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EDITORIAL.

THE REVIVALS OF THE PAST CENTURY.

In the October number of the *Princeton Review* there are two articles by one of the editors, Dr. Lyman H. Atwater, on *Revivals of Religion*, which deserve attention at the close of this Centennial year. In the first article, entitled the *Great Awakening of 1740*, Dr. Atwater shows:—

1. The *causes* that produced the *deadness* in the American Churches, from which they were roused by the great awakening under Whitefield, Edwards and the Tennents. He specifies these causes to have been, in general, "a practical reliance on the externals of baptism, church membership, christian parental teaching and training, regular attendance on public worship, and a good moral life to insure salvation."

Then he goes on (2) to show that the *truths* which became, in the hands of the great preachers referred to above, the *instruments* of awakening the churches from their cold formalism, were the *Scriptural doctrine of grace*, especially the doctrine of man's ruin by the fall, of redemption by Christ, and regeneration by the Spirit. People were made to feel, as Dr. Tracy expresses it, "that all those hopes of heaven which they had built upon their own doings—upon their morality, partaking the Lord's Supper, or using means of grace, were entirely swept

away by the doctrines of the Gospel. They were made to see that God has not appointed anything to do before coming to Christ by faith: that all their previous works were unacceptable to his sight, and lay Him under no obligation, either on account of their worthiness or His promise to grant them any spiritual favour." These were the doctrines that dispelled the prevailing formalism, and which brought into unwonted distinctness and prominence—incited, shaped and moulded the great and blessed revival that reached its height in the year 1740.

Dr. Atwater takes occasion next to point out (3) the evils and disorders that came in the train of this great awakening. One evil, ("an error," as Edwards says, "that supports all other errors,") was giving to one's own thoughts, feelings and inward experiences the authority of a Divine revelation. Another error was the denunciation of ministers who kept aloof from the movement as *unconverted*, no matter "how devout and holy their lives, or fruitful their ministry, in the quiet and steady winning of souls to Christ." A third evil was, the exorbitant *exaltation of lay exhorters and teachers to invade the province of the regularly ordained ministry*. Connected indirectly with these errors in principle, were fanatical disorders, such as bodily agitations, convulsions, outcries and screamings.

Dr. Atwater's second article "The Revivals of the Century," is a continua-