beginning to the end of the sermon. This would be noticeable particularly to those people in the audience who had heard Asbury before or who knew him. When he said he was not ashamed of "The Gospel," in the first subdivision, because of the "Experience," "Precepts," and "Blessings," of it, seemingly he used personal proof in each one of the parts of "The Gospel." He personally had the Christian "Experience," he had been striving to keep all the "Precepts" given in the Bible, and he had been receiving "The blessings" of God through "The Gospel." Very likely his message manifested these through his character. In the second subdivision, "To preach it in its purity," presumably his character was revealed as personal proof in this part of the message, because he was personally seeking for heart purity during much of his life. In the third subdivision, "To suffer for it," Asbury exemplified suffering in the preaching of the gospel on the American frontier more than any other one itinerant, hence, this factor of character must have been strong personal proof.

In the second major division of the sermon, "Why he was not ashamed," Asbury, in all probability, used this as personal proof through his character, because he was not ashamed of the power of God to save him from the "Guilt," "Power," and "Remains" of sin. Being unashamed of "The Gospel" in his personal life manifestly revealed, as in the second subdivision, "It is the power of God displayed in

preaching the simple truths of the Gospel," still more of his character and its persuasiveness as personal proof.

Since Asbury's personal proof, through his character, most likely had been established with his audience as he came to his last major division, "To whom it became so," it can be assumed his personal proof was used effectively as he developed this division. When he amplified "The threatenings," "The precepts," and "The invitations" of "The Gospel," and then, when he presented "Jesus Christ for this present salvation," in his last division, he manifestly used personal proof.

Because Francis Asbury was so concerned about his personal devotional life, because he was constantly seeking greater depth in his Christian experience, because of his great desire to know the Bible as the revealed Word of God, and because he was a man of prayer, he developed a Christian character that seemingly was persuasive through personal proof in his preaching.

Competence.--"Competence is the quality that grows out of a combination of mental ability, know-how, intelligence, understanding, experience with the subject, and knowledge."¹ Competence, including the qualities of intelligence and understanding, relate not only to the speaker, but also to the message which the speaker delivers. Because competence was treated above under the discussion of Francis

¹Hance, p. 38.

Asbury as a speaker,¹ and because many of the elements of competence relate to both the speaker and the message, those qualities found in him as a speaker will not be discussed here.

Francis Asbury had the ability to become a good student, and as a result, he developed a great desire to read. Through his intense interest in books, he became a self-educated man who was well informed and capable. "Asbury was a talented man."² His methodical habits of life undoubtedly contributed to his competence, inasmuch as he had a method and a way of organizing everything, and if a way was unknown, he invented one. For instance, his method of traveling, preaching, writing, studying, Bible reading, and praying demanded the application of his best endeavors to his mission in the New World.³ The methodical life of such a speaker manifestly contributed to the competence of his message.

Asbury's competence also extended into his ability to understand men, audiences, and occasions, all of which led him to the understanding of his message. Perhaps the one significant quality in his life, that reinforced the competence of his message, was his great love for men.

"This love of souls . . . became a consuming passion."⁴

To illustrate competence, still further, an outline of one of Asbury's funeral sermons is selected. He

¹Supra., pp. 189-198.

²Clark, III, xii.

³Ibid.

⁴Tipple, Asbury, p. 183.

frequently preached funeral sermons, probably more often than the other types of special occasion speeches, taking into account the custom of his day of preaching a funeral sermon soon after the death of a prominent person, and particularly an important church leader. Hence, a number of funeral addresses would be given for the same man to different audiences by different preachers. Such was the case with Francis Asbury at Petersburg, Virginia, on April 19, 1801. In his Journal he made this comment:

There had been put forth a printed appointment for me to preach the funeral sermon of the late Rev. Devereux Jarratt, who had lately returned to rest. My subject was Matt. 25, 21: "His Lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It was observed, I. That a good servant was only good in relation which his practice and his experience bore to the example and the precepts of his divine Master; that his was Christian goodness--a goodness altogether founded in grace. II. "Faithful servant"--faithful to his ministerial character:--he hath a high and just sense of the authority of his Divine Master in the person of God the Father and God the Son; he hath a just respect for the people he is to serve of all characters: the service he is to perform--1st. The preaching of the word. 2d. The administration of the sacraments and ordinances. 3d. Ruling the Church of God. The 'talents'--the gift of prayer, preaching, expounding of the Scriptures; and social advice. "Faithful in a few things"--to be ruler over many things in the glory of God. The 'joy' of Jesus--the joy of his redemption and salvation of souls socially and personally, felt and experienced--and lastly, the hearty welcome into glory.

Mr. Devereux Jarratt was settled in Bath Parish, Dinwiddie County, Virginia, in the year 1763, and continued until February, 1801. He was a faithful and successful preacher. He had witnessed four or five periodical revivals of religion in his parish. When he began his labours, there was no other, that he knew of, evangelical minister in all the province! He travelled into several counties, and there were very

few parish churches within fifty miles of his own in which he had not preached; to which labours of love and zeal were added, preaching the word of life on solitary plantations and in meeting houses. He was the first who received our despised preachers--when strangers and unfriended, he took them to his house, and had societies formed in his parish. Some of his people became travelling preachers amongst us. I have already observed that the ministry of Mr. Jarratt was successful--I believe that hundreds were awakened by his labours; they are dispersed--some are gone to the Carolinas, to Georgia, to the western country--some perhaps are in heaven; and some, it maybe, in hell.¹

Concerning this sermon, Asbury manifested competence several times. First, he showed his mental ability to select a Scriptural text, from which to preach the funeral message, following his arrival in Petersburg, Virginia, Saturday night, after riding thirty miles on horseback that day. The funeral sermon had been announced previously, and, by implication, it seems he knew nothing about the printed announcement before. He knew how to select an appropriate Scriptural text for his audience and for the occasion.

Second, Asbury manifested understanding, prudence, and love, not only in the selecting of this Scripture, but in the preaching of this sermon for Devereux Jarratt. Jarratt, a preacher of the Established Church in Virginia, befriended the early Methodists; but later he had some misgivings concerning them, about the time of the O'Kelly schism. He wrote in a letter concerning Asbury:

I dare say he [O'Kelly] will make Asbury's Mitre set very uneasy on his head, so as to give sensible pain to his heart. . . . Indeed I never expected

¹Clark, II, pp. 291-292.

that Mitre would set easy for any considerable length of time, as it was a cobbled piece of work at first.¹

As implied in this statement, Jarratt opposed Asbury's views of the episcopacy and apostolicity. Taking into account this opposition to him, Asbury considered Jarratt one of his enemies. Nevertheless, Asbury's understanding and love for others, including his enemies, further augments his competence in handling a situation that could have been both difficult and embarrassing for him.

Third, Asbury revealed his competence in knowing how to develop his subject for this occasion. He divided it into the two main divisions of a "good servant" and a "faithful servant" of God. In the first division he competently developed the good servant as one who bore "the example and the precepts of his divine Master," and that his goodness was "that founded in grace." In the second division Asbury was just as competent in developing "a faithful servant" as one who was a faithful minister, namely Devereux Jarratt. In his ministerial character he possessed a high and just sense of God and a just respect for the people he served in preaching, administering the sacraments, and ruling the church of God. Then he commended the deceased for his talents of the gift of prayer, of preaching, and of expounding the Scriptures. He continued by referring to his ability to give social advice and to be faithful over a few things, which, in turn had prepared him to be ruler

¹Clark, III, p. 318.

over many things. Finally, Asbury spoke about the joy of Jesus he was experiencing: the joy of being redeemed, of saving souls, and of receiving a hearty welcome into glory. Moreover, Asbury concluded the funeral sermon with the customary obituary.

This analysis reveals that Francis Asbury not only had a good character to reinforce his message, but, also, he was competent in developing it. Next to be considered is good will, the last of the materials of personal proof.

Good will.--"Good will consists of friendliness, likableness, rapport, warmth, and being 'in' with the audience. The listener may say of the speaker who exhibits this quality, 'I like him; he is warm and friendly, and he really gets across'." ¹

Because good will has been developed elsewhere in this dissertation from the point of view of the speaker, ² there will not be a repetition of this material here, but an attempt will be made to show how Asbury created good will through his message.

Not every hearer in the many audiences of Francis Asbury could say "I like him; he is warm and friendly, and he really gets across." In fact, his disorderly and apathetic audiences may have expressed the opposite of this. But taking into account that many of the people who heard

¹Hance, pp. 38-39.

²Supra., pp. 198-203.

him preach responded to his message, he presumably created good will with many of his hearers through his message. Strickland, who personally knew some of Asbury's contemporaries, described the Bishop's address at the opening of the Genesee Conference:

He gave a succinct and interesting narrative of the rise, progress, and present state of Methodism in America, and intimated, as with prophetic ken, its glorious future. His address was truly inspiring, and was received with every demonstration of gratification by the ninety representatives present. When he concluded Bishop M'Kendree rose and replied, thanking him, in behalf of the delegates assembled, and of the Church in general, for his address, and for the fatherly care with which he had watched over the interests of Methodism from the beginning.¹

Manifestly his message created good will with his conference audience.

Perhaps one of the best examples of Asbury's use of good will, as one of the materials of personal proof, was in a camp-meeting sermon he preached when a company of the Union Volunteers was in his audience. Strickland described the sermon like this:

The bishop gave out the hymn, 'Soldiers of Christ arise, And put your armor on.' He then addressed the throne of grace, and prayed most fervently for the President of the United States, the Cabinet, the Senate, and House of Representatives. His text was, 'And the soldiers likewise demanded of him saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages.' Luke 3, 14. In his discourse he dwelt impressively on the evils of war, its destructive influence upon commerce, the arts of life, and the wealth of nations, but more particularly its pernicious effects in relation to religion and

¹Strickland, pp. 438-439.

morals. He showed that war should, if possible, be avoided, and it never should be declared only as a dernier resort. If Christian nations should be embroiled in war, they should only act on the defensive. He also enlarged upon the importance of good discipline in an army, and showed that the government or military discipline could at the same time be strict and mild, and that the officers should be kind and generous to their men. In a word, he said that the commanding officer should be as a father to his soldiers, and they should in turn be obedient to all his military commands. He concluded by giving fatherly advice to the soldiers. After his discourse he descended, and took a position where the company passed in review before him. As the commanding officer approached he placed his hands upon his head and prayed for him most fervently, blessing him in the name of the Lord; then each of the officers; and as the soldiers passed he took each one by the hand and gave them a parting blessing. Tears flowed from every eye of the thousands gathered there.¹

It seems that good will was created by Francis Asbury in this camp-meeting service from the very beginning. Several steps are evident. In the first place, the audience occasion seemed to have influenced him to organize the entire service in such a manner that it would meet the needs of the hearers. In the next place, when he announced the hymn, "Soldiers of Christ arise, And put your armor on," he took another step in creating good will, because of the comparison of soldiers of the nation and soldiers of Christ. In the third place, he took another step in creating good will when he prayed for the President, Cabinet, Senate, and House of Representatives because of the relationship of the military with the federal government.

In the fourth place, the sermon and its development seemed to create good will with his audience. The appropriate

¹Ibid., pp. 446-447.

choice of subject, Scriptural text, and the materials of development manifestly created good will. He must have been adroit in his lines of argument as he dealt with the evils of war, that war should be avoided, and that "if Christian nations should be embroiled in war, they should only act on the defensive."¹ Nevertheless, he created good will.

In the fifth place, the personal message to the soldiers and officers on discipline and the suggestions on their relationships with his fatherly advice seemed to be well accepted by the audience, creating good will. In the sixth place, the blessings imparted on each one of the officers, and the words of encouragement spoken to each one of the soldiers were another manifestation of the expression of good will. Finally, the favorable reaction of the audience, "Tears flowed from every eye," indicated that good will had been created throughout the delivery of the message.

This sermon and all the other parts of the camp-meeting service reveal that Asbury used good will effectively as one of the materials of personal proof.

Even though Francis Asbury had some disorderly and apathetic audiences where he could not create good will with his listeners, this study reveals that a great many of his audiences were responsive to his message. This response is evidenced by the increase in membership in the Methodist

¹Ibid.

movement and in the sizable number of meetinghouses and churches that were built during his lifetime, for which he was largely responsible through his leadership and preaching. Furthermore, this study reveals that each element of personal proof: character, competence, and good will, were used effectively in persuading his listeners to respond to and accept his message. Asbury developed a good character through his devotion to God, manifested competence in communicating his message because of his devotional sincerity and knowledge of the Bible, and created good will with his listeners because of his Christian character and his competence in developing his subject.

Materials of Experience

Materials of experience are used by a speaker, in addition to the materials of development and the materials of personal proof, in order for him to communicate his message more effectively to an audience. "Materials of experience are designed to appeal primarily to the listener's basic motives, his sensory experiences and memories of them, and his needs, hopes, fears, and desires."¹ An analysis of the message of Francis Asbury reveals that the materials of experience include motive appeals, attention, and suggestion.

Motive appeals.--By motive appeals is meant the "appeals to the listener's senses, needs, and drives."² They

¹Hance, p. 71.

²Ibid., p. 72.

are categorized as preservation, altruism, pride, conformity and change, and sex.¹

Preservation: By preservation is meant the desire of man "to preserve his own life and health, and the lives of those dear to him."² It seems that Francis Asbury responded very early in life to the need of spiritual preservation. He feared that he would displease God in nearly everything he did. Later, referring to his early life in his Journal, he said: "I have neither dared an oath nor hazarded a lie."³ Because of this drive for self-preservation, he developed an abhorrence of all wickedness. Probably the motive for the preservation of self was one of the contributing factors of his salvation and of his impelling desire to serve God. In his first preaching Asbury communicated a message that was common to all the messages of the lay preachers, the personal testimony. This was primarily a declaration of receiving God's pardoning grace through Jesus Christ. Here the motive of preservation was manifested.

While Francis Asbury was crossing the Atlantic Ocean on his voyage to America in 1771, the motive of self-preservation, along with other motives, must have been driving him to a pitiless self-examination. As a result of this introspection he arrived at the controlling motives of his life and recorded them in his Journal:

¹Ibid., pp. 78-80.

²Ibid., p. 78.

³Clark, I, p. 720.

I will set down a few things that lie on my mind.
 Whither am I going? To the New World. What to do?
 To gain honor? No, if I know my own heart. To get
 money? No; I am¹going to live to God, and to bring
 others so to do.

The first motive, "I am going to live to God," became a continuous force that led him to seek God and His guidance in everything that he did throughout his life. He made many references to this in his Journal, revealing his thirst for more of God and His holiness. This led him to the realization of the value of the soul, not only his own soul, but the great number of souls in America. As a result of this realization, he became a preacher with a consuming passion to communicate the Gospel to every person. His goal was to awaken men in order for them to sense and realize the value of their souls. If they became cognizant of their value, presumably he hoped by appealing to the motive of preservation in his hearers, through his message, to persuade them to take action to preserve their souls. Asbury attempted to use the motive of preservation in two ways. The first was to delineate the state of souls without God in this life and in the life to come with all the consequent punishments of hell. No security or preservation could be expected for the most valuable possession men owned, their souls. The second way was to delineate the state of the soul with God, who loved the souls of men so much that He gave His Son, Jesus Christ, to the world for their redemption. The appeal to their preservation was to

¹Clark, I, p. 4.

use the means of preservation and security for this life and the life to come--the acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Savior. Consequently, Asbury seemed to design his message in order to appeal to the motive of preservation in the lives of his listeners.

The following sermon outline has been selected as a representative example of his use of the motive of preservation.

My subject was, 'Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.' 1. I treated on the divine character of Christ, as judge--his perfections and relation to the persons who are tried. 2. The characters to be judged--infidels, sinners, Pharisees, hypocrites, backsliders, believers, true and false ministers: these are to be tried, found guilty, or acquitted; sentenced and punished, or applauded and rewarded.¹

In order to analyze this message, it seemed feasible to construct a chronological substance outline because it is more operational than the paragraph form recorded in Asbury's Journal.

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuaded men.

- I. The divine character of Christ as judge
 - A. His perfections
 - B. His relation to the persons who are to be tried
- II. The characters to be judged
 - A. Infidels
 - B. Sinners
 - C. Pharisees
 - D. Hypocrites
 - E. Backsliders
 - F. Believers
 - G. True ministers
 - H. False ministers

¹Clark, II, p. 122.

- III. The trial
 - A. Guilty
 - 1. Found guilty
 - 2. Sentenced
 - 3. Punished
 - B. Guiltless
 - 1. Acquitted
 - 2. Applauded
 - 3. Rewarded

In the first part of the text, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord," presumably, Asbury appealed to the motive of preservation, because of the implication that a person is insecure when he senses the terror of the Lord, and in the second part of the text, "we persuade men," he further appealed to the motive of preservation, because the reason for persuading men to accept Christ as their Savior is to escape the terror of the Lord.

In the first division, "The divine character of Christ as judge," Asbury probably attempted to persuade his audience that the judge of all men is flawless and perfect because He is divine. He, then, would persuade the believer to feel secure in Christ, and the unbeliever insecure if he has been persuaded that Christ is the judge of all men.

In the second division, "The characters to be judged," Asbury may have used description as he dealt with each class of people: infidels, sinners, Pharisees, hypocrites, backsliders, believers, true and false ministers, as he attempted to persuade every person in his audience that he will be tried before the divine judge, Christ. Here he manifestly used the motive of preservation.

In the last division, "The trial," the two groups of people, the guilty and the guiltless, were delineated before his audience. The guilty were insecure, because in the trial they would be found guilty, sentenced, and punished. Hence, they had no eternal preservation. The guiltless were secure, because in the trial they would be acquitted, applauded, and rewarded. Hence, they had eternal preservation.

It seems that Asbury appealed to the motive of preservation in two general classes of sermons: first, those that dealt with the judgments of God, and, second those that dealt with the love of God. He used the negative approach to salvation, by using the judgment, in the early part of his ministry, and the positive approach to salvation, by using the great love of God for man, later. In fact, his sermon outlines reveal that he preached more on the love of God than any other one theme, his favorite text being 1 Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This leads to the next motive appeal.

Altruism: "Another strong motive in most people is the desire to do good without thought of reward or recognition,"¹ known as altruism. When Francis Asbury recorded in his Journal the motives for coming to America, "I am going to live to God, and to bring others so to do,"² the

¹Hance, p. 79.

²Clark, I, p. 4.

second was altruism, or his love for man, which became the ultimate motive in his life in America as an itinerant preacher. Here is the explanation of his prodigious labor on the American frontier. It was his "love of souls, which became a consuming passion, that alone accounts for his grim endurance of hardships and his undying devotion."¹ He expressed his purpose of living in this manner: "For what do I live but to do good, and to teach others so to do, both by precept and example?"² Altruism is shown by his concern for every person in America. For instance, he said:

I spent part of the week in visiting from house to house. I feel happy in speaking to all I find, whether parents, children, or servants; I see no other way; the common means will no do; Baxter, Wesley, and our Form of Discipline, say 'Go into every house.' I would go farther, and say, go into every kitchen and shop; address all, aged and young, on the salvation of their souls.³

He particularly loved his preachers and would do anything within his power to help them. At the Western Conference held on September 20, 1806, he saw the need of the preachers. He wrote in his Journal: "The brethren were in want, and could not suit themselves; so I parted with my watch, my coat, and my shirt."⁴

This deep-seated motive of altruism in the life of Francis Asbury manifestly influenced his message. Because of his great love for men, and his desire to do good to all men, he appealed to the motive of altruism in the lives of

¹Tipple, Asbury, p. 183.

²Clark, II, p. 669.

³Tipple, Asbury, p. 217.

⁴Clark, II, p. 517.

his listeners, believing, presumably, that they would, in like manner, respond to similar stimuli by turning from themselves and their sins to God because of His great love for them. Then, as his listeners responded to the love of God, through the appeal of altruism, they in turn would be stimulated to help other people in the same way.

As an example of the appeal to altruism through his message to his listeners, he related this experience at Liberty, Virginia:

When I came up into the crowd, the people gathered around my carriage, as if I had a cake and cider cart; this sight occasioned a kind of shock. . . . After alighting, I went immediately to the throng in the court house, and founded a discourse on Matthew 22:5. ['But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.'] What great things the Gospel revealeth to mankind. First, the love of God. Secondly, The sufferings, and death, and merits of Christ. Thirdly, The gifts, extraordinary and ordinary of the Holy Ghost: men make light of all the blessings of God, and of all the miseries and consequences of sin: they not only think lightly of, but are opposed exceedingly to them; 'for the carnal mind is enmity against God,' and the things of God. I admired the attention and solemnity of the people; many of the¹ men standing in and out of the house the whole time.¹

In order to have a more operational outline from which to work, this chronological substance outline was constructed.

What great things the Gospel revealeth to mankind.

- I. The love of God
- II. The love of Christ
 - A. Sufferings
 - B. Death
 - C. Merits

¹Clark, II, p. 250.

- III. The gifts of the Holy Ghost
 - A. Extraordinary
 - B. Ordinary
- IV. Reactions of men
 - A. Make light of the blessings of God
 - B. Make light of sin
 - 1. The miseries of sin
 - 2. The consequences of sin
 - C. Opposed to blessings of God
 - 1. Carnal mind against God
 - 2. Carnal mind against the things of God

Whether Asbury announced his text at the beginning of this sermon is questionable, because of its nature. He did not copy the Scriptural text in his Journal, which procedure he often failed to do. But he did have a title in addition to the Scripture reference, which he did not often record. If this is a clue, he may have given his title, "What great things the Gospel revealeth to mankind," as an indication of his use of the motive of altruism, because the Scriptural text does not apply to the sermon until near the end. In the first division, "The love of God" was manifestly revealed as one of the great things of the Gospel. In the second division, "The love of Christ" for man through His sufferings, death, and merits, or atonement was revealed as the second great thing of the Gospel. In the third division, "The gifts of the Holy Ghost," the love of God the Father and the love of Christ, the Son of God, were revealed by giving both ordinary and extraordinary gifts to man through the Holy Ghost. Whatever means of development Asbury may have used as he preached this part of the sermon, it seems apparent that he would use, and probably did use, the motive of altruism to persuade his hearers to accept these great

things the Gospel reveals. The motive of altruism presumably was not used in the remainder of the sermon, or at least it is not implied in his outline.

The central theme of his message during his long life of preaching was the "Great Salvation," his favorite text being 1 Timothy 1:15, as he said on January 2, 1799, "I . . . preached on my favourite subject: 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'."¹ Even though this was his favorite Scripture-text, he did not record any outline of a sermon he preached on it. However, he did leave the outline of another sermon, with the same central theme of his message, the "Great Salvation," or the "Gracious Gift," from Acts 13:26. "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent." He preached this sermon on October 4, 1815, the year before his death, in the court house at Georgetown, Kentucky. He recorded it in this manner:

My subject Acts 13, 26: 'To you is the word of this salvation sent.' This salvation; the Gospel, to be sure. Who the author, what the nature, means, conditions, spirituality, and degrees of this salvation. From whom it is sent, by whom, and to whom it is sent. It was sent to Jews first, afterward to Gentiles, and continued to be sent, and is still sent to the children of men by the written word, by the ministers of that word, and by the influences of the Holy Spirit. The consequences of its reception--eternal₂ life: of its rejection--everlasting damnation.

¹Clark, I, p. 291.

²Clark, II, p. 792.

In order to make this sermon outline more useful it has been cast into the form of a logical outline.

- To you is the word of this salvation sent.
- I. This salvation
 - A. The author
 - B. The nature
 - C. The means
 - D. The conditions
 - E. The spirituality
 - F. The degrees
 - II. From whom it is sent
 - III. By whom it is sent
 - A. The written word
 - B. The ministers of that word
 - C. The influences of the Holy Spirit
 - IV. To whom it is sent
 - A. The Jews
 - B. The Gentiles
 - C. The children of men
 - V. The consequences
 - A. Reception--eternal life
 - B. Rejection--everlasting damnation

Because the motivating force in Francis Asbury's whole life was love for God and love for man, it seems natural to assume that he used the motive appeal of altruism, or love, in much of his preaching. The sermon, "To you is the word of this salvation sent," is another representative example. The first division, "This salvation" is divided into six segments, for some of which the motive of altruism could have been used for persuasion. In the first three, "The author," "The nature," and "The means" of "This salvation," the motive appeal of altruism: to love, to worship, and to reverence God for the great gift of salvation He gave to man, Asbury presumably used for persuasion. It seems as if explanation would be used for "The conditions" instead of a motive appeal. Then the appeal to some phase of altruism

probably was used to persuade his hearers of "The spirituality" of salvation, and "The degrees" of it in experience.

In the second division, "From whom it is sent," he likely used the appeal to altruism because of reverence, love, and worship of the Author of salvation, God. It is questionable that motive appeals would be used in the third division, "By whom it is sent" or the subdivisions. But in the fourth division, "To whom it is sent," and in each one of the subdivisions, particularly the third, "The children of men," the motive appeal of altruism, the love of God for man, presumably Asbury used effectively for persuasion.

The last division, "the consequences" of receiving, or rejecting, the great gift of salvation is the climax of the sermon, and, again, presumably, Asbury used the motive appeal of altruism in some form in order to persuade his hearers to accept the gift so lovingly offered to them from God.

Pride: By pride is meant "a deep desire to look well in the public eye."¹ A favorable appearance or a favorable impression upon the public involves self-respect, honor, a sense of duty, and fair-play. These will be included in the motive appeal of pride.

In all probability Francis Asbury was aware of the importance of making a favorable impression upon people in order to communicate his message effectively and in order

¹Hance, p. 78.

to use the motive appeal of pride for persuasion. He was careful about his appearance. "In his earlier life his frame was robust, his countenance full, fresh, and expressive of generous, if not refined feelings. He was attentive to his apparel, and always maintained an easy dignity of manners, which commanded the respect, if not the affection, of his associates."¹

He seemed to have a sense of pride in the regimen of rules for his daily conduct and industry. He elevated honor, self-respect, a sense of duty, and fair-play to such a high plane that he constantly flagellated both his mind and body in order to reach his goals and to maintain this sense of price. Presumably, the motive appeal of pride in his own life assisted him in the use of this appeal in persuasive speaking. Because of his cultivation of honor, self-respect, a sense of duty, and fair-play in his personal life, Asbury's message, in all probability, was permeated with this motive appeal. Hence, it would seem that he would appeal to the motive of pride in his listeners, as part of his persuasive endeavor.

Examinations of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury reveal that he did not use the motive appeal of pride as much as he did the motive appeals of altruism and preservation. However, the following representative sermon outline, in which he presumably used the motive appeal of pride, has been selected for analysis. His Scriptural text was

¹Stevens, p. 93.

2 Timothy 4:2. "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Asbury said:

I was divinely assisted while I opened 2 Timothy 4.2. 1. Preach the word. 2. The application of it; that is, reprove, rebuke, exhort; to time his work; be instant, in season, out of season;-- in the morning, noon, and evening of life;-- when it is winter, spring, summer, and autumn of the Church;--in her pleasing and unpleasing prospects.¹

Since the chronological substance outline is more usable than the paragraph form recorded in Asbury's Journal, this one has been prepared for the analysis of the motive appeal of pride.

- I. Preach the word
- II. The application of preaching the word
 - A. To reprove
 - B. To rebuke
 - C. To exhort
- III. Time his work
- IV. Be instant (urgent or importunate) in season and out of season
 - A. Man
 - 1. In the morning of life
 - 2. In the noon of life
 - 3. In the evening of life
 - B. Church
 - 1. When it is winter
 - 2. When it is spring
 - 3. When it is summer
 - 4. When it is autumn
 - C. Prospects
 - 1. Pleasing
 - 2. Unpleasing

In the first division, "Preach the word," Asbury may have appealed to the honor of preaching the word, which is an appeal to pride. In the second division, "The application of preaching the word," the appeal to duty very likely was

¹Clark, II, p. 249.

used when he urged that the preaching of the word was to reprove, rebuke, and exhort. In the third division, "Time his work," the appeal to pride probably was used to persuade the preachers of the Word to organize their time in order to get the work done. Then, in the fourth division, "Be instant in and out of season" an appeal to duty, and a sense of pride when performing the duty, is made when the preacher is persuaded to be urgent and importunate in his own life, in the lives of others, and in the Church. In the subdivision, "Prospects," an appeal to pride is made when the prospects are pleasing. When the "Prospects" are unpleasing, then there is a lack of pride--humiliation.

Conformity and change: "Most of us, most of the time, appear to want things left about as they are."¹ This is the meaning of conformity. The meaning of change is implied in the word itself; it is the opposite of conformity.

The motive appeals of both conformity and change were expressed in the personal life of Francis Asbury, and must have been used to some degree in his persuasive speaking. When he came to America he was conforming to the Wesleyan doctrines and the Methodist concept of itineracy and refused to change. On the other hand, when he appeared before Boardman to receive his first appointment, which was in the New York Methodist society with two other ministers, he refused to conform to the custom of the preachers to remain in the cities. He strongly opposed conforming to this custom and started to itinerate, taking the initiative in

¹Hance, p. 79.

changing the American custom himself. However, in taking this step for change, he was conforming to a deep-seated conviction he had formed in his own mind before he left England. Another instance of his conformity was his unwillingness to deviate from the disciplined life he structured for himself, which led to illness, suffering, hardship, and peril. He believed he had been called to endure all these afflictions and to become a martyr in America in much the same way St. Paul was in Asia and Europe. On the other hand, he did not close his mind to change, when he observed that it was progress in the advancement of the Kingdom of God in America through Methodism. This was exemplified in his attitude toward the camp-meeting idea. When he discerned that people were being won to Christ through this medium, he was willing to change to this method of evangelism, adopted it for Methodism, and urged his preachers to hold camp meetings regularly on their circuits.

Because Asbury seemed to realize the strength of the motive appeals of conformity and change in his personal life, it is very likely that he appealed to these motives in his audience, particularly, when he was preaching on controversial issues or on doctrine. The following preaching experience and the sermon outline exemplify and represent the appeals to conformity and change in his audience.

Hearing there was a Presbyterian congregation, we asked to preach and hear: we did both. Mr. Nelson spoke first, and I addressed Methodists and others on John 8, 31-32: 'Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' How to know the truth.

By continuing under Gospel ministry, and using Gospel means. Ye shall know the truth--of the Gospel: freely, experimentally, practically. Make you free. What the freedom wrought consists in . It is an entire deliverance from sin--from its guilt, power, and inbeing. A freedom embracing the privileges of pardon, peace, patience, meekness, perfect love, joy on earth, and everlasting glory in heaven. We¹ hastened away, after meeting to William Cunningham's.

The paragraph form of the outline has been changed into a chronological substance outline, because it is more convenient for analysis.

- I. How to know the truth
 - A. By continuing under the Gospel ministry
 - B. By using the Gospel means
- II. Ye shall know the truth
 - A. Freely
 - B. Experimentally
 - C. Practically
- III. The truth shall make you free
 - A. The freedom wrought consists in entire deliverance from sin
 - 1. Its guilt
 - 2. Its power
 - 3. Its inbeing
 - B. The freedom embraces the privileges
 - 1. Of pardon
 - 2. Of peace
 - 3. Of patience
 - 4. Of meekness
 - 5. Of perfect love
 - 6. Of joy on earth
 - 7. Of everlasting glory in heaven

Francis Asbury probably implied in the first division, "How to know the truth," that the listener would have to be under the preaching of the Gospel--and, to him, the only genuine Gospel was that preached by the Methodists--and to use the Gospel means, or, in other words, attend and participate in the Methodist societies or churches. Manifestly this was an appeal to the listener's change, if they were

¹Clark, II, p. 761.

not already Methodists. In the second division, "Ye shall know the truth," he again appealed to the motive of change. Everyone had to accept, freely, the gift of salvation--the truth--to experience salvation, and to practice salvation daily in his life. In the third division, "The truth shall make you free," Asbury appealed to the motive of change--freedom from the bondage of sin, "Its guilt," "Its power," and "Its inbeing." To accept this freedom from sin was a radical change and a complete breaking of the conformity to sin. Asbury enumerated the results of change in the last part of the third division. "The freedom embraces the privileges," "of pardon," "of peace," "of patience," "of meekness," "of perfect love," "of joy on earth," and "of everlasting glory in heaven."

Sex: "The sex motive, in varied manifestations, affects our daily behavior--and our reaction to speakers--in many ways."¹ Francis Asbury may have used the sex appeal as one of the motive appeals, but it is questionable, because the examination of the two hundred sermon outlines recorded in his Journal reveals that he made no reference to the sex appeal. The closest manifestation might be the family relationship of son to father, which Asbury used, but it was concluded that this was not the use of the motive appeal of sex.

The study of the motive appeals, one of the materials of experience, reveals that Francis Asbury probably used

¹Hance, p. 80.

preservation, altruism, pride, and conformity and change as a means of persuasion. It is improbable that he used the sex appeal. It seems that he appealed to the motives of altruism and preservation in his audience more than he did to the other motive appeals.

Attention.--"From the speaker's point of view . . . arousing attention consists of leading your listeners to select the particular stimulus you (the speaker) want them to select, and leading them to focus on it . . . until 'it becomes sharp and clear while other stimuli recede to indistinctness'." ¹

Attention has been approached from the point of view of unlearned and learned stimuli of attention. The unlearned or natural stimuli may be classified as (1) change or variety, (2) intensity, (3) striking quality, (4) repetition, and (5) definiteness of form. ² The learned or conditioned stimuli, sometimes known as "factors of interestingness," may be classified as (1) animation, (2) the vital, (3) the concrete, (4) suspense, (5) conflict, (6) the familiar, (7) the novel, (8) proximity, and (9) humor. ³

These are suggestions offered in an attempt to answer the question, "How can I get and hold the attention of the audience?" Another group of suggestions may help to answer

¹Hance, pp. 80-81.

²Winston L. Brembeck and William S. Howell, Persuasion, A Means of Social Control (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1952), pp. 267-268.

³Ibid. For further information on stimuli of attention see pp. 264-272.

this question. They are divided into two groups of five each. The first group deals with devices of composition to get and hold attention; the second group deals with devices of delivery to hold attention.¹ These are the devices that can be used to get and hold attention:

1. Start with a reference to what was said immediately before you speak.
2. Use a significant, meaningful purpose sentence or opening statement; if you can, express it in dramatic language.
3. Level a barrage of facts or questions at the listeners.
4. Use narrative material.
5. Use humor as a device for getting and holding attention.
6. Approach the platform deliberately. In nearly every situation, it is wise to pause for a moment before you speak.
7. A sudden dramatic gesture will always attract the listeners' attention.
8. Your choice of language as you speak has a good deal of influence on the listeners' attention. Dull monotonous language will let their attention wander; but words that are exciting, dramatic, full of sensory impressions, and so on will keep the listeners from daydreaming while you are speaking.
9. Begin speaking with one extreme or the other in volume.
10. Asking the listeners to do something together, in unison,² is often an effective way to keep attention.

These three lists of suggestions, factors, or devices to get and hold attention will be used to analyze the message of Francis Asbury in the following manner. The analysis of his sermon outlines will be made within the frame of reference of the last group of suggestions and the ten devices will be used as guide lines. The other two groups

¹Hance, pp. 82-84.

²Ibid.

of suggestions will be used to explain further, define, or make clearer the points under consideration as they are dealt with under each one of the devices.

The first of the five devices to get and hold attention is "to start with a reference to what was said immediately before you speak."¹ This is thinking of the listeners first, because their attention has been on the preceding speaker and his subject. A reference to him and his message is a good transition to get the attention for the next speech. Francis Asbury probably did not use this device, because usually he was the first and only speaker at any one speaking occasion. When he did follow another speaker he did not seem to use a personal reference to the person speaking before him. For instance, on October 15, 1799, he recorded: "After Jesse Lee had discoursed upon the word of the Lord as a fire and a hammer, I added a few words on 'Take heed how ye hear'."² Since this was recorded after the speaking occasion, it is unknown whether he referred to Jesse Lee or not. Presumably he did not. On May 9, 1798, he referred to the occasion of his speaking, which may have been an attention device, when he said: "I attended the public fast. My subject was: 'So the Lord was entreated for the land'."³

¹Ibid., p. 82.

²Clark, II, p. 208.

³Ibid., p. 159.

A second device is to "use a significant, meaningful purpose sentence or opening statement."¹ When the opening statement, or the purpose sentence, is important to the listeners and is distinctive having a purpose, it is an attention getting device. A number of the foregoing suggestions could apply here. The purpose sentence may be dramatic, vital, concrete, arouse suspense, be a conflict, be familiar, novel, or humorous and be expressed with animation. It could arouse curiosity and appeal to the fundamental interests of the listeners.

Francis Asbury seemed to use this device a great deal. Many of his sermon outlines start with the Scriptural text from which he preached. Which suggestion or suggestions he used to get and hold attention is not known, but this study reveals that he believed the Scriptural text, which was his purpose sentence, was significant, was important, and was meaningful to his hearers. The following examples show that they were because they appealed to the fundamental interests of man. "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."² "My subject was awful, Amos 8:11: 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.' I observed. . . ."³ This is another example: "My subject

¹Hance, p. 82.

²Clark, II, p. 64.

³Ibid., p. 107.

was 2 Cor. 6.2. I considered by way of introduction, what character of people they were who are to be the subjects of salvation--the lost, the enslaved, and those that cannot save themselves."¹ Most of his outlines start in a manner similar to these three examples that represent the use of the device to obtain attention at the beginning of his sermon.

A third device is to "level a barrage of facts or questions at the listeners."² This device would be using both intensity and repetition to get and to hold attention. The analysis of Asbury's sermon outlines reveals that he infrequently used this device. Although he may have employed it in his preaching, the outlines, for the most part, are too brief to reveal the use of this technique. Seemingly, he may have used the device of a barrage of facts when he preached from Acts 26:17-18, "Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." About this text Asbury said:

I preached upon Acts 26, 17, 18. Many were the instances of deliverance; they bound him and scourged him, yet had the Jews no power over his life, which they so often sought. And the Gentiles,

¹Ibid., p. 133.

²Hance, p. 82.

to whom he was especially sent by the Son of God, what a description is given of their deplorable state! what blindness of mind, ignorance, idolatry, superstition, complicated and unaccountable wickedness! 'The power of Satan'--completely in his possession, body, soul, and spirit, in all their powers and passions--in infidelity and impenitence, under guilt of actual transgression. Thus Gospel truth and Gospel ministers find sinners; and they must be preached to with energy. And these ministers must be sent; and to be qualified for this mission, they must, like Paul, be convinced, convicted, and converted, and sanctified. Like him they must be preserved from the violence of the people; but especially from their indulgences and flatteries. 'Turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' A faithful minister will have these signs to follow him.¹

Because the text itself contains a number of facts, it can be inferred that Asbury's development of this text would also employ many facts as is evidenced by the first part of the outline. It seems that Asbury introduced his sermon with a number of instances of Paul's deliverance--a barrage of facts--and then he described the deplorable state of the Gentiles: "blindness of mind, ignorance, idolatry, superstition, complicated and unaccountable wickedness"--another barrage of facts.

A fourth device to get and hold attention is to "use narrative material."² This can include illustrations which are a sure way to hold attention. Also, the use of narrative can include the suggestion of talking about people who are interested in other people. The sermon outlines, recorded in Asbury's Journal, do not give any information about his use of narrative material to obtain

¹Clark, II, p. 796.

²Hance, p. 82.

and keep attention. Only once did he mention the use of stories--when he preached in New Haven, Connecticut. He said: "I had the honour of the president Stiles, Dr. Wales, and the Rev. Mr. Edwards, to hear me, and several of the collegians, with a few scattering citizens. I talked away to them very fast, telling them some little stories, whilst the sun shone in my face."¹ He then recorded a brief outline of his sermon. But outlines usually do not contain illustrations or anecdotes; consequently, it would be unjust to Asbury to claim he did not use them. One of his biographers wrote that he used many illustrations and anecdotes in his sermons.² In view of the fact that Asbury knew his Bible so well, it is natural to expect him to use many Biblical illustrations and anecdotes, which he did. Also, he used personal illustrations, incidents that had occurred, such as storms and earthquakes, and national problems and the war. Usually he would place a homiletic or spiritual interpretation upon them.³ Whether he used illustrations and anecdotes as materials of development, only, or whether he used them for attention, too, is unknown. Presumably, he used some of them for attention. For instance, he wrote:

Surely we stand in jeopardy every hour! This day the thunder and lightning struck four people dead on the spot. Awful scene! And will man still venture to be careless and wicked? I made some improvement⁴ on the subject in the evening.⁵

¹Clark, I, p. 678.

²Carroll, p. 124.

³Rudolph, p. 88.

⁴Employment or use.

⁵Clark, I, p. 125.

In this case, he seemingly used the incident of the storm and the tragedy connected with it as illustrations for attention.

A fifth device is the use of "humor . . . for getting and holding attention."¹ Because "humor has the ability to reduce many of our tensions . . . it has attention value."² Asbury seemed inclined to be humorous and witty in his informal conversations. In fact, he fought this trait, believing that it was evil for him to indulge in such frivolity. Entries in his Journal reveal his ability to use wit and humor. This is an example: "I made an attempt to preach on Matt. 25, 34-36; a marble-hearted congregation as well as Marbletown."³ How much humor did Asbury use in the pulpit? Because of the seriousness of his message, it would appear that he used very little. On the other hand, Strickland said: "Occasionally a slight sparkle of wit may be found playing like a sunshine over his grave sentences, and sometimes, though rarely, he indulged in a flight of imagination."⁴ Asbury commented in this manner concerning his use of humor: "I was condemned for telling humorous anecdotes, and knew not whether it was guilt or fear, lest my friends should think I go beyond the bounds of prudent liberty."⁵ Since he apparently was characteristically humorous and witty in his conversations and

¹Hance, p. 83.

²Brembeck, p. 272.

³Clark, II, p. 199.

⁴Strickland, p. 471.

⁵Clark, I, p. 365.

occasionally in his preaching, presumably he may have used both humor and wit to obtain and hold attention.

The sixth device of getting and holding attention is to "approach the platform deliberately and to pause for a moment before you speak."¹ Many times Francis Asbury had no platform from which to speak, and when he did have, little is known how he approached it. However, he was always as careful about his appearance to his audience as an itinerant could be. Nathan Bangs, who knew Asbury well, wrote in his Introduction to Strickland's The Pioneer Bishop: "Those who were acquainted with Asbury, as was the writer of this Introduction, cannot but remember his dignified appearance, his manly eloquence, and . . . solemn and commanding manner."² In all probability his first appearance obtained and helped to hold attention with many audiences.

The seventh device is the use of a "sudden dramatic gesture."³ It "will always attract the listeners' attention."⁴ Animation comes through movement, change, and variety. It seems that Asbury was a dramatic speaker using gestures, energy, animation, and vigor. Probably he used these as a means of obtaining and holding attention as he attempted to persuade his hearers to accept the Gospel message. He wrote about his animation and energy in the following manner: "I was much animated, and spoke loud and long."⁵ "I was

¹Hance, p. 83.

²Strickland, p. 10.

³Hance, p. 83.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Clark, I, p. 371.

zealous."¹ "I talked away to them very fast."² "I spoke with great rapidity for nearly two hours."³ It is probable that he was attempting to obtain and hold attention by these means. "He was not one to strive for effects, but for results. He was ardent, enthusiastic, with glowing lips and a throbbing heart."⁴ "When he spoke or preached it was with burning intensity. Terrible earnestness was characteristic of his preaching. His manner in preaching was awesome and terrifying."⁵ Concerning his earnestness in preaching he said of himself: "Could I be less earnest when I preach, I might have less bodily suffering; but it may not be."⁶ It seems that Asbury used many sudden dramatic gestures along with loud speaking, enthusiasm, earnestness, and zeal to maintain the attention of his hearers. About one meeting he commented: "We had as wild and disorderly a congregation as could well be without words and blows. I preached a little, and stormed a great deal."⁷ His noisy preaching gained attention in another manner: "I alarmed the town by the excessive noise I made, and thereby enlarged my congregation."⁸ "Though his pulpit exhibitions were the admiration and delight of those who heard him frequently, yet it must be admitted that he was not in general so edifying

¹Ibid., p. 383.

²Ibid., p. 678.

³Clark II, p. 105.

⁴Tipple, Asbury, p. 239.

⁵Ibid., p. 218.

⁶Clark, II, p. 709.

⁷Ibid., p. 45.

⁸Clark, I, p. 769.

to strangers."¹ Manifestly, he used dramatic gestures accompanied with zeal, enthusiasm, animation, and noise to attract the listeners' attention.

An eighth device used for getting and holding attention is the choice of language which "has a good deal of influence on the listeners' attention."² In all probability, Francis Asbury chose his language and his Scriptural texts in a manner that would attract the attention of his listeners. In describing his preaching, he frequently used such words as "simple," "plain," "pointed," "warm," "alarming," "close," "pure," and "direct." He seemed to use a great deal of care in selecting the texts in order to accomplish his purpose. For instance he used 1 Peter 4:17-18 a number of times: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Another text he used many times was 1 Timothy 1:15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The language of the first text is such that it would strike the hearts of the sinners with terror and the language of the second text is such that it would strike the hearts of sinners with love. Presumably,

¹Harlan L. Feeman, Francis Asbury's Silver Trumpet (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1950), p. 130.

²Hance, p. 83.

Asbury selected texts with language that would attract and hold the attention of the listeners in his audiences.

A ninth device to get and hold the attention of the audience "is to begin speaking with one extreme or the other in volume."¹ How much Asbury used his voice in this manner to get attention is unknown, but he did record in his Journal a number of times that he spoke loud and long. In all probability he did change his volume during a sermon in order to get attention. "Sometimes a sudden burst of eloquence would break forth in a manner which spoke a soul full of God, and like a mountain torrent swept all before it."² Here combined loudness and rapidity manifestly arrested the attention of his audience. In contrast, the following exemplifies the use of his voice to obtain attention. The occasion was a conference Sunday morning in Baltimore. The Bishop was preaching on the duty of parents.

Having uttered a severe reproof to those who neglect this duty, . . . he suddenly paused and then said: 'But you will say it is hard. Alas,' he added, letting his voice, which had been raised in a high, commanding tone which gave such a majesty to what he uttered, suddenly fall to a low and soft key, 'It is harder to be damned!' Those words dropped from his lips in a manner which indicated the deep sensations of his heart, and fell on the audience, now wrought up to the highest pitch of interest by what had preceded them, like the sudden precipitation of a cloud on the mown grass, and they were in a moment melted into tears.³

¹Ibid.

²Rudolph, p. 90.

³Mouzon, p. 39.

Consequently, it seems Asbury used both extremes in volume in his preaching, to get and to hold the attention of his audience.

The last device to get and hold the attention of the audience is to ask "the listeners to do something together, in unison."¹ It is questionable whether Asbury used this device to get attention. About the only known unison activity in his audiences was singing. He may have used others, but no record of them has been found.

An analysis of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury, from the point of view of attention, one of the materials of experience, reveals that he used a number of the factors of attention. He had change and variety, intensity, animation, conflict, the familiar, the novel, humor, had one dominant idea, was concrete and specific, appealed to the fundamental interests of people, talked about people, used illustrations, had a good appearance to the audience, used dramatic gestures, chose language carefully, and varied his volume in speaking. However, because there are no visible records of Francis Asbury's delivery, and because many of the devices of attention are delivery oriented, it is impossible to know, exactly, the degree that he employed the use of these devices.

Suggestion.--A third use of the materials of experience is suggestion, which is "an attempt to introduce an

¹Hance, p. 84.

idea indirectly into the mind of the listener, without direct references to that idea, at least at first."¹ Another definition of suggestion is:

Suggestion is the process in which a stimulus or an idea works in the margin of attention and provokes a response--the acceptance of an idea or action. The essence of the process is that persons believe or act without realizing, at the moment of response, what the stimuli are which touch off the response. They react without knowing why they have behaved thus. This is possible because at any moment of attention there is always a foreground or center (primary stimuli) that dominates mental activity and simultaneously there is a background or margin (consisting² of secondary stimuli) that fills out the experience.

Furthermore, the following needs to be considered. If a person "will reflect for a moment, he will realize that he is acting upon suggestion at almost every turn. Much, if not most, persuasion employs forms and methods which operate according to the laws of suggestion."³ This frame of reference, that most persuasion "employs forms and methods which operate according to the laws of suggestion," will be used in the investigation of suggestion that Francis Asbury may have used in his persuasive speaking.

There are some important ways that a speaker may use to influence or persuade his listeners indirectly. Some of these ways have been selected to use as guide lines, within the frame of reference mentioned above, in the examination of the use of suggestion in the message of Francis Asbury.

¹Ibid.

²Donald C. Bryant and Karl L. Wallace, Fundamentals of Public Speaking (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960), p. 329.

³Brembeck, p. 165.

Following are ways that suggestion may be used through the materials and language of the message:

1. Authority. In using authorities, the speaker can take pains to enhance their weight and importance. Use of the authority's name carries more weight than the weak phrase, 'authorities (or experts) agree that'. The speaker's own authoritativeness should not be neglected.
2. Imagery. The sharp, vivid image aids attention and perception because it enhances the intensity of an idea. Here suggestion is at work because over and above the raw meaning of the idea behind the image, the intensity of the image indirectly encourages understanding and acceptance.
3. Emulation. A powerful means of suggestion utilizes our tendency to do what others do.
4. Motives and emotions. At issue is this question: Should the speaker make them felt directly so that his listeners may be quite aware of a certain emotion? Or should he stimulate the emotion indirectly and thus make use of suggestion?
5. Binding listeners together. The greater the feeling of solidarity and oneness an audience has, the stronger and surer its favorable response is likely to be. To enhance the feeling of oneness a speaker can often stimulate his audience to respond as a whole.
6. The directive. This is a method of suggestion in which a speaker explicitly tells his audience what idea to accept or reject, and what conduct to follow or avoid. He may give the directive in two ways, directly or obliquely. In asking for the acceptance of an idea, he can do so obliquely by such statements as, 'I believe we all agree that. . . .'. 'We can accept this as fact. . . .'. On the other hand, in asking a listener to accept an idea, the forthright directive usually boomerangs and should be used only when the speaker is sure his audience is ready for it. Its usual form is the command: 'Accept this.' 'Reject that.'
7. Repetition. The recurrence of an idea at intervals promotes clarity; it also encourages the acceptance of the idea. The recurrence seems to exert a cumulative or piling-up effect in the fringe of attention, and we are for the most part unaware that the reinforcement has influenced our response. Competing ideas and stimuli are subordinated or fail to register at all; they are driven out of mind.¹

¹Bryant, pp. 330-339.

Motive appeals, as one of the materials of experience, have already been considered in this dissertation.¹ Even though this writer recognizes that motive appeals may be used indirectly for suggestion, this guide line will not be used in the development of suggestion.

"The directive" is used as a method of suggestion. When a speaker uses the directive directly, this is not suggestion but is a contradiction to the definition of suggestion which is "an attempt to introduce an idea indirectly." However, the oblique directive contains the element of suggestion, but the word "directive" is misleading in its use in this connection. This is a reservation which is considered in the use of the ways selected as guide lines for suggestion in the examination of Asbury's sermon outlines.

The first way of using suggestion through materials of experience is by authority.² Francis Asbury constantly referred to the Bible as the record of the revealed Word of God through Christ who was the authority of his preaching. Following is an example:

I preached on John 14, 6. ["I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."] 1. Christ is the way to God by precept, example, and power. 2. The truth; the true Messiah, revealing the truths of God, the standard and judge of all. 3. The life, by his merit and Spirit, leading to³ the knowledge of God in his perfections and glory.

¹Supra., pp. 322-340.

²Bryant, p. 330.

³Clark, I, pp. 772-773.

The following is a chronological substance outline of this sermon:

- I. Christ is the way to God
 - A. By precept
 - B. By example
 - C. By power
- II. Christ is the truth
 - A. The true Messiah, revealing the truths of God
 - B. The standard of all
 - C. The judge of all
- III. Christ is the life
 - A. By his merit
 - B. By his Spirit
 - C. By his leading to the knowledge of God
 - 1. In his perfections
 - 2. In his glory

Presumably, the authority of Christ was used as suggestion by Francis Asbury, when he preached this sermon. In the first division, "Christ is the way to God," the suggestion of the "way" by precept, example, and power," as the way to get to God, is authoritative. In the second division, there is suggestion of more authority because Christ is the "true Messiah revealing the truths of God." Then, in the third division there is the suggestion of the most or greatest authority, to "Christ who is life" that leads to the knowledge of God in his "perfections and glory."

A second way of using suggestion through materials of experience is by imagery. "The sharp, vivid image aids attention and perception because it enhances the intensity of an idea. Here . . . suggestion is at work, because over and above the raw meaning of the idea behind the image, the intensity of the image indirectly encourages understanding

and acceptance."¹ Since Jesus used much imagery in his teaching, and since Asbury relied mainly on the Bible for the substance of his sermons, he, too, used imagery in his preaching. One image that seems to suggest understanding and acceptance is the father-son relationship. To illustrate this the following sermon outline has been selected:

My subject was Philippians 2, 14,15: 'Do all things without murmurings or disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke.' First it was observed how Christians are brought into the relation of 'sons of God.' Second, The duties and privileges of that relation. Third, The purity and sincerity the subjects of this relation are called to experience. Fourth, That 'murmurings' either towards God, or good or bad men, ought to be avoided; and perverse 'disputings' cautiously guarded against; and in all duties, sufferings, and discipline, true Christian meekness and forbearance should be manifested.²

Because of the paragraph arrangement of Asbury's outline, a more usable chronological substance outline has been structured for the analysis of this sermon.

- I. How Christians are brought into the relation of "Sons of God"
- II. The duties and privileges of that relation
- III. The subjects of this relation are called to experience
 - A. Purity
 - B. Sincerity
- IV. Murmurings ought to be avoided
 - A. Towards God
 - B. Towards good men
 - C. Towards bad men
- V. Perverse "disputings" cautiously guarded against
- VI. True Christian meekness and forbearance should be manifested
 - A. In all duties
 - B. In all sufferings
 - C. In all discipline

¹Bryant, p. 331.

²Clark, II, p. 357.

It seems that the concept of the spiritual birth of a Christian, as stated in the first division, "How Christians are brought into the relation of 'Sons of God'," could have been suggested through the well-known image of the family. Asbury may have used the analogy that Jesus used in John 3 when he conversed with Nicodemus about being born again. Here the family relationship is involved, for a man has to be born into the world, physically, to become a son of his parents; similarly, a man has to be born into the Kingdom of God, spiritually, in order to become a son of God. Presumably, Asbury may have used this image to intensify the suggestion that his hearers become sons of God. In the second division, "The duties and privileges of that relation," another image in all probability was used for suggestion. Here, again, both the duties that a man has to perform for his earthly father, because he is his son, and the privileges he enjoys in his father's family, because he is a son, may have been paralleled, in comparison, with the duties a Christian has to perform for his heavenly Father, and the privileges he enjoys because he is a spiritual son of God.

The image of this family relationship manifestly could have been used throughout the entire sermon to suggest that his hearers become "sons of God without rebuke." Assuming that Asbury did do this, then the third division, "The subjects of this relationship are called to experience purity and sincerity," suggests that the unbroken and

sincere relationships between children and parents are to be maintained by mutual understanding and communication, and that the same relationships are to be maintained between spiritual children and their heavenly Father.

In the fourth division, "Murmurings ought to be avoided," the image of the family presumably was used by Asbury to suggest to his listeners to avoid murmurings. This could be negative suggestion, depending on the presentation. As murmurings of children against their parents and against other people are devastating to the well-being of the human family, so are they destructive to the relationships between the spiritual sons and the heavenly Father in the spiritual family. Closely related to this image is the fifth division, "Perverse 'disputings' guarded against." A similar image may have been created by Asbury to suggest that perverse disputings are detrimental and harmful in both the human and spiritual families, and that they should cautiously guard against them.

In the last division, "True Christian meekness and forbearance should be manifested in all duties, sufferings, and discipline," still another image, Asbury presumably used as suggestion to encourage the true Christians to strive for these qualities. It is probable this suggestion was strengthened by the image of the analogy of the human and spiritual families. As a son in the human family learns there are family duties to perform, sufferings to endure, and discipline to instruct in order to be an acceptable

member of the human family, in like manner, a spiritual son learns that there are duties to perform, sufferings to endure, and discipline to instruct in order to manifest true Christian meekness and forbearance.

A third way of using suggestion through materials of experience is by emulation. "A powerful means of suggestion utilizes our tendency to do what others do."¹ Francis Asbury seemingly used suggestion through emulation a number of times. When he came to America, he suggested itineracy as the best method of evangelizing the New World by emulating the Wesleyan procedure. Furthermore, he seemed to use suggestion by emulating the organization of Methodist societies, the keeping of the Methodist rules, and governing the churches and preachers through the founder of the movement, John Wesley. In all probability, he set himself up before his preachers as an itinerant, a Bible student, a man of devotion and prayer, and an evangelist suggesting to them that they should emulate him in their work.

As an example of suggestion by emulation this representative sermon outline has been selected:

I preached . . . on, 'He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.'

1. The Christian soldier has to overcome the world, sin, and the devil, with his temptations.
2. He fights under the banner of Christ, who is the Captain of his salvation.
3. His armour is described by St. Paul, Ephes. 6.
4. His inheritance--Christian tempers, and the things promised to the seven Churches; and finally, glory--

¹Bryant, p. 331.

'Will be his God'--giving him wisdom, truth, love--
 'He shall be my son'--a son partakes of the nature
 and property of the father, and doeth his will; so
 it is with those who are the children of God.

Although this is one of Asbury's well-structured outlines, a chronological substance outline has been prepared as a more usable form for analysis.

- I. The Christian soldier has to overcome
 - A. The world
 - B. Sin
 - C. The devil
 - D. Temptations
- II. The Christian soldier fights
 - A. Under the banner of Christ
 - B. With Christ as his Captain
- III. The Christian armour
 - A. Loins girt about with truth
 - B. Breastplate of righteousness
 - C. Feet shod with gospel of peace
 - D. Shield of faith
 - E. Helmet of salvation
 - F. Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God
- IV. The Christian's inheritance
 - A. Christian tempers
 - B. Things promised to the seven Churches
 - C. Will be his God, giving
 - 1. Wisdom
 - 2. Truth
 - 3. Love
 - D. He shall be my son
 - 1. Son partakes of the nature of the father
 - 2. Son partakes of the property of the father
 - 3. Son doeth the will of the father

In this sermon Francis Asbury probably used suggestion by means of emulation, which is the tendency to do what others are doing. He may have compared the soldier in the army with the Christian soldier, and by means of emulation through suggestion, he may have persuaded his hearers to imitate the Christian soldier.

As the soldier enlists in the army to fight his enemies and to conquer them, so does the Christian soldier

enlist in the Lord's army to fight and conquer his foes, which are "The world, sin, the devil, and his temptations." Not only is the suggestion of emulating the victorious Christian soldier persuasive, as recorded in the first division, but the suggestion of the Captain and the flag is also persuasive, as given in the second division. Likely the analogy continued as Asbury may have compared the country's flag to the banner of Christ, and the captain of the army to Christ as the Captain.

In the third division, "The Christian armour," which is the Christian's equipment, was probably compared to the soldier's equipment, as the analogy was developed. The description of the Christian soldier equipped with all the armor needed for battle must have been persuasive as he may have suggested to his hearers to emulate the Christian soldier thus equipped.

The last division, "The Christian's inheritance," enumerates the rewards of the Christian soldier who is victorious. By implication, the analogy with the soldier of the army was used no longer. But the suggestion by emulating the rewards is persuasive, because Asbury named a number of them such as the Christian virtues, the promises made to the seven Churches in Asia, and the promise that God will be the Christian's God. The suggestion is climaxed by the emulation of the victorious Christian soldier's becoming a son of God and partaking of the nature and property of the Father.

The fourth way of using suggestion through materials of experience is by the use of motives and emotions, but this concept has been developed elsewhere in this dissertation.¹

A fifth way of using suggestion through materials of experience is binding the listeners in order to get a unified response from the group. Probably singing was one means used for binding the listeners together, because the Methodists were singing people.

The Methodist Revival was a singing revival. The Methodists were happy folk. They sang at meeting, on the way to meeting, on the way home from meeting, at home, at work, at leisure. In fact, that was one of the charges sometimes brought against them--that they sang too much. . . . The two Wesley brothers and Whitefield were from² the beginning eager to hear their congregations sing.

In all probability, Francis Asbury employed the use of singing in his services as a means of binding his listeners together in order to obtain a unison response.

A sixth way of using suggestion through materials of experience is by the directive. "This is a method of suggestion in which a speaker explicitly tells his audience what idea to accept or reject, and what conduct to follow or avoid. He may give the directive in two ways, directly or obliquely. In asking for the acceptance of an idea, he can do so obliquely by such a phrase as, 'I believe we all

¹Supra., pp. 322-340.

²Luccock, p. 105.

agree that. . . ."¹ The usual form of the directive is a command, such as "Accept this," or "Reject that."²

As mentioned before, the writer of this dissertation does not believe the "directive" used "directly" is suggestion, that a command is direct appeal and not suggestion. The comments Francis Asbury made about his own preaching, as recorded in his Journal, seem to indicate that he must have used the direct method a good deal. "I feel as if I ought not to preach one sermon without being pointed and very full upon the doctrine of purity."³ "I was very pointed on sinners and backslidden souls."⁴ "I think my words pierced the hearts of some like a sword. I neither spared myself nor my hearers."⁵ "I spoke . . . and was awfully severe; perhaps too much so."⁶ These are samplings of the many times he referred to his preaching in this manner.

If the directive can be given obliquely, as defined above, then suggestion would be present because the idea is introduced indirectly into the minds of the hearers. A representative outline has been selected to illustrate the oblique manner of suggestion, which outline follows:

¹Bryant, p. 337.

²Ibid.

³Clark, II, p. 518.

⁴Ibid., p. 573.

⁵Ibid., p. 639.

⁶Ibid., p. 649.

I endeavoured to preach on 2 Cor. 13,5. ["Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you."] In discoursing on the above text I pursued nearly the following method--

- I. Such as profess to have experienced religion should examine whether they have not let some fundamental doctrines slip.
- II. Examine into the nature and effects of faith--it is the substance of things hoped for, in a penitent state; and the evidence of things not seen, in a justified state.
- III. They should know themselves, whether they are seekers, believers, or backsliders.
- IV. They should prove themselves, to themselves, to their ministers, the world, and the church of God.
- V. That if they have heart-religion, Christ is in them--the meek, loving pure mind of Christ.¹

The Scriptural text itself has the direct approach, because there are three commands given: "Examine," "prove," and "know." But Asbury evidently did not approach his audience with this kind of direct appeal. In the first division, "Such as profess to have experienced religion should examine . . .," is an oblique suggestion that those who "profess" should "examine," and in the rest of the first division is given what those who profess should examine, "whether they have not let some fundamental doctrines slip."

The second division, "Such as profess to have experienced religion should examine into the nature and effects of faith," again, is oblique suggestion. Then Scripture (Hebrews 11:1) is used to explain and obliquely suggest the "nature" and "effects" of faith: "It is the substance of things hoped for, in a penitent state; and the evidence of things not seen, in a justified state."

In the third division, "They should know themselves, whether they are seekers, believers, or backsliders," oblique suggestion is used because Asbury did not directly say "You should be a seeker, or a believer," or that "You are a backslider and should repent."

The same type of oblique suggestion was used in the fourth division, "They should prove themselves." Then, by oblique suggestion, Asbury enumerated to whom "they should prove themselves": "to themselves," "to their ministers," "to the world," and "to the church of God."

In the last division, "That if they have heart-religion," oblique suggestion, then, "Christ is in them." In the final part of this division, "the meek, loving, pure mind of Christ," oblique suggestion is employed again, because if Christ is in the hearts of his hearers, then they will have the "mind of Christ," which mind is "meek," "loving," and "pure."

The last way of using suggestion through materials of experience is by repetition. In all probability Asbury used repetition in the preaching of his message and presumably for the purpose of suggestion. In the following sermon the word "night" and its synonym, "darkness," seem to be repeated effectively:

I preached on Romans 13, 12: 'The night is far spent.' What constitutes the natural night? Absence of light, ignorance, insecurity, uncertainty. The Gospel watchman crieth the hours. The Scripture night; from Adam to Moses. The patriarchal stars, and those who preceded them as dim lights, Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham. The moon-light of the law, the

Sabbaths, the sacrifices. But this night was about to pass away, although darker just before the dawn of the Gospel day; and it is thus in nature. The Jews had corrupted themselves in religion and in manners. The night of Judaism and Paganism had nearly passed away. When Paul wrote in the year sixty, the Gospel had obtained in Europe, Lesser Asia, Greece, in the city of Rome; and had spread from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean. This night has returned occasionally. It came upon the Asiatic Churches because of their unfaithfulness: where once were the Gospel and its martyrs, are now Greek 'papas,' and Greek superstitions. From the third to the thirteenth century, the Church of Rome brought darkness upon Europe by prohibiting the Bible, and by the introduction of her own mummeries and idolatries. Philosophy, so called, with Voltaire for its high priest, brought night and destruction upon France; judicially, to avenge on the bloody house of Bourbon the blood of the Protestant martyrs. And would not some of our great men, if they dared, bring a night of infidelity on this land? Who sees them in regular attendance on the house of God? 'Let us cast off the works of darkness.' Let us not sin in practice. Let us cast off evil tempers, desires, and affections. 'The armour of light' (see Ephesians 6, 11-17), perfect faith, perfect hope, perfect obedience, perfect love.¹

The key word in the text is "night," and Asbury repeated the word, or some other word meaning night, eight or ten times, and then the antonym of night, light, was repeated about half as many times. In all probability he repeated these words as a means of suggestion.

The study of suggestion, as related to the message of Francis Asbury, reveals that he used most, if not all, of the ways of suggestion--one of the materials of experience. It is probable that he used authority, emulation, and the oblique directive more than the others. It seems his use of suggestion, along with attention and motive

¹Clark, II, p. 790.

appeals, contributed to the persuasiveness of his message. The study reveals that he used materials of experience and materials of personal proof along with explanation in many of his sermons.

Structure

Structure will be considered under the rubrics of introduction, body, conclusion, and transitions through the adaptation of a form presented by Theodore Clevenger.¹ "In its broadest sense, disposition [structure] embraces the following matters: the emergence of a central theme, the general method of arrangement adopted for the speech, and the order in which the parts of the discourse are developed."² Each one of these will be treated in the following manner. "The emergence of a central theme" will be considered in the introduction under the purpose sentence. "The general method of arrangement adopted for the speech" will be considered in the body under the plan of the speech. "The order in which the parts of the discourse are developed" will be considered in the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.

Even though Francis Asbury employed exposition or explanation in the development of many of his sermons, he nearly always preached a persuasive message. Therefore,

¹Theodore Clevenger, Jr., "The Rhetorical Jigsaw Puzzle: A Device for Teaching Certain Aspects of Speech Composition," Speech Teacher, volume 12, p. 145.

²Thornsen, p. 393.

the treatment of the elements of structure will be within the framework of persuasive speaking.

Introduction

The first element of structure to be examined is the introduction. "In all persuasive talks a major purpose of the introduction is to establish rapport between speaker and audience; to make the listeners feel at ease, to induce them to like and respect the speaker, and, consequently, to have confidence in what he is about to say."¹

Attention material.--Of the many different kinds of introductions that can be used as attention material, the following are basic types.

1. The unrelated introduction. The unrelated introduction consists of telling jokes or stories, or saying anything the speaker may think will gain the hearers' attention.
2. The acknowledgment introduction. In this technique the speaker spends his entire introduction in greeting the assembled dignitaries and other guests, in acknowledging the chairman's speech of introduction, and in paying compliments to the audience.
3. The occasion introduction. In this technique the speaker builds his introduction out of aspects of the occasion.
4. The illustration-quotation introduction. In this kind of introduction the speaker begins by catching his hearers' attention with a story, a description of some event or situation, or a striking quotation. It differs from the unrelated introduction in that it does relate, more or less, to the occasion or purpose of the talk.
5. The direct introduction. In this introduction the speaker announces to his listeners exactly what he intends to argue for and then proceeds to do it.²

¹Hance, p. 244.

²Ibid., pp. 244-245.

A limited amount of information on the introduction is given in the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury. An examination of the two hundred outlines reveals that few contain introductions, as classified above, to gain attention. One instance, of the "unrelated introduction," he gave in his Journal: "I talked away to them very fast, telling them some little stories."¹ Presumably, he may have used stories and humor in introducing other sermons to get attention, because he was a good story-teller, using both wit and humor.²

It is questionable whether Francis Asbury used the "acknowledgment introduction" for attention. An examination of the sermon outlines does not reveal that he used this kind.

He seemed to use the "occasion introduction," infrequently, except in the special occasion sermons where it was employed for attention. Following is an example of a funeral sermon:

I preached at Lebanon, [Ohio] by request of conference, a memorial sermon for Doctor Coke: my subject was Matt. 5, 16: 'Let your light so shine before men.' The Gospel light, in all its fulness of grace and power, the reflected light of that Light of the world, manifested in faith and in obedience in every grade and class of believers. Ministers should be resplendent like a city illuminated in the night; a great light amidst Churches in darkness and slumber; Like Doctor Coke, whose effulgence beamed forth in missions, in labours, in Europe, in America, in the isles of the sea, and in Asia. I took occasion to particularize the abundant labours of this distinguished man of God.³

¹Clark, I, p. 678.

²Supra., pp. 347.

³Clark, II, p. 792.

The introduction contains the Scriptural text and attention material to the last printed sentence. When he said, "I took occasion to particularize . . .," he probably started the body of his sermon, the outline of which he did not give.

It seems that Asbury used the "illustration-quotation introduction," particularly the striking quotation, to get the attention of his audience. Practically all of his sermon outlines started with the Scriptural text, from which he preached, and it was significant and meaningful, because presumably it was familiar, novel, vital, or perhaps expressed a conflict. This example illustrates the use of the striking quotation with a brief explanation to obtain attention:

I was enabled to be close in preaching on Matt. 18,3: 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.' In my introduction I showed that the being converted here mentioned is the same word which in other places is translated, 'born again'; answering to the new creation and resurrection.¹

The "direct introduction," the one in which the Scriptural text was given, followed by an immediate development of the text, seemed to be a customary practice of Francis Asbury. For instance, he said, "I gave a short sermon, on, Rom. 8, 9: 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.'"

- I. How we are to know when we have the Spirit of Christ; by the operations, gifts, consolations, and fruits of the Spirit.

¹Clark, I, p. 765.

- II. We are none of his if we are not interested in the offices, if not partakers of the redemption and privileges of Christ.
- III. That none can be interested in Christ, who are not partakers of the spirit of Jesus.¹

It is not known what Asbury may have said between the announcement of his Scriptural text and the beginning of his first division. If he explained the text, illustrated it, or told an anecdote, this sermon outline would not exemplify the direct introduction, but if he gave his Scriptural text to his audience, and, then, started immediately to develop his first division, this would be a direct introduction.

Orienting material.--Orienting material in the introduction usually will give the purpose sentence, and sometimes, the partitioning of the speech.

Purpose sentence: A purpose sentence is a "concise and accurate statement of what you want to accomplish."²

A statement is a declarative sentence formulating an idea, a feeling, a judgment, an opinion, a matter of inquiry, which needs development through particularization, illustration, concretion, interpretation, reinforcement, or support of some sort if it is to convey its intended meaning to the audience to whom it is addressed.³

An examination of the outlines of Francis Asbury's sermons reveals that in most of them he employed a purpose sentence in the form of a Scriptural text. This was an important part of the introduction, in whatever form it

¹Clark, II, p. 254.

²Hance, p. 24.

³Bryant, p. 46.

may have taken, because Asbury always preached to his text and not from it in the development of his sermon.¹ Many of his sermon outlines illustrate the use of the Scriptural text for his purpose sentence. The following is a typical outline--one of the better structured ones:

'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' First, the light of your principles and doctrine. Second, The light of your experience. Third, The light of your tempers. Fourth, The light of your practice, that they may see it manifested in virtue and piety, and be converted to God.²

The Scriptural text, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven," is the purpose sentence in this sermon. Asbury took the one word, "light," from the purpose sentence to use as the key word for each one of his divisions in which he used that part of the purpose sentence to strengthen his entire outline, and, presumably his sermon. The use of the purpose sentence was the strongest kind of orienting material that Asbury used in the introductions of his sermons.

Partition: Francis Asbury infrequently used partition as orienting material in his introductions. This example is not typical or representative but is an illustration manifesting what he did with this one sermon.

I preached at Fell's Point: my subject, Isaiah 62, 1: 'For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace.'
Introduction. Zion--the interests and welfare of the Church: Jerusalem--the interests of the State.
General propositions. On what principles we should

¹Tipple, Asbury, p. 255.

²Clark, II, p. 417.

calculate the true interests of the Church and State--who are concerned--what are the ways and means, and what the instruments to be used for the promotion of their welfare.¹

This outline has been cast into a chronological substance outline for more convenient examination.

Introduction

- I. Zion--interests and welfare of the Church
- II. Jersualem--the interests of the State

Body

- I. Principles upon which the true interests of the Church and State are calculated
- II. What are the ways and means
- III. What are the instruments to be used for the promotion of their welfare

The introduction is not an exact partitioning of the sermon because he had two parts: "Zion," representing "the interests and welfare of the Church," and "Jerusalem," representing the interests of the State. Instead of using these as the two major divisions of the sermon, he had the "principles," "ways and means," and "instruments," as the key words in the three divisions of the body, but which, evidently, contained the "interests and welfare of the Church" and the "interests of the State," presented in the introduction. Therefore, this introduction is not good partitioning, but it does contain orienting materials because it is the topical interpretation that Asbury made from his topic sentence, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace."

The study of the introductions, as part of the structure of Asbury's sermon outlines, reveals that he used the quotation (Scriptural texts) and the direct introductions

¹Clark, II, p. 498.

more than the unrelated and occasion introductions, and that he likely used the acknowledgment introduction very little, as attention and orienting materials. Furthermore, the study reveals that he used the purpose sentence in practically every sermon outline and that he did not use partition for orienting materials in his introductions.

Body

The examination of the body of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury will include the speech plan, the main points, sub-points, and the supporting materials.

Plan of speech.--Speaking plans vary from the strictly logical to the primarily nonlogical, according to the speaker's estimate of the particular speaking situation and of the nature of his audience. Many methods are available for classifying the kinds of speech plans that may be used. Speaking plans are usually personal, subjective. Each experienced speaker has his own 'ways' of organizing a talk for delivery.¹

Several speech plans have been suggested, such as, the deductive speaking plan, the inductive speaking plan, and the combined deductive-inductive speaking plan.²

An investigation of the speaking plans of Francis Asbury, as given in his sermon outlines, reveals that he primarily used the deductive speaking plan. He usually had a Scriptural text for his purpose sentence, and, then, he would partition the text into parts which became the divisions. Sometimes the exact words of the Scripture were

¹Hance, p. 236.

²Ibid., pp. 236-239.

used, and at other times, a topical outline was structured, based upon the Scriptural text.

The deductive speaking plan

proceeds from statement of purpose to particulars. The speaking plan is essentially argumentative. It consists of a purpose sentence, one or more major reasons in support of the purpose sentence, and evidence and further reasoning supporting the major points. Furthermore, the speaker employs illustrations or other experience or sensory materials to make his¹ talk interesting and persuasive to his hearers.

The outline on Isaiah 62:10 is an example of the partitioning of the text and the use of the deductive speaking plan.

I preached on Isaiah 62:10: "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." 1. The charge to the ministry to go through the gates as ministers and Christians. 2. Prepare the way--removing all the difficulties. 3. Cast up the highway--repentance, regeneration, and sanctification. 4. Gather out the stones--wicked ministers and people. 5. Set up the standard--that is, form the Christian church; give² the standard of Christian doctrine and experience.

The "statement of purpose" is the Scriptural text. "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." This text is partitioned into five divisions with the use of the language of the text, mainly, making it a textual sermon. Each one of the five divisions, presumably, was developed deductively with application through means of support that are not

¹Ibid., p. 237.

²Clerk, II, p. 93.

present in the outline. The first division, "The charge to the ministry to go through the gates as ministers and Christians," supports the purpose sentence and is a part of it. In the second division, "Prepare the way--removing all the difficulties," the next step is taken in the deductive plan, the preparation of the minister. The third division, "cast up the highway," another step in the deductive plan, probably means the arranging of the highway (the minister's life) into a suitable form, or order, through repentance, regeneration, and sanctification, the deductive development of subdivisions. The fourth division, "Gather out the stones," moves to the negative aspect of the duties of the minister, but is still a part of the deductive plan. The last division, "Set up the standard," completes the deductive speaking plan. This sermon represents many of the speaking plans that Asbury employed: a partitioning of the text and a developing of the parts deductively.

The following is another outline that has been selected for analysis:

- I preached from 1 Samuel 10,6: 'The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.'
 Here I took occasion to show,
- I. The operations of the Spirit on the heart of man--to convince, convict, convert, and sanctify.
 - II. The effects of these operations.
 - 1. A strong inclination to speak for God. This is the duty of every Christian.
 - 2. A great change--in judgment, desire, spirit, temper, and practice.¹

¹Clark, I, p. 152.

This outline manifestly exemplifies the dividing to the text to make a topical outline, which follows the deductive speaking plan. The first division, "The operations of the Spirit on the heart of man," comes directly from the first part of the text. "The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee." The second division, "The effects of these operations," including the two subdivisions: "A strong inclination to speak for God," and "A great change," come from the second part of the text, "and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man." This speaking plan, the deductive, was employed by Francis Asbury in most of his sermons. However, in this particular outline, a sub-plan of the deductive plan is evident: the cause-effect. The first division, "The operations of the Spirit on the heart of man," is a cause that will bring about "the effects of these operations," "a strong inclination to speak for God," and "a great change." Therefore, this particular sermon was structured using the deductive speaking plan with a cause-effect relationship.

After the purpose sentence, the statement, or the Scriptural text, and the speaking plan have been selected, the development of the speech comes next.

By development we mean the sum of such methods, materials, and language as should serve, with the particular listeners involved, to make particular, to make concrete, to reinforce, to enliven, to support, or otherwise to fill out the meaning and significance of the statement. Anything a speaker says,

then, which tends to prove his point, explain his idea, or make his statement clear, vivid, or attractive to his audience is considered development.¹

Main points.--In this development the main points in the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury will be considered next. This part of his development is found in almost all of his sermon outlines, as recorded in his Journal. The following is an example:

- I preached in Lynn, on 2 Chron. 15,2, the prophecy of Azariah by the Spirit.
- I. We are to seek Jehovah in the means; by the direction of the word and Spirit; through Christ, by repentance and faith.
 - II. The Lord will be with his people, as a Father and God; in his wisdom, love, truth, and mercy; at all times and places; in every strait and difficulty.
 - III. We should be with God as his children, to fear, trust in, worship, and serve him.
 - IV. The breach of the covenant by idolatry, departing from the love, fear, and confidence they have in him.
 - V. That the Lord will withdraw from such souls.²

In order to make the divisions clearer in this outline, a chronological substance outline was formed.

- I. We are to seek Jehovah in the means
 - A. By the direction of the word
 - B. By the direction of the Spirit
 - 1. Through Christ by repentance
 - 2. Through Christ by faith
- II. The Lord will be with his people, as a Father and God
 - A. In wisdom, love, truth, and mercy
 - B. At all times and places
 - C. In every strait and difficulty
- III. We should be with God as his children
 - A. To fear
 - B. To trust in
 - C. To worship
 - D. To serve him

¹Bryant, p. 46.

²Clark, I, p. 766.

- IV. The breach of the covenant
 - A. By idolatry
 - B. By departing from the love they have of him
 - C. By departing from the fear they have of him
 - D. By departing from the confidence they have in him
- V. The Lord will withdraw from such souls

In this particular outline Asbury had five main heads, topically arranged, coming from the Scriptural text. The arrangement and the phrasing of the main heads are representative of his procedure. The fourth main head, "The breach of the covenant" is not a complete sentence, while the other four are. There is little apparent parallelism in the main divisions, but there is unity with his purpose sentence, the Scriptural text, "The Lord is with you, while you be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."

The next outline, that has been selected, represents Asbury's best structure of main heads in a sermon outline. He said:

- I preached upon Luke 3,6: 'All flesh shall see the salvation of God':--
- I. The excellencies of this salvation: it is a common salvation, a great salvation, the salvation of God.
 - II. The nature of this salvation: in its degrees of justification, sanctification, and glorification.
 - III. The present subjects of salvation--infants and believers. The ample means furnished to all, that they may see this salvation--faithful ministers, faithful, consistent, praying professors, and all the holy ordinances of the Church.¹

In this outline the purpose sentence, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God," contains the word "salvation" which is the significant part of the Scriptural text and is found in each one of the three

¹Clark, II, p. 459.

three divisions: "The excellencies of this salvation," "The nature of this salvation," and "The present subjects of salvation." Not only does the key word, "salvation," hold the purpose sentence and the divisions together as one unit, but each division has a key word, which, presumably, in like manner, holds each division together in unity. In the first division the key word is "excellencies," in the second, "nature," and in the third, "subjects." This is good parallelism in structure.

Sub-points.--Development also includes the sub-points used in the outline. Francis Asbury frequently gave his sub-points, along with the main points, of his sermon outlines. The following chronological substance outline of the sermon, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God" exemplifies his use of sub-points:

- I. The excellencies of this salvation
 - A. It is a common salvation
 - B. It is a great salvation
 - C. It is the salvation of God
- II. The nature of this salvation: in its degrees
 - A. Of justification
 - B. Of sanctification
 - C. Of glorification
- III. The present subjects of salvation
 - A. Infants
 - B. Believers

The three sub-points, "It is a common salvation," "It is a great salvation," and "It is the salvation of God," are subordinate to the first main point and develop it, meeting the requirement that "subheads and all subordinate

details should develop the main heads directly and unmistakably."¹

The three sub-points, "justification," "sanctification," and "glorification" develop the second division, "The nature of this salvation" by bringing to light the degrees of salvation. Again, these sub-points meet the test for proper subordination.

The two sub-points, "Infants" and "Believers," are "The present subjects of salvation," making them subordinate to the third main point, and, still again, meeting the test for proper subordination. The second sub-point, "Believers," is amplified further by explanation and development, but it is subordination.

Supporting materials.--The final part of the development of the body of the speech is the supporting materials, which include example, comparison, statistics and factual material, definition, testimony, and restatement. The reader will notice that these terms were used in the discussion of materials of development, but here they will be considered from the point of view of structure. It is taken for granted that it is very difficult, if at all possible, to separate supporting materials as materials of development from supporting materials as means of structure, and, the writer is aware that supporting materials by their very nature, are, primarily, materials of

¹Bryant, p. 156.

development. However, an attempt will be made to treat supporting materials from the point of view of structure--how they are used to arrange or to structure supports.

An examination of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury reveals that the structure of the supporting materials is often missing. However, those outlines, which are detailed enough in their structure to warrant close study, reveal that example, comparison, definition, testimony, and restatement are the devices of structure most frequently used.

Example: An example may be in the form of specific instances or particulars that are not developed, or, in the form of illustrations that have been developed. "Example is the detailing, sketching, narrating, describing, or otherwise setting before the audience of typical circumstances of characteristic cases, of particular instances which help to make clear, vivid, or credible the statement which the speaker wants his audience to accept."¹

In all probability Asbury used example in the following sermon:

- My subject was Mark 8, 34.
- I. I observed the harmony of the evangelists, Matthew and Luke with Mark.
 - II. That our Lord had given the clusters of the grapes of the promised land in blessings and promises.
 - III. He had given such demonstrations of his power upon the bodies of men; the dead were raised, the hungry fed, the lepers cleansed, the lame and the blind were restored, the wind and the sea were at his command.

¹Bryant, p. 47.

- IV. He opened the distinguishing conditions of discipleship; the denial of self in every temper and affection that is evil. They that seek to save their lives by denying Christ, shall lose soul and body; if it is through pride and shame, Christ will not dishonour himself by owning such in the day of judgment.¹

If Asbury used the examples, "The dead raised," "The hungry fed," "The lepers cleansed," "The lame walked," "The blind saw," "The wind calmed," and "The sea stilled," as "demonstrations of his power," in the third division, as the means of structuring a series of illustrations to be developed, then these examples would structure or arrange his means of development. If he just referred to the examples, as instances, with no development, then the examples would not be used for structuring this part of the sermon. In all probability, he developed each example into an illustration, which would mean he used examples for structure.

The next outline illustrates the use of example in the structure of the sermon:

My subject . . . was 1 Kings 9, 6-9. It was observed on the first head of the discourse, What the pious Israelites had professed, experienced, and practiced, namely, the knowledge, worship, ordinances, and service of the true and glorious Jehovah--they and their godly children had an experience of convicting, converting, and sanctifying grace through a promised Messiah; and had pardon of sin, and peace with God. Israelites indeed--enjoying the love of God, and walking in loving, living, obedience to all the known commandments of God. Secondly, How they might partially return from following the Lord: and, again, how they might wholly depart from God. Thirdly, The dreadful consequences. In this discourse the parallel was drawn, and a close application made, to the rising generation.

¹Clark, II, p. 241.

Some sentiments were expressed upon the burning of the former house; the probabilities of the latter house also being destroyed, unless defended by the Almighty.¹

This sermon exemplifies Asbury's use of an extended illustration for the structure of his entire sermon. In the first division he described the profession, experience, and practice of the pious Israelites; in the second, the relationship they had with their Lord; and in the third, the dreadful consequences they experienced by wholly departing from God.

Comparison: A second type of supporting materials is comparison and contrast. "Comparison and contrast are . . . concerned with showing likenesses and differences among objects, ideas, and situations. The former puts stress upon illuminating similarities; the latter on dissimilarities."² Francis Asbury seemed to use both comparison and contrast a good deal in his sermons. The following brief outline illustrates his employment of this supporting material to structure his whole sermon. "My subject . . . was 1 Cor. 15, 22: 'As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.' First, Our union with Adam, and the unhappy consequences. Secondly, Our union with Christ, and the happy consequences."³ The first part of each of the two divisions, "Our union with Adam" and "Our union with Christ" is the use of contrast to structure the relationship between the two "unions." In like manner, the second

¹Clark, II, p. 159.

²Bryant, p. 47.

³Clark, II, p. 285.

part of each one of the two divisions, "the unhappy consequences," and "the happy consequences," is the use of contrast to structure the relationship between the two "consequences."

Factual information: Another type of supporting material is factual information.

When we say that a speaker knows what he is talking about, that he has the facts on his subject, we usually mean that he has filled out and supported his ideas with plenty of information--with factual data, with figures and statistical material, with observation, all of which may be verified independently of the speaker.¹

Presumably, Francis Asbury may have used factual data, figures and statistical material, which could be verified independently of the speaker, in the materials of development of his sermons. His letters often contain factual information such as the one he wrote to Stith Mead, a Presiding elder, in 1807, a part of which follows:

Since the Virginia Conference I have ridden above 3000 miles. We have great peace in all our conferences, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, great and good prospects. New England great increase of preachers, and openings. Generally increase this year, preachers 103, 32 located, increase of members 1420. By making comparison between the British and American Connection, Methodism began in Britain 1730. In the British Empire of Kingdoms and Islands, above 30 million souls to operate amongst; the minutes of last year, number of members in Britain 150,974, the number of Methodists in the States and Canada 144,590. The British Kingdoms 900 square miles of operation. The American state above 22,000 square miles. They have had only from two to three, and three to five million to operate among. Methodism began in America 1763 and 1770 but chiefly; as very little was done till the latter end of the year '71 except a small beginning in [New] York and Philadelphia.²

¹Bryant, p. 47.

²Clark, III, p. 370.

An examination of Asbury's sermon outlines reveals that he infrequently used factual data or figures and statistical material as supporting material for materials of development. Further examination of the outlines reveals that he seldom used factual data as supporting material to structure a sermon. The following sermon outline is a possible example of the use of factual information as supporting materials for structure:

My subject was Luke 22, 61, 62: 'And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.' The Gospels will harmonize here by John, who was witness to the whole. Peter denied thrice; First, to the damsel who keep the door; John having asked leave of the high priest to bring in Peter. Secondly, when the kinsman or cousin of Malchus, whose ear Peter cut off, witnessed, possibly, by the young man, asked him, 'Did not I see thee in the garden with him?' Thirdly, when the conversation is taken up in company with the servants of the high priest, and one of them asks, 'Art thou not one of his disciples?' The previous character of Peter may be noticed--a married man, not a youth; forward, ardent, as was seen on many occasions. When faithfully warned, he pledged himself with overweening confidence. His offence was, First, taking unallowed means of defence--like his pretended successors, the popes: Secondly, following too far off: Thirdly, denying his Lord;--the lie, the oath, and their repetition, follow of course. What was the subject of Peter's denial? Did he deny Christ was the eternal Son of God--the Saviour of the world in all his sacred office? No: Peter's crime was, that he denied his discipleship; and this is the crime of which so many modern apostates are guilty. Who now deny the Lord? Backsliders, baptized infidels, careless seekers of salvation, slothful believers, and those who have fallen from sanctification by the neglect of the works of mercy, charity, and piety. 'The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.' Ah! he was obliged to go out with disgrace; he had entered with honour. But he could not weep and repent in wicked company: no, he sought a solitude--for three days and three nights, it may be. But lo, Jesus sendeth the word of comfort that he may not break his heart: 'Go tell my brethren,' said he to Mary Magdalene. Thrice did Peter deny his Lord; and thrice did our Lord question his disciple.

'Lovest thou me?' O, how great is the love of God;
the love of Christ; the love of the Holy Spirit!
redemption is love.¹

A chronological substance outline was constructed as
an aid in the analysis of this sermon.

Peter's denial.

Introduction

- I. Peter's denial to the damsel
- II. Peter's denial to kinsman of Malchus
- III. Peter's denial to the servants of the high priest

Body

- I. Peter's previous character
 - A. Married man
 - B. Forward and ardent
 - C. Over confident
- II. Peter's offence
 - A. Taking unallowed means of defence
 - B. Following too far off
 - C. Denying his Lord
- III. The subject of Peter's denial
 - A. Did not deny Christ was Son of God
 - B. Did deny his discipleship
- IV. The Lord's love for Peter
 - A. The Lord looked at Peter
 - B. The Lord comforted Peter
 - C. The Lord questioned Peter

The structure of this sermon seems to contain several
segments of the biography of Peter, factual material, used
as supporting material. The introduction was structured
with the use of the people who heard Peter deny his Lord:
"the damsel," "the kinsman," and "the servants." The first
division, "Peter's previous character," was structured by
using information about him: "a married man," "forward and
ardent," and "overconfident." The second division, "Peter's
offence," was structured with the supporting materials,
"taking unallowed means of defence," "following afar off,"

¹Clark, II, pp. 788-789.

and "denying his Lord," The third division, "the subject of Peter's denial," was structured by further information in Peter's life: "He did not deny Christ was the Son of God," but "He did deny his discipleship." The last division, "The Lord's love for Peter," was structured with the use of the supporting materials, "The Lord looked at Peter," "The Lord comforted Peter," and "The Lord questioned Peter."

As discussed previously, it is difficult to separate supporting materials, as the means of structure in a sermon, from supporting materials, as materials of development in the same sermon. The foregoing has been an attempt.

Definition: Definition marks the limits of an idea. To define definition positively, we say that it teaches of what elements an idea, as a whole, is composed. It consists in brining together many general ideas, of which one is limited by the others. When the idea, so to speak, is fortified, entrenched, so that on all sides it repels ideas which would mix themselves with it, the object is defined.¹

Definition, as one of the means of explanation and exposition, was used by Asbury in the development of his sermons, but, the following sermon seems to employ definition as a means of structure:

My subject was Eccles. 5, 1: 'Keep they foot when thou goest into the house of God.'

- I. The house of God--the temples, first and second, and synagogues, were called houses of God. A place built for the worship and service of the Lord; the congregation and church.
- II. The exercises and ordinances of the house of God: reading and preaching the word of God; prayer and praises; baptism and the Lord's supper. In his temple every one shall speak of his glory.

¹Broadus, p. 163.

- III. The manifestations that God is pleased to make of himself in his own house to the souls of his people.
- IV. How people should prepare for, and behave in, the house of God. To keep their eyes and ears--fix their attention on the Lord and Master of the house.
- V. The wicked called fools, and the sacrifice they make. Ignorant of themselves, of God, of Christ, and true religion, and the worship of the Lord, and do not consider it is God, Christ, and sacred things they make light of.¹

In the first division, Asbury seemed to define "the house of God" by explaining and describing the temples, synagogues, and meetinghouses. Then, in the second division, he defined the activities taking place in the church, "The exercises and ordinances." He continued his defining in the third division by a statement that God is pleased to manifest Himself in the house of God. In the fourth division he defined the actions of the worshipers by describing "How people should prepare for, and behave in, the house of God." In the last division he defined the lack of consideration of the house of God by wicked people by describing their ignorance "of themselves, of God, of Christ, of true religion, and the worship of the Lord."

Testimony: "Testimony is the say-so of someone other than the speaker, in support of a point or in explanation of an idea."² Asbury frequently used the testimonies of the people he met daily in his itineracy, the testimonies of eminent religious scholars, and the testimonies of Biblical characters for supporting materials. In the next

¹Clark, II, p. 118.

²Bryant, p. 47.

sermon he employed the use of testimony for the structure of the entire sermon:

I preached . . . from Gal. 2, 20: 'I am crucified with Christ.' Christ crucified: and Paul crucified after the likeness of Christ, and for 'Jesus'--crucified to the world in afflictions, hopes, and desires. 'I live'--I have had a spiritual birth, and live a spiritual life of faith, love, and holiness; yet not I, as the author of my own birth or life; 'Christ liveth in me,'--by his Spirit; 'and the life I now live is by faith of the Son of God';--faith of, and faith, in Christ--'who hath loved me, and given himself for me,'--that is, I know and feel my personal and real interest in, and union with, him.¹

This sermon outline apparently was developed and preached by Asbury as an extended testimony of St. Paul. He structured the sermon by giving the first steps of Paul's "spiritual birth" and his "spiritual life of faith, love, and holiness." Next, in the testimony, Christ was living in Paul's life, "by his Spirit," and Paul was living a life of faith in Christ, who loved him and had a personal interest in him. Because of Christ living in Paul and Paul living for Christ, there was "union with him." This example is one of the few sermon outlines that Asbury structured by means of the testimony.

Restatement: Restatement is largely a matter of language. By expressing an idea over again in other language or other form or both, a speaker not only adds emphasis but may often hit upon terminology and phrasing which will strike his listeners as clearer, fuller, more familiar, or in some other way more understandable or more forceful than the language of the original statement.²

¹Clark, II. p. 190.

²Bryant, p. 47.

In all probability Asbury used restatement in his explanation of texts and his expository development of his sermons. But as a means of structure, the examination of his sermon outlines reveals that he infrequently used this technique. The following sermon has been selected as a possible example of the use of restatement for structure.

I preached . . . from Luke 20, 21: 'In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good unto thee.'

- I. What things they are that are hidden from the wise and prudent: the things of the Gospel, the great things, and the deep things of the Spirit of God, in the Divine operations, and sensations, and affections, and fruits of the Spirit of grace; these are revealed to simple-hearted, ignorant, poor, and unlearned men and women.
- II. Why are they hidden from the 'wise and prudent'?
 1. Because they seek the knowledge of them by their own wisdom.
 2. Because they will not submit to the rules of discipleship that they may learn.
 3. Because they have chosen the world for their portion, with its riches, honours, and pleasures; and thus living, they cannot learn.
 4. Because they will not, cannot part with their darling passions and besetting sins.
 5. Because they will not submit to suffer reproach. Jesus rejoiced that his heavenly Father has made foolish the wisdom of this world, so contrary in its spirit to humble faith and holy obedience; and that so many hath been made, and that millions might be made, the subjects of the grace of God--that wisdom which cometh from above. But our Lord did not rejoice in the spiritual ignorance and damnation of 'the wise and prudent': he upbraided them for what might have been prevented; and wept, as man, with Godlike love, over Jerusalem.¹

There is some restatement in the two main divisions of the sermon. The first one, "What great things that are hidden from the wise and prudent," was partially restated

¹Clark, II, p. 422.

in the second division, "Why are they hidden from the wise and prudent." Each one of the five subdivisions, of the second division, is introduced with the word, "because," which is a restatement of the introductory word for each of the five answers to the question posed in the second division.

Conclusion

"The conclusion has one primary purpose: to help the listeners to remember your message and to assimilate it, to strengthen and deepen it in their minds, and, as a 'clincher,' to tell them what you want them to think and to do."¹ Conclusions for persuasive speeches may be classified into four basic types: purpose-sentence conclusion, summary conclusion, appeal conclusion, and the illustration-quotation conclusion.²

Purpose-sentence conclusion.--"If a speaker used the strictly inductive type of organization he usually concludes his talk with the full statement of his purpose in speaking."³ An examination of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury does not reveal that he used the purpose-sentence type of conclusion, which was his Scriptural text, because he did not use "the strictly inductive type of organization" in his sermons.

¹ Hance, p. 242.

² Ibid., pp. 242-243.

³ Ibid., p. 242.

Summary conclusion.--"The summary is probably the most common form for persuasive talks. In it the speaker repeats his main arguments and his main propositions."¹ Even though much of Francis Asbury's speaking was persuasive, the investigation of his sermon outlines reveals that he seldom used the summary conclusion. The sermon above, from Luke 20, 21, may have been concluded with a summary. The following portion seems to be a partial summary of that which precedes:

Jesus rejoiced that his heavenly Father has made foolish the wisdom of this world, so contrary in its spirit to humble faith and holy obedience; and that so many hath been made, and that millions might be made, the subjects of the grace of God--that wisdom which cometh from above. But our Lord did not rejoice in the spiritual ignorance and damnation of 'the wise and prudent': he upbraided them for what might have been prevented; and wept as man, with Godlike love, over Jerusalem.²

This is not representative of Asbury's conclusions; he may have used more summary conclusions than his sermon outlines reveal.

Appeal conclusion.--In the appeal conclusion "the speaker directly asks his hearers to agree with him or to take certain action, or he pictures to them the possibility of a brighter future if they think and act as he suggests."³

In all probability, Francis Asbury used this type of conclusion more than the other types. Following is an example:

I spoke on 2 Tim. 4, 5-8: 'But watch thou in all things,' etc. Introduction--the special relation

¹Ibid.

²Clark, II, p. 422.

³Hance, p. 243.

of a spiritual father and son. The time and circumstances peculiar to Paul and Timothy: 'Watch in all things': as a Christian; as a Christian minister or bishop; endure afflictions of mind and body, as a Christian and a minister--endure heat, cold, hunger, thirst, labour, persecution, temptations. 'Do the work of an evangelist'-- spread the Gospel where it is not, support it where it is. Paul knew he was going by martyrdom: he had 'fought a good fight of faith'; and by faith he had 'kept' justifying 'faith,' which some had made shipwreck of: the 'crown' of justifying and sanctifying, and practical righteousness, was waiting to encircle his triumphant brows--a 'crown' thrice radiant with the three degrees of glory. In conclusion I said many things and with great plainness, urging the necessity of being civilized, moralized, and spiritualized, by¹ the Gosepl in the plentitude of its Divine operation.

In the conclusion of this sermon, Asbury specifically stated that he "said many things, and with great plainness," urging his hearers by direct appeal to be "civilized, moralized, and spiritualized."

Other sermons were concluded in a similar manner: "I applied it to the Christian world, so called,--heathens in their hearts and practices; and showed how vain it is to substitute heathen morality, or religious forms and ceremonies, for true religion."² ". . . and closed with an application suited to the cases and consciences of the people,"³ "In this discourse the parallel was drawn, and a close application made, to the rising generation."⁴ "By application--to a verietty of cases;--what do ye more than others?"⁵

However, most of Asbury's sermons do not have appeals as clearly stated. The following sermon outline is

¹Clark, II, p. 475.

²Clark, I, p. 197.

³Ibid., p. 341.

⁴Clark, II, p. 159.

⁵Ibid., p. 553.

representative and typical of many of his outlines:

- Ezekiel 36, 25-27. I showed the evils God threatened, and prophesied the removal of, by his servant to his nominal professed people, Israel.
- I. Their stony heart--their idols and filthiness.
 - II. The blessings promised and prophesied--a new heart, a new spirit, the indwelling and sanctifying influence of the Spirit.
 - III. The blessed consequential effects--'I will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments to do them.' The law, the judgments of God, because of the penalty annexed--thus saith the Lord to the renewed soul, 'Thou shalt have none other gods but me.' 'Lord,' saith the Christian, 'I want none other but thee.' Saith Jehovah, 'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image.' The pious soul saith, 'I will not; the work of my hands cannot save my soul: I will not take thy name in vain. I love thy day--thy love hath written thy law upon my heart, and love to my neighbor engages me to fulfil my duty to him also.' 'The meek shall inherit the earth,' as a sacred charter from the Lord--this is their claim, security, and defence.¹

The first two divisions are short and the third is much longer. It seems as if there is no conclusion in this outline. An examination of the two hundred outlines reveals that many of Asbury's sermons were constructed in this manner. Presumably, he must have had some kind of conclusion when he preached, because people were persuaded to become Christians through his message. After preaching his sermon, he may have employed exhortation, which was largely used in his day.

Illustration-quotation conclusion.--Illustrations will help to focus and hold the listener's attention upon some specific matter which he can remember. The quotation may strike a familiar chord in the listener's memory; it may bring the added authority of some

¹Ibid., p. 119.

well-known and well-respected person into the speech; and it may serve to bring together the main points of the speech into a succinct, easily remembered statement.¹

The use of either illustrations or quotations as concluding material is problematical in the sermons of Francis Asbury. The examination of his sermon outlines reveals that he did not use the illustration-quotation technique to conclude his sermons. But, the study of the preaching of Francis Asbury reveals that he employed both illustrations and quotations a good deal in the communicating of his message. Consequently, he presumably used them in the conclusions of his sermons.

Transitions

"Transitions constitute the glue that holds together all materials of the speech, large and small."² Transitions include the three types: the sign-post, the flashback-preview, and the internal summary.

Sign-post.--The sign-post device is that of numbering the main points and the sub-points. Transitions of this type are like "the sign-posts along the road that tell us where we are going and foretell each curve and cross-road along the way."³

¹Hance, p. 243.

²William Norwood Brigance, Speech Composition (second edition; New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1953), p. 207.

³Ibid.

The investigation of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury reveals that he used this device to connect his main divisions and his subdivisions. He used different numbering systems: The Roman numerals, the Arabic numerals, and the written "first," "secondly," and "thirdly." This sermon outline exemplifies his use of the Roman numerals as the sign-post device:

- I preached on Acts 17:30, 31: 'Now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent.'
- I. The nature of repentance--the whole of religion.
 - II. The universality of repentance--all orders, stations, characters, must repent.
 - III. The possibility of, and the provision made for, repentance,--the gift of Christ--the death of Christ--the agency of the Spirit--the preaching of the Gospel--the means of grace.
 - IV. Necessity of repentance--from the considerations of the fall and our own actual transgressions, a future state and general judgment.
 - V. The time for repentance--now--this Gospel day of grace.¹

It is evident that the numbers I, II, III, IV, and V held together the key words, "nature," "universality," "possibility and provision," "necessity," and "time," as well as, and along with, the five main divisions.

This example is given to illustrate another method of sign-posts used by Asbury:

I preached on James 1, 22: 'But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.' By introduction, I collected the words of our Lord, and those of the apostle Paul upon the same subject, and brought them to one point. In opening the subject, I observed, 1. What we are taught in the preaching of the Gospel: First, Christian experience; Secondly, Christian tempers; Thirdly, Christian perfection;

¹Clark, II, p. 495.

Fourthly, Christian duties. 2. General head: How people should hear the word--constantly, seriously; in faith, in prayer; as believing it promises all that is good, and threatens the most dreadful evil. 3. To be doers of the word is to seek for the immediate experience and practice of the word.¹

Asbury used the numbers "1," "2," and "3" at the beginning of his three main divisions. He then used "First," "Secondly," "Thirdly," and "Fourthly" as sign-post transitions to each subdivision under the first main division. He did not use any transitions to the subdivisions under the second main division.

Flashback-preview.--The flashback-preview device "consists in alluding at the major points of the speech to what has just been said and to what will follow."² Francis Asbury occasionally used this device for making transitions. In the sermon, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," he made the transition from the Scriptural text to the first part of his sermon by the use of the phrase, "By introduction." After his introduction he used a partial preview transition when he said, "In opening the subject, I observed."

Internal summary.--"The summary should be managed by restatement (recurrence of an old idea in different words) rather than by repetition (recurrence of old idea in the same phraseology)."³ The internal summary is the employment of the summary as a transition between the divisions of a

¹Ibid., p. 411.

²Bryant, p. 185.

³Ibid., p. 182.

speech. An examination of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury reveals that he did not use this device for making transitions.

The study of the structure of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury reveals that he used the quotation (Scriptural text) and the direct introductions more than the other types, and that he used the Scriptural text as the purpose sentence in practically all of his sermon outlines.

Furthermore, in the body of his sermon outlines, the deductive speaking plan was used more than the other speaking plans. He had main points for his sermons, usually a partition of his purpose sentence, (Scriptural text), using both the exact words of the purpose sentence and topics from the purpose sentence, for his main divisions. Many of his sermons contained sub-points.

Again, the study of the supporting materials as structure reveals that it was very difficult to separate Asbury's use of supporting materials for materials of development and the use of supporting materials for structure. It seems he used example, comparison, definition, and testimony more than he used statistics and factual information and restatement.

Moreover, the study of the structure of the conclusions that Francis Asbury used reveals that he used the appeal conclusion more than the purpose-sentence, summary, or illustration-quotation conclusions.

Finally, the study reveals that he used the sign-post transitions the most, the flashback-preview occasionally, and the internal summary not at all.

Language and Style

By style is meant "that quality in speaking which results from the selection and management of language,"¹ or "the order and movement of ideas and feelings as expressed in the oral medium."²

Lord Chesterfield held that style is 'the dress of thoughts.' Others claim that a man's style is the man himself. Webster's Dictionary defines style as 'mode of expressing thought in language . . .'. This last definition is perhaps the broadest and most useful starting point for our attempt to discover what style means. From this definition, we know that the vehicle of style is language; and language is a system of symbols called words. It is through words that communication is carried on.³

Since there are only brief excerpts of sermons available, mainly in outline form, the evaluation of Asbury's style of preaching is dependent upon these outlines, upon the criticism of people who heard him preach, upon what his biographers said about his preaching, and upon what he himself said about it. In the attempt to evaluate his style the following guide lines will be used: first, the requirements of language and style, including instant intelligibility,

¹Bryant, p. 252.

²Lew Sarett, William Trufant Foster, Alma Johnson Sarett, Basic Principles of Speech (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1958), p. 53.

³Hance, p. 181.

personal address, and informal sentence structure, and, second, the characteristics of language and style, including clarity, forcefulness, vividness, and adaptability.¹

Requirements of Language and Style

Instant intelligibility.--The requirement of instant intelligibility means that the speaker must use shorter words, phrases, and sentences; more oral punctuation, more imagery, more illustration than would the writer who would have the same image to convey. The speaker must use a style that sounds the meaning rather than spells it out.²

Because there is no way of knowing how Francis Asbury may have "sounded the meaning" in his sermons as he preached them, several examples from his Journal are given, assuming that his oral style was comparable to his written style.

After working almost a week in a busy conference in the John Street meetinghouse in New York, and after traveling about a day, he wrote in his Journal:

How sweet to me are all the moving and still life scenes which now surround me on every side! The quiet country houses; the fields and orchards, bearing the promise of a fruitful year; the flocks and herds, the hills and vales, and dewy meads; the gliding streams and murmuring brooks: and thou, too, solitude--with thy attendants, silence and meditation--how dost thou solace my pensive mind after the tempest of fear, and care, and tumult, and talk, experienced in the noisy, bustling city! 'where will they send me?--to Hampshire--to Rhode Island--to Connecticut--to Canada?' One preacher wishes to go where another dreads to be sent, and smiles at the fears of his more timid brother. 'But' say the citizens, 'how shall we be supplied?--such a one will be too strict, and may put us out of order--a second will not keep the congregations together; and our collections will not be made--

¹Ibid., pp. 183-192.

²Ibid., p. 184.

a third will not please; because he is not a lively preacher, and we want a revival of religion.' Ah! the half is not told of the passions, parties, hopes and fears, amongst the best of men, through ignorance and mistake. This, at least, may be said of the Methodists of New York--they are righteous over-much in their kindness to their friends.¹

Asbury used short words in this selection for instant intelligibility. There were 165 words containing one syllable, 39 words containing two syllables, and 17 words containing three or more syllables. Most of his phrases are short, such as, "The quiet country houses," "and may put us out of order," and "amongst the best of men." However, Asbury used long sentences in both his letters and his Journal, but he seemed to overcome the natural ambiguity of long sentences by having many punctuation marks: commas, semi-colons, colons, dashes, exclamation points, and question marks. Some imagination is apparent in the description of the country-side, but there are no illustrations, particularly from the point of view of the narrative. If the style of Asbury's oral discourse was comparable to the style of his written materials, then, presumably, he met the requirement of instant intelligibility.

One of his more extended sermon outlines exemplifies instant intelligibility still further:

My subject was Luke 22, 61, 62: 'And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.' The Gospels will harmonize here by John, who was witness to the whole. Peter denied thrice; First, to the damsel who kept the door; John having asked leave of the high priest to bring in Peter. Secondly, when the kinsman or cousin of

¹Clark, II, pp. 343-344.

Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off, witnessed, possibly, by the young man, asked him, 'Did not I see thee in the garden with him?' Thirdly, when the conversation is taken up in company with the servants of the high priest, and one of them asks, 'Art thou not one of his disciples?' The previous character of Peter may be noticed--a married man, not a youth; forward, ardent, as was seen on many occasions. When faithfully warned, he pledged himself with overweening confidence. His offence was, First, taking unallowed means of defence--like his pretended successors, the popes: Secondly, following too far off: Thirdly, denying his Lord;--the lie, the oath, and their repetition, follow of course. What was the subject of Peter's denial? Did he deny that Christ was the eternal Son of God--the Saviour of the world in all his sacred offices? No: Peter's crime was, that he denied his discipleship; and this is the crime of which so many modern apostates are guilty. Who now deny the Lord? Backsliders, baptized infidels, careless seekers of salvation, slothful believers, and those who have fallen from sanctification by the neglect of the works of mercy, charity, and piety. 'The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.' Ah! he was obliged to go out with disgrace; he had entered with honour. But he could not weep and repent in wicked company: No, he sought a solitude--for three days and three nights, it may be. But lo, Jesus sendeth the word of comfort that he may not break his heart: 'Go, tell my brethren,' said he to Mary Magdalene. Thrice did Peter deny his Lord; and thrice did our Lord question his disciple. 'Lovest thou me?' O, how great is the love of God; the love of Christ; the love of the Holy Spirit! redemption is love.¹

The use of short words in this sermon outline compares favorably with the use of words in the descriptive writing. In this outline there were 256 words containing one syllable, 67 words containing two syllables, and 36 words containing three or more syllables. In the descriptive selection 75% of the total number of words contained one syllable, in the sermon outline, 71%. In the descriptive selection 17% of the total contained two syllables, in the sermon outline,

¹Clark, II, pp. 788-789.

19%. In the descriptive selection 8% of the total number of words contained three or more syllables, in the sermon outline, 10%. Short phrases were used in the sermon outline as in the descriptive selection. However, there were more sentences, about 17. Even with a greater number of sentences, Asbury used the various marks of punctuation for oral punctuation. The imagery is not particularly noticeable in the sermon outline, but, in all probability, he employed the use of illustration as he developed this segment of Peter's life--the denial and return to his Lord.

Personal address.--Because of the direct, face-to-face, and immediate contact of the speaker with his listeners, he is permitted, and often, indeed, required, to use a more personal form of address than the writer customarily uses. . . . Effective as 'you' may be, there are many occasions in which greater informality and warmth are desired, occasions in which the speaker must demonstrate oneness with his hearers. The use of the first person plural, 'we,' . . . tends to involve the speaker and his audience in a union, and often makes for convincing speaking.¹

It seems that Francis Asbury employed the personal pronouns, meeting the requirement of personal address in language and style. This is an example:

My subject was Rom. 12, 1, 2: 'I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.' It was observed, that the apostle's form of address was excellent and particularly directed to the Christian believers--the subjects of grace. That the people of the 'world' who lived in

¹Hance, pp. 184-185.

conformity to its manners and maxims, lived in their proper element--'but ye (said our Lord in addressing believers) are not of the world, as I am not of the world, because I have called you out of the world.' The apostle had in view one thing, in two parts, namely: the devotion of the whole man, body and soul, to God; without which the man cannot be a Christian, perfect and entire. 'Present your bodies a living sacrifice,'--this can be done by abstaining from all things sinful in practice. We must not only not live in the use of unlawful things, but we must not indulge in the unlawful use of unlawful things: it is lawful to eat, but not to gluttony; it is lawful to drink, but not to drunkenness; it is lawful to be married, but it is unlawful for either husband or wife to idolize the other. We ought to make the faculties of our bodies subservient to the worship and service of God--our eyes to see for God; our ears to hear; our hands to be liberal; our feet to move for God, so as to do or suffer--this is 'reasonable service'; and thus occupied, the 'mercies of God' excite us properly, and we are 'not conformed to this world.' That we be 'renewed in our minds'--that all the powers of the soul be given in love and service to the Lord; in conviction for indwelling sin, the repentance of believers; in sanctification; persevering grace; perfect love; and the fruition--perfect and eternal glory. We 'prove the will of God' by this--to be good--to be 'acceptable' to our own souls; and to be 'perfect' in our Christian perfection, holiness, and happiness eternal.¹

In this sermon outline Asbury employed the personal approach to his audience by using the following personal pronouns: "our" nine times, "we" six times, "you" or "ye" five times, "your" four times, "I" three times, "my" once, and "us" once, making a total of twenty-nine. Out of the total of 386 words in this outline, twenty-nine were personal pronouns, almost 8% of the total. Assuming this sermon outline to be representative of his other sermons, manifestly he used personal pronouns in addressing his hearers.

¹Clark, II, pp. 464-465.

Informal sentence structure.--"The comparative informality of most speaking situations permits and encourages greater liberty in the construction of sentences than traditional writing patterns permit."¹ Such constructions as contractions, the split infinitive, and incomplete sentences are frequently used effectively in oral communication in order to make the message more meaningful to the listeners. "One thing is certain: to be effective, speaking style must be geared to the immediate understanding of the listener."²

It is problematical whether Asbury used informal speech, such as contractions, the split infinitive, or incomplete sentences. Many of his sermon outlines have long complete sentences, broken with various kinds of punctuation marks. Then, there are outlines like the following:

Rode to Maxfield's, and preached to about three hundred people; spoke on 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' First, showed, What we are to be saved from. 2. How we are saved. 3. Why there are few. No open sinner can be in a state of salvation; no formalist, violent sectarian, having only opinions and modes of religion; no hypocrites₃ or backsliders; no, nor those who are only seekers.³

Manifestly, Asbury did not use contractions in this sermon outline. An examination of the two hundred sermon outlines reveals that he did not use either contractions or split infinitives. However, this sermon outline illustrates some of his sentence structure: first, the short fragment such as, "First, showed, What we are to be saved from,"

¹Hance, p. 185.

²Ibid., p. 186.

³Clark, I, p. 323.

"2. How we are saved," and "3. Why there are few"; and second, the long sentence beginning with "No open sinner can be . . . ," which sentence is broken up into groups with marks of punctuation. It is not known if this is an illustration of his oral style in preaching.

Another portion is quoted which illustrates both the informal and more formal sentence structure in the written form as recorded in his Journal.

Sunday, 30. I preached morning and evening: it was a season of deep seriousness with the congregations. I felt an intimate communion with God; and a great love to the people, saints and poor sinners. Monday, met the society. Tuesday, we bade farewell to our attentive and affectionate friends in Cincinnati. The great river was covered with mist until nine o'clock, when the airy curtain rose slowly from the waters, gliding along in expanded and silent majesty. We laboured around the rough banks and over the dry ridge of Bank Lick Creek to Barnes's. Alas! for the people--there is a great call for missionaries for Eagle Creek and the Ridge. Wednesday, came to Conge's to dine, and stopped at Mubury's to lodge. Thursday, to Jesse Griffin's. Friday, at rest. Preached for the people. There is¹ a drought prevailing; and the heat is very intense.

This portion from Asbury's Journal is representative of his writing. It can only be assumed that he spoke in this manner.

Characteristics of Language and Style

The requirements of instant intelligibility, personal address, and informal sentence structure have been considered in the preaching of Francis Asbury. Next to be examined are the characteristics of language and style in

¹Clark, II, p. 650.

his preaching. This investigation will be within the framework of the four qualities of speaking style: clarity, forcefulness, vividness, and adaptability.¹

Clarity.--"Style should, above all else, be clear; whatever the speaker says should be easily understood by his audience."² "Usually, clearness is the result of casting familiar, concrete, specific, active words into familiar, direct, uncomplicated sentences and larger thought-units in which the structural and logical relations are easily visible and are marked with connecting and relating words."³

"His style of writing, as his Journal . . . will show, was plain, pointed, direct."⁴ "There was often a majestic simplicity in Asbury's exposition of the Scripture."⁵ Asbury commented often on his preaching: "I was pretty plain on Isaiah 55, 6, 7."⁶ "I was led to be pointed."⁷ "I was as pointed as I could be."⁸ "I was very plain."⁹ "I could not speak plain enough to them."¹⁰

Manifestly, Asbury attempted to communicate his message in simple, concrete words in order for his hearers to understand it. The following sermon outline illustrates:

¹Hance, p. 187.

²Ibid.

³Bryant, pp. 262-263.

⁴Strickland, p. 471.

⁵Duren, p. 143.

⁶Clark, I, p. 428.

⁷Ibid., p. 514.

⁸Ibid., p. 330.

⁹Ibid., p. 331.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 305.

Many people attended this evening, while I described an honest and good heart, under the similitude of the good ground which received the seed and brought forth fruit. This was free from the hardness of the way-side, from the shallowness of the stony ground, and from the obstructions of the thorny ground. The honesty of the heart in its conduct towards God, towards all mankind, and towards itself. As our Lord is pleased to denominate such a heart good as well as honest, is it not very wrong for a Christian to say he has a bad heart? Is not all that the Holy Ghost produces good? And so far as that blessed Spirit has changed the heart of a believer, is it not good?¹

Asbury used simple and concrete words, such as "honest," "good heart," "good ground," "seed," "fruit," "free," "hardness," "shallowness," "stony ground," "thorny ground," "very wrong," "bad heart."

Forcefulness.--Forcefulness is another standard of good style in speaking; the term implies drive, excitement, urgency--qualities that are necessary in many speeches Perhaps the best way to describe forceful speaking is to say that it is compelling, for the style should at all times compel the audience to listen, to try to understand, to welcome persuasion and information.²

Francis Asbury apparently used force in his preaching. "As a preacher, although not an orator, he was dignified, eloquent, and impressive; his sermons were the result of good sense and sound wisdom, delivered with great authority, and often attended with divine unction, which made them as refreshing as the dew of heaven."³

In one of his letters to an itinerant he said: "You will find it best to preach pointedly on Christian tempers and duties, to add energy and fire to your administrations."⁴

¹Ibid., p. 78.

²Hance, p. 189.

³Strickland, pp. 144-145.

⁴Clark, III, p. 281.

This sermon outline exemplifies Asbury's use of force in his preaching:

I preached on Isaiah 62:10: ["Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people."] 1. The charge to the ministry to go through the gates as ministers and Christians. 2. Prepare the way--removing all the difficulties. 3. Cast up the highway--repentance, regeneration, and sanctification. 4. Gather out the stones--wicked ministers and people. 5. Set up the standard--that is form the Christian church; give, the standard of Christian doctrine and experience.¹

Asbury evidently was forceful in preaching this sermon to ministers, using the element of directness. His employment of the direct statements of the Scripture likely contributed in compelling his listeners to attend to his message, and, in all probability, to be persuaded by it. The first division, "The charge of the ministry to go through the gates as ministers and Christians," is not too forceful. The second division opens with the direct command, "Prepare the way," which is more forceful. Then each one of the next three divisions maintains the same force, "Cast up the highway," "Gather out the stones," and "set up the standard," with a possible progression of force from the first part of the sermon to the last division, which seems to be the climactic one. Manifestly, both directness and climax contributed to the force in this sermon.

Vividness.--"Vivid language appeals to the senses of the listener. It helps the listener to see, hear, feel,

¹Clark, II, p. 93.

even taste and smell, the images the speaker tries to create in his attempt to make ideas real to his audience."¹

Francis Asbury did not seem to make a conscious effort to develop vividness in his speaking because, "for him, style was incidental."² However, occasionally, he did write vivid descriptions in his Journal. For instance, he wrote:

After getting our horses shod, we made a move for Holston, and entered upon the mountains; the first of which I called steel, the second stone, and the third iron mountain: they are rough, and difficult to climb. We were spoken to on our way by most awful thunder and lightning, accompanied by heavy rain. We crept for shelter into a little dirty house, where the filth might have been taken from the floor with a spade. We felt the want of fire, but could get little wood to make it, and what we gathered was wet.³

Asbury appealed to several of the senses in this description, such as the rugged "mountains," "the rain," and the "wet wood." He named the three mountains "steel," "stone," and "iron," words which "sound" like the description of the rough mountains, thus making a clearer visual image. "Rough" and "difficult to climb" appeal to the sense of feeling. "We were spoken to by thunder" appeals to the sense of hearing, "lightening" and heavy rain" appeal to the senses of sight and smell, and "heavy rain," also, to the sense of feeling. "Crept" appeals to the senses of feeling and sight, because the men manifestly were tired, hungry, drenched, and seeking shelter. "A little dirty

¹Hance, p. 189.

²Duren, p. 48.

³Clark, I, pp. 568-569.

house" appeals to sight, while "filth" and "spade" appeal not only to sight, but to the feelings, and, perhaps, to the sense of smell. "We felt the want of fire" appeals to the sense of feeling, "little wood" appeals to the sense of sight, and "wet" appeals to both the senses of sight and feeling. In this selection Asbury seemed to create images for the reader by appealing to the senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, and smelling.

An examination of the sermon outlines of Francis Asbury reveals that he infrequently used vivid language and figures of speech in them. However, it should be noted, the sermon outlines were more in the form of speaker's notes than in the form of well written sermons. Whether he used vivid language when he preached is not known, but he may have used it occasionally as he did in his written style. A longer, and a more expanded outline is presented as a possible example of his use of vivid language:

I preached on Romans 13, 12: 'The night is far spent.' What constitutes the natural night? Absence of light, ignorance, insecurity, uncertainty. The Gospel watchman crieth the hours. The Scripture night; from Adam to Moses. The patriarchal stars, and those who preceded them as dim lights, as Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham. The moon-light of the law, the Sabbaths, the sacrifices. But this night was about to pass away, although darker just before the dawn of the Gospel day; and it is thus in nature. The Jews had corrupted themselves in religion and in manners. The night of Judaism and Paganism had nearly passed away. When Paul wrote in the year sixty, the Gospel had obtained in Europe, Lesser Asia, Greece, in the city of Rome; had spread from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean. This night has returned occasionally. It came upon the Asiatic Churches because of their unfaithfulness: where once were the Gospel and its martyrs, are now

Greek "papas," and Greek superstitions. From the third to the thirteenth century, the Church of Rome brought darkness upon Europe by prohibiting the Bible, and by the introduction of her own mummeries and idolatries. Philosophy, so called, with Voltaire for its high priest, brought night and destruction upon France; judicially, to avenge on the bloody house of Bourbon the blood of the Protestant martyrs. And would not some of our great men, if they dared, bring a night of infidelity on this land? Who sees them in regular attendance on the house of God? 'Let us cast off the works of darkness.' Let us not sin in practice. Let us cast off evil tempers, desires, and affections. 'The armour of light' (see Ephesians 7, 11-17), perfect faith, perfect hope, perfect obedience, perfect love.¹

The printed portion of the sermon, "The night is far spent," seems to be cast in figurative language. There are some vivid expressions appealing to the sense of sight, such as "natural night," "absence of light," "dim lights," and "moon-light." One expression appealing to the sense of hearing is "The Gospel watchman crieth the hours." There are several metaphors, such as, "the moon-light of the law," "dawn of the Gospel day," night of Judaism and Paganism," "Voltaire for its high priest," and "night of infidelity." Also, there is the use of alliteration, such as, "the Sabbaths, the sacrifices," "darker just before the dawn of the Gospel day," "from the third to the thirteenth century," and "to avenge on the bloody house of Bourbon the blood of the Protestant martyrs."

Adaptability.--"A good style is adaptable to various occasions and audiences."² "Asbury had a remarkable faculty for choosing a text which exactly fitted his purpose, and

¹Clark, II, p. 790.

²Hance, pp. 190-191.

for the most part he found his divisions in the obvious meaning of the text itself."¹ "One of the gripping things about his preaching was the surprising appropriateness of his texts, which made his discourse seem to burst forth out of the inspiration of the moment."² Even though Asbury, in all probability, did not habitually use vivid and figurative words, the words he did select and use were adaptable to his audience and to the occasion. He seemed to excel in adaptability.

The following illustrates Asbury's ability to adapt to occasions and audiences. The conference, which had convened at Charleston, South Carolina, adjourned on Saturday, January 4. On the same day the news of the death of George Washington reached the city. Asbury wrote in his Journal:

Slow moved the northern post on the eve of New Year's day, and brought the heart-distressing information of the death of Washington, who departed this life December 14, 1799.

Washington, the calm, intrepid chief, the disinterested friend, first father, and temporal saviour of his country under Divine protection and direction. A universal cloud sat upon the faces of the citizens of Charleston; the pulpits clothed in black--the bells muffled--the paraded soldiery--a public oration decreed to be delivered on Friday, 14th of this month--a marble statue to be placed in some proper situation. These were the expressions of sorrow, and these the marks of respect paid by his feeling fellow-citizens to the memory of this great man. I am disposed to lose sight of all but Washington: matchless man! At all times he acknowledged the providence of God, and never was he ashamed of his Redeemer: we believe he died, not fearing death. In his will he ordered the manumission of his slaves--a true son of liberty in all points.³

¹Duren, p. 145

²Ibid., p. 147.

³Clark, II, p. 221.

On the next, day, Sunday, Asbury continued in his

Journal:

After the burden of care was thrown off, I again resumed the pulpit; and in order the better to suit my subject to meet the conference, the new year, ordination of elders and deacons, and the General's death, I made choice of Isaiah 61, 2: 'To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.'

I. The acceptable year of the Lord.

II. The day of vengeance of our God.

III. To comfort all that mourn.

The congregation was large, decent, and solemn; the ordination was attended with unction from above, and the sacrament with tenderness of heart.¹

This sermon illustrates Asbury's ability to adapt his message to both the occasion and the audience. The occasion was conference Sunday--usually the climactic day of a conference because the Bishop preached, the sacrament was observed, elders and deacons were ordained, and appointments were made. Again, the occasion was the first Sunday of the new year. Furthermore, it was a solemn occasion because of the death of President Washington. The audience was made up of the ministers of the conference, the church members at the Charleston church, and the friends of the Methodists. In the selection of his text, Asbury, in the first division, "The acceptable year of the Lord," probably adapted the words of his message to the new year that each person was starting. It is not known how he adapted the second division, "The vengeance of our God," to the occasion or the audience, unless it might have been a challenge to the ministers to preach the message of God. The third

¹Ibid., p. 222.

division, "To comfort all that mourn," seems to be well adapted both to the occasion and to the audience, because all were sorrowful over the loss of George Washington. The style that Asbury used in the development of this sermon is not known beyond the basic outline.

Asbury himself was no unimportant factor in the appeals which he made from the pulpit. What his sermons were as they came hurtling from his passionate soul must be left largely to the imagination, and to the judgment based upon the tremendous effect which they produced in the lives of the people. Many bear testimony to the plainness of his style, but Ezekiel Cooper intimates that his force lay in the grandeur of his sentiments rather than in any rhetorical effect. He spoke to the conscience more than to the mind.¹

Ezekiel Cooper, manager of the Methodist Book Concern, and one of Asbury's friends, heard him preach many times. After the death of Francis Asbury, Cooper preached the funeral sermon in the St. George's Church in Philadelphia, in which he said the following about Asbury's preaching:

His language was good, his manner agreeable, his matter excellent, and his voice melodious. But his eloquence did not usually consist in the splendor of pompous language, nor the artificial flowers of refined and polite oratory, but in the grandeur of the sentiments and the sublimity and excellence of the divine truths he uttered. His addresses were generally plain and simple; yet energetic, carrying with them the impressive authority of truth, and admirably tempered with the gentleness of Christianity, self-possession, modest intrepidity, and humble boldness, and most commonly consisted in a judicious selection of choice matter to suit the occasion. It was neither his study nor custom to use artful strains of disingenuous [sic] or unintelligible declamation to amuse and tickle the fanciful imagination of those who had itching ears. It was not his object to show by smooth and well-turned periods, in all the studied artificial graces of rhetoric, how handsomely he could

¹Duren, p. 146.

speaking; nor did he seek in all the beautiful elegance of attitude and elocution to gain the admiration of the listening multitude; but rather to manifest how well, how truly, how convincingly, and how feelingly and pungently he could address himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God; that thereby he might gain souls for Christ.¹

¹Mouzon, pp. 37-38.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Historical Background

Because Francis Asbury was born in 1745 and lived the first twenty-six years of his life in England, the political, social, intellectual, and religious conditions of eighteenth-century England were briefly considered in this study. He was reared in the yeoman class of Englishmen, receiving the best that the environment of this class could offer him.

When Asbury was seven years of age, his parents sent him to school to receive a secular education, but his formal school life lasted only four years, because of a cruel school-master. In eighteenth-century England, most of the children worked, consequently, young Francis Asbury hired out as a servant in a near-by wealthy home. After two years of this kind of employment, he then became an apprentice as a blacksmith in the foundry located in his home town, where he was employed until he reached the age of twenty-one years, at which time he entered the full-time itinerant ministry.

Furthermore, because Francis Asbury responded to the call to go to America as a Methodist missionary in 1771, and because he labored in America as an itinerant preacher

for a period of forty-five years, the political, physical and economic, social, intellectual, and religious conditions of eighteenth-century America were briefly reviewed.

Francis Asbury, the Man

Francis Asbury responded to his mother's careful training, both religiously and intellectually, seeking the Lord and learning to read early in life. Soon after his conversion at fifteen or sixteen years of age, he started his career of preaching by reading the Bible and exhorting in prayer meetings. For five years he preached in neighboring towns while working at the foundry. At the age of twenty-one years he became a traveling minister and itinerated under John Wesley for another period of five years.

This ten-year period was significant for Asbury in several ways. First, he learned and subscribed to the doctrinal position of the Methodists as taught by John Wesley. Second, he imbibed the principle of itineracy as a part of preaching the Gospel, so that they became inseparable in his life.

Soon after his arrival in America, he started to itinerate and was soon organizing Methodist societies and establishing circuits. His vision, his indomitable will, and his message inspired others to itinerate, until it was said of him, "If one particular service of a life of singular devotion as father and founder of American Methodism were to be selected for its preeminent value, it

would have to be, I think, Asbury's success in persuading the preachers to itinerate."¹

Itineracy was basic to the success of Asbury's preaching in frontier America, because, through this system the Gospel became a part of the lives of many of the pioneers. Consequently, Methodist churches sprang up and grew with other institutions in frontier communities, and seemed to wield an influence for good in these communities.

Not only was Francis Asbury foremost among the itinerants in America, but he was a great and capable leader. He held the struggling Methodist societies together during the American Revolution, when it seemed Methodism would be stamped out, because many of the preachers and some of the members were Tories. Whenever Asbury worked he had to be a leader in the group. It seems that he had learned some of the basic principles of leadership, such as a good character, optimism, ability to pick men for the job, and ability to dominate and master events as he met them. Manifestly, the possession of these principles contributed to the life of Asbury as Bishop of all American Methodism. Furthermore, he possessed the ability to marshal men, superintend the preachers, circuits, and the churches within each circuit, and to communicate his directions to them.

Francis Asbury, the Speaker

The time of Francis Asbury's speaking was during the period of American history from 1771 to 1816, in which

¹Carroll, p. 73.

period the American colonies obtained their independence and gave birth to a new nation. The place of his speaking encompassed all of the colonies, later states and territories, under the domain of the United States during his lifetime in America. Asbury's speaking was primarily deliberative with the purpose of persuading men to accept Christ as their personal Saviour.

The qualities found in Francis Asbury seemed to influence his speaking. His fervent devotion to God, his integrity, and his self-control were so much a part of his life that they naturally were a part of him as a speaker. His constant seeking for more of the holiness of God in his life also influenced his speaking. Then the constant struggle he encountered between humility and arrogance, between patience and a lack of it, between moral courage and fear, seemed to temper and make him a more effective speaker. His seeming untiring industry and his rugged, almost cruel, self-discipline helped to make him the speaker he became.

Not only did Francis Asbury possess these qualities of character, but he also was competent as a speaker. This was evident in his intelligence, or mental ability to know men, situations, and subject matter and in his understanding or wisdom to discern the needs of people, to apprehend the relations of people and situations as they pertain to preaching.

Furthermore, Asbury seemed to create good will, the third element of personal proof found in a speaker, in most of his relations with people because of his great love for them, his friendliness, and warmth of personality. Character, competence, and good will seemed to contribute much to the impact of his message upon his listeners because of the possession of these elements in his life as a speaker.

The sources of these qualities that Francis Asbury possessed seem to be his religious experience, which he daily strived to improve; his prayer life, which he exercised not only daily, but many times during the day; and his Bible study, which he performed faithfully.

One result of the possession of these personal qualities was his simple and direct preaching. His themes were simple and his preaching was in earnest, which persuaded great numbers of men and women to change their ways and live for Christ. Another result was his unconquerable zeal. Asbury seemed obsessed with a religious drive that thrust him into the American wilderness in order to win the last man, on the edge of the frontier, for Christ. This zeal was ever a part of his life, until, on his way to his next appointment, he died at the age of seventy-one years. The third result of possessing these qualities of character was his governing power. Perhaps Asbury's ability as a governor was one of the strongest parts of his life and career. He seemed capable of projecting himself into the future of the church and of imprinting the image of his genius upon its

structure so deeply, that he actually had the same relationship to American Methodism that John Wesley had to English Methodism.¹

Presumably Francis Asbury realized the necessity of being prepared to speak. In early life he learned how to study and became an avid reader. He acquired a knowledge of men, cultivated an intimate relationship with God, and conscientiously disciplined himself and organized his work in order that he might be prepared for any speaking occasion.

Little is known about the delivery of Francis Asbury. It seems that his appearance made a favorable impression on his listeners and that his bodily movements, which sometimes were many, aided in the communication of his message. Presumably he articulated well and pronounced his words clearly in order to be understood. He spoke loudly so that all in his audience could hear his message.

Francis Asbury's Audiences

The types of audience occasions of Francis Asbury can be classified as the circuits, the city churches, the conferences, and the camp meetings. In all probability, he spoke to more people in his circuit audiences. Even though some of the people in the frontier audiences manifested apathetic and disorderly behavior, great numbers of people in these audiences were well-behaved and many responded to the appeal of the Gospel for their lives. The audiences

¹Ibid., p. 117.

seemed to influence the speaking and the message of Francis Asbury: the apathetic and disorderly audiences challenged him to preach more effectively, and the well-behaved and sympathetic audiences stimulated him to preach his best sermons.

Francis Asbury's Message

Because Francis Asbury was primarily an evangelistic and a doctrinal preacher, he selected topics such as conviction, repentance, justification, perseverance in good works, and sanctification upon which to preach. Inasmuch as he attempted to explain and to communicate the Scriptural meaning of these topics, he preached textual and expository sermons.

In view of the fact that Francis Asbury accepted the Biblical doctrines as truth and the Scriptures as the revealed will of God, the matter of evidence did not particularly concern him. Consequently, Scriptural evidence was employed in his reasoning, in which he used cause and analogy more than sign and example in his materials of development. Even though he probably structured some of his reasoning inductively, most of it was structured deductively. He used explanation a good deal in his materials of development.

Taking into account that Asbury used materials of development for persuasive speaking, he used perhaps, even more, the materials of personal proof and the materials of

experience. The circuit-rider seemed to possess credibility wherever he traveled on the American frontier, and since Francis Asbury was the foremost of the itinerants, his personal proof was effective for persuasion. In view of this, when he employed the materials of experience, he usually obtained the attention of his listeners, and appealed to the motives of preservation, pride, conformity and change, and altruism in persuading his listeners to accept his message. It could not be determined how much suggestion he may have used.

Francis Asbury seemed to know how a sermon should be structured in order to be communicated effectively. In his sermon outlines the introductions were often missing, but, the body nearly always started with the Scriptural text which was used as his purpose sentence. This text was either partitioned with the use of the words of the text, to become the divisions of the sermon, or topics coming from the text were used as divisions. In either case, he employed the deductive speaking plan for the development of his sermons. Some of the time he included sub-points in his outlines. Furthermore, he structured his sermons using mainly examples--including illustrations--comparison, definition, and testimony. Conclusions were missing, mainly, in his outlines. Presumably he may have used the appeal and the illustration-quotation type a great deal. Finally, his transitions were usually of the sign-post variety, with some use of the flashback-preview.

On account of Asbury's deep-seated desire to preach a message that would be understood and accepted now, he met the requirement of instant intelligibility in language and style. Also, he used personal pronouns in his speaking, but it could not be determined whether he used informal sentence structure.

Stylistic characteristics of clarity, forcefulness, and adaptability were manifestly used, but the characteristic of vividness and figurative language was infrequently employed by Francis Asbury, as he attempted to persuade his hearers to accept his message.

Significant Conclusions

From the study of the preaching of Francis Asbury several conclusions have emerged. First, because of his ability to preach a simple and direct message that his listeners could understand, because of his ability to persuade his listeners to respond to his message and to become Christians, and because of his ability to persuade the new converts to persevere in their new experiences, Francis Asbury was an effective and a persuasive speaker.

Second, on account of his devotion to God, his faithful prayer life, his diligent study of the Bible, and his great love for people, Francis Asbury was a great Christian.

Third, by reason of the fact that he took the initiative to itinerate in order to preach his message to as many people as possible, that he possessed an unconquerable zeal

and faced many perils as an itinerant, that he traveled over the entire nation by horseback and carriage annually, that he persuaded many young men to enter the itinerant ministry, he can be acclaimed the foremost itinerant.

Fourth, because of his ability to organize, to master and dominate events, marshal men, direct with authority, and to inspire his subordinates to strive to reach goals, Francis Asbury was a good leader.

Finally, because of his ability to pull the struggling Methodist societies together before, during, and after the American Revolution, because of his ability to govern the preachers and the churches, because of his concepts of church government and of the episcopacy, and because of his ability to build a great ecclesiastical empire from six preachers and 600 members in 1771 to 700 ministers and 200,000 members in 1816, Francis Asbury was an outstanding churchman.

These five conclusions are interdependent in the following manner. Because Francis Asbury was a great Christian, he had a message that fulfilled the purpose for which he came to America: "I am going to live to God, and bring others so to do."¹ Because he communicated his message in such a way that many people accepted it and became Christians, he was an effective and a persuasive speaker. And, because he was an effective and a persuasive speaker, he was a foremost itinerant, a good leader, and an outstanding churchman.

¹Clark, I. p. 4.

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