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The Controversial Speaking of Alexander Campbell.

Carroll Brooks Ellis

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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THE CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKING OF ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech

by

Carroll Brooks Ellis
B.S., North Texas State Teachers College, 1941
M.A., Louisiana State University, 1945
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Theological debates were a vital part of the religious life of the Old Southwest from the close of the Second Great Awakening, 1805, until the Civil War period. The emotional wave which engulfed the frontier gave way to rationalized theology, dogmatic and argumentative. The presence of people with a heterogeneous religious background, the large number of religious sects struggling for supremacy, to which was added the rugged individualism of the frontier, the readiness to question, and the spirit of boastfulness, demanded that those who had conflicting religious opinions discuss them. Religious debates became the order of the day, and were at least equal in importance to the political debates.

Alexander Campbell was one of the leading debaters of the period. He was born September 12, 1787, in Ireland, but moved to America in 1809, settling in western Virginia. In 1812, Alexander and his father Thomas Campbell launched what they called "the Restoration Movement," in which they were seeking for the unity of all Christians on the basis of the Bible. The movement ultimately resulted in the formation of a religious group known by three names, Church of Christ, Christian Church, and Disciples of Christ. Because Alexander Campbell's ideas were in conflict with many of the frontier denominations, he engaged in at least
nine religious debates.

Through the influence of his father, his training at Glasgow University, and his personal study, Campbell had acquired both speech training and philosophy which fitted him for the role of a religious debater. Perhaps his fame in American religious history is due, in great measure, to his skill as a controversialist. His debates first brought him to public attention, and were his most productive efforts in the Restoration Movement. They have an even wider significance, for they are outstanding examples of typical speaking situations which affected the lives of people on the American frontier.

This dissertation is a rhetorical study of Alexander Campbell the controversialist, as revealed through his efforts in his three most important debates. In 1829, in Cincinnati, Ohio, he discussed with Robert Owen, the Scottish socialist, the validity of Christianity. His next major debate, in 1837, was also held in Cincinnati with Bishop John B. Purcell, one of the leading American Catholic clergymen. Although seven different propositions were discussed, in reality the subject was Protestantism versus Catholicism. In 1843, Campbell debated the Reverend N. L. Rice, a noted Presbyterian minister at Lexington, Kentucky, on the subjects of baptism, the Holy Spirit, and human creeds. These debates were held in large
cities; each of the opponents was outstanding; and the debates attracted wide attention. Furthermore, the Owen, Purcell, and Rice discussions were taken down in shorthand, and the printed record was certified by both speakers as correct.

Campbell looked upon theological discussions as an effective technique by which to disseminate his views. He felt, however, that debate was of value only when he had a qualified man as an opponent. Once an opponent had been agreed upon, Campbell insisted that rules of debate be drawn up, moderators appointed, and stenographers employed to take down the discussion in shorthand in order that the debate could be published.

Judging by modern standards, Campbell was not much concerned about the wording of the propositions to be discussed, for only in the Rice debate were the propositions clear and well stated. Campbell's strength lay in analysis, organization, and in gathering material. Most of his arguments were not original, but he exhibited a comprehensive understanding of the questions discussed. He quoted from the Bible, ancient historians, church fathers, classical writers, skeptics, lexicographers, Bible commentators, reformers, and modern church leaders with readiness.

Without exception he attempted to associate his
cause with truth, gave evidence of sincerity and acted with tact and moderation. (Even though he was discussing three different highly explosive questions, there is no indication of Campbell's ever losing control over his emotions. His manner was more like a lawyer pleading his case before a jury than a frontier preacher denouncing a rival. When appeals to the emotions were employed, they were usually woven into his logical argument.)

Because Campbell was more concerned in advancing his own case than in answering objections, he did not place major emphasis upon rebuttal. He used all of the special techniques of refutation, but only when he thought the refuted point would advance his cause. He was more suited for the affirmative than the negative in a debate, for he was essentially a builder.

Campbell was weakest in adapting his material to the audience. This is partly true because in each of the three debates he was as much concerned with the reading public as with the immediate audience. His interest in the published reports led him to read his affirmative speeches in the Rice debate, to introduce some arguments which he acknowledged were not for the audience, but for the reading public, and to present in some instances an over-abundance of evidence. (He did employ admirably the techniques of amplification, repetition, restatement,)

vii
examples, rhetorical questions, and figures of speech. He declined, however, to employ humor.)

Even though the Owen, Purcell, and Rice debates were held in large auditoriums, there was never enough room to seat all those who desired to attend. The daily newspapers carried reports of the debate, and often listed the arguments. The published reports were widely circulated both in this country and in England.

In spite of some deficiencies, Alexander Campbell was an effective debater. He was well qualified to use religious discussion as a technique to advance his cause.
INTRODUCTION

George D. Prentice, editor of the Louisville Journal wrote in 1858:

Alexander Campbell is unquestionably one of the most extraordinary men of our time. Putting wholly out of view his tenets, with which we, of course, have nothing to do, he claims, by virtue of his intrinsic qualities, as manifested in his achievements, a place among the very foremost spirits of the age. . . . Surely the life of a man thus excellent and gifted is a part of the common treasure of society.1

This statement is not an exaggeration, for Campbell's long and colorful career had many striking aspects. He was an outstanding educator, farmer, social reformer, writer, lecturer, preacher, and debater. All of these activities were connected with religion, and were so significant that they secured for him a prominent place in American religious history.

Alexander Campbell was born September 12, 1787, in the county of Antrim, near Ballymena, Ireland. He moved with his family to America in 1809, and settled in southwestern Pennsylvania. He married Margaret Brown in 1811, and was later given the Brown farm in northwestern Virginia. Beginning with his first sermon in

1 Quoted in Archibald McLean, Alexander Campbell as a Preacher (St. Louis, 1908), p. 44.
1810, his fame as a preacher and a religious leader spread rapidly. Alexander and his father, Thomas Campbell, launched what came to be known as the Restoration Movement, which has resulted in the formation of the largest indigenous American church. This crusade was, essentially, a plea for a more practical religion founded more on reason than emotion, and for unity of all Christians on the basis of the Bible. By 1830 those who had accepted the views of the Restorers were expelled or forced to withdraw from the various denominations with which they had been affiliated. Thus they felt compelled to form a separate religious communion. The churches were known by the term which the individual congregation preferred. The three names most often used, however, were Church of Christ, Christian Church, and Disciples of Christ. Although no general name was adopted, critics of the Restorers labeled them "Campbellites." Campbell, like others in the Restoration Movement, deeply resented this designation, saying, "This is both unmanly and unchristian."  

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4 Millennial Harbinger, I (1830), 118.
Even though Campbell disclaimed being the "founder" of the movement, he was the accepted leader during his lifetime. Under his leadership and with the added strength given by Barton W. Stone and Walter Scott, the growth of the group was phenomenal. In its beginning, it was concentrated more than any other religious group in the Old Southwest,\(^5\) where by 1840 its membership may have equalled that of the Baptists.\(^6\)

(Campbell achieved and held leadership by his aggressiveness, his almost unlimited capacity for work, and his ability as a public speaker. Perhaps the reports of contemporaries who heard Campbell preach should be discounted, but even so, it is possible to see that he was considered a prominent speaker. Ex-president James Madison met Campbell at the Virginia constitutional convention in 1829; later he said, "It was my pleasure to hear him often as a preacher of the Gospel, and I regard him as the ablest and most original expounder of the Scriptures I have ever heard."\(^7\) (Jeremiah Black, the

\(^5\) Ralph Leslie Rusk, *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier* (New York, 1926), I, 45.


\(^7\) MoLean, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
distinguished Attorney-General of the United States, was a student of Campbell and heard him preach on many occasions. He said, "As a great preacher, he will be remembered with unqualified admiration by all who had the good fortune to hear him in the prime of life. The interest which he excited in a large congregation can hardly be explained. The first sentence of his discourse 'drew audience still as death', and every word was heard with rapt attention to the close."\(^8\)

Even those who were in violent disagreement with Campbell's theology recognized his ability as a speaker. N. L. Rice, the last opponent of Campbell in a debate, later wrote a cutting article against him under the title, "Alexander Campbell's Sacrifice and Reforms." After accusing him of insincerity and of starting his religious movement for monetary reasons, Rice said, "Mr. Campbell is a man of more than ordinary talents, and he is possessed of considerable learning, and is a fine popular speaker and debater."\(^9\) Robert Davidson, in his History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky,

\(^8\) "Speech in Presentation of the bust of Alexander Campbell," by Jeremiah Black. Included in Selina Huntington Campbell, Home Life and Reminiscences of A. Campbell (St. Louis, 1882), pp. 275-283.

\(^9\) Louisville, The Presbyterian Exposition, January 5, 1857.
lashed out at Campbell for leaving the Presbyterian Church, yet he said, "He was a man of great natural gifts; a cool head, . . . having a respectable share of learning; considerable knowledge of human nature, and a keen polemical turn."¹⁰ (Judge Roper of Flemingsburg, Kentucky, who presided at Campbell's debate with the Reverend W. L. McCalla, said after the debate, "If Mr. Campbell should affirm that a crow was white, I would be unwilling to enter the list against him and attempt to prove the contrary."¹¹

These opinions attest Campbell's ability as a speaker and debater. His fame became so great that churches of many denominations were open to him. He rarely left any place without baptizing large numbers. In addition to preaching and debating, he also spoke often to school and educational societies on education or other popular subjects; in the latter part of his life, much of his speaking was to raise funds for Bethany College, which he established in 1840.¹²


¹¹ Quoted in W. R. Rogers, Recollections of Men of Faith (St. Louis, 1889), p. 62.

¹² Aylett Rains records numerous instances in his diary of hearing Campbell speak on the subject of Bethany College in the eighteen-fifties and eighteen-sixties. Aylett Rains' Diary (MSS in the College of the Bible Library, Lexington, Kentucky.)
Since he was seeking to reform religion, Campbell naturally engaged in much speaking. Being on the frontier where religious debating was popular, it was almost inevitable that he would enter the field of public discussion. At the beginning of his career, he locked with aversion, as did his father, on "theological pugilism". When challenged by the Reverend John Walker, a Presbyterian minister of Ohio, for a debate in 1820, Campbell refused to meet him, "not regarding public debate to be the proper method of proceeding in contending for the faith once delivered to the saints." After three requests from Walker and a period of six months delay, however, Campbell consented to engage in his first public discussion.

The Campbell-Walker debate was held at Mount Pleasant, Ohio, June 19 to 20, 1821. In his introductory address, Campbell explained why he had consented to engage in a public discussion of religion.

But why should I hesitate on the lawfulness of thus vindicating truth and opposing error? Did not the apostle Paul publicly dispute with the Jews and Greeks, with the leaders in philosophy

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14 Robert Richardson, Memoirs of Alexander Campbell (Cincinnati, 1897) II, 14.
and religion of his time? Yes, he publicly disputed with Epicureans and Stoics, the Jewish priests and the Roman orators, and openly refuted them. Nay, he disputed publicly in the school of one Tryannus two entire years with all that came to him. The Messiah himself publicly disputed with the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the priests and the rulers of the people; and by public discussion did Martin Luther, the celebrated Reformer, wage war with the whole learning of Rome. By these means he began and carried on the Reformation. . . . Heaven has stamped its probatum upon this method of maintaining truth. 15

He became increasingly convinced of the rightfulness of debate as a means of propagating his ideas, especially as he saw the widespread results of it. Later he wrote of the practice:

There are not a few who deprecate religious controversy as an evil of no small magnitude. But these are either the ill-informed, or those conscious that their principles will not bear investigation. So long as there is good and evil, truth and error, in the world, so long will there be opposition; for it is the nature of good and evil, of truth and error, to oppose each other. We cheerfully confess that it is much to be regretted that controversy among christians should exist; but it is more to be regretted that error, the professed cause of it should exist. Seeing then that controversy must exist, the only question is, how may it be managed to the best advantage. To the controversies, recorded in the New Testament we must appeal, as furnishing an answer to this question.

15 Alexander Campbell, Infant Sprinkling Proved To Be a Human Tradition: Being the Substance of a Debate on Christian Baptism, Between Mr. John Walker, A Minister of the Secession; and Alexander Campbell (Stoubonville, Ohio, 1820).
They were in general public, open, plain, and
sometimes sharp and severe. But the disputants
who embrace the truth in those controversies,
ever lost the spirit of truth in the heat of
conflict; but with all calmness moderation,
firmness, and benevolence, they wielded the sword
of the spirit ..."16

Alexander Campbell engaged in five important oral
religious debates, beginning with that with the Reverend
John Walker, a Presbyterian, in Mount Pleasant, Ohio, in
1820, on the subject of the mode of baptism. In 1823 he
debated the Reverend W. L. MacCalla, a Presbyterian, at
Washington, Kentucky. The subject was again the mode of
baptism. In 1829 in Cincinnati, Ohio, he discussed with
Robert Owen, the Scottish socialist, the validity of
Christianity. His fourth major debate was also held in
Cincinnati in 1837 with Bishop John B. Purcell of the
Catholic Church. Although seven different propositions
were discussed, in reality the subject was Protestant-
tism versus Catholicism. The last debate, held in 1843,
was with the Reverend N. L. Rice, a noted Presbyterian
minister at Lexington, Kentucky, on the subjects of
baptism, the Holy Spirit, and human creeds.

16 Alexander Campbell and W. L. MacCalla, A Public
Debate on Christian Baptism Between the Rev. W. L. MacCalla,
a Presbyterian Teacher, and Alexander Campbell. (London,
England, 1842, Reproduced by the Old Paths Book Club,
1943), Preface, iv.
Alexander Campbell’s fame in American religious history is due, in great measure, to the skill which he developed as a controversialist. His debates first brought him to public attention, and were his most productive efforts in the Restoration Movement. They have an even wider significance, for they are the outstanding examples of typical speaking situations which affected the lives of people on the American frontier. B. A. Abbott says, "No student of American Christianity can really understand the development of religion and church life in the Mississippi Valley and through the West without reading at least Campbell’s debates.”

Yet there is no definitive study of Alexander Campbell as a debater. In fact, little has been written on the discussions themselves. Four biographies of Campbell have been written. The first was written by Dr. Robert Richardson, who was Campbell’s friend and a professor in Bethany College. There is much valuable


19 B. A. Abbott, The Disciples, An Interpretation (St. Louis, 1924), p. 16.

20 Robert Richardson, Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, 2 vols. (Cincinnati, 1897). This was first published by Lippincott in 1867 and 1870.
source material in the book, but it does not devote much space to the debates. The other three make little pretense to the discovery of new sources and are little more than condensations of the Richardson biography.21 One book written on the debates themselves, J. J. Haley's The Debates That Made History published in 1890, contains only the material to be found in Richardson and the title page and proposition of each debate.22 Recently three Master's theses have been written in speech departments concerning Campbell's debates.23

This dissertation is a study of Alexander Campbell's controversial speaking as revealed through his efforts in the Owen, Purcell, and Rice debates. These debates have been selected because they represent Campbell's three most important theological encounters. They were held


22 J. J. Haley, The Debates That Made History (St. Louis, 1890).

in large cities; each of the opponents was outstanding; and the debates attracted wide attention. Furthermore, the Owen, Purcell, and Rice discussions were taken down in shorthand, and the printed record was certified by both speakers as correct.

This dissertation constitutes rhetorical case study in American religious debating. It is developed according to the following pattern:

The first chapter surveys the rise and popularity of religious controversy in the Old Southwest. The aim of the chapter is to provide a background for Campbell's debates.

The second chapter traces Campbell's education; especially noting the forces and events in his life which molded him into a speaker.

Chapters three, four, and five deal respectively with the Owen, Purcell, and Rice debates. Each contest is placed in its immediate historical setting. Particular attention is paid to Campbell's analysis, his organization, his use of argument and evidence, his use of ethical and pathetic appeal, his refutational skill, and his ability in audience adaptation. These topics are employed because they are the standard ones given by authorities on technique in argumentation and debate.

The sixth chapter is a summary of Campbell's
effectiveness as a debater.

MATERIALS

The editions of the Owen and Purcell debates used in this study were published by the MoQuiddy Printing Company in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1946 and 1914 respectively. Both of these have been checked with original printings and found to be identical with the exception that the print is larger in the later editions. A first edition of the Rice debate was available.

Campbell and his wife were methodical in keeping all personal letters and papers. They were filed in the safe at Bethany College. In 1917, however, for some unknown reason his only living child, Decima Campbell Barkley destroyed all of these records. Nevertheless there is abundant source material.

Alexander Campbell and John B. Purcell, A Debate on the Roman Catholic Religion (Nashville, 1914).

25 Alexander Campbell and N. L. Rice, A Debate Between Rev. A. Campbell and Rev. N. L. Rice, on the Action, Subject, Design, and Administrator of Christian Baptism; also, on the Character of Spiritual Influence in Conversion and Sanctification, and of the Expediency and Tendency of Ecclesiastic Creeds As Terms of Union and Communion (Cincinnati, 1841).
The most extensive collection of Campbell material is found at the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in Canton, Missouri. Many valuable primary sources are deposited there, as well as many books written on Campbell and the Restoration Movement. The College of the Bible Library in Lexington, Kentucky, has an excellent file of early papers published by members of the Churches of Christ. The Philip Fowl Christian Church in Frankfort, Kentucky, has twenty unpublished Campbell letters. The Fiskun Club and Baptist Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky, all contain source material on religious conditions on the frontier and statements from Campbell's critics. The Cincinnati Public Library, the Ohio State Historical Society, and the University of Cincinnati Library have good newspaper files and many contemporary records of the period. The Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., has all of Campbell's publications, including complete files of his monthly magazines, *The Christian Baptist* and *The Millennial Harbinger*. These last two publications, however, are found in many libraries. The Southern Methodist University Library of Dallas, Texas, has an excellent collection of autobiographies of early Methodist preachers.
CHAPTER I

RELIGION ON THE FRONTIER

A consideration of Campbell as a controversial speaker necessitates an understanding of religious conditions on the frontier of Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee in the first half of the nineteenth century. Special attention needs to be given to the rise of religious debating.

The close of the Revolution was followed by a great migration into the area that became Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Nowhere else has so large an area been settled in such a short period of time, almost entirely through the work of individuals moving singly or in small groups, and of their own volition. The earlier population of wood-choppers, game hunters, and Indian fighters was soon completely overwhelmed by the great new streams of emigrants. This emigration was made up not only of small farmers and people of the lower middle class, but also young planters, lawyers, and men of means.¹ The clergyman also made an

¹ Reuben Gold Thwaites, Early Western Travels (Cleveland, 1905), Preface IV, 10.
early appearance on this "western front"\(^2\), though his influence was not appreciable until about the turn of the century. Many of those who were on the cutting edge of the frontier pushed on westward; some, however, settled permanently, and adapted their way of life to the new environment.

When Francis Baily, an English traveler, came to Kentucky in 1797, he wrote:

Those ranks of men who form the first and second class of society have moved off, and left the country for the most part to be possessed by those who have been brought up in all the refinement and civilized manners of their brethren on the eastern side of the Alleghany mountains. From a few straggling settlements scattered over this vast territory, whose inhabitants were obliged to shut themselves up in block-houses, and establish their rights by the point which seemed right in his own eyes -- there have arisen -- fertile fields, blushing orchards, neat and commodious houses, and trading towns, whose inhabitants have imposed upon themselves the just restraint of mild laws, and who increasing in numbers, can lie down secure and free from all apprehensions of the tomahawk or scalping-knife.\(^3\)

By the last decade in the eighteenth century the "raw" frontier had moved beyond the trans-Allegheny region,

\(^2\) Avery Craven, "The Advance of Civilization Into the Middle West In the Period of Settlement," in Dixon Ryan Fox, ed., Sources of Culture in the Middle West (New York, 1934), p. 60.

but many frontier conditions existed in the area. In the first federal census in 1790, the regions soon to be known as Kentucky and Tennessee reported populations of 73,677 and 35,691 respectively. There were small settlements across the Ohio in the Northwest Territory. By 1810, Kentucky had a population of 406,511; Tennessee 261,727; and Ohio had reached 230,760.

The settlers were however in many respects still frontiersmen, because they were largely cut off from the East, and had to carve their homes out of the wilderness. Although a few lived in the small towns and villages, the majority were concerned with land. A scattered rural population made it difficult for the few preachers to "carry the light into the darkened corners." Life developed without too much interference from the churches.

Because of the many conflicting reports, it is difficult to generalize about the character of these pioneers. Contemporary observers, as well as modern

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4 Return of the Whole Number of Persons Within the Several Districts of the United States (Washington, 1802), pp. 47, 52.

writers, agree that frontier society was characterized by social democracy. In an environment where there was substantial economic equality, there was no basis for social distinctions. Neither wealth nor family standing meant much. All stood on an equality in cutting down trees, building cabins, putting in crops, and building fences.

Frontier conditions, likewise, produced a high degree of self-confidence and individualism. When people moved to the West, they were largely cut off from the restraints imposed by a settled society, and were placed upon their own resourcefulness. Early frontiersmen knew what they wanted to do, but in most cases they lacked the tools for doing it. The construction of a log cabin, the building of furniture, and the providing of cooking utensils developed individual initiative. In spite of a remarkable spirit of helpfulness that existed, it was every man for himself. Those who were successful came to have a high opinion of themselves, and this feeling was transferred to other phases of life, at least to politics and religion.6

Optimism was usually another characteristic which developed in the pioneer. Those who settled in the new

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6 Ibid., p. 146.
regions came with the hope of improving their conditions, willing to endure the labor and hardship if better times were on the way. Frequently this optimism led some into boastfulness concerning the superiorities of their particular region. For instance, Timothy Flint related an anecdote which, he said, was well known in the West, concerning an exhorter from Kentucky, who was preaching in a neighboring state on the topic of the happiness of Heaven. "In short, my brethren," said the preacher when he reached his climax, "to say all in one word, heaven is a Kentuck of a place."  

There was, to be sure, the crude side of frontier life. Harriet Martineau, Mrs. Trollope, and Charles Dickens were among the Europeans who did not hesitate to point out the crudities of the West. William Faux, writing in 1823 of Memorable Days in America said, "The traveler who must necessarily often mix with the very dregs in this country should be prepared with plain clothes, or the dress of a mechanic; a gentlemanly

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7 Timothy Flint, The History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley (Cincinnati, 1833), II, 56.

appearance only exciting unfriendly or curious feelings." Philip Lindsley, who was president of the University of Nashville from 1824 to 1850, found many circumstances of which he did not approve upon his arrival in Nashville.

"The habit of spitting acquired and rendered unavoidable by the practice of chewing tobacco," he declared, "is so offensive to all well-bred people as to exact some surprise that a gentleman should continue it." The Nashville chewing tobacco enthusiasts were as likely to spit on the floor of the church as they were on the floor of the saloon. Lindsley himself had an unfortunate experience in church one Sunday. While the congregation was standing during prayers, a well dressed young man leaned over and spat tobacco juice into Lindsley's pew in such amounts "as fairly to put all devotion out of countenance."

As had been suggested, in the early stages of settlement religion did not exercise a great influence.

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11 Ibid., III, 624.
over the lives of the people. It is true there were a few preachers and churches, but the people were usually classed as irreligious. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur commented that persons in a newly settled region seldom question the others about their religion, because "they care very little what the religious opinions of newcomers are."12 Apparently, other questions seemed more important. Furthermore, in moving to a new part of the country, many broke their church ties. Those for whom religion had never meant anything more than an indifferent conformity with a state church naturally dropped out when there was no established church. Others, while still giving a vague allegiance to the Christian tradition, had become detached from the churches of their fathers by reason of the pressure of new interests. Also, the frontiersman of the old Southwest, unlike his eastern counterpart, did not leave his home and go into a new territory for religious reasons; his motives tended to be economic.13

In the latter part of the eighteenth century


13 This idea is developed in Frederick Johnson Turner, Rise of the New West (New York, 1906), pp. 88-90.
there was a period of religious and moral lethargy throughout the United States. In a sermon preached in 1801 at New Haven, Timothy Dwight, President of Yale College, summarized the general moral and religious situation in the nation and declared that "profaneness of language, drunkenness, gambling, and lewdness" were increasing, while at the same time there was a cold and contemptuous indifference toward every moral and religious subject. If not more than one out of twenty-three Americans was affiliated with a church at the time of the Revolution, the proportion later on the frontier must have been even smaller.

It is safe to say, therefore, that the pioneers of the trans-Allegheny region were not noted for their piety. There are a few examples of "traveling churches," such as the Gilbert's Church of Kentucky, where a minister


15 Timothy Dwight, "A Discourse on Some Events of the Last Century," delivered in the Brick Church in New Haven, January 7, 1801.


and his entire church moved to the West, but these were exceptions rather than the rule. A vast majority of the early communities became notorious for lawlessness, rowdyism, swearing, drinking, and fighting. Since the challenge of the wilderness was so largely to physical prowess, brawn came to be the most respected of all endowments; education and religion were looked upon as not only unnecessary, but not quite becoming a man. Many were like the man at Lexington who boasted, "If some are spotted with sin, I am spot all over."

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18 This church had been formed in Virginia, and was there called the Upper Spottsylvania Church. Lewis Craig, one of the most successful Baptist ministers of Virginia, was their preacher. In 1781 Craig decided to move to Kentucky, and so great was the attachment of his members, that a majority of them decided to migrate with him. Their organization was kept on the march over the mountains, and their minister preached again and again as they camped along the way. After great hardship and danger, they arrived at their destination, and quickly made a clearing, and established Craig's Station of Gilbert Creek. Here on the second Sunday of December, 1781, they gathered for worship "around the same old Bible they had used in Spottsylvania." See Robert B. Semple, A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia, revised and extended by G. W. Beale (Richmond, 1894), p. 200.


20 Davenport, Ante-Bellum Kentucky, p. 118.
The churches in the East "mourned about the destitute condition" of their brothers in the West, for the latter faced a great problem in following the westward movement. These churches best equipped to meet the problem were naturally the ones which were destined to have the greatest influence. For a denomination to flourish in the West it was not only necessary that it have a sufficient organization, but it had to adapt to the situation on the frontier. In reality it is difficult to determine which exerted the greatest influence, the churches on the West or the West on the churches.

The older established churches of the Atlantic seaboard had little success, in the early years, at least, in the Trans-Allegheny region. The Roman Catholic, Episcopal, and Congregational churches did not gain much of a foothold, except in the instances where settlers moved out in a group. The settlement at Marietta, Ohio, was largely made up of Congregationalist, and certain of the French towns were Roman Catholic; but the general influence of these churches in the West was not great.

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22 John Bach McMaster, *A History of the People of the United States, From the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York, 1895), IV, 552.
(It remained for the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches, particularly the first two mentioned, to exercise the greatest influence in the winning of the West.23) 

There are many reasons for this fact. As has been suggested, these were the churches which were most capable of adapting themselves to frontier conditions. They were all more or less democratic in their form of government. Perhaps also the fact that they had been persecuted in the elder colonies added to their zeal.24

At the close of the Revolution, the Presbyterians were in the best position with reference to the West. Their presbyteries, churches, and ministers were to be found farthest west, and their leaders were imbued with the sturdy spirit of the pioneers.25 Many of those going west were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who formed a working nucleus.

John McMillan was the first minister to head a congregation west of the Alleghenies. After his graduating from the College of New Jersey (Princeton), and

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24 For instances of persecution see John N. Mecklin, The Story of American Dissent (New York, 1934), particularly chapters X, XI, and XII.

25 Sweet, Presbyterians, p. 23.
after his theological training at Pequea, he was called to the two Presbyterian congregations of Chartiers and Pigeon Creek in Redstone County in southwestern Pennsylvania in 1776. He was soon joined by Thaddeaus Dodd, James Power, and Joseph Smith as fellow ministers. According to Presbyterian practices, they formed a presbytery in 1781 called the Redstone Presbytery.

David Rice, a native of Virginia and a graduate of Princeton, was the first Presbyterian minister to settle in Kentucky. In 1783 he went there in search of land for his children. He was received with joy by the Presbyterian settlers, who urged him to move to the West. He agreed that if a written invitation were drawn up and signed by the permanent settlers, he would take it into consideration. Sometime later he was sent a petition with three hundred signatures, and accordingly moved in October, 1783, to the region of Dansville, Kentucky. Much of the advance of Presbyterianism in Kentucky was due to the influence of "Father" Rice.

From the beginning of settlement, Tennessee attracted many Scotch-Irish from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas. In 1773, two Presbyterian congregations on the Holston River, Ebbing Spring and

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26 Mann Butler, *Commonwealth of Kentucky* (Louisville, 1834), p. 27.
Sinking Spring, sent a call to the Hanover Presbytery for the services of the Reverend Charles Cummings. He accepted the invitation and for more than thirty years was the leader in establishing his church in Tennessee.

If one is to judge from the records of the early preaching tours, it would seem that the first task of the Presbyterian minister was to find those localities where Presbyterians had settled. Once they were found, the minister began regular preaching. Presbyterianism always prospered best where there was the largest number of Presbyterian settlers, because the preachers were mainly concerned with "finding the lost sheep in the wilderness" rather than winning new converts. This condition, coupled with their insistence upon college-trained ministers, and complicated by much internal dissension, accounts for the fact that even though the Presbyterians were in the best position for growth on the frontier, they were soon out-distanced by the Methodists and Baptists.

The Methodist Church first existed in America as a society within the Episcopal Church, but even before they organized a separate denomination on January 10, 1785, in Baltimore, Maryland, they were concerned with

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27 Sweet, *Presbyterians*, p. 34.
all humanity. Their message was not to a special race or class of people, but their doctrine made it imperative that they preach to all. During and immediately following the Revolution, Methodism first made its way westward over the Allegheny Mountains from Virginia and North Carolina into Eastern Tennessee and Kentucky. In 1782, circuits were formed on the headwaters of the Yadkin and Holston rivers that flowed together to form the Tennessee River. The circuits took the names of the two rivers. Two years later the Redstone Circuit in southwestern Pennsylvania appeared, and in 1786, these three earliest trans-Alleghenian Methodist circuits reported a combined membership of 1,210, of whom 11 were colored. The same year James Haw and Benjamin Ogden, circuit preachers, formed the Kentucky circuit.

Since it included not only ordained ministers, but lay exhorters and class leaders, the Methodists' local organization was well suited to frontier conditions. The most significant contribution of Methodism to the religious life of the pioneer was, however, the circuit rider, or itinerant preacher. The great advantage of the circuit rider system was that one preacher could supply many churches. Scores of circuit riders traveled

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through the country on horseback, preaching nearly every
day in pioneer cabins, in outdoor places, or wherever
people assembled to hear them. Some of these circuits
were hundreds of miles in length. In addition to taking
religion to the people, this system exercised a marked
influence upon the quality of Methodists preaching.
Robert Baird, the distinguished early Presbyterian
church historian, points out this fact in his book
*Religion in America.* He says:

... But the grand advantage possessed by the
Methodist itinerant preacher, and one which, if
he has any talent at all, he cannot fail to
profit by, is that he may preach sooner or later
in many or all of the eight, ten or more places
in his circuit, the discourse with which he sets
out, and which he had been preparing during the
intervals of repose which he enjoys. The frequent
repetition of the same sermon is an inestimable
means of improvement. Each repetition admits of
some modification, as the discourse is not written
out, and enables the preacher to improve what
seemed faulty, and to supply what seems deficient
in the preceding effort. No men, accordingly,
with us become readier or more effective speakers.30

The Baptists were equally adaptable to frontier
needs. The first Baptist preacher to hold anything
like regular preaching services in Kentucky was Thomas
Tinsley, who preached at Harrodsburg in 1776,31 but the

30 Robert Baird, *Religion in America* (New York,
1844), p. 191.

31 William Warren Sweet, *The Baptists, 1783-1830*
in "Religion on the American Frontier" (New York, 1931), I, 19.
first to settle permanently in Kentucky was William Marshall. Among the emigrants from Virginia and North Carolina were a number of Baptists, who constituted the beginning of this denomination on the frontier. By 1780, eight Baptist ministers, followed by a number of their members, came from Virginia and North Carolina into Holston County, Tennessee, but not until 1790 did Baptist church organisations begin to appear.  

By 1797, there were four Baptist churches in the general vicinity of Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Baptist Church grew rapidly on the frontier after 1800. Its democratic form of church organization and its aggressiveness appealed to the pioneers. The preachers, recruited from local ranks, were in sufficient numbers to meet the demand.

The typical Baptist preacher was also a farmer who worked on his land five or six days a week, except when he was called upon to hold week-day meetings or funerals. Licensed or ordained by a local Baptist Church, he believed that he was directly "called" by God to preach. As a general rule, he was not highly schooled, but his lack of education was almost an advantage.

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32 Sweet, Baptists, p. 27.
because of a strong prejudice against an educated ministry. Peter Cartwright, the famous backwoods Methodist preacher, after hearing a minister educated in the East read a sermon, commented that "it made him think of a gosling that had got the straddles by wading in the dew." The Baptist minister's manner of preaching was little different from that of the Methodist minister's. William Henry Milburn, a writer of the period, has given a sketch of the preaching of these exhorters. He said:

There was an immense deal of vim and stamina in their method. They spoke loudly and with their whole body; their feet and hands were put in requisition as well as their tongues and eyes. It was a very fierce, cutting and demonstrative style of preaching.

(As soon as four or five little frontier churches had been organized in a given region, the next step was to form a Baptist association. Strictly speaking, each church was completely independent, but the associations, technically merely advisory bodies, usually assumed a regulatory function. They assumed the power to expel from the association churches which failed to take their advice.) William Warren Sweet comments, "It was only

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through the combining of these little churches, and through the leadership of such men as Lewis Craig, William Hickman, and John Taylor, and the assistance which they were able to render whole groups of churches, through associational organization, that the Baptists became an effective instrument in meeting frontier needs."

The first meeting houses of all the churches on the frontier were, as a rule, the rude cabins of the settlers, which served until a permanent congregation was established. Then the male members came and built a church house. The following story of the erection of a Presbyterian Church in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, in 1800, illustrates the method by which many a frontier community secured its first house of worship:

... The Rev. Samuel Tait, a graduate of the Canenburg Academy and John McMillan's "Theological School," was sent out by the Ohio Presbytery to preach where he could find hearers. In the spring of 1800 he came to Cool Spring, in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, where he preached on the Sabbath. The interest manifested led him to propose that if they would secure a lot and build a church he would come and preach to them. The following Thursday was appointed as the day to build the meeting house. Men and boys came with their axes, and soon they were "lifted up against thick trees." Legs were cut off at proper lengths, but they were too heavy to be brought into position without a yoke of oxen, and alas the only team of oxen in the settlement belonged to a professed infidel.

36 Sweet, Baptists, p. 55.
and no one wanted to approach him on the subject. "Just as the necessity became pressing," who should appear approaching through the woods but the "infidel" with his yoke of sturdy oxen, shouting in a merry voice, "Here comes the devil with his oxen to help you build your meeting house," and the work went gaily forwards. The next important thing was the appearance of Thomas McLean with a flat keg of whiskey under his arm. This was placed in the minister's hands, and beginning with the minister and ending with the donor, all took a drink, after which there were three cheers for Thomas McLean. . . . By sundown the church was completed, "covered with clapboards, floored with puncheons, and round logs rolled in for seats. The house was so located that a huge stump answered the purpose of a pulpit, with two puncheons set upright in front and one across secured to the uprights with pins, on which the Bible might be placed. A puncheon seat for the minister completed the arrangement.

During the summer months, and especially on "sacramental occasions," it became customary to hold the services out of doors, generally on a hillside. A platform with a roof was erected for the preachers, and seats made of logs hewn on one side were arranged for the hearers.

Although the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists were early on the scene in the trans-Allegheny region, their growth was slow during the first years. Each of the denominations was active in building up

37 S. J. M. Eaton, "History of the Presbytery of Erie" (New York, 1868) included in, Sweet, Presbyterian, pp. 61-62.

38 A "sacramental occasion" was a meeting lasting two or three days at which communion was taken.
churches and preaching, but the general effect was not noticeable. William Henry Milburn explains:

The people, nevertheless, were somewhat insensible to the preached word during the first twenty-five years of its dispensation. They were absorbed by Indian wars, and by the pressing demands upon their labor necessary to maintain physical existence in a new country. Soon afterward came in French infidelity with French politics; and deism and atheism were openly avowed on every hand. . . . Thus the field which these pioneer preachers were called to till was a hard and stony one; and they had much difficulty in pushing their way.39

Barton W. Stone gives further evidence of the disinterestedness in religion. He said:

Things moved on quietly in my congregation, and in the country generally. Apathy in religious societies appeared everywhere to an alarming degree. Not only the power of religion had disappeared, but also the very form of it was waning fast away, and continued so till the beginning of the present century.40

Timothy Flint was not so pessimistic, but still he points out a lack of interest in religion. He wrote:

It is true, a serious mind cannot fail to observe with regret, the want of the permanent and moral influence of settled religious institutions. The regular "church going bell" to our ear such a delightful peal on the sabbath is not often heard in the western villages with the recurrence

39 Milburn, op. cit., p. 356.

40 Barton Warren Stone, The Biography of Eld. Barton Warren Stone, written by Himself, with Additions and Reflections by Elder John Rogers (Cincinnati, 1847), p. 34.
of that day, and there is something of tranquil sobriety, of elevated and just notions of morals, the influence of which is so immediately perceived in a country, where regular worship prevails, that in the more unsettled districts of this country, is felt as a painful privation.41

None of the churches, even in the older communities, exerted more than a feeble and sporadic influence. Francis Butler Simkins says, "Yet, a sense of sin and of piety deeply embedded in people whose ancestors had been devout British Protestants, was not to be uprooted by the liberating circumstances of a new environment."42 It took time for the pioneer to conquer the forces of nature, and for the churches to become established, but with these two things accomplished, it was only a matter of time until the Great Revival burst forth.

James McGready, a Presbyterian minister, is usually given credit for starting the wave of religious emotionalism that now engulfed the frontier. McGready came from North Carolina to Logan County, Kentucky, in 1796, where he became the pastor of three small congregations. He brought to the backwoods a modified Calvinism and a warm evangelistic attitude which probably could be traced indirectly to the preaching of George

41 Flint, The History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley, p. 147.
42 Simkins, op. cit., p. 76.
Whitefield. A contemporary declared that he gave such a vivid description of hell that a group of sinners trembled and quaked, believing that a lake of fire was yawning before them, an abyss horrible beyond description.

Under his preaching, a revival started in 1797 in each of his congregations in Logan County. The McGee brothers, John and William, from Sumner County, Tennessee, had a part in generating the original enthusiasm; soon the meeting was joined by other Presbyterian and Methodist preachers. At Red River, Gasper River, and Muddy River people "crowded from all parts of the country to see a strange work." Many came from points fifty and sixty miles away, others traveled a hundred miles. Every available means of transportation were used, for some came on foot, some on horse-back, and one man came in a wagon loaded with provisions.

43 Davenport, op. cit., p. 119.
44 Robert Davidson, History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky (New York, 1847), p. 132.
45 Davenport, op. cit., p. 119.
46 Barton W. Stone tells of visiting a camp meeting in Logan County directed by James McGready. Stone, Autobiography, p. 34.
47 James Smith, ed., The Posthumous Works of James McGready (Louisville, 1832), 1, xiii-xv.
48 According to Abernethy, it was at this meeting that one man attended who did not have enough horses for his entire family to ride. He therefore stocked his wagon and camped on the grounds. Thus, two essential features of the camp meeting sprung into existence.
From Logan County the revival spread south and east to Nashville and Knoxville and north and east to the Kentucky Bluegrass. In fact, in a brief period the Great Revival was in effect in all of the West, and had penetrated some parts of the East. The large meetings usually took the form of a camp, and soon became stereotyped in procedure. In his Autobiography, Peter Cartwright gives an excellent description of the usual proceedings.

They would erect their camps with logs or frame them, and cover them with clapboards or shingles. They would also erect a shed, sufficiently large to protect five thousand people from wind and rain, and cover it with boards or shingles; build a large stand, seat the shed, and here they would collect together from forty to fifty miles around, sometimes further than that. Ten, twenty, and sometimes thirty ministers, of different denominations, would come together and preach night and day, four or five days together; and, indeed, I have known these camp-meetings to last three or four weeks, and great good resulted from them. I have seen more than a hundred sinners fall like dead men under one powerful sermon.49

There are numerous descriptions of what took place at the camp meeting and how the people reacted to the preaching. One of the most exact pictures has been given by J. R. Graves, a famous Tennessee Baptist preacher of the time, in his book The Great Iron Wheel. It is so characteristic of what actually took place that it is

Listen to the character of the preaching; the doctrines advanced; observe all the multi-
form and questionable appliances and ingenious expedients brought into requisition. The pulpit
or stand is a Mount Sinai hung with the black-
ness of darkness, crested with fire, and shaken
with thunderings, and wreathed with fierce
lightenings; wrath and fury, "hell-fire and
damnation" are the themes of sermon and exhor-
tation. The membership must be roused to action.
The preacher says he wants to hear "a shout"
raised in the camp of Israel -- that the walls of
Jericho never fell-down until Israel raised the
shout; and he never knew anything done until
some sister "got happy," "Lord, make these
sisters here shouting happy, right now." What
appeals follow upon this to the passions -- to
the affections and fears; What scenes are de-
picted of dying fathers, dying mothers, dying
children and infants (violent sobbing), death-
scenes, hell-scenes -- friends in heaven meeting
and fathers and mothers there, meeting children,
and the dear little babies lost. Hear that shout
-- (had the Lord answered the prayer?) -- and
another -- and another; and now it becomes
general -- the preacher's voice rises like trumpet-
tone over all -- "Fire! Fire! Send down fi-re!"
"Baptize all this congregation in the Holy Ghost
and fi-re!" "Paw-er! Paw-er! -- Come in thy
mighty paw-er!" Now, the excitement being at the
right stage, the straw being prepared, the door
of the altar is thrown open and sinners are
called upon to come forward before they drop into
hell. In the midst of the uproar, parents drag
their excited and terrified children into the
altar, and others from alarm, others from pure
nervous excitement, and others from sympathy,
rush forward; the altar is crowded. Now follows
what some preachers call a "sanctified row."
The mourners are exhorted to pray mightily and a
season of prayer commences. A brother who has a
strong voice is called upon to pray -- call
mightily upon God. And who can describe the
scene that follows for the next half hour --
men and women, girls and boys, of all ages, are
mingled and co-mingled in one conglomerated mass
in the straw, rolling and tumbling, and throwing
their arms and limbs about in every conceivable
direction; forty or fifty "mourners" crying.
screaming, some shouting, some swooning, some with the power; and the shrill voice of the leader ever and anon rising above the din; calling for "fire," "power!" and the ministers shouting the loud and deep "A-men! a-men!" do Lord! Hallelujah!"50

Shouting was a feature of these meetings from the first, and the trance and visions were not new.51 Presently a new exercise known as the "jerks" was added. Peter Cartwright, looking upon it as a remarkable manifestation of God, described what would take place as follows:

... No matter whether they were saints or sinners, they would be taken under a warm song or sermon, and seized with a convulsive jerking all over, which they could not by any possibility avoid, and the more they resisted the more they jerked. If they would not strive against it and pray in good earnest, the jerking would usually abate. I have seen more than five hundred persons jerking at one time in my large congregations. Most usually persons taken with the jerks would rise up and dance. Some would run, but could not get away.

To see those proud young gentlemen and young ladies, dressed in their silks, jewelry, and prunella, from top to toe, take the jerks, would often excite my risibilities. The first jerk or so, you would see their fine bonnets, caps, and combs fly; and so sudden would be the jerking of the head that their long loose hair would crack almost as loud as a wagener's whip.52

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51 Barton W. Stone classified the emotional experiences in the following manner: the falling exercise, the jerks, the dancing exercise, the barking exercise, the laughing exercise, the running exercise, and the singing exercise. Autobiography, pp. 39-42.
52 Strickland, Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, pp. 48-49.
At first, the camp ground was a religious rallying center where Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists were working together. Even though the Great Revival was started among the Presbyterians, soon Presbyterians were working in harmony with the Methodists and Baptists. The Methodist, Presbyterian or Baptist exhorters were assigned certain periods of the day or sections of the ground in which each was to have control over worship and preaching. Sectarianism was completely submerged. William Burke, a famous Methodist preacher, stated that the Presbyterians saw how much use the Methodists could be, and were "pressing in their invitations" for assistance. Speaking of the camp meeting at Concord, Kentucky, Barton W. Stone said, "the whole country appeared to be in motion to the place, and the multitudes of all denominations attended. All seemed to unite in the work and in Christian love, party spirit, abashed, shrank away."54

The approximate date generally given for the close of the Great Revival is 1805.55 By that time the

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53 J. B. Finley, Sketches of Western Methodism (Cincinnati, 1857), p. 76.

54 Stone, op. cit., p. 157.

55 Catherine C. Cleveland, The Great Revival in the West (Chicago, 1916).
Presbyterians had abandoned it, but the Baptists and Methodists were continuing. It was the Methodists who carried on the camp meetings to reap the greatest results from them. In fact, the camp meetings became associated in the common mind with Methodism, and the emotional experiences of these meetings were referred to as "Methodists fits."

The Great Revival as a product of the frontier had many lasting social effects; one of them was the division within the ranks of the existing religious groups. According to William Warren Sweet, revivalism has been one of the most decisive factors in organized religion in America. The Great Revival precipitated an era of theological speculation and doctrinal division. It stimulated religion, but in so doing multiplied the sects. In the Presbyterian Church, for example, there grew up two groups of ministers, those favoring and defending the revival, called "Revival men," and those opposing it known as "Anti-Revival men." This division

56 William Warren Sweet, Revivalism in America (New York, 1945), p. 140. Even though Catherine C. Cleveland tends to emphasize the benefits of the Great Revival, she admits it resulted in division and fostered sectarianism, see Cleveland, The Great Revival in the West, chapter 5. Peter G. Mode, The Frontier Spirit in American Christianity applies Turner's thesis to Christianity and points to the division which resulted. See chapter 1.
led to the formation of the Cumberland Presbyterians, the New Light group, and the Shakers, which mainly came from the ranks of the regular Presbyterians. Soon there were twelve kinds of Presbyterians, thirteen kinds of Baptists, seventeen kinds of Methodists, and the smaller groups divided and sub-divided. There were various causes listed as reasons for the separation, but in general, it is possible to describe them under four headings: divisions over doctrine, administration and moral questions, or controversies of a personal character. It is still possible, however, to assign a more fundamental reason -- the frontier spirit. Many people in the old Southwest were like the "honest Georgian" who preferred "his whiskey straight and his politics and religion red hot."58 There pioneer environment had developed a vigorous independence and a distrust for authority. These characteristics affected their attitude toward religion.


58 Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, Georgia Frontier, quoted in V. L. Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought (New York, 1927-30), II, 167. Frederick L. Paxson, History of the American Frontier, 1763-1893 (Boston, 1924), traces the similarity of political and religious conditions on the frontier.
Doctrinal differences among the popular denominations had been largely forgotten in the emotional excitement of the Great Revival. Once the great wave was over, however, the effort of each denomination to entrench the converts to its particular brand of theology resulted in division within denominations and battles among them. Frontier religion was largely becoming rationalized theology; the camp meeting with its call to universal repentance was being replaced by doctrinal discussion, by a dogmatic orthodoxy, contentious and argumentative.

The doctrine of conversion was one of the contributing causes of this dissention. For conversion was to be a highly individualistic matter, not believed to be connected with any church. The preacher under whose exhortation the convert was won looked upon the converted as the "lawful bounty" of his church, but the other denominations looked upon him as a prospective member. Alfred Brunson complains of this practice in the following way:

... In that neighborhood the Good Master had favored the Methodists with the conversion of about two hundred souls; but a system of proselytism had been so ingeniously and successfully practiced, that half or more of these had been induced to join

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59 Strickland, op. cit., p. 64.
other Churches. Many of these proselyters were on the ground, watching for new spoils in the case of new conversions.60

He expressed his attitude toward these practices in no uncertain terms:

If our converts choose to go to other folks, disregarding the indications of God's will in their being awakened and converted among us, and of their own accord, we say to them, go; we want none but volunteers, those who, from principle prefer their spiritual birthplace as their homes; but when they are led away against their first convictions of duty, by artful maneuvering and false representations, we deem it but right to enlighten them as to the truth in the case, and to expose to public view the deceptions resorted to in such matters.61

Apparently the most effective means by which a denomination could boast of superiority was on the basis of doctrine.

One of the great sources of dispute, therefore, was Calvinistic doctrine, which included such dogmas as election, predestination, falling from grace, and total depravity. Presbyterians, and to a lesser degree the Baptists, defended Calvinism, while the Methodists

60 Alfred Brunson, A Western Pioneer; Or, Incidents of the Life and Times of Rev. Alfred Brunson, A.M.D.D., Embracing a Period of Over Seventy Years. Written by Himself (Cincinnati, 1872), I, 295.

61 Ibid., p. 296.
opposed the teaching of the other denominations. Questions of church government, mission work, and the doctrine of the trinity were points of contention. But perhaps the question which involved the greatest disagreement was the mode of baptism. Peter Cartwright remarked that it was just a controversy about the way to heaven, "whether it was by water or by land," but indeed, none of these were subjects which were dismissed lightly by the sectarian mind of the frontier. They caused, at times, serious divisions in families and disunion in community life.

In spite of the frequent ill effects of controversy, apparently the frontier sectarian loved it, and he was as loyal to his doctrines as he expected the adversary to be to his. James B. Finley, a famous Methodist frontier preacher, was the son of a Presbyterian. At one of the Methodist class meetings, the elder Finley was

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62 Philip Schaff, ed., A Religious Encyclopedia or Dictionary of Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, and Practical Theology. Based on the Real Encyklopadie of Herzog, Flitt, and Hauck (New York, 1882), I, 145, states the Methodists were Armenian in doctrine; it gives an excellent contrast of Armenianism with that of Calvinism.

63 Strickland, op. cit., p. 32.

64 Nottingham, Methodism on the Frontier, pp. 164-166.
attempting to reconcile some of Calvin's and Wesley's teachings. When he had finished his talk, the young Finley arose and said:

Father, you can no more reconcile Calvin and Wesley than you can darkness and light, or error and truth, and there is no use of your trying to do so. Permit me to say, if you are a Methodist be one, and if you are a Calvinist be one, for I want truth to prevail everywhere, and every man to be really what he is. 65

The younger Finley felt bad about reproaching his father, but soon justified himself with the scripture, "He that loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me." The words, "If you are a Methodist be one, and if you are a Calvinist be one, for I want . . . every man to be really what he is," struck the keynote of the frontier attitude toward sectarian affiliation.

While there were some who sought to keep controversy down, seemingly the majority were in favor of it, seeking to justify it as productive of good. Parson William G. Brownlow said:

. . . but so long as error and bigotry, and sin and its attendant miseries, are in the world, . . . so long will there be a call for controversy; and moreover, he who conducts it in accordance with truth and righteousness, renders an important service to the Church and to the world.

I am not among those, however, who consider all religious controversy, in the present state of society detrimental to the cause of Christ. In addition to its eliciting truth by the exposure of error, it has a tendency to exercise the human faculties -- to make mankind think deeply and accurately, and to dive cautiously and understandingly into the great sea of theological truth.66

The Presbyterian Magazine expressed almost the same thought in an article in 1856:

Discussion elicits truth, just as the collision of flint and steel bring out the spark. Let the representative of each religious communion, in his time and place, fairly present the peculiar views of his sect, and the people at large will be better prepared to determine what is orthodoxy.

The testimony of facts is in conformity to and corroboration of the foregoing. Turn your eyes any direction in Christendom where the citadel of truth had been most seriously assailed, and you will find that a bold and uncompromising opposition to error has been most fruitful of good. Silence or shrinking would, in every such instance, have been regarded a surrender of the ground, and the enemy, accordingly, been emboldened in his attacks.67

While both of these statements were given at a time when controversy was beginning to slacken, they indicate the feeling of the times.

The intense partisan feeling which developed after the Great Awakening exhibited itself in three ways:


doctrinal preaching, pamphlet and book writing, and public religious debates.

Elizabeth K. Nottingham says that the congregations of the various churches came to expect and to relish controversial pulpit oratory. "Religion had been presented to them under the guise of a fight, -- whether with the ever-present devil or the almost equally omnipresent doctrinal foe would seem to make little difference." Indeed, the ministers apparently did not know much else to preach about, for the Presbyterian Magazine said that if controversial topics were excluded from the pulpit, "we would be shut up to a narrow round of subjects." An extract from the Journal of Benjamin Lakin, a pioneer Methodist preacher, serves to illustrate the prevalence of argumentative pulpit preaching:

. . . The Baptist in this place have (been) bitterly opposed to Methodism, by misrepresenting the doctrine, and by opposing us in almost every shape, appeared resolved to keep us out of the place if possible. One of their last efforts seemed to be made shortly after our return by a preacher by the name of Bowler, he came and preached so severely against Armenians, that he gave general offence to the thinking part of the people. He went so far as to say that Armenians

68 Nottingham, op. cit., p. 164.
69 Ibid.
70 Van Rensselaer, op. cit., p. 154.
ought to be doubled damned.\textsuperscript{71}

Evidently Lakin was determined to preach on the subject of the doctrines held by the Armenians, and to answer the arguments given.

Speaking of Kentucky in 1801, Jacob Young gave the following similar account:

The Baptists then began to try to make proselytes throughout both counties. They preached hardly any thing else but baptism by immersion. Our elder came round to hold his quarterly meeting at the mouth of Kentucky River. On Sabbath, he preached a sermon on baptism. There were a great many Baptists in the congregation; among others, a very respectable old lady by the name of Cragg, who became so deeply affected that you could hear her breaths all over the house. The friends had to carry her out, else she would have fallen on the floor. An aged man rose up, and addressed the preacher in the following words. "Sir, you have preached lies this day, and I can prove it from the word of God." The elder replied, very mildly, "You had better take your seat and be still. I am sorry the lady's feelings are hurt. I will do any thing in my power to allay them." Confusion became so great that he was not able to finish his sermon.\textsuperscript{72}

Apparently much of the preaching was devoted either to attacking the doctrines of other religious groups or to an attempt to support their own preachers.\textsuperscript{73} On an

\textsuperscript{71} "The Journal of Benjamin Lakin, 1794-1820," found in Sweet, Methodists, p. 256.

\textsuperscript{72} Jacob Young, Autobiography of a Pioneer; or, The Nativity, Experience, Travels, and Ministerial Labors of Rev. Jacob Young, with Incidents, Observations and Reflections (Cincinnati, 1859), p. 80.

\textsuperscript{73} William T. Utter, op. cit., p. 371.
evangelistic (preaching) tour through Tennessee in 1804, Lorenzo Dow recorded many instances of controversial preaching. The following is an example of some of the sermons he records:

Sunday, 21st. I heard Doctor Tooley, a man of liberal education, who had been a noted deist, preach on the subject of the jerks and the dancing exercise. He brought ten passages of scripture to prove that dancing was once a religious exercise, but corrupted at Aaron's calf, and from thence young people got it for amusement. I believe the congregation and the preachers were generally satisfied with his remarks.\[74\]

In addition to attacks from the pulpit, religious controversial writing, directed primarily at other denominations were widely circulated.\[75\] David Rice published "An Epistle to the Citizens of Kentucky Professing Christianity; especially to those who are, or have been, Denominated Presbyterians." In this tract he argued that desertion of the Presbyterian Church was a step toward atheism. John Baily wrote a pamphlet entitled "Fanaticism Exposed; or the Scheme of Shakerism Compared with Scripture, Reason and Religion, and Found to be Contrary to them All." Peter Cartwright believed that

\[74\] Lorenzo Dow, The Life, Travels, Labors, and Writings of Lorenzo Dow; Including his Singular and Erratic Wanderings in Europe and America (New York, 1881), p. 155.

\[75\] For an excellent bibliography of religious controversial writing on the frontier see, Ralph Leslie Rusk, The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier (New York, 1926), II, 231-270.
the beginning of controversial writing by members of his sect (Methodist) was occasioned by the appearance of "A Familiar Dialogue between Calvinus and Arminius" by Thomas Celland. Methodists wrote in reply two satirical pamphlets, "A Useful Discovery; or, I Never Saw the Like Before" and "The Dragon of Calvinism." Most of these writings were personal in nature, characterized by extreme denominational bitterness, and usually assuming almost the form of a written debate. Such writing was not confined to pamphlets, however, for books were published attacking other religious groups. Perhaps the outstanding example of these is the interchange of books written by J. R. Graves, a Baptist preacher of Nashville, Tennessee, and William G. Brownlow, a Methodist preacher of Knoxville, Tennessee. The men were extremely bitter and while they did not exactly arrive at the extreme of using profanity against each other, one wonders why they exercised even that degree of restraint.

Oral religious debates were the most popular form which the controversy among the sects assumed. In his

76 J. R. Graves, The Great Iron Wheel; Or Republicanism Backwards and Christianity (Nashville, 1855).
77 William G. Brownlow, op. cit.
book The Older Middle West, Henry Clyde Hubbart says, "The great debates of the politicians of that day were equaled if not excelled by these theological contests, perhaps unparalleled in American history and playing a major part in the higher life of the West from 1825 to 1850." At times a formal challenge was issued, rules drawn up, and subsequently the debate was published. Often the debates were more informal. If we can judge by the contemporary writings of the time, there were many oral religious debates.

In referring to one debate, William Burke said:

This year began my war with the Baptists. Having had some small revival the Baptists did all they could to draw off our members and get them into the water; and I began with lecturing every time I baptized an infant, which greatly roused up the Baptists, so much so that I received a challenge from the Rev. Thomas Shelton, the champion of the whole Baptist denomination. Burke accepted the challenge and the debate was held. This was only one of the many in which he participated.

In his Autobiography, Jacob Young, who was a prominent frontier Methodist preacher, mentions a number of religious discussions. For example, he tells of such an incident in Kentucky in 1801.

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78 Henry Clyde Hubbart, The Older Middle West, p. 64.

79 James B. Finley, Sketches of Western Methodism (Cincinnati, 1855), p. 54.
Men of the best talent in the Baptist Church were engaged in trying to prove that there was no Christian baptism but immersion, and that infant sprinkling, as they termed it, was sinful in the sight of God. Our elder, and a Baptist preacher by the name of Keller, had a public debate on the subject before a very large assembly. Mr. Keller was an able man, a good debater, and well versed in the subject. He came into the congregation with nearly as many books as he could carry, but he appeared to feel the keen edge of the elder's logic, and to be embarrassed with his eloquence.80

He records another debate in 1816 in Ohio:

A certain Universalist preacher, by the name of Streeter, came on from the east, and stopped in Lancaster. I was informed, afterward, that he was a backslidden Methodist preacher. He commenced a violent attack on the Methodist Church. M'Mehan encountered him and put him to silence. They held a public debate in the courthouse, and M'Mehan evidently gained the victory.81

Peter Cartwright had many public debates. His first one was in southern Indiana in 1808. He was sent for by the Methodists, because "Old Brother Collins," the local minister, was not eloquent in public debate.82 Arriving on the scene, Cartwright went to the Shaker meeting and "proposed to them to have a debate, and they dared not refuse."83 The discussion was held in the open air before a large audience. According to the agreement,

80 Young, Autobiography of a Pioneer, p. 81.
81 Ibid., p. 347.
82 Strickland, op. cit., p. 53.
83 Ibid., p. 54.
Cartwright was supposed to close the debate, but before his speech, Mr. Gill, one of the Shaker representatives, called on all of his faith to leave. But in this situation, Cartwright demonstrated his resourcefulness:

... I arose, called them to order, and stated that it was fairly agreed by these Shaker priests that I should bring up the rear, or close the argument. I stated that it was cowardly to run; that if I was the devil himself, and they were right, I could not hurt them. I got most of them to take their seats and hear me...

I addressed the multitude about three hours, and when I closed my argument I opened the door of the Church, and invited all that would renounce Shakerism to come and give me their hand. Forty-seven came forward and then and there openly renounced the dreadful delusion.

Cartwright was still not content with his success, for he tells that the next day, "I followed those that fled... and my number arose to eighty-seven."85

In his Memoirs, Isaac N. Walter tells of a discussion with J. C. Lyon of the Methodist Church. After discussing the origin of the controversy, Walter quotes the account of the debate given in the Christian Palladium, one of his church papers.

A spirited controversy has taken place in Virginia, between Eld. I. N. Walter and Mr. J. C. Lyon, a Methodist minister of Harrisburgh.

84 Ibid.
85 Ibid., p. 55.
Mr. Lyon, in this case, has fared as all Methodist ministers must, who have the presumption to enter the field in defense of their creed in this age of light. Mr. Walter is a young man, yet he has failed, if not confounded a Methodist champion. The strong man, the Lyon (lion), with desperate frenzy and tremendous roar, fell upon this young stranger in a strange land. But the stripling, like David, caught him by the beard and smote him: Now his carcass lies by the wayside. 86

This example seems to reflect one of the characteristics of religious debating, for in most instances after the discussion each side claimed a complete victory, and publicized the fact in the religious paper of their denomination. At least, neither party ever admitted defeat.

Apparently many of these debates were not planned, but happened upon the spur of the moment. Young tells of the following experience which William M’Kendree had in the Ohio district in 1812:

Next morning we were visited by a deputation from the Presbyterian Church, setting forth with great dignity, that they were about to settle a Presbyterian minister in that place; that they were hardly able to do it; that if the congregation were divided they would fail; and that there was no probability that the Methodists could make an establishment there; therefore, they thought we had better keep away. In addition to the above circumstances, they did not wish Methodism to be introduced into the country, because, in the first place,

Methodists preached false doctrines; in the second place, their Church government was not warrantable. Beside these, they made many other frivolous objections that I shall not mention. In the course of the conversation they became angry and very insulting, and said to M'Kendree, "Sir, you preached false doctrine here last night." M'Kendree made no reply, but rose from his seat, and invited Squire Mead to come into the room. He then invited us all in, and requested us to be seated. The room was pretty well filled, a good many being present. He then spoke to the company, saying, "These gentlemen have charged me with preaching false doctrines. It happens very fortunately there is a judge present, and I will set you down as jurors, while I make my defense." The deputation began to look a little alarmed, matters having taken a serious turn. He now called upon them to state the charges against him. 87

Other examples could be given of religious debating on the frontier, for while not all preachers were controversialists, apparently each religious group had those who were specialists in the field. 88 Theological discussions came to be as much a part of the frontier life as the political disputes. Religious debates were not an invention of the frontier, for they are as old as religion, but the characteristics of the frontier helped to make them popular. The presence of people with a heterogeneous religious background, the large number of religious sects struggling for supremacy, plus the rugged

88 Ibid., p. 231.
individualism of the frontier, the readiness to question, and the spirit of boastfulness, demanded that those who had conflicting religious opinions discuss them. There religious debates were the order of the day. They were frequent and well attended. They occupied much of the time of some of the leading men of the various denominations. Discussions were not all confined to the pulpit, for to "argue religion" was a favorite pastime. It was a poor church member who could not quote scripture to defend the views of his denomination. 89

William Henry Milburn, a contemporary writer of the period, summarizes the relationship between religious debates and the frontier in the following paragraph:

. . . There was a sort of pugnacious rivalry or "free fight" between these various denominations in the West -- nor has this quite yet passed away. There is an active, rough, resolute courage, independence, and pluck about the western people, which inclines them to close scuffing and grappling, a sort of knockdown attitude visible through all of their modes of life; and their clergy are not free from the same peculiarities. They were therefore great controversialists; and there was an immense din about Baptism, and Pedobaptism; Free Grace and Predestination; Falling from Grace and the Perseverance of the Saints, etc. etc. Brethren of different denominations often held what they called discussions or debates; where one of one challenged another. Meeting together before the people, occupying a temporary pulpit in a grove, they would thus treat -- and maltreat -- the doctrines and views of each other, to the eminent

89 Utter, op. cit., p. 371.
edification, and often-times the entertainment of the assembled multitude. 90

Judging from the records, it seems that religious debating was the most approved method by which these pioneers "defended" their doctrines. Such discussion continued to be popular until the Civil War, when the subjects of Atheism, Catholicism and slavery supplanted many of the older topics.

These debates are of interest to the rhetorical critic as a part of the history of American oratory. They were speaking situations in which vast numbers were interested, and which had a great influence on the course of American religion. The religious debates on the frontier deserve at least as much attention as the political discussions, because they were both a product of the same forces. Religious controversies are not usually mentioned as prominently in history as political discussions, but perhaps the tendency on the part of many past historians to emphasize political history rather than social history is a partial explanation. Many of the religious discussions are no longer of wide interest today, for the modern mind has the tendency to dismiss them as mere hair-splitting contests. The rhetorical

90 Milburn, op. cit., pp. 355-356.
critic, however, must not employ the present day yardstick in determining the importance of speaking events of the past. Many of these religious debates drew large crowds, and both daily and religious newspapers carried day-by-day accounts of the arguments of both speakers. Such prominent frontier leaders as Lyman Beecher, Henry Clay, Timothy Flint, and James G. Birney were connected with them. To many of the people, the questions discussed were matters of truth and error involving Heaven or Hell. Therefore, as important speaking situations of the frontier life, religious debates deserve attention from those interested in the history and development of American public address.

Alexander Campbell was one of the outstanding religious debaters of the period. He and his father, Thomas Campbell, began their religious movement in the Old Southwest in 1812, whereby they sought to abolish sectarianism and to unite all Christians on the basis of the Bible. As the leader in the movement, Alexander Campbell was seeking for unity, not for a mere nominal

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91 Both Henry Clyde Hubbart, *The Older Middle West*, p. 64, and R. L. Rusk, *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier*, p. 230, assign Campbell first place among religious controversialists of the period.
union of Christians, on what he believed to be the "facts" of the Bible. His doctrines, if not his plea, were novel upon the frontier, and in conflict with all of the existing denominations. Because of the spirit of the times, he adopted religious debating as an effective technique to advance his cause. Apparently his speech training and background admirably fitted him for the role he assumed.
CHAPTER II

FORCES WHICH MOLDED ALEXANDER CAMPBELL INTO A SPEAKER

The study of Campbell as a debater upon religious subjects is in reality an aspect of the study of Campbell as a speaker. For while his debates were important for a number of reasons, they cannot be divorced from his philosophy and practice of public speaking. An inquiry, therefore, into the forces and events which molded Campbell into a speaker is at the same time a study of the circumstances which fitted him to assume a leading role as a religious debater.

The speech education of Alexander Campbell is not confined to one or two isolated events in his life, but as in the case of most speakers, to many experiences which contributed to his total development. It must be admitted, however, that there are always dominant forces which at least guide the growth of any given speaker. Therefore, the main concern of the present chapter is to investigate the main factors which molded Campbell into a speaker.

It is safe to say that Thomas Campbell exercised the greatest influence on his son. Alexander acknowledged his indebtedness saying, "Whatsoever good I may have done under God, I owe it all to his paternal care and instruction,"
and especially to his example." ¹ The relationship between father and son was a remarkably intimate one, even though Alexander later said,

Although my own father has been a diligent student, and a teacher of the Christian religion since his youth and in my opinion, understands this book as well as any person with whom I am acquainted, yet there is no man with whom I have debated more, and reasoned more, on all subjects of this kind, than he.²

But Alexander usually followed the paths marked out by his father. By education and experience, Thomas Campbell was equipped to influence his son not only in religion, but to aid in his development as a speaker.

Thomas Campbell was born on February 1, 1763, in County Down, near Newry, Ireland. He was of Scottish descent, as his name implies, and traced his lineage back to the race of Diarmid, the Campbells of Argyleshire, Scotland; but his immediate ancestors had lived in North Ireland for some years.³ Thomas showed a deeply religious nature early in life, acquired "a most sincere and earnest love for the scriptures,"⁴ and at an early age decided to study for the ministry.

¹ Quoted in Archibald McLean, Alexander Campbell as a Preacher (St. Louis, 1908), p. 47.
² Christian Baptist, p. 229.
³ Benjamin Lyon Smith, Alexander Campbell (St. Louis, 1930), p. 45.
After teaching for a short period in two different schools near his home, Thomas felt such an intense desire to pursue theological studies that he made definite plans to prepare himself for the ministry. With the help of John Kinley and with the reluctant consent of his father, he enrolled in the University of Glasgow in 1783 to study to become a clergyman.5

He attended the School of Arts for three years, and then entered the Divinity Hall of the Anti-Burgher branch of the Succession Church, which was a part of the University of Glasgow. Five sessions of eight weeks were required by the Synod for a ministerial candidate. Thomas completed these, as well as the undergraduate work prescribed. His schooling was not consecutive, however, and so he did not receive his degree until 1791. He must have been a good student, for he was designated as an honor graduate of the University of Glasgow.6

Thomas taught in an academy in Antrim, Ireland, when he was not attending the University. There he became acquainted with Miss Jane Corenighle, a descendant of the Hugenots who had fled from France upon the


6 Ibid., p. 17.
revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. The two were married in June, 1787. Alexander, their first child, was born September 12, 1788, in the county of Antrim near Ballymena. 7

Thomas was particular in the instruction of his son, because he desired him to be a minister. His education must have started early, for later Thomas Campbell wrote his parents:

Most infants from twelve to eighteen months old are capable of being instructed, so that at the age of two years they would be able to connect the idea of the heavenly Father with every object of delight and enjoyment, and thus not only become duly acquainted with the divine existence, but also with the delightful attributes of his nature — his power, wisdom, goodness, and love. . . . Yes, indeed, many parents (I almost said most) take more care in training inferior animals . . . than they do in the moral and religious nurture of their children, at least, for the first three, four or five years. 8

A minister’s family was supposed to be a model for all the parish in daily religious instruction. The Synod prescribed that the minister should "worship God in his family by singing, reading, and prayer, morning and evening; that he should catechize and instruct them at least once a week in religion." 9 Both Thomas and his wife were

7 Robert Richardson, Memoirs of Alexander Campbell (Cincinnati, 1897), I, 19.
8 Millennial Harbinger, Series Two, IV (1840), 340.
conscientious in carrying out these rules. It was the custom that every member of the family should commit a passage of Scripture to memory each day and recite it at the evening worship. On Sunday they rehearsed all the verses learned during the week. When Thomas was away on ministerial duties, his wife superintended the religious instruction.

Apart from its religious significance, such training must have played an important part in the speech education of Alexander Campbell. Perhaps unconsciously this daily opportunity for recitation placed great stress upon the spoken word. Alexander later recognized the importance of such training, for he wrote:

I can but gratefully add, that to my mother, as well as to my father I am indebted for having memorized in early life almost all of the writings of King Solomon -- his Proverbs, his Ecclesiastes, and many of the Psalms of his father David. They have not only been written on the tables of my memory, but incorporated with my modes of thinking and speaking.

Alexander attended elementary school for three years in Ahorey and for an additional three years attended the school of his uncles, Archibald and Enos Campbell, located at the town of Newry. After Alexander had

10 Ibid., p. 24.
11 Quoted in Richardson, op. cit., I, p. 37.
completed his elementary education, his father sought to superintend his study. The father found, however, that Alexander was more interested in outdoor life, particularly in hunting and swimming, than in books. Thomas did not attempt to force his son to study, but put him on the farm to work.

As Alexander attained his physical growth, his intellectual interest began to awaken, and he resolved "to become the greatest scholar in the whole kingdom." Thomas Campbell then started him on a regular course of instruction. In addition to studying the Bible, he studied English grammar, French, Latin, and Greek. Also, his father had him to memorize certain select passages of the best English authors. Years later, Alexander Campbell published in his magazine, the Christian Baptist, "The instructions of Paternus to his Son." As a preface to it he wrote:

The following instructions from a father to a son, I committed to memory when a child. . . . Though I was compelled to commit it to memory, as I was many fine pieces of prose and verse, I have found it a pleasing theme of reflection; and, indeed, many pieces which cost me some tears at the recollection of them. This in prose, and Gray's Elegy in verse, were, I think now, as I thought then, the two best selections out of some hundred which a father, solicitous of my improvement, made a part of my task at school. For in those days, it was usual to commit and recite some of the finest

\[13\] Athearn, op. cit., p. 19.
pieces of prose and verse as a regular part of education, during the whole course of academic instruction.¹⁴

Apparently Alexander had a remarkable memory; at least, it is related of him that as a test at this early period he committed to memory sixty lines of blank verse in fifty-two minutes.¹⁵ Aside from the regular course of study under his father, he must have been greatly influenced in his subsequent development as a speaker by his father’s preaching. Thomas Campbell was characterized by those who heard him as an excellent speaker, was noted particularly for his ability to generalize upon certain themes, and for his accuracy in definition and in the organization of sermons.¹⁶ A contemporary who heard Thomas Campbell preach in America when he was quite old made the following comment upon his ability as an orator:

... The venerable Thomas Campbell saddled his favorite sorrel and made an extensive tour ... Nothing could have been more opportune; just such a man was needed, and none who never saw him can well appreciate the great effect of the presence, counsels and addresses of this noble man. Uniting the simplicity of a child with the dignity of a senator, agreeable almost to playfulness, with a piety so pure, sweet and unostentatious as to command the

¹⁴ Christian Baptist, p. 642.
¹⁵ Richardson, op. cit., I, p. 33.
¹⁶ Ibid., p. 40.
respect and admiration of all around him
the newly formed churches felt his presence the
timely aid, encouragement and counsel which
could be imparted by no other one so well. His
fame and ability as a scholar and a speaker drew
large audiences.17

It is reasonable to assume that his father's preaching
was a factor in Alexander's later development as a speak­
er. At least three of the characteristics often men­
tioned in connection with the preaching of Thomas
Campbell are later present in his son's preaching; namely,
his ability to generalize, his accuracy of definition, and
his skill in the organisation of sermons.

Alexander listened to his father and others of
their denomination preach, but because of Thomas' liber­
ality in matters of religion, he also had an opportunity
to hear many of the great preachers of Ireland and Scot­
land at Newry and Rich-Hill. Sectarianism was so bigoted
that it was considered wrong for members of the Seceder
Church to attend the services of any other religious
group. In fact, one man was excommunicated because he
helped to build an Episcopal Church.18 Thomas, however,
did not agree with such views. It was his custom to at­
tend other churches, in the company of his son. On these

17 Amos Sutton Hayden, Early History of the Dis­
ciples in the Western Reserve, Ohio (Cincinnati, 1875),
p. 148.

18 Richardson, op. cit., I, 55.
excursions, Alexander heard the celebrated Rowland Hill, Alexander Haldane, Alexander Carson, John Walker, and many other famous preachers of his day.

When Alexander was seventeen years old, the family moved to Rich-Hill, where Thomas was the minister of the Anti-Burgher Secession Presbyterian Church. In order to provide more money for his increasing family and to give them an education, he founded the Rich-Hill Academy. Because of Thomas' reputation the school immediately came to be looked upon as an important addition to the town and the neighborhood. To carry on such a school in addition to his usual pastoral labors was so great a task that soon Thomas needed assistance. Accordingly, Alexander became a teacher, charged with the responsibility of teaching the more elementary subjects. It is important to note that when only seventeen, Alexander began a teaching career which continued the rest of his life.

When he came to America, he established in his home the Buffalo Seminary, which became so large that there was no room to take all of the students who applied for admission. In 1841 he founded Bethany College. He was a teacher before he was a preacher, and the influence of the classroom can be seen in all of his speaking.

Courage, intellectual independence, and sincerity were traits characteristic of Alexander Campbell as a
speaker. On one occasion he said, "I have been so long disciplined in the school of free inquiry, that, if I know my own mind, there is not a man upon the earth whose authority can influence me, any farther than he comes with the authority of evidence, reason, and truth."19

Timothy Flint, who attended the Owen debate in Cincinnati, wrote of Campbell, "He wore an aspect, as of one who had words both ready and inexhaustible, and as possessed of the excellent grace of perseverance, to a degree, that he would not retreat an inch in the way of concession to escape the crack and pudder of a dissolving world."20

In fact rarely did those who heard him fail to comment upon one or all of these qualities. While it is impossible to say that these traits were a direct result of his father’s training, they were at least factors in his development as a speaker and especially as a debater.

Because of over-work from teaching and preaching, Thomas Campbell became ill, and was informed by his doctor that a long sea voyage would be necessary for his complete recovery.21 Although friends proposed a trip to

19 Christian Baptist, p. 229.
20 Western Monthly Review, II (1829), 640.
21 Hanna, Thomas Campbell, p. 27.
America, the thought of leaving home was so distasteful
to him that he refused to consider it. Several factors,
however, operated to make him change his mind. Alexander
insisted that his father make the voyage because of his
own determination to make the New World his home as soon
as he came of age; also many of the friends of Thomas
Campbell had emigrated from Northern Ireland. Finally
Thomas decided to make the change with the view of later
bringing his family to America. On April 8, 1807, he
sailed for Philadelphia, leaving Alexander to finish the
term at the Rich-Hill Academy.

Thomas Campbell was pleased with America and sent
for his family. They sailed on October 1, 1808. The
ship on which they traveled was the *Hibernia*, and while
it was seaworthy, it was manned by an inefficient crew.22
The ship was dashed upon a sunken rock, a few miles off
the coast of Scotland, but, despite a terrifying experience
lasting two days, all on board were saved. This event
was important in the life of Alexander Campbell, because
it was then that he made up his mind to become a minister.
The family being delayed a year in Glasgow, the interval
gave him an opportunity to attend the University.

On November 8, 1808, Alexander Campbell enrolled

22 Richardson, *op. cit.*, I, 95-96.
in the three-hundred and fifty-years-old Glasgow University. There were perhaps twenty-five hundred students in attendance. Of the thirteen departments or colleges in the university, Alexander chose to enter that of the Humanities. The course included Greek, Logic, Natural Science, and Moral Philosophy. Campbell later gave the following explanation of what the term "humanities" meant in the Scotch universities.

In my youthful days I sometimes wondered why, in the Scotch universities, this form of literature, or the study of these dead tongues, was called humanity, or rather humanities. I ultimately discovered the philosophy of this portion of their nomenclature. . . . They imagined that, language being the symbol of ideas, a man of much language had many ideas. Amongst that people the art of acquiring and communicating knowledge were highly appreciated and cultivated. Of them they said:

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24 By 1818 some departments had been added, for the following is a list of the departments and faculty of Glasgow as given by Robert Chapman, The Picture of Glasgow (Glasgow, 1818), p. 148.

Humanity . . . Josiah Walker; Greek . . . John Young;
Logic . . . George Jardine; Moral Philosophy . . . James
Mylne; Natural Philosophy . . . W. Meikleham, LL.D.;
Mathematics . . . James Millar; Practical Astronomy . .
Midwifery . . . James Towers; Surgery . . . John Burns;
Chemistry . . . T. Thomson, M.D.; Botany . . . R. Graham,
M.D.; Materia Medica . . . Rich, Miller, M.D.
"These polish'd arts have humanized mankind,
Soft'en'd the rude, and calm'd the boisterous mind."

Consequently, they had professors of the humanities
called grammar, logic, rhetoric, poetry."25

While Campbell was at the University, he must have
been a good student,26 at least a diligent one; for, ac­
cording to his notes, he went to bed at ten o'clock and
got up regularly at four in the morning and spent all
of the time either attending classes or studying.27

Richardson, Campbell's biographer, says that the teacher
who influenced him most at Glasgow was George Jardine,28
who is usually listed as the professor of logic, but
who on the title page of his book, Outlines of Philosop­
hal Education, is listed as professor of Logic and

25 Alexander Campbell, Popular Lectures and
Addresses (Cincinnati, 1863), p. 182.

26 Campbell's wife later wrote, "Soon after his
entrance he became one of the brightest ornaments of
the school. He studied hard. He was absorbed in his books.
He read extensively. He was prompt and regular at reci­
tation." Selina Huntington Campbell, Home Life and Reminis­
cences of A. Campbell (St. Louis, 1882), p. 289.

27 Richardson, op. cit., I, 131. Richardson had
access to Campbell's notes taken in the University. His
wife wrote, "It is incredible the amount of writing he
did whilst there, taking down lectures, notes, and obser­
vations. He was systematic in all that he did; and he
used the old-fashioned, marble-colored, blank-book,
commencing with the alphabet -- A.B.C. and so on for

28 Ibid., p. 132.
Rhetoric. Jardine, who taught at the university for over fifty years, was considered to be one of the outstanding men on the faculty. When Jardine's book was published, the review in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* had the following to say of him:

The author of this work is universally known throughout Scotland as a most zealous, unwearied, and enlightened teacher of youth. Perhaps no man ever did more service in his generation, through those who were willing to receive instruction, and, at the same time, to follow out an active course of study than Professor Jardine. Many of the most distinguished characters in the literature, the law, and the politics of Scotland, have been his pupils, and not one of them all, however brilliant his career in after life, would hesitate to ascribe the cultivation of those talents and powers, that led unto wealth and fame, to the admirable system of education, so admirably exemplified in the logic class of the university of Glasgow.

When Jardine became the professor of Logic and Rhetoric at Glasgow in 1774, the subject matter of Logic was an explanation of the Dialectics of Aristotle, followed by an "exposition of the most abstruse doctrine of metaphysics on ontology." After his first year he

29 George Jardine, *Outlines of Philosophical Education, Illustrated by the Method of Teaching the Logic, or First Class of Philosophy in the University of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1818). This book contained Jardine's theory of education, in which among other things he emphasized the value of oral recitation.

30 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, III, (1818), 481.

recognized the inadequacy of this approach and made some radical changes. Thereafter the course consisted of a short account of Aristotle's logic, the origin of language, the principles of general grammar, the elements of taste and criticism, and the rules of composition. Also a part of the course included the study of Rhetoric with Quintilian as a text-book. Jardine had portions of this book printed for the benefit of his students.

Professor Jardine had little faith in the lecture method. He therefore, in addition to his morning lecture, had his class meet in the afternoon to have an oral examination upon the material covered in the morning lecture. He had his students write themes each week on subjects contained in his lectures. In the afternoon session, the students read aloud their themes; after comments from the class, the instructor commented "upon their style and composition, pointed out their faults of arrangement, and etc., and by judicial and cheering criticism, both correct and excite." The industry and interest of the professor made it possible for one to comment, "The Logic Class of the University, though a

32 Ibid., p. 250.
33 David Murray, Memories of the Old College of Glasgow (Glasgow, 1927), p. 81.
34 Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, III, (1818), 421.
class of labour, was always looked forward to with a feeling of elevation, and the period of attendance is generally recollected by the students as among the busiest but the happiest of his academical course.  

Apparently Jardine was especially skilled in bringing out the best in his students, for Peter Morris gives this report of one of his afternoon sessions:

I did not, however, hear the Professor deliver one of the lectures. . . . It so happened, that at the hour I went, he was engaged, not in prelection, but in examining his pupils on some of the subjects of a lecture he had delivered on the preceding day. Perhaps, however, the benefits derived from his teaching may be traced in no inconsiderable measure to his peculiar excellence in this very branch of his duties. Such a clear manly method of putting his questions -- such a ready manner of comprehending the drift of the replies he received -- such skillful nicety in drawing out the workings of the perplexed minds, and making those who were puzzled find for themselves the thread that should lead them out of their labyrinths -- and all this accompanied with such an honest, downright, paternal sort of kindness in voice, look, and gesture -- I have really never before seen a more amiable combination of the faculties most precious in a teacher of youth.

Even though Alexander Campbell attended the University for only one session, he had abundant opportunities for improvement. In his logic class, in addition to


36 Peter Morris, Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk (New York, 1820), pp. 490-491.
becoming familiar with some of the writings of Aristotle and Quintilian, he had the experience of speaking and reading in public with the benefit of criticism from his fellow students and the teacher. This course gave him the subject matter for some of his later lectures, and introduced him to principles of logic and rhetoric which must have been a factor in his development as a speaker.

The other professor who is mentioned as influencing Campbell at Glasgow was John Young, teacher of Greek, who is referred to by Campbell's biographer as "the profound grammarian and master of elocution." Sir William Hamilton, who was one of his students, spoke of him as "having the happiest talent for exploring the whole structure of language," and as an eloquent speaker. Peter Norris visited one of Professor Young's classes in 1820, and wrote, "Assuredly Mr. Young must have been a fine orator in any department. He is, without exception the best reader I ever heard of Greek; and I have heard very few readers of English that I could for a moment compare with him." He added, "Nor is this slight praise from an Englishman to a Scotchman." It is

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37 Richardson, op. cit., I, 30.
38 Ibid., I, 132.
39 Quoted in Murray, op. cit., p. 205.
40 Morris, op. cit., p. 488.
41 Ibid., p. 489.
important to realize that Alexander Campbell had instruction under this type of teacher, and his enthusiasm for the Greek language must have resulted in some degree from his study under John Young. Campbell later often used Greek in his sermons, and more especially in his debates.

Two other forces which might have influenced Campbell's development as a speaker while a student at Glasgow University were the literary and debating societies and the library. At the time he was in the University, there was a number of literary and debating societies in existence. In 1787 the Elocution Society was formed, and it continued for a number of years. In 1791, the poet Thomas Campbell established the Discursive Society, which was followed by the Athenaeum Debating Society. While Alexander Campbell was a student, both the Logic class and the Ethics class had debating societies. Henry Duncan, who was a fellow student of the poet Thomas Campbell, gives a description of the literary and debating societies as they existed at Glasgow.

... you are well aware of the literary societies and debating clubs which prevail in our northern

42 Murray, op. cit., pp. 519-520.
universities; and which, I believe, form a peculiar feature in our academical employments. They are, as you know, voluntary associations among the students themselves, with which the Professors in no respect interfere -- except, perhaps, occasionally in the case of individual students, in whom they chance to have a peculiar interest. The object of these associations is literary discussion, on given topics; and their effect is to call forth and stimulate the talents of the young man, and excite among them a salutary emulation.

There is no existing evidence, however, to prove that Alexander Campbell was ever a member of a literary or debating society. But the fact that he was described as being of "an eminently social disposition," and that he was fond of debate suggest that he might have participated in these activities. In any case it is possible to say that while Campbell was a student at the University many opportunities were available for practice in public speaking.

The Glasgow University library in Campbell's time contained twenty thousand volumes, among which was an excellent collection of the writings and speeches of the ancient rhetoricians and orators. Most of the latter books were a part of the Hunterian Museum given

43 William Beattie, ed. Life and Letters of Thomas Campbell (New York, 1850), I, 86.
44 Richardson, op. cit., I, 130.
45 Athenaeum, op. cit., p. 27.
to the University by Dr. William Hunter in 1807. The
works of Gorgias of Leontinum, Antiphe, Thrasy machus,
Protagoras, Isaeus, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and
Quintilian were all included in this collection. The
excellence of the collection is attested by the fact
that R. C. Jebb, later a professor of Greek at Glasgow
University, used it to supply material for his famous
two volume work, The Attic Orators from Antiphe to
Isaeus. Campbell's reading in the works of the ancient
rhetoricians and orators is not certain, but he may have
become familiar with some of them, because in a sermon
he later said:

In all our readings, in Grecian and Roman lore,
we find scarcely anything which does not lead us,
directly or indirectly, to the all-absorbing sub­
ject or oratory or eloquence. Hence it is, that
we see in ancient history so many orators receiv­
ing the highest honors within the gift of the
people. In the Demosthenean and Ciceronian schools,
no class of men shone more brilliantly, and none
were placed more conspicuously before the public,
than the orators. It was the magic eloquence
of the accomplished orator that shook the very
thrones of Greece and Rome, as it was the majestic
displays of speech that magnified and perpetuated
the fame of the glorious victories recorded in
their respective departments of history.

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46 Mungo Ferguson, compiler, The Printed Books in
the Library of the Hunterian Museum in the University of
Glasgow (Glasgow, 1930).

47 Richard Claverhouse Jebb, The Attic Orators
from Antiphe to Isaeus (London, 1875).

48 Alexander Campbell, Sermon on the 13th Chapter
of I Corinthians, taken in shorthand by C. V. Segar. An ex­
tract included in Selina Huntington Campbell, op. cit., p.
360.
Aside from the University, one of the other factors which influenced Campbell while in Glasgow was religion. His acquaintance with many of the different preachers, and the divided state of religion had an influence especially in the formation of his speech premises. In Glasgow he found representatives of all of the religious sects then in existence in Scotland. Presbyterianism was the established religion, but by the Act of Toleration of 1712, the co-existence of the Episcopal Church and numerous other religious groups was recognized. The National Church was divided into two major parties, the Moderates and the Evangelicals. Also, from the established church there had been many divisions, of which the Seceder, Burghers, Anti-burghers, Old Lights, New Lights, Reformed, and the Relief Presbyterians were the most important. There were churches representing all of these different branches in Glasgow, as well as strong Episcopalian Church, a few loyal and influential Catholic Churches, and Baptist, Methodist, Quaker, and Independent churches. Nothing, seemingly was too trivial to cause further division. While Campbell was living in small towns in Ireland, he was acquainted with

49 A list of all the denominations in Glasgow in 1818, with their ministers is included in Chapman, op. cit., pp. 136-137.
religious division, but at Glasgow he saw the practical results of it on a large scale. He later wrote, "My faith in creeds and confessions of human device was considerably shaken while in Scotland." 

Another influence in his subsequent development as a speaker must have been his contact with the many ministers there, especially those of the Independent Church. It would be impossible to state the extent of this influence, but Campbell said he was "determined to study men as well as things." In fact, he kept a pocket memorandum book in which he wrote down his impressions of the various preachers he met. When he arrived at Glasgow, he had a letter of introduction to Grenville Ewing, pastor of the Independent Church. Ewing took a deep interest in young Campbell, and often invited him into his home. It was there that he became acquainted with the Haldane brothers, the leaders of the Independent movement.

James and Robert Haldane were wealthy Scotsmen who gave much of their means to stimulate evangelistic zeal throughout Scotland. They were called Independents,

50 *Christian Baptist*, p. 92.
because they were not affiliated with any religious organization. Eventually the Haldane brothers began preaching and acquired numerous followers. They opposed church division, and insisted that the Bible should be regarded as the only revelation of Christ. It was the custom of the Independents to celebrate the Lord's Supper on every first day of the week, and later they abandoned infant baptism. A student in Glasgow while their movement was at its height, Alexander respected the men personally. Coming to question many of the practices of the Seceder church he withdrew from that organization while in Glasgow. Later Campbell disclaimed the Haldane influence, but much of his theology resembled theirs.

Alexander Campbell attended the University for only a year. After the session ended, in May, 1809, he went to Helensburg, Scotland, as a tutor for some families. After five weeks in this resort, he returned to Glasgow to rejoin his family, who were again making preparations for the journey to America. On July 21, 1809, they sailed from Glasgow, bound for New York.

While the instruction and contacts at Glasgow had great influence upon Campbell, it is safe to say

53 Ibid., 229.
that the greatest factor in his development as a speaker was his personal study and investigation. From his father he had been taught to study regularly and consistently, and he continued this habit throughout life. After he was settled in Washington county, Pennsylvania, he again set out on a systematic course of study. In 1810 he wrote down the following schedule for his studies:

One hour to read Greek -- from 8 to 9 in the morning.
One hour to read Latin -- from 11 to 12 in the morning.
One half hour to read Hebrew -- between 12 and 1 P.M.
Commit ten verses of scripture to memory each day, and read the same in the original languages, with Henry and Scott's notes and practical observations. For this exercise we shall allow two hours. These exercises, being intended for every day, will not be dispensed with. Other reading and studies as occasion may serve. These studies in all require four and a half hours. Church history, and divers other studies, are intended to constitute the principle part of my other literary pursuits.54

His study habits grew rather than diminished throughout his life. At Bethany he later erected a study in his yard. His wife described the retreat in her *Home Life and Reminiscences of A. Campbell*.

I wish now to notice the last little brick study Mr. Campbell built. It stands at the

54 Richardson, *op. cit.*, I, 278.
head of the large yard, above the evergreens, and faces toward Bethany and Bethany College. Its shape at first was Hexagonal, with a beautiful raised sky-light, the same form at the top. It was painted straw-color, having no windows at the sides, only imitations of them. There are two narrow ones beside the door, one on each side. Some time after Mr. Campbell enlarged it, by building an addition to it at the back part, having a comfortable fire-place.55

It was Campbell's custom to get up at four o'clock in the morning, and to work until breakfast. Aside from the time spent at meals and daily exercise, the remainder of his day until ten o'clock at night he devoted to his study. His niece Jane Dawson, who lived a short distance from Bethany and often visited there said, "I knew that my uncle, when at home was in his study."56 David S. Burnet in his "Memorial Address" delivered at Bethany College three months after the death of Campbell said, "Your late President was a reader, and a student in his boyhood, his manhood and his old age."57 It is reported that when Lyman Beecher inquired how Campbell came to possess such stores of methodized knowledge,

55 Selina Huntington Campbell, op. cit., p. 55.


57 David S. Burnet, "Memorial Address."
Campbell replied, "by studying sixteen hours a day." His effort brought solid substance to his sermons and debates.

The books which Campbell brought over from Scotland served as the nucleus of his constantly growing library. His daughter Decima said that his library was not so extensive as it was select, and that his books were in various languages, especially Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French. Even though in 1917, looking back, Campbell's library did not seem extensive to his daughter, William T. Utter in his book The Frontier State says that it was the largest in western Virginia. Apparently Campbell was cautious in buying books and purchasing only those which he felt would be of special value to him. It was his custom to buy books which would be of benefit to him in his debates, for Decima relates having

58 Decima Campbell Barclay to F. M. Rains, Bethany, West Virginia, July 27, 1917.

59 There is no list of the books Campbell brought from Scotland. Richardson speaks of them, and tells of his purchasing books, but he neither gives the amount spent nor the names of the books. Richardson, op. cit., I, pp. 106, 137.

60 Decima Campbell Barclay to F. M. Rains, Bethany, West Virginia, July 27, 1917.

61 Utter, op. cit., p. 247.
found a check to Ray, a book dealer in Pittsburg, from whom he purchased books for the Rice debate. 62

It is safe to say that the book which influenced Alexander Campbell's life most, and therefore had a bearing upon his development as a speaker was the Bible. Beginning the study of the Bible in the family circle, he continued it through life. (He said, "I have endeavored to read the Scriptures as though no one had read them before me; and I am as much on my guard against reading them today, through the medium of my own views yesterday, or a week ago, as I am against being influenced by any foreign name, authority or system." 63 ) He was a great admirer of the Scottish translators, George Campbell, James McKnight, and Philip Doddridge, each of whom had translated a part of the New Testament in the speech of their day. In the winter of 1826, he started compiling these three sources into a complete American translation of the New Testament. He added such notes and observations as he felt would assist the reader, wrote an introduction to each of the twenty-seven books, and translated all anglicized Greek loan-words into equivalent native English terms. The volume, which appeared in 1827

62 Decima Campbell Barclay to F. M. Rains, Bethany, West Virginia, July 27, 1917.

63 Christian Baptist, p. 229.
under the title, "The Living Oracles," was the first American translation. It never became popular, because it was too much of a pioneer, but it is indicative of the vast amount of study which Campbell devoted to the Bible.

After hearing Campbell preach on October 28, 1858, Aylett Rains wrote in his diary, "Bro. Campbell preached today at 11 o'clock on various topics. . . . He has more Bible knowledge than any man living."64 After Campbell established Bethany College, it became his custom to deliver a lecture to the students each morning in chapel. Every day a student read a chapter of the Bible and after the reading Campbell would make extended comments on it. According to one of the students, he never seemed to know the chapter to be discussed until it was read, but was usually so familiar with it that it was not necessary for him to look at it to be able to discuss it.65

It is evident that the Bible influenced the speaking of Alexander Campbell. Much of his speaking dealt directly with Biblical themes and is filled with

64 Aylett Rains, diary, October 28, 1858. (MSS in the College of the Bible, Lexington, Kentucky.)

65 Alexander Campbell, Familiar Lectures on the Pentateuch (St. Louis, 1867), p. 55.
quotations from Holy Writ, and his style and choice of words as well show the influence of the Bible. Believing that the Bible should be a text-book in every college, he made it the center of the curriculum at Bethany College. Many of his popular lectures dealt with the necessity of Bible study. On one occasion he said:

Let its stupendous facts, its sublime precepts and its rich and ineffably transcendent promises command a daily portion of our time and of our studies. Let its deep and lofty philosophy and divine science imbue the minds of all our youth that receive instruction and garniture for our social system. . . . Let the Lord himself teach in all our seminaries in his own words, and in his own arguments, and let us fear not that he may impinge upon the shibboleths or weaken our earth-born sanctions of heaven-descended truths.

The voluminous writing of Alexander Campbell must have had an indirect influence upon his speaking. As a boy he wrote poetry and kept a journal of his thoughts on religion. As his fame grew, he carried on a large correspondence. In a letter to Philip Fall, he expresses appreciation for Fall's letter saying that he read it with delight. He adds, "I say read for it

66 "Address on the Amelioration of the Social State"; "Responsibilities of Men of Genius", "Address on Education", "On Common Schools", "Address on Colleges", all included in Alexander Campbell, Popular Lectures and Addresses.

67 Quoted in, Selina Huntington Campbell, op. cit., p. 114.
is not the lot of all letters to me addressed to be read when they are received. Some are lain aside for days without being read."68

In 1823, Campbell began the publication of a monthly magazine which he named The Christian Baptist. He discontinued it in 1830, and substituted a larger monthly paper called The Millennial Harbinger. He continued as editor and publisher of the journal until 1863, or three years before his death. In both of these periodicals Campbell, in addition to editing, contributed most of the articles. He wrote a number of books; two of the most important are the Christian System and Christian Baptism.69 Including his debates and his magazines, he turned out sixty volumes.

Needless to say, Campbell spent much time in writing. In one of his letters to Philip Fall he said, "My health is just middling, and so much confinement is not favorable. I have to write or rather scrawl out some twenty pages per day such as these besides my other attentions."70 Much of Campbell's writing, especially

68 Alexander Campbell to Philip S. Fall, July 28, 1827, Bethany, Virginia. Original in possession of the Philip Fall Christian Church, Frankfort, Kentucky.


70 Alexander Campbell to Philip S. Fall, February 25, 1830, Bethany, Virginia. Original in possession of the Philip Fall Christian Church, Frankfort, Kentucky.
in his periodicals, is personal journalism, and differs little in style from his speaking. His constant writing and re-writing must have been factors in his development of his use of language and must have thereby influenced him as a speaker.

Summarizing, it is possible to point out certain factors or forces which influenced Alexander Campbell in his development as a speaker. Among the most important of these seem to be his father, his study at Glasgow University, religious conditions and preachers at Glasgow, his own personal study, the Bible, and his writing and editing. None of these factors, with the exception of his work at the University of Glasgow, was primarily directed toward training him as a speaker. It is safe to infer, however, that indirectly, as a vital part of his background, they are largely responsible for his skill in oral communication.

CAMPBELL'S PHILOSOPHY OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

While the term "elocution" was distasteful to Campbell, because in his mind it stood for artificial delivery, he was not against the study of public speaking; in fact, he had some concrete ideas about it. He even formulated some definite speech principles, especially for the young preachers studying speech. He said,
"Young orators, in the pulpit and at the bar, are more in need of an instruction than children at school, or students at college. For if they begin wrong, and contract a bad habit, they seldom can cure it." In one of his lectures upon the subject of education he pointed out three fields in which colleges should function: (1) physical education, (2) intellectual education and moral culture, (3) religious and moral obligation. Under the heading of intellectual education, he said:

After giving an analysis of the intellectual powers — perception, memory, reflection, reason, imagination, abstraction — proceed to the exercise and employment of them in the acquisition and communication of knowledge, including logic, rhetoric, oratory, taste, discussion, and debate. As a teacher of young preachers, he was always ready to give advice to help improve them as speakers. According to his niece Jane Dawson, his most constant comment was, "make your hearers think."  

Campbell developed a philosophy of public speaking, and attempted to follow it in all of his speaking. While a student in the University of Glasgow, he wrote in a

73 Jane Dawson, op. cit.
notebook the "qualifications necessary to attain excellence in the composing and pronouncing of sermons."

His rules for a preacher and preaching were:

1. The preacher must be a man of piety, and one who has the instruction and salvation of mankind sincerely at heart.

2. A man of modest and simple manners, and in his public performances and general behavior must conduct himself so as to make people sensible that he has their temporal and eternal welfare more at heart than anything else.

3. He must be well instructed in morality and religion, and in the original tongues in which the Scriptures are written, for without them he can hardly be qualified to explain Scriptures or to teach religion and morality.

4. He must be such a proficient in his own language as to be able to express every doctrine and precept with the utmost simplicity, and without anything in his diction either finical on the one hand or vulgar on the other.

5. A sermon should be composed with regularity and unity of design, so that all its parts may have a mutual and natural connection, and it should not consist of many heads, neither should it be very long.

6. A sermon ought to be pronounced with gravity, modesty and meekness, and so as to be distinctly heard by all the audience.

Let the preacher, therefore, accustom himself to articulate slowly and deliver the words with a distinct voice, and without artificial attitudes or motions or any other affectation. 74

These rules include almost every aspect of the preacher's

74 Quoted in Richardson, op. cit., I, 138.
theory of public speaking.

Campbell wrote a great deal to young preachers through the pages of his magazine and in his letters. In his compositions he touched upon almost every phase of public speaking, but three themes stand out. These principles he attempted to follow in his controversial speaking.

First, Campbell did not believe in textual preaching. In an article headed "Texts and Textuary Divines" he fully explained what he meant by the term "text".

I would rather derive the term directly from the Greek verb τίξτο, beget or bring forth, from which τέξαι or textus might be ingeniously formed, and this might be translated an egg, or something pregnant with life, which by the laws of sermonizing easily becomes a full grown sermon.75

Particularly in the Christian Baptist, Campbell made war against what he called "the textuaries." Often times he would ridicule the using of texts in the following manner:

... a certain textuary did take for his text the words of a wicked man, found in Matt. 25; the false accusation of the wicked servant who told his lord-- "You are an austere man." This was the text. The preacher could not spell well, and he made it "You are an oyster man." But the misfortune was, "he raised his whole doctrine" on the word oyster. In his exordium, for he too was

75 Christian Baptist, p. 145.
an orator, he told his audience that his object was to show how fitly the Saviour was compared to an oyster-man, or oyster-catcher. Accordingly his method was -- 1st. To show the coincidence or resemblance between his Saviour and an oyster-man. 2d. To point out how suitably oysters represented sinners. 3d. To demonstrate how beautifully the tongue which the oyster-man uses to take up oysters, represented "ministers of the gospel." 4th. To prove that the oyster-man's boat was a fit emblem of the gospel and of a "gospel church," into which the oysters or sinners are put when caught or converted. His fifth head I have forgotten; but perhaps it was to show how the cooking and eating of oysters represented the management and discipline of those sinners caught by those ministers of the gospel. He concluded, with a few practical hints according to custom. 76

Numerous other examples of the same type of ridicule are found in Campbell's writing; he was continually objecting to those whom he designated as "scrap doctors."

Campbell had a serious reason behind such criticism, for he believed that textual preaching limited the speaker too much. He thought there was too great a tendency to discuss the subject from the point of view of the speaker rather than from that of the Bible. Campbell thought that subjects should be discussed, instead of texts. It was his practice to speak on topics such as "The Suffering of Christ," "The Law," "Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and "Salvation." 77 As a rule, he did not read a text, but an entire chapter or a portion of it,

76 Christian Baptist, p. 203.
77 McLean, op. cit., p. 25.
for the basis of his lesson.78 This type of preaching undoubtedly had an influence upon his debating, for there is every reason to believe that the subjects on which he engaged in controversy had been his sermon subjects on numerous occasions.

Not only was Campbell against textual preaching, but in the second place he opposed all artificiality in the pulpit. He said, "There is, indeed a manner of truth as well as its matter."79 In a severely satirical article headed "The Performance of Preaching," Campbell ridiculed artificiality as follows:

And let your sermons be full of "the enticing words of man's wisdom, and let it be beautified with just divisions, with tropes, and with metaphors, and with hyperbole, and with apostrophe, and with interjection, and with acclamation, and with syllogisms, and with sophisms, and throughout let declamation be.

And take good heed to your attitudes and your gestures, knowing when to bend and when to erect, and when to lift your right hand and when your left, and let your motions be graceful, even in your attitudes and in your gestures let your grace be.80


80 Christian Baptist, p. 167.
Personally he thought that "Godly sincerity, impressiveness, earnestness, and benevolent ardor are essential elements of the manner of Christ's truth." 81

Advising young preachers he said:

I do think that nature, when followed, is a better teacher of eloquence than Longinus, or all the Grecian and Roman models. Mimes never can excel, except in being mimics. There is more true gracefulness and dignity in a speech pronounced in the natural tone of our own voice, and in the natural key, than in all the studied mimicry of mere actors, whether stage or pulpit actors, and which is the more numerous we will not be able to decide till after the census of 1830. 82

Campbell also gave his formula for naturalness. He said:

But he who speaks for some great, or good, or interesting object, loses himself in the subject; forgets almost his own identity, and sees or feels nothing but that for which he speaks. His object is in his heart and before his eyes continually. From it He derives his inspiration, his zeal, his eloquence. When a speaker has an object to gain, which his understanding, his conscience, his heart approve — 'tis then, and then only he can be truly eloquent. 83

The third principle which Campbell continually emphasized was the necessity of addressing the reason of the audience. He was against "declamatory preaching," for "it is destitute of sober reasoning and addressed merely to the passions." 84 He said:

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81 Alexander Campbell to James Wallis, Bethany, Virginia, December 15, 1837.
82 Christian Baptist, p. 585.
83 Ibid., p. 604.
84 Millennial Harbinger, II (1832), 297.
I have seen other preachers who can strike fire no other way than by the friction of their hands, and an occasional clap, resembling a peal of distant thunder. In this holy paroxysm of clapping, rubbing, sneezing, and roaring, the mind is fairly on the way, and the tongue in full gallop, which like a race horse, runs the swifter the less weight it carries. . . . They can neither speak to God nor man in the pulpit to purpose, as they think, unless when, like the boiler of a steam boat, they are almost ready to burst. 85

Campbell did not rule out emotion in a speech. He stated three things which he believed should be done in a sermon: To prove that the gospel is a faithful saying, or a true report, is certainly the first point; to prove that it is worthy of all reception is the second point; and to press the immediate acceptance of it upon an audience, is the third and last point of a preacher's duty. 86

According to contemporary testimony, Campbell lived up to these last two principles in his preaching. One hearer says, "His carriage was erect and imposing, but his pose was not that of an orator who has carefully studied pantomime and stands for effect. He seemed oblivious of his attitude; he had something to say, but no piece to act." 87 Isaac Erret, who was a preacher

85 Christian Baptist, p. 585.
87 Thomas Chalmers, Alexander Campbell's Tour in Scotland (Louisville, 1892), p. 76.
in the Church of Christ, said, "We have known him to stand for two hours, and talk in true conversational style, with scarce a gesture in the entire discourse." Mrs. M. B. Spears said:

Alexander Campbell held a series of meetings in Washington County, Pa. near my Grandfather Gordon's home. My grandfather often had the privilege of entertaining him, and my mother sat at his feet and learned of him the pure gospel truths that remained with her throughout a long life.

The seemingly strange new religion awakened the whole countryside. In the evening, at the close of the services, my grandfather's house would be filled with men and women, eager to hear the great preacher expound the gospel. His style was plain and simple, high enough for the greatest mind to enjoy, yet so clear and straightforward that a child could comprehend. . . . My mother said that it seemed as if the apostle Paul had returned to earth.

Many other such statements can be given, but they all add up to the same thing: conversational delivery, absence of gesture, and speaking to convey his point.

Campbell's rules for "composing and pronouncing of sermons," taken with the three principles which he sought to emphasize and practice, give a clear picture

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88 McLean, Alexander Campbell as a Preacher, p. 17.

of the man's speech theory. He was disdainful of anything which was artificial or mechanical. His emphasis was upon the character and sincerity of the speaker, speech content, clear organization, simplicity and dignity of language, and direct unaffected delivery. Public speaking to him was not display, but a practical means of accomplishing certain aims.

Campbell's background, training, speech philosophy, and experience helped him to become skillful in oral communication. He commanded attention and influenced people, whether on the lecture platform, in the pulpit, or in polemical circles. Yet all of the forces in his background prepared him especially for controversial speaking. So much is this true that, in reading his sermons and writings, one does not discover a noticeable difference between them and his debates. He was well equipped both by his speech education and philosophy of public speaking for the role of a religious debater.
CHAPTER III

THE OWEN DEBATE

Even though religious debating was popular on the frontier, Alexander's father Thomas Campbell was strongly opposed to it. He was convinced that the union of all Christians could not be accomplished through public controversy. The publication of the Declaration and Address on September 7, 1809, is usually regarded as the beginning of the Restoration Movement. In an extended appendix added thirty days later, Thomas Campbell referred to religious controversy among Christians as "the most unhappy of all practices sanctioned by the plausible pretense of zeal for truth." While he was willing to

1 Garrison and DeGroot, op. cit., 145. This document was written by Thomas Campbell to set forth the ideas of the Christian Association of Washington in a more tangible form. Published in pamphlet form, and covering fifty-four closely printed pages, it called for unity, peace, and purity among Christians on the basis of the Bible. William Warren Sweet says of it, "A thorough consideration of Thomas Campbell's Declaration and Address will convince any unprejudiced student that it is a great document; one of the greatest indeed that American Christianity has produced." William Warren Sweet, "Campbell's Position in Church History," The Christian-Evangelist, LXXVI, 969, September 8, 1938.

"consider" any written objections to the statement in the Declaration, he said, "but verbal controversy we absolutely refuse." 3

There can be little doubt that the strong opposition of his father deterred Alexander Campbell during his first ten years of preaching from engaging in religious debate. 4 When he did enter his first debate, he did so with reluctance. 5 However, his biographer says that he was never really opposed to religious debating, but that his sentiments before the Walker discussion came "more from deference to his father's feelings on the subject, than from his own matured convictions of expediency or from his natural temperament." 6 Campbell later explained his hesitancy as follows:

In the year 1820, when solicited to meet Mr. Walker on the subject of baptism, I hesitated for about six months whether it were lawful thus to defend the truth. I was written to three times before I gained my own consent. I did not like controversy so well as many have since thought I did; and I was doubtful of the effects it might have upon society. These difficulties, were, however, overcome, and we met. It was not until after I discovered the effects of that discussion that I began to hope that something might be done to rouse

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3 Ibid.

4 Richardson, Memoire of Alexander Campbell, II, 14.

5 Christian Baptist, p. 92.

6 Richardson, op. cit., II, 14.
this generation from its supineness and spiritual lethargy.7

John Walker, a Presbyterian minister, was preaching in the vicinity of a Baptist church at Mount Pleasant, Ohio, on the subject of baptism, and was attacking immersion.8 When the Baptist minister, John Birch, questioned some of his statements, Walker challenged him to a debate. Birch declined, but immediately wrote to Campbell requesting him to meet Walker. After the delays already mentioned, Campbell agreed, and the theological contest was held June 19 and 20 at Mount Pleasant, which was only twenty-three miles from Campbell's home.

The debate was on the "mode" and "subject" of baptism, with Walker on the affirmative and Campbell on the negative. After the discussion, Campbell wrote out the arguments on both sides and published them in a book which immediately went through two editions of two thousand and three thousand copies respectively.9 Walker also wrote an account of the debate denying Campbell's

7 *Christian Baptist*, 644.


9 *Alexander Campbell, Infant Sprinkling, Proved To Be A Human Tradition: Being the Substance of a Debate on Christian Baptism, Between Mr. John Walker, A Minister of the Secession; and Alexander Campbell (Steubenville, O., 1820).*
accuracy. Samuel Ralston, a Presbyterian minister, also published a book, in which he predicted, "If I am not much mistaken, his Campbell's career is near an end, and if he has not already, he will soon write himself into complete disrepute." To the young people of his congregation, Ralston said concerning Campbell's doctrines, "In a word avoid them more than you would the pestilence; for they lead down to eternal death and woe."

Ralston was, however, "much mistaken," for the Walker debate first brought Campbell to the attention of the general public especially to the Baptist Church. Also, this discussion convinced Campbell of the value of controversy, thereby largely molding his future career. In fact, in the published version of the Walker debate Campbell included a general challenge for

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10 John Walker, op. cit.

11 Samuel Ralston, A Review of a Debate on Christian Baptism Between Mr. John Walker, a Minister of the Secession, and Mr. Alexander Campbell, a Baptist Minister, Published by Mr. Campbell; In a Series of Letters, Addressed and Dedicated to the United Presbyterian Congregations of Mingo Creek and Williamsport, by their Affectionate Pastor. (Washington, Pa., 1825, second edition), 254.

12 Ibid.


14 Christian Baptist, p. 664.
any reputable Pedo-Baptist minister.\textsuperscript{15}

It was in response to this invitation that W. L. MacCalla, a Presbyterian minister of Augusta, Kentucky, challenged Campbell to debate. After a somewhat acrimonious correspondence in regard to terms and conditions,\textsuperscript{16} the debate was held at Washington County, Kentucky, October 15-22, 1823. The discussion, scheduled originally in the Baptist Church, was moved outdoors to the Methodist camp ground to accommodate the large number of people in attendance.\textsuperscript{17} The topics discussed were the "subject" and the "mode" of baptism. In this contest Campbell began to give serious thought to the design or meaning of the act. For the first time, he affirmed that baptism was connected with "the washing away of sins,"\textsuperscript{18} a doctrine which became important in the subsequent history of the Restoration Movement.

The MacCalla debate illustrates the humor often present in frontier debates. MacCalla spoke of the danger to health which immersion involved, especially to

\textsuperscript{15} Campbell-Walker Debate, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{17} Richardson, op. cit., I, 73.
\textsuperscript{18} Campbell-MacCalla Debate, p. 380.
the administrator by reason of frequent exposure to cold water at all seasons. Campbell parried by directing attention to the physical appearance of their respective moderators—Vardeeman, Baptist, reputed to have immersed more people than any other man in the entire West, was a herculean person of great height and weight, ruddy complexion, and vigor; Mr. Birch, Presbyterian, was of less than average size, pale, and apparently anemic.19

From his notes and those of Sidney Rigdon, Campbell wrote out and published all of the arguments used by both speakers.20 MacCalla later published a pamphlet, Unitarian Baptist, in which he denied the correctness of Campbell's publication. Campbell's debate with MacCalla was important because it marked the beginning of his influence in Kentucky.21 Also, because of his stand on the meaning of baptism, it provoked the open hostility of the Baptist Church against him.

BACKGROUND OF THE DEBATE

Campbell pointed to a relationship between the Walker debate and his publication of the Christian Baptist.22

19 Richardson, op. cit., I, 85.
22 Christian Baptist, p. 664.
The first issue of his small but immensely important magazine appeared significantly on July 4, 1823. In it he declared his independence from all denominations, choosing Jeremiah 1:10: "to root out and to pull down and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant" as the pertinent text for the masthead. So Campbell became an iconoclast, because even though his goal was the union of all Christians, he believed he would first have to clear away the accumulated "corruptions of the centuries." Thus, according to D. S. Burnett, one of his close personal friends, "The editor and his coadjuster, who like Luther, attempted a reformation of the church, fixed their eyes upon these departures from the simplicity of the gospel and Christian worship, and blasted them without mercy and with great effect."23

Campbell exercised complete control over the Christian Baptist and wrote the majority of its articles. Because he was vitriolic in print, he received many replies. He established the policy of allowing any person to contribute to the paper, but he exercised the right to respond to any article published. Thus, Campbell entered into controversy with the religious groups on the frontier.

It was in this way, while attempting to deliver Christianity from its avowed friends, that he almost inadvertently came into contact with its professed enemies—the skeptics.

By the time Campbell started his publication of the *Christian Baptist*, skepticism, under the leadership of Robert Owen, had become quite vocal on the frontier. Following the panic of 1819 in the British Isles, among the large number of immigrants who came to America was a group of active freethinkers, who set to work to give new life to their views. They established a communal society at New Harmony, Indiana, and another at Kendal, Stark county, Ohio. In addition to their economic and cooperative views, they were strongly anti-religious, and disseminated their views through the *New Harmony Gazette*, a weekly, which was first issued on October 1, 1825.

Upon opening the pages of his paper to others, Campbell received numerous articles from skeptics which he published. He resultantly entered into an extended controversy on the validity of Christianity. This was climaxed by five essays entitled *Robert Owen and the Social System*, and *Deism and the Social System*.25

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24 A picture of skepticism on the frontier is given in Albert Post, *Popular Freethought in America, 1825-1850* (New York, 1943).

Campbell had neither a major objection to the mere cooperative arrangements of Owen's system, nor to Owen personally. In fact, he said:

Mr. Owen has attracted much attention in this country as well as in Britain from the singularity of his views, and the benevolent nature of his efforts for the amelioration of society. He has afforded evidence of "mental independence" never perhaps surpassed before. His talents, education, fortune, and extraordinary zeal in the prosecution of his favorite object, entitle him to a very liberal share of public respect.26

Yet Campbell did not hesitate to condemn Owen's attitude toward religion.27

As a result of the Walker and MacCalla debates, Campbell began to advocate public discussion with the skeptics. He wrote:

For my part I rejoice to know that so much of the reflex light of Christianity shines in our political institutions that no bastile, no auto da fe awaits the man who vends his skeptical reveries in books or papers, publicly declaims against the bible and in favor of Deism. If our most pure, holy, and heavenly religion can be defended, supported, inculcated, and diffused by no other weapons than iron locks, swords, and faggots, I wish not to be in the rear or van of its advocates. No: on our banner is inscribed, reason, argument, persuasion.28

An unnamed citizen of Canton, Ohio, wrote Campbell requesting that he accept a challenge issued by Dr.

26 Ibid., p. 327.
27 Ibid., p. 328.
28 Ibid., p. 343-344.
Underhill, the leader of the communal society at Kendal. 29

Campbell refused to accept the invitation, but replied:

... As to this Doctor Underhill, he is too obscure to merit any attention from me on the Atheism or Deism of his philosophy. If I lived in the neighborhood with him, and should he throw himself in my way, I might find it my duty to either kill him, or to break a lance over his steep cap. But to go out of my way to meet such a gentleman would be rather incompatible with my views of propriety. If his great master, Mr. Robert Owen, will engage to debate the whole system of his moral and religious philosophy with me, if he will pledge himself to prove any position affirmative of his atheistical sentiments as they lie scattered over the pages of the New Harmony Gazette—if he will engage to do this coolly and dispassionately in a regular and systematic debate, to be moderated by a competent tribunal, I will engage to take the negative and disprove all his affirmative positions in a public debate to be holden any place equi-distant from him and me. 30

At approximately the time of Campbell's refusal to meet Dr. Underhill, Robert Owen delivered a series of lectures in New Orleans on his social system. In his talks he made frequent assaults on religion. Owen accused the clergy of misrepresenting his views and issued a challenge to discuss publicly or privately their differences. 31


30 Ibid., p. 208.

31 Robert Owen, Robert Owen's Opening Speech, and his Reply to the Rev. Alex. Campbell, in the Recent Public Discussion in Cincinnati, To Prove That the Principles of all Religions Are Erroneous, and that their Practice is Injurious to the Human Race (Cincinnati, 1829), p. 12.
Among other statements he said:

I propose to prove, as I have already attempted to do in my lectures, that all of the religions of the world have been founded on the ignorance of mankind; that they are directly opposed to the never-changing laws of our nature; that they have been and are the real source of vice, disunion, and misery of every description; that they are now the only real bar to the formation of a society of virtue, of intelligence, of charity in its most extended sense, and of sincerity and kindness among the whole human family; and that they can be no longer maintained except through the ignorance of the mass of the people, and with the tyranny of the few over the mass.

None of the New Orleans clergy saw fit to respond to Owen's challenge, but upon learning of it, Campbell immediately addressed a letter to Owen proposing a debate. Before Campbell's letter arrived, Owen had written to Bethany for more details concerning Campbell's statement in the Christian Baptist. At approximately the same time, both men became interested in a public discussion on the differences between skepticism and Christianity.

In spite of the fact that Owen was eager to debate, he did not agree immediately to meet Campbell. He explained his delay in the following words:

Having occasion, about that period, to pass, on

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32 The Christian Baptist, p. 433. Campbell gave the entire challenge and said, "It seems this challenge was published in several of the New Orleans papers."

33 Ibid., p. 444.

34 Ibid., p. 455.
my way to Europe, within twenty miles of Mr. Campbell's residence, I went to see him, to ascertain whether his proposal to meet me in public emanated from a conscientious desire to discover valuable truths for the benefit of the human race; or from a wish to attain a useless notoriety, by a vain and futile contest of words, without any definite meaning.\textsuperscript{35}

Campbell later remarked that "Owen felt of him a little to try his caliber."\textsuperscript{36} Apparently both men were satisfied, however, for they published complimentary notices,\textsuperscript{37} and agreed to debate in April, 1829, at Cincinnati, after Owen's return from Europe.

In this his third discussion, Campbell had for an opponent a man of international prominence. Owen's fame, however, was not due to his ability in debate, nor did it rest upon his skill as a public speaker. His eagerness for an oral debate was probably stimulated by the spirit of the American frontier.\textsuperscript{38} Yet one of his biographers says of him:

\textsuperscript{35} Owen, Robert Owen's Opening Speech, p. xii.

\textsuperscript{36} Alfred Brunson, A Western Pioneer; or, Incidents of the Life and Times of Rev. Alfred Brunson, A.M., D.D., Embracing a Period of Over Seventy Years. Written by Himself (Cincinnati, 1872), I, 402.

\textsuperscript{37} Owen, Robert Owen's Opening Speech, xiii. The Christian Baptist, p. 470.

\textsuperscript{38} After his debate with Campbell he engaged in three other formal discussions, with Rev. J. H. Roebuck in 1837, with Rev. W. Lagg in 1839, and with J. Brindley in 1841.
He was far too intent on stating his own case, at inordinate length to pay any attention to his opponents. ... Owen regarded a debate simply as affording a platform from which he could repeat his unvarying version of the truth. He was a most persuasive lecturer when he had the platform to himself, but he was always worsted in debate.39

Robert Owen was born May 14, 1771, in Newton, Montgomeryshire, a remote little town of Central Wales. Largely self-educated, he left home at the age of nine, and made a fortune in textile manufacturing. Both his wealth and fame came to him while he lived near Glasgow, Scotland, where he was part owner as well as manager of New Lanark mills for twenty-eight years. Perhaps he was one of the first at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution to be more concerned with men than machines. He was a leader in the fight for factory reform, and gradually transformed the New Lanark mills into the most successful establishment of the day in human as well as its commercial results.

Owen, reared in a Christian atmosphere, turned away from all religions because of his disgust over sectarian differences. After his success with the Lanark mills, he formulated a scheme for a Utopian society. Because he felt that religion was the only obstacle to

the establishment of his "new society," he attacked all religions with vehemence.\textsuperscript{41}

In 1825, he attempted to make a practical application of some of his theories in the United States. From the Rappites he purchased Harmony, an estate of some 30,000 acres in Posey County, Indiana, on the banks of the Wabash River. From 1825 to 1829, he spent most of his time in America directing New Harmony, as he renamed it. Even though the experiment was not the success which he had anticipated, he continued to predict a new social order. After 1829 he returned to England, where he became a strong political figure among the working classes in the Trade Unions and Co-operatives movements.\textsuperscript{42}

During Owen's sojourn in America, he engaged in the debate with Alexander Campbell. This discussion was merely another opportunity for him to preach his social gospel and attack religion. In Owen, however, Campbell secured as an opponent a man of great reputation and perhaps one of the outstanding skeptics of the day.

\textbf{SETTING OF THE DEBATE}

The newspapers gave much publicity to the

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 225.

preparations for the Campbell-Owen debate. In a whimsical vein Timothy Flint wrote, "the papers from Dan to Beersheba, from Land's End to Shetland Island, from Calais to Archangel, from Quoddy to the Sabine, wrung with the note of preparation for this grand tournament." Isaac G. Burnett was elected temporary chairman and Richard Fosdick was appointed temporary secretary of a group of interested citizens which met in the Cincinnati Council Chamber on Tuesday, April 7, 1829, to make suitable arrangements for the battle between religion and atheism. After reading Owen's challenge and Campbell's letter of acceptance, they decided to have a public meeting on Thursday night, April 9, to work out the final plans.

According to the papers, "a large and respectable meeting was held at the Council Chamber on Thursday evening, April 9th." Isaac G. Burnett was again chairman, and John T. Jones was appointed secretary. A committee was appointed to secure a place where the debate could be held. Those selected were Francis Carr, Isaac G. Burnett, Daniel Gano, James Gozlay, Samuel Lewis, Thomas Clark, Owen Owens, William Disney, and Moses Lyons.

44 The Daily Cincinnati Gazette, April 9, 1829.
45 Cincinnati Advertiser, April 11, 1829.
46 Ibid.
This group was instructed to ask for the use of the Presbyterian Church, because it contained the largest auditorium in town. Apparently Campbell's friends attended to all of the details, for Burnett was the preacher of the Cincinnati Church of Christ, and at least three members on the committee were members of that church.

Reverend Joshua L. Wilson, the Presbyterian minister, and later Campbell's staunch friend, refused the use of his church. Mrs. Francis Trollope, who attended the debate, wrote in her book, Domestic Manners of the Americans:

... whatever confidence the learning and piety of Mr. Campbell might have inspired in his friends, or in the Cincinnati Christians in general, it was not, as it appeared, sufficient to induce Mr. Wilson, the Presbyterian minister of the largest church in the town, to permit the display of them within its walls. This refusal was greatly reprobated, and much regretted, as the curiosity to hear the discussion was very general, and no other edifice offered so much accommodation. 47

The committee procured the use of the Methodist Church. 48 In fact, the committee was given complete liberty to make such changes in the auditorium as they considered necessary. Around the high and narrow pulpit they built a small stage for the debaters. Another

48 Christian Baptist, p. 552.
platform was built in a "conspicuous part of the building for the moderators." Mrs. Trollope estimated the seating capacity at one thousand, but others said it would seat as many as twelve hundred.

When Campbell and Owen arrived in Cincinnati, all of the preparations had been made except the selection of the moderators. Campbell appointed Isaac G. Burnett, Col. Samuel W. Davies, and Major Daniel Gano. Owen selected the Rev. Timothy Flint, Col. Francis Carr, and Henry Starr. These six in turn chose the Rev. Oliver M. Spencer. Burnett was elected to serve as chairman of the debate, that is, to preside over the meeting.

Nothing was said in the preliminary proceedings concerning the duties of the moderators. It is apparent, however, that they did not act as aids to the debater, but served more as a committee to see that both the speakers and the audience maintained the proper order. On several occasions they interrupted Owen, telling him he was off the subject. Campbell appealed to them twice

49 Trollope, op. cit., 126.
50 Ibid.
51 The Cincinnati Chronicle, April 25, 1829.
52 Christian Baptist, p. 552.
to give an opinion on Owen's management of his arguments, and finally asked permission to conduct his part of the case as he saw fit. The moderators always acted with extreme caution, couching their decisions in over-polite language.

Campbell had accepted the propositions included in Owen's challenge. In his letter to the New Orleans clergy, Owen had not stated a formal debate proposition, but merely gave points which he was willing to defend. Nevertheless, the following four topics became the proposition for the Campbell-Owen debate:

1. That all the religions of the world have been founded on ignorance of mankind.

2. That they have been, and are, the real sources of vice, disunion, and misery of every description.

3. That they are now the only real bar to the formation of a society of virtue, intelligence, sincerity, and benevolence.

4. That they can be no longer maintained except through the ignorance of the mass of the people, and the tyranny of the few over the mass.53

These propositions were awkwardly worded, contained too many ambiguous terms, and did not clearly present the conflict between Owen and Campbell. Perhaps they were a contributing factor to the confusion over issues which later developed in the discussion.

53 Ibid., p. 433.
Throughout the debate, Owen was to be the affirmative, and Campbell was to occupy the negative position. It was arranged that each disputant should speak alternately half an hour or less, but could speak longer with the consent of the moderators. Each day there were to be morning and afternoon sessions, which were supposed to occupy approximately two hours each. The discussion began on Monday, April 13, and continued through April 21, 1829.

At the first session on Monday, April 19, the seating capacity was not enough to accommodate the audience. Describing the crowd, Timothy Flint said:

... the church and the open area leading to it was a perfect wedge. ... All ages, sexes and conditions were there. Even our fair spinsters, with their shining morning faces, were waiting to catch a mouthful of metaphysics, with which to sweep the intellects of their swains at the first convenient period after the honeymoon.

The Chronicle stated, "there was, each day of the debate an audience of more than twelve hundred persons, many of whom were strangers, attracted to our city by the novelty and importance of the discussion." Aylett Rains, a daily attendant, later wrote that the building

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54 Robert Owen, Robert Owen's Opening Speech, p. v.
55 Flint, op. cit., p. 640.
56 The Cincinnati Chronicle, April 25, 1829.
was so densely packed it was necessary for him to stand in the aisle, and that hundreds were turned away.\textsuperscript{57} In her book Mrs. Trollope has a crude lithograph of the scene showing one person sitting in the window and another standing outside looking in.\textsuperscript{58}

Mrs. Trollope wrote:

The chapel was equally divided, one-half being appropriated to ladies, the other to gentlemen; and the door of the entrance for the ladies was carefully guarded by persons appointed to prevent any crowding or difficulty from impeding their approach. I suspect that the ladies were indebted to Mr. Owen for this attention; the arrangements respecting them on this occasion were by no means American.\textsuperscript{59}

Mrs. Trollope also mentions that the best citizens were in attendance, and that the best bonnets fluttered there.\textsuperscript{60}

Even though the question of atheism vs. religion was highly inflammatory, apparently the behavior of the audience was excellent. Flint said:

\ldots During the eight days, that the discussion lasted, the church was uniformly crowded seldom admitting all the spectators. We all felt, that our city richly deserved the compliment, which

\textsuperscript{57} W. R. Rogers, \textit{Recollections of Men of Faith} (St. Louis, 1889), p. 45.

\textsuperscript{58} Trollope, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 126.

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Ibid.}
both the disputants gave it. There was the most perfect order, and entire decorousness of observ­ance, during the whole debate. Although the far greater proportion were professed Christians, and no small part of the strister class, they received with invincible forbearance, the frank and sarcastic remarks of Mr. Owen in ridicule of the most sacred articles of Christian belief.61

After the discussion was concluded, Owen published a book which contained his opening and closing speeches, and a chapter called, "General Observations Relative to the Discussion." In this he commented as follows:

It was the first public discussion that the world has ever permitted with any degree of fairness, to take place between the orthodox faith of any country and a well known open and decided opponent. The credit of this first submission to truth and common sense is due to the United States generally, and to the population of the city of Cincinnati in particular. No audience could conduct themselves with more order, decorum and fairness, than was exhibited on this occasion.62

Mrs. Trollope said, "All this I think could have only happened in America," but hastened to add, "I am not quite sure that it was desirable it should have happened anywhere."63

The size and behavior of the audience is another reflection of democracy in the West. Even though the auditors were mainly those who professed Christianity, they were willing to listen to a speaker who called their

61 Flint, op. cit., p. 646.
62 Owen, op. cit., p. 147.
63 Trollope, op. cit., p. 129.
beliefs into question. The Chronicle commented upon the uniqueness of the occasion, and attributed the good behavior to Campbell and Owen, "the christian forbearance of the one and the philosophic complacency of the other."^64

Thus we have the background of the Owen debate. It now remains to examine Campbell's debate technique, that is, his ability at analysis, his skill in organization, the nature of his arguments, the type of evidence he presented, the manner in which he employed ethical and pathetic proof,^65 his effectiveness in rebuttal, and his proficiency in adapting the material to those present.

ANALYSIS

Modern text-book writers in the field of argumentation generally agree that it is the duty of the affirmative to analyze the proposition under consideration; that is, it is the responsibility of the affirmative to give

^64 The Cincinnati Chronicle, April 25, 1829.

^65 The terms ethical and pathetic proof are usually associated with Aristotle, for in his Rhetoric the concept is first fairly stated. Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, Speech Criticism, The Development of Standards for Rhetorical Appraisal (New York, 1948) devote Chapters twelve and thirteen to a statement of these concepts. The brief definition which they give of ethical proof is—"the force of the speaker's personality or character is instrumental in facilitating the acceptance of belief." p. 383. The meaning of pathetic proof can be seen by their statement, "It is the orator's task to link the truth to man's emotional nature so as to insure the most responsible beliefs and actions consistent with human limitations." p. 360.
the background of the question, define the terms, narrow the question by the exclusion of irrelevant matter, state what is admitted matter, and to give the issues of the debate. Although the Campbell-Owen debate took place long before any of the modern text books upon argumentation and debate were written, Campbell's concept of analysis was the same in most instances as that held by later writers on the subject.

Owen did not state the propositions of the debate and did not present logical arguments to prove them. Instead, he spent most of his time reading a manuscript on the nature of his new social system and on his opposition to religion. From Campbell's protests against Owen's management of his speeches, it is possible to get a clear interpretation of Campbell's concept of analysis.

In his introductory speech, Campbell marked out the general plan which he thought the controversy should take, but he added, "... it devolves upon my opponent to lead the way, and upon me to follow." Apparently

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66 Lionel Crocker, Argumentation and Debate (New York, 1944), p. 52.

67 The first book on argumentation was George Baker, Principles of Argumentation ( , 1895).

Campbell desired Owen to state the main issues and wished to play the part of the true negative by presenting contentions in refutation.69

Campbell recognized the importance of analysis. He said, "If it were possible to present a general synthetic view without a previous analysis, we would prefer it; for the only utility of analysis is to put us in possession of synthetic views." But he added, "Our views are always partial at best, but much more so when we have not put ourselves to the trouble to analyze, with patience, the whole data presented." 70

Therefore, Campbell pressed upon Owen the necessity of excluding irrelevant matter. He said, "If the truth is to be elicited, for the love of truth let us close the door against the admission of all extraneous and irrelevant matter." 71 Also, Campbell insisted upon a definition of

69 Throughout this study the following standard modern debate terminology will be used. Premises: the underlying assumptions upon which the case is built. Issues: fundamental questions, the answers to which determine the truth or falsity of the proposition. In formal analysis they are stated as disinterested questions to which the affirmative answers "yes" and the negative answers "no." Contentions: the answers to the issues. Arguments: reasons given to support the contentions. Needless to say, Campbell did not always use these terms in the modern sense, but an attempt will be made to relate his use of them to the modern meaning.

70 Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 374.
71 Ibid., p. 25.
terms: "There can be no development of logical truth without the nicest precision and co-intelligence in the use of our terms." Furthermore, he insisted that there must be a logical relationship between Owen's contentions and the propositions. Campbell protested, "His manner is certainly loose and declamatory; and as he does not exhibit any bearing or connection existing between his allegata and the affirmative propositions which he intends to prove by them, he necessarily imposes upon himself as well as the audience."  

In spite of Campbell's insistence, and the occasional interruptions of the moderators, Owen continued to ignore his responsibility to clarify the issues. All of Owen's argument was centered around what he called "Twelve Fundamental Laws" which he sometimes referred to as "Divine Facts" or "True Principles." Whatever he called them, he clung to them tenaciously. They were as follows:

1. That man, at his birth, is ignorant of everything relative to his own organisation, and that he has not been permitted to create the slightest part of his natural propensities, faculties, or qualities, physical or mental.

2. That no two infants, at birth, have yet been

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72 Ibid., p. 24.
73 Ibid., p. 33.
known to possess precisely the same organization, while the physical, mental, and moral differences, between all infants, are formed without their knowledge or will.

3. That each individual is placed, at birth, without his knowledge or consent, within circumstances, which, acting upon his peculiar organization, impress the general character of those circumstances upon the infant, child, and man. Yet that the influence of those circumstances is to a certain degree modified by the peculiar natural organization of each individual.

4. That no infant has the power of deciding at what period of time or in what part of the world he shall come into existence; of whom he shall be born, in what distinct religion he shall be trained to believe, or by what other circumstances he shall be surrounded from birth to death.

5. That each individual is so created, that when young, he may be made to receive impressions, to produce either true ideas or false notions, and beneficial or injurious habits, and to retain them with great tenacity.

6. That each individual is so created that he must believe according to the strongest impressions that are made on his feelings and other faculties, while his belief in no case depends upon his will.

7. That each individual is so created that he must like that which is pleasant to him, or that which produces agreeable sensations on his individual organization, and he must dislike that which creates in him unpleasant and disagreeable sensations, while he cannot discover, previous to experience, what those sensations should be.

8. That each individual is so created, that the sensations made upon his organization, although pleasant and delightful at their commencement and for some duration, generally become, when continued beyond a certain period, without change, disagreeable and painful; while on the contrary, when a too rapid change of sensations is made on his organization, it dissipates, weakens, and otherwise injures his physical, intellectual, and moral powers of enjoyment.
9. That the highest health, the greatest progressive improvements, and the most permanent happiness of each individual depend, in a great degree, upon the proper cultivation of all his physical, intellectual, and moral faculties and powers from infancy to maturity, and upon all these parts of his nature being duly called into action, at their proper period, and temperately exercised according to the strength and capacity of the individual.

10. That the individual is made to possess and to acquire the worst character, when his organization at birth has been compounded of the most inferior propensities, faculties and qualities of our common nature, and when so organized, he has been placed, from birth to death, amid the most vicious or worst circumstances.

11. That the individual is made to possess and to acquire a medium character, when his original organization has been created superior, and when the circumstances which surround him from birth to death produce continued vicious or unfavorable impressions. Or when his organization has been formed of inferior materials, and the circumstances in which he has been placed from birth to death are of a character to produce superior impressions only. Or when there has been some mixture of good and bad qualities, in the original organization, and when it has also been placed, through life, in various circumstances of good and evil. This last compound has been hitherto the common lot of mankind.

12. That the individual is made the most superior of his species when his original organization has been compounded of the best proportions of the best ingredients of which human nature is formed, and when the circumstances, or laws, institutions, and customs, in which he is placed, are all in unison with his nature.

According to Owen, the laws referred to in Principle No. 12 would usher in a new social state in which there would be no religion, no artificial laws, no private property,

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*74 Campbell-Owen Debate*, pp. 16-17.
war, nor marriage. He believed that the existing society was founded upon artificial principles which resulted in what he classed as "evils." By an acceptance of his "Divine Principles," he insisted, the above-mentioned institutions would vanish. He related his "Twelve Fundamental Principles" to religion by attempting to show that man was not responsible for his religious beliefs, and therefore he could not be held accountable. He further reasoned that if man could not be responsible for what he believed, all religions must be false.

Owen's primary concern, however, was not with religion, but to prove that his "Twelve Fundamental Principles" were true. His proof consisted mainly of repetition and amplification, with few logical arguments in support. Toward the end of the discussion, when Owen was considering the laws again, Campbell arose and said, "I would beg leave to suggest that these laws should not be commented on more than eleven times." Owen did, however, go over them once more, making twelve times in all.

After Campbell became convinced that Owen would not define the true issues of the propositions nor discuss

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75 Ibid., p. 477.
76 The Cincinnati Chronicle, April 25, 1829.
the propositions themselves, he made a counter analysis. He maintained that the "Twelve Laws" should be excluded because they were not related to the questions under discussion. He said:

I have been pleased with the perusal of my friend's 'twelve fundamental laws of human nature.' . . . I have very little objection to any of them, save that which undertakes to settle the amount of influence which they will exercise over our belief.

But he affirmed that the "Twelve laws" did not prove all religions to be false. Campbell added, "If Mr. Owen had said, that a man has two eyes, two ears, two hands, two feet, etc. . . . I would admit. But when admitted, will it follow from these truths, accidents or properties, affirmed of man, that all religions are false?" He criticized the "laws" because they failed to take into account the spiritual side of man, but he was willing to accept all with the exception of the sixth as true. Nevertheless he sought to exclude them, because they were not related to whether religion was true or false.

Almost in the beginning of the contest, Campbell narrowed the term "all religions" to include only the Jewish and Christian religions. He quoted a letter which Owen had written to the London Times saying that the object

77 Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 46.
78 Ibid., pp. 55-56.
of the debate was "not to discuss the truth or falsehood of the Christian religion . . . but to ascertain the errors in all religions . . ." 79 Campbell charged that he had never consented to such a scheme. According to the evidence, however, such was not the case. In his magazine the Christian Baptist, Campbell had listed the propositions to be discussed, and the first one being "That all the religions of the world have been founded on the ignorance of mankind." All of the other questions referred to "all religions of the world," and not to Judaism or Christianity. Perhaps Christianity and Judaism were synonymous in Campbell's mind with "all religions of the world." If so, he was mistaken. Campbell did not admit his error, but insisted upon narrowing the question to mean only Judaism and Christianity instead of "all religions."

Campbell maintained that the truth or falsity of the Jewish and Christian religions had to be debated as a question of fact. His meaning of "question of fact" can be seen by the following statement:

I aver that the Christian religion is founded upon facts, upon veritable, historical, incontrovertible facts--facts triable by all the criteria which any respectable historian of ancient or modern times has ever had for his pilots. 80

80 Ibid., p. 30.
Campbell's premise was that if the facts were true, then the religion founded upon them was true.

With the consent of the moderators, Campbell in reality discarded original propositions, and the question for discussion became: Resolved: That the Jewish and Christian religions are inspired of God. Campbell then analysed the proposition into five main issues:

1. Is it possible for man to invent religion?
2. Are the facts upon which the Jewish religion is founded true?
3. Are the facts upon which the Christian religion is founded true?
4. Is the Bible the word of God?
5. Has Christianity been beneficial to mankind?

To all of these issues, Campbell, of course, answered "yes," and Owen refused to take a stand. Campbell proceeded to debate upon his analysis, while Owen clung to his prepared manuscript, rarely referring to anything which Campbell said. Clearly it is hardly proper to say that Campbell and Owen ever debated in the modern sense. True, they did uphold extreme opposite positions with reference to religion, but they failed to clash in argument. Campbell recognized the situation which developed,

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81 Ibid., p. 137.
but felt he was adopting the only course possible under the circumstances. After the contest had closed, Owen wrote: "By comparing Mr. C's ideas with mine, as they rapidly flowed from him, I perceived there was no connecting point between our minds. We were proceeding, as it were in parallel lines which could never meet." Owen's statement is true, for aside from one or two instances, there existed no major clash in argument.

The major blame for this state of affairs must rest upon Owen, because of the way in which he handled, or failed to handle, the propositions. He made no attempt at analysis, and not only neglected to show a relationship between his assertions and the propositions, but rarely mentioned them. Certain ideas seemed paramount to him, and he believed so firmly in their importance that he neglected to state issues and debate them. He was intent upon explaining his theory of the new social state, his Utopian dream.

Summary. Campbell seemed justified in giving a counter analysis. Campbell's analysis was clear, and

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82 Owen, Robert Owen's Opening Speech, p. 34.

83 Both Mrs. Trollope and Timothy Flint point to a lack of relationship between Owen's "Twelve Fundamental Laws" and the propositions. Trollope, op. cit., 128. Flint, op. cit., 640.
presented a practical basis for argumentation. There was nothing novel in his analysis, for it was the standard one used by most theological writers in defending Judaism and Christianity. Campbell can be criticized, however, for originally agreeing to debate on Owen's propositions, for the negative of them did not state Campbell's religious convictions. Neither did they state in clear terms the differences between the speakers. The impression of this critic in reading the debate is that perhaps Campbell was more fitted to lead the way in this contest than to follow. At least, the turn of events was to his advantage.

ORGANIZATION

Because of the turn of events, Campbell was compelled to adopt a new organization as well as a different analysis. He expressed his feeling on the situation in the following words:

The propositions which have been so often read, I expected Mr. Owen would logically defend, one by one. He affirmed, and I denied. The onus probandi he took upon himself. Conscious of his inability to support these positions, it seems he now has abandoned them, any farther than assertions without proof, and declamation without arguments, upon twelve other positions. . . . I was prepared to rebut his proofs and arguments, had he presumed to defend his affirmations, but did not expect to assume propositions affirmative of the authenticity of Christianity, and prove them while I must rebut him. This failure of my friend, has very much embarrassed this
discussion, and has obliged me to change my course, and to now modify my defense of Christianity.

In spite of the fact that Campbell complained continually about the course of the discussion, it is obvious he was not caught unaware. In his introductory speech he had listed two possible organizations he might follow, which shows he had previously thought about the dispositio.

It will be remembered that according to the rules, each speaker was to occupy two thirty-minute periods in the morning, and the same in the afternoon. After Owen finished reading his manuscript during his twenty-second appearance, he generously granted Campbell the privilege of speaking as long as he wished without interruptions. There is no reason to believe that Campbell anticipated such a move, but he was so familiar with the material under consideration that he spoke for twelve hours, beginning on Friday afternoon at 3:00 o'clock, and continuing until Monday afternoon. He spoke two hours each morning and two hours each afternoon. His speech, listed as his twenty-second, occupies one hundred and sixty pages in the printed report.

Campbell's first speech was purely introductory,

84 *Campbell-Owen Debate*, p. 290.
that is, he oriented the audience in respect to the discussion. He justified his appearance on such an occasion by affirming that the Bible authorized and encouraged public controversy. He was not working to convince Owen of his error. He said, "I know, indeed that there is no circumstance in which any person can be placed more unfavorable to his conviction, than that which puts him in a public assembly upon the proof of his principles." But he undertook the discussion because of "the public, the wavering, doubting, and unsettled public, who are endangered to be carried off, as an apostle says, by the flood which the dragon has poured out of his mouth." Campbell recounted the early struggles of Christianity, outlined what he believed should be the main points of clash, and closed with an emotional appeal on immortality. Evidently, Campbell had given much thought and time to his introductory speech, for it served its purpose admirably.

The organization of each of Campbell's thirty-minute speeches assumed almost the same pattern. At first he made "a few general strictures upon the data before us," which consisted in responding to something Owen had

85 Ibid.
86 Ibid.
said in the preceding speech. As a rule, he did not attempt to refute Owen's remarks, but showed why they were not related to the subject. A constructive argument to support his contention was then next upon his agenda. He stated the argument, discussed it in detail, and summarized before going on to the next. Usually, Campbell presented during a speech only one argument. At times he amplified his development in such detail that he failed to complete a given argument within one thirty-minute period. If such were the case, in the next speech he gave a brief summary before continuing with his development.

Campbell's individual arguments were well organized and clearly presented. At times, however, he failed to relate a particular argument to his main contention, which, in turn, was not always tied to his proposition. Both at the beginning and end of the debate, Campbell gave an over-all view of his organization, but he failed, in some instances, to relate a specific argument to the whole picture. Since the contest lasted seven days, frequent internal summaries pointing up the association between argument and proposition would have been of benefit to the immediate audience.

Campbell was pleased when he was allowed to speak without interruption, because he said, "anon, the apprehensions that my half hour is almost fled, restrain my
tongue and embargo my thoughts." When he started his "long speech," he mapped out the course he intended to follow.

As I have now got the arena to myself, I will now submit to your consideration the course which I intend to pursue in conducting this argument, to something like a natural, and as far as circumstances will permit, to a logical termination.

1. I shall call your attention to the historic evidence of the Christian religion;

2. I shall next give a brief outline of the prophetic evidences, or rather the evidences arising from the prophecies, found in the inspired volume;

3. We shall then draw some arguments from the genius and tendency of the Christian religion;

4. And in conclusion, pay some attention to "the social system."87

He adhered to this organization with remarkable accuracy.

In his organization, one point worthy of notice is the use of transitional sentences. After a point had been established, he summarized, and before going into the next topic used a transitional sentence such as these: "But to approach the position to be proved still more closely."88 "But, although we give the testimony of Celsus first, it is not because there is not more ancient witnesses. . . ."89

Campbell's organization was a mixture of the

87 Ibid., p. 280.
88 Ibid., p. 286.
89 Ibid., p. 287.
chronological and topical patterns. He began his argument on the topic of the inability of man to invent religion, then chronologically treated the Jewish and Christian religion, only to come back to the topic of the social system.

Campbell made one serious mistake in organization. Since Owen was not presenting any objections to his arguments, Campbell said, "We entreat any other person present, who has an objection, to make it known, either by word or writing." As a result of this request, he received six written questions which he took time to answer. It was his intention to weave them into the arguments; but while they were interesting questions, they did not fit into the organization which he was following.

Campbell employed his last speech to summarize all of his arguments. He had intended a detailed one, but said, "as night with its sable wings is fast embracing us, I must hasten." Therefore, instead of restating his arguments, he merely presented them in a general outline form. So far as the audience was concerned, this technique seemed to be satisfactory, because it left them with a condensed but correct view of Campbell's entire case. He closed by contrasting skepticism and Christianity.

\[90\text{Ibid.}, p. 380.\]
Summary. That Campbell was conscious of organization is evident, for he took pains to make himself clear. When Owen failed to do what Campbell had expected, Campbell was able to meet the emergency by presenting an organized case in favor of Christianity. Campbell's individual arguments, particularly, were well organized, but they were not always related to the proposition. His case utilized a topical-chronological pattern. He employed effective transitions from point to point. The unity of his organization was marred somewhat by turning aside to answer questions from the audience. Both his introduction and conclusion, however, fitted the situation, and particularly his brief conclusion, served to leave his case in the minds of the audience.

ARGUMENTS

Before Campbell entered into a discussion upon his analysis, he presented one extended argument in an attempt to discredit Owen's position. Campbell maintained that division and uncertainty had always been characteristic of those who opposed Christianity. He classed all skeptics as deists, theists, or atheists, and after explaining each of these divisions, pointed to the different positions which they held.

No two atheists now living, or who have published
Owen agreed that Campbell's statements were true by saying:

I am . . . much indebted to my friend, Mr. Campbell, for his learned dissertation upon the opinions of others, for I did not trouble myself very much about a knowledge, in detail, of these opinions before. My researches were not in that direction, after I ascertained they contained so little really useful practical information. The object I had in view compelled me to become a practical man, 'to study from the life, and in the original peruse mankind.'

Campbell's argument, although not related to the propositions, can be classed as part of his psychological strategy. It is important to note that his argument was stated at the first of the debate and was referred to many times during the discussion. The argument was not nearly so strong as Campbell imagined, for Owen could easily have turned the tables to show division within the ranks of Christendom. Aside from the brief remark given above, Owen chose to say nothing.

After the presentation of this argument, Campbell

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91 Ibid., p. 65.
92 Ibid., p. 68.
began debating upon the analysis he had set up. In answer to his first issue, "Is it possible for man to invent religion," Campbell contended it was impossible for man to originate the idea of God. He reasoned that man was capable of having new ideas only because of impressions received through the senses. He correctly quoted Locke and Hume to prove the imagination could combine impressions, but could not create a new idea. To prove his point, he asked Owen to imagine a sixth sense. He then concluded that the idea of God could only come through revelation. He defined the term revelation as meaning "nothing more or less than a Divine communication concerning spiritual and eternal things." To make his point clear he said, "You might as reasonably expect a person born deaf to have all the ideas of harmony, as a man destitute of supernatural revelation to have the ideas of God and a spiritual system." Campbell attempted to establish this argument by induction; that is, he analysed the five senses, quoted Locke and Hume, and gave many comparisons.

Campbell's argument is clear to the reader of the printed record, because it is possible to re-read some

93 Ibid., p. 152.
94 Ibid., p. 151.
parts. The immediate audience must have experienced some difficulty in understanding it because of the nature of the argument and the technical language employed. 95

Campbell's next contention was that the facts of the Jewish religion were true. He offered two main arguments to prove his point. His fundamental assumption in this contention was that if the facts were true, then the religion founded upon them was true. Before giving his first argument, he recounted the statements from the Old Testament which he sought to prove correct. He briefly told the story of the Israelite's journey from Egypt to the land of Canaan, especially mentioning that they walked through the Red Sea, saw a visible manifestation of the Deity at Mount Sinai, were fed by manna in the wilderness for forty years, and were led by a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night in their travel. These were the facts which he was seeking to establish.

In proof of the correctness of the foregoing

95 It is interesting to note that Campbell read over this argument and made the following comment in a footnote of the printed report of the debate. "While reading over my debate with Mr. Owen, which I see is a good deal in the style of my extemporaneous harangues—a good many unnecessary repetitions, and a too great diffuseness in the argument (though I hope this defect will be advantageous to the common reader as it will keep the argument longer before his mind, and relieve him from much abstract thinking.)" Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 177.
assertions, Campbell's first argument was to list four criteria by which to judge the truth of ancient occurrences:

1. The facts relied upon were sensible facts.
2. They were facts of remarkable notoriety.
3. There now exists standing monuments in perpetual commemoration of these facts.
4. These commemorative attestations have continued from the very period in which the events happened, up to the present time.

He then proceeded to prove that the happenings which he mentioned met these four standards. He declared,

If these mighty miracles of Moses had been performed in a dark corner of the earth, in the presence of only a few wandering tribes, or of rude unlettered nations, without records, some skeptical scruple might arise in our mind... These facts transpired in an age when the human faculties were highly cultivated; Moses himself was brought up in all the learning of the Egyptians.

Campbell's technique was to discuss in great detail each of the events which he had mentioned earlier, especially emphasizing the passover celebration as a commemorative institution attesting their truth. In fact, he was so diffuse that the immediate audience probably lost his train of thought. Brevity of statement and fewer repetitions would have made this argument clearer.

Campbell's second argument supporting this

96 The Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 184.
97 Ibid., p. 188.
contention was based upon contemporary evidence. He main-
tained, "all the ancient historians which peep into the
depths of remote antiquity, do, in all their allusions,
confirm the sacred history." To prove this point, he took
nine occurrences recorded in the Old Testament, and read
from several ancient historians who mentioned the events.
The topic which he amplified most was the record of the
flood. His technique was to read long passages from the
history of Egypt, Chaldea, and China then relate them to
the accounts given by Moses. He concluded this argument
by saying,

We have not, we presume, exhausted your patience
on this dry but still interesting part of the ar-
gument. We predicate nothing on these documents
further than this, so far as the antiquities of
nations have descended to us, there is corrobora-
tive evidence of the Mosaic Account, and not a
single testimony against it.98

There can be no doubt that Campbell by his ex-
tensive reading of history added a certain amount of
ethical proof to his position, which made a valuable
record for those who might desire to go into a detailed
study of the subject later. For a popular audience, how-
ever, the development was probably too long. The argument
would have been clearer if he had made it a policy only to
mention the historian and the point in question. This

98 Ibid., p. 259.
argument was based upon authority, and it was inductive in arrangement.

The next issue which Campbell had outlined was, "Is the Bible the word of God?" He contended, "The volume called the New Testament was written by the persons whose name it bears, and at the time in which it is said to have been written." After stating his point of view, he made a few introductory remarks on the necessity of an objective attitude before going into three arguments to support his contention.

Campbell's first argument was to quote from ancient writers who mentioned certain passages in the New Testament and acknowledged the book and author. He affirmed that Barnabas, Clement, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Papias, all men who knew the apostles, had made extensive quotations from the New Testament in their writings. Campbell did not give statements from all of them, but the following excerpt illustrates his choice:

.... In the letter written by Clement from Rome to Corinth, .... the sermon on the Mount is directly quoted, and other passages of the testimony of Matthew and Luke. But it would be tedious to be minute in furnishing examples of each sort of quotation here; more than forty clear allusions to the books of the New Testament are to be found in the single fragment of Polycarp.

99 Ibid., p. 282.
100 Ibid., p. 289.
101 Ibid., p. 288.
Campbell's second argument was that the ancient enemies of Christianity affirmed the facts of the Bible. Campbell said that even though they attempted to philosophize away the events of Christianity, they neither denied them nor the scriptures. Again, his technique was to read extracts from their writings, give brief comments upon their life, and then relate their statements to passages in the Bible. The following is an example of Campbell's method:

Hierocles, the philosopher, was a prefect at Alexandria, in the year 303. He composed two books in order to confute the Christian religion. .. . The proof of Christianity, from the miracles of Jesus, he tried to invalidate, not by denying the facts themselves, but by showing that one Apollonius had performed equal, if not greater miracles, which were recorded, he says, not by ignorant men like Peter and Paul, but by Maximum of AEgis, and Damis a philosopher.102

Both Campbell's first and second arguments were closely related, the only difference being the class of testimony used. In each of these his material was effectively presented. He tended to read shorter passages than he did from the ancient historians and to give a condensation of the point under consideration. Furthermore, after presenting the material, Campbell employed a good technique of summary, thereby relating these arguments to his contention.

102 Ibid., p. 300.
His third argument, intended to establish the Bible as the word of God, consisted of what he classed as "internal evidences of authenticity." He admitted that "... The internal evidence found within the volume, is not supposed to be the best calculated to arrest the attention of the bold, declaiming infidel, ... yet this is the evidence which ever has made the deepest impression upon the mind of the honest inquirer."103 His position was that the New Testament contained "the physiognomy of truth," which he explained as the frankness, candor, honesty, and sincerity of the authors. He explained that it was easy to detect a spurious work because the author would avoid details and particulars and deal mainly in generalities. He argued that this was not characteristic of Biblical writers, for they gave definite dates and names of persons, and alluded to customs then in existence.

Campbell did not develop this argument in great detail. It might be observed that if, instead of citing authentic works as examples, he had cited a spurious work, i.e., an obvious forgery of the Bible, his point would have been more convincing. It seems that Campbell introduced this argument as an after thought and he did not give it the attention which it deserved.

103 Ibid., p. 304.
Campbell's next issue in his analysis was, "Are the facts upon which the Christian religion is founded true?" His contention was that Christ arose from the dead. He considered this the most important point in the discussion because he said, "I beg the indulgence of this assembly here. I will to be diffuse on this one point. I desire it for the sake of every saint and sinner here—or who may read this discussion. . . . This fact proved, and all is proved."104 Therefore, he went into more detail upon this contention than any of the others.

His argument was first to give the testimony of the apostles, especially of the Apostle Paul, upon the resurrection of Christ. He affirmed they saw Christ after his resurrection and sealed their testimony with their death. He admitted that people have been martyrs for their opinions, and said this did not prove their opinions to be true. But he stated, "The martyr to an opinion, in dying says, 'I sincerely think.' But the martyr to a fact in dying says, 'I most assuredly saw or heard.' It was for publishing facts, sensible facts, and not for propagating opinions, that all the original martyrs suffered and died."105

Campbell rarely stated only one argument in proof

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104 Ibid., p. 313.
105 Ibid., p. 320.
of a contention, and seldom gave only one source of evidence. The extent to which he was capable of developing a point is clearly seen in this contention. Not only did he give the testimony of the apostles on the resurrection of Christ, but he pointed to the three thousand converts on Pentecost who affirmed the facts, to the failure of Christ's enemies to produce the body, and to the lack of motive for anyone attempting to remove the body. All of these he discussed in detail. Then he applied the same four criteria which he had applied in the case of the events of the Jewish religion, and gave the testimony of five ancient historians who stated that large numbers of people in the first century believed that Christ arose from the dead. Thus, when he did finish his contention, the audience must have thought he was justified in saying, "There is no other historical fact of equal antiquity, that can be supported by one thousandth part of the testimony that this is."

The last issue of the debate was "Has Christianity been beneficial to man?" Campbell, of course, contended that Christianity offered the best to man in this life and in the one to come. He spent at least two hours on this proposition, and made several direct hits, but many of his statements did not directly concern his contention. For

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106 Arguments on this one contention occupies thirty-seven pages in the printed report of the debate.
example, he spent much time in a historical survey of religion through the patriarchal dispensation, the Mosaic, and up to the Christian; then he explained the difference between the Old and New Covenants. His ideas are interesting, and no doubt correct, but they do not further the position which he stated. Even though he spent much time on this contention, he had only two main arguments, and they perhaps should be called extended assertions.

His first argument in his own words was "... Christianity is founded upon the most philosophic view of human nature ... its immediate object is to implant in the human heart, through a discovery of the divine philanthropy, a principle of love, which fulfills every moral precept ever promulgated on the earth." 107 He then contrasted the difference between skepticism and Christianity in making men better. He said Owen's philosophy was, "Transplant a tree and it become an apple tree. But the great reformer's philosophy was, engraft a new scion." 108

Campbell's second argument on the benefits of Christianity was the position which it had given to women. He expressed this idea not only with force but with beauty. He said:

But some half dozen of female names have come down to us in the annals of Grecian and Roman history, as having attracted much attention from their contemporaries, or as deserving much admiration from posterity. Natural affection, in defiance of pagan darkness, superstition, and cruelty, did, in some few instances, snatch some individual females from the empire of night, and gave them a place among the reputable characters of antiquity. But the sex, as such, were almost universally neglected. But from the time that Gabriel visited the cottage of Mary, the mother of our Lord, down to the present, wherever Christianity had found its way, the female sex has been emancipated from ignorance, bondage, and obscurity.

Summary. Thus we have the main arguments which Campbell used in the Owen debate. In the main, he followed his analysis with remarkable accuracy. Because he used the "preview and flash-back" technique, his contentions and arguments are clear; though in some instances he tended to become too diffuse in his arguments and present too much evidence, yet his argument on the internal evidences of the inspiration of the Bible needed further development. Most of his arguments were supported by sufficient evidence, usually testimony, but in the last argument he relied mainly upon assertion to prove his point. Campbell's arguments were not new, but are the standard arguments used in defense of Christianity. He was well acquainted with them, however, presented them clearly, and was armed with a great amount of evidence.

109 Ibid., p. 417.
Conceding that Alexander Campbell was thoroughly acquainted with the material which had been written in defense of Christianity and was familiar with the position of skeptics, one is amazed at the vast amount of information which he was able to assemble and to present in this discussion. Perhaps Mrs. Trollope explained the reason when she said:

Mr. Owen's preparation, however, could only have been such as those who run may read, for, during the interval, he traversed great parts of North America, crossed the Atlantic twice, visited England, Scotland, Mexico, Texas, and I know not how many places besides.

Mr. Campbell, I was told, passed this period very differently, being engaged in reading with great research and perseverance all the theological works within his reach. ¹¹⁰

To what extent this observation is true of Campbell is hard to ascertain. For during the period from the time he accepted the challenge until the actual debate, he published a hymn book, preached at least twice a week, published his monthly magazine, and married Miss Selina H. Bakewell.¹¹¹ He did, however, enter the discussion with a wealth of material. Timothy Flint wrote:

Every ancient writer, sacred or profane, that has left any remains, which had the least bearing upon

¹¹⁰ Trollope, op. cit., p. 125.
¹¹¹ Smith, op. cit., p. 376.
his subject came back to instruct us. Warburton, Newton, Locke, Milton, Butler, Soame Jennings, and the great names of the classics were put in requisition on the one hand; and the whole herd of philosophers, skeptics, and atheists on the other were evoked from their sleep of the tomb, to be compared, judged, and sentenced.\textsuperscript{112}

The three major types of evidence which Campbell employed were, in order of frequency, testimony, comparisons, and examples. By far the greatest amount of supporting material came from the writers of antiquity. Campbell utilized four main classes in testimony, namely skeptics, historians, theologians, and Biblical writers.

To support his argument on the differences among skeptics, he quoted from the writings of Sir Thomas Hobbs, David Hume, Thomas Paine, Mirabaud,\textsuperscript{113} Spinoza, and Vannini. His method was to name them, give a brief biographical sketch, state their belief, and point out how they differed from others. He also gave a list which he classed as "Confessed Ignorance of Atheists,"\textsuperscript{114} and another titled "Natural Mysteries of Atheism."\textsuperscript{115} All of his material on this point was taken from three sources, Thomas Paine's :

\begin{itemize}
    \item \textsuperscript{112} Flint, \textit{The Western Monthly Review}, 644.
    \item \textsuperscript{113} Campbell does not give Mirabaud's first name, but refers to him as Monsieur Mirabaud the Atheist.
    \item \textsuperscript{114} \textit{The Campbell-Owen Debate}, p. 78.
    \item \textsuperscript{115} Ibid., p. 79.
\end{itemize}
Age of Reason, \(^\text{116}\) Lord Herbert's De Veritate, \(^\text{117}\) and Dr. Cudworth's The True Intellectual System. \(^\text{118}\) Each of these books was a recognized source of material on atheistic beliefs, especially Cudworth's writings. \(^\text{119}\)

The second class of testimony to confirm the facts of the Old Testament was the ancient writers. He introduced Diodorus Siculus and Herodotus, two ancient Greek historians, and read passages in which they mentioned events described in the Old Testament. His quotations from Siculus and Herodotus were taken from the writings of William Warburton, The Divine Legation of Moses, \(^\text{120}\) one of the great works in English theology. \(^\text{121}\)


\(^{117}\) Edward Herbert, De Veritate (London, 1624).

\(^{118}\) Ralph Cudworth, The True Intellectual System of the Universe, wherein all the Reason and Philosophy of Atheism is refuted, and its Impossibility Demonstrated (Cambridge, 1688).


\(^{121}\) Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge, III, 2479.
Also in confirmation of the happenings of the Old Testament, Campbell cited the history of many of the nations around Judea. All of this material came from the famous theological work by Samuel Shuckford, commonly called _Connection_. From this work he read extended paragraphs which contained the accounts of the ancient historians.

Campbell introduced early writers of the Christian period in an attempt to establish the facts of the New Testament as true. He presented quotations from Trypho, Celsius, Prophecy, Hierocles, Julian, and Lucian. He labeled all these men as opposers of the Christian religion and attempted to show that indirectly they proved the truth of Christianity. When he presented these men, Campbell always gave a sentence or two about each before reading from his writings. He does not give the source from which the excerpts were taken, but it seems logical that they all came from the same theological work.

Campbell referred to other early Jewish, Greek, and Roman historians in the debate. He quoted Tacitus, the Roman historian; Justinus, whom he referred to as

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122 Samuel Shuckford, _The Sacred and Profane History of the World Connected from the Creation of the World to the Dissolution of the Assyrian Empire at the Death of Sardanapalus, and to the Declension of the Kings of Judah and Israel Under the Reigns of Ahaz and Pekah_ (London, 1727).
another Roman writer; Eusebius, early church father;
Antoninus, Roman emperor in 130 A.D.; and Marcus
Antoninus, Roman emperor in 161 A.D. He correctly con-
cluded from this testimony that the establishment and
progress of Christianity was a matter of public and general
notoriety, and that it "arrested the attention of all ranks
and degrees of men." Campbell did not give the source
of this evidence, but merely read long passages from each
of the men mentioned above.

Throughout the debate, Campbell employed certain
standard books upon the subject of Christian evidences.
These most used were the following: Bishop Joseph Butler's
The Analogy of Religion, William Paley's Evidences of
Christianity, Soame Jenyns's View of the Internal Evi-
dences of the Christian Religion, Robert Haldane's

123 The Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 346.
124 Joseph Butler, The Analogy of Religion, Natural
and Revealed to the Constitution and Course of Nature
(London, 1736).
125 William Paley, Evidences of Christianity
(London, 1794).
126 Soame Jenyns, A View of the Internal Evidence
of the Christian Religion (Stockbridge, 1791).
Evidence and Authority of Revelation,¹²⁷ and Thomas Chalmers's Discourses on the Christian Revelation.¹²⁸ All of these works were widely known in America. In fact, Butler and Paley were the two most widely used books on Christian evidences in American colleges and universities.¹²⁹

Campbell utilized the above-mentioned books not only to supply his argument, but at times to explain it. He often introduced a subject, and then read two or three pages from one of his theological sources. It is possible to conclude that Campbell consulted the leading books of his day in the field of Christian evidences. The fact that he read so much material must, however, have detracted from the force of some of his arguments.

Campbell’s handling of the Bible as testimony is interesting. He rarely made a direct quotation from the Bible to prove any argument. In fact, in the entire debate, there were not more than five direct quotations

¹²⁷ Robert Haldane, Evidence and Authority of Revelation (Edinburgh, 1816).

¹²⁸ Thomas Chalmers, Discourses on the Christian Revelation, viewed in Connection with Modern Astronomy (Glasgow, 1816).

¹²⁹ James Orval Filbeck, The Christian Evidence Movement (Kansas City, 1946), 129.
from the Bible; neither was his vocabulary drawn from this source. Owen used a great many more Biblical terms than did the defender of Christianity. Campbell did, however, make mention of a number of the events recorded in the Bible, and sought to prove them to be true. At no time did he maintain that a certain statement was true just because it was recorded in the Bible. This was his belief, but he was wise to analyze the situation and recognize that the facts needed to be established by evidence from additional sources.

In addition to testimony, Campbell applied comparison as a form of support. His speeches were not overloaded with comparisons, but when he did use them, they were effective. The majority of his comparisons came from nature and government, and none were taken from the field of religion. In attempting to prove that it was impossible for the imagination to invent anything new, but only combine that which was already known, Campbell used a comparison which illustrated his technique:

My imagination might picture to me a tree, the roots of which are iron, the stem brass, the leaves silver, and the apples gold; but if I had never seen a tree growing in the earth, could I possibly have conceived in the wildest vagaries of my imagination an idea of this wonderful metallic tree.

130 The Campbell-Owen Debate, 48.
Campbell made less use of examples than of comparisons, but at times he did employ them as supporting material. As a rule they were drawn from close at hand, and were particularly appealing because they were related to the audience. They were usually hypothetical. For example, in differentiating between perception, memory, and consciousness, he said, "I perceive a numerous assemblage now before me, and I am conscious of my own thoughts at the time. I remember that there were such and such persons here yesterday." 131

Summary. The raw material out of which Campbell built his argument was mainly testimony from skeptics, historians, theologians, and the Bible. He made a limited use of comparison and example. In attempting to establish the validity of certain facts, he employed history and logic to prove their verity. His selection of evidence was wide and extensive; he drew only on standard, recognized sources. He tended to read too much from theological works, but his restraint in quoting from the Bible was commendable.

ETHICAL AND PATHETIC PROOF

Even though Campbell was not contemplating

131 Ibid., p. 153.
convincing Owen of the truth of Christianity, he was working for a verdict on the part of the immediate audience as well as the more extensive group who would read the debate. He had two main purposes in mind: first he was attempting to convince the "wavering, doubting, and unsettled public," of the truth of the Christian religion; and second, he was seeking to strengthen the faith of those who were already Christians. He was not standing for the doctrines of any church, but for the fundamental principles upon which Christianity is based. Since Campbell was seeking to persuade, let us notice his technique with reference to ethical and pathetic proof.

It is safe to infer that Campbell began the discussion with the majority of the audience in sympathy with him as the "defender of the faith." His ethical standing was high at the beginning of the contest because he was affirming a position associated with the elevated and virtuous. Apparently, also, his appearance was in his favor. Timothy Flint gave this description of him:

The chivalrous champion of the covenant is a citizen of Bethany, near Wheeling, in Virginia; a gentleman, we should think, between thirty and forty; with a long face, a rather small head, of a sparkling, bright and cheerful countenance, and finely arched forehead; in the earnest vigor of youth, and with a very fine sprinkling of white on his crown. 132

Campbell, however, did not allow the audience's antecedent impression of his character keep him from seeking to increase his ethical appeal during his speeches. From the beginning he had the advantage, and the following are the techniques by which he sought to expand it.

Whenever possible, Campbell praised Christianity. He spoke of the "Christian volunteer" as possessing "peace of mind, a heaven-born equanimity, a good conscience, a pure heart, universal love, a triumphant joy, and a glorious hope of immortal bliss." He recognized that Christianity had its imperfections, and he did not attempt to pass over them. Rather he sought to nullify their effect by affirming they were not faults of the system, but merely a corruption of it. In fact, he turned the tables by affirming that imperfection was a proof of Christianity, for "no man is wont to pretend to anything which has not somewhere a real existence." In most of Campbell's speeches there are words of praise for the Christian system. One of the techniques by which speakers can increase their ethical proof is to associate either himself or his message with what is virtuous and elevated. Campbell

133 The Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 9.
134 Ibid., p. 352.
made extensive use of this method.

Campbell's ethical appeal must have been increased by his attitude toward Owen during the debate. He strongly differed from him, but he never sought to impugn his motives or character. In his opening speech, Campbell said, "I do cherish the most kind feelings toward Mr. Owen. I am sorry that controversial rules require me to call him my opponent. The term I use with perfect good-will toward him. I am satisfied that Mr. Owen is doing that which he conceives to be just and right." Apparently Owen appreciated Campbell's attitude, for he held him in high regard during and after the discussion.


137 Owen in his published observations on the debate had this to say about his feelings toward Campbell. "I had, during the period of the public debate . . . and for nearly a fortnight afterwards, frequent friendly, open and frank private discussions, at the houses of our friends in and near the city, with this reverend gentleman. There is something so kind and evidently sincere in his manners, that I had great pleasure in all my communications with him. And I believe we each expected to make some impression upon the mind of the other; or, if not, to discover the real cause which united us in feeling, and divided us in the foundation of our sentiments on the subject of religion. When the time of separation arrived, however, the impression left on my mind from the whole intercourse between us was, that our feelings of good will and friendship for each other had increased; but that not the slightest progress had been made in the conversion of either part to the religious or irreligious opinions of the other." Owen, Robert Owen's Opening Speech, p. 163.
Also, Campbell acted with tact and moderation at all times. He did not engage in mere "name-calling" or any other demagogic technique destined to arouse prejudice. Strongly in favor of the discussion, he did all in his power to make it logical and free from personal abuse.

He also exemplified that he was possessed of intellectual integrity and wisdom. In fact, he went to unusual pains to create such an impression, for in addition to his extensive English vocabulary, he used no less than fifty separate Latin phrases in his speeches. There was little, if any, necessity for them, and so it seems they were employed for effect. His knowledge, however, of history and the Bible, and the great amount of evidence which he presented must have convinced the audience that he was a man of wisdom.

To those who were in doubt on the subject of Christianity, the confidence which Campbell showed in his position must have been a persuasive factor. He was always sure of himself and firm in the stand which he assumed. Such expressions as these reveal his attitude: "There can be no substantial argument urged against the verity of these stupendous facts . . . ." 138 Most unquestionably these embrace all the proofs which human reason can require . . . ." 139 "this is the best attested fact in the

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138 Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 216.
139 Ibid., p. 287.
annals of the world." Campbell was sure of himself even to the point of being dogmatic.

**Summary.** Though Campbell entered the contest with the audience strongly in his favor, the position he took and the method which he adopted must have increased his personal proof. His praise of Christianity, his attitude toward Owen, his wisdom, and his firmness in the cause which he was advocating must have given the audience a high impression of his character, good will, and ability.

**Pathetic Proof.** There are examples of pathetic proof in the Owen debate. Such instances are but meager in comparison with the instances of logical proof. Admittedly a close relationship exists between ethical and pathetic proof. In a consideration of Campbell's use of pathetic proof, attention is paid to his technique in associating his arguments to the basic human motives, emotions, and attitudes of his audience.

The dominant appeal running throughout all of Campbell's arguments was to a greater or lesser degree the motive of self-preservation—perhaps not in the usual sense that is listed in text-books on public speaking, but

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141 The term "logical proof" is used in the Aristotelian sense of rational demonstration through severe argumentation as a means of persuasion. The sections on analysis, argument, and evidence are discussions of phases of Campbell's logical proof.
certainly in a manner compatible with his subject matter. For Campbell began the debate on the subject of immortality, made a few references to it during the course of his arguments, and closed on the same subject. Christianity offered heaven, while skepticism offered nothing. Campbell did not discuss hell, neither did he consign skeptics there, but he often pointed to the life beyond the grave, tendered by the religion of Christ. The following example shows how Campbell first introduced the subject of immortality into the discussion:

What is man? Whence came he? Whither does he go? Is he a mortal or an immortal being? Is he doomed to spring up like the grass, bloom like a flower, drop his seed into the earth, and die forever? Is there no object of future hope? No God—no heaven—no exalted society to be known or enjoyed? Are all the great and illustrious men and women who have lived before we were born, wasted and gone forever? After a few short days are fled, when the enjoyments and toils of life are over; when our relish for social enjoyment, and our desires for returning to the fountain of life are most acute, must we hang our heads and close our eyes in the desolating and appalling prospect of never opening them again, of never tasting the sweets for which a state of discipline and trial has so well fitted us? These are the awful and sublime merits of the question at issue. It is not what we shall eat, nor what we shall drink, unless we shall be proved to be mere animals; but it is, shall we live or die forever? It is as beautifully expressed by a Christian poet—

Shall spring ever visit the mouldering urn?
Shall day ever dawn on the night of the grave?142

142 Campbell-Owen Debate, 13.
Closely related to self-preservation was Campbell's attempt to convince the audience that Christianity was sure and stable, while skepticism was uncertain. He sought to connect the Christian religion to the basic human emotion of the desire for confidence or security in life. He presented skeptics as unsure on all of the fundamental questions of existence, and devoted an entire argument to the differences and confusion among them. He pictured Christianity as giving a positive answer to the problems of life and as an authoritative rule of living. Skepticism was "confessedly conjectural, doubtful, and unworthy of any sort of confidence," but Christianity was just the opposite because it was from God. Campbell said:

... as soon as we abandon the Bible, there is not a speck of terra firma accessible to human ingenuity, on which anything worthy of the name of system can be built ... Skepticism only allures from the haven of safety, to the wide and tempestuous ocean of absolute uncertainty, without even promising us compass, helm, or pilot to conduct us to a safe anchorage again.

He affirmed that skepticism placed man no higher than the "bat, beaver, bee, butterfly, or the elephant," and the "rider was no better than the horse," but that this was not true of the Christian religion. He sought to make the

143 Ibid., p. 59.
144 Ibid.
audience feel a sense of importance by saying that man was "the lord paramount over all the irrational part of creation."\(^{145}\) Campbell continually employed such expressions and pointed to man as a responsible being. Furthermore, he maintained that only Christianity recognized the personal worth of the individual.

Moreover, Campbell sought to relate his position to man's desire for happiness and joy. In this attempt he centered many of his statements around the doctrine of immortality, but he also sought to show that Christianity was the only system which could make man happy on earth. He maintained that "the legitimate tendency of the religion of Jesus Christ is to fill all who submit to his government with peace, and joy, and good hope . . . ."\(^{146}\)

One of Campbell's most effective emotional appeals was to sentimental attachments by picturing home-life and mother's love. Owen had said that in his new society all marriage would be abolished because it was an unnatural attachment, and women would be relieved of the responsibility of caring for children. Campbell had little to say in answer at the time it was presented, but waited until almost the close of the discussion to answer. He spoke of the importance of marriage, and described a happy family.

\(^{145}\) Ibid., p. 104.

\(^{146}\) Ibid., p. 415.
He pointed out, "God saith, it is not good for man to be alone! He then created a helpmate for him. Even in paradise, man alone was but half pleased:

The world was sad, the garden was a wild.  
And man the hermit sigh'd, till woman smil'd.

Campbell ridiculed Owen's position in freeing mothers from the care of their children by saying:

Mothers are thus to be happily exempted from many of the toils incident to parturition; and in the arrangement Mr. Owen supposes he is promoting the happiness of mothers. This is a lame and blind philosophy. A mother feels incomparably more pleasure in having the care of her own offspring than, in being exempt from it. The smiles of her infant, the opening dawn of reason, the indications of future greatness or goodness, as they exhibit themselves to her sanguine expectations, open to her sources of enjoyment incomparably overpaying the solicitudes and gentle toils of nursing. In exempting her from the natural concern and care due her offspring, Mr. Owen debars her from the largest portions of maternal enjoyments, for which he can substitute nothing like an equivalent. 147

Summary. Campbell's pathetic appeals are not difficult to isolate. He attempted to present Christianity in terms appealing to man. Thus he connected it to the motive of self-preservation, to man's desire for security, to his love of importance, to his happiness, and to man's sentimental attachments. Campbell affirmed that these basic motives, emotions, and attitudes could be satisfied only through Christianity. He employed these pathetic

147 Ibid., p. 430.
appeals mainly at the first and last of the discussion. This was according to his philosophy, for he said, "When men have reasoned very strongly, and carried a point by a very powerful attack upon the human understanding, they may be allowed to slacken the reigns upon their passions, and make some appeal to the hearts or feelings of the audience."  

Although Campbell was skillful in the use of pathetic proof, he did not utilize it enough in this debate. In spite of his philosophy, many of his "strong arguments" would have been more effective if they had contained more emotional appeal. Both at the beginning and end of the discussion he reminded the audience of the tremendous pathetic appeal of his position, and they were likely to forget this while he was spending an hour proving that the flood actually happened. A more adroit blending of pathetic proof with logical would have increased the effectiveness of his position.

REFUTATION AND REBUTTAL

As has been suggested, there was not a direct clash in the discussion, hence Campbell had little opportunity for rebuttal and refutation. Both speakers

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148 Ibid., p. 463.
proceeded along parallel lines, because they debated from different premises. There was only one significant point of clash, and after rebuttal on that point, Campbell, with the consent of the moderators, began to argue upon a counter-analysis. After this turn of affairs, it was not until the last two speeches that either debater more than mentioned the arguments of the other.

The one point of clash growing out of Owen's "laws" was on the freedom of the will. In essence, Owen was maintaining that the individual does not form his character, and therefore is not responsible for his feeling, opinion, conduct, or religion. He affirmed that man had no control over his will, but had to act according to the strongest impression which he received.

Campbell, in rebuttal on this point, used the technique of turning the tables. He said:

Mr. Owen tells us that the infant man could not help being surrounded with his individual set of circumstances. Well, admit it, but is man to remain an infant? If he were always to remain in a state of infantile imbecility, then he might be likened to the tree or to the stone located to the soil . . . I apprehend it to be a capital fallacy in Mr. Owen's theory, that while he originates man in a certain set of circumstances, he leaves him there, and never considers that the adult man is continually changing his circumstances. . . .

Campbell pointed to Owen's life as a proof that man has

149 Ibid., p. 57.
freedom of the will by saying: "My opponent is himself a living refutation of his own doctrine. He was born in Great Britain, consequently was bred in a state of society very different from that which he is so anxious to induce." Campbell sought not only to refute the argument, but to show the unhappy implications of affirming that man did not have the power of choice. He said:

Mr. Owen's doctrine of irresponsibility lays the same to the root of that tree from whence spring all our feelings, good as well as evil. Like a rash and unskilful physician, he kills the patient while he kills the fever. All the kind feelings, complacency, affections, and social delights are murdered by the same sword which is unsheathed to stab religion to the heart.

After the discussion on the freedom of the will was completed, Campbell began arguing on his counter-analysis and Owen continued to discuss the "twelve fundamental laws." Campbell continued to say that Owen was off the subject. As has been pointed out, aside from stating his "laws," Owen made many harsh statements against Christianity and the capitalistic system. Campbell's way of answering him is revealed by this statement:

I have enumerated fifty-four distinct assertions adduced in his last address, and, in the same space of time I could utter fifty-four entirely distinct from my opponent's. But what would be the results, what the convictions arising from such a style of disputation? If this is to pass for argument,
demonstration, or proof among the skeptics, I think their case is indeed irremediable.\footnote{152}

Thus, as a rule, Campbell did not make counter-assertions, but after such a statement as the above, continued with his constructive argument. Perhaps there were at least two reasons for his procedure; first, he was more interested in establishing his constructive arguments than in engaging in a name-calling. Second, most of Owen's statements against Christianity were generalizations which were not acceptable to the audience, and there was no reason to refute them.

Campbell's attitude toward Owen's entire case was to reduce it to an absurdity. So far as he did engage in rebuttal, the special technique was \textit{reductio ad absurdum}. For example, after turning the tables on Owen's argument of the irresponsibility of man, Campbell summarized his rebuttal by saying:

\begin{quote}
In opposition to which we have urged this consideration--that, admitting its truth, it follows that infants, idiots, and madmen, philosophers, and the common-sense part of the community, are all alike capable or incapable of society and moral government, because man has no more control over his own actions, than a mill-wheel has over its own revolutions. This was, as I conceived, reducing his argument to an absurdity.\footnote{153}
\end{quote}

Campbell applied this same technique to Owen's twelve laws.

\footnote{152 \textit{Ibid.}, p. 259.}
\footnote{153 \textit{Ibid.}, p. 138.}
While Campbell admitted most of them were true, he affirmed they were not only irrelevant to the discussion, but also faulty, because they did not take into account the spiritual nature of man. During the last part of the debate, he said:

As Mr. Owen has read them so often, I hope I may be indulged to read them once; and that I may make them more famous by my reading them, I will show the whole extent of their latitude, and I think Mr. Owen himself will be indebted to me for the liberal and extensive construction which I am about to give them. I will show that they are so large and so liberal as to engross almost every animal in the creation within their lawful jurisdiction. But for the sake of trial and proof, I will only try how they will suit one species of quadrupeds. Mr. Owen has told you twelve times that they will exactly suit for bipeds.

Then Campbell read through the entire twelve laws substituting the word "goat" for the word "man."

There is another point of note which should be mentioned in Campbell's rebuttal efforts. During his twelve-hour speech, he objected to some of his own statements, since his opponent habitually failed to do so, and then answered them. He did this on five occasions, but his answers were always better than his objections. In reality this should not be classed as a rebuttal technique, but merely a method of getting the audience to see his point.

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154 Ibid., p. 483.
Summary. Because of the turn of events, Campbell did not have much opportunity for refutation and rebuttal. Upon the point of clash, however, he did meet the issue, and sought to refute it by the two devices of turning the tables and *reductio ad absurdum*. The over-all technique which he applied to Owen's case was *reductio ad absurdum*, which, in view of the circumstances was about the only one available. Campbell did give, however, ample evidence of his knowledge of both sides of the question. But his rebuttal efforts are by no means the high point of the debate.

AUDIENCE ADAPTATION

Campbell was keenly aware of two audiences throughout the course of the discussion. His concern about the audience present can be seen by his occasional compliment and direct reference to them. At the conclusion of the debate he said:

> Before we dismiss this assembly, I beg leave to express my sensibility, my admiration of the marked and courteous attention which has been paid by this community to this discussion. I must again repeat that I have never seen any assembly convened upon any occasion which has all through exhibited the same good order, the same complaisant behaviour, and the same unremitting attention.\(^\text{156}\)


The event which shows Campbell's concern about the listening audience most clearly, however, is at the end of the contest, when he asked the audience to express their opinion concerning the outcome. He gave as a reason for his action that people who would read the printed record should know the attitude of the people who attended. Richardson, his biographer, says:

He perceived that Mr. Owen was of a temperament so sanguine as to regard every one who treated him with respect and interest as his disciples, and to be constantly under the wildest illusions of hope as to the prevalence of his views. He determined, therefore, for Mr. Owen's sake as well as that of the cause he pleaded, that he would deprive him of any false estimate he might have formed.157

Whether this was his reason or not, Campbell asked, "that all persons in this assembly who believe in the Christian religion or who feel so much interest in it, as to wish to see it pervade the world, will please signify it by standing up."158 The published account says, "An almost universal rising up followed." After they were seated, Campbell requested, "all persons doubtful of the truth of the Christian religion, or who do not believe it, and who are not friendly to its spread and prevalence over the world, will please signify it by rising up." The written record says

157 Richardson, op. cit., II, 282.
158 Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 504.
that three stood up. Owen said, "I am much pleased with Mr. Campbell's little maneuver of the test, because I discover it pleases him and his friends. Truth requires no such support." Without attempting to ascertain Campbell's motives or the validity of the expression, we may say that his maneuver does show Campbell's interest in the immediate audience.

Campbell was also concerned about the reading audience, i.e., those who would read the printed record of the proceedings. This is evidenced by his specifications that a stenographer should take down the entire discussion in order that it could be published. Also, in many of his speeches, he made remarks about the reading audience. On one occasion he said:

I have regretted the necessity of introducing the argument which I have nearly brought to a close, because it is neither adapted to the taste nor apprehension of a popular assembly. But I have been obliged to be somewhat abstract in these disquisitions because the scope of the debate seems to require it, and the debate itself is contemplated to be a matter of record.

Campbell's admission on one argument is also true in many others, because the text gives ample proof of his concern about the reading public. The type of some of his

159 Ibid.
160 Ibid.
161 Ibid., p. 173.
arguments, as well as the variety and amount of historical evidence, did make the book substantial, but did not help the immediate audience. This is a major failure in audience adaptation. He should have concentrated on those present, and if he desired, later written a book on the subject. The fact that he was concerned with two audiences means that he was not as effective as possible with either.

Another major point in which Campbell failed in audience adaptation was in his use of language. He was a highly educated man. His study of languages especially gave him an extensive command of the English language. He allowed his vocabulary to have full play in the statement of all his arguments. For example he used such words as, "cognizance," "opprobium," "encomiums," "eviscerating," "puissant," "menstruums," and "obtunded." While such terms should not give too much difficulty to an educated audience, it is reasonable to assume that many of the average church-going people of Cincinnati did not understand all of them. Also, he tended to employ many technical terms, especially from science and theology, which he never explained, and he brought in many Latin words and phrases. His language may have increased his ethical proof, but it did not increase the intelligibility of his speeches.
Commendable evidences of Campbell's ability to adapt his material to his audience do appear, and a few of them should be noticed. Campbell frequently engaged in repetition and restatement. Rarely was he content to state an argument once, but would repeat it as many as four or five times. For example, when he was explaining the sense of smell, he stated the properties of the sense of smell in general terms, then in a more specific one, gave an example, and then restated the idea in different words. The audience may not have been able to follow Campbell through some of his explanations, but before he left an argument they understood his position.

Another effective technique which Campbell employed was the application of epigrams or pithy statements to drive home his argument. He was adept at coining such phrases, and they must have helped the audience to remember his points. For example, he said: "No man can speak of the future, pretending to a certain knowledge but the Christian. Here the infidel's candle goes out, and except he obtains some oil from the lamps of revelation, he must continue in perpetual darkness." While talking on the subject of the purity of Christianity, he said, "A diamond, though found in a bed of mud, is still a

162 Ibid., pp. 143-144.
163 Ibid., p. 275.
diamond, nor can the dirt, which surrounds it, depreciate its value, or destroy its luster." 164 With reference to reason and skepticism he said, "Men do, indeed, talk of reason, and eulogise her, and compare her with Christianity; but I have uniformly remarked that skeptics, after a few compliments to their goddess at the threshold, afterward treat her with great neglect." 165

Campbell also used comparisons, sometimes as supporting material, but more often to make his point vivid and interesting. The following are examples of Campbell's comparisons: "immovable as the rock of Gibraltar," "as foreign to the appropriate subject now before this meeting, as would be the history of a tour in the Ganges," and "But as well might Mr. Owen attempt to fetter the sea, to lock up the winds, to prevent the rising of the sun, as to exile this idea from the human race." Especially did Campbell employ comparisons at the conclusions of an argument, either in the form of a simile, metaphor, or analogy.

Campbell utilized humor to make his subject matter interesting to the audience. As has been pointed out, his major rebuttal technique was *reductio ad absurdum*, and many

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of his rebuttal remarks must have produced laughter. In fact, Mrs. Trollope recorded that at times "he kept the whole audience in a roar of laughter." Campbell had his own brand of humor, which usually consisted in the substitution of a word, in the turn of a phrase, or in an unusual statement of a position. He never brought in humor for its sake, but always applied it to the question at issue.

Closely related to humor was his sarcasm and irony. Campbell could be very cutting at times, and whether he made Owen wince or not, he must have delighted that part of the audience favorable to Christianity. For example, he read of the Epicureans, "Those who embraced the sect of Epicurus the atheist, did not become debauchees, because they had embraced the doctrines of Epicurus, they only embraced the doctrines of Epicurus . . . because they were debauchees." After reading this passage, Campbell remarked, "High encomiums on atheism!" In one speech Owen talked about his "infant" school in New Lanark. He said, "Such qualifications as these, will make angels of any children, except their wings; but these I cannot promise, for they have not yet been invented for them."

166 Trollope, op. cit., p. 128.
167 Campbell-Owen Debate, p. 64.
168 Ibid., p. 84.
In his next speech Campbell said that Owen had been off the subject, and commented that he could not answer, "unless I were to speak of angelic infants, with, or without wings." Campbell had had much practice in the use of sarcasm and irony in *The Christian Baptist*, and the carry-ever is evident in the debate.

Campbell stirred the audience with occasional flights of eloquence. There are many "purple patches" where he used picturesque and emotional words to move the audience. The following passage is an example of his ability in this regard:

Angels read men, and by and by men will read angels, to learn the Deity. In the rational delights and entertainments of heaven you and they will read each other. Gabriel will tell you what were his emotions when first he saw the sun open his eyes and smile upon the new-born earth; what he thought when he shut up Noah in the ark, and opened the windows of heaven and the fountains of the deep. Yes, Raphael will tell you with what astonishment he saw Eve put forth her hand to the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Gabriel will relate his joy when he saw the rainbow of peace span the vault of heaven in token of no more deluge. He will give you to know what were his emotions when sent to salute the mother of our Lord; and all the multitude will rehearse the song they sung the night they visited the shepherds of Bethlehem. . . .

Perhaps such passages explain why one person who attended the debate wrote that all of the audience was in tears.

171 *Rogers, op. cit.*, p. 47.
Summary. Most of the familiar means of adapting material to the audience can be found in Campbell's efforts. He frequently repeated and re-stated arguments, made a point clear at the end by comparisons, coined pithy statements, used satire, and by occasional oratorical flights stirred the emotions of his audience. He can be criticized for concentrating upon two audiences, for his use of pedantic rather than familiar language, and the extensive employment of technical terms and Latin words. During the discussion, Campbell was straightforward and direct. He must not have failed in audience adaptation, for the building was filled on each of the seven days. The printed record had extensive circulation both in this country and England, the latest edition being printed in 1946.
CHAPTER IV

THE PURCELL DEBATE

After the Owen debate, Campbell continued his theological arguments; the crystallization of denominational antagonism against him and his followers resulted in many opportunities to debate. By 1830, all who had accepted Campbell's views were forced to withdraw from the churches with which they had been affiliated, and to form a separate religious communion. A contemporary said of Campbell, "He had waged war with the clergy, and he will bring them all down on his head, the Baptists in particular."¹ This prophecy and the attitude of the Baptists is reflected in the following excerpt from the Franklin Baptist Association of Kentucky.

Before Alexander Campbell visited Kentucky, you were in harmony and peace; you heard but the one gospel, and knew only one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. . . . Have not those happy days gone by? In place of preaching, you now hear your church covenants ridiculed; your faith, as registered upon your church books, is denounced, and you yourselves are traduced. . . . The fell spirit of discord stalks, in open day, through families, neighborhoods and churches. If you would protect yourselves as churches, make no compromise with error -- mark them who cause division, and divest yourself of the last vestige of Campbellism. As an Association, we shall esteem it our duty to drop correspondence with any and every association or

¹ Quoted in, A. S. Hayden, Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve Ohio (Cincinnati, 1875), p. 80.
church where this heresy is tolerated. Those who say they are no Campbellites, and yet countenance and circulate his little pamphlets, are insincere—they are to be avoided.2

Campbell continued to travel extensively and to preach, often three times a day. After each sermon, he followed the practice of having a question period during which anyone who objected to what he had said was allowed to speak or to ask a question. Campbell then answered but rarely entered into an extended discussion.3

As a result he received many challenges for public controversies. Campbell's answer to John Bryce, a Baptist preacher of Georgetown, Kentucky, who in March, 1831, had asked for a debate is interesting because it gives his attitude toward public discussion:

I cannot accept the challenge of Mr. John Bryce for the following reasons:

1. I have never yet consented to meet any gentleman in public or private discussion for the purpose of affording him an opportunity of exculpating himself from the charge of cowardice, which is the only reason assigned by Mr. Bryce for soliciting a public discussion. He issues the above challenge to prove that he is no coward; he has, then, gained his object, unless some virtuoso should allege that he knew full well that it would never be accepted.

2. In the second place, I cannot consent to contend with any man who writes English which I cannot parse;

2 John Augustus Williams, Life of Elder John Smith (St. Louis, 1874), pp. 347-348.

and I must confess that all the rules of the English Syntax will not enable me to parse even the words of the challenge.

3. The utility of public discussion depends much upon the confidence the people have in the parties who engage in it. My apprehensions in this case are, that the discomfiture of my friend Bryce would not satisfy his friends, for they would say they had a hundred men still, superior to him; and that the discussion would not be of sufficient interest to have it published by a disinterested person.

4. My views on that subject are already before the public in writing. They are now public property. If Mr. Bryce thinks he can prove them fallacious, let him do so by the press. We will then attend to him according to his merit.

5. But good as these reasons appear to me, provided the Opposition in Kentucky will select Mr. John Bryce, or any other person, to appear for them as the defender of their faith; and provided they will find a stenographer, of good character, impartial and capable, who will on his own account, and for his own benefit, give the discussion to the public, I will consent to meet him on some definite propositions including the points at issue. For Mr. Bryce, as a gentleman of good temper, and of very courteous demeanor, I entertain a very high opinion, and cannot but regret that the mould into which his mind has been cast so eminently disqualifies him for the investigation of any question to be decided by authority of the New Testament.

Campbell sought opportunities for discussing his views in public, especially before preachers. His reports often mentioned the number of preachers present. Reverend Alfred Brunson, an important Methodist preacher of the day, relates an incident which reflects the extent to which

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4 Millennial Harbinger, II (1831), 189.
5 Millennial Harbinger, II (1831), 190.
Campbell went to reach ministerial audiences. In writing of the Methodist Conference which met in Wellsburg, Virginia, Brunson reports:

In two days after our conference began its session in Wellsburg, eight miles from Campbell's residence, he came into the place and invited the Conference to hear him, alleging that he perceived that some of our ministers did not rightly understand his doctrines, and he wished to have an opportunity to explain himself. Though it came to us in Conference, in his own handwriting, and in the name of an invitation, yet at the same time he had posters stuck up all around town in the nature of a challenge to the Conference.

When he was not permitted to speak before the Methodist Conference, Campbell hired a public building and spoke daily while the sessions were in progress.

Reverend Brunson commented:

In his movements in this matter, Campbell evinced that he possesses one trait of character, at least known in western parlance as the "big head." He, or any other man, must think he is of great consequence, to suppose that a Conference of seventy or eighty ministers, who had met to transact their annual business, would leave it to listen to his explanation of his doctrine, because the arguments of one of the humblest of the body had upset the theory upon which he was misleading his followers.

During the interval between the Owen and Purcell Debate, Campbell engaged in three minor religious discussions.

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6 Alfred Brunson, A Western Pioneer: or, Incidents of the Life and Times of Rev. Alfred Brunson, A.M.; D.D. Embracing a Period of Over Seventy Years, Written by Himself (Cincinnati, 1872), I, 405.

7 Ibid., I, 406.
The first was with the Rev. Obadiah Jennings, Presbyterian minister, at Nashville, Tennessee, in 1831. While Campbell was preaching there, Rev. Jennings objected to some of the statements in one of his sermons. As a result, a debate was held on December 25, 26, and 27. The controversy involved the type of faith which saves. This contest excited great attention in Nashville. Afterward Obadiah Jennings wrote a report for publication. Robert Richardson, Campbell's friend and biographer, refers to it as the "pretended report of the debate."9

In 1835, Campbell had a written debate with Mr. R. W. Meredith, who at the time was editor of the Baptist Interpreter, a North Carolina publication. Meredith had written a series of articles against Campbell's views on baptism and on the remission of sins, offering Campbell "page for page to answer. Campbell immediately accepted, and the resulting discussion was published in the Millennial Harbinger and the Baptist Interpreter.

The third debate was with Dr. Samuel Underhill, a skeptic of Cleveland, Ohio, in June of 1836. After delivering four lectures on the truth of Christianity,

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8 For a complete account see The Millennial Harbinger, II (1831), 109-120.

9 Robert Richardson, Memoirs of Alexander Campbell (Cincinnati, 1879), II, 342.
Campbell had invited all doubters to state publicly their objections. As a result he arranged a debate with Dr. Samuel Underhill who was selected by a local organization as a fitting opponent. Before the Owen debate, Campbell had refused to meet Underhill, because he felt him unqualified, but apparently he had changed his views. On the outcome of the debate, Tolbert Panning, who was traveling with Campbell, commented as follows: "There was great interest manifested by the citizens generally. All sects were pleased, and I doubt not infidelity received a wound which it cannot survive in this city." 10

In the seven year period after the Owen debate, Cincinnati had made much progress. By 1836 it had a right to the title "Queen City of the West," with a population of approximately 30,000. 11 Forty-five teachers were employed in the public schools; 12 four daily newspapers were published; and five institutions of higher learning were operating. Charles F. Hoffman, a New Yorker, who visited the city in 1834, described it as follows:


11 Annual Report of the Trustees and Visitors of Common Schools to the City of Cincinnati (Cincinnati, 1836), p. 4.

12 Ibid., p. 10.
The streets are broad, occasionally lined with trees, and generally well built of brick, though there are some pretty churches and noble private dwellings of cut stone and of stucco.13

Religion occupied an important place in the lives of the people of Cincinnati. William Cooper Howells, an Ohio citizen of this period, observed, "The public mind was more largely employed with religious subjects than it was in later years, and it was the subject and object of nearly all public meetings to consider religion in some of its relations."14 Likewise, Caleb Atwater stated, "The people of the east need not mourn over our destitute state as to preaching, because we have ten sermons to their one, in proportion to our numbers."15 With reference to the type of preaching, he also commented, "As to talent and learning, we have a good degree of them in the pulpit . . . On the whole, we feel quite proud of our ministers as such, as Christians, as citizens, and as men."16

There was no dominant sect in Cincinnati, as in many of the communities along the Atlantic coast, for all the people, to use an expression of that day, "came from


14 William Cooper Howells, Recollections of Life in Ohio, From 1813 to 1840 (Cincinnati, 1895), p. 120.


16 Ibid., p. 306.
some place or another." There resulted, quite naturally, a number of denominations. In 1836 there were approximately forty churches, representing about twenty religious communions.¹⁷

Since his debate with Robert Owen, Campbell had often visited Cincinnati. Bethany, the Campbell homestead was in the panhandle of western Virginia, between Ohio and Pennsylvania, a short distance away. By 1836 as a result of the Restoration Movement, at least two churches in the city had been organized.¹⁸ Campbell had frequently occupied these pulpits. The *Daily Gazette*, edited by Charles Hammond, in an article dated February 7, 1837, criticized Campbell generally, but stated, "Still, however, he retained amongst us a number of ardent, respectable supporters."¹⁹

Campbell's activities in Cincinnati were not confined to the pulpit, for he was an active member of what was known as the College of Teachers; the official name of which was the Western Literary Institute and College of

¹⁸ Charles Cist, comp., *Cincinnati Directory for the Year 1842* (Cincinnati, 1842), X-XI.
¹⁹ Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, February 7, 1837.
Professional Teachers. His activities in the meeting of October 3, 1836, show his position in this organization. He was one of the vice-presidents, held a life

20 It was established in 1831, growing out of the Western Academic Institute, which was founded in 1829 by Albert Picker and Alexander Kinmont. If the date 1829 can be taken as the beginning of the College of Teachers, it was the earliest American educational association. (Paul Monroe, ed., A Cyclopedia of Education New York, 1913, V. 766). It drew members largely from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky, with scattered membership in many other states. Meetings were held each October in Cincinnati, and lasted from three to five days. Formal lectures as well as much informal discussion on the subject of education were given at these sessions. The purpose of the organization was "to remedy the defects in the prevailing systems and modes of instruction, and to elevate the character and profession of teachers." (Cincinnati Western Christian Advocate, September 9, 1836.) Of the two hundred members in 1836, the majority was engaged in teaching, but many clergymen and physicians held membership. (D. L. Talbot, ed., Transactions of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers (Cincinnati, 1837), pp. 2-26.) E. D. Mansfield, a Cincinnati citizen of that period, said, perhaps a little boastfully, "I doubt whether in any one association to promote the cause of education, there was ever in any one space of time concentrated in this country a larger measure of talent, information and zeal." (E. D. Mansfield, Personal Reminiscences, Social, Political and Literary, with Sketches of Many Noted People, 1805-1843 (Cincinnati, 1879), p. 376.) Even discounting such flattering statements, the organization can still be regarded as one of importance, and much of the educational development in the West was due to the influence of the College of Teachers.
membership, was a member of four committees, opened the session with prayer, presented one of the formal lectures, engaged in four of the informal discussions, and on request delivered an extemporaneous speech to close the meeting.21

BACKGROUND OF THE DEBATE

The above-mentioned meeting assumed additional importance because it became the inciting incident for the Campbell-Purcell Debate. After the opening address by Senator Albert Picket, president of the organization, the Reverend Joshua L. Wilson, who had been minister of the First Presbyterian Church for forty years, delivered an address, in which he stressed the desirability and practicality of universal education. In the last of his speech, he mentioned that the English translation of the Bible contained "the best system of universal instruction," and recommended it as a text-book for public schools on the basis that it would help bring "all nations to one language and one religion."22

That evening the Reverend John Baptist Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati, delivered a lecture, "On The Philosophy

21 Talbot, op. cit., p. 63.
22 Talbot, op. cit., p. 63.
of the Mind." Before his lecture proper, he expressed strong exceptions to some of Wilson's statements. Campbell described Purcell's remarks as a "tirade against the Protestant modes of teaching and against Protestant influence upon the community, and against allowing the Bible to be used in Schools." In reply, Purcell said that he only raised the question as to the translation of the Bible to be used, and that he was attempting to banish sectarianism from the college. Concerning this event, the minutes of the College of Teachers record, "there was an animated discussion, on the subject of the Lecture delivered in the forenoon, with particular reference to the introduction of the Bible into Schools, in which the Reverend Dr. J. L. Wilson, Alexander Campbell, and Bishop J. B. Purcell, and Alexander Kinmont took part."

Two days later, October 5, Campbell delivered an address "On The Importance of Uniting the Moral With the Intellectual Culture of the Mind," a subject which had been assigned him the preceding May. By way of introduction, he argued that man should think for himself.

24 Cincinnati Daily Gazette, January 30, 1837.
26 Alexander Campbell, Popular Lectures and Addresses (Cincinnati, 1863), p. 483.
pointing to the Protestant Reformation as one of the factors in the development of freedom of thought. Campbell stated specifically:

Happy is it, then for the general interests of all science, and of all society, that when men begin to think and reason and decide for themselves, on any one subject, unrestrained by the prescriptions, and unwed by the authority of the past ages, it is not within their own power, nor within the grasp of any extrinsic authority on earth, to restrain their speculations, or to confine them to that one subject, whatever it may be, which happened first to arouse their minds from the repose of unthinking acquiescence, and to break the spell of implicit resignation to the reputed sages of ancient times. Hence, the impetus given to the human mind by the Protestant Reformation, extends into every science, into every art, into all the business of life, and continues with increased and increasing energy, to consume and waste all the influence of every existing institution, law, and custom, not founded upon eternal truth, and the immutable and invincible nature of things.27

In the body of the speech, Campbell developed the idea that intellectual instruction without moral teaching will not constitute adequate education. He affirmed that moral excellence is greater and more to be wished than intellectual superiority. The speech was pronounced by the Daily Gazette as "one of his best efforts."28 Campbell later wrote that he did not think any American Roman Catholic would object to anything he had said.29 He further

27 Talbot, op. cit., p. 483.
28 Cincinnati Daily Gazette, January 27, 1837.
29 Campbell, Popular Lectures and Addresses, p. 483.
stated, "I did not intend it; nor, in my judgment, was it either necessary or expedient for any of that priesthood to take exceptions at a single reference to the Protestant Reformation in its literary bearings and influence." 30

Bishop Purcell did object, however, to the statements about the Protestant Reformation. On Thursday afternoon, October 6, before the College of Teachers, Purcell challenged some of Campbell's statements. 31 He denied any beneficial results from the Reformation and stated that it had been the cause of contention and infidelity in the world. Since it was against the rules of the College to discuss religion, Campbell defended therefore, only his assertions with reference to education and the Reformation. After the meeting, he informed Purcell that he would welcome a debate on the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism. Purcell expressed his approval of public discussion, but he did not commit himself as to Campbell's offer. Campbell announced that he would speak on the subject of the Protestant Reformation the following Monday night, October 10, at the Sycamore Meeting House, a Church of Christ.

30 Ibid.

31 Richardson, Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, II, 422.
At the appointed time, Campbell delivered his speech, which was received with "thrilling interest" by the people of Cincinnati. Bishop Purcell, present on the occasion, when given an opportunity to reply, declined to comment. The following evening, October 11, at the Syenore Meeting House, he did speak against the Protestant Reformation, especially the work of Martin Luther. Campbell again proposed a formal debate, but Purcell declined. Then the next evening Campbell spoke again on the Reformation at the Wesley Chapel. At the conclusion of his address, he gave nine propositions which he would defend against Bishop Purcell or "any other competent prelate of the Roman persuasion." The courage with which he presented the propositions may be inferred from his statement, "Our confidence in Protestant principles is such as to banish all fear of the issue of meeting any prelate of the East or West on any of the propositions which have already been most respectively submitted."  

32 Cincinnati Western Christian Advocate, December 23, 1836.
33 Richardson, op. cit., II, 324.
34 Campbell, Popular Lectures and Addresses, p. 483.
35 Ibid.
The speeches of Campbell and Purcell created great interest. On each occasion they had spoken to crowded houses, made up of both Protestants and Catholics. On Thursday, October 13, Campbell received the following letter signed by sixty citizens of Cincinnati:

The undersigned, citizens of Cincinnati, having listened with great pleasure to your exposure and illustrations of the absurd claims and usages of the Roman Catholic Church, would respectfully and earnestly request you to proceed immediately before this community the . . . propositions announced at the close of your lecture last evening.

The following postscript was added, "One-half of the city could be obtained would time permit. Fearing your hasty departure induces the above persons to hand it in without delay."

Pressing duties at Bethany called Campbell home before he had received a reply from Purcell. However, because of the petition and the numerous personal requests for a discussion of the propositions, Campbell agreed that upon his return in January, 1837, to speak on the subjects suggested, even if no opponent came forward. It was widely believed that Purcell would accept the challenge, for on October 29, 1836, The Baptist Banner, a

36 Cincinnati Daily Gazette, February 7, 1837.
37 Richardson, op. cit., II, 423-424.
38 Cincinnati Daily Gazette, February 7, 1837.
strong anti-Campbell paper, printed the following notice:

Mr. A. Campbell is likely to have a logomachic tilt in Cincinnati with some Catholic priest. He has thrown the gauntlet, and intends, if none of the Roman clergy take it up, to deliver sundry lectures upon Catholicism, about the commencement of the ensuing year. . . . it is to be regretted that he had not all along been engaged in some such work, instead of the ignoble one of sowing discord among brethren, and in doing nothing but marring the happiness of communities and churches.39

Campbell's eagerness to participate in a debate is reflected in his letter, which appeared in the Western Christian Advocate November 24, 1836.

We have made our arrangements, all things concurring, to be at Cincinnati in the beginning of the second week in January next. We hope that our Roman Catholic friends, who have avowed their regard for free discussion and who have so boldly and wantonly impugned protestant principles, will then and there be in readiness to sustain their allegations, or to dispute the propositions we have submitted to their consideration. In case of a failure of their part, we shall, on Tuesday the 10th of January, either by day or by night, as the friends of the discussion may decide, commence an investigation of the claims and pretensions of popery in defence of our propositions already offered.40

Such notices had the desired effect, for the Daily Gazette carried the report that on December 19, 1836, Purcell had agreed to "accept the gauntlet of a public debate thrown by Alexander Campbell."41

39 Shelbyville, Kentucky, The Baptist Banner, October 29, 1836.
40 Cincinnati Western Christian Advocate, November 24, 1836.
41 Cincinnati Daily Gazette, December 19, 1836.
Campbell secured an able opponent in Purcell. Aside from John Hughes, Purcell had become probably the most influential figure in the American Catholic Church, and probably no American bishop was better known at Rome.  He had been born February 26, 1800, in the town of Mellow, County Cork, Ireland. In spite of the poverty of his parents, he was able to get an excellent classical training at the local St. Patrick's College without expense. At eighteen he came to America, hoping to find means by which he could complete his education. Because of his previous classical training, he was able to qualify for a teacher's certificate at Asbury College in Baltimore. After about one year as a private tutor, he received a scholarship to Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, where he studied and received his tonsure and minor orders for the priesthood. On March 1, 1824, he sailed for Europe to complete his studies in Paris, remaining there until his ordination, May 26, 1826.  

Upon his return to the United States, Purcell became a professor in St. Mary's Seminary, and subsequently president of the institution. In 1833, he was appointed


Bishop of the Cincinnati Diocese. He was described as being "untiring in his labor, preaching and giving lectures, and writing articles." The "little bishop," as he sometimes called himself, had a fine reputation as a theologian and a scholar. That he was somewhat of a controversialist can be seen not only in the Campbell debate, but from the tone of many of his articles in the Daily Gazette and in The Catholic Telegraph. In his later years, he participated in debates with the Reverend Thomas Vickers, a Congregationalist minister, the Reverend A. D. Mayo, a Unitarian clergyman, and the Reverend N. L. Rice, who was Campbell's last opponent.

Campbell arrived in Cincinnati January 11, 1837. The Ohio River having become impassable because of ice, he described the journey as "sometimes on foot, sometimes on a sleigh, and finally by the mail stage." On the day that he arrived in Cincinnati he addressed a letter to Bishop Purcell in which he said:

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44 Charles G. Herbermann, ed., The Catholic Encyclopedia, (Albany, 1911), XII, 570. When Ohio was made an archbishopric in 1850, Purcell was made archbishop, which position he held until his death July 4, 1883.
45 Ibid.
46 Henry Howe, Historical Collections of Ohio (Norwalk, Ohio, 1896), I, 340.
47 Lamott, op. cit., p. 83. Apparently none of these debates were published.
48 Campbell-Purcell Debate, v.
I received either from you or some of my friends, a copy of the Daily Gazette. . . . intimating your fixed purpose of meeting me in a public discussion . . . of the points at issue between Roman Catholics and Protestants. This, together with your former declaration in favor of full and free discussion, is not only in good keeping with the spirit of the age, and the genius of our institutions, but fully indicative of a becoming confidence and sincerity in your own cause. This frank and manly course, permit me to add, greatly heightens my esteem for you.

Now sir, that I am on the premises I take the earliest opportunity of informing you of my arrival, and of requesting you to name the time and place in which it may be most convenient for you to meet me for the purpose of arranging the preliminaries.49

Campbell and Purcell met immediately and decided upon the rules of the debate and the questions to be discussed. They agreed that the debate should take place in the Sycamore Street Meeting House, beginning on Friday, January 13, and last seven days exclusive of Sunday. There were to be two sessions each day, one in the morning from nine-thirty until twelve-thirty, and one each afternoon from three until five. In the morning each speaker was to have an hour's rebuttal; in the afternoon each was to have two thirty-minute periods in which to present his ideas. Campbell was designated as the affirmative speaker.

49 Ibid.
They further agreed that "the copyright of the Discussion shall be sold to some bookseller, who shall have it taken down by a stenographer," and that the profit from the sale of the book should be divided between two public charities to be selected by the speakers. The discussion was to be under the direction of five moderators. Each of the debaters selected two, and the four selected a fifth.50

The nine propositions which Campbell had submitted before leaving Cincinnati in the autumn became the questions for discussion. In order, however, to have a full discussion of the subject in seven days, Campbell reduced, or rather, as he said, "engrossed the nine into . . . seven."51 The propositions were to be discussed in the following order:

1. The Roman Catholic Institution, sometimes called the "Holy, Apostolic, Catholic Church," is not now, nor was she ever, catholic, apostolic, or holy; but is a sect in the fair import of that word, older than any other sect now existing, not the "Mother and Mistress of all Churches," but an apostasy from the only true, holy, apostolic and catholic church of Christ.

2. Her notion of apostolic succession is without any foundation in the Bible, in reason, or in fact; an imposition of the most injurious consequences, built upon unscriptural and anti-scriptural traditions, resting wholly upon the opinions of interested and fallible men.

50 Cincinnati Cross and Baptist Journal, January 13, 1837.

51 Cincinnati Daily Gazette, January 13, 1837.
3. She is not uniform in her faith, or united in her members, but mutable and fallible, as any other sect of philosophy or religion -- Jewish, Turkish, or Christian -- a confederation of sects with a politico-ecclesiastic head.

4. She is the "Babylon" of John, the "Man of Sin" of Paul, and the Empire of the "Youngest Horn" of Daniel's Sea Monster.

5. Her notion of purgatory, indulgences, auricular confession, remission of sins, transubstantiation, supererogation, &c., essential elements of her system, are immoral in their tendency, and injurious to the well-being of society, religious and political.

6. Notwithstanding her pretensions to have given us the Bible, and faith in it, we are perfectly independent of her for our knowledge of that book, and its evidence of a divine original.

7. The Roman Catholic religion, if infallible and unsusceptible of reformation, as alleged, is essentially anti-American, being opposed to the genius of all free institutions, and positively subversive of them, opposing the general reading of the scriptures, and the diffusion of useful knowledge among the whole community, so essential to liberty and the permanency of good government.52

It is obvious that Campbell worded all of the propositions with great care. Later he wrote, "Everything in debate depends first upon the choice of appropriate and definite terms in the proposition to be discussed, and next is the phraseology . . . Unless we are select, judicious, and scriptural in this matter, public discussions are a real injury to the cause."53 He added, "and even when the terms

52 Ibid.

53 Millennial Harbinger, New Series, VI (1842), 447.
are select, all depends upon the Christian spirit and demeanor of the parties, so far as success is to be expected or realized."\(^{54}\)

In spite of Campbell's sound views concerning debate propositions, those which he framed for this discussion do not meet the requirements given by standard modern authors. It is true they were debatable and that they stated fairly the differences between Catholicism and Protestantism. Yet, they were too long and complex, and in some instances they overlapped. Purcell exaggerated but little when he said that had Campbell "compressed his first three propositions into one he would have greatly abridged his own labor and saved this audience and myself much loss of time."\(^{55}\) Such expressions as "most injurious consequences," "immoral," and "pretensions" slanted them toward the affirmative and tended to confuse the real issues by creating prejudice. A good debate proposition should embody one central idea, but some of Campbell's contained five. As a result, some of them were not discussed or were only lightly touched upon. The propositions, however, did not cause confusion as in the Owen debate, because Campbell assumed the burden of proof

\(^{54}\) *Millennial Harbinger*, New Series, VI (1842), 447.

\(^{55}\) *Campbell-Purcell Debate*, p. 70.
and created issues which Purcell was willing to debate.

William Disney was selected to serve as the chairman. The other moderators were Samuel Lewis, Thomas J. Briggs, John Rogers, and J. W. Platt. The following-named duties of the moderators were plainly set forth in the fifth rule for the discussion: "The duties of the Moderators shall be to preserve order in the assembly, and to keep the parties to the question."56 The moderators had little to do, however, for they called each speaker to order only once.

At every session, the Sycamore Street Meeting House was filled to capacity.57 On the first day, only those who had arrived at least an hour early were able to obtain seats, and this continued to be the situation both at morning and afternoon meetings.58 Newspapers reports emphasised the size of the immediate audiences. The editor of the Daily Gazette said of the attendance on Monday, "The auditory, at the grand debate, was the largest that had yet appeared. So heavy was the pressure, especially in the galleries, that I could not help an inquiry, in my own mind, as to the strength of the

56 Cincinnati Daily Whig, January 13, 14, 1837.
57 Cincinnati Whig and Intelligencer, January 27, 1837.
58 Cincinnati Western Christian Advocate, January 27, 1837.
The Friday attendance was described as "more than usually crowded." At the first session of the debate, Samuel Lewis, one of the moderators, asked the audience to refrain from any emotional demonstrations, and apparently this injunction was heeded, for one of the Cincinnati papers stated, "excellent behaviour was manifested by all present." Another paper, commenting on the first day of the debate, said, "the audience was large, composed of men and women, who were all attentive and apparently deeply interested."

It is difficult because of the lack of evidence to draw valid conclusions as to the nature of the audience. James O. Birney said, however, that a large number of the worthy and intelligent citizens of Cincinnati who had requested the debate were in daily attendance. Protestants and Catholics were also well represented in the audience; The Cross and Baptist Journal said the debate "was listened to with unprecedented interest, during five hours of each day. Both parties, Protestants and Catholics,
had full confidence in their champion."64

The debate was the chief topic of conversation in Cincinnati.65 Interest, however, was not confined to "the Queen City," because Charles Hammond, editor of the Daily Gazette, wrote, "Our exchange papers show that 'the Grand Debate' had excited a good deal of attention throughout the country."66 He gave an excerpt from a paper in Richmond, Virginia, and later one from New Haven, Connecticut.67 The published volume of the debate appeared on March 24, 1837, and the demand for it was so great that by May 25, the fourth edition was being printed.68 Within one year, almost fifteen thousand copies had been sold.69

ANALYSIS

In his first speech, Campbell stated that he was defending the great cardinal doctrines of Protestantism and not advocating the particular principles of any one

64. The Cross and Baptist Journal, February 24, 1837.
65. Cincinnati Daily Gazette, January 24, 1837.
66. Ibid., February 14, 1837.
67. Ibid., February 24, 1837.
68. Lamott, op. cit., p. 79.
The latter part of his statement was true, because he did not discuss individual Protestant doctrines; in fact, he did not talk of Protestant teachings at all. Throughout the debate, he remained on the offensive, and the only defense he made of Protestantism was his attack on Catholicism. At times Purcell attempted to force him to justify certain Protestant positions. In such instances Campbell usually gave only brief answers, and then added something such as the following:

When arranging the preliminaries as to the mode in which this discussion was to be conducted, the gentleman perseveringly insisted that I should lead the way, commencing every session; and that, whether the propositions were affirmative or negative, he must always respond. . . . If, however, he sincerely dislikes the arrangement, I am willing to alter it, and change places with him to-morrow. The affirmative should, in all right, and by universal usage, open, and the respondent follow, in debate.71

In this procedure Campbell was justified, because the debate propositions were not worded in terms of Protestantism but stated Catholic beliefs and practices. As has been pointed out, Campbell was in most of the discussion in the position of affirming a negative; but as this was the agreement, he was warranted in the course which he pursued. Be that as it may, Campbell kept the discussion focused upon Catholic doctrine and practices.

70 The Campbell-Purcell Debate, p. 9.
71 Ibid., p. 81.
Campbell recognized the importance of defining the terms of the propositions, and his statement as to the necessity of definition is similar to the one found in the Owen debate. He said: "most controversies are mere logomachies, and that perspicuous and precise definitions would settle a great number of them cannot be doubted." Yet Campbell attempted to define the terms in only two of the propositions, and his explanations then were merely restatements of the questions. Fortunately, there was no disagreement between the speakers on the meaning of terms; therefore little confusion resulted. Members of the audience not familiar with Catholic doctrine must have had difficulty in following some portions of the debate.

In spite of overlapping propositions, and of Campbell's failure to define terms, the clash was distinct. This can be attributed to the fact that Campbell selected fundamental issues, and both speakers debated them. Campbell did not formally exclude irrelevant material, but his presentation of issues clearly stated the differences in the two positions. He exhibited skill in adducing the following eight issues:

1. Did Christ create the office of pope?

2. If the office were created, was the Apostle Peter the first pope?

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Ibid., p. 201.
3. If Peter was the first pope, is it possible for others to succeed to the office?

4. Is the Catholic church more united than the Protestant churches?

5. Are Catholic doctrines taught by the Bible?

6. Is the destruction of the Catholic church prophesied by the Bible?

7. Did the Catholic church give the Bible to the world?

8. Is the Catholic church anti-American?

To all of these issues, Campbell answered "yes" and Purcell "no." Purcell must have considered these the correct issues, for he accepted them without complaining.

Campbell went to unusual pains in stating the issues. At the beginning of each proposition, he drew the issues and gave his reason for so doing. Also, often in the middle of a speech, he again pointed up the issue. Campbell did select the significant points of difference between Protestantism and Catholicism. His analysis followed more or less a chronological pattern. Almost half of the discussion was centered around the office of pope, which both speakers believed to be fundamental in the debate.

Summary. There were instances when Campbell and Purcell wandered off the subject. At times irrelevant matter was amplified, but in the main the discussion was centered on Campbell's eight issues. Campbell was on the offensive, but he neither defined terms nor formally
excluded irrelevant matter in his analysis. Yet the clash was clear, for he selected fundamental, debatable issues which Purcell accepted.

ORGANIZATION

In his first speech, Campbell brought forth little introductory material. He attempted only to prove that he did not originate the discussion. After the moderators called him to order for being off of the subject, he immediately began his first argument on the proposition. In reality, Campbell did not have an introduction to the seven days' debate. In contrast to his practice in the Owen discussion in which he had a carefully prepared introduction Campbell made no attempt to catch the attention of the audience nor to prepare them for his arguments.

Likewise, at the end of the debate, Campbell employed no conclusion. He intended to summarize his arguments, but did not do so. Instead, he said: "I proceed, therefore, not to recapitulate my arguments, as I expected we both would have done in our last speeches; but to brush the dust off a few of the prominent points, crowded together in this last effort."74 In spite of Campbell's

73 Campbell-Purcell Debate, p. 10.
74 Ibid., p. 438.
explanation, he was probably not justified in omitting a summary of his arguments. Neither was Purcell to blame, because Campbell should have "let the dust remain" and summarized his case. As it was, Campbell closed the entire debate with a refutation of one of Purcell's minor arguments.

Aside from a weak introduction and an ineffective conclusion, Campbell's organization was clear. His concern with a logical arrangement is shown by the following statement, "I must . . . give as connected a form as circumstances will permit to my argument."75 At times Campbell did wander from the subject, but in the main, he stated the issue at the beginning of each proposition, gave his contentions, and introduced arguments to support them.

Campbell was especially skillful in a logical statement of his arguments. As a rule, he previewed his argument and gave the reason for its importance. Often times, before presenting his evidence, he stated the argument in enthymemmatic form. Then, after the material had been presented, he gave an extended summary of the argument. Of course, Purcell did not agree with his arguments, but because of Campbell's clarity of statement Purcell never misunderstood them.

75 Ibid., p. 81.
If Campbell did not finish an argument in one thirty-minute speech, he would briefly recapitulate before continuing in the next period. He usually employed a topical arrangement of his arguments. It is evident that he had a definite organization in mind before he started the debate.

Campbell's rebuttal technique also helped to give unity to his case. Due to the fact there were no set rebuttal speeches, Campbell sought to insert refutation where he thought it would be the most effective. If Purcell made a strong argument, Campbell attempted to answer it in the first part of his next speech. If he felt, however, that Purcell's objections were not substantial or relevant, he continued with his constructive argument. He revealed his method when he said:

I must however, intimate to him and my audience, my purpose of ceasing to respond to anything he may introduce not in reply to my speeches. If I must lead the way; he must follow. I cannot be decoyed into all the minor and remote points he may originate. I must go on to sustain my propositions, whether he responds to them or not; and shall appropriate half an hour occasionally to such matters in his speeches as may call for my notice.76

Campbell sought to undermine only the central pillars of his opponent's case. Since he had formulated the issues, he replied only to those arguments which he felt

76 Ibid., p. 167.
Campbell's introductory arguments were clear, because they buttressed efforts to strengthen the unity of the case. But he planned arguments to sustain the contentions. In his re-examination he stressed the need to determine from the over-all organization of the case, which determined the over-all organization of the contentions, within which the separate numbers of the arguments on separate issues were relevant. Ignoring that the organization of an introductory issue was always made clear, even though this total organization was not always evident. Moreover Campbell's often employed internal summaries in which he listed numerically the arguments on an issue. Except on the question of the pope, he seldom attempted to relate the issues to each other. This meant that the opponent was not always evident. To give an over-all unity to Campbell's case, to relate all of the arguments to the question involved, this technique helped to sustain the unity of the case. Campbell had a weak introduction and conclusion, which detracted from the over-all organization of his case. Consequently, Campbell had a weak introduction and conclusion, which detracted from the over-all organization of his case.

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were presented in an organized manner. His frequent in-
terval summaries served to point up his system on an
individual issue.

ARGUMENTS

All of Campbell's arguments were based upon bibli-
cal or historical authority. He usually presented his
biblical evidence first, followed by a historical survey.

The first issue in the debate was "Did Christ
create the office of pope?" Campbell contended that the
office was of human origin. His first substantiation
was that the office is not mentioned in the Bible, and
that Scripture actually teaches against "the idea of a
prince among the apostles." His second argument was that
the office of pope did not exist for the first five cen-
turies after Christ. In his third argument, Campbell
undertook to show that the title was first assumed by
John the Faster, Bishop of Constantinople, in the 6th
century. In reply, Purcell contended that Christ had
established the office of pope. He sought to refute
Campbell's arguments by quoting passages of Scripture
which the Catholics said referred to the pope.

The second issue was "If the office were created,
was the Apostle Peter the first pope?" Campbell denied,
of course, that Peter was the first pope. His first
argument, based on the Bible, was to the effect that the honors which came to Peter were not because of office, but because of his age, courage, and zeal. Anyway, "he was a married man with a family." Campbell's second argument was that papal authority is not given in the Bible. He spent much time on this argument, pointing out clearly the office and mission of the High Priest in Old Testament times and of Christ in the New Testament. "Yet," he said, "the pope outrivals the proudest monarch of the east, but his office and power are based upon inference."78 This argument was out of place, because it logically belonged under the first issue. Campbell's third argument was that authentic history did not record Peter as pope. Purcell assumed the negative on all of these arguments, seeking to prove from the Bible and history that Peter was the first pope. Both Campbell and Purcell considered the question of Peter important; they spent more time on it than any other of the issues in the debate.

On the third issue, "If Peter was the first pope, is it possible for others to succeed to the office," Campbell contended that the Bible did not institute apostolic succession. His two arguments were: first, that in the first chapter of Acts the qualifications necessary for apostleship forbid successors, and second, that successors

78 Ibid., p. 119.
must be successors in full. On the second contention, he reasoned that since popes did not have the power of Peter, they therefore could not be his successors. In counter-argument, Purcell argued that the Bible authorized apostolic succession, and that popes could be successors without having all of the power of Peter.

The fourth issue was, "Is the Catholic church more united than the Protestant churches?" In this question, Campbell's position was that the Catholic church is not more united than Protestant churches. His first argument was the Catholics are united by the office of pope, while Protestants are united by acknowledgment of the Bible alone. His second argument was that Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jansenists, Jesuits, et al., were in reality sects in Catholicism corresponding to Lutherans, Calvinists, and Arminians among Protestants. Purcell denied the division among Catholics, and spent the rest of his time pointing to division among Protestants.

The fifth issue was, "Are Catholic doctrines taught by the Bible?" Campbell contended that purgatory, indulgences, auricular confession, and transubstantiation are not taught in the Bible. His method was to take up each of the doctrines and show why he believed they are not taught in the Bible. The main argument which he gave against them was that they annulled the positive divine laws of God. Purcell, on the contrary, sought to prove
that they were authorized by the Bible. Aside from the issue of pope, this question was discussed longer than any of the others.

The sixth issue was, "Is the destruction of the Catholic church prophesied by the Bible?" Campbell, to support his contention that the destruction of the Catholic church was prophesied by the Bible, read statements made by Daniel, John, and Paul. His plan of organization was to read each prophecy, to discuss it, and then list numerically the reasons why he believed it referred to the Roman Catholic church. Purcell at first attempted to ridicule Campbell's arguments and prophecy in general, but when pressed by Campbell, he sought to show that the prophecies referred to Mohammedanism.

The seventh issue was "Did the Catholic church give the Bible to the world?" Campbell contended that the Catholic church was a witness for the authenticity of the Bible, but by no means the only one. Campbell presented the fact that the three earliest copies of the Bible were older than the Catholic church. Purcell contended that the Catholic church existed before the Bible and was responsible for giving the Bible to the world.

The eighth issue was "Is the Catholic church anti-American?" Campbell contended that it was because of its doctrine, introducing three arguments to sustain his belief.
First, he affirmed that the popes exercise temporal power wherever possible; second, that the Catholic church is a persecuting church; third, the Catholic church is opposed to freedom of the press and of speech. Purcell denied all of these arguments. He said that temporal power of the popes was only in the past, the Protestants had also persecuted, and that Catholics were not against freedom, but did not allow immoral or heretical books to be read by members.

Summary. As in the case of the Owen debate, Campbell's arguments were not new. They were the standard ones used against Catholics. Campbell's arguments were comprehensive, and included most of the available attacks against Catholicism. In the main, his arguments followed closely the issues which he had given in the analysis of the propositions. His arguments were clearly stated, and in most instances supported by abundant material. In most cases, Purcell not only accepted Campbell's analysis, but the arguments which he adduced from them. That is, Purcell took the negative to Campbell's arguments. He did not introduce a counter-analysis or counter-arguments.

EVIDENCE

Campbell's evidence in the Purcell debate was not as copious as in the Owen discussion, but he had a
sufficient amount to convince the audience that he had thoroughly prepared for the contest. His evidence mainly consisted of testimony from the Bible and from history. Occasionally he did employ examples and comparisons.

Campbell's main source of evidence was the Bible. This is to be expected, for while he and Purcell differed about translations and certain books, both men agreed that the Bible is the inspired word of God, and therefore the final authority. Campbell displayed fairness in using the Rhemish version. He said:

The version from which I am about to quote was printed in New York, and is certified to correspond exactly, with the Rhemish original, by a number of gentlemen, of the first standing in society. If it differs from any other more authentic copy, I will not rely upon it. I am willing to take whatever bible the gentleman may propose.79

Purcell did not object to the Rhemish version until the last day of the debate. In reply Campbell answered that Purcell had waited too long to disapprove. Nevertheless Campbell attempted to prove by authority that the Rhemish version was an acceptable Roman Catholic Bible.80

Campbell said many times, "Our rule is the Bible alone."81 Frequently he eulogized the Bible. For example,

79 Ibid., p. 15.
80 Ibid., pp. 438-439.
81 Ibid., p. 209.
at the beginning of the discussion he said, "This testimony of Christ will outweigh volumes. Put all the folios and authorities, which the gentleman may bring on one side, and this text of Jesus Christ on the other, and the former, in comparison, will be found light as the chaff which is blown away by a breath." As a rule, the first argument upon every issue was drawn from the Bible. He used forty-one different direct biblical quotations, as well as numerous indirect references and allusions. He exhibited great familiarity with the Scriptures, and skill in analyzing passages. He did not depend upon commentaries for explanations of his passages. Usually he was not satisfied to draw a conclusion from just one citation of biblical authority, but often used two or three references. Also, without exception, he followed his quotation with the exact reference.

Campbell next utilized the writings of the church fathers, decrees of religious councils, and statements of popes as evidence. In fact, historical material was used in greater abundance than the Bible. His main source for this information was the three-volume work of Lewis Ellies Du Pin, a French Catholic clergyman and historian. Du Pin's work, a translation, was a criticism of the

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82 Ibid., p. 15.
writings of the primitive church fathers. Purcell seriously protested against Du Pin as a competent witness upon Catholic history and doctrines:

And here may I observe that I deny the authority of Du Pin to be competent to the settlement of question to be called up for decision in the course of the present controversy. Du Pin was a Pansenist Jansenist, removed from his place of Regius Professor at the Sorbonne for his doctrinal errors, by Louis XIV, to whom Clement XI addressed a brief on this occasion, commending his zeal for the truth.

Campbell answered:

Du Pin was born and educated, lived and died and was buried in the Roman Catholic Church. The gentleman proved, two or three months ago, that general La Fayette was a Roman Catholic because he was baptized in the church of Rome and buried in consecrated ground. Certainly then Du Pin was all this and more! It matters not whether he was a Jansenist or Jesuit. Both orders have been at different times in good and bad repute. . . . But the question is not, was he a good Catholic, but was he an authentic historian?

Purcell replied that he was not. Campbell attempted to prove that he was, but stated:

However, while I wish it to go to the public that bishop Purcell has objected to Du Pin, as an authentic historian, I will distinctly state that I rely upon him in this controversy only so far as he is sustained by other historians and therefore I will only quote him in such matters as I know can be sustained from other sources.

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84 Campbell-Purcell Debate, p. 22.
85 Ibid., p. 33.
86 Ibid., p. 33.
In spite of Purcell, Campbell continued to employ Du Pin, without showing how he was sustained by other historians. Herein it seems that Campbell was at fault. Du Pin was, after all, a secondary source. Campbell's evidence would have been more effective if he had gone to original sources. If church councils and church fathers had been presented in their original form, there could have been no dispute concerning the validity of the evidence.

This same criticism can be leveled against Campbell's use of the testimony of St. Alphonsus de Ligori. De Ligori was the most popular and influential author of devotional works on ethical theology in the Roman Catholic church in the eighteenth century, and Purcell admitted him as an authority. But Campbell took his quotations not from Ligori but from a synopsis of his works translated by Samuel B. Smith, and Purcell usually objected that the quotation was not to be found in the original. Much confusion could have been avoided had Campbell quoted from the primary source.

Two other Catholic sources upon which Campbell relied


88 Samuel B. Smith, A Synopsis of the Moral Theology of the Church of Rome Taken from the Works of St. Ligori and Translated from the Latin into English by Samuel B. Smith, late a Roman Priest (New York, 1836).
were Cardinal Baronius' *Annales Ecclesiastic*,\(^{89}\) and
Cardinal Bellarmine, *Disputationes de Controversiis*\(^{90}\)
These were popular Catholic writers just after the Re-
formation. Campbell quoted them from the original source,
and therefore Purcell did not object to their testimony.

The Protestant sources Campbell relied on most
were George Waddington's *Christian History*,\(^{91}\) and Johann
Moshem's *History of the Christian Church*.\(^{92}\) Also he
often referred to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman
Empire*,\(^{93}\) which could be classed as neither a Protestant
nor a Catholic source. As a rule, before Campbell gave
a quotation from these sources, he said a brief word
about the author, and gave the reference of his extract.
None of his quotations were long and were usually presented
to sustain a statement which he had made. The above-named
sources were all standard authorities.

\(^{89}\) Caesar Baronius, *Annales Ecclesiastic* (Rome,
1588-1607).

\(^{90}\) Robert Frans Romulus Bellarmine, *Disputationes
de Controversiis Christianace Fidei* (Rome, 1581-1593).

\(^{91}\) George Waddington, *History of the Church from
the Earliest Ages to the Reformation* (London, 1836).

\(^{92}\) Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, *History of the Chris-
tian Church* (Frankfutt and Leipsig, 1726-1755).

\(^{93}\) Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and
Fall of the Roman Empire* (London, 1776-1788).
Campbell made effective use of comparison and contrast as forms of support. He drew many comparisons from the field of government. For example, he compared the election of the pope with the selection of the president of the United States, and contrasted clerical courts with the American judiciary. He made contrasts between Pagan Rome and Papal Rome, and compared the Protestant and Catholic attitudes toward the Bible.

Campbell also employed examples as forms of support. For instance, in attempting to prove the fallacy of relying upon tradition as historical fact, he said, "The assertion of my present opponent is worth as much as that of any man who has lived for a thousand years, to prove an event which happened years before he was born." 94 Campbell then mentioned the tradition that St. Patrick sailed to Ireland on a rock. He gave examples of violence in the selection of popes, and of persecution. He drew some of his illustrations from the field of government, but most of them came from history.

Summary. Campbell relied almost exclusively upon the testimony of the Bible and history as the raw material out of which to build and support his argument. He employed comparisons and examples skillfully but much less frequently. In fact, a greater use of them would have added

94 Campbell-Purcell Debate, p. 123.
interest as well as intelligibility to his arguments. Campbell's testimony was drawn from well recognized sources, with Catholic authorities utilized more than Protestant sources. It seems, therefore, that his evidence had the more weight in that he did not employ those who were traditionally and emotionally against Catholicism. Furthermore, Campbell never used testimony sparingly. He was never content to have only one authority. As a rule, this was commendable, but on occasions it must have become burdensome. For example, in his argument that popes have the power from their councils to depose rulers, half of his evidence would have been sufficient, especially since Purcell did not question Campbell's authorities. The presentation of additional material, even though on the subject, served to waste valuable time. However, Campbell never substituted evidence for argument. Purcell often spent half of his speech reading a long statement from a historian or from some authority on the point at issue. Campbell never did this, but employed a number of different short quotations to prove his contention.

Campbell can be severely criticized for quoting the church fathers, the religious councils, the popes and St. de Ligeri through the secondary sources of Du Pin and Smith. This procedure often allowed Purcell to cloud the issue and gave him an unnecessary advantage. Primary sources were available and Campbell should have used them.
Campbell was familiar with the authorities on both sides of the question, and brought to the debate abundant evidence to support his contentions.

ETHICAL AND PATHETIC PROOF

A consideration of Campbell’s personal appeal to the audience requires us to begin somewhat before the debate. Campbell was well known in Cincinnati because of his preaching, lecturing, and publications. At least one monthly magazine was published there which was devoted to the cause for which he was pleading.\(^{95}\) As the defender of Christianity he had debated Robert Owen there in 1829. Since the skeptics were in the minority, this debate had done much to increase his reputation and standing with many of the citizens. Now as "defender of Protestantism" he was acceptable to most non-Catholics of the city. Particularly was this true at the time, because the question of the relation of the Catholic church to the American state was of popular interest. Only three years before, the "Native American Party" had arisen in New York, proclaiming as one of its principle objectives "an abridgment of the rapidly increasing political influence of the papal power in the United States." Samuel F. B. Morse as its candidate for mayor of New York City had polled

\(^{95}\) A. Grisfield, ed., *The Christian Preacher* (Cincinnati, 1830-1840).
about one-fourth of the votes cast in the election.\textsuperscript{96} Also, Lyman Beecher, president of Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, had just published a book, \textit{A Plea for the West},\textsuperscript{97} which was mainly an attack on Catholicism.

Campbell entered the discussion with a reputation as a debater, which Purcell acknowledged.\textsuperscript{98} He was not content, however, to let his reputation and the popularity of his side of the question serve as the complete basis for his personal appeal to the audience. He employed many direct techniques during the debate to increase his ethical appeal.

Throughout the discussion Campbell expressed his belief in the importance of the question and his confidence in the cause for which he was pleading. For example, on one occasion he said:

\begin{quote}
I stand here as a Protestant, not as a Baptist, Methodist, or Episcopalian; but to defend Protestantism. I am not afraid to meet my antagonist on these premises. In advocating the great cardinal principles of Protestantism, I feel that I stand upon a rock. There is nothing in hazard. . . . Can the truth suffer from discussion?\textsuperscript{99}
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{96} Winfred Ernest Garrison, \textit{Religion Follows the Frontier} (New York, 1931), p. 171.
\textsuperscript{97} Lyman Beecher, \textit{A Plea for the West} (Cincinnati, 1835).
\textsuperscript{98} \textit{Campbell-Purcell Debate}, p. 21.
\textsuperscript{99} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 61.
\end{flushright}
Campbell was convinced he was engaging in a righteous cause, and sought always to connect his message with virtue, truth, and honor. Such expressions as the following are characteristic: "I regard this discussion, my friends, as a very serious and important affair, involving in it the very best interests of the whole community... I speak for the great cause of truth."\textsuperscript{100}

Though occasionally critical of Purcell, Campbell sought to make it clear that he had no personal animosity toward him or against any individual Catholic. He said, "No man, in my knowledge, could sustain the Romanist cause better than my learned and ingenious respondent; and if he fails, Roman Catholicism in the West need not look for an abler defendant.\textsuperscript{101} To show that he held no personal bitterness against individual Catholics, Campbell said,

\begin{quote}
We feel the same humanity and benevolence toward Roman Catholics, as men, as to Protestants. We always discriminate between tenets and men, a system or theory, and those who hold it... I oppose his religion, because, I sincerely think it enslaves him, and would enslave me, if it had the power. But in all this there is no hatred to Roman Catholics as men.\textsuperscript{102}
\end{quote}

Moreover, he sought to minimize any personal attacks

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., p. 81.
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., p. 247.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., p. 212.
which were made on him. While it was true that his reputation was excellent, his doctrine was severely criticized. During the first part of the debate, Purcell read an article from the Baptist Banner which was critical of Campbell. When Purcell was called to order by the chairman for reading the article, Campbell interrupted to say that Purcell had read the worst part and should be allowed to read the balance. 103 To other such articles which Purcell read, Campbell repeatedly refused to reply at length.

On one such occasion he responded in the following manner:

Many such a banner was unfurled against Martin Luther, John Calvin, and John Wesley and all reformers; for they were all heretics and controversialists. . . . But what has the Baptist Banner to do with present points at issue. 104

By allowing personal criticisms to be read, and refusing to be thrown off balance by them, Campbell placed himself in the position of one who was persecuted for advocating a righteous cause.

Campbell revealed his keenness of judgment or sagacity by appealing to what is popularly called "common sense." In most instances he not only attempted to refute Catholic doctrines by the Bible, but sought to show they violated human reason. For example, he used many arguments against the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, but

103 Ibid., p. 247.
104 Ibid., p. 73.
basically he appealed to the reason of the audience when he said:

If you believe the priest and receive the bread as flesh, you never after can with reason believe your own sense; for, when, your eyes declare it bread, and your sense of smelling, tasting, feeling, and I might add hearing — all declare that it is still bread and not flesh — If, I say contrary to your own sense, which God has given you as the means of knowledge and certainty, thus implicitly believe the declaration of a priest; you are disqualified for reasoning, for believing the Christian religion, or your own senses on any subject of which they are witnesses. So that it may be truly said, he that believes in transubstantiation, can rationally believe in nothing else. 105

The vast amount of material which he brought forward and his technique in applying it was evidence of Campbell's intellectual integrity and wisdom. Purcell objected to most of his authorities, but Campbell always took pains to show why he believed them correct. In most instances he read the title page of the book from which he quoted, and also listed the outstanding Catholics who endorsed the work. After answering some of Purcell's objections, he dismissed them as he did on one occasion by saying, "There is no authority against the church of Rome — neither Protestant nor Catholic to be believed, if they say anything against her." 106 Perhaps, also the fact that Campbell frequently read quotations in Greek

105 Ibid., p. 350.
106 Ibid., p. 439.
and Latin helped to impress the audience with his wisdom.

**Summary.** Campbell's reputation and the position which he assumed aided his ethical appeal before the debate started. He employed many techniques however to increase his personal appeal to the audience. His attempts to connect his case with truth, his lack of personal bitterness, his appeal to common sense, his appearance as somewhat of a martyr, and the abundance of material to which he referred created the impression that he was a man of character, sagacity, and good will. His straightforward and positive manner must have had a favorable reaction upon the audience. It is significant to note that even Purcell was impressed with his character, for after the debate he wrote:

Campbell was decidedly the fairest man in debate I ever saw, and as fair as you can possibly conceive. He never fought for victory ... He seemed to be always fighting for the truth, or what he believed to be the truth. He never misrepresented his case nor that of his opponent; never tried to hide a weak point; never quibbled ... He came out fairly and squarely ... Rather than force a victory by underhanded or ignoble means, he preferred to encounter defeat. But whenever he fell, he fell like Chevalier Bayard, with honor and a clear conscience.107

**Pathetic Proof.** It is difficult to isolate many extended examples of pathetic proof in Campbell's speeches in the Purcell debate. This is true, in part, because he was not working for any immediate action on the part of

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107 Quoted in Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 152.
the audience. Perhaps his specific purpose, according to the possible demands for action which C. H. Woolbert gives, was to persuade his auditors to "accept this doctrine," "renew your faith," "change your mind," or "reverse your attitude." It is noteworthy that in spite of the strong anti-Catholic feeling of the time, Campbell made no attempts at "rabble reusing." Even though his pathetic appeals are in general subordinated to his logical elements, nevertheless, they are present.

Campbell's dominant appeal in the Owen discussion was the preservation of life. In this debate his basic appeal was to the negative motive of ugliness and displeasure; that is, Campbell sought to picture the Catholic church in terms which would create in the audience a feeling of revulsion. For example in speaking of confession, Campbell asked,

And with what propriety, modesty, piety, males and females, old and young, should mutter their sins and secrets into the ears of any bachelor, priest, or confessor, as if his ears were a common sewer -- or conduit to carry down to oblivion the impurities of mortals. 109

His technique in this regard can be seen in the picture he drew of the doctrine of transubstantiation:


109 Campbell-Purcell Debate, p. 256.
The Messiah is then always suffering, always bleeding, always dying, always expiating sin by the sacrifices of himself; and his people are always literally devouring his flesh! What a picture! I shall turn away from it; for my soul sickens at the thought. 110

Thus Campbell stated every Catholic doctrine in such a way as to make it repulsive to his audience.

He also sought to create a feeling of displeasure by charging that the Catholic church was opposed to morality. For example, he used the writings of St. Liguori to prove that in one way or another every precept in the Ten Commandments could be violated with the approval of the Catholic church. He read, for example, that swearing, nonobservance of the Lord's Day, stealing, lying, gambling, and drunkenness were tolerated. He also contrasted the morality of Catholic countries with that of Protestant countries, much to the discredit of the former. Purcell denied the charges, of course, but Campbell's treatment of them illustrate the device by which he was seeking to make the Catholic church repulsive to the audience.

Campbell also attempted to stir the emotions of the audience by charging the Catholic church with intolerance. He emphasized that the Roman clergy refused to permit the reading of many works of standard Protestant authors. He maintained that the Catholic church considered the members

110 Ibid., p. 351.
of other religious groups as heretics and not fit sub-
jects for heaven. With such expressions as "the colossal
empire of the papacy," "baseless monarchy," and "paragon
of supreme tyranny," he sought to identify the Catholic
church with intolerance.

Closely connected with this mode was Campbell's
appeal to the sense of fear of the audience. He said:

I have no antipathy; but I have my fears. I do
honestly think (and I avow it here, that I may
give my ingenious opponent an opportunity to re-
move the impression if he can), I say, I do sincere-
ly believe and think, that Roman Catholicism in any
country is detrimental to its interests and pros-
perity; and in a republic, directly and positively
tending every moment to its subversion.111

Although he did not dwell extensively upon the inquisition,
he did mention it as well as the massacre of St. Bartholo-
mew's day. He pointed to doctrines, which taught that
it was the duty of Catholics to persecute heretics. He
referred to the Roman church as a "scarlet, crimsoned,
cruel mother."

In the last proposition, Campbell appealed to
love of freedom and patriotism. He spoke of his deep
feeling for America, referring to it as "the last and best
hope of all the oppressed of all nations."112 He made
many statements on the necessity of free press and free

111 Ibid., p. 383.
112 Ibid., p. 442.
speech. Particularly did he stress the need of public education. He commented, "Nothing can preserve our republican institutions but a system of intellectual and moral culture, accessible to every child born upon our soil or brought to our shores." He associated Catholicism with the opposition to religious freedom and civil liberty. In a sweeping generalization he said, "... in all history, civil liberty follows in the wake of religious liberty; inasmuch, that it is almost an oracle of philosophy, that religious liberty is the cause, and political liberty an effect of that cause."114

Summary. Campbell sought to connect his position with the basic attitudes, emotions, and motives of his audience. Since he was attacking Catholicism, most of his pathetic appeals were negative rather than positive. He sought to picture the Roman church in a disagreeable light, to relate it to intolerance, and stir the audience to fear Catholicism. He made positive appeal to the motive of freedom. Campbell's pathetic proof did not dominate, except in the last proposition. As a rule, there was a skillful blending of logical and pathetic proof.

113 Ibid.
114 Ibid., p. 393.
In rebuttal, Campbell revealed a thorough knowledge of both sides of the question. He occasionally presented anticipatory refutation. Much of his rebuttal technique, once the clash was determined, was indirect; he produced arguments to supplant those offered by Purcell. Also he used direct attack upon the authorities and statements which Purcell had used or the interpretations which he had advanced. While much of Campbell's work in rebuttal should be called pure refutation, he also applied many special techniques, such as (1) turning the tables, (2) *reductio ad absurdum*, (3) the use of the dilemma, (4) exposing the inconsistencies, and (5) the method of residues.

Perhaps the special refutation technique, Campbell most frequently employed was that of turning the tables; that is, he took his opponent's argument to prove his own contention. Purcell explained that the injunction, "Call no one father" could not be taken literally. After accepting his explanation, Campbell added that it was a command to call no one father in a religious sense. Many of the scriptural passages which Purcell quoted to prove Peter was pope, Campbell turned to prove that Peter was supreme among the apostles, but not pope. Another example is found in the use of a quotation from Irenaeus, one of
the church fathers. After Purcell employed it as historical evidence to prove that Peter was pope, Campbell utilized the same quotation to establish that for two hundred years after the establishment of the church there was no statement that Peter was pope. Campbell explained that Irenaeus lived two hundred years after Christ, and the church father stated only his belief that Peter was the first pope and not a fact personally known to him.

Campbell also used effectively the technique of *reductio ad absurdum* in rebuttal. There are many examples in the discussion, but only a few will be given here. Purcell argued that it was correct to have images in worship because God had caused a brazen serpent to be made and commanded the people to look on it. Campbell answered that the image had been destroyed by commandment of God when the people begun to worship it. "But where is the same authority for carrying about the bones of a dead saint, or the hair of the Virgin Mary, or the feet of Balaam's ass?"115 Campbell explained the church in the New Testament was referred to as the "body of Christ." He said, however, that if the pope is the head of the church, "the church is the body of the pope."116

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115 Ibid., p. 270.
116 Ibid., p. 140.
Campbell also used reductio ad absurdum against Purcell in the same way as against Owen. It will be remembered that Campbell read through Owen's "twelve fundamental laws" substituting the word "goat" for man. In this discussion, "sheep" were under consideration instead of "goats." Purcell interpreted the passage "Feed my sheep" as a command for Peter to feed the clergy. He took sheep to mean symbolically clergy, and offered this as proof that Peter was the first pope. Campbell said:

This is an extraordinary assumption. It would be a waste of time to argue against it. But that you may see its absurdity, I will read from the Catholic version a part of the 10th chap. of John substituting the bishop's definition for the term.

He then read:

He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the clergy, but climbeth up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth by the door, is the pastor of the clergy ... 117

Campbell read the entire passage changing the word "sheep" to "clergy" in every instance where it occurred.

Campbell also employed the special rebuttal technique called the method of residues; that is, he pursued the argument to a number of possible conclusions and showed that all but one were impracticable. For example, one of Purcell's arguments was that Peter was supreme among the apostles and that therefore he was pope. After

\[\text{Ibid., p. 167.}\]
admitting Peter's supremacy, Campbell said it could have been based either on talents, seal, age, or office. He then presented an argument designed to prove that it rested on the first three foundations and not on the last. His method was not only to rule certain possibilities out, but to present a justification for the remaining alternatives.

Campbell utilized the method of dilemma in refutation. He did not use this technique as extensively as some of the others, but there are examples of it. That is, he would attempt to show that some of Purcell's arguments lead to two contradictory conclusions, and that therefore his logic was faulty. For example, on the subject of infallibility of the pope, Campbell presented the following dilemma. "Adria VI did, unequivocally, disown the pope's infallibility . . . If right, the pope is fallible; for he avows that he is. If wrong, the pope is fallible; for he was a pope and yet did err." In his rebuttal material on transubstantiation, Campbell presented the following dilemma:

Will the bishop please inform us whether the bread and wine are transubstantiated into the natural body of Christ, or into his glorified body? If into the natural body, in which he said, 'this is my body, this is my blood,' of what profit to eat it and how dare Christians to eat it, according to the decrees of the apostles? And if it be his glorified body,

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118 Ibid., p. 223.
how can there be flesh and blood in it? for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. 119

Campbell attempted to expose inconsistencies in Purcell's argument. This, like the method of dilemma, was not used as extensively as other techniques, but on occasions he did make skillful use of it. In discussing the seventh proposition, Campbell affirmed that Purcell had quoted from Deuteronomy to prove the pope had temporal power, and at the same time had disclaimed the temporal power of the pope. He also attempted to show that Purcell was inconsistent in using the miracle of Cana of Galilee to prove transubstantiation. For he maintained, "It did not look like water -- taste like water, smell like water, nor operate like water. It was real wine, in color, taste, smell, and in all its sensible properties." 120

Summary. As has been pointed out in discussing Campbell's organization, in refutation he sought to pick out only the significant and relevant points of clash. At no time did he seek a complete refutation of every argument which Purcell presented. Purcell criticized Campbell for his action, but Campbell continued to discuss only those which he considered pertinent. Most of his rebuttal should be classed as pure refutation, for, in the main, he attacked directly the arguments on the

119 Ibid., p. 382.
120 Ibid., p. 391.
issues. He did, however, use many of the special methods of refutation, namely, turning the tables, *reductio ad absurdum*, the method of residues, the use of the dilemma, and the exposure of inconsistencies. Campbell exhibited a complete understanding of both sides of the debate, and he was skillful in detecting fallacies.

**AUDIENCE ADAPTATION**

As in the case of the Owen debate, Campbell was concerned with two audiences; those present and the larger reading public. He said, "I have respect . . . not only to the audience who hear, but to those who may read this discussion." 121 In fact, Campbell had more to say about the printed record of the contest than he did about those present. Purcell frequently complimented the audience, spoke in glowing terms of Cincinnati, and employed humor. On the other hand, Campbell mentioned the audience only once or twice, never used humor, and seemed intent upon presenting a connected chain of arguments. To achieve maximum effectiveness, a speech must be designed for a particular audience. Whatever ultimate advantage Campbell may have gained by concern with the reading public, it was not good debating technique in terms of the immediate

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Perhaps Campbell's concern over the published report is at least partially responsible for some of his other failures at audience adaptation. At the beginning and end of the debate, he did not employ an adequate introduction and conclusion. While this is a weakness in organization, it is also an error in relating material to the audience. A summary, particularly, is not so vital to a reader, but it is indispensable to a listening audience, especially when the discussion has been long and involved. Campbell, however, abruptly began and ended the debate.

Also on some points Campbell presented an overabundance of evidence. For example, in his argument that popes have power granted by their councils to depose rulers, half of Campbell's authorities would have been sufficient to prove the point, especially since Purcell did not question his authorities. His presentation of extra material served to burden the audience and to waste valuable time. While the published debate remains a good source book for evidence on certain points, the immediate audience must have suffered under the weight of it.

Another fault in audience adaptation, which cannot be excused by Campbell's concern about the published debate, was his choice of language. While his language was exact, at times it was meaningful only to those who had some
education. It was not simple. Campbell had an extensive vocabulary, which he did not hesitate to use in the debate. These sentences selected at random illustrate:

"These are they who are taught to execrate the liberty of the press, and to consider liberty of conscience pestilential error, and that a spiritual monarch, and a political emperor are the very paragon of all excellence in church and state."\textsuperscript{122} "It is also alleged that the admission of such a pretension, on the part of any priest was debasing and paralysing to the human understanding, and subjected to imposture and fraud those who implicitly acquiesced in it."\textsuperscript{123} While such language does not impose a strain upon the intelligence, it serves as proof that Campbell was not mainly concerned with using simple words.

Campbell also frequently quoted Latin and Greek. As a rule he translated, but not always. He not only read certain Latin and Greek passages, but he based arguments upon their construction. He also employed Latin phrases in his sentences. To a person familiar with classical languages, such a practice presented no difficulty, but it did not make for clearness to the audience generally.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{122} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 420.
\item \textsuperscript{123} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 366.
\end{itemize}
In spite of these serious failures, Campbell did exhibit skill in some phases of audience adaptation. He made frequent use of repetition and restatement. He frequently gave a brief preview of his arguments at the beginning of his speech, and a brief summary at the end. In the development of his arguments and in rebuttal he often employed brief internal summaries. Also, after a point had been made, he frequently amplified it by restatement. For example, he affirmed that there was no contemporary testimony to prove that Peter was ever the pope of the Roman Catholic church. He maintained that "we cannot prove a fact by a witness who did not see it."

This idea is immediately repeated twice, and he gave three separate illustrations to make his point clear.

Campbell was apt at the use of figurative language. While his speeches were not burdened with comparisons, allusions, and figures of speech, he included enough to give flavor to his discourse and illuminate his meaning. At no time does he give the impression that he is striving for picturesque speech. For example, Campbell often employed similes to advantage. In emphasizing that the attack against his argument on prophecy had been ineffective, he said, "But, my friends, we are not to be laughed out of our argument, that stands before us like the rock of Gibraltar. The waves that strike it, but foam out their
imbecility, and are broken to pieces." 124 Again, on the same point he accused Purcell of being like "the scuttle fish, he darkens the waters that he may escape the eye and hand of his pursuer." 125 Some of his other comparisons are, "light as the chaff which is blown away by a breath," "meek as a dove," "smooth as oil."

Campbell's figures of speech were well chosen, and while they add a certain beauty to his style, their chief advantage is in the implications which they carry with them. Notice the suggestibility in following figures: "The artillery of Heaven's vengeance shall burst upon her in a moment; for Omnipotence has a long controversy against her and her evil deeds." 126 Campbell made reference to the division between the Roman and Greek Catholic churches in this manner: "For the jealousies and rivalries of these two bishops never slumbered nor slept till the church was divided. . . ." 127 In discussing the value of prophecy, Campbell maintained, "It is one of the kindest boons of heaven, that we are permitted sometimes to peep into the future, guided by the lamp of eternity." 128

124 Ibid., p. 310.
125 Ibid., p. 310.
126 Ibid., p. 292.
127 Ibid., p. 48.
128 Ibid., p. 311.
As has been suggested, Campbell's speeches were not burdened with figures of speech; unlike the Owen debate, the Purcell debate contained no "purple patches;" but those figures which were present give clearness and force to his language.

**Summary.** The logical manner in which Campbell presented his arguments must have helped the audience to understand them. Individual arguments were developed according to a definite system. In general, Campbell always stayed on the subject. His attention to organization, plus repetition and restatement, and excellent use of figurative language must have aided the audience to attain a better understanding of his position.
CHAPTER V

THE CAMPBELL-RICE DEBATE

The interval between the Purcell and Rice debate was a busy one for Campbell. He continued to publish his monthly magazine *The Millennial Harbinger* and to do his usual amount of preaching. He conducted two written debates, one with Thomas Skinner, a Universalist, and the other with S. W. Lynd, a Baptist preacher. In 1838, he made an extensive preaching tour through the lower South and he founded Bethany College in 1841.

In 1842, Campbell was in Kentucky raising money for his school, for there, after the union with the forces of Barton W. Stone in 1832, the expansion of the Restoration Movement had been so rapid that the Movement boasted of approximately 50,000 members at the time of his visit.\(^1\) Many people left the various denominations to become associated with the Movement, and many of the most powerful preachers of the Christian Church\(^2\) were located in Kentucky.

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1 *Millennial Harbinger*, Third Series, I (1844), 525.

2 No name was ever formally adopted by the group; some called themselves Christians, other Disciples. The churches were known by the term the individual congregation preferred. The three names most often used, however, were Church of Christ, Christian Church, and Disciples of Christ. Stone favored the name Christian Church, and because of his influence in Kentucky it was the term most frequently used there.
There was great antagonism on the part of other religious groups toward Campbell and his movement, especially among the Baptists and Presbyterians. Scarcely an issue of their papers failed to have something detrimental to say about "Campbellites."

BACKGROUND OF THE DEBATE

While Campbell was preaching in Richmond, Kentucky, in 1842, John Brown, the local Presbyterian minister, proposed a debate in which the cardinal differences between the Presbyterians and Restorers would be discussed. Campbell agreed only on the condition that he could have the outstanding man in the state as his opponent. After a year of correspondence between Brown and Campbell, the arrangements were finally made. N. L. Rice met Campbell in a public discussion in Lexington, Kentucky, November 15 through December 1, 1843.

Three items were discussed at length in the exchange of letters. The first question concerned who would be considered the "challenger." In a letter to Brown, Campbell spoke of "the earnestness with which, while I was in your town, you sought a discussion of certain points at issue between Presbyterians and those
Ehrlstlans called Reformers.⁴ Brown immediately replied:

There is evidently a misapprehension, on the part of one of us, as it regards our interview at Richmond, in August last. You seem to intimate that I, with earnestness, sought a discussion of certain points at issue between Presbyterians, and those christians called Reformers. Let the facts speak for themselves. They are briefly the following:

At the close of your address in Richmond on the 3rd of August, your friend, Mr. Duncan, approached me and asked my opinion as to the address, which I gave with as much candor as it was sought.

After other interrogatories were propounded and answered, he inquired, if I thought discussion advisable; to which I gave an affirmative reply. He then remarked, that he had engaged to dine with you, and would ascertain your feelings and wishes on the subject.

All this occurred before we left the church. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon Mr. Duncan sought a second interview with me, and requested me to call in company with him at your room, stating that you desired an interview with me on the subject about which he and I had conversed in the forenoon.

I conformed to his wish, and accompanied him to your room, which ultimat ed in a mutual agreement to discuss certain points of difference for the mutual edification of the church and the prosperity of the cause of Christ, with a definite and expressed understanding that neither was to be considered the challenging party.⁴


⁴ Ibid., p. 12.
In his next letter to Brown, Campbell however, would not admit to the correctness of these statements, and put a different interpretation upon them.

The narrative you now give of the occasion of your soliciting a discussion, is as curious as it is novel and unexpected. The fact of your soliciting a public conference, with no other preamble to me expressed, than "that once yourself and your brethren had not been friendly to public debates, but that now you have changed your ground, being convinced that the state of society and religious opinion demanded it," is all that I thought important to the arrangements proposed, without the details of the mere occasion of your personal application to me. As to the definite and express understanding that neither should be regarded as the challenging party, I have no distinct recollection. I do, indeed, remember that you emphatically spoke of your desiring a friendly discussion.5

Through the lengthy correspondence of twenty-five letters, the first one dated September 19, 1842, and the last August 5, 1843, neither Campbell nor Brown admitted instigation of the debate, but the letters show that they both desired a discussion.

The two other major contentions between Campbell and Brown were the opponent and the wording of the propositions. In the discussion at Richmond, Campbell had requested Dr. John C. Young as his opponent, because he considered him to be the leading Presbyterian minister of Kentucky. Young was agreeable to Brown, but declined to debate because of bad health. Campbell was disappointed,

5 Ibid.
and became somewhat upset when he heard Brown was considering N. L. Rice as the Presbyterian standard-bearer. He wrote to Brown:

I am not a man to be managed just in that way, and have replied to madam rumor, that the moment you presented Mr. Rice, you have forfeited every claim upon my attendance; and that unless the denomination, in some way selected him in preference to Mr. Young in scholarship and discursive talent, I should have nothing to do with the affair.⁶

He gave as his reason for such a statement, "Mr. Rice may be learned, and as able a disputant, for anything I know to the contrary, as Mr. Young; but he stands not so high with the community either as a polite gentleman or a scholar. . . ."⁷

Brown replied that Rice had not been selected, but said sarcastically to Campbell:

I do not wonder at your reluctance to meet Mr. Rice. He has health to go through such a discussion, and is accustomed, as well as yourself, to public debate. But it seems his standing in the community "as a polite gentleman" is not high enough for you! With all deference, I beg leave to say, I am not aware that his standing, in this respect, is inferior to Mr. Campbell's. As to his learning, it is sufficient that Presbyterians are willing to risk their cause in his hands, even against Mr. Campbell. . . . We offer you a Presbyterian minister as your opponent, who shall be selected by us precisely in accordance with the arrangement made at synod, viz. that we would select one of our number to meet you in debate. Now you have your choice to retreat or accept.⁸

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⁶ Ibid., p. 23.
⁷ Ibid., p. 23.
⁸ Ibid., p. 25.
After much bickering back and forth, Campbell decided that he would accept anybody chosen by the Presbyterians. Finally, Brown wrote that a committee composed of himself, John C. Young, R. J. Breckenridge, N. L. Rice, and J. F. Price had been formed to select Campbell's opponent. Their first choice was Breckenridge, but he declined because he had to be out of the state. Campbell later quoted Breckenridge as having said, "No, sir, I will never be Alexander Campbell's opponent. A man who has done what he has done to defend Christianity against infidelity, to defend Protestantism against the delusions and usurpations of Catholicism, I will never oppose in public debate: I esteem him too highly." The committee selected N. L. Rice of Paris, Kentucky, who agreed to debate.

Campbell was not satisfied with the arrangement, and said to Aylett Rains, "Mr. Rice, from all accounts of him, will enter the debate in order to succeed at all hazards. He will endeavor to carry every point, whether he answers my argument or not. But then all the arrangements are completed -- no change can be effected:"

Whether Campbell acknowledged it or not, Rice was a worthy opponent. He was only thirty-six years old at

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9 Millennial Harpinger, Fifth Series, I (1868), 200.

10 Rogers, Recollections of Men of Faith, p.19.
the time, and he had not yet risen to great heights in his denomination. He was born in Garrard County, Kentucky, December 29, 1807. He attended school at Centre College, Danville, Kentucky, and Princeton Theological Seminary. He first preached in Bardstown, Kentucky. While there he engaged in much open controversy with the Roman Catholics, established a school, and published a paper. At the time of the debate, he was preaching in Paris, Kentucky. Later he became one of the most important preachers in the Old School Presbyterian Church, occupying prominent pulpits in Cincinnati, St. Louis, and New York. In 1855, he was elected moderator of the General Assembly of the Old School Presbyterian Church, which was the highest office his denomination could confer upon him. 

Like Campbell, Rice was experienced in religious debate. Moreover, he was thoroughly familiar with the writings of Campbell and the doctrinal teaching of the Restorers. He had previously debated with three prominent preachers of the Restoration Movement: James Shannon,

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11 Because of doctrinal differences and slavery the Presbyterian church divided into the Old School and New School in 1837. A reunion was effected in 1869. This was not the North-South division which resulted in the General Assembly of the Confederate State of America in 1861.

Tolbert Fanning, and Aylett Rains. Also after his debate with Campbell, he held three other important debates: (1) in 1845 with Reverend E. A. Blanchard on slavery; (2) in 1845 with Reverend E. A. Pringree on universal salvation; (3) in 1851 with Reverend John B. Purcell on Romanism.

Richardson, Campbell's biographer, who attended the Rice debate, later wrote:

It cannot be justly denied that throughout the discussion Mr. Rice manifested acuteness and ingenuity in bringing forward what ever could yield the slightest support to his cause, or that his efforts produced occasionally a marked impression on the audience. Having a musical voice and a pleasant countenance, with brilliant black eyes and hair, a confident and positive manner and an agonistic style of gesticulation, he was well fitted to command attention.

During the time Campbell and Brown were corresponding about the Presbyterian representative, they discussed a still more important matter: the wording of the propositions. It was agreed that the debate was to cover the differences between the Restorationists and the Presbyterians, but the vital point was to get these doctrinal divergencies into suitable debate propositions. The subjects were first agreed upon, and then the wording

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13 *Campbell-Rice Debate*, p. 64.


of the propositions discussed. Campbell would send a list of propositions to Brown, who in turn would make changes and send another list to Campbell. The propositions finally agreed upon were as follows:

1. The immersion in water of a proper subject, into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is the one, only apostolic or Christian baptism.

2. The infant of a believing parent is a scriptural subject of baptism.

3. Christian baptism is for the remission of sins.

4. Baptism is to be administered only by a bishop or ordained presbyter.

5. In conversion and sanctification, the Spirit of God operates on persons only through the word of truth.

6. Human creeds, as bonds of union and communion, are necessarily heretical and schismatical.16

Campbell was to be in the affirmative on the first, third, fifth, and sixth questions; and Rice was the affirmant on the second and fourth questions. For some reason, Brown refused to consent to Campbell's suggestion that affirmatives be equally divided.

In spite of the fact that neither party was well satisfied with the wordings, it seems they were unduly concerned about minor details. The propositions met all of the standards set up by authorities in debate; they were stated affirmatively, in complete sentences, contained

16 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 47.
one central idea, did not contain ambiguous terms, and were debatable. They further stated the significant points of clash between the Presbyterians and Restorationists. During the debate, no confusion arose about the propositions or the meaning of terms. All were so worded that Campbell was able to present his distinctive views.

Judge Robinson and Col. Speed Smith were selected to serve as moderators, and they chose Henry Clay to be the president-moderator. No reason was given for the selection of Clay, but perhaps, in addition to his fame, the fact that he was notoriously neutral on religious questions had something to do with the choice. At that time, he was practicing law in Lexington, but he was soon to be candidate for the presidency. The Protestant Churchman, an Episcopal paper, had this to say concerning his activities:

The Hon. Henry Clay is understood to have been scrupulously careful after the debate, as well as during its progress, to abstain from all invidious comparisons; whilst, at the same time, it is said that he expressed himself in terms of almost extravagant admiration of the mental powers, and occasional bursts of eloquence, on the part of the Rev. Mr. Campbell.17

Outside of a brief opening speech, however, Clay made no remarks.

17 Reprinted in Millennial Harbinger, Third Series, I (1844), 326.
Nothing was said in the published rules of the discussion concerning the duties of the moderators. As in the case of Campbell's two other debates, it seems they were to keep order and see that the speakers stayed on the subject. Contrary to the practice in the Owen and Purcell debates, six general principles were agreed upon as rules to govern both contestants. They were as follows:

Rule 1. The terms in which the question in debate is expressed, and the point at issue, should be clearly defined, that there could be no misunderstanding respecting them.

Rule 2. The parties should mutually consider each other as standing on a footing of equality, in respect to the subject in debate. Each should regard the other as possessing equal talents, knowledge, and a desire for truth with himself; and that it is possible, therefore, that he may be in the wrong, and his adversary in the right.

Rule 3. All expressions which are unmeaning, or without effect in regard to the subject in debate, should be strictly avoided.

Rule 4. Personal reflections on an adversary should, in no instance, be indulged.

Rule 5. The consequences of any doctrine are not to be charged on him who maintains it, unless he expressly avows them.

Rule 6. As truth, and not victory, is the professed object of controversy, whatever proofs may be advanced, on either side, should be examined with fairness and candor; and any attempt to answer an adversary by arts of sophistry, or to lessen the force of his reasoning by wit, cavilling or ridicule, is a violation of the rules of honorable controversy. 18

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Apparently these rules had little effect, however, for the debate was extremely personal and bitter.

The contest began on November 15 and continued for sixteen days, closing December 1. The sessions were from ten until two o'clock each day, except for two night sessions of two hours, making a total of seventy-two hours of actual debating. Two stenographers took down the entire discussion, which was published in 1844 with a certificate from Campbell and Rice to the effect that it was a "full exhibition of the facts, documents, and arguments used by us on the several questions debated." The published volume contained nine hundred and twelve pages of small print - more than half a million words.

Great interest was manifested in Lexington before the debate began, much of which was of a partisan nature. Campbell's friends were foretelling a great victory. Some were predicting that Rice would not even make a second speech.19 The Presbyterians, on their part, predicted that Rice would win an overwhelming victory. The Cincinnati Gazette had a special reporter on the scene who sent back this report:

This being the day appointed for a commencement of the long contemplated discussion between Mr. Alexander Campbell and Rev. W. L. Rice, the various avenues leading to Lexington have, for the last 48

19 John Waller, Western Baptist Review, I (September, 1845), 26.
hours, exhibited ample evidence of the wide spread interest felt in the cause.

Steamboats, stages, railroad cars, and vehicles of every variety, were crowded with zealous partisans, lovers of excitement, lovers of debate, and lovers of conflict, whether of body or of mind -- all rushing to the scene, eager to secure good lodging, and good places to see and be seen.

On our arrival last evening, the town was alive with strangers from various parts and states of the Union, near to the distance of a thousand miles.20

Campbell estimated that there were "some hundred and fifty preachers present from various denominations, . . . from New York to Louisiana, and from Philadelphia to Little Rock."21

On the first day of the debate, there were two thousand people present in the newly completed Christian Church,22 but the Cincinnati Gazette said, "The number of anxious strangers continues to increase from every point of the compass, and the church though a large one, is unable to contain the half of those who would attend if they could get within hearing distance."23

The church building was uniformly filled at every session. On the third day of the debate, a Lexington paper

20 Cincinnati Gazette, November 21, 1843.
22 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 48.
23 Cincinnati Gazette, November 20, 1843.
reported that two thousand were present, commenting that a large portion of the audience was "composed of strangers who have been attracted hither by the celebrity of the disputants, and the importance of the subjects to be discussed." A week later the same paper said, "The discussion between the Rev. Mr. Rice and Elder Alexander Campbell progresses, and the interest which it first awakened is not at all diminished by its continuance. Large crowds are daily in attendance." At the close of the discussion, the Daily Cincinnati Gazette reported, "The theological discussion at Lexington, Ky., between Alexander Campbell and Nathan L. Rice, closed on Saturday evening. It has been kept up for three weeks, and the public interest was unabated to the last. The debate, says the Intelligencer, was able and learned, and the collision of great minds battling great truths cannot fail of producing good."

Not only were there large crowds present at each meeting, but the audience was apparently deeply interested. Each speaker was very complimentary of the good conduct and interest of the audience. The correspondent of the Cincinnati Gazette stated:

24 Lexington Observer and Reporter, November 18, 1843.
25 Lexington Observer and Reporter, November 25, 1843.
26 Daily Cincinnati Gazette, December 8, 1843.
It is truly marvellous to see how multitudes of intelligent men and women can be thus enlisted, and kept for hours, days, and weeks, enchained in breathless anxiety, as if their eternal welfare were in the scale. . . . Yes, and witnessed with copious streams of tears, of alternate grief and joy, from the eyes of many a worthy sire and matron, whose hopes of future happiness are connected with one or the other mode of belief.27

The Lexington Observer and Reporter at the conclusion commented,

we will venture to assert that the Reverend disputants and the distinguished moderators will unite in bearing their testimony to the interest which marked the good order which reigned in the vast crowd which attended this polemical disputation, and hung upon the accents of the Reverend orators.28

There is little wonder that the debate excited much public attention, for this was an age in which controversies of all types were popular. The questions were considered important not only to the temporal welfare of the people, but to their eternal well-being, and were the subjects perhaps most frequently spoken on from all Protestant pulpits. Both of the contestants were considered to be men of high intelligence and the leaders in their respective religious groups, which had been engaged in open controversy for twenty years. The continued interest is

27 Cincinnati Gazette, November 24, 1843.
28 Lexington Observer and Reporter, December 2, 1843.
certainly to be accounted for by the fact that there was a sharp clash of opinion and argument, some dramatic and colorful incidents, and many excellent examples of speaking.

ANALYSIS

Almost invariably, Campbell began his part of the discussion upon any of the propositions by pointing to their importance, and occasionally he wove into his opening statements something of the history of the question under consideration. A typical example of his technique is the following statement found at the beginning of the discussion on the mode of baptism:

Let no one undervalue the points at issue in the present controversy. Let no one be startled when I affirm the conviction, that, in the questions to be discussed on the present occasion, the fortunes of America, of Europe and the world are greatly involved. Can that be regarded by the mere politician (to say nothing of the philanthropist or the christian) as a minor matter which gives to the pope of Rome one hundred millions of subjects every three and thirty years; and that, too, without a single thought, volition or action of their own? Can any one regard that as a very unimportant ceremony, which binds forever to the Papal throne so many of our race, by five drops of water and the sign of a cross imposed upon them with their christian names?

Thus at the beginning of every proposition, he gave background material, and attempted to establish the significance

29 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 51.
of the question. When Campbell was on the affirmative, he defined the terms of the proposition, and if negative, responded to Rice's definitions. Campbell's concern over explaining the terms can be seen by the following statement:

Most controversies are mere logomachies -- wars of words about words, and not about things. Perspicuity and precision in the definition of the terms of a proposition at the commencement, would have prevented more than half of all the debates in the world, and would have reduced the other half to less than half their size.30

Most of the terms did not need elaborate interpretation, for they were then in current use and readily understood, but nevertheless, in most cases Campbell attempted some type of definition. The special method of definition most often used was example, though etymology was sometimes employed.

The following is an illustration of how Campbell defined the terms of the fifth proposition, "In conversion and sanctification, the Spirit of God operates on Persons only through the Word." Recognizing that the terms "conversion and sanctification" were likely to give the most difficulty, he discussed them in detail. After giving two extended examples of their meaning which would "gradually open them to the apprehension of all," he said:

30 Ibid., p. 611.
The terms of my proposition will now be easily defined and apprehended. Conversion is a term denoting that whole moral or spiritual change, which is sometimes called sanctification, sometimes regeneration. These are not three changes, but one change indicated by these three terms, regeneration, conversion, sanctification. Whether we shall call it by one or the other of these, depends upon the metaphor we happen to have before us, . . . 31

Rice did not always agree with Campbell's definitions; in fact, much of the clash on the mode of baptism and human creeds revolved around the import of the terms. But Rice always understood his opponent's position. Campbell used great detail in defining the controversial terms and usually made them clear by example.

To Campbell all of the propositions were questions of fact, to be settled upon the basis of the Bible. Rice agreed with this analysis. To show the extent to which he wished to follow the Bible, Campbell said:

But I must risk the charge of illiberality in avowing my conviction, that there is nothing within human power so terrific and appalling, as any attempt to touch the ark of the Lord, by accommodating any of Christ's ordinances to the pride, the caprice, the vanity, or apathy of any man or set of men. . . . I am zealous for the letter; for although a man may have the letter and the form without the spirit, he cannot have the spirit without the letter and the form of godliness. 32

When Campbell was on the affirmative, he always

31 Ibid., p. 613.
assumed the burden of proof, and sought to narrow the question. This was according to his theory of debate, for he stated:

There is nothing more generally established in the literary world than that, in all discussions in the form of debate, there should be a proposition, parties, an affirmand and a respondent; and that there are duties which devolve upon these parties as they severally stand, to the thesis to be discussed. In all schools, not merely in ordinary debating schools, but in all the high schools and colleges, one law obtains: the proof lies upon the affirmand, and the disproof upon the negative. Whatever arguments, therefore are adduced by the affirmand, it is the duty of the negative to respond to them in some way or other. If they are weak, irrelevant, or inconclusive, he should expose them and refute them. If they are good, and relevant, and conclusive, he should acknowledge it and yield to them.

It was not difficult for Campbell to draw the issues, because they were evident from the propositions. Nevertheless, he sought to make them clear. The six issues which he adduced from the propositions were:

1. Is immersion the only form of baptism authorized by the Bible?
2. Is an infant of believing parents a scriptural subject for baptism?
3. Is baptism for the remission of past sins?
4. Is baptism to be administered only by an ordained minister?

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33 The term "burden of proof" denotes the obligation to prove the case.

34 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 455.
5. Does the Holy Spirit operate in conversion only through the Bible?

6. Are human creeds injurious to Christianity?

On all but issue number two and four, Campbell answered "yes" and Rice "no." Both speakers understood the issues and debated them.

While both speakers agreed upon the issues, they varied in the development of them. In the Purcell debate, the Bishop had been content to seek to destroy Campbell's arguments, but Rice usually pursued a different method. On the affirmative, Campbell stated his contention and then presented his arguments. Oftentimes, however, Rice did not immediately reply to them, if ever, but introduced arguments of his own. As far as Rice was concerned, this was often good debate strategy, but it placed a double duty on Campbell.

Summary. Throughout the debate, Campbell was conscious of the importance of analysis. When he was on the affirmative, he stressed the importance of the subject, frequently gave a brief historical background, defined the terms, and narrowed the proposition to the significant point of clash. In the two instances in which Campbell was on the negative, he accepted Rice's analysis, but sought to emphasize the issues. Campbell acted in harmony with his theory of debate, since, when on the affirmative he always assumed the burden of proof. To him
all of the propositions were questions of fact to be determined by the Bible. Largely because of Campbell's efforts, and the exact wording of the propositions the issues were clear.

ORGANIZATION

Campbell recognized the importance of organization. He said:

It is all important, sir, as you well know, to make a few points, to concentrate the mind upon them and to fortify them well with documentary proof. A multiplicity of matters confusedly thrown together, is neither so edifying nor so convincing as a few well selected and digested arguments properly arranged and fully elaborated. Without a distinct and methodical arrangement, we might argue for years and prove nothing satisfactorily.

Each of the six propositions, discussed separately, was argued upon different days, and new evidence was presented upon each of them. Even though they have a logical connection, they were considered as independent topics. In spite of this fact, however, Campbell maintained somewhat the same organization in all of his speeches; there is a noticeable likeness even in his affirmative and negative organization.

In his four affirmative cases, Campbell's procedure was the same. He always had an introduction distinct

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from the rest of the case, in which he engaged in his preliminary analysis; that is, stated the importance of the issues, defined the terms, excluded admitted and irrelevant matter, and drew the point of clash. His introductions were clear, and served to attract the attention of the audience, and to pave the way for the arguments which he presented.

There was always a definite break between his introduction and the body of his speech. As a rule he supplied transitional material, as he did between his introduction and argument on the first proposition. He said:

Without further introduction, I proceed to the first proposition; and may the Spirit of all wisdom and revelation direct our deliberations, subdue all pride of opinion, restrain every illicit desire of human approbation, inspire our souls with the love of truth rather than of victory, lead our investigations to the happiest issue, and give to this discussion an extensive and long-enduring influence in healing divisions, in promoting peace, and in extending the empire of truth over myriads of minds enthralled by error and oppressed with the doctrines and commandments of men.36

Campbell spent approximately thirty minutes of his opening speech in the debate on introductory material. Other affirmative introductions were approximately fifteen minutes long. Considering that on each question he spoke

56 Ibid., p. 54.
for at least six hours, his introductions were comparatively brief.

Campbell presented his arguments in an organised form which was easy to follow. He labeled his points by saying, "My first argument is," or "This, for method's sake, I shall call my third argument." Campbell brought forth numerous arguments; on the first proposition he presented thirteen; on the third proposition, fourteen arguments; on the fifth proposition, fourteen arguments; and on the sixth proposition, thirteen arguments. Many of his arguments were so similar that they could have been combined, thus simplifying his organization.

After Campbell introduced a point, if he had a large amount of evidence to present, he numbered his authorities. For example, in the first proposition on the action of baptism, his first argument was based on the proper meaning of the root "baptizo" from which the word baptism is derived. After stating his argument, he said, "My witnesses are so numerous that I must call them forth in classes, and hear them in detail. I shall first summon the Greek lexicographers."37 Then he listed numerically thirteen different men who, he said, were "the most ancient, the most impartial, and the most famous

37 Ibid., p. 58.
Thus Campbell not only numbered his arguments, but labeled the evidence which he presented. Such attention to organization must have aided the audience to get a clear view of his case.

Furthermore, he continually used the "flash-back" and "preview" technique between his arguments. For example, in the discussion on the mode of baptism, before he presented his fourth argument he said:

I am now prepared to state my fourth argument. My second argument, from all authoritative lexicons down to the present century, that, they all, without one single exception, give dip, immerse, sink or plunge, synonymously expressive of the true, proper, and primary signification of baptizo; not one of them giving sprinkle or pour as a meaning of it or any of its family.

My third argument has been drawn from the classic use of the word. They sustain the lexicons except in one point. They never give to baptizo the sense of dyeing, etc. They never use it either to represent the actions of sprinkling, or pouring. Every attempt to make out, by construction, a single instance of this sort, has been a total failure.

My fourth argument is deduced from the ancient, and especially from the modern versions of the New Testament. Before stating it, I must premise a few words.39

Usually between arguments he named the one or two which he had just given, but waited until he had presented five or six arguments before employing an internal summary. Then, as a rule, he did not restate the arguments in numerical order, but merely repeated the contention and made some

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38 Ibid., p. 58.
39 Ibid., p. 110.
generalization upon the material presented. Rice pointed out the necessity of such a procedure, and Campbell replied, "I concur with him, indeed, in the necessity of an occasional recapitulation, and in the propriety of keeping the main question before us. It is important to have frequent recurrence to the points at issue, and to the progress made." Campbell sought to make such recapitulations throughout the debate.

Campbell was never able to introduce all of his arguments in his opening speech; Rice, of course, immediately began his rebuttal efforts, often consisting of counter-arguments, so that rebuttal started before the affirmative case was completely presented. Campbell sought to solve this problem by the following procedure:

So far as I lead the way, I propose the following method: -- On rising I shall attend to so much of my respondent's speeches as are relevant to the premises I have offered. While affirmant, it is my privilege to lead the way. Whatever my respondent advances, relative to my arguments, shall be immediately attended to. Other matters, calling for any special attention, shall be attended to at proper and pertinent seasons. Should anything of this sort, which Mr. Rice deems important, be overlooked or forgotten, I request him to bring it up to my attention, and I shall give to it all due regard. I shall then immediately proceed with my arguments, in numerical order, to which, of course, I shall expect a particular attention in the same order.  

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40 Ibid., p. 95.
41 Ibid., p. 86.
At the close of an affirmative case, Campbell's conclusion was just as definite as his introduction. It consisted of two items, first a summary of all his arguments, and an emotional appeal to the audience. His summaries were never elaborate, but he merely listed numerically the arguments which he had presented, without the criticisms which Rice had offered, since he felt his arguments were unanswered. The appeal to the audience was usually brief, but well worded. Consider his closing statement on the design of baptism:

Finally, fellow-citizens, it is the immediate duty of all who have not been immersed, to be immersed into the sacred name, for the richest of heaven's blessings, the privileges and immunities of the new kingdom and repentance, but when submitted to in faith, it is never to be repented of. No one has yet said, on a dying bed, that he regretted his having been immersed, while thousands have repented at least, that they had not so honored the Lord; I have only to add my unfeigned desires, that you may solemnly weigh all that you have heard on the present occasion, bring it all to the solemn and ultimate judge of all controversies, that holy oracle, and speedily decide for yourselves, what you ought to do. It is all-important that you know the truth -- that you obey the truth -- and that you send it with your commendations, to all your friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens, and that this be done immediately. All of which I submit with my kindest wishes, for your individual happiness, temporal and eternal.  

Campbell debated the negative in two of the propositions: infant baptism and the administrator of

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42 Ibid., p. 560.
baptism. Since the question of the administrator of baptism was discussed only one day, Campbell was on the affirmative for most of the debate; Campbell evidently looked on the negative as the easier position, for in his first negative speech, he said, "The laboring oar has at length fallen into the hands of my former respondent."43

As with the affirmative speeches, the opening speeches of Campbell's negatives were again spent in introductory material. On both propositions he accepted the definitions which Rice had given, but sought to state the issue involved in a way that would be to his advantage. He then sought to answer the arguments which Rice had presented; Campbell said, "He leads the way—I follow." It was not his technique to respond to all of the arguments presented, but to select the ones which he felt were of the most consequence. He said, "I may pass over something, nay I must pass in silence various . . . matters . . . I will keep my eye on all matters that may affect the real issue. Others may stand for what they are worth."44 Campbell did present much constructive material on the negative, but he always wove it into the answers which he offered. He also used the technique of asking many pointed and direct questions.

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In the conclusions of his two negative cases, Campbell summarized the entire question. He listed Rice's main contentions, and gave his answers. Then he listed in numerical order the points and objections to Rice's doctrine. Apparently Campbell had intended to make an appeal to the audience in his closing speech of the second proposition, but Rice asked and was granted permission to read an extract from The Millennial Harbinger. Campbell said, "Mr. Rice, my friends, will have the last word; affirmative or negative he must have the last word. Now this is all for effect." But he was not interrupted on the fourth proposition, the administrator of baptism, and after his summary did give a brief appeal to the audience. He said:

But fellow-citizens, we all do fade as a leaf -- we are frail dust and ashes; our words soon pass away. They perish from our lips as the sound dies upon the ear. Our opinions are as light as air; but God's word has at all times firmly stood, and shall from age to age endure. "All flesh is grass," and the glory of man as the flower that fadeth, "but the word of the Lord endureth forever." Bring all things, then, to its discriminating and solemn test; what accords with it receive, believe, and practice; what does not, reject as a human invention, and repudiate as a part of the doctrines and commandments of men.

Summary. Whether on the affirmative or negative, Campbell was conscious of organization. In the main, the

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46 Ibid., p. 610.
arrangement and presentation of his material is commendable. Both his introductions and conclusions served their purpose. He numbered his arguments and evidence, and he attempted to stay with the main points under discussion. There is evidence in the printed report of the debate that he spent much time before the discussion on organization, and was concerned with making his position clear.

ARGUMENTS

As had been suggested, Campbell presented numerous arguments upon all of the six propositions. To enumerate all of them would constitute more of a study in his theology than a rhetorical criticism of debating. In order to understand Campbell as a debater, however, it is necessary to state the position which he assumed and how it differed from that of his opponent, and to list his main arguments.

First Proposition: The immersion in water of a proper subject, into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is the one, only apostolic or Christian baptism. Mr. Campbell affirms -- Mr. Rice denies.

The discussion on the first proposition began on Wednesday, November 15, and continued until Saturday, November 18. A session was held each day from ten o'clock until two. On Saturday evening an additional meeting was scheduled from six until eight. Twenty-two hours were
devoted to this proposition, which in the published form occupies two hundred and twenty-three pages of small print.

The question of immersion versus sprinkling or pouring as a mode of baptism was not a new one nor an unimportant one to the people of that day. Many of the theological writers prior to the debate had written extensively upon the subject. The conflict between the Pede-Baptists, who adhered to the principle of sprinkling or pouring, and the Anna-Baptists who were advocates of immersion, had been discussed many times. The Pede-Baptist concept was represented in America by the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Episcopal churches, while the Baptist church and the Churches of Christ upheld the Anna-Baptist belief.

The point of difference, therefore, between Campbell and Rice was one of long standing. Campbell affirmed that immersion was the only mode of baptism authorized, while Rice contended that sprinkling or pouring was as acceptable as immersion. Therefore the point of clash was upon the word "only" in the proposition.

Campbell's first main argument was based upon the meaning of the Greek word *baptizo* from which the English word *baptism* is derived. He alleged that *baptizo* meant only "to immerse," "to plunge" or "to dip." Therefore, he asserted that it was incorrect to talk about the "mode" of
baptism, because Christ had commanded a specific action. Rice, on the other hand, agreed that *baptizo* meant "to immerse," but argued that it also signified "to sprinkle," "to wash," or "to pour." Both speakers referred to lexicographers, classical writers, and various translations of the Bible to sustain their argument.

The apostolic allusions to baptism constituted Campbell's next main argument. He contended that the New Testament writers made no statements upon the "action" of baptism, but they understood the word meant "to immerse." But he claimed that the apostles alluded to baptism as a "burial and resurrection" or "a planting of seeds in the earth." Rice protested that the references to "burial and planting" were not speaking of literal actions but of spiritual ones.

**Summary.** Of the thirteen arguments which Campbell presented, all fell under one of the above-named categories. Campbell either argued upon the original meaning of the word or on Biblical allusions to it. His arguments were clearly stated and explained, but some of them must have been difficult for the audience to comprehend because of their nature. Especially his extended discussion upon *baptizo* was technical and required too much background in language for the audience to follow easily. Campbell recognized this, for he said, "We shall now state our twelfth argument. For the special benefit of the most
uneducated ..."47 While the wording of this statement was not in keeping with good strategy, it did show that Campbell recognized some of his arguments to be complex. It must be admitted, nevertheless, that he was taking the traditional approach to the subject.

SECOND PROPOSITION: The infant of a believing parent is a Scriptural Subject of Christian baptism. Mr. Rice affirms -- Mr. Campbell denies.

The discussion on the second proposition began on Monday, November 20, was concluded on Wednesday, November 22, and occupies one hundred and fifty-seven pages in the printed record. Rice said, "I am constrained to regard this subject as one of greater practical importance than that of which we have just disposed."48 Campbell also deemed it important, but answered "I do not compare atoms with the universe, nor moments with eternity. All things commanded by God are equally important to be observed. . . ."49 In general, the religious groups who practiced baptism by affusion also believed in infant baptism.

Rice's position was that baptism was necessary for church membership, but not essential for salvation. If infants, therefore, were to receive the "blessings of church

47 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 232.
48 Ibid., p. 273.
49 Ibid., p. 286.
membership," they had to be baptized. His basic contention was that the church was established in the days of Abraham, and only by the rite of circumcision were children admitted into the church. In the New Testament, circumcision had been abolished, but baptism had been instituted in its place. He reasoned that there was no command in the New Testament to exclude infants but only the command to baptize; therefore children of believing parents should be baptized. It should be noted that upon this proposition, and indeed upon all of the others, neither Rice nor Campbell argued upon psychological advantages of a given practice. The major question was, "Is this doctrine authorized by the Bible?"

Campbell's position was that infants were saved without baptism and church membership. Hence there was no need for it. In answer to Rice's arguments, he entered two major objections. He asserted that the church was founded on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, and not in the days of Abraham. Thereby he sought to rule out Rice's contention that infants were entitled to church membership. Secondly, he sought to prove that circumcision did not convey any spiritual benefits, but was merely an act of recognition of the covenant God made with Abraham. He also listed sixteen differences between circumcision and baptism.
Campbell's one counter-argument was that belief always precedes baptism. Since infants could not believe, he reasoned that they were not subjects of baptism. He said:

To as many as (and no more than) receive him, he gave the privilege of becoming the sons of God; to them that believe on his name who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Why should not these words of the Messiah . . . decide this subject forever?\(^{50}\)

**Summary.** Oftentimes Campbell went into such detail in his presentation, that many of his arguments may have lost their force. His argument upon the establishment of the church, however, was not supported with sufficient evidence. Campbell did, nevertheless, exhibit skill in selecting fundamental points for attack in Rice's case.

**THIRD PROPOSITION:** Christian Baptism is for the remission of past sins. Mr. Campbell affirms. Mr. Rice denies.

The debate on the third proposition began on Thursday, November 23, and continued until Friday, November 24. Again there were four-hour sessions on the two days, and on Friday night an extra meeting of three hours. The speeches on this question occupy one hundred and thirty pages in the printed report.

Upon this question, Campbell occupied a unique position in Protestantism. Although he was probably

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\(^{50}\) Ibid., p. 322.
more criticized for his belief on the design of baptism than for any of his other teachings, nevertheless, his stand on the subject was one of the cardinal principles of the Restoration Movement. Campbell believed that baptism was "for the remission of sins," that is, was necessary for salvation. Rice's position on the design of baptism was the standard one of most Protestants. He believed that baptism was essential to church membership but was not connected with salvation.

Campbell offered fourteen separate arguments to sustain his position, all of which were explanations of verses of scripture. A typical argument is the one he based on Acts 2:38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." After he gave an extended introduction to the passage, he said that this verse was an exact statement of his proposition with the exception of the word "past," "for we command inquiring penitents, in the very words of Peter, 'Be baptized every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins." Campbell added, "Our proposition, then is incontrovertibly true; provided only, Peter knew what he said, and said what he meant." Later Campbell commented at length upon the expression "for

51 Ibid., p. 436.
52 Ibid.
the remission of sins" attempting to prove it meant "unto the remission of sins." He gave the statement of Christ in instituting the Lord's supper, "This is the blood of the new covenant shed for the remission of the sins of many," as an example of other uses of "for the remission of sins."

Rice met Campbell upon this proposition by saying the meaning which he attached to Acts 2:38 and other passages could not be true. "It flatly contradicts the express declarations of Christ and the apostles." Rice then presented and explained six passages which spoke of salvation by faith. His main attack against Campbell was to accuse him of inconsistency. Rice read a letter written by Campbell in the Millennial Harbinger in which he had said:

Should I find a Pedo-baptist more intelligent in the Christian Scriptures, more spiritually-minded and more devoted to the Lord than a Baptist, or one immersed in a profession of the ancient faith, I could not hesitate a moment in giving the preference of my heart to him that loveth most.

Rice declared this statement was contrary to Campbell's position in the debate. Campbell attempted but was unable to harmonize this discrepancy.

53 Ibid., p. 444.
54 Ibid., p. 517.
Summary. All of Campbell's arguments were based upon passages of scripture. He was clear in his explanations and applications. However, he was at fault for not fully stating an argument at one time. That is, he would briefly introduce an argument, and wait until a later speech to develop it completely. It seems that his arguments would have had more force had he thoroughly discussed them at one time.

FOURTH PROPOSITION: Baptism is to be administered only by a Bishop or Ordained Presbyter. Mr. Rice affirms, Mr. Campbell denies.

The entire discussion of the fourth proposition lasted only one day, November 24, and comprises fifty-three pages in the printed version. Rice's position was one held by most religious groups, though on different grounds. He affirmed that baptism was valid only if administered by an ordained clergyman. Campbell agreed that in most instances only ministers should baptize, but he asserted the validity of baptism was not dependent upon "the human mediator."

In his opening address, Rice used only forty minutes of his hour, and presented only a few constructive arguments. He argued that because of the significance of baptism, it should be performed in "decency and order." He spent the major part of his time ridiculing Campbell's position by saying that a little girl ten years of age could baptize "according to his [Campbell's] doctrine."
Campbell agreed with Rice, though not very politely, that baptism should be performed in "decency and order." He said that he did not believe in children baptizing others. Since Rice did not assume the burden of proof on this proposition, Campbell offered constructive arguments. His main argument was that the efficacy of an ordinance depended upon the heart of the individual and not upon the administrator. In this argument he argued that ordained ministers had no power handed down from the apostles, and that all Christians were "Kings and Priests" of God.

Summary. Because Rice did not present many arguments, it was necessary for Campbell to present constructive arguments against Rice's position. The clash on this proposition came over the material Campbell introduced. Campbell's arguments were related to the issue and clearly presented his views on the subject.

FIFTH PROPOSITION: In conversion and sanctification, the Spirit of God operates on persons only through the Word. Mr. Campbell affirms, Mr. Rice denies.

The discussion on the fifth proposition continued from Monday, November 27, to Wednesday, November 29, and occupies one hundred forty-seven pages in the published debate. This was one of the most interesting questions discussed because it indirectly involved the Great Revival and camp-meetings.
The emotional wave which engulfed the frontier at the turn of the century was possible because of the doctrine which most of the denominations taught. Many Protestant groups held the theory that in order for man to turn from sin, the Holy Spirit had to act directly upon the individual. The "jerks," "dancing exercises," and all of the other "remarkable manifestations" were supposedly caused by the "falling" of the Holy Spirit. While some religious groups did not advocate such extreme physical activity in "being converted," most sects believed that the Holy Spirit had to operate directly in a manner "better felt than told" on the sinner to save him.

In this proposition, Campbell affirmed that the Holy Spirit operated indirectly upon the heart of an individual. He maintained that the Bible was the "word of the Holy Spirit," and that only through the instrumentality of the Bible, the Holy Spirit worked in conversion. Rice's position was the traditional one, that is, the Holy Spirit operated independently from the Bible.

Campbell went into great detail to clarify his position and the point of clash, because he had often been misrepresented upon the subject. One of his main arguments was that "no living man has ever been heard of . . . possessed of a single conception of Christianity . . . where the Bible, or some tradition from it, has not
been before him. "55 He spoke of the importance of the Bible in conversion and asked why the Bible should be preached to sinners if they could be converted without it. Campbell then argued that all the recorded conversions in the Bible were accomplished with the Word of God. He also talked of the "fanaticism and wild enthusiasm" which resulted because of this doctrine.

Most of Rice's case was developed around a counter-argument. He averred that if the doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit were not true, then those who died in infancy were lost. He believed in the Calvinistic concept of total depravity, that is, that all were born into the world in a lost condition. Therefore, he concluded that if infants died before they were old enough to understand the Bible, Campbell's belief would consign them to hell. Rice believed that in the case of a dying infant, the Holy Spirit, "changed its heart" before death, and therefore the child would be saved.

In his answer Campbell said:

The infant that falls asleep in its mother's bosom, and after a few short days breathes out its spirit gently there, needs no more change to fit it for Abraham's bosom, than that which the Spirit of God will effect in the resurrection of the dead, or in the transformation of the living saints at the time of his coming. Philosophy, reason, and faith, are alike silent on the subject of any infant regeneration

55 Ibid., p. 619.
before death. It is all theory -- idle, empty, suicidal theory. 56

He charged, "His [Rice's] theory is, therefore adopted to get rid of a metaphysical difficulty. It owes its origin to a mystic knot which he cannot untie, and which he dares not cut." 57

Summary. Campbell's fourteen arguments, drawn from the Bible and philosophy, fully presented his ideas upon the subject. His arguments were well stated and developed, and related to the point at issue. He responded to the counter argument presented by Rice, in addition to developing his own case. On several occasions he wandered from the subject and introduced material not necessary for the advancement of his case. As long as he stayed with his arguments, however, his position was clear. Because his belief had often been misunderstood, Campbell took unusual care in the explanation of his arguments.

PROPOSITION SIX: Human creeds, as bonds of union and communion are, necessarily heretical and schismatical. Mr. Campbell affirms. Mr. Rice denies.

The discussion on the sixth and concluding proposition began on Thursday, November 30, and was concluded on

56 Ibid., p. 655.
57 Ibid., p. 654.
Saturday, December 2. It comprises one hundred fifty pages in the published debate. The position assumed by each debater is well stated in the proposition. Campbell contended that the Bible should be the only creed, while Rice insisted on the necessity of human creeds. Campbell defined a creed or confession of faith as "an ecclesiastic document -- the mind and will of some synod or council possessing authority -- as terms of communion, by which persons and opinions are to be tested, approbated, or reprobated." On the proposition, as in all of the others, there was a decided clash. However, on this question there was not only a conflict of argument but of emotion. Each speaker spent too much time in pointing out the defects of the church of the other. Campbell, however, did present thirteen arguments in support of his position.

Campbell's first argument was: creeds are heretical because they are the offspring of human effort and authority. He maintained that they did not exist in New Testament times nor were they authorized by the apostles. He argued that the Holy Spirit can speak as plainly as man, as witnessed by the fact that so-called authoritative explanations of the Bible have to have explanations. He said that to found the church upon a human creed is "building a golden palace upon the grass, a divine temple
temple upon reeds and rushes."58 Rice answered by saying that the church was founded upon the Bible, but that it is necessary to have an official interpretation of it.

Campbell also argued that "human creeds strain out the gnats and swallow the camels." He meant creeds concentrate upon unimportant matters and neglect the more important ones. He pointed out that "all the world's greatest benefactors--apostles, prophets and reformers--have been declared heretics and schismatics--reprobated, and cast out of synagogues and churches, through the native, direct and immediate influence and operation of these documents."59 Rice did not directly answer this argument, but cast it aside by saying that when any person calls himself a reformer he begins to talk about persecution.

Perhaps Campbell's main argument against creeds was that they were obstacles in the way of uniting Christians. He maintained that Christians could be united only upon the basis of the Bible. He said,

What all sects have in common may be christianity, but what they have in particular most certainly is not. . . . These partisan institutions, built upon peculiar phrenological developments of human nature, must give way to the whole genius of human nature. We want a broader, deeper, higher, purer, more spiritual christianity than any of them.60

58 Ibid., p. 764.
59 Ibid., p. 766.
60 Ibid., p. 903.
Rice did not pay much attention to Campbell's arguments, but launched such a vigorous attack that Campbell was forced on the defensive for most of the proposition. Rice accused Campbell of writing a creed in his magazine and books. He charged that there were all sorts of heretics in "his [Campbell's] church." Campbell denied the charges, and in addition pointed to defects in the Presbyterian church.

As this was the last proposition in the debate both speakers tried to give evidence that they had won, and were extremely bitter toward each other.

EVIDENCE

In the debate Campbell used an abundance of evidence because he was seeking to establish the validity of certain points. One should not be surprised at the knowledge and resources which he had on the questions, for he had been preaching and writing on them for twenty-five years. Furthermore, he had in his library most of the works of any importance which dwelt upon the questions involved. He was familiar with the sources and was not hesitant in using them.

Rarely did Campbell introduce an argument without supporting it with several sources of evidence. The fact that he presented at least seventy-five separate arguments suggests the amount of material which he used.

Campbell used authority almost exclusively to support his arguments. In fact, this was practically the only type of evidence suitable to the issues involved. The authority, however, can be divided into four groups, namely the Bible, language authorities, the writings of the early church fathers, and the writings of outstanding men in various religious groups.

Since both speakers accepted the Bible as the inspired word of God, they considered it the final authority on all questions. Rice accused Campbell of using his own translation of the Bible, but Campbell denied the charge. Campbell said, "I am willing, if circumstances should command me, to meet any virtuous man, on any version extant and maintain all that I now stand pledged to maintain on the present occasion." Aside from the above-noted charge, nothing more was said upon the subject of translations, and the King James Version was used.

Campbell's method of citing the Bible as authority

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62 Campbell published the first American translation of the Bible in 1828.

63 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 62.
was to develop a few leading passages which he believed sustained his argument. Rice criticized Campbell for not quoting more Scripture, but Campbell replied:

When I commenced preaching it was usual to quote, in a single sermon, almost a hundred texts of Scripture. Each head of the discourse had its own list of authorities. In my youthful sallies I was accustomed to quote ten texts, as we call them for one I now cite. There is no greater delusion than an array of verses, torn out of their context, and arranged in a new connection in support of some view or tenet.  

Usually Campbell's method was to give an introduction to each verse, by describing its context, quote it, give the complete reference and a brief explanation. Then he read what a number of prominent men in various churches had said about the point involved. By this latter technique, he sought to drive his explanations home and prove that they were correct. The technique was not as effective, however, as he imagined, for the verse would have been clearer had he spent more time in explanation and less in reading from others.

Campbell made extensive use of language authorities in the discussion on the mode of baptism, in which he asserted that _baptizo_ meant only to immerse. He quoted fourteen different lexicographers, who, he said were the "most

64 Ibid., p. 542.
ancient, the most impartial, and the most famous lexicographers." He followed the same system in the introduction of each of his lexicographers; he stated his name, gave the edition from which the quotation was taken, said a few words as to his qualifications, and then read his statement. The following is an example of how all were used:

Schleusner, a name revered by orthodox theologians, and of enviable fame, says, (Glasgow Ed. 1824).

'1st. Propria, immergo ac intingo, in aquam immergo. Properly it signifies, I immerse, I dip, I immerse in water. 2d. It signifies, I wash or cleanse by water -- (quia haud rare aliquid immersi ac intingi in aquam solat ut lavetur) -- because for the most part, a thing must be dipped or plunged into water, that it may be washed.' Thus he gives the reason why baptizo figuratively means "to wash," -- because it is frequently the effect of immersion.

Campbell justified the introduction of classical writers as authority on the meaning of baptizo by saying:

The meaning of a word is ascertained by the usage of those writers and speakers, whose knowledge and acquirements have made them masters of their own language. For this class of vouchers we derive most of our knowledge of holy writ, and of all the remains of Grecian literature and science. We indeed, try the dictionaries by the classics, the extant authors of the language.

65 Campbell quoted from the following-named men: Soapula, Henrichus Stephanus, Robertson, Schleusner, Pastor, Pommegan, Parkhurst, John Jones, Rost, Bretschneider, Voss, Wilson, Stokius, and Stuart. In most instances Campbell did not give either the titles of their works nor their first names.

66 Ibid., 59.

67 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 58.
He read passages from twenty-three classical writers who used the word *baptisko* or some of its derivatives. The following is an example of how he presented such evidence:

Aristotle, *De Color*, c. 4, says: By reason of heat and moisture, the colors enter into the pores of things dipped into them (tou baptomenou). *De Anima*, iii. c. 12, If a man dips (bapæi) any thing into wax, it is moved so far as it is dipped.

After giving the testimony of these, he gave the name of twenty-five others which he said he could employ, but he said:

I regard it as more pedantic, than necessary, to display so many authorities. I may, however, say that I could read scores of such as you have heard, all in perfect concurrence with those read. We have the entire phalanx of all classic authority -- poets, philosophers, orators, historians, metaphysicians, critics, showing one perfect agreement in their use of *baptisko* and its derivatives.

In addition to the biblical and linguistics authorities, Campbell cited the church fathers as authority.

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68 He quoted from the writings of Lucian, Plutarch, Strabo, Polybius, Porphyry, Themistius, Plutarch, Josephus, Homer, Pindar, Aristotle, Aristophanes, Heraclides Ponticus, Herodotus, Aratus, Xenophon, Heraclides, Heliodorus, Justin Martyr, Plato, Philo Judaeus, Diodorus Siculus, Allegor.

69 *Campbell-Rice Debate*, p. 88.


71 *Campbell-Rice Debate*, p. 89.
In his arguments on the first proposition, he presented Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Eusebius, and others to prove that immersion was the practice of the early church. Yet, when Rice introduced the same authorities on infant baptism, Campbell objected to them. He said:

Outside of the New Testament there is no church authority whatever, no Christian authority. The arguments heard are no earlier than the third century -- for, indeed there is no vestige of infant baptism till the third -- Tertullian is the first person that names it. But suppose it was found in the second century . . . It is, in the judgment of the most learned Presbyterian doctors now living, of no value or authority whatever.

Rice was quick to notice this discrepancy. He said, "These fathers were excellent witnesses when he could make capital of their testimony, but now it is not worth a straw."

Campbell utilized prominent men in various churches as evidence. Particularly did he employ statements from Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, and Archbishop Richard Whately. He exhibited wisdom in the selection of these authorities because they were not generally in favor of his views. In spite of the fact

72 *The Campbell-Rice Debate*, p. 416.
74 Campbell quoted: Dr. George Campbell, Presbyterian; Francois Tertulline, Presbyterian; Adam Clarke, Methodist; Timothy Dwight, Congregationalists; Charles Anthon, his religious affiliations not given; Philip Lemborch, Dutch Reformer; Dr. Samuel Miller, Presbyterian; Edward Pusey, Church of England; Hermann Witsius.
that numerous Baptist authorities could have been cited
on immersion and infant baptism, Campbell always chose
Presbyterian writers. In fact, Campbell said: "My
witnesses are all borrowed from the party that opposes me
... I have chosen names well known to fame, and un-
questionable learning and authorities in several Pedo-
Baptist parties."

Rice sought to nullify much of Campbell's evidence
by saying that none of the church authorities in reality
agreed with Campbell. Campbell's concept of the use of
testimony is shown by his answer:

The quoting of authors is rather a delicate point.
... To quote them, as we have sometimes heard
them quoted, is rather a licentious affair. We
can prove things the most antipodal by the same
author. I argue that justice and consistency
alike demand of us that, if we quote a man's opin-
ions as authority, we ought to take all his
opinions; if we quote him as a witness of facts
transpiring in his time, or coming under his cog-
nizance, we ought to take his whole testimony, and
not just so much of his opinions, and just so much
of his testimony as suits our prejudice ... I
will admit the testimony of Dodridge, but not his
opinions. So of Luther and Calvin.

I do, indeed, especially quote the concessions
of Pedo-baptists and other opponents, with con-
siderable deference to their judgment in such
matters, as are against their practice and against
their interests; for men seldom make such concessions
unless the force of evidence is very strong and over-
whelming. 75

Summary. Throughout the debate Campbell primarily

75 Ibid., p. 163.
resorted to authority as evidence in support of his arguments. In fact, at times, he can be criticized for introducing too many authorities. He did select outstanding sources, however, and exhibited wisdom in utilizing those who were not affiliated with religious groups which believed the doctrines he upheld. He showed skill in using the Bible, but was not consistent in employing the church fathers. He attempted to show why his evidence was authoritative. One of the reasons why the published debate had such an extensive circulation, and is still in print, is the fact that it contains such an abundance of evidence upon his side of the propositions.

**ETHICAL AND PATHETIC PROOF**

There can be no doubt that Campbell was concerned with gaining as many new supporters for the Restoration Movement as possible. He was working for a verdict. After the debate was over, both sides claimed a complete victory; but Campbell, in an article in the *Millennial Harbinger*, gave his idea on how the contest should be judged:

In all this puffing, this main argument was, however, wanting. How many of the enemy were taken? Did any one or more go over to the side of presbyterianism? . . . An occurrence in Nashville set this argument in a fair light. I once had a public talk there with the late Obadiah Jennings, D.D., in which I was, as usual, gloriously defeated. The city rang with presbyterian acclamations for some ten days, when an aged citizen accosted one of the boasters in the following style:—'You, Presbyterians, have gained a victory.
"Counting the scalps" certainly showed that Campbell was concerned about influencing belief and getting action from his auditors.

In order to gain acceptance for his view, Campbell knew it was necessary to have the good will of the audience. Because the debate was intensely partisan, perhaps it was impossible for him to succeed completely. Nevertheless, many of his statements suggest that he was attempting to gain the favor of those present.

Campbell claimed that he was fighting for truth and not for victory. He always spoke in terms of "truth" and never "my doctrines." In fact, when Rice said, "Mr. Campbell's church," Campbell objected by saying that he did not have a church. On many occasions he made such statements as the following:

I stand, sir, for the defense of truth -- God's own soul-redeeming truth. It is for what is written in this book, I stand up here. When convicted of any error or false position, which I may have assumed, I will, sir, gladly retreat from it. I fight not for victory. I plead for truth. I would a thousand times rather, where it is possible, be vanquished with the truth, than to triumph with error. Before heaven and earth I lift up my voice for the truth of this holy book. I will stand by it,

76 *Millennial Harbinger*, First Series, I (1844), 9.
that it may stand by me; for that alone can strengthen man in the day of trial.\textsuperscript{77}

He continued to emphasize that he had no personal motives for engaging the controversy. By this technique, Campbell attempted to associate himself and message with that which is virtuous and elevated.

Relying upon authority derived from personal experience is another recognized method which Campbell used to impress the audience with his character.\textsuperscript{78} Campbell had been reared a Presbyterian in northern Ireland, but had left that denomination when he came to America. He frequently spoke of his former religious connection and of his earlier belief of the doctrines which Rice was advocating. He said:

\begin{quote}
I was once a Presbyterian, fully imbued with all the doctrines of the church. Its catechisms were as familiar as household words. My understanding, my conscience, my affections were all baptized in the fount of pure orthodox Presbyterianism. I experimentally knew the struggle, the inward conflict, of calling in question any of its sage decisions. I traveled over all the ground more than thirty years ago.\textsuperscript{79}
\end{quote}

Rice sought to nullify Campbell's use of personal experience by declaring:

I find myself doubting, whether he was a \textit{bona fide}

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\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Campbell-Rice Debate}, p. 506.
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\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Campbell-Rice Debate}, p. 100.
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Presbyterian. Presbyterianism I once heard, very appropriately, compared to a kind of grass that grows in some parts of the South, which is said to be very valuable, but if once it becomes fairly set, there is no such thing as rooting it out. If a man ever become a genuine Presbyterian it will stick by him, living and dying.\textsuperscript{80}

Campbell answered:

\textit{... This is dangerous ground... I would not for this commonwealth say that I will never change. God gave us two ears, Mr. President, and he put one on each side of our heads. I move, sir, that we keep them there, and do not put them both on one side. I believe, sir, that we should not only hear on both sides, but that we ought to hear both sides, and whenever enlightened act.}\textsuperscript{81}

In spite of Rice's criticism, Campbell continued to employ his personal experience in leaving the Presbyterian church as a means of convincing the auditors of his sincerity. He claimed that he was not discussing mere theory, but doctrines which he had once firmly understood and believed.

Furthermore, Campbell attempted to appeal to the common sense of the audience; that is, after giving arguments from the Bible and from theological writers, he sought to connect his position with human reason. For example, in the discussion of the administrator of baptism, Campbell gave passages of Scripture which he affirmed taught that others besides a clergyman could perform baptism. Thereupon he quoted the opinions of Whatley. He

\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 204.

did not even stop there but cited the following case of Roger Williams:

There was not an immersed believer in all Providence plantation, in all the district of country known to any of this little band of believers. The question with them was, "What shall we do? We all believe the gospel, we all desire to be baptized, but there is no one to baptize us. Shall we send one to England to be immersed, and await his return, or now immediately baptize each other and form a church. . . . They obeyed common sense and the Bible . . . Had the patriarch of Constantinople, or the pope of Rome, or his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, been present . . . and performed the service, it would, to say the least, have been no better done.82

By this technique, Campbell sought to relate his position to the good judgment of his listeners. After many of his arguments, Campbell boasted, "I have good Dr. Common Sense with me, and he will make it plain to all."83 Such a method increases the confidence of the audience in the speaker.84

Campbell's attitude toward his opponent, however, did not help him to gain the support of the audience. He had been disappointed when Rice was selected, and this attitude is evident during the debate. He frequently criticized Rice's manner of debating. Campbell was often justified in complaining, but not to the extent which he

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82 Ibid., p. 585.
83 Ibid., p. 666.
84 Thonssen and Baird, op. cit., p. 386.
did. In contrast to the Owen and Purcell debates in which Campbell frequently complimented his opponent, he now turned to invective. His attitude can be partly understood because of Rice's feeling toward Campbell. Rice accused him of carrying on the Restoration Movement for money, of fatally deceiving thousands, and of being insincere. Campbell, on his part, made just as many charges against Rice. He always apologized to the audience for "descending from the high plane of discussion," but he did "descend." Possibly there is something to be gained in criticizing the opponent, but Campbell carried it so far that perhaps Rice was justified in saying he was only attempting to "brow-beat and confuse me."\textsuperscript{85}

Summary. Although Campbell's age, experience, and reputation were all in his favor in this discussion, he attempted to increase his ethical appeal in his speeches. He emphasized his desire for truth and his willingness to accept it, he relied upon his personal experience, and appealed to the common sense of the audience. His attitude toward Rice, whether justified or not, was not good ethical strategy.

Pathetic Proof. Campbell also used pathetic appeal because he attempted to make the audience want to believe

\textsuperscript{85} Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 249.
his position; that is, he sought to connect his arguments with the basic needs and wants of his auditors. As in the other debates, pathetic appeals did not dominate, nevertheless, they were present.

Perhaps his predominate appeal was directed at love of freedom and desire for independence, not in a political sense but in a religious one. He pictured the religious world as chained to human creeds and customs. Through infant baptism and the doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit people were brought into the church without their consent. Such doctrines, he charged, denied man freedom of action because it took away from him the power of choice. The doctrines which he advocated recognized human liberty. He declared:

No one can be physically or metaphysically brought into or cast out of Christ's church. . . . There is, too, an inexpressible pleasure in acting for one's self in making the christian profession. The feeling of our own responsibility, and of our coming, under a sense of it, into a new and everlasting relation to God, to angels and to men. We feel a thousand times more awful pleasure and high dignity, treating in our own person with our Redeemer, without any interfering earthly mediator or negotiator. It is the highest enjoyment of personal liberty ever attained by mortal man, to have the privilege of signing the covenant with his own hand, and vowing with his own lips, eternal allegiance to him that had redeemed him, and tendered to him an everlasting life. . . .

86 Ibid., p. 323.
Campbell declared that men should think for themselves, and not be confined by human traditions. On one occasion he said:

Weak minds are the slaves of old times, and of old customs. They need the crutches of antiquity, and human authority. But men of vigorous minds ask, what is truth? not who says it. . . . it is an evidence, to my mind, at least that a man has some intelligence, and some force of intellect, when he has so much mental independence as to think for himself.87

He maintained that human creeds limit freedom of thought.

He pictured a creed handed to an individual with this admonition:

Brother you must never grow beyond the thirty-ninth article. If you go to the fortieth, we will cut you down or send you adrift. If you live three-score years and ten, remember, you must never think of the fortieth article. You must subscribe them all now at your birth, and subscribe no more at your death. If you should attain to the knowledge, and the gifts, and the graces of the sweet psalmist of Israel, you must never think of transcending those nine and thirty. . . .88

Furthermore, Campbell sought to connect his case to man's desire for happiness and joy. Speaking of faith, he said,

It is the spring and fountain of a thousand pure and holy pleasures. It throws new charms over heaven, earth and sea. It makes the heavens more bright, and gives new beauties to the earth. . . . It purifies the heart from all its unhallowed and polluting passions, and adorns human character with the most splendid virtues.89

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87 Ibid., p. 608.
88 Ibid., p. 823.
89 Ibid., p. 509.
Baptism was not a mere form, but "a birth into the family of God," in which the individual has "a rich estate, and much glory and blessing in store." Not only so, but "all the great, and noble, and honorable, and pure spirits, celestial and terrestrial, are his brethren and relatives." Campbell claimed that Rice's doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit was, "ne comforter of the soul."

Campbell continually wove into his arguments appeals for reverence and respect for divine authority. To him the debate was "grave," "solemn," "conducted in the sight of God." He said much about the authority of God, Christ, and the Bible, and he sought to maintain that his arguments were the only ones supported by divine authority. Rice, he charged, was upholding the "doctrines and commandments of men" while he was "contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

The success of the Restoration Movement was a basis of an appeal to the audience. Campbell sought to connect his doctrines with man's attitude toward success. That is, if you believe my position, you will be associated with rapidly growing group. He affirmed:

During some five and twenty years they [Restoration

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90 Ibid., p. 510.
principles have been publicly opposed in every form, and what has been the result. Often defeated, as our opponents say, while they always prove their positions, still they spread continually. They triumph everywhere, amongst all who give them a candid hearing — and they will continue to triumph till all partyism cease — till the whole Christian world shall bow together in one spacious temple.91

On another occasion he said:

The experiment for the time has been most successful. Probably not less than two hundred thousand persons of all the creeds, and parties, and various associations around us . . . have united in making the same confession . . . They are found, too in all the states of this immense union and its territories. They are found in the Canadas, and in all northern America. They are found in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales . . . 92

"Pure, primitive, Bible Christianity has had to fight its way down to us through a host of opponents," but, Campbell claimed, the Restoration Movement was carrying on in a successful way.

Summary. During the debate Campbell made effective use of pathetic proof, by appealing to basic human emotions, motives, and attitudes. He directed many of his arguments to man's desire for freedom and liberty, man's desire for happiness, to his feeling of respect and reverence, and to his love of success. Many of these appeals were woven into his logical arguments, but at times they were presented in an eloquent passage at the conclusion

91 Ibid., p. 264.
92 Ibid., p. 821.
of a speech. Even though Campbell's case did appeal to the understanding, it is evident that he was working for a verdict, and employed pathetic proof in order to achieve his end.

**REBUTTAL AND REFUTATION**

There were no set rebuttal speeches designated in the rules of the debate, but only the stipulation that the opening speeches in every proposition should be one hour in length, and the other speeches thirty minutes. Both debaters, therefore, could use any portion of their periods in the manner which they saw fit. As a general rule, rebuttal began in the first negative speech, and thereafter each speaker employed the first part of his thirty-minute speech for refutation.

As has already been pointed out, there was a sharp and sometimes heated clash upon many points, large and small. It was Rice's method to present counter-arguments when on the negative, in addition to attempting to answer those given by Campbell. Thus on the affirmative, Campbell had a double duty. He had to substantiate his own arguments, while attempting to demolish those of his opponent. Contrary to the situation in the Owen debate, rebuttal and refutation played an important part in this discussion.
While Campbell had a double duty in rebuttal, a substantiation of his own arguments was his main concern. He sought to justify his procedure by saying:

Whatever is advanced in reply to my arguments offered, or to my facts and documents submitted, I am bound to notice. Other matters, introduced by him, are only entitled to a mere complimentary notice. . . . If a person were obliged to advert to every thing which his respondent may please to throw in his way, he would travel very slowly indeed. 93

He did reply to Rice's counter arguments, however, oftentimes by grouping them under a single head. For example, he said, "when there are many things of the same class, it is not necessary to respond to them individually . . . I will, in such case, select the strongest particular introduced." 94 Thus, when Rice presented a number of passages which said people are saved by faith, Campbell selected only one and attempted to show that the faith mentioned was an "active faith" and therefore included baptism.

Most of Campbell's rebuttal technique was direct; that is, he attempted to cast out Rice's objections. Yet, he sought to leave a strong argument on the ruins of an objection he had destroyed. In rebuttal, Campbell was essentially a builder. He never took up a point merely for the sake of argument; if refutation would not advance

93 Ibid., p. 247.
94 Ibid., p. 652.
his cause, he ignored the point.

Campbell utilized most of the special techniques of refutation. Perhaps he employed *reductio ad absurdum* and turning the tables more frequently than any of the others. As a rule, he stated the contested point, gave his refutation, and then sought to tie the refuted point into his case.

Oftentimes Campbell merely presented more material upon a point which Rice had denied. For example, Campbell referred to the Westminster Confession of Faith as the constitution of the Presbyterian church. Rice said that it was not the constitution, but only the opinions of some learned men of his church. In the next speech, however, Campbell read the title page of the book which used the word "constitution," gave the history of its formation and adoption, and cited several Presbyterian courts which called it "the constitution."

Campbell was able to analyze an opposing argument and expose the inconsistencies in it. For example, Rice contended that infant baptism was authorized by the Bible because it said that Lydia and her family were baptized. Campbell answered by saying:

Mr. Rice assumes, that Lydia was a married lady; in the second place, he assumes that she had children; in the third place, he assumes that she had infant children; and in the fourth place, that those infants were baptized on her faith. Give me
four assumptions like these, and what can I not prove? He also accused Rice of being inconsistent in his doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. Rice, he charged, believed that conversion was independent of the Bible, and yet he was a preacher.

There are some examples of Campbell's use of the dilemma, even though he did not employ dilemma as often as the other techniques. As an illustration, Rice argued that baptism was the door of the church, and that infants should be baptised because they were circumcised in Old Testament times. Campbell gradually maneuvered Rice into a dilemma, for he said that circumcision did not make the infants members of the Old Testament institution, but affiliation was theirs by right of birth. When Campbell pressed him on the figure, Rice said that infants of Presbyterians were in the church by right of their physical birth. Then Campbell questioned:

If Presbyterian infants are born in Christ's church, by virtue of the flesh of one of their parents, and if baptism be still regarded substantially as a door, into what does it introduce them?

An example of his application of reductio ad absurdum is found in the conflict of the meaning of the word word baptizo. Campbell affirmed that it meant "to dip,"

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95 Ibid., p. 395.

96 Ibid., p. 674.
"to plunge" or "to immerse." Rice admitted that one of the meanings was "to dip," but maintained that it sometimes meant "to wash," "to sprinkle" and "to purify."

Campbell answered by saying:

According to the philology of Mr. Rice, no ordinary man could satisfactorily prove either that the Messiah commanded the mystic loaf to be eaten, or that his apostles ate it after the last passover. To common minds, the language appears perspicuous and satisfactory; but to learned men, like my respondent, it is peculiarly mysterious and unintelligible. . . . when the precept, after the benediction of the loaf -- Take eat, this is my body. Here, says he, is the difficulty. The term eat is a generic term, and has many meanings. I own, says he, it sometimes means to take a substance into the mouth and masticate it; but is it not applied to acids also? . . . Again, is not a cancer said to eat up a person's flesh. . . . Now, that baptizo to dip is as plain as phago, to eat, every unprejudiced Jew and gentile on earth knows. What a glorious uncertainty a person of a little ingenuity and learning may throw around the Christian law.\(^97\)

Rice, however, got out of the difficulty with ease. He simply said, "The apostles were not acids."

The technique which Campbell employed most frequently in rebuttal was to incorporate his opponent's argument into his own case, a device usually called turning the tables. For example, Rice offered as a counter argument on the operation of the Holy Spirit, that God created Adam by a miracle, and that in the progress of regeneration He could perform a miracle again. Campbell agreed that God could perform a miracle, but attempted to

\(^{97}\) Ibid., p. 232.
prove that the age of miracles was over. He added, "It is not the origination of a new constitution, but a change of heart, a transformation moral that we are inquiring into." In the discussion on human creeds, Rice stated that creeds were necessary in order to have unity, charging that Campbell had in his church men who had all different types of opinions. Campbell turned the tables in answering by saying, "It is not the object of our efforts to make men think alike on a thousand themes. Let men think as they please on any matters of human opinions, and upon the 'doctrines of religion,' provided only they hold The Head Christ, and keep his commandments."99

**Summary.** Throughout all of his rebuttal efforts, Campbell was seeking to build his arguments; he never sought merely to answer his opponent. His philosophy was to ignore all of the minor points, and once he had answered a major objection to leave it. He used all of the special methods of refutation. Often on a contested point he would give more evidence and expose inconsistencies. The two special techniques he employed most were *reductio ad absurdum* and turning the tables. In the refutation

98 Ibid., p. 653.
99 Ibid., p. 797.
of a given point, Campbell usually stated it, gave his answer, and attempted to incorporate it into his case. In all of his rebuttal efforts, there is ample evidence to conclude that he was familiar with both sides of the arguments.

Two weaknesses are apparent, however, in Campbell's refutation techniques. First, he did pass over too lightly many of the objections which Rice made. When Rice spent almost an entire speech on a point, and Campbell only briefly mentioned it because he said it was irrelevant and minor, it is doubtful that the audience always agreed with him. To some it might have seemed that Campbell could not answer.

Second, once Campbell answered a point, he rarely came back to it. Rice, however, after Campbell had answered an argument, often made some witty remark and repeated his objection with as much emphasis as before. Campbell complained about "assertion and re-assertion" but continued with other matters. Because of Campbell's failure in this regard, many of his rebuttal arguments must not have been as prominent in the minds of the audience as they should have been.

The rebuttal periods in this debate were important and interesting because there was a violent disagreement on every point. Campbell sought to select only what he considered were the main arguments to attack, letting the
others pass with little or no notice. Both speakers, however, concluded the discussion by saying that none of their arguments had been answered.

AUDIENCE ADAPTATION

As in the case of the Owen and Purcell debates, Campbell in this discussion was concerned with two audiences, those present and the larger reading public. His interest in his immediate auditors is attested by his occasional compliment, by direct statements to them, and by including them in illustrations. On one occasion he spoke of Lexington as the "Athens of Kentucky" and told of the social, literary, and moral advantages there. 100

Campbell, however, was just as interested in the reading public as in those present. Many times he said, "We must not forget that we are furnishing a new book on baptism, and other matters connected therewith. We must, therefore, have supreme regard to that as we proceed." 101

Again he emphasized:

What is said here is to be read by all parties; and my only desire on that subject is that the book may be read impartially, and that the argument may be duly weighed on both sides. Let every man take up the book and read it candidly, decide according to evidence and fact, and then let him act in perfect harmony with his convictions; and may the Lord bless him in so doing. 102

100 Ibid., p. 426.
101 Ibid., p. 86.
102 Ibid., p. 657.
He was interested in the reading public, even to the extent of giving directions as to how the book should be read. As has been suggested before, maximum effectiveness can be achieved only by concentrating on the immediate audience. In this debate, for example, Campbell was not as effective as possible with those present because he did not center his entire attention upon them. At least two failures in audience adaptation can be traced to Campbell's concern about the reading public.

Campbell was so concerned about getting his detailed material into the book in a correct form that he read his four first affirmative speeches from manuscript. In a Presbyterian paper after the debate, Rice said, "Mr. Campbell had written, with great care, his four introductory speeches, which he read to the audience. . . ." 103 Rice did not wait until after the discussion to criticize Campbell for reading:

It is truly marvelous, that one of the greatest debaters of the age—-one who has, for the last thirty years, been engaged in this species of controversy, should find it necessary to read his arguments! Is it true, that he had his defence of immersion prepared, "cut and dried," before the discussion commenced, to be read to the audience? Cannot my friend sustain his cause by any other means? I never heard of but one man reading a speech in Congress; and I believe every body laughed at him. 104

103 The Protestant and Herald, July 25, 1844.
104 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 187.
Campbell defended himself by saying:

My reading, it seems, is a great annoyance to my friend. The more concentrated arguments, exhibited in that form, require a more special attention than, as yet, he has bestowed on any thing I have advanced. . . . I have no preference for reading . . . the one great reason of my presenting some of these arguments in this form is, that they abound in criticism and matters somewhat minute, requiring great accuracy, which no stenographer in Christendom could rationally be expected to report accurately. 105

With firmness he said, "I am neither to be allured nor driven from my course, to suit the convenience of my worthy friend." 106

Campbell continued to read his affirmative arguments, even though Rice persisted in making such statements as, "He is making a book for posterity! He does not speak for the multitude. I go for present effect and for future effect; and I think I shall be understood, and my arguments appreciated by those who hear me." 107

Not only did he read, but some of his arguments and evidence were not suited to the immediate audience. For example, his long and exceedingly technical argument upon the meaning of baptism must have been difficult for auditors to follow. Also, on some points he introduced

105 Ibid., p. 194.
106 Ibid.
107 Ibid., p. 303.
as many as twenty-five different authorities. While this technique made the book a valuable source of material, it did not help persuade the immediate audience.

Even though Campbell said, "Like Saint Anthony, we might just as well preach to the fish, as to any community, unless we speak to it in their own language, and in terms which they can understand," he was not always guided by his principle. He can be criticized again for his use of Latin phrases. Also, Campbell did not hesitate to bring the full force of his extensive vocabulary into play. His language did not present any difficulty to the two language professors whom he recognized in the audience, but it probably was not always meaningful for the part of the audience which he classed as "uneducated and unlearned."

In spite of some of Campbell's failures at adapting his material to the audience, there are some good points which are worthy of notice.

If he felt that a statement was not clear, he went back and gave a detailed explanation. For example he said:

I am told, however, I am not fully understood on the oft repeated and important distinction of generic and specific terms. I shall, therefore, once for all, more fully deliver myself on this essential difference.109

108 Ibid., p. 369.
109 Ibid., p. 99.
Then Campbell gave a detailed exposition on the differences in the terms. The same technique was often applied to arguments.

Campbell attempted to make his material interesting and vivid by the use of figures of speech and picturesque language. For example he referred to the Arian creed as "the vagaries of these moon-struck theologians." Of the operation of the Holy Spirit on infants, he said, "These infant regenerators are lame in both limbs, in the right limb of faith, and in the left limb of philosophy of mind. They move on crutches, and broken crutches, too." Speaking of a doctrinal difference between Rome and Constantinople, he declared, "it became so sublimated, that the metaphysical doctors, through the finest spectacles, have long since failed to comprehend or appreciate the difference."

Closely associated with this technique was his use of "purple patches," highly emotional and imaginative language in extended descriptions of God, Christ, liberty, truth and the Bible. Rice referred to them as "vague declamations," but many less prejudiced spoke of their

110 Ibid., p. 796.
111 Ibid., p. 619.
112 Ibid., p. 767.
beauty. The extent of Campbell's eloquence at times can be seen by the following passage on truth:

Truth, my friends, holy truth, stands upon the Rock of Ages. It lifts its head above the clouds--above the stars. It communes with God. It holds sweet converse with the hierarchies around the throne of the Eternal King; with those elders, sons of light, and with the spirits of the mighty dead. It is the bright effluence of the bright essence of the uncreated mind. God spoke, and Truth was born. Its days are the years of God. Embodied in the Word of God, it came down from heaven and became incarnate. It is, therefore, immortal, and cannot be killed. It will survive all its foes, and stands erect when every idol falls. No one knows its gigantic strength. It has been cast down, but never destroyed. For ages, past, it has been gathering strength and preparing for a mightier conflict yet, than times record. It needs no fleshly wisdom, nor worldly policy, to give it power or to gain it victory. It is itself, redeeming, soul-redeeming, and dis-enthralling. It has passed through fire, and flood and tempest, and is as fresh, as fair, as beautiful, and as puissant, as ever. I feel myself peculiarly happy in being permitted, in being honored, to stand up for it, when most insulted and disparaged by its professed friends. He that defends it, feels the strength of mountains, as though girded with the everlasting hills. It gives him more than moral strength, and enlarges his benevolence wide as humanity itself.

Such passages usually came at the end of Campbell's speeches, and they were always in harmony with the point he had presented.

113 Richardson quotes a high dignitary in the Episcopal Church who wrote an article in the Protestant Churchman who spoke of the thrilling and magnificent passages in Campbell's efforts. Richardson, op. cit., II, 515.

114 Campbell-Rice Debate, p. 892.
Campbell also employed examples as a means of adapting his material to the audience. He attempted to simplify his complex arguments by the use of examples. Most of these were drawn from nature, history, or government. To illustrate his doctrine of the Holy Spirit operating only through the Bible, he gave the following example:

If I see a man take an axe and fell a tree, I call the axe the instrument, and I say, whatever power he puts forth in felling the tree is put forth through the axe. Not one chip is removed without it. This illustrates so much of the subject as pertains to instrumentality.115

On occasions, Campbell utilized most of the methods of audience adaptation except humor. There are only three times recorded in the debate when Campbell made the audience laugh, and then by accident. Rice, on the other hand, had them laughing in most of his speeches, usually at Campbell's expense. Campbell rebuked Rice for causing laughter over matters "involving the world's destiny," and never employed humor himself.

Summary. Campbell was concerned about those who read the debate more than about the people in daily attendance. This divided interest led him into practices not effective with the immediate audience. He read his first affirmative speeches, introduced material not

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115 Ibid., p. 719.
suitable to a popular audience, and introduced too much evidence upon many points. In spite of this, however, there are many good points about his attention to the immediate audience. He often gave detailed explanations, used picturesque language, employed examples, and declaimed many eloquent passages at the close of his speeches. He employed most of the common methods of amplification with the exception of humor.
CHAPTER VI

AN EVALUATION OF ALEXANDER CAMPBELL AS A DEBATER

Once the Great Revival was over, the spirit of frontier character, the presence of numerous religious groups struggling for supremacy gave rise to a period of religious controversy in the Old Southwest. When Alexander Campbell and others in 1809 began a movement to "restore New Testament Christianity" it was almost impossible for them to avoid controversy. Alexander Campbell, because of his training and experience was well qualified for the role of a religious debater. He accepted this technique as a means of advancing his religious views, and especially through the Owen, Purcell and Rice debates gained great fame as a controversialist. Was Alexander Campbell an effective debater?

After each debate both contestants and their friends claimed a complete victory. Robert Owen wrote after his discussion with Campbell, "several new converts to baptism were plunged over head by him in the waters of the canal and of the Ohio." Owen then questioned, "Is it not melancholy to see some of the finest faculties of human nature thus deranged?" Yet Owen affirmed that the

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1 Robert Owen, Robert Owen's Opening Speech, and his Reply to the Rev. Alex. Campbell, 163.
intelligent part of the community regarded skepticism as having triumphed in the discussion.2

After the Purcell debate, a group of eighty men met and passed five resolutions which in effect stated that Campbell had been the champion of the discussion.3 However, the Roman Catholics of Cincinnati held a celebration and presented Purcell with a silver plate in honor of his triumph.4 Campbell's friends made much of the fact that during the Rice discussion a Lutheran minister was immersed,5 but in 1847 when Henry Clay was sprinkled, the Presbyterians rejoiced.6 The religious papers of both groups after each debate proclaimed the success of their doctrines.

Because of bias, therefore, contemporary testimony is of little value in determining Campbell's effectiveness as a debater. From a study of the Owen, Purcell, and Rice debates, however, it is possible to evaluate Campbell as a controversialist.

Even though Campbell always disclaimed being the "challenger," it is obvious that Campbell was to some

2 Ibid., p. 145.
3 Cincinnati Whig and Intelligencer, January 26, 1837.
4 Cincinnati Western Christian Advocate, May 17, 1837.
5 Millennial Harbinger, Third Series, I (1844), 9.
6 Louisville, The Presbyterian Exposition, January 5, 1847.
degree responsible for the Owen, Purcell, and Rice debates. In each case he skillfully maneuvered the opposition into the position of issuing the challenge. Since the earlier Walker debate, Campbell looked upon theological discussions as an effective technique by which to disseminate his views. He later wrote, "We are fully persuaded that a week's debating is worth a year's preaching... for the purpose of disseminating truth and putting error out of countenance." 7

Campbell had, however, many opportunities for debate which he refused. For he felt that debate was of value only when he had a qualified man as an opponent. Only when convinced that he had an outstanding man would he consent to debate.

Once an opponent had been agreed upon, Campbell insisted that the debate be conducted in a more or less formal manner; that is, he demanded that rules be drawn up, moderators appointed, and a stenographer employed to take down the discussion in shorthand so that the debate could be published. As a rule both speakers appointed an equal number of moderators and those selected chose a presiding moderator. The moderators had the power to call the speakers to order as well as to decide controverted

7 John T. Brown, Churches of Christ (Louisville, 1904), 67.
questions which might arise. However, they influenced the course of the debates but little.

Judging by modern standards, Campbell was not much concerned about the wording of the propositions to be discussed. He accepted Owen's vague propositions without change, and even though he wrote the questions for the Purcell debate, they were faulty. The questions for the Purcell debate were long and overlapping, and they contained too many ambiguous terms. In reality, the propositions in the Owen and Purcell debates were not discussed. Only in the Rice debate were the propositions clear and well stated.

Campbell's strength lay in analysis, organization, and in gathering material. Consequently, if his opponent accepted his analysis, in spite of faulty propositions, the issue was clear and the clash was distinct. When on the affirmative, as he was in reality on all but two propositions in the three debates, Campbell excluded irrelevant matter, drew up debatable issues, and assumed the burden of proof. Only in the Rice debate, however, did he distinctly define the terms of the propositions. Campbell always adhered to his analysis because he considered it the duty of the affirmative to lead the way and that of the negative to follow. He was skillful in analysis, in that he was able to state the points of differences in a distinct, concise manner.
Campbell took great care with organization. Aside from the failure to have an introduction and conclusion in the Purcell debate, there are no major faults to be found in his organization. His over-all organization was effective and he followed a systematic procedure in stating arguments and introducing evidence. Rarely turning aside to quibble, he concentrated on the main issues which he had adduced.

As a rule Campbell tended to present too many separate arguments on a question. For example, in the Rice debate on the mode of baptism, he introduced thirteen different arguments. Generally many of his arguments could have been combined, and some excluded altogether. Campbell's numerous arguments coupled with the abundant evidence which he presented accounted for the great length of the debates. Nevertheless he was always pressed for time. In the Rice debate, he requested six hours a day for debate instead of four. Rice wisely refused to grant the extra time, but Campbell complained after the debate that he had been treated unfairly.8

Aside from the discussion on the meaning of baptism, of the Holy Spirit, and of "human creeds" in the

8 Millennial Harbinger, Third Series, I (1844), 445.
Rice debate, most of Campbell's arguments were the standard arguments used by many writers. The greater number of his arguments, for example, on the evidences of Christianity were taken from recognized theological writers. Campbell did not make any claim to originality, but rather boasted that he was "surrounded by such a host of scholars."

Campbell's arguments seem to have been carefully planned before the debates. Once he assumed a line of reasoning, he was not to be shaken from it. The following appropriate contrast of Campbell and Rice appeared in the *Protestant Churchman*, an Episcopalian publication:

Mr. Campbell was like a heavy Dutch-built man-of-war, carrying many guns, and of a very large calibre; whilst Mr. Rice resembled a daring and active Yankee privateer, who contrived, by the liveliness of his movements and the ease with which he could take up his position for a raking fire, to leave his more cumbrous adversary in a very crippled condition at the close of the fight.

Since neither Owen nor Purcell was a "daring and active Yankee privateer," Campbell's argumentative technique appeared to greater advantage in his discussions with them than in the Rice debate. In spite of the fact that after the Rice debate Campbell said, "I am truly sorry that I had not a more argumentative and magnanimous opponent,"

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9 Quoted in *Millennial Harbinger*, Third Series, I (1844), 326.

seemingly Rice was the most skillful debater Campbell ever had for an opponent.

To Campbell, the most authoritative source of evidence was naturally the Bible—"the testimony of Christ will outweigh volumes." Campbell was wise in his use of the Bible in the Owen debate, and in the versions which he selected in the Purcell and Rice discussions. He exhibited great familiarity with the Bible, and great skill in applying and analyzing passages from the Scriptures. Yet the overwhelming amount of evidence was drawn from secular sources. Only on the questions of the meaning of baptism and the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Rice debate and the destruction of the Catholic church in the Purcell debate was Campbell’s evidence largely drawn from the Bible. Campbell’s failure to use the Bible more can be attributed to two reasons. First, it was his technique to select a few representative passages of Scripture upon the question involved and analyze them thoroughly, rather than briefly introduce an array of biblical quotations. Second, the Bible was not suitable evidence upon many of the propositions discussed. Even recognizing these explanations, however, Campbell can be criticized for not employing the Bible more frequently. The cardinal principle of the Restoration Movement was "the all sufficiency of the Scriptures" and it is somewhat inconsistent that Campbell did not make the Bible his
as a rule, however, he applied his secular authority wisely. He demonstrated wide knowledge of history and of theology. He quoted from ancient historians, church fathers, classical writers, skeptics, lexicographers, Bible commentators, reformers, and modern church leaders with readiness. Each of the three debates were only widely different subjects, and yet Campbell seemed to have completely mastered most of the material concerning them. Many of his sources were not primary, but were drawn from standard theological writers. The authenticity of his evidence was not challenged, however, except in the Purcell debate. On many occasions, Campbell employed the testimony of authorities affiliated with his opponent to advance his own cause. There are only a few examples in the last two debates of Campbell's using as authority those who were traditionally associated with the doctrines for which he was contending. As an over-all principle, however, Campbell had a tendency to utilize more evidence than was necessary. As a result, on many occasions his development appears to be tedious.

By the time of the Owen debate, Campbell had gained quite a reputation as a controversialist. Therefore both his reputation and appearance were inclined to give him a certain amount of ethical appeal at the beginning of
each of his last three debates. According to Rice, his fame as "the greatest debater of the age" placed him also at a slight disadvantage during the course of the speaking. It was difficult to live up to such a reputation.

Campbell was especially skillful, however, in the use of ethical proof. Without exception he attempted to associate his cause with truth, gave evidence of sincerity, and acted with tact and moderation. It is remarkable that in discussing three different highly explosive questions, that there is no indication in the printed record of Campbell's ever losing control over his emotions. His manner was more like that of a lawyer pleading his case before a jury, than a frontier preacher denouncing a rival.

Campbell did use pathetic proof, nevertheless, though it was rather subordinated to his logical and ethical appeals. He did seek to connect his arguments to basic human emotions. As a rule, pathetic appeals were centered mainly in the last proposition of the debate, but scattered examples are evident in most of his speeches. When appeals to the emotions were employed, they were usually woven into his logical argument. Except for a few instances in the Rice debate, there seems to be no conscious turning aside to stir the emotions of the audience. Campbell combined logical and pathetic proof by often founding an argument upon love of freedom, the dignity of man, or fear of persecution. Also he employed "loaded" or emotionally
packed words, and supporting material charged with emotional drive in connection with many of his arguments. The examples of pathetic proof found in the debates are effective. There can be little doubt but that Campbell could have been more persuasive with his immediate audience had he employed pathetic proof more extensively. Yet he can be commended for attempting to appeal more to reason than to emotion.

Because of the turn of events in the Owen debate, Campbell had little opportunity for rebuttal. In the Purcell and Rice debates rebuttal was important. Campbell seemed familiar with the position and arguments of his opponents. At least, he was not caught unaware by either their arguments or objections, and occasionally he engaged in anticipatory rebuttal. However, Campbell did not believe that it was necessary to respond to every opposing argument. He attempted to answer those which he felt directly concerned his position. He often criticized his opponents for being off the subject, of begging the question, or of paying too much attention to minor points. After such criticism he usually stated his theory of rebuttal and proceeded to develop his constructive case. He was more interested in advancing his own case than in merely answering objections. Once he recognized a strong opposing argument, however, he attacked with vigor. His method in rebuttal was direct. He rarely questioned either
the evidence or its source, but sought to show where his opponent's reasoning was faulty. The special methods of refutation most employed by Campbell were turning the tables and *reductio ad absurdum*. His technique in the latter method was remarkably similar in the three debates.

After Campbell had answered an argument he rarely came back to it. Usually in his summaries he presented his arguments as untouched. In most instances his opponents had attempted to answer his arguments, at times with telling effect. In failing to repeat his rebuttal material, Campbell was not adhering to good debate strategy.

Just as Campbell was strongest in analysis, organisation, and gathering material, he was weakest in audience adaptation. In each of the three debates Campbell was at least as much concerned with the reading public as with the immediate audience. Judging these discussions in terms of speaking situations, his failure to concentrate upon those present was a major fault. His interest in the published reports led him to read his affirmative speeches in the Rice debate, to introduce some arguments which he acknowledged were not for the audience but for the reading public, and to present in some instances an over abundance of evidence. Also, his concern about the book was a factor in his at times too rigid adherence to his analysis and organization.
It must be recognized, however, that Campbell's losses in terms of the immediate audience were gains in terms of the printed record. That is, some of the failures in audience adaptation appear as strong points in the book. The following statement by Richardson illustrates the point:

Whatever was the judgment of the discerning and impartial with regard to the discussion and the disputants, it is certain that the Presbyterians, as Mr. Rice himself had done throughout the debate, boasted of a complete victory on their side. . . . The sincerity of the Presbyterians in their convictions of success was well shown in the eagerness with which the Rev. J. H. Brown purchased for $2000 the copyright of the printed debate, and in the efforts with which for a time were made by them to circulate it.

It was soon found, however, that the effect of the printed discussion upon the public mind was quite different from what the party expected, and they were mortified to perceive that it was making many converts to Mr. Campbell's views, but none to Presbyterianism. Upon this, Mr. Brown gladly disposed of his copyright for a small sum to a member of the Christian Church at Jacksonville, Illinois, C. D. Roberts, who immediately printed a large edition of the work, which has been since patronized and circulated by the Reformers.11

Campbell can be criticized further for using pedantic terms and Latin and Greek words that did not help in clarifying his arguments. At times, according to present day standards, he tended to be too flowery, but many of his words were well chosen. Often, indeed, his language had remarkable force and beauty.

Campbell employed all of the techniques of amplification, repetition, restatement, examples, rhetorical questions, and figures of speech. But he used humor only in the Owen debate, and then not extensively.

Campbell had a "keen polemic turn" and seemed to relish theological controversy. For at least twenty-five years in his life he was an active participant in public debates. He debated Walker, McCalla, Jennings, Skinner, Lynn, and Underhill, but his most important discussions were with Owen, Purcell, and Rice. Campbell began the Restoration Movement at a time in which religious debates were popular, and he was equipped by background and training to be a participant. Perhaps his greatest fame in his own day came as a religious debater. Possibly also the Owen, Purcell, and Rice debates have had the most extensive circulation of any of his publications. At least, they are the Campbell books which have been most frequently in print during the last hundred and thirty years.

The Owen, Purcell, and Rice debates attracted great attention in their day. In spite of their length, they were attended by people from all parts of the nation. The newspapers carried daily reports, and often listed the arguments. They were exciting events, in which Campbell was contending for his concept of "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."
The majority of Campbell's associates looked upon his efforts as "the greatest since Paul." His debates no doubt furnished Restoration preachers with sermon material for many a year. It seems to be the tendency of some of the modern writers to minimize the importance of Campbell as a debater. Yet to fail to see Alexander Campbell as a controversialist is to omit one of the dominant phases of his career and to do an injustice to historical fact. In the opinion of this critic, Thomas W. Grafton correctly evaluated both Campbell and his debates when he said:

Whatever may be said against this mode of presenting and defending the truth to-day, it was made in Mr. Campbell's hands, and under the conditions of society prevailing at that time, a powerful instrument in stirring up the spirit of earnest investigation.  

12 Thomas W. Grafton, Alexander Campbell (St. Louis, 1897), 175.
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BIOGRAPHY

Carroll Brooks Ellis was born May 24, 1919, at Booneville, Mississippi. The family moved to Texas when he was four years old. He received his elementary education at Winnetka School in Dallas, Texas, and his secondary training at Sunset High School, Dallas, Texas. He received the B.S. degree from North Texas State Teachers College in 1941, and completed work on a Bible major at Abilene Christian College in the summer of 1943. He received the M.A. degree from Louisiana State University in the summer of 1945.

From 1941 to 1943 he was a teacher of speech in the Denton High School, Denton, Texas, and preached for the Church of Christ in Justin, Texas. Since September, 1943, he has been minister of the Church of Christ in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For the school years 1947-1948 and 1948-1949 he served on the speech faculty of Louisiana State University as an assistant.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Carroll Ellis

Major Field: Speech

Title of Thesis: THE CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKING OF ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination: August 4, 1949