

The Holy Spirit led the preachers to use just the doctrines needed to meet the case. It is obvious that the natural tendency of the call to submission and duty was to make *practical Christians*. Great reform movements sprang up, against intemperance, profanity, Sabbath desecration, licentiousness, slavery, war, etc. The great benevolent and missionary agencies came into existence—the Bible Society, Tract Society, Sunday School Union, Mission Societies, etc. A powerful and permanent impulse was given to missions, home and foreign. The opening half of the century witnessed a marked elevation in Christian ideals, character, and activity.

The Third Era of American Revivals began with the great awakening of 1858. It was a revival among the people. It made revivalists rather than was made by them; and has been estimated to have added a million members to the churches. This religious awakening came in a most unusual way, and took on an entirely new aspect. The previous movements were intimately connected with some special presentation of dogmatic truth, or with the appearance of great leaders; but the revival of 1858 came as one result of the pressure of a peculiar providence. A great financial crisis had some time before prostrated the industries of the country; the depression continued and increased until vast numbers, left without work, were on the verge of abject want. In their despair they were driven to turn to God in prayer.

New York city, the center of commercial depression, was the place in which the movement originated. The Fulton Street Noon Prayer-Meeting, established October 8, 1857, with a layman, Mr. J. C. Lanphier, in charge, was the point of origin. That meeting was itself an inspiration. In three months after it was opened the great revival had already begun. In six months "Noon Prayer-Meetings" had spread across the continent, in all the cities and centers, and the revival went with them. Dr. A. P. Marvin, in the "*Bibliotheca Sacra*" for 1859, says:

"Perhaps there was no period of four months' duration, in the time of Edwards, when the results were so great and astonishing as during the four months which followed the opening of February in the year 1858. And as the present work is still going forward with power, may we not hope that its final results will mark it as the grandest since the planting of Christianity in the midst of pagan darkness and pollution?"

The work spread from the prayer-meetings to the churches, and the preachers added their messages to the sympathetic influence of the union gatherings. In Philadelphia alone, 10,000 new members were gathered into the churches at that time. It was not a revival for preaching the doctrines of dogmatic theology, but for the Spirit to write certain needed practical doctrines in the heart of the church. It demonstrated for Christendom *the power of prayer*. It was a great, sympathetic, social movement, that brought Christians of all denomi-