

is seen in the Established Church. In the seventeenth century, when a period of worldliness and decay had succeeded to the first life of the Reformation, arose the great Puritan revival, of which the indirect effects powerfully influence our pulpit and religious press to this moment, and its permanent embodied result is the community of orthodox Dissenters. In the eighteenth, when a few good men, thinly scattered here and there, were lamenting the general decay of piety and frightful corruption of manners, the great revival of the last century sprang up, of which the indirect effects were an unprecedented quickening of every branch of the Church, and its permanent embodied result is the Methodist body throughout the world.*

Each of these three revivals was properly national. They did not affect a single neighbourhood, or terminate in a season. They pervaded the entire country, were sustained through a succession of years, and affected our national morals to the very core. It is impossible to estimate the collective effect of these three great revivals upon our nation generally in its character and position. Without them we should probably have been such a people as the Italians, destitute of their art. They have left no department of our social, intellectual, political, or moral life untouched; and the result has been a preparation of our race to carry out a beneficent mission on the earth, which leaves very much to be desired, but furnishes lively grounds of hope for the future prospects of mankind.

It is to be remarked that America shared largely in the benefit of each of these three great national revivals. From the first her middle and southern States received those religious institutions and means of grace, by which such men as Washington were trained up to give a healthy tone to the early steps of the young republic. From the second New England received its pilgrim Fathers, with those hardy Puritans whose sons have deeply impressed the character of the American Churches, and borne a glorious share in the toils and fruits of the present revival. From the third she received those itinerants who were the pioneer Preachers in all her new Western States, and the fruits of whose labor now constitute the most numerous religious body in the Union.

When, therefore, we speak of a great revival, we mean such a manifestation of the converting power of God, as shall mark a new epoch in the moral and religious history of mankind;—not the conversion of a few scores in this town, or a few hundreds in that city, although over these we should rejoice, and so would the angels too, but a pervasive, national quickening, reaching into every parish, going into the centre of society, striking its highest and its lowest extremes, and carrying forward the cause of vital religion as far in advance of its

* See a valuable paper by Rev. T. R. BINKS, in the volume called, "The Religious Condition of Christendom."