WRITINGS OF NATHAN D BANGS

by Nathan D. Bangs

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Nathan D. Bangs, compiled for study and devotional reading.

76 Chapters

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Chapter 1

01.00 A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs, D.D (Later Expanded To Four Volumes -- DVM) FROM THE YEAR 1766 TO THE YEAR `1840.

THIRD EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED.

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob; and thy tabernacles, O Israel," Numbers 24:5.

"Behold, I send an Angel before thee -- beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not. -- If thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to thine enemies, and an adversary to thine adversaries," Exodus 23:20-22.

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01.01. Vol 1, Book 1

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs

Volume I From the Year 1766 to the Year 1792 Third Edition, Published in 1839

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[Transcriber Note: After considerable thought, and after having tried this and that method of dividing the various portions of this first book, of the four-volume work by Dr. Bangs, it has been finally decided to place the chapters in files titled as "Parts" with numbers to run consecutively through all four volumes. This was done to eliminate confusion resulting from the same Book number or Chapter number being repeatedly used in the author's volume and book divisions of this work. In this Table of Contents, I have inserted, within brackets, each Part of this electronic edition and its number to the right of the author's Chapter and number. -- DVM]

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END OF VOLUME ONE

01.01.01. Vol 1, Book 1, Chapter 01

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book I

CHAPTER 1 From 1766 to 1773 A a short account of the origin of Methodism in England -- Of the Rev. John Wesley -- His parentage, and first labor in the ministry.

Twenty-seven years had elapsed from the time Mr. Wesley formed the first Methodist society in London, when a few Methodist emigrants from Ireland formed themselves into a society in the city of New York. But before we proceed to detail the circumstances under which this society was formed, and the subsequent events in the history of Methodism in this country, it seems proper that we should trace its origin in England, and more especially notice some particulars in the life and labors of that great man of God, the Rev. John Wesley, who was the chief instrument in beginning and carrying forward this extensive revival of true religion. Without this, any history of Methodism would be incomplete. The Rev. John Wesley was the second son of Samuel and Susanna Wesley, and was born at Epworth, in Lincolnshire, June 17th, 1703, O. S. He received his first lessons of instruction from his mother, a woman admirably qualified for the right education and training of her children. His father was a learned and pious minister of the establishment, and his mother was not less strenuously attached than he to the doctrines, usages, and formularies of that church. In these principles the son was educated, and the impressions made upon his mind under the management of the skillful teachings of such a mother, and the guidance and example of such a father, were never wholly erased, but became the guiding principles, with some few deviations from strict conformity to the establishment, of his subsequent life. At the age of eleven, in the year 1714, he was dismissed from the immediate care of his mother, and placed at the Charter House, under the able tuition of Dr. Walker, with whom, on account of his sobriety and diligence in his studies, he became a great favorite. At the age of sixteen he entered college at Oxford, and soon gave evidence, by his progress in his studies, of that acuteness of intellect, and sternness of virtue, by which he was afterward so eminently distinguished. When about twenty years of age he began to think seriously of entering into holy orders; and accordingly, after consulting his father and mother, turned his attention to those books and studies which were best adapted to give him the needful information. In September, 1725, he was ordained a deacon, and the following year elected fellow of Lincoln College. He took his degree in February, 1727, and in 1728 was ordained a priest or presbyter in the Church of England. In 1729 he attended the meetings of a small society which had been formed at Oxford, in which were included his brother Charles and Mr. Morgan, for the purpose of assisting each other in their studies, and of consulting how they might employ their time to the best advantage. The same year he became a tutor in the college, received pupils, and presided as moderator in the disputations six times a week.

It was about this time, the society above named having attracted some attention from the regularity of their lives, and their efforts to do good to others, that some of the wits at Oxford applied to the members the name of Methodists, a name by which John Wesley and his followers have ever since been distinguished. Whatever might have suggested this name to those who first used it in

this application, whether in reference to an ancient sect of physicians, or to some Christians so called in the early days of the Reformation, it is no small recommendation of those who were thus designated at this time, that it was applied to them as descriptive of the rigidness with which they adhered to method in their studies, the regularity of their deportment, and their diligence in visiting the sick and the poor, with a view to relieve their wants, and impart to them religious instruction. Happy will it be for those who are still designated by the same descriptive appellation, if they shall continue to exemplify the same virtues, and the same pursuit after intellectual and spiritual improvement. It was not long after that the holiness of their lives gained for them a still more worthy epithet, namely, The Holy Club, and finally, on account of the frequency with which they commemorated the sufferings of their divine Master, that of Sacramentarians. These things, however, were so far from damping the ardor of their zeal, that they served only to reanimate them, with renewed courage, and stimulate them to perseverance in the discharge of their duties. In all these works John Wesley was the distinguished leader.

Passing over the events of his life which occurred during the remainder of the days he spent at Oxford, in which he continued to be characterized by his wisdom in counsel, his attachment to the Church, and his charity to the poor and the ignorant, I come to notice his missionary voyage to America. In the latter part of the year 1735; through the solicitation of General Oglethorpe, and the trustees for the new colony of Georgia, he consented to deny himself of the many advantages he enjoyed in the seclusion of Oxford, and to embark, in company with his brother Charles, on a missionary enterprise for that colony. Here they landed on the 6th of February, 1736. Of his fidelity in the cause of his Master here, the privations he suffered, and the good he was instrumental in doing, I need not speak in this sketch, as a full detail of them may be seen in his biography, by Mr. Moore and others. After remaining about one year and a half, baffled in his pious design of preaching the gospel to the heathen, misrepresented and persecuted by those who ought to have been his friends and defenders, and seeing no prospect of succeeding in his main design, which was to convert the Indians, he took leave of the Georgians, and arrived in London February 3, 1738. This voyage had its benefits. On his passage over to America, there being several Moravians on board, he had frequent opportunities of conversing with them, by which he learned "the way of God," particularly the way of justification through faith in Jesus Christ, and the necessity and privilege of the witness and fruits of the Holy Spirit "more perfectly." On his return to England he renewed his acquaintance with some of the Moravian ministers; and after much conversation, in which his objections to the above doctrines were fully obviated by appeals to Scripture and the experience of God’s children, he says, "About a quarter before nine," (in the evening,) "while one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans, where he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation: and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." About the same time his brother Charles was made a partaker of the like blessing.

Mr. Wesley had, from the time he had been convinced of the necessity of justification by faith in Christ, preached the doctrine to the people; but now since he was made a partaker of this great blessing, he began more earnestly and understandingly to proclaim aloud to sinners the "things he had seen and felt." As he had been much edified by the conversation of the Moravians, with a view to strengthen himself in the faith, he made a journey to Germany, visited Hernhuth, their principle

settlement, attended their meetings, and had free and full conversations with their most eminent men on the subject of experimental and practical godliness, by which his mind was much enlightened, and his heart established in the doctrine of justification by faith, and in the enjoyment of the witness and fruit of the Holy Spirit. After thus holding communion with these saints for some time, he returned to London in September, 1738.

Having no other plan of operations than simply to get and communicate all the good in his power, after his return from Germany, he began preaching more powerfully than ever the grand doctrines of Jesus Christ; and so pointed were his appeals to the consciences of the unregenerate, and earnest his exhortations to repentance, that the "offence of the cross" soon began to manifest itself, and he was given to understand that he could no longer preach in this, and then in another church. He then, in imitation of his brother Whitefield, went into the open fields, and Kensington Commons, and other places, were made to echo with the joyful sound of salvation by faith in the name of Jesus. Success crowned his efforts. Those who were awakened under his searching appeals to a sense of their danger came to him for advice; and as their number continually increased, he found it expedient to form them into a society; and in 1743 he drew up those rules which have continued to be the general rules 1of the societies, both in Europe and America, to this day, with one small exception. This was the first regular organization of societies by Mr. Wesley, and the formation of classes soon followed. Among those who were converted under his ministry, and joined his societies, were some young men "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," to whom it became manifest a "dispensation of the gospel was committed;" and though in consequence of his strong attachment to the established order of things in his church, he submitted with great reluctance to employ them, yet being convinced they were called of God to this work, he dare not refuse the help thus afforded him by the Head of the church. Hence originated the employment of lay-preachers, an irregularity for which Mr. Wesley suffered much persecution. As the work increased under his, his brother’s, and the labors of those preachers, to avoid confusion it became necessary to have a more digested plan of proceeding: this gave rise to calling the preachers together for conference, the first of which was held in London in June, 1744. From this time the work went on more rapidly than ever, and it soon spread throughout different parts of England and Wales.

It is by no means necessary, in this sketch of the rise and progress of Methodism in Great Britain, to enter into farther details; and even thus much has been given that the reader might see the root of that tree, the branches of which have since extended over this western hemisphere, and become a shelter for so many of the weary sons of apostate Adam, "who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them." Suffice it therefore to say, that Mr. Wesley continued his evangelical labors, assisted occasionally by a few pious clergymen of the establishment, among whom the most efficient was his brother Charles, and afterward Mr. Fletcher, and those whom God raised up from among his sons in the gospel, extending their labors to Ireland and Scotland, until, in 1766, a way opened for the introduction of this same gospel into America. At this time Methodism, under the skilful hand of the Wesleys, had received a regular shape, was known as a distinct denomination, though still adhering to the Church of England, and had adopted such a method of carrying forward its operations as to become a compact system, every part of which moved in obedience to him who, under God, had brought it into existence. I shall conclude this chapter with a few reflections.

1. It appears that the founder of Methodism was fully qualified for, and regularly called to his work.

2. That the work was eminently the work of God.

3. That Mr. Wesley was led into it without any previously digested plan of his own, but was conducted forward by the indications of divine Providence and grace, in the adoption of those measures, and the selection of those means, which arose out of the circumstances in which he was placed, and, which were evidently sanctioned of God for the spiritual good of mankind.

4. That he was so far from setting out in his career with a view of putting himself at the head of a sect, that his only object was to do good, to revive primitive Christianity in the church of which he was a minister, in conformity to the letter and spirit of its own articles of faith and formuluries of devotion. But that being opposed and persecuted by the carnal clergy of the establishment, as well as by Catholics and dissenters, he was forced either to disobey God by relinquishing his work, or to become the leader of a distinct sect. He wisely chose the latter, for which thousands will bless God in time and eternity.

ENDNOTE 1 These rules will be inserted in their proper place.

01.01.02. Vol 1, Book 1, Chapter 02

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book I

CHAPTER 2 From the introduction of Methodism into the city of New York, in 1766, to the landing of the first missionaries in 1769. The introduction of Methodism into these United States was attended with those circumstances which show how great events often result from comparatively insignificant causes. Like the entire structure of Methodism, it originated without any foresight of man, without any previous design in the instruments to bring about such an event, and without any of those previously devised plans which generally mark all human enterprises. And yet it will doubtlessly mark an era in the history of our country, on which its future historians will stop and pause, as having a bearing, it is hoped for good, on its destinies. The spirit of discontent had already begun to vent itself in low murmurings and secret whispers against the supposed wrongs and oppressions of the mother country, when Methodism commenced its leavening influence on the minds of a few obscure persons in the city of New York. And although it formed no part of the design of its disciples to enter into the political speculations of the day, nor to intermeddle with the civil affairs of the country, yet it is thought that its extensive spread in this country, the hallowing influence it has exerted on society in uniting in one compact body so many members, through the medium of an itinerant ministry, interchanging from north to south, and from east to west, has contributed not a little to the union and prosperity of the nation.

Let us, however, hasten to lay before the reader the facts and circumstances indicated at the head of this chapter.

We have already stated, that the first Methodist society was established in the city of New York, in the year 1766. This was done by a small number of pious emigrants from Ireland, who, previously to their removal to this [country], had been members of a Methodist society in their own country. Among their number was Mr. Philip Embury, a local preacher. Though they had been attached to Wesleyan Methodism at home, it appears that, on their arrival here, they came very near making "shipwreck of faith and a good conscience." They were strangers in a strange land; and not finding any pious acquaintances with whom they could associate, they gradually lost their relish for divine things, and sunk away into the spirit of the world. In this state of lukewarmness and worldly mindedness they were found the next year on the arrival of another family from Ireland, among whom was a pious "mother in Israel," to whose zeal in the cause of God they were all indebted for the revival of the spirit of piety among them. Soon after her arrival, she ascertained that those who had preceded her had so far departed from their "first love" as to be mingling in the frivolities and sinful amusements of life. The knowledge of this painful fact aroused her indignation, and with a zeal which deserves commemoration, she suddenly entered, the room where they were assembled, seized the pack of cards with which they were playing, and threw them into the fire. Having thus unceremoniously destroyed their "playthings," she addressed herself to them in language of expostulation; and turning to Mr. Embury, she said, "You must preach to us, or we shall all go to hell together, and God will require our blood at your hands!" This pointed appeal had

its intended effect, in awaking his attention to the perilousness of their condition. Yet, as if to excuse himself from the performance of an obvious duty, he tremblingly replied, "I cannot preach, for I have neither a house nor congregation." "Preach in your own house first, and to our own company," was the reply. Feeling the responsibility of his situation, and not being able any longer to resist the importunities of his reprover, he consented to comply with her request; and accordingly preached his first sermon, "in his own hired house," to five persons only. This, it is believed, was the first Methodist sermon ever preached in America. As they continued to assemble together for mutual edification, so their numbers were gradually increased, and they were much comforted and strengthened by "exhorting one another daily." They were too few in number, however, to attract much public attention, and for some time they remained in apparent obscurity. As might be expected, they gradually gained more and more notoriety; for the name of WESLEY, as well as of METHODIST, was not unknown in this country; and the very reproach which was heaped upon him and his followers gave him and them a notoriety which otherwise they might never have gained. Notwithstanding, therefore, the fewness of their number, and the secluded manner in which they held their meetings, they soon found that they must either procure a larger place, or preclude many from their meetings who were desirous to attend. They accordingly rented a room in the neighborhood of larger dimensions, the expense of which was defrayed by voluntary contributions. Here they assembled for mutual edification, Mr. Embury continuing to lead their devotions, and to expound to them the word of God. An event happened about this time which tended to bring them more into notice, and to attract a greater number of hearers. This was the arrival of Captain Webb, an officer in the British army, at that time stationed in Albany, in the state of New York. He had been brought to the "knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins," under the ministry of Mr. Wesley, in Bristol, England, about the year 1765; and though a military character, such was his love for immortal souls, that he was constrained to declare unto them the loving-kindness of God. This he did, first to his fellow-soldiers, and afterward to all who were willing to hear him. His first appearance as a stranger among the "little flock" in New York, in his military costume, gave them no little uneasiness, as they were fearful that he had come to "spy out their liberties," or to interrupt them in their meetings; but when they saw him kneel in prayer, and otherwise participate with them in their worship, their fears subsided; and on forming a more intimate acquaintance, they found that Captain Webb had "partaken of like precious faith" with themselves. He was accordingly invited to preach. The novelty of his appearance in the badges of a military officer excited no little surprise. This, together with the energy with which he spoke in the name of the Lord, drew many to the place of worship, and the room where they assembled soon became too small to accommodate all who wished to hear. But what greatly encouraged them in their "work of faith and labor of love" was, that sinners were awakened and converted to God, and added to the society. These, continuing to walk in the "fellowship of the Holy Ghost," were much strengthened and comforted, while others who beheld their godly conversation were convinced of the power and excellence of their religion. To accommodate all who wished to hear, they next hired a rigging loft in William Street, and fitted it up for a place of public worship. Here they assembled for a considerable time, edified in faith and holiness by the labors of Mr. Embury, who was occasionally assisted by Capt. Webb. While the society were thus going forward in their work in New York, Capt. Webb made excursions upon Long Island, and even went as far as Philadelphia, preaching, wherever he could find an opening, the gospel of the Son of God, and success attended his labors, many being awakened to a sense

of their sinfulness through his pointed ministry, and brought to the knowledge of the truth. In consequence of the accession of numbers to the society, and hearers of the word, the rigging loft also became too small, and hence they began to consult together on the propriety of building a house of worship.

But, for the accomplishment of this pious undertaking, many difficulties were to be encountered. The members of the society were yet few in number and most of them of the poorer class, and of course had but a limited acquaintance and influence in the community. For some time a painful suspense kept them undetermined which way to act. But while all were deliberating on the most suitable means to be adopted to accomplish an object so desirable, and even necessary for their continued prosperity, an elderly lady,1 one of the Irish emigrants before mentioned, while fervently engaged in prayer for direction in this important enterprise, received, with inexpressible sweetness and power, this answer -- "I, the Lord, will do it." At the same time a plan was presented to her mind, which, on being submitted to the society, was generally approved of, and finally adopted. They proceeded to issue a subscription paper, waited on the mayor of the city and other opulent citizens, to whom they explained their object, and from them received such liberal donations as greatly encouraged them to proceed in their undertaking. Thus countenanced by their fellow citizens, they succeeded in purchasing several lots in John Street, on which they erected a house of worship, 80 feet in length and 42 in breadth calling it, from respect to the venerable founder of Methodism, WESLEY CHAPEL. Such, however, were the municipal relations in the province at that time, that they were not allowed to consecrate the house exclusively for divine worship; they therefore devoted a small portion of it to domestic purposes. This was the first meeting house ever erected by a Methodist congregation in America -- and this was built in the year 1768, and the first sermon was preached in it October 30, 1768, by Mr. Embury.

While this house was in progress, they felt the necessity of procuring the services of a more competent preacher. Though Mr. Embury was a zealous and good man, yet he had but moderate abilities as a preacher. He was obliged, moreover, to work with his own hands to support himself and family, and therefore could not devote his labors exclusively to the work of the ministry. To supply this deficiency the society wisely determined to apply to Mr. Wesley for help; and the following letter, signed T. T., will show the general state of the society, and the earnestness with which they solicited the requisite aid.

"New York, 11 April, 1768

"Rev. and Very Dear Sir, -- I intended writing to you for several weeks past; but a few of us had a very material transaction in view. I therefore postponed writing until I could give you a particular account thereof; this was the purchasing of ground for building a preaching house upon, which, by the blessing of God, we have now concluded. But before I proceed, I shall give you a short account of the state of religion in this city. By the best intelligence I can collect, there was little either of the form or power of it until Mr. Whitefield came over, thirty years ago; and even after his first and second visits, there appeared but little fruit of his labors. But during his visit fourteen or fifteen years ago, there was a considerable shaking among the dry bones. Divers were savingly converted; and this work was much increased in his last journey, about fourteen years since, when his words were really like a hammer and like a fire. Most part of the adults were stirred up: great numbers pricked to the heart, and, by a judgment of charity, several found peace and joy in

believing. The consequence of this work was, churches were crowded, and subscriptions raised for building new ones. Mr. Whitefield’s example provoked most of the ministers to a much greater degree of earnestness. And by the multitudes of people, old and young, rich and poor, flocking to the churches, religion became an honorable profession. There was now no outward cross to be taken up therein. Nay, a person who could not speak about the grace of God, and the new birth, was esteemed unfit for genteel company. But in a while, instead of pressing forward, and growing in grace, (as he exhorted them,) the generality were pleading for the remains of sin and the necessity of being in darkness. They esteemed their opinions as the very essentials of Christianity, and regarded not holiness, either of heart or life. The above appears to me to be a genuine account of the state of religion in New York eighteen months ago, when it pleased God to rouse up Mr. Embury to employ his talent (which for several years had been hid, as it were, in a napkin) by calling sinners to repentance, and exhorting believers to let their light shine before men. He spoke at first only in his own house. A few were soon collected together and joined into a little society, chiefly his own countrymen, Irish Germans. In about three months after, brother White and brother Souse, from Dublin, joined them. They then rented an empty room in their neighborhood, which was in the most infamous street in the city, adjoining the barracks. For some time few thought it worth their while to hear: but God so ordered it by his providence, that about fourteen months ago Captain Webb, barrack-master at Albany, (who was converted three years since at Bristol,) found them out, and preached in his regimentals. The novelty of a man preaching in a scarlet coat soon brought greater numbers to hear than the room could contain. But his doctrines were quite new to the hearers; for he told them point-blank, ’that all their knowledge and religion were not worth a rush, unless their sins were forgiven, and they had "the witness of God’s Spirit with theirs that they were the children of God." ’ This strange doctrine, with some peculiarities in his person, made him soon taken notice of; and obliged the little society to look out for a larger house to preach in. They soon found a place that had been built for a rigging house, sixty feet in length and eighteen in breadth.

"About this period Mr. Webb, whose wife’s relations lived at Jamaica, Long Island, took a house in that neighborhood, and began to preach in his own house, and several other places on Long Island. Within six months, about twenty-four persons received justifying grace, nearly half of them whites, -- the rest Negroes. While Mr. Webb was (to borrow his own phrase) ’felling trees on Long Island,’ brother Embury was exhorting all who attended on Thursday evenings, and Sundays, morning and evening, at the rigging house, to flee from the wrath to come. His hearers began to increase, and some gave heed to his report, about the time the gracious providence of God brought me safe to New York, after a very favorable passage of six weeks from Plymouth. It was the 26th day of October last, when I arrived, recommended to a person for lodging; I inquired of my host (who was a very religious man) if any Methodists were in New York; he answered that there was one Captain Webb, a strange sort of man, who lived on Long Island, and who sometimes preached at one Embury’s, at the rigging house. In a few days I found out Embury. I soon found of what spirit he was, and that he was personally acquainted with you and your doctrines, and that he had been a helper in Ireland. He had formed two classes, one of the men, and the other of the women, but had never met the society apart from the congregation, although there were six or seven men, and as many women, who had a clear sense of their acceptance in the Beloved.

You will not wonder at my being agreeably surprised in meeting with a few here who have been and desire again to be in connection with you. God only knows the weight of affliction I felt on leaving my native country. But I have reason now to conclude God intended all for my good. Ever since I left London, my load has been removed, and I have found a cheerfulness in being banished from all near and dear to me, and I made a new covenant with my God, that I would go to the utmost parts of the earth, provided he would raise up a people with whom I might join in his praise. On the great deep I found a more earnest desire to be united with the people of God than ever before. I made a resolution that God's people should be my people, and their God my God: and, bless his holy name, I have since experienced more heartfelt happiness than ever thought it possible to have on this side eternity. All anxious care about my dear wife and children is taken away. I cannot assist them, but I daily and hourly commend them to God in prayer, and I know he hears my prayers, by an answer of love in my heart. I find power daily to devote myself unto him; and I find power also to overcome sin. If any uneasiness at all affects me, it is because I can speak so little of so good a God.

"Mr. Embury lately has been more zealous than formerly; the consequence of which is, that he is more lively in preaching; and his gifts as well as graces are much increased. Great numbers of serious persons came to hear God's word as for their lives; and their numbers increased so fast that our house for six weeks past would not contain half the people.

"We had some consultations how to remedy this inconvenience, and Mr. Embury proposed renting a small lot of ground for twenty-one years, and to exert our utmost endeavors to build a wooden tabernacle; a piece of ground was proposed; the ground rent was agreed for, and the lease was to be executed in a few days. We, however, in the meantime, had several days for fasting and prayer, for the direction of God and his blessing on our proceedings; and Providence opened such a door as we had no expectation of. A young man, a sincere Christian and constant hearer, though not joined in society, not giving any thing toward this house, offered ten pounds to buy a lot of ground, went of his own accord to a lady who had two lots to sell, on one of which there is a house that rents for eighteen pounds per annum. He found the purchase money of the two lots was six hundred pounds, which she was willing should remain in the purchasers' possession, on good security. We called once more on God for his direction, and resolved to purchase the whole. There are eight of us who are joint purchasers: among whom Mr. Webb and Mr. Lupton are men of property. I was determined the house should be on the sa me footing as the orphan house at Newcastle, and others in England; but as we were ignorant how to draw the deeds, we purchased for us and our heirs, until a copy of the writing is sent us from England, which we desire may be sent by the first opportunity.

"Before we began to talk of building, the devil and his children were very peaceable: but since this affair took place many ministers have cursed us in the name of the Lord, and labored with all their might to stop their congregations from assisting us. But He that sitteth in the highest laughed them to scorn! Many have broken through, and given their friendly assistance. We have collected above one hundred pounds more than our own contributions; and have reason to hope in the whole we shall have two hundred pounds: but the house will cost four hundred pounds more, so that unless God is pleased to raise up friends we shall yet be at a loss. I believe Mr. Webb and Mr. Lupton will borrow or advance two hundred pounds, rather than the building should not go forward; but the interest of money here is a great burden -- being seven per cent Some of our brethren proposed

writing to you for a collection in England: but I was averse to this, as I well know our friends there are overburdened already. Yet so far I would earnestly beg: if you would intimate our circumstances to particular persons of ability, perhaps God would open their hearts to assist this infant society, and contribute to the first preaching house on the original Methodist plan in all America, (excepting Mr. Whitefield's orphan house in Georgia:) but I shall write no more on this subject.

"There is another point far more material, and in which I must importune your assistance, not only in my own name, but also in the name of the whole society. We want an able and experienced preacher; one who has both gifts and grace necessary for the work. God has not, indeed, despised the day of small things. There is a real work of grace begun in many hearts by the preaching of Mr. Webb and Mr. Embury; but although they are both useful, and their hearts in the work, they want many qualifications for such an undertaking; and the progress of the gospel here depends much upon the qualifications of preachers. In regard to a preacher, if possible we must have a man of wisdom, of sound faith, and a good disciplinarian: one whose heart and soul are in the work; and I doubt not but by the goodness of God such a flame will be soon kindled as would never stop until it reached the great South Sea. We may make many shifts to evade temporal inconveniences; but, cannot purchase such a preacher as I have described. Dear sir, I entreat you, for the good of thousands, to use your utmost endeavors to send one over. I would advise him to take shipping at Bristol, Liverpool, or Dublin, in the month of July, or early in August: by embarking at this season he will have fine weather in his passage, and probably arrive here in the month of September. He will see before winter what progress the gospel has made.

"With respect to money for the payment of the preachers' passage over, if they could not procure it, we would sell our coats and shirts to procure it for them.

"I most earnestly beg an interest in your prayers, and trust you, and many of our brethren, will not forget the church in this wilderness.

"I remain with sincere esteem, Rev. and dear sir, "Your very affectionate brother and servant, "T. T."

Mr. Wesley refers to these circumstances in his Works, and says, "Tuesday, August 1, our conference began at Leeds. On Thursday, I mentioned the case of our brethren in New York. For some years past, several of our brethren from England and Ireland, (and some of them preachers,) had settled in North America, and had in various places formed societies, particularly in Philadelphia and New York. The society at New York had lately built a commodious preaching house, and now desired our help, being in great want of money, but much more of preachers. Two of our preachers, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pillmore, willingly offered themselves for the service; by whom we determined to send over fifty pounds as a token of our brotherly love." These brethren, who were the first regular itinerant Methodist preachers who visited this country, landed at Gloucester Point, six miles below Philadelphia, October 24, 1769. They immediately entered upon their Master's work, Mr. Boardman taking his station in New York, and Mr. Pillmore in Philadelphia, occasionally changing with each other, and sometimes making short excursions into the country. They found a people ripe for the gospel; for in all places whither they went, multitudes flocked to hear the word, and many were induced to seek an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Having thus traced the commencement of this work of God in the city of New York, where the seeds of Methodism were first planted in American soil, we will turn our attention to another part of the Lord's vineyard, where similar efforts were made with the like success. About the same time that Mr. Embury was laying the foundation for this spiritual edifice in New York, and Captain Webb was, to use his own language, "felling the trees on Long Island," and some other places, Mr. Robert Strawbridge, another local preacher from Ireland, came over and settled in Frederick county, in Maryland; and being a pious and zealous man, he commenced preaching in his own house, and other private houses, the doctrines of Jesus Christ as held and taught by Mr. Wesley. His word was attended "with the power and demonstration of the Spirit," and very soon a society was collected of such as "desired to flee the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." Mr. Strawbridge succeeded in building a house of worship, near Pipe Greek, in Maryland, called the Log Meeting House, in which he continued for some time to preach to the people, and to watch over the society he had formed. The following anecdote is related of this good man by Mr. Garrettson: -- "He came to the house of a gentleman near where I lived to stay all night. I had never heard him preach; but as I had a great desire to be in company with a person who had caused so much talk in the country, I went over and sat and heard him converse until nearly midnight; and when I retired it was with these thoughts -- I have never spent a few hours so agreeably in my life. He spent most of the time in explaining Scripture, and in giving interesting anecdotes; and perhaps one of them will do to relate here A congregation came together in a certain place, and a gentleman who was hearing thought that the preacher had directed his whole sermon to him, and he retired home after the sermon in disgust. However, he concluded to hear him once more, and hide himself behind the people, so that the preacher should not see him; it was the old story -- his character was delineated. He retired dejected; but concluded that possibly the preacher saw him, and said, 'I will try him once more;' he did so, and hid himself behind the door. The preacher took for his text, 'And a man shall be as a hiding place, &c.' In the midst of the sermon, the preacher cried out, 'Sinner, come from your scouting hole!' The poor fellow came forward, looked the preacher in the face, and said, 'You are a wizard, and the devil is in you; I will hear you no more.'"

Thus was at foundation laid by these two men of God, [Philip Embury and Robert Strawbridge] who probably came to America for other purposes than that of preaching the gospel, for a permanent work of God in this country; and it was the Macedonian cry which was sent to England by these people, and more especially those in New York, which moved Mr. Wesley to send them, in answer to their petition, the help they so much needed.

ENDNOTES

1 The name of this pious woman was Hick, the mother of the late Paul Hick, who became a member of the Methodist E. Church in his youth, and was subsequently a class leader and trustee, in which offices he continued until near the close of life, and finally died in the triumphs of faith in the 74th year of his age. He has children and grandchildren now members of the church in the city of New York. He has often conversed with the writer respecting the circumstances and incidents of these early days of Methodism, with much apparent delight and gratitude. When quite a lad, his mother used to lead him by the hand to the meetings; and, said he, "the first sixpence I could ever call my own, I put into the plate which was carried around to receive the contributions of the people, and I felt, in so doing, an inexpressible pleasure." God abundantly rewarded him in after

life, with both temporal and spiritual blessings, and he lived to see this "seed of the kingdom spring up and bear fruit, even a hundredfold." Several of the facts above narrated were received by the writer from Mr. Hick and other members of the family.

01.01.03. Vol 1, Book 1, Chapter 03

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book I

CHAPTER 3 From the arrival of the first missionaries in 1769 to the first conference in 1773.

We have already seen that Messrs. Boardman and Pillmore, after their arrival, entered upon their respective fields of labor with ardor and success. After spending some time in Philadelphia, hearing of the labors of Mr. Strawbridge in Maryland, Mr. Pillmore paid him a visit, and endeavored to strengthen his hands in the Lord. After preaching to the people in that part of Maryland, and rejoicing in the good which had been effected by the labors of Mr. Strawbridge, he visited some parts of Virginia and North Carolina, where he preached with success, and formed some societies. Here he also found the people exceedingly attentive to the word of God, and manifesting a cordial feeling for those who preached it. After laboring a short time in those parts of the country, where he was much encouraged at the appearance of things, he returned to Philadelphia. The following letter, which he addressed to Mr. Wesley, will show the state of things here. The letter is dated, "Philadelphia, Oct. 31, 1769.

"Rev. Sir, -- By the blessing of God we are safely arrived here, after a tedious passage of nine weeks. We were not a little surprised to find Captain Webb in town, a society of about one hundred members, who desire to be in close connection with you. 'This is the Lord's doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes.'

I have preached several times, and the people flock to hear in multitudes. Sunday evening I went out upon the common. I had the stage appointed for the horse race for my pulpit, and I think between four and five thousand hearers, who heard with attention still as night. Blessed be God for field preaching. When I began to talk of preaching at 5 o'clock in the morning, the people thought it would not answer in America however, I resolved to try, and I had a very good congregation.

"There seems to be a great and effectual door opening in this country, and I hope many souls will be gathered in. The people in general like to hear the word, and seem to have ideas of salvation by grace." The above letter shows the good effects of Captain Webb's labor's in Philadelphia, for it seems he had been instrumental in collecting not less than one hundred souls into the society previously to the arrival of Mr. Pillmore. On coming to New York, Mr. Boardman found the society in a flourishing state under the labors of Mr. Embury. Mr. Boardman was a man of respectable talents as a preacher, of great simplicity and godly sincerity, and he entered upon his evangelical labors with a fair prospect of success, the people flocking to hear him with the utmost eagerness and attention. At this early stage of their labors in the ministry they commenced an interchange with each other, Mr. Pillmore coming to New York and Mr. Boardman going to Philadelphia. Having entered upon the charge of the society in New York, and making a fair trial among the people, on the 24th of April, 1770, he transmitted to Mr. Wesley the following account of the state of things in this city:

"Our house contains about seventeen hundred people. About a third part of those who attend get in; the rest are glad to hear without. There appears such a willingness in the Americans to hear the word as I never saw before. They have no preaching in some parts of the back settlements. I doubt not but an effectual door will be opened among them. O! may the Most High now give his Son the heathen for his inheritance. The number of the blacks that attend the preaching affects me much." In addition to these two eminent men, who were sent over to this country by Mr. Wesley, Mr. Robert Williams, who had been a local preacher in England, and Mr. John King, from London, came over, not under the direction of Mr. Wesley, but on their own account; the former, however, having a permit from him to preach under the direction of the missionaries. Mr. Williams labored as a local preacher with acceptance among the people; and with considerable success, and so also did Mr. King, after being duly examined and licensed by Mr. Pillmore. Both of these brethren so demeaned themselves as ministers of the gospel, that they were afterward received into the traveling ministry, as may be seen by reference to the minutes of conference for the year 1773. From the encouraging representations of the condition and disposition of the people in America, which were transmitted to Mr. Wesley, he was induced to adopt measures to furnish them with additional help in their important work. Accordingly, the next year, 1771, Mr. Francis Asbury and Mr. Richard Wright, having volunteered their services, were dismissed under the blessing of God for the help of their brethren in America. As Mr. Asbury bore such a conspicuous part in the extensive revival of pure religion, it seems proper that we should give some account of his birth and education, his call to the ministry, and the motives which led him to embark in this holy enterprise.

According to a notice in his journal, vol. ii, p.133, it appears that he was born in England, in the parish of Harrodsworth, near the foot of Hampstead Bridge, about four miles from Birmingham, in Staffordshire, on the 20th or 21st of August, 1745. His parents were people in common life, but were remarkable for honesty and industry, so that they procured a competency for themselves and family. They had but two children; a son and daughter, and the latter dying in infancy, left Francis the only son of his mother, and the only child of his parents. It seems that they lived in a very dark time and place as respects spiritual and divine things.

He was early sent to school, and though he took delight in learning to read, particularly his Bible, yet he met with such cruel treatment from his master as to contract such a dread of him, that he preferred almost any thing to his school. He accordingly, when about thirteen years of age, left the school and went to a trade, in which he continued as an apprentice about six years and a half, during which time he was treated with great kindness and attention. The following is his own account of his conversion, of his call to, and entrance upon, the Christian ministry:

"Soon after I entered on that business, God sent a pious man, not a Methodist, into our neighborhood, and my mother invited him to our house; by his conversation and prayers I was awakened before I was fourteen years of age. It was now easy and pleasing to leave my company, and I began to pray morning and evening, being drawn by the cords of love, as with the bands of a man. I soon left our blind priest, and went to West-Bromwick church: here I heard Ryland, Stillingfleet, Talbot, Bagnall, Mansfield, Hawes, and Venn, great names, and esteemed gospel ministers. I became very serious, reading a great deal -- Whitefield and Cennick’s Sermons, and every good book I could meet with. It was not long before I began to inquire of my mother who, where, what were the Methodists; she gave me a favorable account, and directed me to a person

that could take me to Wednesbury to hear them. I soon found this was not the church -- but it was better. The people were so devout -- men and women kneeling down, saying, Amen. -- Now, behold! they were singing hymns -- sweet sound! Why, strange to tell! the preacher had no prayer-book, and yet he prayed wonderfully! What was yet more extraordinary, the man took his text, and had no sermon-book: thought I, this is wonderful indeed! It is certainly a strange way, but the best way. He talked about confidence, assurance, &c. -- of which all my flights and hopes fell short. I had no deep convictions, nor had I committed any deep known sins. At one sermon, some time after, my companion was powerfully wrought on: I was exceedingly grieved that I could not weep like him; yet I knew myself to be in a state of unbelief. On a certain time, when we were praying in my father's barn, I believe the Lord pardoned my sins, and justified my soul; but my companions reasoned me out of this belief, saying, 'Mr. Mather said a believer was as happy as if he was in heaven.' I thought I was not as happy as I would be there, and gave up my confidence, and that for months; yet I was happy; free from guilt and fear, and had power over sin, and felt great inward joy. After this we met for reading and prayer, and had large and good meetings, and were much persecuted, until the persons at whose houses we held them were afraid, and they were discontinued. I then held meetings frequently at my father's house, exhorting the people there, as also at Sutton-Cofields, and several souls professed to find peace through my labors. I met class a while at Bromwick Heath, and met in band at Wednesbury. I had preached some months before I publicly appeared in the Methodist meeting houses; when my labors became more public and extensive, some were amazed, not knowing how I had exercised elsewhere. Behold me now a local preacher; the humble and willing servant of any and of every preacher that called on me by night or by day, being ready, with hasty steps, to go far and wide to do good, visiting Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and indeed almost every place within my reach for the sake of precious souls; preaching, generally, three, four, and five times a week, and at the same time pursuing my calling. I think when I was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of age I gave myself up to God and his work, after acting as a local preacher near the space of five years: it is now the 19th of July, 1792. I have been laboring for God and souls about thirty years, or upward.

"Some time after I had obtained a clear witness of my acceptance with God, the Lord showed me, in the heat of youth and youthful blood, the evil of my heart: for a short time I enjoyed, as I thought, the pure and perfect love of God; but this happy frame did not long continue, although at seasons I was greatly blessed. While I was a traveling preacher in England, I was much tempted, finding myself exceedingly ignorant of almost every thing a minister of the gospel ought to know. How I came to America, and the events which have happened since my Journal will show." In the first volume of his Journal he records the following facts the exercises of his mind, and his final determination to visit this country:

"On the 7th of August, 1771, the conference began at Bristol, in England. Before this, I had felt for half a year strong intimations in my mind that I should visit America; which I laid before the Lord, being unwilling to do my own will, or to run before I was sent. During this time my trials were very great, which the Lord, I believe, permitted to prove and try me, in order to prepare me for future usefulness. At the conference it was proposed that some preachers should go over to the American continent. I spoke my mind, and made a offer of myself. It was accepted by Mr. Wesley and others, who judged that I had a call. From Bristol I went home to acquaint my parents with my

great undertaking, which I opened in as gentle a manner as possible. Though it was grievous to flesh and blood, they consented let me go. My mother is one of tenderest parents in the world: but I believe she was blessed in the present instance with divine assistance to part with me. I visited most of my friends in Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Gloucestershire, and felt much life and power among them. Several of our meetings were indeed held in the Spirit and life of God. Many of my friends were struck with wonder when they heard of my going; but none opened their mouths against it, hoping it was of God. Some wished that their situation would allow them to go with me.

"I returned to Bristol in the latter end of August, where Richard Wright was waiting for me, to sail in a few days for Philadelphia. When I came to Bristol I had not one penny of money: but the Lord soon opened the hearts of friends, who supplied me with clothes and ten pounds: thus I found by experience that the Lord will provide for those who trust in him.

"On Wednesday, September 2, we set sail from a port near Bristol; and having a good wind soon passed the channel. For three days I was very ill with the sea-sickness: and no sickness I ever knew was equal to it. The captain behaved well to us. On the Lord's day, September 8, brother W. preached a sermon on deck, and all the crew gave attention.

"Thursday 12th. I will set down a few things that lie on my mind. Whither am I going? To the new world. What to do? To gain honor? No, if I know my own heart. To get money? No, I am going to live to God, and to bring others so to do. In America there has been a work of God: some moving first among the Friends, but in time it declined: likewise by the Presbyterians, but among them also it declined. The people God owns in England are the Methodists. The doctrines they preach, and the discipline they enforce, are, I believe, the purest of any people now in the world. The Lord has greatly blessed these doctrines and this discipline in the three kingdoms: they must therefore be pleasing to him. If God does not acknowledge me in America, I will soon, return to England. I know my views are upright now -- may they never be otherwise!"

They landed in Philadelphia, October 7, 1771, and were most cordially received by the people. They immediately repaired to the church, and heard a sermon from Mr. Pillmore, whom they found at his station and in his work.

"The people," says Mr. Asbury, "looked on us with pleasure, hardly knowing how to show their love sufficiently, bidding us welcome with fervent affection; and receiving us as angels of God. O that we may walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. When I came near the American shore my very heart melted within me: to think from whence I came, where I was going, and what I was going about. But I felt my mind open to the people, and my tongue loosed to speak. I feel that God is here, and find plenty of all I need." As the printed minutes extend no farther back than 1773, we have no other account of the numbers in society at this time than what is found in Mr. Asbury's Journal, vol. iii, p. 109, where he says there were "about three hundred in New York, two hundred and fifty in Philadelphia, and a few in New Jersey;" but there must have been some also in Maryland, as the fruit of the labors of Mr. Strawbridge, probably the whole number was not less than six hundred.

After spending a few days in Philadelphia, delivering his testimony for God, Mr. Asbury left there for the city of New York, where he arrived on the 12th, of November, and on the 13th preached to

the people from 1 Cor. ii, 2, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "I approved much," says he, "of the spirit of the people; they were loving and serious; there appeared also in some a love of discipline. Though I was unwilling to go to York so soon, I believe it is all well; and I still hope I am in the order of God. My friend B." (meaning doubtless Mr. Boardman, the preacher) "is a kind, loving, worthy man, truly amiable and entertaining, and of a child-like temper." Respecting himself he says, "I purpose to be given up to God more and more, day by day."

It seems that previously to the arrival of Mr. Asbury the preachers had confined their labors chiefly to the cities. This plan of operations did not suit the enlarged desires of Mr. Asbury. He alludes to this circumstance in the following words: "At present I am dissatisfied, and judge that we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way." -- "I am come over with an upright intention, and through the grace of God I will make it appear, and am determined that no man shall bias me with soft words and fair speeches." -- "Whomsoever I please or displease, I will be faithful to God, to the people, and to my own soul." This determination I believe he steadily and perseveringly kept to the end of his life. And in pursuance of the design he had thus formed, he made an excursion to West Farms and to Westchester, preaching with great freedom and power the "gospel of the kingdom." He spent the winter alternately in the city and country, extending his labors to New Rochelle, to Rye, and sometimes visiting Staten Island; and he had the unspeakable pleasure of being hailed by the people in general as a messenger of God, though sometimes persecuted and opposed by the rabble. The consequence of thus extending his labors into the country towns and villages, was the giving a new and more vigorous impulse to religious zeal, and of calling the attention of multitudes to the gospel message, who otherwise might never have heard it. This example of Mr. Asbury had its effect upon the other preachers, and in the latter part of the year some of them visited the provinces of Delaware and Maryland, and preached on the western and eastern shore of Maryland. Two private members of the society raised up by Mr. Strawbridge, were the first Methodists who visited Kent county, on the eastern shore of Maryland. They came to one John Randal’s, conversed and prayed with the family, and left behind them some salutary impressions. This created a desire for Methodist preaching; and shortly after, Mr. Strawbridge himself paid them a visit, and preached to them the gospel of Christ. He was followed by Robert Williams; and in December following, 1772, Mr. Asbury went into Kent county. "Before preaching," he says, "one Mr. R., a Church minister, came to me and desired to know who I was, and whether I was licensed. I told him who I was. He spoke great swelling words, and said he had authority over the people, and was charged with the care of their souls. He also said that I could not, and should not preach: and if I did, he should proceed against me according to law. I let him know that I came to preach, and preach I would; and farther asked him if he had authority to bind the consciences of the people, or if he was a justice of the peace; and told him I thought he had nothing to do with me. He charged me with making a schism. I told him that I did not draw the people from the Church, and asked him if his church was then open. He then said that I hindered the people from their work. I asked him if fairs and horse races did not hinder them; and farther told him that I came to help him. He said he had not hired me for an assistant, and did not want my help. I told him if there were no swearers or other sinners, he was sufficient. But, said he, What do you come for? I replied, To turn sinners to God. He said, Cannot I do that as well as you? I told him that I had authority from God. He then laughed at me, and said, You are a fine fellow indeed! I told him I did

not do this to invalidate his authority: and also gave him to understand that I did not wish to dispute with him; but he said he had business with me, and came into the house in a great rage. I began to preach, and urged the people to repent and turn from all their transgressions, so iniquity should not prove their ruin. After preaching the parson went out, and told the people they did wrong in coming to hear me, and said I spoke against learning, whereas I only spoke to this purpose -- when a man turned from all sin he would adorn every character in life, both in church and state." This quotation is given as a specimen of the sort of opposition the first Methodist preachers had to encounter in that part of the country. The clergy in general had but a name to live, while they were dead to spiritual and divine things, and were therefore unprepared to receive the true messengers of peace and mercy. Through the persevering labors of Mr. Asbury and others associated with him, a gracious work was commenced on this peninsula, which has terminated in great good to the souls of thousands. In the month of April of this year Mr. Pillmore, following the example of Mr. Asbury, traveled south, through Maryland and Virginia, as far as Norfolk, preaching in all places where he could find an opening; and in the beginning of 1773 he penetrated into the lower counties of Virginia, and thence through North Carolina to Charleston, in South Carolina, nor did he stop till he reached Savannah, in Georgia, visiting the Orphan House, which had been erected by Mr. Whitefield as early as 1740. We have no particular account of these visits, but it is presumed that they were rendered a blessing to many. He returned northwardly some time the next spring. Mr. Boardman made a tour north as far as Boston, where he preached and formed a small society, and then returned to his station in New York. In the early part of this year Mr. Robert Williams visited Norfolk, in Virginia. Without giving any public notice, he stood on the steps of the court house and began to sing, which soon collected a number of people around him, to whom he preached, not, however, without considerable interruption from some disorderly persons. They seemed to think, indeed, that the preacher was mad, for as they had not been accustomed to hear a minister pronounce the words hell and devil in his sermons, from the frequent use Mr. Williams made of these terms they concluded he was a wicked, swearing preacher, though in some parts of his discourse they thought he preached the gospel. From this first impression of the man, no one was inclined to invite him to his house. But on hearing him a second time at the same place, they so far altered their opinion respecting his sanity that he was invited to their houses; and not long after, a society was formed in Norfolk, which has continued to this day, gradually increasing in number and usefulness.

October 10, 1772, Mr. Asbury says he received a letter from Mr. Wesley, in which he required a strict attention to the general rules, and also appointing him general assistant. To understand this designation it is necessary to observe, that Mr. Wesley, being, under God, the founder of the societies, was considered the head of the whole body, both in Europe and America, and the one having charge of a circuit under him was styled his assistant, and those under this assistant were styled helpers. In appointing, therefore, Mr. Asbury as general assistant, he constituted him the head of all the preachers and societies in America, with power to station the preachers, &c., under the general direction of Mr. Wesley himself. As yet no regular conference of preachers had been convened, but they regulated their matters at the quarterly meetings. At one of these meetings, which was held Tuesday, December 23, on the western shore of Maryland, Mr. Asbury, after preaching on the duties of the ministry, says they "proceeded to their temporal business, and considered the following propositions:

1. What are our collections? We found them sufficient to defray our expenses.

2. How are the preachers stationed? It is regretted that, in answering this question, Mr. Asbury gives the initials only of the names of the preachers who received their stations. He says, "Brother S. (by which we suppose he means, Strawbridge,) "and brother O." (who?) "in Frederick county," "brother K." (King?) "brother W." (Williams?) "and J. R" (who?) "on the other side of the Bay; and myself in Baltimore.

3. Shall we be strict in our society meetings, and not admit strangers? Agreed.

4. Shall we drop preaching in the day-time through the week? Not agreed to.

5. Will the people be contented without our administering the sacraments. John King was neuter; brother Strawbridge pleaded much for the ordinances, and so did the people, who seemed to be much biased by him. I told them I would not agree to it at that time, and insisted on our abiding by our rules.

6. Shall we make collections weekly to pay the preachers' board and expenses? This was not agreed to. We then inquired into the moral character of the preachers and exhorters."

Though Mr. Asbury took his station in Baltimore, where he was most cordially received by the people, he by no means confined his labors to that city, but extended them into the towns and villages in the vicinity, everywhere proclaiming in the ears of the people the joyful news of salvation by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus. In consequence of thus enlarging the boundaries of their labors -- for the other preachers followed the apostolic example set them by Mr. Asbury -- the work of God spread among the people, so that considerable additions were made to the societies. This, though the numbers were not yet taken, appears evident from Mr. Asbury's Journal, where he speaks of meeting and regulating the classes in a number of places.

It was remarked above, that most of the clergy in the southern provinces were destitute of experimental godliness; and therefore, instead of helping forward the work of God as promoted by the Methodist preachers, they either manifested indifference, "caring for none of these things," or otherwise set themselves in opposition to it. To this, however, there were some honorable exceptions. Among these was the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, of Virginia, under whose preaching there had been a considerable revival of religion, particularly at a place called White Oak. In imitation of Mr. Wesley and his preachers, Mr. Jarratt formed those who were awakened to a sense of their danger into a society, that they might assist each other in working out their salvation. The good effects of these meetings were so apparent, in producing "the fruits of good living," that they were encouraged, and the revival went on gradually, chiefly under the labors of Mr. Jarratt, from 1771 to 1773, spreading from fifty to sixty miles "in the region round about." In the beginning of the year 1773, Mr. Robert Williams visited Petersburg, in Virginia, and preached with success, first in the town, and then through various parts of the country. He was a plain, pointed preacher, indefatigable in his labors, and many were awakened and converted to God through his public and private exhortations; and it is said that the name of Robert Williams was long remembered by many who were his spiritual children in those parts. He and other Methodist preachers who visited Virginia were kindly received by Mr. Jarratt, and they greatly assisted each other in promoting the work of the Lord. In the meantime Mr. Asbury continued his itinerating labors very extensively through the country, devoting all his time and attention to the work of the ministry. Nor did he labor

in vain. Many sinners were brought to the knowledge of the truth, and new societies were established in various places.

Mr. Wesley was considered the father of the societies both in Europe and America. To him, therefore, they looked for direction in all important matters, and especially for a regular supply of preachers -- for as yet none had been raised in this country who had entered the itinerant ranks. That he might understand the true state of things for himself, and thereby be competent to act with the more discretion and efficiency, it seems that he had manifested a desire to visit America; for Mr. Asbury says, under date of May 6, 1773, "This day a letter from Mr. Wesley came to hand, dated March 2, in which he informs me that the time for his visiting America is not yet, being detained by the building of a new chapel." Soon after this, however, Mr. Asbury was cheered by the arrival of two missionaries, Messrs. Thomas Rankin and George Shadford. They landed in Philadelphia on the third day of June, 1773, and immediately entered upon their work. As Mr. Rankin had traveled several years longer than Mr. Asbury, Mr. Wesley appointed him the general assistant of the societies in America.

01.02. Vol 1, Book 2

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs

Volume I From the Year 1766 to the Year 1792 Third Edition, Published in 1839

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[Transcriber Note: After considerable thought, and after having tried this and that method of dividing the various portions of this first book, of the four-volume work by Dr. Bangs, it has been finally decided to place the chapters in files titled as "Parts" with numbers to run consecutively through all four volumes. This was done to eliminate confusion resulting from the same Book number or Chapter number being repeatedly used in the author's volume and book divisions of this work. In this Table of Contents, I have inserted, within brackets, each Part of this electronic edition and its number to the right of the author's Chapter and number. -- DVM]

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END OF VOLUME ONE

01.02..01. Vol 1, Book 2, Chapter 01

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book II FROM THE FIRST CONFERENCE IN 1773, TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH IN 1784

CHAPTER 1 From the conference of 1773 to the commencement of the war in 1776

We have seen that up to this period no regular conference had been held, but that the business had been transacted at their quarterly meetings. On the arrival of Mr. Rankin with powers to act as general assistant, a conference was convened in the city of Philadelphia, July 4, 1773. This being the first regular conference ever held in America, I think it proper to give the entire minutes as they were taken down and afterward published.

"The following queries were proposed to every preacher: --

"1. Ought not the authority of Mr. Wesley and that conference to extend to the preachers and people in America, as well as in Great Britain and Ireland?

Answer Yes.

2. Ought not the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, as contained in the minutes, to be the sole rule of our conduct, who labor in the connection with Mr. Wesley, in America?

Answer Yes.

3. If so, does it not follow, that if any preachers deviate from the minutes, we can have no fellowship with them till they change their conduct?

Answer Yes. The following rules were agreed to by all the preachers present: --

1. Every preacher who acts in connection with Mr. Wesley and the brethren who labor in America, is strictly to avoid administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper.

2. All the people among whom we labor to be earnestly exhorted to attend the Church, and to receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner to press the people in Maryland and Virginia to the observance of this minute.

3. No person or persons to be admitted into our love-feasts oftener than twice or thrice, unless they become members; and none to be admitted to the society meetings more than thrice.

4. None of the preachers in America to reprint any of Mr. Wesley’s books, without his authority (when it can be gotten) and the consent of their brethren.

5. Robert Williams to sell the books he has already printed, but to print no more, unless under the above restrictions.

6. Every preacher who acts as an assistant, to send an account of the work once in six months to the general assistant.

Question 1. How are the preachers stationed?

Answer New York, Thomas Rankin, to change in four months [with Shadford]; Philadelphia, George Shadford, to change four months [with Rankin]; New Jersey, John King, William Watters; Baltimore, Francis Asbury, Robert Strawbridge, Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Yearbry; Norfolk, Richard Wright; Petersburg, Robert Williams.

Question 2. What numbers are there in the society?

Answer New York, 180; Philadelphia, 180; New Jersey, 200; Maryland, 500; Virginia, 100; [Total] 1160; (Preachers 10.)

It is highly probable that some of the preachers had manifested an unwillingness to submit entirely to the authority of Mr. Wesley in all matters, and hence the reason and seasonableness of the above minute in respect to yielding obedience to his authority. That Mr. Strawbridge and some others had evinced a disposition so far to depart from Wesleyan Methodism as to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper, we know; and that it required all the authority of Mr. Asbury to restrain them from this practice heretofore, is evident from a former quotation from his Journal. To prevent a repetition of this disorderly practice, it seems the above prohibitory rule was adopted in reference to this subject. In the above stations we find the name of William Watters, who was the first American preacher who joined the itinerancy, and he continued a laborious and successful laborer in his Master’s work until the day of his death.

It seems that, notwithstanding the vigilance of Mr. Asbury in correcting those abuses which had arisen from the laxity with which discipline had been administered, many disorders still existed for which an adequate remedy had not been provided. These things had been communicated to Mr. Wesley, and he therefore clothed Mr. Rankin with powers superior to any which had been vested in his predecessors in office, in the faithful exercise of which he set himself to purifying the societies from corrupt members, and restoring things to order. It was soon found that the discharge of this duty, however painful, instead of abridging the influence of ministerial labor, greatly extended it, and exerted a most salutary effect upon the societies. Speaking of the comfort he derived from the arrival of Mr. Rankin, Mr. Asbury says, "Though he will not be admired as a preacher, yet as a disciplinarian he will fill his place."

Having thus adopted the Wesleyan plan of stationing the preachers, and each man going to his work in the name of the Lord, the cause of reformation began to spread more extensively than heretofore; new societies were formed in many places, the circuits were enlarged, and a more regular administration of discipline secured. On the eastern shore of Maryland, particularly in the county of Kent, there was a considerable revival of religion, by which many souls were brought to the "knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins." A class was formed at New Rochelle, about twenty miles from the city of New York. In Baltimore also there was an enlargement of the work, more especially at Fell’s Point, where they commenced building a house of worship, which was the first erected in the city of Baltimore. Though Mr. Asbury was appointed to Baltimore, he by no means confined his labor to that place, but traveled extensively through various parts of Maryland, preaching every day, forming those who had been awakened to a sense of their sin and danger

into classes, that they might the more easily help each other to work out their salvation. In consequence of these labors, the work of religion spread among the people. In the city of New York, it appears that Mr. Rankin met with some opposition in his endeavors to reduce the classes to order and regularity; but his steady perseverance overcame the obstacles thrown in his way, so that he succeeded in his pious designs. He also, as the general assistant, traveled as extensively as practicable, that he might take a general oversight of the work, and see that the rules by which they professed to be governed were suitably enforced. In the beginning of 1774, the foundation of a house of worship was laid in Baltimore, known by the name of Light Street church, and another in Kent county, about nine miles below Chestertown, called the Kent meeting-house. This latter house was not erected without considerable opposition. After the frame was prepared for raising, some wicked persons came in the night and broke the rafters; but the workmen soon repaired the loss, the house was finished, and the work of the Lord prospered abundantly.

1774. On the 25th of May, of this year, the second conference was held in the city of Philadelphia. From the minutes it appears that seven preachers, namely, William Duke, John Wade, Daniel Ruff, Edward Drumgole, Isaac Rollins, Robert Lindsay, and Samuel Spragg were admitted on trial; and William Watters, Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Yearbry, Philip Gatch, and Philip Ebert were admitted into full connection; most of these, it seems, had been raised up in America during the past two years, for we find no mention of any of their names, except William Watters, Abraham Whitworth, and Joseph Yearbry, among the stations the preceding year. This year, it seems, they adopted the practice introduced into the conferences by Mr. Wesley and which has ever since been followed in this country, namely, that of examining the preachers' characters before the conference; for we find the following question and answer: -- "Quest. Are there any objections to any of the preachers? Answer They were examined one by one." The following are the stations and numbers, and the rules which were agreed upon.

New York, Francis Asbury, to change in three months [with Rankin]; Philadelphia, Thomas Rankin, to change in three months [with Asbury]; Trenton, William Watters; Greenwich, Philip Ebert; Chester, Daniel Ruff, Joseph Yearbry, to change with Wm. Watters and P. Ebert; Kent, Abraham Whitworth; Baltimore, George Shadford, Edward Drumgole, Richard Webster, Robert Lindsay; Frederick, Philip Gatch, William Duke; Norfolk, John King; Brunswick, John Wade, Isaac Rollins, Samuel Spragg.

All the preachers to change at the end of six months.

Question 6. What numbers are there in society?

Answer New York 222; Philadelphia 204; New Jersey 257; Chester 36; Baltimore 738; Frederick 175; Norfolk 73; Brunswick 218; Kent 150; [Total] 2073; (Preachers 17.) This conference agreed to the following particulars: --

1. Every preacher who is received into full connection is to have the use and property of his horse, which any of the circuits may furnish him with.

2. Every preacher to be allowed six pounds Pennsylvania currency per quarter, and his traveling charges besides.

3. For every assistant to make a general collection at Easter, in the circuits where they labor; to be applied to the sinking of the debts on the houses, and relieving the preachers in want.

4. Wherever Thomas Rankin spends his time, he is to be assisted by those circuits." From this, it appears that the number had increased 913, being nearly double to what they were the year before; and that they had seven additional preachers. This shows the beneficial influence of enforcing a Scriptural discipline, and adopting an extended method of preaching the gospel by a regular itinerancy. In the beginning of this year, Messrs. Boardman and Pillmore left the continent for England; the former, who had endeared himself much to the people by his indefatigable labors and Christian deportment, never to return; the latter, Mr. Pillmore, soon after came back, was admitted and ordained as a minister in the Protestant Episcopal Church, in which he lived respected and beloved as a useful minister until his death. Mr. Boardman lived about eight years after his return to Europe, and then died in peace, leaving behind him a name that is "like precious ointment poured forth." It seems that Mr. Strawbridge did not continue in the regular itinerancy, as we do not find his name in the minutes of conference; the probability is, that he became disaffected on account of the opposition manifested to his administering the ordinances, to which he adhered with great pertinacity. The Journal of Mr. Asbury for this year shows the steady manner in which he pursued his work. So far from confining himself to the cities of New York and Baltimore, in each of which he was stationed for six months, he traversed the country between the two places, as well as north and south of each; and he everywhere found multitudes who flocked to hear the word, and not a few received it with joy, and were formed into classes under the general rules. His example provoked others to like diligence, though some manifested a reluctance to leave the comforts of a city life for the more fatiguing labors of a country itinerant. The blessed effects of these labors were soon apparent. Among others who contributed largely to the extension of this work, we must not forget to record the labors of Robert Williams, of whom Mr. Asbury says in his Journal, "He is a singular man, but honest in his intentions, and sincerely engaged for the prosperity of the work." In the same connection he says, "I met brother W. from Virginia, who gave me a great account of the work of God in these parts; five or six hundred souls justified by faith, and five or six circuits formed, so that we now have fourteen circuits in America, and about twenty-two preachers are required to supply them."

It seems that in the early part of this year, Mr. Williams penetrated into Virginia, and finally succeeded in extending the work from Petersburgh south, over the Roanoke River, some distance into South Carolina; and from the conference three preachers, John King, John Wade, and Isaac Rollins, were sent to his help. Toward the close of the year, a most remarkable revival of godliness was the effect of their united labors, which terminated as above related by Mr. Asbury.

Such were the indefatigable labors of Mr. Asbury, his constant preaching, his exposures by day and night, that he finally sunk under them, and was obliged to take to his bed, and submit to medical treatment. So feeble was he, that he says, for nine days he was not able even to write in his Journal. "My friends," says he, "were very kind, and expecting my death, they affectionately lamented over me." The Lord, however, blessed the means prescribed for his recovery, so that in about three weeks from the time of his confinement, he was able to resume those labors in which his soul delighted. The latter part of this year he spent in Baltimore and the adjoining settlements, in all which places he enjoyed much of the presence of God, and often witnessed the displays of his power in the awakening and conversion of sinners.

1775. -- On the 17th of May of this year, the third conference was held in the city of Philadelphia. Of this conference, Mr. Asbury says that it sat from Wednesday to Friday, "with great harmony and sweetness of temper." This record to the good temper exemplified in the conference is made with a view to show that, notwithstanding some difficulties had occurred between Mr. Rankin and Mr. Asbury, they were not of that serious nature which went to interrupt the harmony of their counsels. To a difference of judgment between them, Mr. Asbury alludes in several places, by which it appears that, in his opinion, Mr. Rankin assumed too much authority over the preachers and people. In consequence of this assumption of power, Mr. Rankin exposed himself to the censures of many of his brethren, and to the remonstrances of Mr. Asbury, as it tended, in his opinion, to alienate the affections of the people from their preachers. These things laid the foundation for those complaints against Mr. Asbury which were transmitted to Mr. Wesley, and afterward became the cause of much of that uneasiness which will be noticed hereafter. Such errors of judgment may very well exist among the best of men, without at all detracting from their moral worth or Christian character, and may even be overruled by our heavenly Father for the general good of his church. The sternness of character manifested by Mr. Rankin, while it sustained him in the rigorous exercise of discipline, was not so exactly suited to the genius of the American people as was the more gentle yet equally firm disposition of Mr. Asbury. The numbers returned in society were 3,148, by which it appears that the increase had been 1,075. Strong symptoms of a war between the colonies and the mother country now began to be manifested in different parts of the American settlements, by which the minds of the people were much agitated on political subjects; and as all the leading Methodist preachers were from England, no little suspicion, however groundless, was entertained respecting the purity of their motives. That most of these were strongly biased in favor of their mother country seems reasonable to suppose; nor are they to be blamed for this feeling, when we consider how natural it is for all men to feel an attachment for the land of their nativity. These suspicions, however, though not yet exemplified in any open acts of hostility, tended in some places to circumscribe the usefulness of the preacher, and to make those of them who came from England turn their attention toward home.

Notwithstanding these unpropitious circumstances, the conference proceeded in their customary work, passing a resolution to raise a yearly collection for general purposes, and making out the stations of the preachers, which were now increased to nineteen in number, distributed among the several circuits. Among other things which they did, was passing the following resolution, which shows their apprehensions respecting the political state of the country, and their pious concern for the prosperity of the work of God. They appointed "a general fast for the prosperity of the work, and for the peace of America, on Tuesday the 18th of July." This year, Mr. Asbury was appointed to labor in Norfolk, state of Virginia, where, he says, he found "about thirty persons in society, but they had no class meetings," and were therefore in rather a disorderly state. Finding nothing better for a "preaching house than an old shattered building, which had formerly been a play-house," after laboring a few days alternately in Norfolk and Portsmouth, he persuaded the brethren to issue a subscription paper for building a house of worship, which, however, went tardily on for the present. As usual, Mr. Asbury omitted no opportunity of doing good to the souls of the people; and for this purpose he made frequent excursions into the country, where he generally found a people willing to hear the word of reconciliation. Having been invited to visit Brunswick circuit, where the Lord was pouring out his Spirit upon the labors of Mr. Shadford, on the 2d of November he arrived there, and says, "God is at work in this part of the country, and my soul catches the holy fire." On

meeting with Mr. Shadford, he says, "My spirit is much united to him, and our meeting was like that of David and Jonathan."

There was indeed a remarkable revival of the work of God in this part of the country, chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr. Shadford. Trembling and shaking would seize upon sinners under the word, and in some instances they were so affected as to fall lifeless upon the floor or upon the ground. These were strange appearances in this country, and some, of course, looked on with astonishment at these manifest displays of the power and grace of God. The consequence of this great and extensive revival was an addition to the societies of upward of 1800 members.

Mr. Robert Williams, who was among the first Methodist preachers that visited Virginia, had married, and located at a place between Norfolk and Suffolk, where he ended his days in peace, on the 26th September 1775. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Asbury, who says of him, that he "has been a very useful man, and the Lord gave him many seals to his ministry. Perhaps no man in America has been an instrument of awakening so many souls as God has awakened by him." As the revival above spoken of was one of the first of the kind in this part of the country, and was, in many respects, very remarkable in its character, I think it proper to give here an account of it as I find it inserted in Mr. Asbury’s Journal. The writer of this account was the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, a minister of the English Church, who participated largely in that revival, and contributed by his labors to its advancement, by favoring the Methodist preachers, and administering the ordinances to such as desired them. Had all the clergy of that day manifested a kindred spirit, how much more extensively would the work have prevailed! A BRIEF NARRATIVE OF THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN VIRGINIA. IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

"Dear Sir, -- You was pleased, when in Virginia, to desire a narrative of the work of God in these parts. I shalt give you matter of fact, in a plain, artless dress; relating only what I have myself seen and heard, and what I have received from men on whose judgment and veracity I can fully depend.

"That you may have a full view of the whole, I shall go back as far as my first settlement in this parish. August 29, 1763, I was chosen rector of B., in the county of D., in Virginia. Ignorance of the things of God, profaneness, and irreligion, then prevailed among all ranks and degrees; so that I doubt if even the form of godliness was to be found in any one family of this large and populous parish. I was a stranger to the people: my doctrines were quite new to them; and were neither preached nor believed by any other clergyman, so far as I could learn, throughout the province.

"My first work was to explain the depravity of our nature, our fall in Adam, and all the evils consequent thereon; the impossibility of being delivered from them by any thing which we could do, an the necessity of a living faith, in order to our obtaining help from God. While I continued to insist upon these truths, and on the absolute necessity of being born again, no small outcry was raised against this way, as well as against him that taught it. But, by the help of God, I continued to witness the same both to small and great.

"The common people, however, frequented the church more constantly, and in larger numbers than usual. Some were affected at times, so as to drop a tear. But still for a year or more, I perceived no lasting effect, only a few were not altogether so profane as before. I could discover no heartfelt convictions of sin, no deep or lasting impression of their lost estate. Indeed, I have

reason to believe that some have been a good deal alarmed at times; but they were shy of speaking to me (thinking it would be presumption) till their convictions wore off.

"But in the year 1765, the power of God was more sensibly felt by a few. These were constrained to apply to me, and inquire, 'What they must do to be saved?' And now I began to preach abroad, as well as in private houses; and to meet little companies in the evenings, and converse freely on divine things. I believe some were this year converted to God, and thenceforth the work of God slowly went on.

"The next year I became acquainted with Mr. M'R., rector of a neighboring parish; and we joined hand in hand in the great work. He labored much therein, and not in vain. A remarkable power attended his preaching, and many were truly converted to God, not only in his parish, but in other parts where he was called to labor.

"In the years 1770 and 1771, we had a more considerable outpouring of the Spirit, at a place in my parish called White Oak. It was here first I formed the people into a society, that they might assist and strengthen each other. The good effects of this were soon apparent. Convictions were deep and lasting; and not only knowledge, but faith, and love, and holiness continually increased.

"In the year 1772, the revival was more considerable, and extended itself in some places for fifty or sixty miles around. It increased still more in the following year, and several sinners were truly converted to God. In spring, 1774, it was more remarkable than ever. The word preached was attended with such energy that many were pierced to the heart. Tears fell plentifully from the eyes of the hearers, and some were constrained to cry out. A goodly number were gathered in this year, both in my parish and in many of the neighboring counties. I formed several societies out of those which were convinced or converted; and I found it a happy means of building up those that had believed, and preventing the rest from losing their convictions. In the counties of Sussex and Brunswick, the work from the year 1773 was chiefly carried on by the labors of the people called Methodists. The first of them who appeared in these parts was Mr. R. W., who, you know, was a plain, artless, indefatigable preacher of the gospel: he was greatly blessed in detecting the hypocrite, razing false foundations, and stirring believers up to press after a present salvation from the remains of sin. He came to my house in the month of March, in the year 1773. The next year others of his brethren came, who gathered many societies both in this neighborhood, and in other places, as far as North Carolina. They now began to ride the circuit, and to take care of the societies already formed, which was rendered a happy means both of deepening and spreading the work of God.

I earnestly recommended it to my societies, to pray much for the prosperity of Sion, and for a larger outpouring of the Spirit of God. They did so, and not in vain. We have had a time of refreshing indeed a revival of religion, as great as perhaps ever was known, in country places, in so short a time. It began in the latter end of the year 1775; but was more considerable in January 1776, the beginning of the present year. It broke out nearly at the same time, at three places not far from each other. Two of these places are in my parish, the other in Amelia county, which had for many years been notorious for carelessness, profaneness, and immoralities of all kinds. Gaming, swearing, drunkenness, and the like, were their delight, while things sacred were their scorn and contempt. However, some time last year, one of my parish (now a local preacher) appointed some meetings among them, and after a while, induced a small number to join in

society. And though few, if any of them, were then believers, yet this was a means of preparing the way of the Lord.

"As there were few converts in my parish the last year, I was sensible a change of preachers was wanting. This has often revived the work of God; and so it did at the present time. Last December, one of the Methodist preachers, Mr. S., preached several times at the three places above mentioned. He confirmed the doctrine I had long preached; and to many of them not in vain. And while their ears were opened by novelty, God set his word home upon their hearts. Many sinners were powerfully convinced, and mercy! mercy! was their cry. In January, the news of convictions and conversions were common; and the people of God were inspired with new life and vigor by the happiness of others. But in a little time they were made strongly sensible that they themselves stood in need of a deeper work in their hearts than they had yet experienced. And while those were panting and groaning for pardon, these were entreating God, with strong cries and tears, to save them from the remains of inbred sin, to 'sanctify them throughout in spirit, soul, and body;' so to 'circumcise their hearts,' that they might 'love God with all their hearts,' and serve him with all their strength.

"During this whole winter, the Spirit of the Lord was poured out in a manner we had not seen before. In almost every assembly might be seen signal instances of divine power, more especially in the meetings of the classes. Here many old stout-hearted sinners felt the force of truth, and their eyes were open to discover their guilt and danger. The shaking among the dry bones was increased from week to week: nay, sometimes ten or twelve have been deeply convinced of sin in one day. Some of these were in great distress, and when they were questioned concerning the state of their souls, were scarce able to make any reply but by weeping and falling on their knees, before all the class, and earnestly soliciting the prayers of God's people. And from time to time he has answered these petitions, set the captives at liberty, and enabled them to praise a pardoning God in the midst of his people. Numbers of old and gray-headed, of middle-aged persons, of youth, yea, of little children, were the subjects of this work. Several of the latter we have seen painfully concerned for the wickedness of their lives, and the corruption of their nature. We have instances of this sort from eight or nine years old. Some of these children are exceeding happy in the love of God; and they speak of the whole process of the work of God, of their convictions, the time when, and the manner how they obtained deliverance, with such clearness as might convince an atheist that this is nothing else but the great power of God.

Many in these parts, who have long neglected the means of grace, now flocked to hear, not only me and the traveling preachers, but also the exhorters and leaders. And the Lord showed he is not confined to man; for whether there was preaching or not, his power was still sensible among the people. And at their meetings for prayer, some have been in such distress that they have continued therein for five or six hours. And it has been found that these prayer-meetings were singularly useful in promoting the work of God.

"The outpouring of the Spirit which began here, soon extended itself, more or less, through most of the circuit, which is regularly attended by the traveling preachers, and which takes in a circumference of between four and five hundred miles. And the work went on with a pleasing progress till the beginning of May, when they held a quarterly meeting at B's chapel, in my parish. This stands at the lower line of the parish, thirty miles from W.'s chapel, at the upper line of it,

where the work began. At this meeting one might truly say the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain of divine influence poured down for more than forty days. The work now became more deep than ever, extended wider, and was swifter in its operations. Many were savingly converted to God, and in a very short time, not only in my parish, but through several parts of Brunswick, Sussex, Prince George, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, and Amelia counties.

"The second day of the quarterly meeting a love-feast was held. As soon as it began, the power of the Lord came down on the assembly like a rushing mighty wind; and it seemed as if the whole house was filled with the presence of God. A flame kindled and ran from heart to heart. Many were deeply convinced of sin; many mourners were filled with consolation: and many believers were so overwhelmed with love that they could not doubt but God had enabled them to love him with all their heart.

"When the love-feast was ended the doors were opened. Many who had stayed without then came in; and beholding the anguish of some, and the rejoicing of others, were filled with astonishment; and not long after with trembling apprehensions of their own danger. Several of them, prostrating themselves before God, cried aloud for mercy. And the convictions which then began in many, have terminated in a happy and lasting change.

"The multitudes that attended on this occasion, returning home all alive to God, spread the flame through their respective neighborhoods, which ran from family to family; so that within four weeks several hundreds found the peace of God. And scarce any conversation was to be heard throughout the circuit, but concerning the things of God: either the complainings of the prisoners, groaning under the spirit of bondage unto fear, or the rejoicing of those whom the Spirit of adoption taught to cry, 'Abba, Father.' The unhappy disputes between England and her colonies, which just before had engrossed all our conversation, seemed now in most companies to be forgot, while things of far greater importance lay so near the heart. I have gone into many, and not small companies, wherein there did not appear to be one careless soul; and the far greater part seemed perfectly happy in a clear sense of the love of God.

One of the doctrines, as you know, which we particularly insist upon, is that of a present salvation; a salvation not only from the guilt and power, but also from the root of sin; a cleansing from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that we may perfect holiness in the fear of God; a going on to perfection, which we sometimes define by loving God with all our hearts. Several who had believed were deeply sensible of their want of this. I have seen both men and women, who had long been happy in a sense of God's pardoning love, as much convicted on account of the remains of sin in their hearts, and as much distressed for a total deliverance from them, as ever I saw any for justification. Their whole cry was,

'O that I now the rest might know, Believe and enter in; Now, Saviour, now, the power bestow, And let me cease from sin.' And I have been present when they believed that God answered this prayer, and bestowed this blessing upon them. I have conversed with them several times since, and have found them thoroughly devoted to God. They all testify that they have received the gift instantaneously, and by simple faith. We have sundry witnesses of this perfect love, who are above all suspicion. I have known the men and their communication for many years, and have ever found them zealous for the cause of God: men of sense and integrity, patterns of piety and humility, whose testimony therefore may be depended on.

"It has been frequently observed, that there never was any remarkable revival of religion, but some degree of enthusiasm was mingled with it -- some wild fire mixed with the sacred flame. It may be doubted whether this is not unavoidable in the nature of things. And notwithstanding all the care we have taken, this work has not been quite free from it; but it never rose to any considerable height, neither was of long continuance. In some meetings there has not been that decency and order observed which I could have wished. Some of our assemblies resembled the congregation of the Jews at the laying the foundation of the second temple in the days of Ezra -- some wept for grief, others shouted for joy, so that it was hard to distinguish one from the other. So it was here: the mourning and distress were so blended with the voice of joy and gladness that it was hard to distinguish the one from the other, till the voice of joy prevailed: the people shouting with a great shout, so that it might be heard afar off.

"To give you, a fuller insight into this great work of God, I subjoin an extract from two or three of my letters.

"To the Rev. Mr. M'R.

"May 3, 1776.

" 'Rev. and Dear Brother, -- Yesterday I preached at B.'s chapel to a crowded and attentive audience. Afterward the Methodists held their love-feast: during which as many as pleased rose, one after another, and spoke in few words of the goodness of God to their souls. Before three had done speaking, (although they spoke but few words,) you might see a solemn sense of the presence of God visible on every countenance, while tears of sorrow or joy were flowing from many eyes. Several testified the consolation they had received: some believed they were perfected in love. When the passions of the people were rising too high, and breaking through all restraint, the preacher gently checked them by giving out a few verses of a hymn. When most of the congregation went away, some were so distressed with a sense of their sins that they could no be persuaded to leave the place. Some lively Christians stayed with them, and continued in prayer for the space of two hours, till fifteen mourners were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. And some careless creatures of the politer sort, who would needs go in to see what this strange thing meant, felt an unusual power, so that like Saul among the prophets, they fell down on their knees, and cried for mercy among the rest. O may they still continue to pray, till God has given them another heart!' "

" 'May 3, 1776

" 'Last night three or four score of my neighbors met together to keep a watchnight: at which it is the custom to spend three or four hours in religious exercises, and to break up at twelve. Such was the distress of those that were convinced of sin that they continued in prayer all night, and till two hours after sunrise. Here also fourteen or fifteen received a sense of pardon: so that in two days thirty of my own parish have been justified, besides others of other parishes.

" 'Indeed, I do not take it for granted that all are justified who think they are so. Some, I fear, are mistaken. But I shall judge better of this when I see the fruits.' "

" 'May 7, 1776

" 'The work of God still increases among us: I believe, within these eight days, more than forty here have been filled with joy and peace in believing. Of these I have had an account; but there may be many more. And several, who have been justified some time, believe God has blessed them with perfect love.

" 'I have no doubt but the work now carrying on is genuine: yet there were some circumstances attending it which I disliked: such as loud outcries, tremblings, fallings, convulsions. But I am better reconciled since I read President Edwards on that head, who observes, 'That wherever these most appear, there is always the greatest and the deepest work.'

" 'There is another thing which has given me much pain: the praying of several at one and the same time. Sometimes five or six, or more, have been praying all at once, in several parts of the room, for distressed persons. Others were speaking by way of exhortation, so that the assembly appeared to be all in confusion, and must seem, to one at a little distance, more like a drunken rabble than the worshippers of God, I was afraid this was not doing all things in decency and order. Indeed Dr. Edwards defends this also. But yet I am not satisfied concerning it. I had heard of it, but never saw it till Sunday evening. But this is a delicate point. It requires much wisdom to allay the wild, and not damp the sacred fire.

" 'The first appearance of any thing of the kind at my chapel was last Saturday night. I was not there, but a young man who studies at my house was. He is grave, prudent, and solidly religious, without the least tincture of enthusiasm. He met the society there in the afternoon, and would have returned home, but that many who were in great distress begged him, and some others, to stay and pray with them. They continued in prayer the whole night, during which about twelve were set at liberty. But, notwithstanding all they could do, there were often two, three, or more speaking at one time.

" 'I heard of this the next day, when I was at church, and hastened thence to the chapel. Some hundreds were assembled there, and were in much confusion when I went in. I went into the pulpit and began to sing, adding short exhortations and prayers. The confusion ceased: several spirits were revived, and some mourners comforted.

" 'Since that evening this kind of confusion has never been known in my neighborhood. It continued longer in other places; but for some time has been totally gone. But as this abated, the work of conviction and conversion usually abated too. Yet, blessed be God, it still goes on, though not with such rapidity. I have heard but of two or three that found peace for three weeks; whereas some time ago seldom a week passed, but I could hear of eight or nine; sometimes between twenty and thirty at one meeting.

" 'I have chiefly spoken of what was done in my parish. But that you may know a little of what was done elsewhere, I subjoin an extract from the letters of two local preachers, in the county of Sussex.'

" 'July 29, 1776

" 'Rev Sir, -- With unspeakable pleasure I acquaint you of the glorious revival of religion in our parts. It broke out at our last quarterly meeting, and has since wonderfully spread throughout the circuit. The time seems to be coming when we shall not need to teach every man his neighbor to

know the Lord: for they daily know him from the least to the greatest, from little children to men of fourscore. Above seven years have I been exhorting my neighbors; but very few would hear. Now, blessed be God, there are few that will not hear. It is no strange thing for two or three to find the Lord at a class meeting: and at a Sunday meeting, although there was no preacher, ten, fifteen, yea, nearly twenty have been converted. At a place near me, thirty have found the Lord within eight days. It is common with us for men and women to fall down as dead under an exhortation, but many more under prayer, perhaps twenty a time. And some that have not fallen to the earth have shown the same distress, wringing their hands, smiting their breasts, and begging all to pray for them. With these the work is generally quick; some getting through in less than a week, some in two or three days; some in one, two, or three hours. Nay, we have an instance of one that was so indifferent as to leave her brethren at prayers and go to bed. But all at once she screamed out under a sense of her lost estate, and in less than fifteen minutes rejoiced in God her Saviour. And, blessed be God, many of these retain a sense of his favor. Many, who a few weeks ago were despisers and scoffers, are now happy in the Lord. Many old Christians, who were always full of doubts and fears, now walk in the light of his countenance. Some have a clear witness in themselves that they have given their whole hearts to God. O may God carry on his work among us, until we are all swallowed up in love!

T. S.'

"Mr. S. lives two-and twenty miles from me: the writer of the following letter about thirty.

" 'July 29, 1776

" 'Rev. Sir, -- On June the 9th, we had a large congregation. I spoke on, "No man can serve two masters." Several appeared to be much distressed, two women in particular. We spent above an hour in prayer for them, and they arose in peace. When we met the class, we suffered all that desired it to stay. The leader only put a question or two to each member. This was scarce ended, when the fire of God's love was kindled. Praises hung on the lips of many; and several cried out, "What must we do to be saved?" Thus it swiftly went on; every now and then one rising with faith in Jesus. Surely this was one of the days of heaven! Such a day I never expected to see in time. While we were met, one I. W. was observed to be looking through the crack of the door which being opened, he came with it, and, being unable to stand, fell on the floor quite helpless. But in two or three hours he rose and praised a pardoning God while one of the class who had been justified some time, received a blessing greatly superior to any thing he had known before. We have reason to believe that, on this day, fifteen were enabled to believe in Jesus.

" 'Saturday, June 15. -- I was speaking to the class, and one found peace to her soul. Sunday 16, I spoke from "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," to four or five hundred people. This was also a day of Pentecost. Convictions seized on numbers, who wrestled with God till their souls were set at liberty. A young woman told me, "She heard that many people fell down, and she would come to help them up." This she said in scorn. She came accordingly. The power of God soon seized her, and she wanted helping up herself. But it was not long before the Spirit of grace helped her, by giving her faith in Christ. We believe twenty souls found peace this day. O may we see many such days!

" 'July 7. -- I spoke to a large congregation. Afterward was going to give out a hymn, when one was so powerfully struck that he could not hold a joint still, and roared aloud for mercy. I immediately went to prayer; the cries of the people all the time greatly increasing. After prayer, B. T., lately a great opposer, jumped up, and began to praise God, with a countenance so altered, that those who beheld him were filled with astonishment. Our meeting continued from twelve at noon till twelve at night; during which, God raised up about fifteen more witnesses.

" 'The Thursday following, six of those who were convinced on Sunday, found peace in believing. We hear of many others converted in the neighborhood, several of whom were strong opposers; and some hoary-headed ones, who had been strict Pharisees from their youth up.

" 'Sunday 21. -- We had a large and attentive auditory, and the power of the Lord prevailed. The next day I was much tempted to doubt, whether I was sent of God to preach or not? I prayed earnestly to the Lord that he would satisfy me, and that he would keep all false fire from among us. Afterward I preached. While I was speaking, a mother and her daughter were so struck with conviction that they trembled every joint; but before I concluded, both found peace. Glory be to God.

" 'I am, &c., J. D.'

"God has made examples of several opposers -- examples not of justice, but of mercy. Some of them came to the assembly with hearts full of rancor against the people of God, so that, had it been in their power, they would have dragged them away to prison, if not to death. But unexpectedly their stubborn hearts were bowed down, being pierced with the arrows of the Almighty. In a moment they were filled with distress and anguish, their laughter turned into mourning, and their cursing into prayer. And frequently in less than a week their heaviness has been turned into joy. Of this sort are several of our most zealous and circumspect walkers at this day. A goodly number of these are rich in this world; yet they are now brought so low that they are willing to be taught by all, and to be the servants of all.

"A gentleman in this parish, in particular, had much opposed and contradicted; he was fully persuaded that all outward appearances, either of distress or joy, were mere deceit. But as he was walking to his mill, about half a mile from his house, deep conviction fell upon him. The terrors of the Lord beset him around about, and distress and anguish got hold upon him. When he came to the mill and found no one there, he took that opportunity of prostrating himself before God, and of pouring out his soul in his presence. As his distress was great, his cries were loud, and his prayer importunate. The Lord heard him, and set his soul at liberty before he left the place. And the power which came upon him was so great, that it seemed as if his whole frame was dissolving.

"Upon the whole, this has been a great, a deep, a swift, an extensively glorious work. Both the nature and manner of it have been nearly the same, wherever its benign influence reached. Where the greatest work was, where the greatest number of souls have been convinced and converted to God, there have been the most outcries, tremblings, convulsions, and all sorts of external signs. I took all the pains I could that these might be kept within bounds, that our good might not be evil spoken of. This I did, not by openly inveighing against them in the public assembly, but by private advices to local preachers and others, as opportunity would permit. This method had its desired effect, without putting a sword into the hands of the wicked. Wherever the contrary method has

been taken, where these things have been publicly opposed, when they have been spoken against in promiscuous congregations, the effect has always been this: the men of the world have been highly gratified, and the children of God deeply wounded. The former have plumed themselves as though they were the men who kept within due bounds, and those that had 'made so much ado about religion,' were no better than hot-brained enthusiasts. I cannot but think this has a great tendency to hinder the work of God. Indeed, if we thought that God wrought every thing irresistibly, we should not fear this. But we know the contrary: we know that as some things promote, so others hinder his work. I grant means should be used to prevent all indecency; but they should be used with great caution and tenderness, that the cure may be effected, if possible, without damping the work of God.

"With regard to the inward work, there has been a great variety as to the length, and depth, and circumstances of the convictions in different persons; but all in general have been at first alarmed with a sense of the multitude and heinousness of their sins; with an awful view of the wrath of God, and certain destruction, if they persisted therein. Hence they betook themselves to prayer, and as time permitted, to the use of all other means of grace; although deeply sensible of the vileness of their performances, and the total insufficiency of all they could do to merit the pardon of one sin, or deserve the favor of God. They were next convinced of their unbelief, and that faith in Christ is the only condition of justification. They continued thus waiting upon the Lord, till he spoke peace to their souls. This he usually did in one moment, in a clear and satisfactory manner, so that all their griefs and anxieties vanished away, and they were filled with joy and peace in believing. Some indeed have had their burdens removed so that they felt no condemnation. And yet, they could not say they were forgiven. But they could not be satisfied with this. They continued instant in prayer till they knew the Lamb of God had taken away their sins.

"Most or these had been suddenly convinced of sin: but with some it was otherwise. Without any sense or their guilt, they were brought to use the means of grace by mere dint of persuasion: and afterward they were brought by degrees to see themselves, and their want of a Saviour. But before they found deliverance they have had as deep a sense of their helpless misery as others. One in my parish was a remarkable instance of this. He was both careless and profane to a great degree; and remained quite unconcerned, while many of his companions were sorrowing after God, or rejoicing in his love. One of his acquaintance advised him to seek the Lord. He said, 'I see no necessity for it as yet. When I do I will seek him as well as others.' His friend persuaded him to try for one week, watching against sin, and going by himself every day. He did so: and though he was quite stupid when he began, yet before the end of the week, he was thoroughly sensible of the load of in, and is now happy in God.

" 'If you ask, 'How stands the case with those that have been the subjects of the late work?' I have the pleasure to inform you, I have not heard of any one apostate yet. It is true, many, since their first joy abated, have given way to doubts and fears, have had their confidence in God much shaken, and have got into much heaviness. Several have passed through this, and are now confirmed in the ways of God. Others are in it still; and chiefly those over whom Satan had gained an advantage, by hurrying them into irregular warmth, or into expressions not well guarded. I have seen some of these in great distress, and just ready to cast away hope.

" ’I have a great deal upon my hands at present, and have little time either to write or read. The difficulties and temptations of the lately converted are so many and various, that I am obliged to be in as many places as I can for now is the critical hour. A man of zeal, though with little knowledge or experience, may be an instrument of converting souls. But after they are converted, he will have need of much knowledge, much prudence and experience, to provide proper food and physic for the several members, according to their state, habit, and constitution. This at present seems in a great measure to devolve upon me. And though I have been twenty years in the Lord’s service, yet I find I am quite unequal to the task. However, I will do what I can and may the Lord bless my endeavors!

"The enemy is busy, night and day, in sowing the tares of division among the wheat. And in some places he has prevailed so far as to plunge some of them in the water. In other places little feuds and animosities arise, to grieve the preachers, and damp the spirits of the people. On these occasions, they commonly apply to me; and all is well, at least for a season. -- When I consider what it is to watch over souls, and how much labor and pains it implies, to discharge it in any degree, I cannot but cry out with the apostle, ’Who is sufficient for these things!’

"However, upon the whole, things are in as flourishing a condition, as can reasonably be expected, considering what great numbers, of various capacities and stations, have been lately added to the societies. But after all, a great, part of Virginia is still in a very dark and deplorable condition. This province contains sixty-two counties and the late work has reached only seven or eight of them. Nor has it been universal even in these, but chiefly in the circuit which is regularly visited by the preachers. In this alone very many hundreds have in a few months been added to the Lord. And some are adding still. May he continue to pour out his Spirit upon us, and increase the number of the faithful every day!

"Our highest gratitude is due to our gracious God; for he hath done marvellous things! In a short time he hath wrought a great work: and let who will speak against it, it is evident, beyond all contradiction, that many open and profligate sinners, of all sorts, have been effectually changed into pious, uniform ChristiAnswer So that every thinking man must allow that God hath been with us of a truth, and that his ’glory dwells in our land.’ I am your sincere friend, and brother in Christ "To Mr. M. R. "D. J., September 10, 1776." The following letter, which relates to the same work, was written some time after.

"To The Rev. Mr. Wesley "June 24, 1778 "Rev. and Dear Sir, -- You have the narrative of the Rev. Mr. J. I send this as a supplement to it.

"At our little conference held in Philadelphia, May 1775, Mr. S. was appointed assistant for Brunswick circuit, in Virginia. He found there about eight hundred joined together, but in a very confused manner. Many of them did not understand the nature of meeting in class; and many of the classes had no leader. He resolved to begin in good earnest; and the preachers with him were like-minded. Their constant custom was, as soon as preaching was over, to speak to all the members of the society, one by one. If the society was large, one preacher spoke to a part, and he that came next, to the rest. By this means they learned more of our doctrine and discipline in a year than in double the time before. The fruit soon appeared the congregations swiftly increased, and many were pricked to the heart. Many that were a little affected desired to see the nature of meeting in class: and while one was speaking, either to those that were groaning for redemption,

or those who had found peace with God, these were frequently cut to the heart, and sometimes enabled on the spot to praise a pardoning God. Nay, sometimes four, five, or six found peace with God before the meeting was over.

"The work of God thus increasing on every side, more preachers were soon wanting: and God raised up several young men, who were exceedingly useful as local preachers.

"After Mr. S. had been about eight mouths in the circuit, Mr. J. desired his parish might be included in it, that all who chose it might have the privilege of meeting in class, and being members of the society. He soon saw the salutary effects. Many that had but small desires before began to be much alarmed, and labored earnestly after eternal life. In a little time numbers were deeply awakened, and many tasted of the pardoning love of God. In a few months Mr. J. saw more fruit of his labors than he had done for many years. And he went on with the preachers hand in hand, both in doctrine and discipline.

"When Mr. S. took an account of the societies, before he came to the conference in 1776, they contained two thousand six hundred and sixty-four persons; to whom eighteen hundred were added in one year. Above a thousand of these had found peace with God; many of whom thirsted for all the mind that was in Christ. And divers believed God had 'circumcised their heart to love him with all their heart, and with all their soul.'

"This revival of religion spread through fourteen counties in Virginia, and through Bute and Halifax counties in North Carolina. At the same time we had a blessed outpouring of the Spirit in several counties bordering upon Maryland.

"Our conference was held at Baltimore Town, on the 22d of May. Here I received a letter from Mr. J., part of which I insert.

" 'May 11, 1776

" 'I praise God for his goodness, in so plentifully pouring out of his Spirit on men, women, and children. I believe threescore, in and near my parish, have believed, through grace, since the quarterly meeting. Such a work I never saw with my eyes. Sometimes twelve, sometimes fifteen, find the Lord at one class-meeting. I am just returned from meeting two classes. Much of the power of God was in each. -- My dear partner is now happy in God her Saviour. I clap my hands exulting, and praise God. Blessed be the Lord, that ever he sent you and your brethren into this part of his vineyard! Many children, from eight to twelve years old, are now under strong convictions; and some of them are savingly converted to God. I was much comforted this morning at the W. O. Chapel. The people there are of a truly teachable spirit; those particularly who profess to have obtained the pure love of God, They are as little children. When you consider how the work is spreading on every side, you will readily excuse me from being at your conference.' "

Such a work as this, perhaps unexampled in the history of these provinces, at such a time, when they were upon the eve of a bloody contest, was matter of great encouragement to all concerned, as well as of lively gratitude to Almighty God. In the course of the summer, Mr. Rankin paid a visit to this part of the country. Being somewhat stern in his manners, and not accustomed to witness such awful displays of the power of God, he made an effort to still the people; and though he succeeded, in some measure, while in his presence, yet no sooner had he withdrawn from among

them, than they broke forth in loud cries for mercy, while others shouted aloud the praises of God; and although some tincture of enthusiasm appeared among the young converts, in giving vent to the joys of their first love, it is evident that in general it was a genuine work of God, as was afterward manifested by its fruits. The following appears to be Mr. Rankin's own account of these wonderful things: --

"Sunday 30. I was comforted by the sight of my dear brother S. But I was weak in body through riding so far in extreme heat, and much exercised in mind and did not know how I should be able to go through the labor of the day. We went to the chapel at ten, where I had liberty of mind and strength of body beyond my expectation. After preaching I met the society, and was more relieved both in body and mind. At four in the afternoon I preached again, from 'I set before thee an open door, and none can shut it.' I had gone through about two-thirds of my discourse, and was bringing the words home to the present now, when such power descended that hundreds fell to the ground, and the house seemed to shake with the presence of God. The chapel was full of white and black, and many were without that could not get in. Look wherever we would, we saw nothing but streaming eyes, and faces bathed in tears; and heard nothing but groans and strong cries after God and the Lord Jesus Christ. My voice was drowned amid the groans and prayers of the congregation. I then sat down in the pulpit; and both Mr. S. and I were so filled with the divine presence that we could only say, This is none other than the house of God! this is the gate of heaven! Husbands were inviting their wives to go to heaven, wives their husbands: parents their children, and children their parents: brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers. In short, those who were happy in God themselves were for bringing all their friends to him in their arms. This mighty effusion of the Spirit continued for above an hour: in which time many were awakened, some found peace with God, and others his pure love. We attempted to speak or sing again and again: but no sooner we began than our voices were drowned. It was with much difficulty that we at last persuaded the people, as night drew on, to retire to their own homes.

"Tuesday, July 2. I rode with Mr. S. to Mr. J.'s who, with Mrs. I., received us with open arms. I preached the next day, not far from his house, to a deeply attentive congregation. Many were much affected at the preaching; but far more at the meeting of the society. Mr. J. himself was constrained to praise God aloud for his great love to him and to his people.

"Sunday 7. I preached at W.'s chapel, about twenty miles from Mr. J.'s. I intended to preach near the house, under the shade of some large trees. But the rain made it impracticable. The house was greatly crowded, and four or five hundred stood at the doors and windows, and listened with unabated attention. I preached from Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones: "And there was a great shaking." I was obliged to stop again and again, and beg of the people to compose themselves. But they could not: some on their knees, and some on their faces, were crying mightily to God all the time I was preaching. Hundreds of Negroes were among them, with the tears streaming down their faces. The same power we found in meeting the society, and many were enabled to rejoice with joy unspeakable. In the cool of the evening I preached out of doors, and many found an uncommon blessing.

"Every day the ensuing week I preached to large and attentive congregations. Indeed the weather was violently hot, and the fatigue of riding, and preaching so often, was great. But God made up all this to me by his comfortable presence. Thursday 11, I preached to a large congregation at the

preaching house near Mr. J.'s. After preaching at several places on Friday and Saturday, on Sunday, 14, I came to Mr. B.'s, where I preached and met the society. The congregation was, as before, abundantly larger than the chapel could contain. And we had almost such a day as fourteen days ago: only attended with a more deep and solemn work. What a work is God working in this corner of Mr. J.'s parish! It seemed as if all the country for nine or ten miles around were ready to turn to God.

"In the evening I rode to Mr. S.'s, and found a whole family fearing and loving God. Mr. S., a sensible and judicious man, had been for many years a justice of the peace. By hearing the truth as it is in Jesus, he and his wife first, and then all his children, had attained that peace that passeth all understanding. He observed, 'How amazing the change was which had been lately wrought in the place where he lived! That before the Methodists came into these parts, when he was called by his office to attend the court, there was nothing but drunkenness, cursing, swearing, and fighting most of the time the court sat: whereas now nothing is heard but prayer and praise, and conversing about God, and the things of God.'

"Monday 15. I rode toward North Carolina. In every place the congregations were large, and received the word with all readiness of mind. I know not that I have spent such a week since I came to America. I saw everywhere such a simplicity in the people, with such a vehement thirst after the word of God, that I frequently preached and continued in prayer till I was hardly able to stand. Indeed there was no getting away from them while I was able to speak one sentence for God.

"Sunday 21. I preached at Roanoke chapel, to more than double of what the house would contain. In general, the white people were within the chapel, and the black people without. The windows being all open, every one could hear, and hundreds felt the word of God. Many were bathed in tears, and others rejoicing with joy unspeakable. When the society met, many could not refrain from praising God aloud. I preached to a large company in the afternoon, and concluded the day with prayer and thanksgiving.

"Tuesday 23. I crossed the Roanoke River, and preached at a chapel in North Carolina. And I preached every day to very large and deeply attentive congregations: although not without much labor and pain, through the extreme heat of the weather. On Tuesday 30 was our quarterly meeting. I scarce ever remember such a season. No chapel or preaching house in Virginia would have contained one-third of the congregation. Our friends, knowing this, had contrived to shade with boughs of trees a space that would contain two or three thousand persons. Under this, wholly screened from the rays of the sun, we held our general love-feast. It began between eight and nine on Wednesday morning, and continued till noon. Many testified that they had 'redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins.' And many were enabled to declare that it had 'cleansed them from all sin.' So clear, so full, so strong was their testimony, that while some were speaking their experience hundreds were in tears, and others vehemently crying to God for pardon or holiness.

About eight our watch-night began. Mr. J. preached an excellent sermon: the rest of the preachers exhorted and prayed with divine energy. Surely, for the work wrought on these two days, many will praise God to all eternity. T. R."

We have alluded to he suspicions which had been awakened in the minds of some respecting the designs of the English preachers. Mr. Wesley, who was ever alive to every thing which would seem to have a bearing upon the work of God, foreseeing the difficulties which would be likely to arise in America, on account of the approaching hostilities, thus addressed them in a letter dated, "London, March 1, 1775.

"My Dear Brethren, -- You were never in your lives in so critical a situation as you are at this time. It is your part to be peace-makers: to be loving and tender to all; but to addict yourselves to no party. In spite of all solicitations, of rough or smooth words, say not one word against one or the other side. Keep yourselves pure; do all you can to help and soften all; but beware how you adopt another's jar.

"See that you act in full union with each other: this is of the utmost consequence. Not only let there be no bitterness or anger, but no shyness or coldness between you. Mark all those that would set one against the other. Some such will never be wanting. But give them no countenance; rather ferret them out, and drag them into open day." This certainly was good and seasonable advice, admirably suited to the times.

We have already alluded to a dissatisfaction expressed by Mr. Asbury of the spirit and conduct of Mr. Rankin: and it is certain, from sundry notices in his Journal, that he suspected strongly that Mr. R. had misrepresented him to Mr. Wesley. What the subject of difference was precisely, we cannot tell but it is manifest from the following extract of a letter from Mr. Wesley to Mr. Rankin, that the suspicions of Mr. Asbury were well founded. In this letter, which is dated May 19, l775, he says, "I doubt not but brother Asbury and you will part friends. I shall hope to see him at the conference. He is quite an upright man. I apprehend he will go through his work more cheerfully when he is within a little distance from me." But in a subsequent letter under date of July 28, of the same year, we find the following words "I rejoice over honest Francis Asbury, and hope he will no more enter into temptation." To what temptation Mr. Wesley alludes we know not; but to whatever particular allusion is made, we are constrained to believe, from the known integrity of heart, and uprightness of deportment ever exemplified by Mr. Asbury, there was no just cause for alarm on his account; and hence we are confirmed in the opinion before expressed, that either Mr. Rankin or some one else, probably from jealousy of the growing reputation of Mr. Asbury, had written to his disadvantage, and had even advised Mr. Wesley to call him home. It is due to truth, and to the character of Mr. Asbury, to say, that whatever representations might have been made disparaging to his character, they were without foundation, as has been proved by every act of Mr. Asbury's most laborious, self-denying, and useful life. And if the difficulties between him and Mr. Rankin arose merely from difference of judgment in regard to the general plan of procedure, the final result proves that the former was in the right; for he lived to outride the storm and to triumph over all his enemies, as the issue of his plans and labors.

1776. On the 24th of May of this year, the annual conference was held for the first time in the city of Baltimore. In consequence of the great revival of religion above detailed, there had been an increase to the societies of one thousand eight hundred and seventy-three, the whole number being four thousand nine hundred and twenty-one, and nine preachers were admitted on trial. Four new circuits were formed, namely, Fairfax, Hanover, Pittsylvania, and Carolina, the former being in the state of Virginia, and the latter in North Carolina, places which had been blessed with

the revival of religion already noticed. There were eleven circuits returned on the minutes, and twenty-five preachers stationed on them.

01.02.02. Vol 1, Book 2, Chapter 02

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book II FROM THE FIRST CONFERENCE IN 1773, TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH IN 1784

CHAPTER 2 From the commencement of the Revolution in 1776, to its termination in 1783. This year forms a memorable era in the history of these United States. The sanguinary conflict which had commenced in 1775 now broke forth with increased violence, and all hope of reconciliation was prostrated, only on condition of an acknowledgment on the part of Great Britain of the independence of the United States. The fleets of England were in our harbors, and her soldiers were landed upon our shores. But what rendered a reconciliation hopeless was, that on the 4th of July, 1776, congress had declared the thirteen united colonies, which they represented, free and independent states. This state of things rendered the situation of many of the Methodist preachers peculiarly trying, and more especially those of them who were known to be favorable to the British cause. As some of them, not taking the very seasonable advice given by Mr. Wesley in the letter above inserted, spoke their sentiments freely against the proceedings of congress and of the American states, they were subjected to some persecutions. And although only four out of the twenty-five preachers were from England, yet as these four were leading men, the others were suspected of favoring the cause of Britain, and were therefore exposed to similar suspicions and treatment. Mr. Asbury, though among the most prudent of them all in his speech and conduct, says that on the 20th of June he was, "fined, near Baltimore, five pounds for preaching the gospel." But though it was with no little difficulty that they were able to travel some of the circuits, and obliged entirely to abandon others, yet conscious of their Christian integrity, the preachers persevered in their labors wherever they could find access to the people; and in many places their efforts were crowned with great success in the awakening and conversion of sinners; as is manifest from the increase of preachers and people before mentioned.

Among those preachers, raised up in this country, we find on the minutes for this year the name of Freeborn Garrettson, whose labors afterward contributed so much to the advancement of the cause of Jesus Christ in these United States.1

1777. The fifth conference was held this year in the Deer Creek meeting house, Harford county, in the state of Maryland. The war at this time raged with great violence, so that by the marching and countermarching of armies, enlisting of soldiers, frequent skirmishes between the contending parties, some of the places, even where religion had prevailed to a considerable extent, were not visited at all by the preachers. Last year Norfolk in Virginia was abandoned, and this year no preacher was stationed in New York; nor do we find this city among the stations again until 1783, though there was a small society of members still there. The cause of this abandonment of the city for so long a time was, that the British troops had it in possession, and had converted the meeting house into barracks for the soldiers, so that it was not possible to occupy it for preaching regularly, even had a preacher been permitted to reside among them. Such are the fatal results of war, that

scourge of humanity.2 But although these were the disastrous results of the war in some places, more particularly in the middle states, yet in others there were gracious outpourings of the Spirit, and revivals of the work of God, the southern states not being yet so much exposed to the ravages of this cruel warfare. In the Brunswick circuit, particularly, as well as the two circuits, Sussex and Amelia, which had been recently taken from it, and in some parts of North Carolina, the work of God continued to spread to a considerable extent. Though, therefore, there was a decrease of members on those circuits which were exposed to the depredations of contending armies, yet, when they came to the conference, they found an increase on the whole of 2047 members and 12 preachers, making the entire number in society to be 6968, and 36 preachers -- so mercifully did God own their labors for the salvation of souls. It was at this conference that those preachers who came from England took into consideration the propriety of returning home; but they finally concluded to remain a while longer, as the way seemed not yet plain for them to leave their American brethren. It seems, indeed, that as early as the month of January preceding, Messrs. Rankin and Shadford had seriously meditated on returning to England; for Mr. Asbury says, under date of January 22, that he met them at their request, and "found them inclined to leave America and embark for England. "But," he adds, "I had before resolved not to depart from the work on any consideration." About the middle of September, however, Messrs. Rankin and Rodda embarked for their native country.

Notwithstanding the prudent caution given to the preachers by Mr. Wesley, in which he advised them not to meddle with the political affairs of the country, they did not all abide by it, but some were very busy in exciting a spirit of disaffection toward the American cause. That they should have felt strongly inclined to favor the cause of their king and country is but natural, and might very well be pardoned on the score of national partiality; but that any professed minister of Jesus Christ should have descended from his high and holy calling to mingle with the combatants of that day in their warlike measures, is a fault for which Christianity furnishes no apology. This, however, was the unhappy case with Mr. Rodda previously to his departure for England. While on his circuit he was detected in spreading the king’s proclamation, and otherwise endeavoring to stir up a spirit of opposition to the American government. Fearing, however, the resentment of his enemies, by the assistance of some slaves he made his escape to the British fleet; and as Philadelphia was then in possession of the British army, he was sent thither, and from thence to his native land. His departure, therefore, was no cause of regret to the Methodists in this country.

Another circumstance tended not a little to excite a spirit of persecution toward the Methodists. A backslider, by the name of Chauncey Clowe, succeeded in enlisting about three hundred men for the British standard, and before he was detected, was the means of shedding blood. He was, however, arrested, and finally hung as a rebel against the government. In the course of the examination, it was found that only two Methodists were engaged in this plot; and the remarks of Governor Rodney, who was friendly to our cause, to those of our enemies who had assiduously endeavored to fix upon them the foul mark of toryism, put them to silence, and obtained for our friends temporary relief.

What made this war the more distressing was the fact, that in many parts of the country the people were divided among themselves in regard to the lawfulness or expediency of taking up arms against Great Britain. This led to domestic disputes, and not infrequently the father was against the son, and the daughter against the mother, and one neighbor against another. These things

produced an irritation of spirit exceedingly unfriendly to the progress of pure religion. But that which exposed the Methodist preachers still more to the suspicions of their enemies, was the fact, that Mr. Wesley had published a pamphlet addressed to the Americans, in which he condemned their conduct, and justified the measures of the British cabinet. This well-meant endeavor of Mr. Wesley, though it may have had a good effect upon the societies under his care in Great Britain, had quite a deleterious influence upon the Methodists in this country. As some copies of this pamphlet found their way here, they tended to increase the irritation against the Methodist preachers, and to expose them to fresh insults. Though Mr. Wesley may be commended as a loyalist for his well-meant endeavors to convince the Americans that they were wrong in taking up arms against his king and country, yet we cannot but believe that he committed an error in thus interfering in the political affairs of this country, as it manifestly tended to increase the difficulties with which the preachers had to contend, without at all mitigating the evils resulting from the war which was then raging. Amid all these difficulties, however, Mr. Asbury stood his ground knowing that his "record was on high, and at his reward was with his God."

Speaking of the of Mssrs. Rankin and Rodda, he says, "So we are left alone. But I leave myself in the hand of God, relying on his good providence to direct and protect us, persuaded that nothing will befall me but what shall conduce to his glory and my benefit."

1778. On the 19th of May of this year the sixth conference was in Leesburgh, Va., at which time six new circuits were added, namely, Berkey, Fluvanna, James City, and Lunenburgh, in Virginia, and Carolina circuit in North Carolina was divided into thee, called Roanoke; Tar River, and New Hope; and five of the old circuits, on account of the war, were left from the minutes; these were New York, Philadelphia, Chester, Frederick, and Norfolk. Though there was an increase in the number of circuits, yet there was a decrease of 873 members, the whole number being 6095; and also of the preachers 29, being 5 less than last year. In order to insure obedience to the government, and to distinguish between friends and enemies, all were called upon to take an oath of allegiance to the state authorities in which they resided, and of course to abjure allegiance to the crown of Great Britain. To the taking this oath many of the preachers had conscientious scruples, which exposed them to many vexations, and obliged some of them to leave their stations. Mr. George Shadford, whose labors had been so abundantly blessed to the awakening and conversion of souls, after keeping a day of fasting and prayer in company with Mr. Asbury for divine direction, took his departure this year for England, leaving behind him the savor of a good name, and many happy souls as seals to his ministry. As Mr. Asbury could not persuade himself to take the required oath of allegiance to the state of Maryland, where he was in the first part of this year, he retired to the state of Delaware, where he found an asylum in the house of Judge White for nearly twelve months. While the storm of war was raging around him, and while all his English brethren had forsaken him and the flocks intrusted to their care, he determined to wait patiently until the tempest should subside, that he might again launch forth upon a calmer sea in quest of immortal souls. But though he was thus secluded from the pursuit of his enemies in the house of his friend and patron, Thomas White, Esq., he says, that except for about two months, when the necessity of the case compelled him, contrary to his most ardent wishes, to be silent, it was a "season of the most active, most useful, and suffering part of his life." Though he could not appear before the congregations on the Sabbath, he was wont to leave his retreat in the gloom of the night, and go from house to house to enforce the truths of the gospel; and notwithstanding the

difficulties with which he and others had to contend in those times of trouble, they were gradually laying a foundation deep and broad, by their labors and sufferings, for that success which Methodism has since had in these United States. But Mr. Asbury was not the only sufferer on this occasion. Mr. Freeborn Garrettson was at that time actively and successfully engaged in preaching the gospel in Queen Anne's county, in the state of Maryland., After having paid a visit to Mr. Asbury in his seclusion at Judge Whites, where he had an opportunity of preaching to a small company, he returned to Queen Anne's and preached. The next day, as he was on his way to Kent, be was met by one John Brown, formerly a judge of that county, who seized his horse's bridle; and notwithstanding the remonstrances of Mr. Garrettson, who assured him that he was on the Lord's errand, peaceably engaged in persuading sinners to be reconciled to God, Brown alighted from horse, seized a stick, and began beating Mr. Garrettson over the head and shoulders, in the meantime calling for help. As some were approaching, as he thought with a rope, Brown let go the bridle, when Mr. Garrettson gave his horse the whip, and thus cleared himself from the grasp of his persecutors. He was, however, soon overtaken by his pursuer, who struck at him with all his might, when Mr. Garrettson was thrown from his horse with great violence. Providentially a lady passed along with a lancet and he was taken to a house and bled, by which means he was restored to his senses, of which he had been deprived by the blows he had received, and the fall from his horse. He then began to exhort his persecutor, who fearing that death would ensue, exhibited some sorrow and great trepidation of heart, offering to take Mr. Garrettson in his carriage wherever he wanted to go. No sooner, however, did he perceive that the patient sufferer was likely to recover, than he brought a magistrate, more wicked the himself, both of whom, says Mr. Garrettson, "appeared as if actuated by the devil." The following is his own account of the termination of this affair: --

"With a stern look the magistrate demanded my name. I told him; and he took out his pen and ink, and began to write a mittimus to commit me to jail. 'Pray, sir,' said I, 'are you a justice of the peace?' He replied that he was. 'Why, then,' said I, 'do you suffer men to behave in his manner? If such persons are not taken notice of, a stranger can with no degree of safety travel the road.' 'You have,' said he, 'broken the law.' 'How do you know that,' answered I; 'but suppose I have, is this the way to put the law in force against me? I am an inhabitant of this state, and have property in it; and, if I mistake not, the law says for the first offense, the fine is five pounds; and double for every offense after. The grand crime was preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which I greatly rejoice. My enemy,' said I, 'conducted himself more like a highwayman than a person enforcing the law in a Christian country. Be well assured, this matter will be brought light,' said I, 'in awful eternity.' He dropped his pen, and made no farther attempt to send me to prison. By this time, the woman who bled me came, with a carriage, and I found myself able to rise from my bed and give an exhortation to the magistrate, my persecutor, and others who were present." From this time Mr. Garrettson went on his way rejoicing in all the mighty things which the Lord did by his instrumentality; for he wrought wonderfully by his means in the states of Maryland and Delaware, through both of which he traveled extensively, And many flocked to hear the word.

Mr. Joseph Hartley also, another traveling preacher, a man of great zeal and faithfulness, was apprehended in Queen Anne's county for preaching the gospel, who gave bonds and security to appear for trial at the next court. Being forbidden to preach, he attended his appointments; and after singing and prayer, stood upon his knees and exhorted the people, until his enemies said that

he might as well preach, standing on his feet as on his knees. He went thence to Talbot county, where he was seized and committed to jail for "preaching Jesus and him crucified." This, however, by no means silenced him. The people collecting around the walls of his prison, he preached to them through the grates; and so powerfully was the word applied to their hearts, that some of them were deeply awakened to a sense of their lost and guilty state, and began earnestly to seek the Lord. This induced some of the inhabitants to remark that unless Hartley were released from prison he would convert the whole town. After keeping him confined for some time, he was set at liberty; but such had been the blessed effects of his preaching, that a powerful revival followed, which terminated in the establishment of a flourishing society in that place. In the latter part of this year, Mr. Asbury ventured from his seclusion and preached the gospel of the kingdom in various parts of Delaware state with such freedom and success, that he remarks, the "gospel meets with such indulgence in this free state," that it "will become as the garden of the Lord, filled with plants of his own planting." The truth of this anticipation has been fully verified.

1779. -- Previously to the assembling of the conference, mentioned in the minutes for this year, the preachers in the more northerly states assembled at Judge White's, where Mr. Asbury had retired from the fury of his enemies, and there held a conference, with Mr. Asbury at their head, who now acted since the departure of Mr. Rankin and the other English preachers, by a vote of this conference, as the general assistant. Although this was considered as "a preparatory conference," yet if we take into consideration that the one afterward held at the Broken Back Church, in Virginia, was held in the absence of the general assistant, we shall see good reason for allowing that this, which was held under the presidency of Mr. Asbury, was the regular conference, and hence their acts and doings are to be considered valid. This year was distinguished by considerable troubles in the societies. These arose principally from a desire manifested among the people in the south to have the ordinances administered to them. That we may understand this subject, it is necessary to remark, that the Methodist preachers, both in Europe and America, were considered only as lay-preachers, having never been separated to the work of the ministry by imposition of hands. Mr. Wesley's strong attachment to the established Church of England had induced him to oppose every thing which tended to a separation from her communion, or to a violation of any of her canons or ordinances. Hence, although frequently importuned to set apart some of his preachers by imposition of hands to the entire work of the ministry, he steadily resisted all such solicitations, exhorting his people to go to the Church for the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. Mr. Asbury, and those English preachers who had been associated with him in this country, had been educated in the Wesleyan school, and hence had sternly resisted all attempts to depart, in this respect, from the principles and practice of their founder. As we have already seen, at an early period of Methodism in America, some of the preachers, and, probably through their influence, the people too, had manifested a strong desire to deviate from this course of conduct, and to have the ordinances among themselves. Mr. Asbury and his associates had resisted all such attempts at innovation, endeavoring to persuade the people to be content to receive the ordinances as they had done, from the hands of their parochial clergy. The question was agitated at the Deer Creek Conference, in 1777, where Mr. Rankin presided. Here the question was asked, "Shall the preachers in America administer the ordinances?" And after a full discussion, it was answered, "We will suspend them until the next conference." At the next conference, which was held in Leesburgh, Va., May 19, 1778, Mr. Asbury not being present on account of ill health, and Mr. Rankin and his British brethren having departed for England, Mr. William Watters, being the oldest

American preacher, was called upon to preside. Here the question, "Shall we administer the ordinances?" was again discussed, and it was finally decided to "lay it over until the next conference." This "next conference" was the one we are now considering. Here the arguments in favor of administering the ordinances came up with double force. The war had separated them from Mr. Wesley; all the English preachers, except Mr. Asbury, had returned to England, and nearly all the ministers of the establishment, being unfriendly to the American cause, had also left their flocks and gone home; and most of those who remained were irregular in their lives and not evangelical in their preaching. In these circumstances, the children were left unbaptized and the people were destitute of the Lord’s supper. They furthermore said, that as God had made them instrumental in the conversion of the souls of the people, so he had given them authority to administer his ordinances; and the people were exceedingly desirous "to have it so."

It was under these views and feelings that the brethren assembled in Fluvanna county, Va. on the 18th of May, 1779. Knowing something of the disposition which prevailed there on this subject, Mr. Watters was sent from the conference which had been held at Judge White’s, to endeavor to dissuade them from carrying their design into execution. His efforts, however, were unavailing; for after deliberating upon the subject, they appointed a committee of some of the oldest brethren to ordain ministers. The members of this committee first ordained each other, and then proceeded to ordain others by imposition of hands. Those who were thus ordained, went out preaching and administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper to all who desired them, either for themselves or for their children; an thus was a breach made between the northern and southern preachers. These men, however, being pious and zealous, and withal much favored by the people for complying with their wishes, were very successful in their labors; but the preachers at the north mourned over them on account of their departure from what they very justly considered Wesleyan Methodism. In consequence of this temporary division, there were two separate minutes taken in 1779, each conference passing its own resolutions, and stationing its preachers; but the numbers in society and of preachers are set down in the minutes of the Fluvanna conference. From these it appears, that, notwithstanding the ravages of the war, the opposition and persecution with which some of the preachers had to contend, and the dissensions among themselves respecting the ordinances, they had an increase of 2482 members and of 20 preachers; so greatly did the word God multiply and prevail in those troublesome times. At these conferences they passed resolutions that "every exhorter and local preacher should go under the direction of the assistants where, and only where, they shall appoint -- that they should "meet the children once a fortnight, and examine the parents in regard to their conduct toward them" -- and after having elected Mr. Asbury as the general assistant, they inserted this question and answer:

"Question How far shall his power extend?

Answer On hearing every preacher for and against what is in debate, the right of determination shall rest with him according to the minutes." These resolutions were adopted at the conference held at Judge White’s, in the state of Delaware. It seems, therefore, that they were not in the habit at that time of determining debatable questions by a majority of votes; but, in imitation of the practice of Mr. Wesley, after hearing all that could be said pro and con, the presiding officer decided the point. The conference at Fluvanna determined to lengthen the time of trial of a preacher from one to two years, which has continued a standing rule to this day. They also declared that any preacher who received "money by subscription" was "excluded the Methodist

connection." As these were the only rules which passed that body, except resolving to ordain ministers and to administer the ordinances, it is probable that they acquiesced in what was done by the other conference, which was held under the presidency of Mr. Asbury.

1780. -- The eighth conference assembled in Baltimore, April 24th of this year. That our readers may see the spirit by which they were actuated, the following questions and answers are inserted as I find them in the printed minutes: --

Question 7. Ought not all the assistants to see to the settling of all the preaching houses by trustees, and order the said trustees to meet once in half a year, and keep a register of their proceedings; if there are any vacancies choose new trustees, for the better security of the houses, and let all the deeds be drawn in substance after that in the printed minutes?

Answer Yes.

Question 8. Shall all the traveling preachers take a license from every conference, importing that they are assistants or helpers in connection with us?

Answer Yes.

Question 9. Shall brother Asbury sign them in behalf of the conference?

Answer Yes.

Question 10. Ought it to be strictly enjoined on all our local preachers and exhorters, that no one presume to speak in public without taking a note every quarter, (if required,) and be examined by the assistant with respect to his life, his qualification, and reception.

Answer Yes.

Question 11. Ought not all our preachers to make conscience of rising at four, and if not, yet at five: (is it not a shame for a preacher to be in bed till six in the morning?) Answer Undoubtedly they ought.

Question 12. Shall we continue in close connection with the Church, and press our people to a closer connection with her?

Answer Yes.

Question 13. Will this conference grant the privilege to all the friendly clergy of the Church of England, at the request or desire of the people, to preach or administer the ordinances in our preaching houses or chapels?

Answer Yes.

Question 14. What provision shall we make for the wives of married preachers?

Answer They shall receive an equivalent with their husbands in quarterage, if they stand in need.

Question 15. Ought not our preachers, if possible, to speak to every person one by one in the families where they lodge, before prayer, if time will permit; or give a family exhortation after reading a chapter?

Answer They ought.

Question 16. Ought not this conference to require those traveling preachers who hold slaves, to give promises to set them free?"

Answer Yes.

Question 17. Does conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the law of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do to us and ours? -- Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom?

Answer Yes.

Question 18. Shall we recommend our quarterly meetings to be held on Saturdays and Sundays when convenient?

Answer Agreed.

Question 19. Shall not the Friday following every quarter day be appointed as a day of fasting?

Answer Yes.

Question 20. Does this whole conference disapprove the step our brethren have taken in Virginia? [giving American Methodist ministers authority to perform the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper -- DVM]

Answer Yes.

Question 21. Do we look upon them no longer as Methodists in connection with Mr. Wesley and us till they come back?3

Answer Agreed.

Question 22. Shall brother Asbury, Garrettson, and Watters attend the Virginia conference, and inform them of our proceedings in this, and receive their answer?

Answer Yes.

Question 23. Do we disapprove of the practice of distilling grain into liquor? Shall we disown our friends who will not renounce the practice?

Answer Yes.

Question 24. What shall the conference do in case of brother Asbury's death or absence?

Answer Meet once a year, and act according to the minutes.

Question 25. Ought not the assistant to meet the colored people himself, and appoint as helpers in his absence proper white persons, and not suffer them to stay late and meet by themselves?

Answer Yes.

Question 26. What must be the conditions of our union with our Virginian brethren?

Answer To suspend all their administrations for one year, and all meet together in Baltimore. On the minute respecting slavery, Mr. Lee, in his History of the Methodists, remarks, that "it was going too far, and calculated to irritate the minds of our people, and not to convince them of their errors." Of this the conferences were subsequently convinced, as they found it necessary to relax in their measures against slave-holders, without, however, attempting to justify the system of slavery itself. By these, minutes, it will also be seen that the preachers of that day set their faces against "distilling grain into liquor," determining to "disown those who would not renounce the practice." From this it may be seen that the Methodist conference set itself against the use of alcoholic liquors long before the temperance movements, which have so distinguished the present days, and which have conferred such lasting blessings upon the community. What a pity there should ever have been any relaxation either in the phraseology or enforcement of this rule! But that which affected them the most vitally was, the resolution respecting their Virginia brethren, who, it should he noted, did not convene with the Baltimore conference, but held one of their own in Virginia; but as their proceedings are not upon record, we cannot say what they did. As, however, this conference forms a very important item in the history of Methodism, in which Mr. Asbury took such a deep interest and agency, I will give his own account of the whole affair, as I find it recorded in his Journal under date of May 8th, 9th, 10th 1780.

"We rode to Granger's, fifteen miles, stopped and fed our horses. These people are full of the ordinances; we talked and prayed with them, then rode on to the Manakin-town ferry, much fatigued with the ride; went to friend Smith's, where all the preachers were met. I conducted myself with cheerful freedom, but found there was a separation in heart and practice. I spoke with my countryman, John Dickins, and found him opposed to our continuance in union with the Episcopal Church. Brother Watters and Garrettson tried their men, and found them inflexible.

"Tuesday 9. -- The conference was called: brother Watters, Garrettson, and myself stood back, and being afterward joined by brother Dromgoole, we were desired to come in, and I was permitted to speak. I read Mr. Wesley's thoughts against a separation -- showed my private letters of instructions from Mr. Wesley -- set before them the sentiments of the Delaware and Baltimore conferences -- read our epistles, and read my letter to brother Gatch, and Dickins's letter in answer. After some time spent this way, it was proposed to me, if I would get the circuits supplied, they would desist; but that I could not do. We went to preaching; I spoke on Ruth ii, 4, and spoke as though nothing had been the matter among the preachers or people; and we were greatly pleased and comforted -- there was some moving among the people. In the afternoon we met; the preachers appeared to me to be farther off; there had been, I thought, some talking out of door. When we, Asbury, Garrettson, Watters and Dromgoole, could not come to a conclusion with them we withdrew, and left them to deliberate on the condition I offered, which was to suspend the measures they had taken for one year. After an hour's conference, we were called to receive their answer, which was, they could not submit to the terms of union. I then prepared to leave the house, to go to a near neighbor's to lodge, under the heaviest cloud I ever felt in America -- O! what I felt! -- nor I alone, but the agents on both sides! -- they wept like children, but kept their opinions.

"Wednesday 10. -- I returned to take leave of conference, and to go off immediately to the north; but found they were brought to an agreement while I had been praying, as with a broken heart, in the house we went to lodge at; and brothers Watters and Garrettson had been praying up stairs

where the conference sat. We heard what they had to say -- surely the hand of God has been greatly seen in all this: there might have been twenty promising preachers, and three thousand people, seriously affected by this separation; but the Lord would not suffer this -- we then had preaching by brother Watters on, 'Come thou with us, and we will do thee good:' afterward we had a love-feast; preachers and people wept, prayed, and talked, so that the spirit of dissension was powerfully weakened, and I hoped it would never take again." This unhappy affair being thus amicably adjusted, the preachers went to their respective fields of labor with renewed courage; and although the clouds of war still hung lowering over all the land, and often threatened them with showers of persecution, yet those who became personally acquainted with them were so thoroughly convinced of the purity of their motives and conduct, and some of those being among the most influential men in the country, they threw around them the shield of their protection. Mr. Asbury being let loose from his confinement, traveled extensively through the southern counties of Virginia and some parts of North Carolina, exerting all his powers to promote the cause of God, and particularly to heal the divisions which had arisen from the disputes respecting the ordinances. Though the preachers all agreed to suspend their use for the present, yet a few of them being not a little pleased with their self-created authority, submitted to the measure with great reluctance, and many of the people surrendered their supposed privileges not without a struggle. Through his influence, however, and that of Mr. Garrettson, and some other influential men of peace and union, the breach was finally healed, and peace and love reigned throughout their borders.

Some places, however, were much disturbed and distressed on account of the war, which now raged with increased violence. In consequence of the continual marching and countermarching of the armies, both of friends and enemies, some of the circuits were abandoned, and others but partially supplied. And although general protection was extended to the preachers, in conformity to the principles of civil and religious liberty for which the United States were now contending, yet there were not wanting individuals who, from various pretexts, stirred up a spirit of persecution against the Methodists. To those who were deeply interested in the success of our arms and who were actuated only by the blind impulses of human nature in its depraved state, it was provoking to find a people in the midst of them led on by a number of active and zealous preachers, who were from principle averse to war; for such was the case in respect to most of the preachers and people denominated Methodists. Add to this the fact, that their first leaders were directly from England, some of whom had not concealed their partiality for their mother country, and all under a leader who had boldly advocated the cause of his government, and denounced the Americans as rebels, it is no wonder that any one who wished to raise the wind of persecution against a Methodist preacher, need only shout Tory, and his wish was accomplished. To this disgraceful practice some resorted, and thereby gratified their unreasonable opposition to the men whom they inwardly hated on account of the spirited manner in which they rebuked them for their wickedness. Among others who suffered in this way, the most conspicuous was Mr. F. Garrettson. On the 27th of February of this year, after preaching to a numerous and attentive congregation in Dorchester county, he was seized by his enemies, and finally committed to prison. Though he suffered much in body in consequence of having no other bed than the floor, with his saddle bags for his pillow, with two large windows open upon him yet he enjoyed great spiritual consolation in prayer and meditation, reading and writing, and was not a little comforted by the visits and prayers of his friends and pious acquaintances.

Before, however, his trial came on, Mr. Asbury went to the governor of Maryland and interceded behalf of Mr. Garrettson; and the governor of Delaware state, being a great friend to the Methodists, sent a letter of recommendation to the governor of Maryland, who immediately set him at liberty. Though the enemies of the cross of Christ in Dorchester county were much dissatisfied with his liberation, yet the authority of their governor prevailed over their opposition, and Mr. Garrettson immediately recommenced his favorite work of preaching the gospel, and "the word of the Lord," says he, "spread through all that country, and hundreds, both white and black, experienced the love of Jesus," so that not far from the very place where he was imprisoned, he soon after preached to a congregation of not less than three thousand people, and many of his bitterest persecutors were among the happy converts to the truth. From the minutes of the conference it appears there was a decrease of members of seventy-three, and of preachers seven; the number being, preachers forty-two, members eight thousand five hundred and four.

1781. It seems that the conference this year was begun at Choptank, in the state of Delaware, April 16, and adjourned to Baltimore, to the 24th of the same month. The following are assigned as the reasons for this measure: -- "To examine those who could not go to Baltimore, and to provide supplies for the circuits where the Lord is more immediately pouring out his Spirit." With a view to secure greater unanimity of sentiment and action, thirty-nine out of fifty-four preachers set their names to a paper, expressive of their determination to "preach the old Methodist doctrine, and strictly to enforce the discipline as contained in the notes, sermons, and minutes published by Mr. Wesley," and "to discountenance a separation among either preachers or people."

They also passed a rule respecting local preachers, forbidding their traveling circuits without consulting Mr. Asbury, or the assistant near where he resides; also providing that no excluded person should be readmitted without giving evidence of repentance; and a third making it the duty of preachers to read often the Rules of the Societies, the Character of a Methodist, and the Plain Account of Christian Perfection. This year the following rule was adopted for settling disputes which might arise between brethren in their dealings with each other: "Let the assistant preacher at quarterly meeting consult with the steward, in appointing proper persons to examine into the circumstances, and if there be any suspicion of injustice, or inability in the referees, to appoint men of more skill and probity, and the parties to abide by their decision, or be excluded the society." They likewise appointed the first Thursday in June, September, January, and April, as days of general fasting. For the first time, the following question and answer were recorded: -- "Question Who desist from traveling this year?

"Answer John Dickins, Isham Tatum, William Moore, Greenberry Green, Daniel Ruff."

Notwithstanding the ravages of the war, which raged this year with most violence in the southern states, the Lord greatly blessed the labors of his faithful and devoted servants, particularly in the states of Maryland and Delaware, as well as in some parts of Virginia and North Carolina; but some of the circuits in these latter places were so harassed with hostile armies, that they were not accessible to the preachers; and many of the members, though much averse to war, were obliged to serve in the American army, by which means some lost their lives, others made "shipwreck of faith and a good conscience," and all were less or more injured in their religious character and enjoyments. Those who were so entirely opposed to war from principle as utterly to refuse to fight, were whipped, or fined and imprisoned, and persecuted in a variety of ways. And such were the

anxieties manifested by the people respecting the final issue of the contest, particularly in Virginia, where the bloody conflict was renewed this year with increased violence, that when they did assemble for divine worship, their conversation turned more upon the political situation of the country, and the probable results of the war, than upon religion; fathers and mothers were anxious for the fate of their sons who were in the army, and wives for their husbands. But though these things exerted an injurious influence upon individuals, and in some places upon whole societies, yet, as a body, they prospered, so much so that the increase was not less than two thousand and thirty-five, and of preachers twelve.

Among others who contributed to advance the cause of God was the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, before mentioned. He attended the conference, preached to the people with great power and acceptance, gave his advice in matters of importance, and administered the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. Of his services Mr. Asbury makes honorable mention in his Journal for this year. After speaking of preaching in his barn he says, Mr. Jarratt seemed all life, and I determined to spend himself in the work of God, and visit what circuits he could." This year has been rendered famous in the annals of our country by the capture of the British army under the command of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia. This event gave a pleasing hope to the friends of peace on both sides of the Atlantic -- and to none more than to the Methodists -- that this war, which had so long desolated the continent, would soon come to an end; while American patriots hailed this as an auspicious event, bringing with it a sure pledge of future prosperity.

1782. The tenth conference commenced in Ellis's preaching house, Va., April 17, and by adjournment in Baltimore, May 21. This was done to accommodate the preachers; but as that held in Baltimore was the oldest, nothing that was done in the Virginia conference was considered binding, unless sanctioned by this conference.

Preachers this year, 59; (Preachers last year, 54); Members, 11,785; (Members last year, 10,539); Increase in Preachers, 5; Increase in Members, 1,246. The appointment of Mr. Asbury by Mr. Wesley as general assistant was reconfirmed at this conference by a unanimous vote, After passing sundry rules for the better regulation of themselves and the people of their charge, the following was entered upon the minutes: --

"The conference acknowledge their obligations to the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, for his kind and friendly services to the preachers and people, from our first entrance into Virginia, and more particularly for attending our conference in Sussex, in public and private; and advise the preachers in the south to consult him and take his advice in the absence of brother Asbury." At this conference they re-resolved to abide by the decision formerly made, not to administer the ordinances. To supply this deficiency, Mr. Jarratt proffered his services, attended some of their quarterly meetings, administered the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, and otherwise assisted them in their work of spreading the gospel among the people. Hence the above acknowledgment of his services.

Only two circuits, Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, and South Branch, in Virginia, had been added during the past year. Nor do we find any thing special in reference to the general state of the societies; but there was a considerable outpouring of the Spirit in the northern parts of Virginia and in some parts of Maryland. For the first time they determined when and where the next conference should be held, namely, in Virginia the first Thursday, and in Baltimore the last Wednesday in May.

Considering the state of the country, the societies in general were prosperous, and much united together.

1783. On the 6th of May the eleventh conference assembled at Ellis' preaching house in Virginia, and by adjournment in Baltimore on the 27th of the same month.

Preachers this year, 82; (Preachers last year, 59); Members, 13,740; (Members last year, 11,789); Increase in Preachers, 23; Increase in Members, 1,955.

We find them at this conference ordering the sum two hundred and sixty pounds to be raised for the support of the preachers' wives. The following rules were passed on the subject of slavery, and on the manufacturing and drinking spirituous liquors: --

"Question What shall be done with our local preachers who hold slaves contrary to the laws which authorize their freedom in any of the United States.

"Answer We will try them another year. In the meantime, let every assistant deal faithfully and plainly with every one, and report to the next conference. It may be necessary to suspend them.

"Question Should our friends be permitted to make spirituous liquors, sell, and drink them in drams.

"Answer By no means. We think it wrong in its natural consequences and desire all our preachers to teach our people, by precept and example, to put away this evil." The first Thursdays in July and October were appointed as days of thanksgiving "for our public peace, temporal and spiritual prosperity, and for the glorious work of God:" and the first Fridays in January and April were set apart as days of fasting and prayer.

After appointing the next conference to be held in the city of Baltimore on the fourth Thursday in May, 1784, they ordered that "the assistants and those who were to be received into full connection," should attend. This is the first time that we find on record any rule respecting who should attend the conference.

Richard Garrettson, Micaijah Debruler, and Samuel Watson, desisted from traveling.

They could not but be thankful to the great Head of the Church for sending peace in their borders, by which means the restraints which had been imposed, in many places, upon the preachers were taken off, and they were therefore permitted to travel wherever they pleased, and to preach the gospel to whomsoever they might find willing to hear it. The consequence was that their borders were greatly enlarged on every hand, both in the older and new settlements. On hearing this glorious news, Mr. Asbury, who, perhaps, had suffered as much as any of the preachers for conscience' sake, makes the following reflections:

"April 5, I heard the news that peace was confirmed between England and America. I had various exercises of mind on the occasion: it may cause great changes to take place among us; some for the better and some for the worse. It may make against the work of God. Our preachers will be far more likely to settle in the world; and our people, by getting into trade and acquiring wealth, may drink into its spirit. Believing the report to be true, I took some notice of it while I treated on Acts x, 36, at brother Clayton's, near Halifax, where they were firing their cannon and rejoicing in their way

on the occasion."

These certainly are very chastened exultations in a man who had suffered so much from the calamities of war, and must, therefore, have enjoyed some bright anticipations from the return of peace; but they show with what moderation he received every temporal mercy, lest it might, by its abuse, become an occasion of a sinful conformity to the spirit and temper of this world. The Methodist societies, however, soon began to witness the beneficial results from this termination of hostilities, in the enlargement of their work, and in the facilities afforded to the preachers to itinerate through the country. During the war many had moved from the more immediate scene of the conflict to the back settlements, where they were destitute of the word and ordinances of religion. On the return, of peace, these were visited by the preachers, while the older circuits, some of which had been either entirely, or partially abandoned during the war, were now regularly supplied; and the consequence of these salutary movements was, a more diffusive spread of the gospel, and the bringing the societies into greater compactness and order under their disciplinary regulations. Hence pure religion greatly revived in almost every direction, while several additional laborers entered the field of itinerancy. That success attended their labors is manifest from the fact that the increase to the numbers in society was, as before stated, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-five, and that eleven new circuits were taken into the work. These were Caroline and Anamessex, in Maryland; Allegheny, Cumberland, and Holstein, in Virginia; Guilford, Caswell, Salisbury, Marsh, Bertie, and Pasquotank, in North Carolina; Norfolk and New York, which had been left destitute in consequence of having been in possession of the British troops, were again supplied with preachers. The intercourse between England and the United States being restored on the return of peace, it was feared that men of exceptionable character might be induced to emigrate from that to this country, and endeavor to palm themselves upon the people as Methodists or preachers. To prevent impositions of this sort, the present conference passed the following rule: --

"We will not receive them," (European Methodists) "without a letter of recommendation, the truth of which we have no reason to doubt."

They were much strengthened in this resolution by receiving, in the latter part of this year, the following letter from Mr. Wesley: -- Bristol, Oct., 1783

1. Let all of you be determined to abide by the Methodist doctrine and discipline, published in the four volumes of Sermons, and the Notes upon the New Testament, together with the large minutes of conference.

2. Beware of preachers coming from Great Britain or Ireland without a full recommendation from me. Three of our traveling preachers here eagerly desired to go to America; but I could not approve of it by any means; because I am not satisfied that they thoroughly like either our discipline or our doctrine; I think they differ from our judgment in one or both. Therefore if these or any others come without my recommendation, take care how you receive them.

3. Neither should you receive any preachers, however recommended, who will not be subject to the American conference, and cheerfully conform to the minutes both of the American and English conferences.

4. I do not wish our American brethren to receive any who make any difficulty on receiving Francis Asbury as the general assistant.

"Undoubtedly, the greatest danger to the work of God in America is likely to arise either from preachers coming from Europe, or from such as will arise from among yourselves, speaking perverse things, or bringing in among you new doctrines, particularly Calvinian. You should guard against this with all possible care, for it is far easier to keep them out than to thrust them out.

"I commend you all to the grace of God, and am your affectionate friend and brother, "John Wesley."

It was not to be expected that all who made profession of religion should adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour, nor that all who professed to be called of God to preach the gospel should stand fast in their calling, giving no occasion of offense. Mr. Asbury, in his Journal for this year, gives an affecting account of the apostasy and sudden death of Isaac Rawlings, who had been employed for eight or ten years as a preacher, but who furnished evidence of his instability at various times. He finally, after striving in a secret way, to make a party for himself, left the connection, and he and his adherents took possession of the Forest chapel. He was, however, soon forsaken by his followers, and became irregular in his life, lost the confidence of the public, and after having spent some hours in writing a defense of himself against some scandalous imputations which had been cast upon his character, mounted a "mettlesome horse, and had not rode many yards before he was thrown to the ground and died on the spot." "I had said," says Mr. Asbury, "I think he cannot stay long, because he did pervert the right ways of the Lord."

1784. -- On the 30th of April, the twelfth conference began at Ellis’s chapel, in Virginia, and closed at Baltimore on the 28th of May following.

Preachers this year, 83; (Preachers last year, 82); Members, 14,986; (Members last year, 13,740); Increase in Preachers, 1; Increase in Members, 1,248.

David Abbott, James Thomas, James Mallory, and John Coleman, desisted from traveling; and Henry Medcalf and William Wright had died. This is the first time we find an account taken of those who had died, and nothing more is said of them than simply to record their deaths.

Among other things, they passed resolutions to collect money by a general yearly subscription in every circuit toward building new chapels, and discharging the debts on those already erected -- to carry the rule passed last year on slavery into execution, except in Virginia -- to improve the singing, by keeping close to Mr. Wesley’s tunes and hymns -- and to conform to his advice respecting receiving European Methodist preachers, as expressed in the preceding letter.

There was a considerable revival this year in some of the frontier settlements, and the prospects of future usefulness were brightening every day, the preachers and people feeling the beneficial effects of the new government, which had been established after the loss of so much blood and treasure.

Mr. Lee, in his History of the Methodists, informs us that to this time they had not printed the minutes, but preserved them only in manuscript. They have since, however, been collected and printed; and it is from these printed minutes that the principal facts in respect to the doings of the conferences have been taken.

ENDNOTES

1 As it is my intention to give a condensed account of such preachers as were any way eminent for their labors, sufferings, and success, when their death is noticed, no more will be said of them in the thread of the history than is necessary to a connected account of the work which was carried on by their instrumentality.

2 It is said, however, in a memoir of the Rev. Mr. Mann, a preacher who afterward went to Nova Scotia, that for a considerable time during the war, at the request of the trustees and leaders, he held meetings in the chapel in New York, until he was relieved by the coming of Mr. Spragg, a regular traveling preacher, who came from Philadelphia, after the British took possession of that city. Through the labors of those men of God a small society was kept together, notwithstanding the difficulties with which they had to contend in those troublesome time.

3 This refers to a partial separation which took place in Virginia on account of the ordinances.

01.02.03. Vol 1, Book 2, Chapter 03

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book II FROM THE FIRST CONFERENCE IN 1773, TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH IN 1784

CHAPTER 3 An account of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with some arguments in its defense.

We have arrived at a very important period in the history of Methodism in this country. And as so much has been said respecting the constituting of the Methodist societies here into an independent church, I shall, in the first place, give a detail of the facts in the case, and, secondly, offer some arguments in defense of the measure.

I. Hitherto the Methodists, both in Europe and America, had been considered as a society within a church -- in Great Britain they considered themselves as members of the establishment -- in America as members of that denomination to which they might be attached. The preachers in both hemispheres, not having been consecrated to their work by the imposition of hands, were distinguished as "lay-preachers," and had not, except in the instance heretofore narrated, presumed to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper. Under these circumstances much uneasiness had been manifested both in Europe and America, more especially here. But all solicitation, whether from the preachers or people, for the establishment of a separate church, had been strenuously resisted by Mr. Wesley, as being foreign to his primary design, and incompatible with the principles he had avowed from the beginning of his ministry. He commenced his ministerial, labor with the single intention of reviving evangelical religion in the Church, by preaching her doctrines and enforcing her discipline. This was the state of things at the time of which we are now speaking.

As, however, the colonies had now become an independent government, no longer under the control of Great Britain, either in civil or ecclesiastical matters, Mr. Wesley began to relax from the sternness with which he had heretofore resisted the solicitations of the American Methodists, and to think seriously of granting their requests; and after consulting with his most intimate friends respecting the propriety of the measure -- for of its lawfulness he had no doubt -- he resolved to grant their request, and adopted means to carry the resolution into effect. "At the conference held in Leeds, in 1784, he declared his intention of sending Dr. Coke and some other preachers to America. Mr. Richard Whatcoat and Mr. Thomas Vasey offered themselves as missionaries for that purpose, and were accepted. Before they sailed, Mr. Wesley abridged the Common Prayer Book of the Church of England, and wrote to Dr. Coke, then in London, desiring him to meet him in Bristol, to receive fuller powers, and to bring the Rev. Mr. Creighton with him. The doctor and Mr. Creighton accordingly met him in Bristol when, with their assistance, he ordained Mr. Richard Whatcoat and Mr. Thomas Vasey presbyters for America; and being peculiarly attached to every rite of the Church of England, he afterward ordained Dr. Coke a superintendent, giving him letters of ordination under his hand and seal, and at the same time the following letter, to be printed and

circulated in America:"1 "Bristol, Sept. 10th, 1784 To Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our Brethren in North America:

1. By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from the British empire, and erected into independent states. The English government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the states of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the congress, partly by the state assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation some thousands of the inhabitants of these states desire my advice: and in compliance with their desire I have drawn up a little sketch.

2. Lord King's Account of the Primitive Church convinced me, many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned from time to time to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our traveling preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace' sake, but because I was determined, as little as possible to violate the established order of the national Church, to which I belonged.

3. But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, and but few parish ministers: so for some hundred miles together there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord's supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end: and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

4. I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury, to be joint superintendents2 over our brethren in North America. As also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them, by baptizing and ministering the Lord's supper.

5. If any one will point out a more rational and Scriptural way of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

6. It has indeed been proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object, 1. I desired the bishop of London to ordain one only; but could not prevail: 2. If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceedings; but the matter admits of no delay: 3. If they would ordain them now, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us! 4. As our American brethren are now totally disentangled both from the state and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again; either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free. John Wesley." The following is the letter of ordination which Mr. Wesley gave to Dr. Coke: "To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late Fellow of Lincoln College, in Oxford, Presbyter of the Church of England, sendeth greeting:

"Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, according to the usage of the same Church, and where as there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers:

"Know all men, that I, John Wesley, think myself to providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America And, therefore, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a superintendent, by the imposition of my hands, and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained ministers,) Thomas Coke, Dr. of civil law, a presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

"John Wesley." Being thus furnished with the proper credentials, in the month of September Dr. Coke, in company with Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey, set sail for America, and landed in the city of New York on the 3d of November, 1784. From thence they proceeded through Philadelphia to the state of Delaware, where, on the 15th day of the same month, he met Mr. Asbury at Barratt's chapel. Mr. Asbury gives the following account of this meeting: --

"Sunday 15. I came to Barratt's chapel. Here, to my great joy, I met those dear men of God, Dr. Coke and Richard Whatcoat. We were greatly comforted together. The doctor preached on Christ our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Having had no opportunity of conversing with them before public worship, I was greatly surprised to see brother Whatcoat assist by taking the cup in the administration of the sacrament. I was shocked when first informed of the intention of these my brethren in coming to this country: it may be of God. My answer then was, If the preachers unanimously choose me, I shall not act in the capacity I have hitherto done by Mr. Wesley's appointment. The design of organizing the Methodists into an independent Episcopal Church was opened to the preachers present, and it was agreed to call a general conference, to meet at Baltimore the ensuing Christmas; as also that brother Garrettson go off to Virginia to give notice thereof to the brethren in the south."

According to this arrangement, Mr. Garrettson set off immediately on his southern journey, sending letters to those he could not see; and Dr. Coke spent the intermediate time in visiting various parts of the country and preaching to the people. On Friday the 26th, Mr. Asbury says, "I observed this day as a day of fasting and prayer, that I might know the will of God in the matter; that is to come before the conference. The preachers and people seem to be much pleased with the projected plan; I myself am led to think it is of the Lord. I am not tickled with the honor to be gained. I see danger in the way. My soul waits upon God. O that he may lead us in the way we should go!" In conformity with the above arrangement, December 25th, sixty out of the eighty-three preachers then in the traveling connection, assembled in the city of Baltimore for the conference, in which Dr. Coke presided, assisted by Mr. Asbury; and the first act of the conference was, by a unanimous vote, to elect Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury as general superintendents; for although Mr. Asbury had been appointed to that high office by Mr. Wesley, yet he declined acting in that capacity independently of the suffrages of his brethren over whom he must preside. After his election, being first ordained a deacon, then an elder, Mr. Asbury was consecrated by Dr. Coke, assisted by several elders, to the office of a superintendent, in the manner set forth in the following certificate: --

"Know all men by these presents, That I, Thomas Coke, Doctor of civil law, late of Jesus College, in the university of Oxford, presbyter of the Church of England, and superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America; under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory; by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted by two ordained elders,) did on the twenty-fifth day of this month, December, set apart Francis Asbury for the office of a deacon in the aforesaid Methodist Episcopal Church. And also on the twenty-sixth day of the said month, did, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted by the said elders,) set apart the said Francis Asbury for the office of elder in the said Methodist Episcopal Church. And on this twenty-seventh day of the said month, being the day of the date hereof, have, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted by the said elders,) set apart the said Francis Asbury for the office of a superintendent in the said Methodist Episcopal Church, a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a fit person preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this 27th day of December, in the year of our Lord 1784.

"Thomas Coke."

One of the elders who assisted at the consecration of Mr. Asbury, was the Rev. Mr. Otterbine, a minister of the German Church. Having enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with this pious and evangelical minister of Jesus Christ, and having full fellowship with him as a laborious and useful servant of God, Mr. Asbury requested that he might be associated with Dr. Coke and the other elders in the performance of this solemn ceremony. The following persons were elected, twelve of whom were consecrated elders: Freeborn Garrettson, William Gill, Le Roy Cole, John Hagerty, James O. Cromwell, John Tunnel, Nelson Reed, Jeremiah Lambert, Reuben Ellis, James O'Kelly, Richard Ivey, Beverly Allen,3 and Henry Willis. Mr. Garrettson and Mr. Cromwell were set apart especially for Nova Scotia, to which place they soon after went; and their labors and success will be noticed in the proper place. Mr. Lambert was ordained for the Island of Antigua, in the West Indies.

John Dickins, Caleb Boyer, and Ignatus Pigman, were elected deacons.

II. Having thus given an account of these transactions, we proceed to offer a few arguments in their defense. Let it be recollected,

1. That there was, a loud call for these things. Most of the clergy of the English Church, during the revolution, had fled from their flocks; and those who remained, with very few exceptions, were fit for any thing rather than ministers of the gospel. From the hands of such men the Methodists felt unwilling to receive the ordinances. As to the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, they would neither baptize the children unless at least one of the parents professed faith in their doctrines, nor admit them to the communion table unless they became members of their church. The Baptists were more rigid still, as they could fellowship none unless they had been baptized by immersion. To neither of these conditions could the Methodists submit. Besides, by these denominations, the Methodists were treated as heretics, on account of their opposition to the Calvinistic doctrine of decrees, and the final perseverance of the saints. Hence a necessity, originating from the state of things in this country, compelled the Methodists either to remain without the ordinances, to administer them by unconsecrated hands, or to provide for them in the manner they did. Those who disclaim all dependence upon the argument derived from the necessity of the case, would do

well to inquire whether any man can be justified in doing an unnecessary work -- a work that might be scripturally dispensed with. It appears to the writer, that if there be no weight in this argument, then it follows that Mr. Wesley, and those who acted with him in this solemn affair were guilty of a work of supererogation, and therefore cannot be justified on any principle whatever, either of Scripture, reason, or conscience.

2. Let it be recollected also, that those who consecrated Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, namely, Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke, and Mr. Creighton, were all regular presbyters in the Church of England; and that those who laid hands on Dr. Coke, and set him apart as a superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal church in America, were also presbyters regularly ordained to that office.

3. It appears manifest from several passages of Scripture, particularly Acts xiii, 1, 2, and I Tim. iv, 14, and the testimonies of the primitive fathers of the church, that presbyters and bishops were of the same order, and that they originally possessed the power of ordination.

4. The doctrine of uninterrupted succession from the apostles, in a third order, by a triple consecration, as distinct from and superior to presbyters, has been discarded by many of the most eminent ecclesiastical writers, as resting upon no solid foundation, not being susceptible of proof from any authentic source.

5. Mr. Wesley possessed a right over the Methodists which no man else did or could possess, because they were his spiritual children, raised up under his preaching and superintendence, and hence they justly looked to him for a supply of the ordinances of Jesus Christ.

6. Therefore in exercising the power with which the divine Head of the Church had invested him, he invaded no other man’s right, nor yet assumed that which did not belong to him.

7. Hence he did not, as the objection which this argument is designed to refute supposes, ordain either presbyters or a bishop for the English Church, nor for any other church then existing, but simply and solely for the Methodist societies in America. And therefore in doing this necessary work, he neither acted inconsistently with himself as a presbyter of the Church of England, nor incompatible with his frequent avowals to remain in that Church, and not to separate from it.

8. For in fact, in organizing the Methodist Episcopal Church he did not separate either from the English or Protestant Episcopal Church; for that Church had no jurisdiction here, and the Methodist was organized some time before the Protestant Episcopal Church had an existence. Hence he acted perfectly consistent with himself, with all his avowals of attachment to the Church of England, while he proceeded to organize a church here; for while he did this, and thereby established a separate and independent church in America, where the English Church had no jurisdiction, he and his people in England still remained members of the Establishment.

9. While the Scriptures are silent in respect to the particular form of church government which should be established, they certainly allow of an Episcopal form, because it is not incompatible with any known precept or usage of primitive Christianity.

10. This is farther manifest from the fact, that the apostles and evangelists did exercise a jurisdiction over the entire church, presbyters, deacons, and people, though at the same time there is no proof that as to order, created such by a third consecration, they were higher than the presbyters.

11. Distinguishing, therefore, between the power of ordination and the power of jurisdiction, we may see how an Episcopal government may be created by a presbyerial ordination, and hence justify the act of Mr. Wesley and his associates in setting apart Dr. Coke to the office of a general superintendent.

These arguments are merely stated here as the grounds on which the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church is justified, referring the reader who may wish to see them in detail, with the proofs on which they rest for support, to the book recently published, called "An Original Church of Christ." In that performance he will see all objections met, and I trust fully answered, and the proceedings of Mr. Wesley and his co-workers amply vindicated.

12. Another ground of defense is in the character of those who were employed in this transaction. As to the Rev. John Wesley, it is almost needless now to say any thing in his commendation. In him were concentrated all the elements of a great man and by a conscientious improvement of his gifts, having been made a partaker of "like precious faith," he was as much distinguished by his goodness as by his greatness; but all his other endowments were propelled on by his inextinguishable thirst for the salvation of his fellow-men, and fully employed, as an evangelist, in the grand cause of Jesus Christ. And such were the effects of these labors, that at the time of which we are now speaking there were no less than sixty-four thousand one hundred and fifty-five members of society, and one hundred and ninety-five preachers in Europe; and fourteen thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight members, and eighty-three preachers in America; making in all seventy-nine thousand one hundred and forty-three members, and two hundred and seventy-eight preachers. These had been raised up through his instrumentality in the short space of forty-five years, as seals to his ministry, and as evidences of his call to the work in which he was engaged. Of his call, therefore, and qualification for the work of an evangelist, there can be no doubt, any more than there should be of his right, as the spiritual father of this numerous family, to provide them with all the means of grace. And as Dr. Thomas Coke took an active and conspicuous part in the organization and establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it seems proper that a short account should be given of him in this place. He received his education at the university of Oxford, and though in his early days he was infected with infidel principles, yet by reading the works of Bishop Sherlock, he was convinced of the truth of Christianity, and was ordained first a deacon and then a presbyter in the Church of England. But like most of the clergy in that day, he was a stranger to experimental godliness. Hearing, however, of Mr. Wesley, he sought and obtained an interview with that apostolic man, and by him was instructed more perfectly in the ways of the Lord. Not long after he fully joined himself with Mr. Wesley, was made a partaker of justification by faith in Jesus Christ and became an active and zealous assistant to the founder of Methodism. For about six years previous to his sailing to America, he had given full proof of his zealous attachment to the cause of Christ, of his love to Methodist doctrine and discipline, and of his entire devotedness to the best interests of mankind. This was the man on whom Mr. Wesley fixed to carry the designs toward his American brethren into execution. And though it may be said that the doctor was somewhat precipitate in some of his movements, yet it is certain that he gave evidence of the most ardent piety; of a chastened zeal in the cause of God, and of deep devotion to the interests of the Redeemer. Of the Rev. Mr. Creighton it is enough to say, that he was a regularly ordained presbyter of the Church of England, a man of a sound mind and of unquestionable piety. He had for several years devoted himself to the cause of God in connection

with Mr. Wesley.

These were the men who consecrated first Messrs. Whatcoat and Vasey to the office of presbyters, and then these latter assisted in the ordination of Dr. Coke to the office of a superintendent over the American Methodists.

Let us now look for a moment at the character of Mr. Asbury, and see if he was not fully qualified for the high and holy trust confided to him. We have already seen in the preceding chapters the circumstances under which he was moved to come to this country as a missionary of the cross, the motives by which he was actuated, as well as the manner in which he discharged his duties up to the time in which he took upon himself the office of a superintendent. By these things it will be seen, I think, that he was "not a novice" in the things of God, in intellectual endowments, in moral courage, nor yet in that expansive benevolence which should characterize a primitive evangelist or bishop. He had, indeed, given such "full proof of his ministry," both as respects his spiritual and mental qualifications, and his indefatigable labors "in word and doctrine," as to insure his election to that high office by a unanimous vote of his brethren -- those very brethren too, among whom he had labored for about fifteen years. And his subsequent life afforded undeniable evidence that their choice had fallen upon the right man.

Now, let those who question the validity of our ordination, and the consequent right we have to administer the ordinances, put their finger upon any organization of a church since the apostolic days, by any number of men, and if they will find stronger marks of a divine call to do these things, or a more urgent necessity for them, arising out of the circumstances of the times, we will then review our ground, and hesitate to pronounce the Methodist Episcopal Church Scriptural and apostolical in her orders and ordinances. Its founders, under the protection of Almighty God, were all men of learning, of deep experience in the things of God, of unquestionable piety, regularly consecrated presbyters of the Church; and the leader in this whole, affair was the father of the entire family of spiritual children; and therefore possessed rights over them which no one else possibly could. To all this it may be said "that the people were not consulted." But their wishes were already known. They had been expressed over and of again; and that their voice was in exact accordance with the proceedings of the conference, is demonstrable from numerous testimonies.

Mr. Lee says, "The Methodists were pretty generally pleased at our becoming a church, and heartily united together in the plan which the conference had adopted; and from that time religion greatly revived."

Mr. William Watters, the oldest American Methodist preacher, says, in his memoirs of himself, "We became, instead of a religious society, a separate Church. This gave great satisfaction through all the societies." The Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, in his Memoir of Bishop Asbury, after stating the fact of our having become an independent Church, says, "This step met with general approbation both among the preachers and members. Perhaps we shall seldom find such unanimity of sentiment upon any question of such magnitude." Nor has a murmur been heard, except from a few disaffected individuals, through all our borders, on account of the measures which were adopted at that conference, and the consequences which have resulted fully sustain the opinions above expressed. What is meant by these results is, not merely making proselytes to the system; for this of itself is no evidence either for or against any cause; but the real reformation in heart and life of

thousands and tens of thousands of immortal souls. If, therefore, the turning of sinners "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God," may be pleaded in favor of any system of operations, then may we say God has fixed the seal of his approbation upon the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church; for it has been instrumental of doing this in the most effectual and extensive manner in these United States.4

It has been already stated that Mr. Wesley made an abridgment of the Book of Common Prayer, as used in the Church of England, and recommended that it should be used by the preachers and people in this country. This accordingly was done in some of the larger towns and cities; but this practice, as well as that of wearing gowns, which the superintendents and some of the elders did for a season, was soon laid aside, on account of the opposition which was generally manifested against it, with the exception of the ordinations and sacramental services, which are retained and used at the present time. The following articles of religion were adopted at this conference, and published: -- I. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness: the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

II. Of the Word, Or Son of God, who was made very Man The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt but also for actual sins of men.

III. Of the Resurrection of Christ

Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man’s nature, wherewith, he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

IV. Of the Holy Ghost The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

V. Of the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church. Of the Names of the Canonical Books

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The First Book of Samuel, The Second Book of Samuel, The First Book of Kings, The Second Book of Kings, The First Book of Chronicles, The Second Book of Chronicles, The Book of Ezra, The Book of Nehemiah, The Book of Esther, The Book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, Cantica, or Songs of Solomon, Four Prophets the greater, Twelve Prophets the less:

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

VI. Of the Old Testament The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only mediator between God and man, being both God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

VII. Of Original or Birth-Sin

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

VIII. Of Free Will The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.

IX. Of the Justification of Man

We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings: -- Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

X. Of Good Works

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God’s judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by its fruit.

XI. Of Works of Supererogation

Voluntary works, besides over and above God’s commandments, which they call works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

XII. Of Sin after Justification Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend, our lives. And therefore

they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

XIII Of the Church The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

XIV. Of Purgatory The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshipping and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the word of God.

XV. Of speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People understand

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the primitive church, to have public prayer in the church, or to minister the sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people.

XVI. Of the Sacraments

Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession; but rather they are certain signs of grace and God's good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

These are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the gospel; that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called sacraments that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for sacraments of the gospel, being such as have partly grown out of the corrupt following of the apostles, and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of baptism and the Lord's supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God. The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith.

XVII. Of Baptism

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized, but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.

XVIII. Of the Lord's Supper The supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given,

taken, and eaten, in the supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith. The sacrament of the Lord's supper was not by Christ's' ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

XIX. Of Both Kinds The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people: for both the parts of the Lord's supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christians alike.

XX. Of the one Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore, the sacrifice of masses, in the which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable, and dangerous deceit.

XXI. Of the Marriage of Ministers The ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

XXII. Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches

It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike: for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

XXIII. Of the Rulers of the United States of America The congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and councils of state, as the delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the general act of confederation, and by the constitutions of their respective states. And the said states ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

XXIV. Of Christian Men's Goods The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

XXV. Of a Christian Man's Oath As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James his apostle, so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth. That the reader may have an entire view of the doings of this conference, I think it expedient to give him the rules as they were then adopted, noticing, as we proceed in our history, such alterations or new

rules as have been incorporated into the Discipline from time to time. After giving a short account of the rise of Methodism in Europe and America in Section I., they proceeded, in Section II., to state The Method of holding a Conference, and the Business to be done therein.

It is desired that all things be considered as in the immediate presence of God. That every person speak freely whatever is in his heart.

Question 1. How may we best improve our time at the conference?

Answer 1. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care to set God always before us.

2. In the intermediate hours, let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises.

3. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on our labor.

Question 2. What is the method wherein we usually proceed in a conference?

Answer We inquire -- 1. What preachers are admitted?

2. Who remain on trial?

3. Who are admitted on trial?

4. Who desist from traveling?

5. Are there any objections to any of the preachers? Who are named one by one.

6. How are the preachers stationed this year?

7. What numbers are in society?

8. What is collected for the contingent expenses?

9. How is this expended?

10. What is contributed toward the fund for the superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of the preachers?

11. What demands are there upon it?

12. Where and when shall our next conferences begin?

Question 3. Is there any other business to be done in the conference?

Answer The electing and ordaining of bishops, elders, and deacons.

After assigning some reasons for the organization which had just been accomplished, and the manner in which it had been done, the fourth section concludes thus on the manner of constituting a bishop, and of his duties and responsibilities: -- Question 2. How is a bishop to be constituted in future?

Answer By the election of a majority of the conference, and the laying on of the hands of a bishop.

Question 3. What is his duty?

Answer To preside as moderator in our conferences; to fix the appointments of the preachers for the several circuits; and in the intervals of the conference, to change, receive, or suspend preachers, as necessity may require to travel through as many circuits as he can, and to direct in the spiritual business of the societies; as also to ordain bishops, elders, and deacons.

N.[athan B[angs]. The bishop has obtained liberty, by the suffrage of the conference, to ordain local preachers to the office of deacons, provided they obtain a testimonial from the society to which they belong, and from the stewards of the circuit, signed by three traveling preachers, three deacons, and three elders, (one of them being a presiding elder;) the names of those nominated being read in the conference previous to their ordination.

Question 4. To whom is the bishop amenable for his conduct?

Answer To the conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary.

Question 5. If the bishop ceases from traveling at large among the people, shall he still exercise his office among us in any degree?

Answer If he ceases from traveling without the consent of the conference, he shall not hereafter exercise any ministerial function whatsoever in our church.

SECTION V. On the constituting of Elders, and their Duty Question 1. How is an elder constituted?

Answer By the election of a majority of the conference, and by the laying on of the hands of a bishop, and of the elders that are present.

Question 2. What is his duty?

Answer 1. To travel through his appointed district.

2. To administer baptism and the Lord’s supper; and to perform all parts of divine service.

3. In the absence of a bishop, to take charge of all the deacons, traveling and local preachers, and exhorters.

4. To change, receive, or suspend preachers.

5. To direct in the transaction of the spiritual business of his circuit.

6. To take care that every part of our discipline be enforced.

7. To aid in the public collections. To attend his bishop when present, and give him when absent all necessary information, by letter, of the state of his district.

N.[athan] B[angs]. No elder that ceases to travel, without the consent of the conference, certified under the hand of a bishop, shall on any account exercise the peculiar functions of his office among us.

SECTION VI. On the constituting of Deacons, and their Duty Question 1. How is a deacon constituted?

Answer By the election of a majority of the conference, and the laying on of the hand, of a bishop.

Question 2. What is the duty of a deacon?

Answer 1. To baptize, and perform the office of matrimony in the absence of the elder.

2. To assist the elder in administering the Lord's supper.

3. To see that the other preachers in this circuit behave well, and want nothing.

4. To renew the tickets quarterly, and regulate the bands.

5. To appoint all the stewards and leaders, and change them when he sees it necessary.

6. To hold watch-nights and love-feasts.

7. To hold quarterly meetings, and therein diligently to inquire both into the temporal and spiritual state of each society.

8. To take care that every society be duly supplied with books: particularly with the SAINTS' REST, INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHILDREN, and the PRIMITIVE PHYSIC; which ought to be in every house.

9. To take an exact account of the number in Society, and to bring it to the conference.

10. To send an account of his circuit every quarter to his elder.

11. To meet the men and women apart in the large societies, once a quarter.

12. To overlook the accounts of all the stewards.

13. To appoint a person to receive the quarterly collection in the classes, and to be present at the time of receiving it.

14. To see that public collections be made quarterly, if need be.

15. To move a yearly subscription through those circuits that can bear it, for building churches.

16. To choose a committee of lay-members, to make a just application of the money, where it is most wanted.

Question 3. What other directions shall we give the deacons?

Answer Several 1. To take a regular catalogue of the societies in towns and cities, as they live in streets.

2. Leave your successor a particular account of the state of the circuit.

3. See that every band-leader have the rules of the bands.

4. Vigorously, but calmly, enforce the rules concerning needless ornaments and drams.

5. As soon as there are four men or women believers in any place, put them into a band.

6. Suffer no love-feast to last above an hour and a half.

7. Warn all from time to time, that none are to remove from one circuit to another, without a note of recommendation from the elder or deacon, in these words: A. B., the bearer, has been an

acceptable member of our society in C., and inform them, that without such a certificate, they will not be received into other societies.

8. Everywhere recommend decency and cleanliness.

9. Read the rules of the society, with the aid of the preachers, once a year, in every congregation, and once a quarter in every society.

10. On any dispute between two or more of the members of our society, which cannot be settled by the parties concerned, the deacon shall inquire into the circumstances of the case, and having consulted the stewards and leaders, shall, if agreeable to their advice, recommend to the contending parties a reference consisting of one arbiter, chosen by the plaintiff, and another by the defendant; which two arbiters so chosen, shall nominate a third (the three arbiters being members of our society) and the decision of any two of them shall be final. But if either of the parties refuse to abide by such a decision, he shall be immediately expelled.

N. B. If any member of our society enter into a lawsuit with another member before those measures are taken, he shall be expelled. No deacon that ceases to travel without the consent of the conference, certified under the hand of a bishop, shall on any account exercise the peculiar functions of his office.

SECTION VII. On the Method of receiving Preachers, and their Duty.

Question 1. How is a preacher to be received?

Answer 1. By the conference.

2. In the interval of the conference, by the bishop, or an elder, until the sitting of the conference.

3. When his name is not printed in the minutes, he must receive a written license from his elder or bishop.

Question 2. What is the duty of a preacher?

Answer

1. To preach.

2. To meet the societies or classes and bands.

3. To visit the sick.

4. To meet the leaders.

5. To preach in the morning, where he can get hearers.

N. B. We are fully determined never to drop morning preaching; and to preach at five o’clock in the summer, and at six in the winter, wherever it is practicable.

Question 3. Are the preachers to read our liturgy?

Answer All that have received a written direction for that purpose, under the hand of a bishop or elder, may read the liturgy as often as they think it expedient.

Question 4. What are the directions given to a preacher?

Answer

1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed; never be triflingly employed. Never trifle away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

2. Be serious. Let your motto be, holiness to the Lord. Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

3. Converse sparingly and cautiously with women, 1 Timothy v, 2.

4. Take no step toward marriage without first consulting with your brethren.

5. Believe evil of no one; unless ye see it done, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

6. Speak evil of no one: else your word especially would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

7. Tell every one under your care what you think wrong in his conduct and temper, and that plainly as soon as may be: else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire cut of your bosom.

8. Do not affect the gentleman. A preacher of the gospel is the servant of all.

9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin.

10. Be punctual. Do every thing exactly at the time. And do not mend our rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but conscience' sake; not for fear of punishment, but for conscience' sake.

11. You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always not only to those that want, but to those that want you most.

12. Observe. it is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society only: but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord. And remember! a Methodist preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline! Therefore you will need to exercise all the sense and grace you have.

13. Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the gospel. As such, it is your duty to employ your time in the manner which we direct: in preaching and visiting from house to house: in reading, meditation, and prayer. Above all, if you labor with us in the Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do that part of the work which we advise, at those times and places which we judge most for his glory.

Question 5. What method do we use in receiving a preacher at the conference?

Answer After solemn fasting and prayer, every person proposed shall then be asked, before the conference, the following directions, (with any others which may be thought necessary,) viz. Have you faith in Christ? Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and his

work? Do you know the rules of the society? Of the bands? Do you keep them? Do you constantly attend the sacrament? Have you read the form of discipline? Are you willing to conform to it? Have you considered the rules of a preacher; especially the first, tenth, and twelfth? Will you keep them for conscience' sake? Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God? Will you endeavor not to speak too long or too loud? Will you diligently instruct the children in every place? Will you visit from house to house? Will you recommend fasting or abstinence, both by precept and example? Are you in debt?

We may then, if he gives satisfaction, receive him as a probationer, by giving him the form of discipline, inscribed thus: To A. B. "You think it your duty to call sinners to repentance. Make full proof hereof and we shall rejoice to receive you as a fellow-laborer." Let him, then, carefully read and weigh what is contained therein; that if he has any doubt, it may be removed. Observe! Taking on trial is entirely different from admitting a preacher. One on trial, may be either admitted or rejected, without doing him any wrong; otherwise it would be no trial at all. Let every deacon and elder explain this to those who are on trial, as well as to those who are in future to be proposed for trial.

After two years' probation, being recommended by the elders and deacons present, and examined by the bishop, he may be received into full connection, by giving him the form of discipline, inscribed thus: "As long as you freely consent to, and earnestly endeavor to walk by these, rules, we shall rejoice to acknowledge you as a fellow laborer."

N. B. Let none who are local, preach or exhort in any of our societies without a note of permission from, the deacon: let every local preacher or exhorter take care to have this renewed yearly: and let every elder insist upon it.

SECTION VIII. Of the Collections that are to be made, and how the Money is to be expended Question 1. How many collections are to be made in a year?

Answer

1. A quarterly collection from the members of the Society to supply the preachers; and when that is deficient, a public quarterly collection. If there be any overplus, let one-third of it be reserved for future deficiencies; one-third be given to the poor in general; and one-third applied to the building or improving of our churches. If there is money left in the hands of the stewards at the close of the year, let it be sent to the conference.

2. A yearly collection from all our members that are of ability, for the building of convenient churches.

3. A collection at love-feasts, and on sacramental occasions, for the poor of our own society.

4. An annual collection or subscription for the college.

5. An annual public collection for the contingencies of the conference; which shall be applied,

1. To discharge the deficiencies of those preachers who shall not have received their full salary in their circuits; and, 2. To defray the expenses of our missions to distant parts of the continent.

Question 2. What is the regular annual salary of the bishops, elders, deacons, and preachers?

Answer Twenty-four pounds Pennsylvania currency, and their traveling expenses.

Question 3. What shall be annually allowed the wives of the married preachers?

Answer Twenty-four pounds Pennsylvania currency, if they are in want of it.

N. B. That no ministers or preachers, traveling or local, shall receive any support either in money or other provision for their services, without the knowledge of the stewards of the circuits, and its being properly entered quarterly on the books.

SECTION IX. On Class-Meeting Question 1. How may the leaders of classes be rendered more useful?

Answer

1. Let each of them be diligently examined concerning his method of meeting a class. Let this be done with all possible exactness, at least once a quarter. In order to this, take sufficient time.

2. Let each leader carefully inquire how every soul in his class prospers: not only how each person observes the outward rules, but how he grows in the knowledge and love of God.

3. Let the leaders converse with the elder and deacon frequently and freely.

Question 2. Can any thing more be done in order to make the class-meetings lively and profitable?

Answer 1. Change improper leaders.

2. Let the leaders frequently meet each other’s classes.

3. Let us observe which leaders are the most useful: and let these meet the other classes as often as possible.

4. See that all the leaders be not only men of sound judgment, but men truly devoted to God.

Question 3. How shall we prevent improper persons from insinuating themselves into the society?

Answer 1. Give tickets to none until they are recommended by a leader with whom they have met at least six months on trial.

2. Give notes to none but those who are recommended by one you know, or until they have met three or four times in a class.

3. Read the rules to them the first time they meet.

Question 4. How shall we be more strict in receiving and excluding members?

Answer In large societies we may read the names of those that are received and excluded once a quarter.

Question 5. What shall we do with those members of society who willfully and repeatedly neglect to meet their class?

Answer

1. Let the elder, deacon, or one of the preachers visit them, whenever it is practicable, and explain to them the consequence if they continue to neglect, viz. exclusion.

2. If they do not amend, let the deacon exclude them in the society; showing that they are laid aside for a breach of our rules of discipline; and not for immoral conduct.

SECTION X. On the Duty of Preachers to God, themselves, and one another Question 1. How shall a preacher be qualified for his charge?

Answer By walking closely with God, and having his work greatly at heart: and by understanding and loving discipline, ours in particular.

Question 2. Do we sufficiently watch over each other?

Answer We do not. Should we not frequently ask each other, Do you walk closely with God? Have you now fellowship with the Father and the Son? At what hour do you rise? Do you punctually observe the morning and evening hour of retirement, viz. five o'clock? Do you spend the day in the manner which the conference advises? Do you converse seriously, usefully, and closely? To be more particular: Do you use all the means of grace yourself, and enforce the use of them on all other persons? They are either instituted or prudential.

I. The instituted are,

1. Prayer; private, family, public; consisting of deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving. Do you use each of these? Do you forecast daily wherever you are, to secure time for private devotion? Do you practice it everywhere? Do you ask everywhere, Have you family prayer? Do you ask individuals; Do you use private prayer every morning and evening in particular?

2. Searching the Scriptures, by

1. Reading; constantly, some part of every day, regularly, all the Bible in order: carefully, with Mr. Wesley's notes: seriously, with prayer before and after: fruitfully, immediately practicing what you learn there? 2. Meditating: at set times? By rule? 3. Hearing: every opportunity? with prayer before, and after? Have you a Bible always about you?

3. The Lord's supper: Do you use this at every opportunity? With solemn prayer before? With earnest and deliberate self-devotion?

4. Fasting: Do you use as much abstinence and fasting every week, as your health, strength, and labor will permit?

5. Christian conference: Are you convinced how important and how difficult it is to order your conversation aright? Is it always in grace, seasoned with salt; meet to minister grace to the hearers? Do you not converse too long at a time? Is not an hour commonly enough? Would it not be well always to have a determinate end in view, and to pray before and after it?

II. Prudential means we may use, either as Christians, as Methodists, as preachers, or as ministers.

6. As Christians: What particular rules have you is order to grow in grace? What arts of holy living?

7. As Methodists: Do you never miss your class or band?

8. As preachers: Do you meet every society? also, the leaders and bands?

9. As ministers: Have you thoroughly considered your duty? And do you make a conscience of executing every part of it?

These means may be used without fruit. But there are some means which cannot; namely, watching, denying ourselves, taking up our cross, exercise of the presence of God.

1. Do you steadily watch against the world? yourself? your besetting sin?

2. Do you deny yourself every useless pleasure of sense? imagination? honor? Are you temperate in all things? instance in food.

1. Do you use only that kind, and that degree which is best both for your body and soul? Do you see the necessity of this? 2. Do you eat no flesh suppers? 3. Do you eat no more at each meal than is necessary? Are you not heavy or drowsy after dinner? 4. Do you use only that kind and that degree of drink which is best both for your body and soul? 5. Do you choose and use water for your common drink? and only take wine medicinally or sacramentally?

3. Wherein do you take up your cross daily? Do you cheerfully bear your cross (whatever is grievous to nature) as a gift of God, and labor to profit thereby?

4. Do you endeavor to set God always before you? to see his eye continually fixed upon you? Never can you use these means but a blessing will ensue; and the more you use them, the more will you grow in grace.

SECTION XI. On the Necessity of Union among ourselves

Let us be deeply sensible (from what we have known) of the evil of a division in principle, spirit, or practice, and the dreadful consequences to ourselves and others. If we are united, what can stand before us? if we divide, we shall destroy ourselves, the work of God, and the souls of our people.

Question 1. What can be done in order to a closer union with each other?

Answer 1. Let us be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of it.

2. Pray earnestly for, and speak freely to each other.

3. When we meet, let us never part without prayer.

4. Take great care not to despise each other’s gifts.

5. Never speak lightly of each other.

6. Let us defend each other’s character in every thing, so far as is consistent with truth.

7. Labor in honor each to prefer the other before himself.

SECTION XII. Of the Trial of those who think they are moved by the Holy Ghost to Preach Question 1. How shall we try those who profess to be moved by the Holy Ghost to preach?

Answer

1. Let them be asked the following questions, viz. Do they know God as a pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they gifts (as well as grace) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear, sound understanding, a right judgment in the things of God, a just conception of salvation by faith? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they fruit? Are any truly convinced of sin, and converted to God by their preaching? As long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient proof that he is moved by the holy Ghost.

SECTION XIII. Of the Spirit and Truth of Singing Question 1. How shall we guard against formality in singing?

Answer 1. By choosing such hymns as are proper for the congregation.

2. By not singing too much at once; seldom more than five or six verses.

3. By suiting the time to the words.

4. By often stopping short, and asking the people, "Now!, do you know what you said last? Did you speak no more than you felt?"

5. Do not suffer the people to sing too slow. This naturally tends to formality, and is brought in by those who have either very strong or very weak voices.

6. In every large society let them learn to sing; and let them always learn our tunes first.

7. Let the women constantly sing their parts alone. Let no man sing with them, unless he understands the notes and sings the bass as it is composed in the tunebook.

8. Introduce no new tune till they are perfect in the old.

9. Recommend our tune-book; and if you cannot sing yourself, choose a person or two at each place to pitch the tune for you.

10. Exhort every person in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only.

11. Sing no hymns of your own composing.

12. If a preacher be present, let him alone give out the words.

13. When the singers would teach a tune to the congregation, they must sing only the tenor.

SECTION XIV.

Rules by which we should Continue Or Desist from Preaching at any Place Question 1. Is it advisable for us to preach in as many places as we can, without forming any societies?

Answer By no means: we have made the trial in various places; and that for a considerable time. But all the seed has fallen by the way-side. There is scarce any fruit remaining.

Question 2. Where should we endeavor to preach most?

Answer 1. Where there are the greatest number of quiet and willing hearers.

2. Where there is the most fruit.

Question 3. Ought we not diligently to observe in what places God is pleased at any time to pour out his Spirit more abundantly?

Answer We ought; and at that time to send more laborers than usual into that part of the harvest.

SECTION XV. On the Matter and Manner of Preaching, and other public exercises.

Question 1. What is the best general method of preaching?

Answer

1. To convince:

2. To offer Christ:

3. To invite:

4. To build up: and to do this in some measure in every sermon.

Question 2. Are there any smaller advices relative to preaching which might be of use to us?

Answer Perhaps these:

1. Be sure never to disappoint a congregation.

2. Begin precisely at the time appointed.

3. Let your whole deportment be serious, weighty, and solemn.

4. Always suit your subject to your audience.

5. Choose the plainest text you can.

6. Take care not to ramble, but keep to your text, and make out what you take in hand.

7. Take care of any thing awkward or affected, either in your gesture, phrase, or pronunciation.

8. Print nothing without the approbation of the conference, and one of the bishops.

9. Do not usually pray extempore above eight or ten minutes (at most) without intermission

10. Frequently read and enlarge upon a portion of Scripture; and let young preachers often exhort without taking a text.

11. Always avail yourself of the great festivals by preaching on the occasion.

Question 3. Have not some of us been led off from practical preaching, by what is called preaching Christ?

Answer The most effectual way of preaching Christ, is to preach him in all his offices; and to declare his law, as well as his gospel, both to believers and unbelievers. Let us strongly and closely insist upon inward and outward holiness in all its branches.

SECTION XVI.

Against Antinomianism Question 1. What can be done to guard against Antinomianism?

Answer 1. Let all the preachers carefully read over Mr. Wesley’s and Mr. Fletcher’s tracts.

2. Let them frequently and explicitly preach the truth, but not in a controversial way. And let them take care to do it in love and gentleness: not in bitterness, returning railing for railing.

3. Answer all the objections of our people as occasion offers: but take care to do it in a Christian temper.

Question 2. Wherein lies our danger of it?

Answer

1. With regard to man’s faithfulness, our Lord himself hath taught us to use the expression; therefore we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert, upon his authority, that if a man is not faithful in the unrighteous mammon, God will not give him the true riches.

2. With regard to working for life, which our Lord expressly commands us to do. Labor (ergadzesthe) literally, work for the meat that endureth to everlasting life. And in fact every believer, till he comes to glory, works for as well as from life.

3. We have received it as a maxim, that "a man is to do nothing in order to justification." Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favor with God should cease from evil, and learn to do well. So God himself teacheth by the Prophet Isaiah. Whoever repents, should do works meet for repentance: and if this is not in order to find favor, what does he do them for?

Once more review the whole affair.

1. Who of us is now accepted of God?

He that now believes in Christ, with a loving, obedient heart.

2. But who among those that never heard of Christ?

He that, according to the light he has, feareth God, and worketh righteousness.

3. Is this the same with, He that is sincere?

Nearly, if not quite.

4. Is not this salvation by works? Not by the merit of works, but by works as a condition.

5. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions is drawn from matter of fact. God does in fact justify those who by their own confession neither fear God, nor wrought righteousness. Is this an exception to the general rule?

It is a doubt whether God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure that the person in question never did fear God and work righteousness? His own thinking so is no proof; for we know how all that are convinced of sin undervalue themselves in every respect. Does not talking without proper caution of a justified or sanctified state tend to mislead men? almost naturally leading them

to trust in what was done in one moment? whereas we are every moment pleasing or displeasing God, according to our works; according to the whole of our present inward tempers and outward behavior.

SECTION XVII.

How to provide for the Circuits in the time of Conference, and to preserve and increase the Work of God.

Question What can be done to supply the circuits during the sitting of the conference?

Answer 1. Let all the appointments stand according to the plan of the circuit it.

2. Engage as many local preachers and exhorters as will supply them; and let them be paid for their time in proportion to the salary of the traveling preachers.

3. If preachers and exhorters cannot attend, let some person of ability be appointed in every society to sing, pray, and read one of Mr. Wesley’s sermons.

4. And if that cannot be done, let there be prayer meetings.

5. Wherever you can, in large societies, appoint prayer meetings.

Lastly, let a fast be published at every quarterly meeting for the Friday following; and a memorandum of it be written on all the class papers. Also be active in dispersing the books among the people.

SECTION XVIII. Of employing our Time profitably when we are not traveling, or engaged in public exercises.

Question 1. What general method of employing our time would you advise us to?

Answer We advise you, 1. As often as possible to rise at four.

2. From four to five in the morning, and from five to six in the evening, to meditate, pray, and read the Scriptures, with Mr. Wesley’s Notes, and the closely practical parts of what he has published.

3. From six in the morning till twelve (allowing an hour for breakfast) read in order, with much prayer, the Christian library and other pious books.

Question 2. Why is it that the people under our care are not better?

Answer Other reasons may concur; but the chief is, because we are not more knowing and more holy.

Question 3. But why are we not more knowing?

Answer Because we are idle. We forget our first rule, "Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary." I fear there is altogether a fault in this matter, and that few of us are clear. Which of you spends as many hours a day in God’s work as you did formerly in man’s work? We talk, talk -- or read what comes next to hand. We must, absolutely must cure this evil, or betray the cause of God. But how?

1. Read the most useful books, and that regularly and constantly

2. Steadily spend all the morning in this employment at least five hours in four and twenty. "But I have no taste for reading." Contract a taste for it by use, or return to your former employment. "But I have no books." Be diligent to spread the books, and you will have the use them.

SECTION XIX. On Baptism

Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling, or pouring.

N. B. We will on no account whatever receive a present for administering baptism, or the burial of the deed.

SECTION XX. On the Lord’s Supper Question Are there any directions to be given concerning the administration of the Lord’s supper?

Answer 1. Let those who choose receive it kneeling, and those who do not, either standing or sitting.

2. Let no person that is not a member of our society be admitted to the communion, without examination, and some token given by an elder or deacon.

SECTION XXI. On unlawful Marriages Question 1. Do we observe any evil which has lately prevailed among our societies?

Answer Many of our members have married with unawakened persons. This has produced bad effects; they have been either hindered for life, or turned back to perdition.

Question 2. What can be done to put a stop to this?

Answer

1. Let every preacher publicly enforce the apostle’s caution, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

2. Let him openly declare whoever does this will be expelled the society.

3. When any such is expelled, let a suitable exhortation be subjoined

4. Let all be exhorted to take no step in so weighty a matter, without advising with the most serious of their brethren.

Question 3. Ought any woman to marry without the consent of her parents?

Answer In general, she ought not. Yet there may be exceptions. For if;

1. A woman be under the necessity of marrying. If; 2. Her parents absolutely refuse to let her marry any Christian; then she may, nay, ought to marry without their consent. Yet even then a Methodist preacher ought not to be married to her.

SECTION XXII. On Perfection

Let us strongly and explicitly exhort all believers to go on to perfection. That we may all speak the same thing, we ask once for all, Shall we defend this perfection, or give it up? We all agree to defend it, meaning thereby (as we did from the beginning) salvation from all sin, by the love of God and man filling our heart. The Papists say, "This cannot be attained till we have been refined by the fire of purgatory." Some professors say, "Nay, it will be attained as soon as the soul and body part." Others say, "It may be attained before we die: a moment after is too late." Is it so or not? we are; all agreed we may be saved from all sin, properly so called, before death, i.e., sinful tempers; but we cannot always speak or think or act, aright, as dwelling in houses of clay. The substance then is settled; but as to the circumstances, is the change gradual or instantaneous? It is both the one and the other. "But should we in preaching insist both on one and the other?" Certainly we should insist on the gradual change; and that earnestly and continually. And are there not reasons why we should insist on the instantaneous change? If there be such a blessed change before death, should we not encourage all believers to expect it? and the rather, because constant experience shows the more earnestly they expect this, the more swiftly and steadily does the gradual work of God go on in their souls; the more careful are they to grow in grace; the more zealous of good works, and the more punctual in their attendance on all the ordinances of God; (whereas just the contrary effects are observed whenever this expectation ceases.) They are saved by hope, by this hope of a total change, with a gradually increasing salvation. Destroy this hope, and that salvation stands still, or rather decreases daily. Therefore whoever will advance the gradual change in believers, should strongly insist on the instantaneous.

SECTION XXIII. On Dress Question Should we insist on the rules concerning dress?

Answer By all me Answer This is no time to give any encouragement to superfluity of apparel; therefore give no tickets to any till they have left off superfluous ornaments. In order to this, 1. Let every deacon read the thoughts upon dress, at least once a year, in every large society. 2. In visiting the classes be very mild, but very strict. 3. Allow of no exempt case, not even of a married woman: better one suffer than many. 4. Give no tickets to any that wear high heads, enormous bonnets, ruffles, or rings.

SECTION XXIV. On the Privileges granted to serious Persons that are not of the Society Question 1. How often shall we permit strangers to be present at the meeting of the society?

Answer At every other meeting of the society in every place, let no stranger be admitted. At other times they may; but the same persons not above twice or thrice.

Question 2. How often shall we permit strangers to be present at our love-feasts?

Answer Let them be admitted with the utmost caution; and the same person on no account above twice or thrice, unless he become a member.

SECTION XXV. On visiting from house to house; guarding against those Sins that are so common to Professors, and enforcing practical Religion Question 1. How can we farther assist those under our care?

Answer By instructing them at their own houses. What unspeakable need is there of this? The world says, "The Methodists are no better than other people." This is not true in the general. But,

1. Personal religion, either toward God or man, is too superficial among us. We can but just touch on a few particulars. How little faith is there among us! how little communion with God! how little living in heaven, walking in eternity, deadness to every creature! how much love of the world! desire of pleasure, of ease, of getting money! how little brotherly love! what continual judging one another! what gossiping, evil speaking, tale-bearing! what want of moral honesty! To instance only one particular: Who does as he would be done by, in buying and selling?

2. Family religion is wanting in many branches. And what avails public preaching alone, though we could preach like angels? We must, yea, every traveling preacher must instruct the people from house to house. Till this is done, and that in good earnest, the Methodists will be no better. Our religion is not deep, universal, uniform; but superficial, partial, uneven. It will be so till we spend half as much time in this visiting as we do now in talking uselessly. Can we find a better method of doing this than Mr. Baxter's? If not, let us adopt it without delay. His whole tract, entitled, Gildas Salvianus, is well worth a careful perusal. Speaking of this visiting from house to house, he says, (p.351,) "We shall find many hindrances, both in ourselves and the people.

1. In ourselves, there is much dullness and laziness, so that there will be much ado to get us to be faithful in the work.

2. We have a base, man-pleasing temper, so that we let men perish, rather than lose their love; we let them go quietly to hell, lest we should offend them.

3. Some of us have also a foolish bashfulness. We know not how to begin, and blush to contradict the devil.

4. But the greatest hindrance is weakness of faith. Our whole motion is weak, because the spring of it is weak.

5. Lastly, we are unskillful in the work. How few know how to deal with men so as to get within them, and suit all our discourse to their several conditions and tempers to choose the fittest subjects, and follow them with a holy mixture of seriousness, terror, love, and meekness! But undoubtedly this private application is implied, those solemn words of the apostle, "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, preach the word; be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering."

O brethren, if we could but set this work on foot in all our societies, and prosecute it zealously, what glory would redound to God! If the common lukewarmness were banished, and every shop and every house busied, in speaking of the word and works of God, surely God would dwell in our habitations, and make us his delight. And this is absolutely necessary to the welfare of our people, some of whom neither repent nor believe to this day. Look around and see how many of them are still in apparent danger of damnation. And how can you walk, and talk, and be merry with such people, when you know their case? Methinks when you look them in the face, you should break forth into tears, as the prophet did when he looked upon Hazael, and then set on them with the most vehement exhortations. O, for God's sake, and the sake of poor souls, bestir yourselves, and spare no pains that may conduce to their salvation!

What cause have we to bleed before the Lord this day, that we have so long neglected this good work! If we had but engaged in it sooner, how many more might have been brought to Christ! and how much holier and happier might we have made our societies before now! and why might we not have done it sooner? There are many hindrances: and so there always will be; but the greatest hindrance was in ourselves, in our littleness of faith and love. But it is objected, 1. This will take up so much time, we shall not have leisure to follow our studies.

We answer, 1. Gaining knowledge is a good thing, but saving soul is a better.

2. By this very thing you will gain the most excellent knowledge, that of God and eternity.

3. You will have time for gaining other knowledge too. Only sleep not more than you need; "and never be idle or triflingly employed." But,

4. If you can do but one, let your studies alone. We ought to throw by all the libraries in the world rather than be guilty of the loss of one soul.

It is objected, 2. "The people will not submit to it." If some will not, others will; and the success with them will repay all your labor. O let us herein follow the example of St. Paul.

1. For our general business, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind.

2. Our special work, Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock.

3. Our doctrine, Repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. The place, I have taught you publicly, and from house to house.

5. The object and manner of teaching, I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears 6. His innocence and self-denial herein, I have coveted no man’s silver or gold.

7. His patience, Neither count I my life dear unto myself. And, among all other motives, let these be ever before our eyes.

1. The church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 2. Grievous wolves shall enter in; yea, of yourselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things.

Write this upon your hearts, and it will do you more good than twenty years’ study. Then you will have no time to spare: you will have work enough. Then likewise no preacher will stay with us who is as salt that has lost its savor; for to such this employment would be mere drudgery and in order to it, you will have need of all the knowledge you can procure, and grace you can attain. The sum is, Go into every house in course, and teach every one therein, young and old, to be Christians inwardly and outwardly; make every particular plain to their understandings; fix it in their minds; write it on their hearts. In order to this, there must be line upon line, precept upon precept. What patience, what love, what knowledge is requisite for this? we must needs do this, were it only to avoid idleness. Do we not loiter away many hours in every week? each try himself: no idleness is consistent with growth in grace. Nay, without exactness in redeeming time, you cannot retain the grace you received in justification.

Question 2. Why are we not more holy, why do not we live in eternity? walk with God all the day long? Why are we not all devoted to God? breathing the whole spirit of missionaries?

Answer Chiefly because we are enthusiasts; looking for the end without using the meAnswer To touch only upon two or three instances: Who of you rises at four? or even at five, when he does not preach? Do you know the obligation and benefit of fasting or abstinence? How often do you practice it? 2. The neglect of this alone is sufficient to account for our feebleness and faintness of spirit. We are continually grieving the Holy Spirit of God by the habitual neglect of a plain duty. Let us amend from this hour.

Question 3. How shall we guard against Sabbath-breaking, evil speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, expensiveness or gayety of apparel, and contracting debts without due care to discharge them?

Answer 1. Let us preach expressly on each of these heads.

2. Read in every society the sermon on evil speaking.

3. Let the leaders closely examine and exhort every person to put away the accursed thing.

4. Let the preacher warn every society that none who is guilty herein can remain with us.

5. Extirpate buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty laid upon them by government out every society. Let none remain with us who will not totally abstain from this evil in every kind and degree.

6. Extirpate bribery, receiving any thing directly or indirectly for voting at any election. Show no respect to persons herein, but expel all that touch the accursed thing.

Question 4. What shall we do to prevent scandal when any of our members fail in business, or contract debts which they are not able to pay?

Answer Let the elder or deacon desire two or three judicious members of the society to inspect the accounts of the supposed delinquents; and if they have behaved dishonestly, or borrowed money without a probability of paying, let them be suspended until their credit is restored.

SECTION XXVI. On the Instruction of Children Question What shall we do for the rising generation? Let him who is zealous for God and the souls of men begin now.

Answer

1. Where there are ten children whose parents are in society meet them an hour once a week; but where this is impracticable, meet them once in two weeks.

2. Procure our instructions for them, and let all who can read and commit them to memory.

3. Explain and impress them upon their hearts.

4. Talk with them every time you see any at home.

5. Pray in earnest for them. Diligently instruct and exhort all parents at their own houses.

6. Let the elders, deacons, and preachers take a list of the names of the children; and if any of them be truly awakened, let them be admitted into society.

7. Preach expressly on education: "But I have no gift for this." Pray earnestly for the gift, and use means to attain it.

SECTION XXVII. On building Churches, and on the Order to be observed therein Question 1. Is any thing advisable in regard to building?

Answer Let all our churches be built plain and decent; but not more expensively than is absolutely unavoidable: otherwise the necessity of raising money will make rich men necessary to us. But if so, we must be dependent on them, yea, and governed by them. And then farewell to the Methodist discipline, if not doctrine too.

N. B.

1. That no person shall be eligible as a trustee to any of our churches or colleges, nor act as a steward or leader, that is not in constant church-communion, and a regular leader or member of a class.

2. That no person that is a trustee shall be ejected while he is in joint security for money, unless such relief be given him as is demanded, or the person who makes the loan will accept.

Question 2. Is there any exception to the rule, "Let the men and women sit apart?"

Answer There is no exception. Let them sit apart in all our churches.

Question 3. But is there not a worse indecency than this, talking in the congregation before and after service? How shall this be cured?

Answer Let all the ministers and preachers join as one man, and enlarge on the impropriety of talking before or after service; and strongly exhort those that are concerned to do it no more. In three months, if we are in earnest, this vile practice will be banished out of every Methodist congregation. Let none stop till he has carried his point.

SECTION XXVIII. On raising a general Fund for the Propagation of the gospel Question How may we raise a general fund for carrying on the whole work of God?

Answer By a yearly collection, and, if need be, a quarterly one, to be raised by every assistant in every principal, congregation in his circuit. To this end, he may then read and enlarge upon the following hints in every such congregation:

How shall we send laborers into those parts where they are most of all wanted? Many are willing to hear, but not to bear the expense. Nor can it as yet be expected of them stay till the word of God has touched their hearts, and then they will gladly provide for them that preach it. Does it not lie upon us in the meantime to supply their lack of service? to raise a general fund, out of which from time to time that expense may be defrayed? By this means those who willingly offer themselves may travel through every part, whether there are societies or not, and stay wherever there is a call, without being burdensome to any. Thus may the gospel, in the life and power thereof, be spread from sea to sea. Which of you will not rejoice to throw in your mite to promote this glorious work?

Besides this, in carrying on so large a work through the continent, there are calls for money in various ways, and we must frequently be at considerable expense, or the work must be at a full

stop. Many, too, are the occasional distresses of our preachers, or their families, which require an immediate supply. Otherwise their hands would hang down, if they were not constrained to depart from the work.

"The money contributed will be brought to the ensuing conference.

"Men and brethren, help! Was there ever a call like this since you first heard the gospel sound? Help to relieve your companions in the kingdom of Jesus, who are pressed above measure. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Help to send forth able, willing laborers into your Lord's harvest so shall ye be assistant in saving souls from death, and hiding a multitude of sins. Help to propagate the gospel of your salvation to the remotest corners of the earth, till the knowledge of our Lord shall cover the land as the waters cover the sea. So shall it appear to ourselves and all men that we are indeed one body, united by one spirit; so shall the baptized heathens be yet again constrained to say, 'See how these Christians love one another.'

SECTION XXIX. Of the Method of raising a Fund for the superannuated Preachers, and the Widows and Orphans of Preachers Question 1. How can we provide for superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers?

Answer 1. Let every preacher contribute two dollars yearly at the conference.

2. Let every one when first admitted as a traveling preacher pay twenty shillings Pennsylvania currency.

3. Let the money be lodged in the hands of the presiding elder, or lent to the college; and an account thereof kept by the deacon.

N. B. The application of the money shall rest with the conference.

4. Out of this fund let provision be made, first, for the worn-out preachers, and then for the widows and children of those that are dead.

5. Every worn-out preacher shall receive, if he wants it, not usually more than twenty-four pounds annually; Pennsylvania currency.

6. Every widow of a preacher shall receive yearly if she wants it, during her widowhood, twenty pounds.

7. Every child of a preacher shall receive once for all, if he wants it, twenty pounds.

8. But none shall be entitled to any thing from this fund till he has paid fifty shillings.

9. Nor any who neglect paying his subscription for three years together, unless he be sent by the conference out of these United States.

10. Let every assistant, as far as possible, bring to the conference the contribution of every preacher left behind in his circuit.

SECTION XXXI. On the Printing of Books, and the Application of the Profits arising therefrom As it has been frequently recommended by the preachers and people that such books as are wanted be printed in this country, we therefore propose,

1. That the advice of the conference shall be desired concerning any valuable impression, and their consent be obtained before any steps be taken for the printing thereof.

2. That the profits of the books, after all the necessary expenses are defrayed, shall be applied, according to the discretion of the conference, toward the college, the preachers' fund, the deficiencies of preachers' salaries, the distant missions, or the debts of our churches.

SECTION XXXII. On bringing to Trial, finding guilty, reproving, suspending, and excluding disorderly Persons from Society and Church Privileges Question How shall a suspected member be brought to trial?

Answer Before the society of which he is a member, or a select number of them, in the presence of a bishop, elder, deacon, or preacher, in the following manner: --

Let the accused and accuser be brought face to face: if this cannot be done, let the next best evidence be procured. If the accused person be found guilty and the crime be such as is expressly forbidden by the word of God, sufficient to exclude a person from the kingdom of grace and glory, and to make him a subject of wrath and hell, let him be expelled. If he evade a trial by absenting himself after sufficient notice given him, and the circumstances of the accusation be strong and presumptive, let him be esteemed as guilty, and accordingly excluded. And without evident marks and fruits of repentance, such offenders shall be solemnly disowned before the church. Witnesses from without shall not be rejected, if a majority believe them to be honest men. But in cases of neglect of duties of any kind, imprudent conduct, indulging sinful tempers or words, disobedience to the order and discipline of the church, -- First, let private reproof be given by a leader or preacher; if there be an acknowledgment of the fault and proper humiliation, the person may remain on trial. On a second offense, a preacher may take one or two faithful friends. On a third failure, if the transgression be increased or continued, let it be brought before the society, or a select number; if there be no sign of humiliation, and the church is dishonored, the offender must be cut off. If there be a murmur or complaint that justice is not done, the person shall be allowed an appeal to the quarterly meeting, and have his case reconsidered before a bishop, presiding elder, or deacon, with the preachers, stewards, and leaders who may be present. After such forms of trial and expulsion, such persons as are thus excommunicated shall have no privileges of society and sacrament in our church, without contrition, confession, and proper trial.

N. B. From this time forward, no person shall be owned as a member of our church without six months' trial.

SECTION XXXIII. On the Manner by which immoral ministers and Preachers shall be brought to Trial, found guilty, reproved, and suspended in the Intervals of Conference.

Question 1. What shall be done when an elder, deacon, or preacher is under the report of being guilty of some capital crime, expressly forbidden in the word of God as an unchristian practice, sufficient to exclude a person from the kingdom of grace and glory, and to make him a subject of wrath and hell?

Answer Let the presiding elder call as many ministers to, the trial as he shall think fit, at least three, and if possible bring the accused and accuser face to face; if the person is clearly convicted, he shall be suspended from official services in the church, and not be allowed the privileges of a

member. But if the accused be a presiding elder, the preachers must call in the presiding elder of the neighboring district, who is required to attend, and act as judge.

If the persons cannot be brought face to face, but the supposed delinquent flees from trial, it shall he received as a presumptive proof of guilt; and out of the mouth of two or three witnesses he shall be condemned. Nevertheless, he may then demand a trial face to face, or he may appeal to the next conference in that district.

Question 2. What shall be done in cases of improper tempers, words, or actions, or a breach of the articles and discipline of the church?

Answer The person so offending shall be reprehended by his bishop, elder, deacon, or preacher that has the charge of the circuit; or if he be a bishop he shall be reprehended by the conference.5 Should a second transgression take place, one, two, or three preachers may be called in if not cured then, he shall be tried at the quarterly meeting by the elder and preachers present; if still incurable, he shall be brought before the conference, and if found guilty and impenitent, he shall be expelled from the connection, and his name so returned in the Minutes.

N. B. Any preacher suspended, at a quarterly meeting, from preaching shall not resume that employment again but by the order of the conference. But it is to be observed that a preacher shall be tried by a deacon, a deacon by an elder, an elder by a presiding elder, and a presiding elder by the presiding elder of a neighboring district.

SECTION XXXIV. On the Qualification and Duty of Stewards Question 1. What are the qualifications necessary for stewards?

Answer Let them be men of solid piety, that both know and love the Methodist doctrine and discipline; and of good natural and acquired abilities to transact the temporal business.

Question 2. What is the duty of stewards?

Answer To take an exact account of all the money or other provision made for and received by any traveling of the preacher in the circuit; to make an accurate return of every expenditure of money whether to the preacher, the sick or the poor; to seek the needy and distressed in order to relieve and comfort them; to inform the preachers of any sick or disorderly persons; to tell the preachers what they think wrong in them; to attend the quarterly meetings of their circuit; to give advice, if asked, in planning the circuit; to attend committees for the application of money to churches; to give counsel in matters of arbitration; to provide elements for the Lord’s supper; to write circular letters to the societies in the circuit to be more liberal, if need be; as also to let them know the state of the temporalities at the last quarterly meeting; to register the marriages and baptisms, and to be subject to the bishops, the presiding elder of their district, and the elder, deacon, and traveling preachers of their circuit.

Question 3. What number of stewards are necessary in each circuit .

Answer Not less than two, nor more than four.

SECTION XXXV. The Nature, Design, and general Rules of the United Societies

1. Our society is nothing more than "a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

2. That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve peons in every class; one of whom is styled the leader. It is his duty, I. To see each person in his class once a week at least, in order 1. To inquire how their souls prosper;

2. To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require;

3. To receive what they are willing to give toward the relief of the preachers, church, and poor.6 II. To meet the minister and the stewards of the society once a week; in order 1. To inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, or will not be reproved.

2. To pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding.

3. There is one only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies, a desire to free from the wrath to come, i.e., a desire to be saved from their sins: but, wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

First, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind; especially that which is most generally practiced such as * The taking the name of God in vain; * The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling: * Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them. * The buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women, or children, with an intention to enslave them: * Fighting, quarreling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing, the using many words in buying or selling: * The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty; * The giving or taking things on usury, i. e., unlawful interest; * Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers: * Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us: * Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as * The putting on of gold and costly apparel: * The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus: * The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God: * Softness and needless self-indulgence: * Laying up treasure upon earth: * Borrowing without a probability of paying or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

4. It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation:

Secondly, By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible to all men:

* To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick, or in prison; * To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine, that "we are not to do good, unless our hearts be free to it." * By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others,

buying one of another, (unless you can be served better elsewhere,) helping each other in business; and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them only. * By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed. * By running with patience the race that is set before them, denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord’s sake.

5. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation, Thirdly, By attending upon all the ordinances of God: such are, * The public worship of God; * The ministry of the word, either read or expounded; * The supper of the Lord; * Family and private prayer; * Searching the Scriptures; and * Fasting or abstinence.

6. These are the general rules of our societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls. The following rules concerning slavery, though I cannot find them either in the printed Minutes,7 or in the Discipline which contains the above sections, Mr. Lee tells us, are the substance of what the conference did in reference to this subject.

"Every member in our society who has slaves in those states where the law admit of freeing them, shall, after notice given him by the preacher, within twelve mouths (except in Virginia, and there within two years) legally execute and record an instrument, whereby he sets free every slave in his possession; those who are from forty to forty-five immediately, or at farthest at the age of forty-five; those who are between the ages of twenty-five and forty immediately, or within the course of five years; those who are between the ages of twenty and twenty-five immediately, or at farthest, at the age of thirty; those who are under the age of twenty, as soon as they are twenty-five at farthest. And every infant immediately on its birth.

"Every person concerned who will not comply with these rules, shall have liberty quietly to withdraw from our society within twelve months following the notice being given him as aforesaid. Otherwise the assistant shall exclude him in the society.

"No person holding slaves shall in future be admitted into society, or to the Lord’s supper, till he previously comply with these rules concerning slavery. Those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away, unless on purpose to free them, shall be expelled immediately."

"These rules," says Mr. Lee, "were short-lived." They indeed gave such general offense, and were found to be of such difficult execution that at the next conference, which was held about six mouths after their passage, they were so generally opposed, that we find the following minute respecting their suspension: --

"It is recommended to all our brethren to suspend the execution of the minute on slavery till the deliberations of a future conference; and that an equal share of time he allowed all our members for consideration when the minute shall be put in force." It is then added in --

"N. B. We do hold in the deepest abhorrence the practice of slavery, and shall not cease to seek its destruction by all wise and prudent means." As these rules were modified from time to time, it will not be necessary to take any farther notice of them than simply to say, that though those who framed them "abhorred the practice of slavery," they could not have considered it such a sin "as to exclude a man from the kingdom of grace and glory," else they never would, as honest men, have suspended their execution, as they did about six months after they were passed; nor did they, as some have seemed to suppose, insist on immediate and unconditional emancipation: for even the rule itself, had it not been suspended, provided only for a gradual emancipation, at farthest in five years from a certain age, where circumstances forbade it to be done immediately: But finding that even this gradual process could not be carried forward without producing a greater evil than it was designed to remove, the rule itself, mild and forbearing as it was in comparison to measures recently proposed, was suspended at the succeeding conference, in favor of those more wise and prudent means which the church has ever since used, and is now ready to use, for the extirpation of slavery.

But, as before observed, it will not be necessary to notice the several modifications of the rules on slavery from one general conference to another until the present time, as they all partake of a similar character, intended to record the opposition of the church to the system, and to adopt such means to mitigate its evils, and finally, if possible, to do it away, as wisdom and prudence should dictate. As the rule now stands on the Discipline, it will be noticed at the proper time, only remarking here, that the item in the General Rules on slavery has remained unaltered to the present time, and is therefore expressive of the sense of the Methodist Episcopal Church upon this subject without variation.

ENDNOTES 1 Moore’s Life of Wesley, vol. ii, p.273.

2 As the translators of our version of the Bible have used the English word "bishop" instead of "superintendent," it has been thought by us that it would appear more Scriptural to adopt their term "bishop." -- Discipline

3 Mr. Allen was not ordained until the conference in 1785; and Mr. Willis not being present, was ordained a few weeks afterward. -- Lee.

4 See Original Church of Christ.

5 For the trial of a bishop, see the 4th question of the 4th section.

6 This part refers wholly to towns and cities, where the poor are generally numerous, and church expenses considerable.

7 Probably the reason why these rules are not found in the printed books is, that the Minutes were not printed, but merely preserved in MS. until 1785, at which time the above rules were suspended.

01.03. Vol 1, Book 3

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs

Volume I From the Year 1766 to the Year 1792 Third Edition, Published in 1839

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[Transcriber Note: After considerable thought, and after having tried this and that method of dividing the various portions of this first book, of the four-volume work by Dr. Bangs, it has been finally decided to place the chapters in files titled as "Parts" with numbers to run consecutively through all four volumes. This was done to eliminate confusion resulting from the same Book number or Chapter number being repeatedly used in the author's volume and book divisions of this work. In this Table of Contents, I have inserted, within brackets, each Part of this electronic edition and its number to the right of the author's Chapter and number. -- DVM]

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END OF VOLUME ONE

01.03.01. Vol 1, Book 3, Chapter 01

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book III FROM THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH IN 1784, TO THE FIRST REGULAR GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1792.

CHAPTER 1 From the beginning of 1785 to the end of 1786. The important transactions we have detailed in the preceding chapter were found, upon experiment, to exert a beneficial influence upon the interests of true religion. And having closed the session in peace and with great unanimity of sentiment, the preachers went to their respective fields of labor with renewed courage and with great cheerfulness of mind.

Mr. Freeborn Garrettson and Mr. James O. Cromwell about the middle of February took their departure for Nova Scotia; and after enduring many perils on the voyage, arrived in safety at their destined sphere of labor. At the close of the Revolutionary War, some members of the society had emigrated to that province of the British empire; and being in a destitute state as to religious instruction, they had sent an earnest request to Mr. Wesley to be supplied; and Dr. Coke had interested himself much in their behalf. Accordingly these brethren volunteered their services for this work. On their arrival they were cordially received at Halifax, where they landed. Here Mr. Garrettson found a few members of the society, some of whom had come from Europe, and some from the United States: and during his short continuance in this place, he preached several times with great satisfaction.

Some time before the arrival of these missionaries, Mr. William Black had been instrumental in doing much good to the souls of the people by preaching in various places, particularly in New Brunswick and Halifax. Mr. Black gave the right hand of fellowship to Mr. Garrettson, and he entered upon his work in this Country with that zeal by which he had been distinguished in the United States, and many sinners were awakened and converted to God, and several societies formed.

Here, however, as elsewhere, opposers of the pure doctrines of Christ were found, not only among the openly profane, but also among professors of godliness. Mr. Garrettson gives the following account of a people here called Allenites, taking their name from Mr. Allen, who was their principal leader: --

"Some of them," says Mr. Garrettson, "seem to have the fear of God; but in general they are as deluded a people as I ever saw. Almost all of them preach in public. I was conversing with one who seems to be a principal person among them. She said she believed death would slay more sins for her than were ever destroyed before. 'As for sin,' said she, 'it cannot hurt me: not even adultery, murder, swearing, drunkenness, nor any other sin, can break the union between me and Christ.' They have passed judgment upon us, that we are neither Christians nor called to preach.

"Thursday I preached at Mr. Woodworth's to a crowded audience. A little before preaching time, two old Calvinists came into my room to have a conversation with me before preaching. 'I

understand,' said one of them, 'that you hold with falling from grace: I heard it, but did not know how to believe it, and should be glad to know whether you do deny the perseverance of the saints.' I answered, I do not, for my desire is that they should persevere: I do not hold with man's persevering in wickedness, neither do I believe that a man can have grace while he lives in sin. Let us take the Bible, and see what is said there. I read part of the 15th of John, and parts of several chapters in Hebrews, Romans, and Peter. Now, said I, this is the language of many other passages. We have no promise for any but such as do persevere to the end, and we have had many unhappy instances of men running well for a time, and then turning back: read the 18th chapter of Ezekiel. Now what harm can there be in enforcing our Lord's, the prophet's, and the apostles' exhortation? 'Very good,' said he. Why should we do it if there was no danger? and what harm can there be in the doctrine? Suppose you are a Christian, and your neighbor is one also; you believe in the unconditional perseverance of saints; he in the conditional: who, sir, is the safest? if you are right, surely he cannot fall. 'I never,' said he, 'saw so much in it before.' They stayed to hear the sermon, and afterward one said, 'I never heard these men before, but they are better than I thought.'

"Friday morning I set out for Granville. I had not got far before a man came running out. 'Sir,' said he; 'I like part of your doctrine well, but part I do not like.' What part don't you like? 'You say, sir, that a saint may fall.' Will you answer me one question, said I. Do you know that you were ever converted? 'I do,' said he. Pray tell me how matters are at present between God and your soul. 'Why,' said he, 'it is a winter state.' But, said I, are you not living in open sin against God? He paused awhile. I ask, said I, in the fear of God, and desire an answer in truth. 'I confess,' said he, I am living in sin.' And yet you do not believe in falling from grace! I believe it because you have fallen. This is what you call a winter state! I call it lying in the arms of the wicked one; and you may talk as you will about your past experience, but I would not give a straw for your chance of heaven, if you die in this state. You are reconciling Christ and Belial together. 'O,' said he, 'I shall be raised up at the last day.' You will, said I; but, unless you repent, it will be to be cast into the lake of fire. He seemed much affected, and left me.

"January 19th, I preached opposite Granville, to a number of serious hearers, and was invited home to dinner by an old gentleman, who, soon after we were seated at table, said, 'I understand you preach perfection.' I do, said I, and have done so for a number of years; and shall do so as long as I find the doctrine in the Bible. 'Why, sir,' said he, 'Paul was not perfect: he complains of a thorn in the side.' The heart is the place for sin, said I, and not the side. He then mentioned several other passages of Scripture which he thought were opposed to holiness of heart, which I explained to him. Pray, said I, let us come to the point at once. Do you believe that an unholy creature can enter into heaven? 'No.' Pray, when is sin to be destroyed? 'At death.' You must then hold with death as being part of a saviour, or with a purgatory after death, or you must come to perfection on this side the grave. He sat amazed, and seemed to give up the argument. We rose from the table. I went to prayer; then went on my journey, and preached at six o'clock in the court house. When I left the old man, he desired me to make his house my home. I left Fletcher's Checks with him. Shortly after, I received a few lines from him to this effect: -- 'I believe you to be a servant of God. I hope the Lord will bless you, and those that sent you here. I want to see you at my house at every opportunity. I thank you for the book.' "

Mr. Garrettson, in another place, gives the following summary of their leading absurdities: -- "1. They think they can tell whether a person is a Christian at first sight. 2. They say that we are leading people blindfolded to hell. 3. They are, they say, as sure of heaven as if they were already there, for sin cannot hurt them." "I never met with such a people in my life. There are about fifty of them in Liverpool."

Soon after his arrival, Mr. Garrettson received a letter from Mr. Wesley, of which the following is an extract: --

"I am glad brother Cromwell and you have undertaken that labor of love, the visiting Nova Scotia, and doubt not but you act in full concert with the little handful who were almost alone till you came. It will be the wisest way to make all those who desire to join together thoroughly acquainted with the whole Methodist plan, and to accustom them, from the very beginning, to the accurate observance of all our rules. Let none of them rest in being half Christians. Whatever they do, let them do it with their might, and it will be well, as soon as any of them find peace with God, to exhort them to go on to perfection. The more explicitly and strongly you press all believers to aspire after full sanctification as attainable now by simple faith, the more the whole work of God will prosper.

"I do not expect any great matters from the bishop. I doubt his eye is not single, and if it be not, he will do little good to you or any one else. It may be a comfort to you that you have no need of him: you want nothing which he can give.

"It is a noble proposal of brother Marchington; but; doubt it will not take place. You do not know the of the English Methodists. They do not roll in money like many of the American Methodists. It is with the utmost difficulty that we can raise five or six hundred pounds a year to supply our contingent expenses, so that it is entirely impracticable to raise five hundred pounds among them to build houses in America. It is true, they might do much; but it is a sad observation, they that have most money have usually least grace. The peace of God be with all your spirits.

I am your affectionate friend and brother, "J. Wesley." As the societies in this province did not long remain connected with the church in the United States, for we find them on the British Minutes for 1787, it is thought most advisable to complete the notice of the work there in this place. It appears from the Life of Mr. Garrettson that he continued his labors in this province, traveling from place to place, and often exposed to many temporal hardships and privations, until April 10th, 1787, when he embarked for the United States, leaving behind him, as evidences of his fidelity and success in his Master’s work, about six hundred members in the societies. While in this country, Mr. Garrettson says, --

"I traversed the mountains and valleys, frequently on foot, with my knapsack on my back, guided by Indian paths in the wilderness, when it was not expedient to take a horse; and I had often to wade through morasses half leg deep in mud and water, frequently satisfying my hunger with a piece of bread and pork from my knapsack, quenching my thirst from a brook, and resting my weary limbs on the leaves of the trees. Thanks be to God! he compensated me for all my toil, for many precious souls were awakened and converted to God." This extract will show the manner in which the early Methodist preachers, in imitation of their divine Lord, "went about doing good." This year, also, Methodism was introduced into the city of Charleston, South Carolina. In the latter

part of February, Bishop Asbury, Jesse Lee, and Henry Willis set off on a visit to this place. Mr. Willis preceded the others, and gave out their appointments; and after preaching in sundry places on their way, they arrived in Charleston on Saturday, February 26th, and on Sabbath morning Mr. Lee preached in an old meeting-house belonging to the Baptists, which had been procured for that purpose. While here they lodged with Mr. Edgar Wells, a respectable merchant, who, though a man of the world, courteously entertained the messengers of the Lord. On their arrival he was preparing to attend the theater, but his plans of amusement were abandoned, and the worship of God was set up in his family. The consequence was, that he became awakened to a sense of his sinfulness, and, after a struggle for about ten days, was brought into gospel liberty. This was the commencement of Methodism in this place; for although Mr. Wesley visited Charleston in 1736, and Mr. Pillmore in 1773, their visits were but transient, and left no permanent impression upon the minds of the people. After preaching a few times, Mr. Lee left the city with a view to labor in other places, but Bishop Asbury remained until the 9th of March, preaching every evening, and sometimes in the morning, to the people, explaining to them "the essential doctrines" of Methodism; and he says, "I loved and pitied the people, and left some under gracious impressions."

Though it will be anticipating the chronological order of the history a little, I think it best to give the following account, taken chiefly from that furnished by the Rev. James O. (now Bishop) Andrew, for the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review.

It seems that, on the departure of Bishop Asbury, Mr. Willis was left in charge of the work. Being a man of general intelligence, of deep piety, and of amiable manners, and devoting himself entirely to his work, he made a favorable impression upon many minds, and soon succeeded in forming a small society. Being informed that they could no longer occupy the old house in which they had hitherto convened, and the private house kindly offered them by Mrs. Stoll soon becoming too small to contain the increased number of hearers, they began to think seriously of building a house of worship, and soon commenced the work. While this was in progress they continued their meetings in an unfinished house which had been offered them by a friend. This house, begun in 1786, and completed in 1787, was situated in Cumberland Street, and has been the spiritual birthplace of many souls. Bishop Asbury visited the place in 1786, and again in 1787, when he met Dr. Coke, who had recently arrived from England. "Here," he says, "we have a spacious house prepared for us; and the congregations are crowded and solemn." Being thus furnished with a convenient house of worship, and the word and ordinances of the gospel, the work of God prospered more than it had done heretofore. It did not, however, go on without opposition. In addition to what arose from the natural enmity of the human heart when it comes in contact with the pure doctrines and precepts of Christianity, Methodism received a wound in Charleston from one of its professed friends and public advocates. In 1787, the Rev. Beverly Allen was placed in charge; as an elder, of the society in this place. He was a man of great popularity as a preacher, had married into a respectable family, and acquired much influence in the community. This unhappy man fell from his steadfastness, and in his fall inflicted a wound upon the cause from which it did not recover for a long time. This, together with the difficulties which arose from the state of slavery as it existed in all the southern states, made the situation of a Methodist minister extremely unpleasant, especially when it is considered that the mistaken but well-meant zeal of Dr. Coke, in his open opposition to slavery, tended much to irritate the public mind on that subject.

The cause, however, gradually gained ground, and was acquiring the public confidence, until the year 1791, when the church was convulsed by the conduct of the Rev. William Hamett, who formed a division, put himself at the head of a party, and fulminated his anathemas at the head of Bishop Asbury and others.

Mr. Hamett, also, unfortunately for the cause against which he arrayed himself, was a man of popular talents and gentlemanly manners, and had acquired considerable influence in the community, and hence the facility with which he accomplished his design. Bishop Asbury, alluding to the secession of Mr. Hamett, says, "He had three grand objections to us, 1. The American preachers and people insulted him. 2. His name was not printed on our minutes. 3. The Nota Bene minute was directed against him." "We are considered by him as seceders from Methodism! because we do not wear gowns and powder, and because we did not pay sufficient respect to Mr. Wesley." This was the pretense; but it is manifest that Mr. Hamett, who had recently arrived from the West Indies, was not willing to submit to the authority of the conference, and to Bishop Asbury. The minute to which Mr. Asbury alludes, was in these words: -- "Mark well! Our brethren and friends are desired to be more cautious how they receive strange preachers, especially to preach; unless their names are in the minutes, or they can show a parchment or certificate from a presiding elder, or some elder in the district they may say they come from." This, however, instead of being directed against Mr. Hamett, who was a regular preacher from the European connection, was designed to guard the people against those impostors who endeavored to palm themselves upon the public as Methodist preachers. The accusations which Mr. H. preferred against Bishop Asbury were amply refuted; and that apostolic man lived to witness the clouds of reproach thus raised against him dispersed by the bright rays from the sun of truth. Mr. H., however, succeeded in establishing himself at the head of a party, built him a house of worship in the city of Charleston, and his society were distinguished by the name of "Primitive Methodists." Though many of his mistaken followers returned afterward to the church they had left, and some joined other communions, he remained at the head of a small sect until his death, when Trinity Church, as it was called, passed into the hands of the Protestant Episcopalians, and finally it reverted back, by an amicable arrangement between the parties, to the Methodist Episcopal Church, where it remains to the present day. I shall not anticipate farther the order of events, but notice other particulars in their proper place.

Mr. Asbury having been elected and consecrated to the office of general superintendent, entered immediately upon his great work, traveling from place to place, preaching to the people, and making collections for the college, which had been recently commenced. In mentioning the college, I am reminded of the necessity of giving an account of this institution, as it belongs most properly to this period of our history. Soon after the arrival of Dr. Coke in 1784, he and Mr. Asbury entered into a consultation respecting the expediency of establishing a literary institution for the education of the sons of our preachers and others who might wish to share in its benefits. Bishop Asbury tells us that he desired a school, but as Dr. Coke pleaded for a college, the conference, when the subject was submitted to them, decided in favor of Dr. Coke’s plan, and measures were adopted to carry it into effect. As all these things belong to the history of the times, and will show the views by which the projectors of this institution were actuated, I think it proper to give the whole plan, as it was published by the superintendents immediately on the adjournment of the Christmas conference.

"The Plan for erecting a College, intended to advocate religion in America, to be presented to the principal members and friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"The college is built at Abingdon in Maryland, on a healthy spot, enjoying a fine air and very extensive prospect. It is to receive for education and board the sons of the elders and preachers of the Methodist Church, poor orphans, and the sons of the subscribers and of other friends. It will be expected that all our friends who send their children to the college will, if they be able, pay a moderate sum for their education and board: the rest will be taught and boarded, and, if our finances will allow of it, clothed gratis. The institution is also intended for the benefit of our young men who are called to preach, that they may receive a measure of that improvement which is highly expedient as a preparative for public service. A teacher of the languages, with an assistant, will be provided, as also an English master, to teach with the utmost propriety both to read and speak the English language: nor shall any other branch of literature be omitted which may be thought necessary for any of the students. Above all, especial care shall be taken that due attention be paid to the religion and morals of the children, and to the exclusion of all such as continue of an ungovernable temper. The college will be under the presidentship of the bishops of our Church for the time being; and is to be supported by yearly collections throughout our circuits, and any endowments which our friends may think proper to give and bequeath.

"Three objects of considerable magnitude we have in view in the instituting of this college.

"The first is a provision for the sons of our married ministers and preachers.

"The wisdom and love of God hath now thrust out a large number of laborers into his harvest: men who desire nothing on earth but to promote the glory of God, by saving their own souls and those that hear them. And those to whom they minister spiritual things are willing to minister to them of their temporal things; so that they have food to eat and raiment to put on, and are content therewith.

"A competent provision is likewise made for the wives of married preachers.

"Yet one considerable difficulty lies on those that have boys, when they grow too big to be under their mother’s direction. Having no father to govern and instruct them, they are exposed to a thousand temptations. To remedy this is one motive that induces us to lay before our friends the intent of the college, that these little ones may have all the instruction they are capable of, together with all things necessary for the body.

"In this view our college will become one of the noblest charities that can be conceived. How reasonable is the institution! Is it fit that the children of those who leave wife and all that is dear to save souls from death, should want what is needful either for soul or body? Ought not we to supply what the parent cannot, because of his labors in the gospel? How excellent will be the effect of this institution! The preacher, eased of this weight, can the more cheerfully go on in his labor. And perhaps many of these children may hereafter fill up the place of those that shall rest from their labors.

"The second object we have in view is the education and support of poor orphans; and surely we need not enumerate the many happy consequences arising from such a charity. Innumerable blessings concenter in it; not only the immediate relief of the objects of our charity, but the ability

given them, under the providence of God, to provide for themselves through the remainder of their lives. The last, though not perhaps the least object in view, is the establishment of a seminary for the children of our competent friends, where learning and religion may go hand in hand; where every advantage may be obtained which may promote the prosperity of the present life, without endangering the morals and religion of the children through those temptations to which they are too much exposed in most of the public schools. This is an object of importance indeed: and here all the tenderest feelings of the parent's heart range on our side.

"But the expense of such an undertaking will be very large; and the best means we could think of at our late conference to accomplish our design was, to desire the assistance of all those in every place who wish well to the work of God: who long to see sinners converted to God, and the kingdom of Christ set up in all the earth.

"All who are thus minded, and more especially our own friends who form our congregations, have an opportunity now of showing their love to the gospel. Now promote, as far as in you lies, one of the noblest charities in the world. Now forward, as you are able, one of the most excellent designs that ever was set on foot in this country. Do what you can to comfort the parents who give up their all for you, and to give their children cause to bless you. You will be no poorer for what you do on such an occasion. God is a good paymaster. And you know, in doing this you lend unto the Lord: in due time he shall repay you.

"The students will be instructed in English, Latin, Greek, logic, rhetoric, history, geography, natural philosophy, and astronomy. To these languages and sciences shall be added, when the finances of our college will admit of it, the Hebrew, French, and German languages.

"But our first object shall be, to answer the design of Christian education, by forming the minds of the youth, through divine aid, to wisdom and holiness; by instilling into their tender minds the principles of true religion; speculative, experimental, and practical, and training them in the ancient way, that they may be rational, Scriptural Christians. For this purpose we shall expect and enjoin it, not only on the president and tutors, but also upon our elders, deacons, and preachers, to embrace every opportunity of instructing the students in the great branches of the Christian religion.

"And this is one principal reason why we do not admit students indiscriminately into our college. For we are persuaded that the promiscuous admission of all sorts of youth into a seminary of learning is pregnant with many bad consequences. For are the students likely (suppose they possessed it) to retain much religion in a college where all that offer are admitted, however corrupted already in principle as well as practice? And what wonder, when (as too frequently it happens) the parents themselves have no more religion than their offspring?

"For the same reason we have consented to receive children of seven years of age, as we wish to have the opportunity of 'teaching their young ideas how to shoot,' and gradually forming their minds, though the divine blessing, almost from their infancy, to holiness and heavenly wisdom as well as human learning. And we may add, that we are thoroughly convinced, with the great Milton, (to whose admirable treatise on education we refer you,) that it is highly expedient for every youth to begin and finish his education at the same place: that nothing can be more irrational and absurd than to break this off in the middle, and to begin it again at a different place, and perhaps in a quite

different manner. And on this account we earnestly desire that the parents and others who may be concerned, will maturely consider the last observation, and not send their children to our seminary if they are not to complete their education there, or at least make some considerable proficiency in the languages, and in the arts and sciences.

"It is also our particular desire, that all who shall be educated in our college may be kept at the utmost distance, as from vice in general, so in particular from softness and effeminacy of manners.

"We shall therefore inflexibly insist on their rising early in the morning; and we are convinced by constant observation and experience, that this is of vast importance both to body and mind. It is of admirable use either for preserving a good, or improving a bad constitution. It is of peculiar service in all nervous complaints, both in preventing and in removing them. And by thus strengthening the various organs of the body, it enables the mind to put forth its utmost exertions.

"On the same principle we prohibit play in the strongest terms: and in this we have the two greatest writers on the subject that perhaps any age has produced (Mr. Locke and Mr. Rousseau) of our sentiments for though the latter was essentially mistaken in his religious system, yet his wisdom in other respects, and extensive genius, are indisputably acknowledged. The employments, therefore, which we have chosen for the recreation of the students are such as are of greatest public utility, agriculture and architecture; studies more especially necessary for a new-settled country and of consequence the instructing of our youth in all the practical branches of those important arts will be an effectual method of rendering them more useful to their country. Agreeably to this idea, the greatest statesman that perhaps ever shone in the annals of history, Peter, the Russian emperor, who was deservedly styled the Great, disdained not to stoop to the employment of a ship carpenter. Nor was it rare, during the purest times of the Roman republic, to see the conquerors of nations and deliverer, of their country return with all simplicity and cheerfulness to the exercise of the plow. In conformity to this sentiment, one of the completest poetic pieces of antiquity (the Georgic of Virgil is written on the subject of husbandry; by the perusal of which, and submission to the above regulations, the students may delightfully unite the theory and the practice together. We say delightfully, for we do not entertain the most distant thought of turning these employments into drudgery or slavery, but into pleasing recreations for the mind and body.

"In teaching the languages, care shall be taken to read those authors, and those only, who join together the purity, the strength, and the elegance of their several tongues. And the utmost caution shall be used that nothing immodest be found in any of our books.

"But this is not all. We shall take care that our books be not only inoffensive but useful; that they contain as much strong sense, and as much genuine morality as possible. As far, therefore, as is consistent with the foregoing observations, a choice and universal library shall be provided for the use of the students.

"Our annual subscription is intended for the support of the charitable part of the institution. We have in the former part of this address enlarged so fully on the nature and excellency of the charity, that no more need be said. The relieving our traveling ministers and preachers, by educating, boarding, and clothing their sons, is a charity of the most noble and extensive kind, not only toward the immediate subjects of it, but also toward the public in general; enabling those

’flames of fire,’ who might otherwise be obliged to confine themselves to an exceedingly contracted sphere of action for the support of their families, to carry the savor of the gospel to the remotest corners of these United States.

"The four guineas a year for tuition, we are persuaded, cannot be lowered, if we give the students that finished education which we are determined they shall have. And though our principal object is to instruct them in the doctrines, spirit, and practice of Christianity, yet we trust that our college will in time send forth men that will be blessings to their country in every laudable office and employment of life, thereby uniting the two greatest ornaments of intelligent beings, which are too often separated, deep learning and genuine religion.

"The rules and regulations with which you are here presented, have been weighed and digested in our conference: but we also submit them to your judgment, as we shall be truly thankful for your advice, as well as your prayers for the success of the college, even where the circumstances of things will not render it expedient to you to favor us with your charity. And we shall esteem ourselves happy, if we be favored with any new light, whether from the members of our own Church or of any other, whereby they may be abridged, enlarged, or in any other way improved, that the institution may be as near perfection as possible.

General Rules concerning the College 1. A president and two tutors shall be provided for the present.

2. The students shall consist of 1. The sons of traveling preachers. 2. The sons of annual subscribers, the children recommended by those annual subscribers who have none of their own, and the sons of members of our society. 3. Orphans. But, 1. The sons of annual subscribers shall have the preference to any others, except those of the traveling preachers. 2. An annual subscriber who has no sons of his own shall have a right to recommend a child; and such child so recommended shall have the preference to any other, except the sons of traveling preachers and annual subscribers. 3. As many of the students as possible shall be lodged and boarded in the town of Abingdon, among our pious friends; but those who cannot be so lodged and boarded shall be provided for in the college. 4. The price of education shall be four guineas. 5. The sons of the traveling preachers shall be boarded, educated, and clothed gratis, except those whose parents, according to the judgment of the conference, are of ability to defray the expense. "6. The orphans shall be boarded, educated, and clothed gratis. 6. No traveling preacher shall have the liberty of keeping his son on the foundation any longer than he travels, unless he be superannuated, or disabled by want of health. 7. No traveling preacher, till he has been received into full connection, shall have a right to place his son on the foundation of this institution. 8. No student shall be received into the college under the age of seven years.

Rules for the Economy of the College and Students 1. The students shall rise at five o’clock in the morning, summer and winter, at the ringing of the college bell.

2. All the students, whether they lodge in or out of the college, shall assemble together in the college at six o’clock, for public prayer, except in cases of sickness; and on any omission shall be responsible to the president.

3. From morning prayer till seven, they shall be allowed to recreate themselves as is hereafter directed.

4. At seven they shall breakfast.

5. From eight till twelve they are to be closely kept to their respective studies.

6. From twelve to three they are to employ themselves in recreation and dining: dinner to be ready at one o’clock.

7. From three till six they are again to be kept closely to their studies.

8. At six they shall sup.

9. At seven there shall be public prayer.

10. From evening prayer till bedtime, they shall be allowed recreation.

11. They shall be all in bed at nine o’clock, without fail.

12. Their recreations shall be gardening, walking, riding, and bathing, without doors; and the carpenter’s, joiner’s, cabinetmaker’s, or turner’s business, within doors.

13. A large plot of land, of at least three acres, shall be appropriated for a garden, and a person skilled in gardening be appointed to overlook the students when employed in that recreation.

14. A convenient bath shall be made for bathing.

15. A master, or some proper person by him appointed, shall be always present at the time of bathing. Only one shall bathe at a time; and no one shall remain in the water above a minute.

16. No student shall be allowed to bathe in the river.

17. A Taberna Lignaria shall be provided on the premises, with all proper instruments and materials, and a skillful person be employed to overlook the students at this recreation.

18. The students shall be indulged with nothing which the world calls play. Let this rule be observed with the strictest nicety; for those who play when they are young will play when they are old.

19. Each student shall have a bed to himself, whether he boards in or out of the college.

20. The students shall lie on mattresses, not on feather beds, because we believe the mattresses to be more healthy.

21. The president and tutors shall strictly examine, from time to time, whether our friends who board the students comply with these rules as far as they concern them.

22. A skillful physician shall be engaged to attend the student on every emergency, that the parents may be fully assured that proper care shall be taken of the health of their children, without any expense to them.

23. The bishops shall examine, by themselves or their delegates, into the progress of all the students in learning, every half year, or oftener if possible.

24. The elders, deacons, and preachers, as often a they visit Abingdon, shall examine the students concerning their knowledge of God and religion.

25. The students shall be divided into proper classes for that purpose.

26. A pupil who has a total incapacity to attain learning, shall, after sufficient trial, be returned to his parents.

27. If a student be convicted of any open sin, he shall, for the first offense, be reproved in private; for second offense, he shall be reproved in public; and for the third offense, he shall be punished at the discretion of the president; if incorrigible, he shall be expelled.

28. But if the sin be exceedingly gross, and a bishop see it necessary, he may be expelled for the first, second, or third offense.

29. Idleness, or any other fault, may be punished with confinement, according to the discretion of the president.

30. A convenient room shall be set apart as a place of confinement.

31. The president shall be the judge of all crimes and punishments, in the absence of the bishops.

32. But the president shall have no power to expel a student without the advice and consent of three of the trustees, but a bishop shall have that power." The site selected for the college buildings, which was on a rising ground in the town of Abingdon, about twenty-five miles from Baltimore, is thus described by Dr. Coke: -- The situation delights me more than ever. There is not, I believe, a point of it, from whence the eye has not a view of at least twenty miles; and in some parts the prospect extends even to fifty miles in length. The water part forms one of the most beautiful views in the United States; the Chesapeake Bay in all its grandeur, with a fine navigable river, the Susquehanna, which empties itself into it, lying exposed to view through a great extent of country."

It was on this spot that a noble brick building was erected, one hundred and eight feet in length, and forty in breadth; and the house was conveniently divided for lodging the students, and for recitation rooms, &c. Through the solicitations of Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury, nearly five thousand dollars had been secured by subscriptions and donations, when they commenced building; and before the rooms were entirely finished a school was opened with a few scholars. On the 8th, 9th, and 10th days of December, 1787, the college was opened with religious exercises, and Bishop Asbury preached a sermon on each day, the dedication sermon being delivered on Sabbath, from 2 Kings iv, 40, "O, thou man of God, there is death in the pot." Whether the selection of this text was ominous or not of the fate of the institution, after being in successful operation for about ten years, it was consumed by fire. Bishop Asbury makes the following remarks on being notified of the destruction of the buildings: --

"We have now a second and confirmed account that Cokesbury College is consumed to ashes, a sacrifice of ten thousand pounds in about ten years! The foundation was laid 1785, and it was born December 7, 1795. Its enemies may rejoice, and its friends need not mourn. Would any man give me ten thousand pounds a year to do and suffer again what I have done for that house, I would not do it."

It seems to have been the opinion of Bishop Asbury, that this destruction of the college buildings was an indication of divine Providence that it was no part of the duty of the Methodist Episcopal

Church to engage in founding and raising up colleges. It appears to us, however, that on the same principle of reasoning, we should refuse to build a church, or a dwelling house, or even to embark in any business, which might be injured by the elements. Job's repeated losses were permitted to try his patience, and this might have been permitted for a similar effect on the church. But although Bishop Asbury was dispirited in respect to building colleges, Dr. Coke, encouraged by the generosity of a number of wealthy friends in the vicinity of Abingdon, who sympathized with the sufferers, and also felt a deep interest in the cause of education, determined to make another effort. To aid him in his design, a number of friends in the city of Baltimore, after consulting together, immediately subscribed about four thousand five hundred dollars toward erecting a new building on the same premises. Ascertaining, however, that there was a large building in Baltimore which would answer the purpose, they purchased the premises for the sum of about twenty two thousand dollars. The ground and building thus purchased being more than was needed for the college, the brethren in Baltimore determined to erect a new church on a part of the premises. This was accordingly done, and the church and college were fitted up for use, and the college was opened with a fair prospect of success, even more promising than what had appeared in Cokesbury College; but unhappily a similar fate awaited it.

Through the imprudence of a few boys who had been making a bonfire with some shavings in an adjoining house, the flames were communicated to the house in which they were assembled, and thence to the church and college, which were, after ineffectual attempts to extinguish the flames, entirely consumed. Thus were the hopes of the friends of education again blasted by the sudden destruction of these buildings, by which the Methodists lost not less than forty-four thousand dollars, and the cause of learning was abandoned in despair by the Methodist Episcopal Church for a number of years. Other denominations, however, in the city of Baltimore, sympathized with the Methodists in the loss of their church, and offered their churches for them to assemble in until they could repair their own. This generous offer was thankfully accepted, and they occupied these houses until they succeeded in erecting another.

Having thus traced the commencement and termination of this laudable effort to diffuse a knowledge of literature and science among the people, we will now return to notice the progress of the general work. Immediately after the adjournment of the conference in Baltimore, Dr. Coke returned to Europe. The doctor's talents as a preacher, his Christian and gentlemanly deportment, and the disinterested zeal he had manifested for the welfare of Methodism in these United States, gained for him a great reputation among the people generally, and gave him an influence of a commanding character; and his enjoyments among his brethren would have been unalloyed had be not given offense, particularly to the people of Virginia, by his pointed, and, as he himself afterward acknowledged, imprudent manner of preaching against slavery. He was, however, rescued from the violence of a mob who had assembled for the purpose of wreaking their vengeance upon him, by the timely and resolute interference of a Christian magistrate and a military officer, and Dr. Coke was permitted to pursue his way unmolested.

It seems that heretofore there had been held only one regular conference in a year; for though some of the preachers had assembled in separate places for the dispatch of their local affairs, the regular conference was considered one and indivisible as to all matters of a general character; but as the work enlarged, new circuits formed, and additional laborers entered the field, and these scattered over such a large surface of country, it became inconvenient for all the preachers to

assemble together in one place; hence this year there were held three conferences; one at Green Hills, in North Carolina, April 20th; another at Mr. Mason's, Brunswick county, Virginia, May 1st; and another at Baltimore on the 1st day of June. But though the business was transacted in three separate conferences, their doings appeared in the minutes as one because nothing, except the stationing the preachers, was considered binding which was done in one conference unless approved by all the rest. The following seven new circuits were added to the list this year: Georgia, in the state of Georgia; Charleston, Georgetown, and Broad River, in South Carolina; New River, in North Carolina; Lancaster, in Virginia; and St. Mary's, in Maryland. The stations in Nova Scotia, before mentioned, and Antigua, in the West Indies, were also returned on the minutes. There were very considerable revivals of religion this year in the south and north, but the greatest work was on the eastern shore of Maryland, and in some parts of New Jersey; so that the increase of members was three thousand and twelve, and of preachers twenty-one: the whole number of members being eighteen thousand -- preachers one hundred and four. The origin of the presiding elder's office may be traced to this year, though those who had charge of several circuits were not so denominated in the minutes until 1789. The office originated in this way: at the organization of the Church in 1784, but twelve out of the whole number of preachers were elected and ordained elders, and hence many of the circuits were destitute of any officer who was authorized to administer the ordinances, as a deacon could only assist at the celebration of the Lord's supper. To remedy this defect, and to supply the people with the ordinances regularly, several circuits were linked together, and put under the charge of an elder, whose duty it was to visit each circuit quarterly, preach to the people, hold love-feasts, and administer the sacrament of the Lord's supper. As the Church had now become regularly organized, and the several offices provided for as they have continued with but little variation to the present time, perhaps this may be the most suitable place to give a short analysis of the several parts of the entire economy, as provided for in the Discipline, that the reader may have the whole before him at one view.

1. There is the society, which includes all the members of the church attached to any particular place.

2. The classes, which originally consisted of about twelve persons in each, but unhappily have often increased to from twenty to forty, who meet together weekly for mutual edification.

3. The class leader has charge of a class, and it is his duty to see each person in his class once a week, to inquire how their souls prosper, and to receive what they are willing to give for the support of the church and poor.

4. The stewards, who are chosen by the quarterly conference, on the nomination of the ruling preacher, have charge of all the money collected for the support of the ministry, the poor, and for sacramental occasions, and disburse it as the Discipline directs.

5. The trustees have charge of the church property, to hold it in trust for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church. These are elected by the people, in those states where the laws so provide, in other places as the Discipline directs.

6. There are the exhorters, who receive their license from the quarterly-meeting conference, and have the privilege of holding meetings for exhortation and prayer.

7. A preacher is one that holds a license, and is authorized to preach, but not to baptize or administer the Lord's supper. He may be either a traveling or local preacher. A local preacher generally follows some secular employment for a livelihood, and preaches on Sabbath and at other times occasionally, without any temporal emolument. A traveling preacher devotes himself entirely to the work of the ministry, and is supported by the people among whom he labors. All these, after being recommended by the class to which each respectively belong, or by a leaders' meeting, receive their license from a quarterly meeting conference, signed by a presiding elder.

8. A deacon holds a parchment from a bishop, and is authorized, in addition to discharging the duties of a preacher, to solemnize matrimony, to bury the dead, to baptize, and to assist the elder in administering the Lord's supper. It is his duty also to seek after the sick and poor, and administer to their comfort.

9. An elder, besides doing the duties above enumerated, has full authority to administer all the ordinances of God's house. These generally, whenever a sufficient number can be had, have the charge of circuits, and the administration of the several parts of the discipline of the church.

10. A presiding elder has charge of several circuits, called collectively a district. It is his duty to visit each circuit once a quarter, to preach, and administer the ordinances, to call together the traveling and local preachers, exhorters, stewards, and leaders of the circuit for a quarterly conference, and in the absence of a bishop, to receive, try, suspend, or expel preachers, as the Discipline directs. He is appointed to his charge by the bishop.

11. A bishop is elected by the General Conference, and is amenable to that body for his official and moral conduct. It is his duty to travel through the work at large, to superintend the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church, to preside in the annual and the general conferences, to ordain such as are elected by an annual conference to the office of deacons or elders, and to appoint the preachers to their stations.

12. A leaders' meeting is composed of all the class leaders in any one circuit or station, in which the preacher in charge presides. Here the weekly class collections are paid into the hands of the stewards, and inquiry is made into the state of the classes, delinquents reported, and the sick and poor inquired after.

13. A quarterly meeting conference is composed of all the traveling and local preachers, exhorters, stewards, and leaders belonging to any particular station or circuit, in which the presiding elder presides, or in his absence the preacher in charge. Here exhorters and local preachers are licensed, and preachers recommended to an annual conference to be received into the traveling ministry; and likewise appeals are heard from any member of the church, who may appeal from the decision of a committee.

14. An annual conference is composed of all the traveling preachers, deacons, and elders within a specified district of country. These are executive and judicial bodies, acting under rules prescribed the by the General Conference. Here the characters and conduct of all the traveling preachers within the bounds of the conference are examined yearly; applicants for admission into the traveling ministry, if accounted worthy, are received, continued on trial, or dropped, as the case may be: appeals from local preachers which may be presented, are heard and decided; and those who are eligible to deacon's or elder's orders are elected. An annual conference possesses

original jurisdiction over all its members, and may therefore try, acquit, suspend, expel, or locate any of them, as the Discipline in such cases provides. For the specific duties of an annual conference, see Discipline, p.28.

15. The General Conference assembles quadrennially, and is composed of a certain number of delegates, elected by the annual conferences. It has power to revise any part of the Discipline, not prohibited by the restrictive regulations, (which will be more particularly noticed hereafter,) to elect the book agents and editors, and the bishops; to hear and determine appeals of preachers from the decisions of annual conferences; to review the acts of those conferences generally; to examine into the general administration of the bishops for the four preceding years; and, if accused, to try, censure, acquit, or condemn a bishop. This is the highest judicatory of the Church.

16. That the reader may have a complete view of our entire economy, so far as it was organized at the time of which we now speak, it is necessary to notice one more usage, and that is, the holding of love-feasts. Those who are acquainted with the history of the primitive church, know perfectly well that they had what were called Agape, (Agapa,) or feasts of charity, in which they ate and drank together, in token of their love and fellowship to and with each other, and in which they bound themselves not to betray one another into the hands of their enemies. In imitation of these primitive feasts of charity, Mr. Wesley established his love-feasts, and they have been continued to the present time in the Church. Without pretending that every minutia observed in these social meetings has an exact archetype in those primitive assemblies, it is sufficient that they resemble them in the main particulars.

Here believers only, and those who profess to be seeking redemption in the blood of Christ, are admitted, generally on the presentation of a printed ticket, which is a certificate of membership in the Church. After singing an appropriate hymn, and prayer, a small piece of bread and a little water are taken by each person as a token of Christian fellowship, and then some time, usually about one hour, is spent for each one who chooses to relate his or her experience and enjoyment of divine things. A collection is then made for the benefit of the poor, when the assembly is dismissed, after singing and prayer, by the benediction. These meetings have been found peculiarly profitable to the souls of God’s people.

17. There is one other item in the economy of our Church which ought to be mentioned in this connection, and that is the salary of the ministry, and the mode in which it is raised. At the time of which we are now speaking, the allowance of a single traveling preacher was sixty-four dollars per annum, and his traveling expenses, and double that sum to one who was married. Out of this amount he had to furnish himself with clothes, horse, and traveling apparatus, his board being included among his traveling or extra expenses. This was raised by the voluntary contributions of the people in weekly class, and quarterly collections a yearly fifth collection was made in all the congregations, and with the small avails arising from the sale of books, was brought to the annual conference, and appropriated to make up the deficiencies of those who did not receive their full allowance on the circuits, and for the widows and worn-out preachers.

Having given this outline of our economy, the reader will be able to understand the meaning of such technical phrases as quarterly, annual, and general conference, society and class meeting, love-feasts, exhorter, preacher, deacon, elder, and bishop, whenever they occur, without further explanation. This year, for the first time, the minutes contained, in connection with the names of

those preachers who had died in the work during the preceding year, short sketches of their character. As, however, the insertion of these sketches would swell this history beyond its destined bulk, the most of them will be abridged, reserving however the privilege of extending such as were the most eminent for their labors and success in the work. The following record concerning the deaths of preachers is found in the minutes of this year: --

1. Caleb B. Peddicord, a man of sorrows, and like his Master, acquainted with grief; but a man dead to the world, and much devoted to God.

2. George Mair, a man of affliction, but of great patience and resignation, and of an excellent understanding.

Samuel Rowe, James Martin, and James Morris, were located; and Le Roy Cole was expelled.

Numbers in Society: Members this year, 18,000, last year 14,988; Preachers this year, 104, last year, 83; Increase in Members, 3,612; Increase in Preachers, 21.

1786. There were three conferences held this year; one at Salisbury, in North Carolina, on the 21st of February; another at Jones's chapel in Virginia, on the 18th of April; and the third at Baltimore, on the 8th day of May. Five new circuits were added to the list, namely, Santee and Peedee, in North Carolina, Newark in New Jersey, and Kentucky, in the state of Kentucky. As this is the first mention of Kentucky in our minutes, and as I have given a sketch of the first settlements and general condition of the thirteen original States, it seems proper to give some account of this, and also of the other new states, in the order in which they were visited by the Methodist ministry. For though Kentucky was not received as a member of the American confederacy [Union] until the year 1792, yet as this [1786] was the year it was first entered by a Methodist preacher, this seems to be the most suitable time and pace to notice these things. In 1775, Colonel Daniel Boone, one of the most famous of American pioneers, first penetrated into the woods of Kentucky, which was then a part of Virginia. His reports of the fertility of the soil, and of the facilities for forming settlements, soon induced other hardy adventurers from Virginia to join him; and thus a way was opened for the cultivation of this wilderness, which, after the war of the revolution had closed, was so rapidly settled, that in 1792 it was formed into an independent government, and received as one of the states of the Union. The character of the first settlers, being principally from Virginia, partook of that chivalry and hospitality for which the Virginians are distinguished, though as to religion and morals much could not be then said in their favor. At the time of which we now speak, there were but few inhabitants, probably not over twenty thousand, in the whole territory, and these were found in scattered groups through the country. The settlements were first visited by the Baptist preachers; but though they exerted some influence among the people in favor of religion, yet it appears from the history of those times, that their general neglect of the Sabbath, their intermeddling much with politics, and their strong bias for Antinomian doctrines, prevented them from doing the good they otherwise might have done. In 1784, a Presbyterian minister settled at Harrodsburgh, in Mercer county, and in the same year a seceder took charge of a congregation in Lexington.

But, as in many other instances we have mentioned, the pioneers of Methodism in this country were some local preachers, who went there for the purpose of bettering their worldly condition, at the same time carrying their religion with them. The author of Short Sketches of the Work of God

in the Western Country, from whom much of this account is taken, relates, that about this time (1784) a local preacher by the name of Tucker, while on his way to that country in company with some of his friends and connections, who were removing with him to Kentucky, in descending the Ohio River in a boat, was attacked by some hostile Indians, and the preacher received a mortal wound, when he fell on his knees and died shouting praises to God. Before he fell, however, by his bravery and presence of mind he rescued the boat and his companions, among whom were several women and children, from destruction. This year Messrs. James Haw and Benjamin Ogden were sent to Kentucky; and though their labors were blessed in this new country to the souls of the people, they both soon after departed from the work, being seduced by James O'Kelly and his party. At the conference in Virginia a proposal was made for some preachers to volunteer their services for the state of Georgia, and several offered themselves for this new field of labor. Two of those who offered themselves, namely, Thomas Humphries and John Major, were accepted, and they went to their work in the name of the Lord, and were made a blessing to many. They formed a circuit along the settlements on the banks of the Savannah River, around by Little River, including the town of Washington. During the year they formed several societies, containing, upward of four hundred members -- so greatly did God bless their labors. Mr. Major continued in the state of Georgia about two years, where he ended his labors and life in great peace.

Mr. Asbury, as the general superintendent, besides attending the conferences, which indeed was but a small part of his labor, traveled extensively through the bounds of the work, exposed often to many hardships and privations, but everywhere treated by the people of God as a messenger of peace and salvation. We find in his Journal for this year that he traversed the country from New York through the middle states to Virginia, and thence to North and South Carolina, preaching generally every day, and meeting the societies. While in Maryland, he received information that on Talbot circuit not less than five hundred souls had joined the Church, half of whom had professed justifying faith, and more than one hundred of the old professors gave evidence of enjoying "perfect love." Indeed, the work of God abundantly prospered this year in various parts of the country, so that the good effects of the late organization were generally felt and acknowledged, and in no department more than in the energy diffused through all its members by the general superintendency in the hands of such a man as Bishop Asbury. His influence was felt throughout the entire work.

Two preachers had died, namely, --

1. Jeremiah Lambert, who had been six years in the work, of whom it is said, that he was "a man of sound judgment good gifts, of genuine piety, and very useful" as a preacher, much esteemed in life and lamented in his death.

2. James Thomas, a pious young man, of good gifts, useful and acceptable, blameless in his life, and much resigned in death. James Hinton, Edward Drumgole, William Glendenning, and William Ringold desisted from traveling. As the case of William Glendenning was somewhat singular, a few particulars respecting him may not be uninteresting. It seems that when a proposal was made for preachers to go to Nova Scotia, he was requested to volunteer in this service, to which, as he himself acknowledges, he objected with improper warmth, and thereby, as he supposed, grieved the Spirit, and soon fell into a state of mental darkness, and finally into an alienation of mind. On his being proposed for the elder's office, he was rejected, as he says, "because I wanted gifts." He

then says, "While Mr. Asbury was at prayer, I felt all light of divine mercy, as in a moment, take its flight from me. My soul then sunk into the depths of misery and despair." After this he wandered about from place to place, until, in 1792, he wrote to the conference, requesting to be readmitted into the traveling ministry but his request was not granted, because it was believed that he labored under mental derangement. The numbers in society this year stood as follows: (white,) 18,791, (colored,) 1,890 -- total, 20,681: last year, 18,000 -- increase, 2,681. Preachers this year, 117: last year, 104 -- increase, 13.

It will be perceived from the above that a considerable number of colored persons had been received into the Church, and were so returned in the minutes of conference. Hence it appears that at an early period of the Methodist ministry in this country, it had turned its attention to this part of the population. Under the active labors of Dr. Coke, missions had already been established in the West Indies which promised much success, and 1,000 of the above number were in the Island of Antigua. These missions, however, were soon after taken under the care of the British conference, and have ever since been prosecuted by the Wesleyan Methodists with perseverance and success.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book III FROM THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH IN 1784, TO THE FIRST REGULAR GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1792.

CHAPTER 2 From 1787 to 1791 inclusive

Three conferences were held this year; one in Salisbury, in North Carolina, on the 17th of March; another at Rough Creek Church, in Virginia, April 19th; and the third in Baltimore on the first day of May. Ten new circuits were added, namely, one in Georgia, the old circuit being divided, the two new ones being called Burke and Augusta: Cainhoy and Edisto, in South Carolina; Greenbrier, Bath, and Ohio, in Virginia; Clarksburgh, Nollechuckie, and Cumberland; and New Rochelle in New York.

Dr. Coke arrived on the continent just in time to attend the first conference in North Carolina, whence he traveled extensively through different parts of the country, preaching to large congregations, and was very useful in his labors. It seems, however, that when he came to the conference in Baltimore, some dissatisfaction was manifested toward him, because, while in Europe, he had, as was contended, so far transcended his powers as to alter the time and place for the conference to meet after they had been fixed by the conference itself. This, with some other complaints of a trifling character, drew from Dr. Coke, with a view to allay all apprehensions of his American brethren hereafter, the following certificate: -- The Certificate of Dr. Coke to the Conference.

"I do solemnly engage by this instrument that I never will, by virtue of my office, as superintendent of the Methodist Church, during my absence from the United States of America, exercise any government whatever in said Methodist Church during my absence from the United States. And I do also engage, that I will exercise no privilege in the said Church when present in the United States, except that of ordaining according to the regulations and laws already existing or hereafter to be made in said Church, and that of presiding when present in conference, and lastly that of traveling at large. Given under my hand the second day of May in the year 1787.

"Thomas Coke.

"Witnesses: "John Tunnel, "John Hagerty, "Nelson Reed." And with a view to guard, as much as possible, against similar infringements of their rights in future, the following question and answer were entered on the minutes: -- Question Who are the superintendents of our Church in these United States?

"Answers Thomas Coke (when present in the States) and Francis Asbury."

These things are recorded because they belong to the history of the times, and show the vigilance with which the conference watched over their rights. They show likewise the Christian spirit by which Dr. Coke was actuated in his intercourse with his American brethren; the respect he

entertained for Bishop Asbury, his junior in office, in yielding to him, on account of his more intimate acquaintance with the preachers and people, the power of stationing the preachers; as well as his readiness to conciliate all by a frank acknowledgment of his error in the assumption of power which did not belong to him -- an act which was certainly more meritorious as it involved a greater sacrifice of feeling than that of the conference in passing a decree of oblivion for what had passed. Dr. Coke was, like all other men, too fallible not to err, and too good to persist in an error after being made sensible of it. At this conference it was proposed that Mr. Freeborn Garrettson be elected and ordained a superintendent for the societies in Nova Scotia and the West Indies. This was done in compliance with the express wishes of Mr. Wesley and Dr. Coke, as well as those of many of the preachers in Nova Scotia. To this, however, Mr. Garrettson objected, until he might go and visit the brethren for one year, and then, if there should be a general wish for him to take the oversight of them in the character of a superintendent, he would comply.1 With this proposition Dr. Coke expressed his satisfaction, and there the business ended; for, on account of some unexplained reason, Mr. Garrettson, contrary to his expectations, was appointed a presiding elder in the peninsula, on the eastern shore of Maryland.

Mr. Wesley also signified his wish to have Mr. Richard Whatcoat ordained a joint superintendent with Bishop Asbury; but to this the conference objected, assigning, among other reasons, that they feared, should he be elected and consecrated, Mr. Wesley would call Bishop Asbury home; which shows the high estimation in which he was held by his brethren. This was the year in which the title of bishop, instead of superintendent, was used in the new edition of the Discipline, and has ever since been in use to designate that highest officer in the Church. Seeing that this change of name, perfectly innocent in itself, has given rise to so much controversy, by the fastidiousness of disaffected individuals, and those who have sought a pretext to impugn the motives of our first bishops and others, it were almost to be wished that it had never been taken. The fact, however, may have its use, as it has been the occasion of furnishing the friends of the Church with arguments in its defense, of which they might otherwise have never availed themselves. But as many specious objections have been preferred against our Church organization, arising partly from this circumstance, and partly from an opinion which has been expressed by malignant individuals, that fraudulent means were resorted to in order to effect it, I shall here state some of these objections, together with such answers as may be considered necessary to obviate them.

1. As to the name itself, it is descriptive, when rightly understood, of the same official work as that of superintendent, the latter being derived from the Latin super and intendere, to oversee, and the former from the German, bishop, and both of the same signification with the Greek Episcopos, an overseer. The simple name, therefore, is perfectly harmless.

2. It is objected that Mr. Wesley was opposed to the thing, and reproved Bishop Asbury for assuming the title of bishop. To the assumption of the title simply, I allow Mr. Wesley was opposed, but not to the thing signified by it; for, 1. He ordained Dr. Coke to this very office; and, 2. He sent him with a prayer-book prepared by himself, and with orders to consecrate Mr. Asbury to this office, with power to ordain others, and exercise functions which appertained not to a simple presbyter.2

3. A surreptitious taking of this title is not, in truth, chargeable upon either Dr. Coke or Bishop Asbury; for though they affixed it to their names in the edition of the Discipline without a formal

vote of the conference, in 1786, Mr. Lee says, that at the ensuing conference, when the subject was submitted to them, a majority of them approved of the act, and it was accordingly inserted in the minutes for 1787, in the following words: --

"We have constituted ourselves into an Episcopal Church, under the direction of bishops, elders, deacons, and preachers, according to the form of ordination annexed to our prayer-book, and the regulations laid down in this form of discipline." Hence we find in the minutes for 1788 this question and answer: -- Question Who are the bishops for our Church in the United States?

"Answers Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury."

Here, therefore, was an open avowal of the whole business in the official document of the Church, which all could read and understand. There was, therefore, neither secrecy, collusion, nor underhandedness of any sort in this transaction. The following questions and answers show the deep interest felt for the colored population, and for the rising generation: -- Question 17. What directions shall we give for the promotion of the spiritual welfare of the colored people?

Answers We conjure all our ministers and preachers by the love of God, and the salvation of souls, and do require them, by all the authority that is invested in us, to leave nothing undone for the spiritual benefit and salvation of them, within their respective circuits or districts; and for this purpose to embrace every opportunity of inquiring into the state of their souls, and to unite in society those who appear to have a real desire of fleeing from the wrath to come, to meet such in class, and to exercise the whole Methodist discipline among them.

Question 19. Shall any directions be given concerning the register-books?

Answers Let register-books be provided by all the societies that the elders and deacons may enter the marriages and baptisms regularly in them; and let every such register book be kept in the hands of the steward or any other proper person of each society respectively. Let one general register-book be also kept in the hands of the general steward of every circuit, in which the contents of all the private register-books in the circuit may be inserted at convenient times.

Question 20. What can we do for the rising generation?

Answers Let the elders, deacons, and helpers class the children of our friends in proper classes, as far as it is practicable, meet them as often as possible, and commit them, during their absence, to the care of proper persons, who may meet them at least weekly; and if any of them be truly awakened, let them be admitted into society.

Hitherto there had been no conference held north of Philadelphia, and, since the commencement of the Revolutionary War, north of Baltimore; but this year we find Bishop Asbury, in pursuance of his grand design of spreading the gospel over these lands, in company with Dr. Coke, coming to New York, where he says "the doctor preached with great energy and acceptance." He then says, "I rode twenty miles on Long Island, to Hempstead harbor, and preached with some liberty in the evening. I am now out of the city, and have time to reflect: my soul returns to its rest, and to its labor for souls, in which I can live more by rule."

This, indeed, seemed to be the element of his soul, to be in prayer, in which he was mighty, and in calling sinners to repentance; and having, as above related, visited this part of the country, he

turned his face toward the south, traversing all the middle states, and everywhere sowing the "good seed of the kingdom." In Virginia he passed through the east end of the "Dismal Swamp," and thence into North Carolina, where he says, "I found we had to go twelve miles by water, and send the horses another way. O what a world of swamps, and rivers, and islands, we live in here!" This year was distinguished by a remarkable revival of religion, particularly in the southern parts of Virginia. As Mr. Lee has given a very particular account of this revival, the reader will be pleased to read it in his own words. It is as follows: --

"There was a remarkable revival of religion in the town of Petersburgh, and many of the inhabitants were savingly converted; and the old Christians greatly revived. That town never witnessed before or since such wonderful displays of the presence and love of God in the salvation of immortal souls. Prayer meetings were frequently held both in the town and in the country, and souls were frequently converted at those meetings, even when there was no preacher present; for the prayers and exhortations of the members were greatly owned of the Lord.

"The most remarkable work of all was in Sussex and Brunswick circuits, where the meetings would frequently continue five or six hours together, and sometimes all night.

"At one quarterly meeting held at Mabry's Chapel in Brunswick circuit, on the 25th and 26th of July, the power of God was among the people in an extraordinary manner: some hundreds were awakened; and it was supposed that above one hundred souls were converted at that meeting, which continued for two days, i. e., on Thursday and Friday. Some thousands of people attended meeting at that place on that occasion.

"The next quarterly meeting was held at Jones's Chapel, in Sussex county, on Saturday and Sunday, the 27th and 28th of July. This meeting was favored with more of the divine presence than any other that had been known before. The sight of the mourners was enough to penetrate the most careless heart. The divine power was felt among the people before the preachers came together. Many of the young converts from the quarterly meeting that had been held two days before at Mabry's, had come together, and uniting with other Christians in singing and praying, the heavenly fire began to kindle, and the flame of love and holy zeal was spreading among the people, which caused them to break out in loud praises to God. Some when they met would hang on each other, or embrace each other in their arms, and weep aloud, and praise the Lord with all their might. The sight of those who were thus overwhelmed with the love and presence of God, would cause sinners to weep and tremble before the Lord.

"By the time the preachers came within half a mile of the chapel, they heard the people shouting and praising God. When they came up they found numbers weeping, both in the chapel and in the open air. Some were on the ground crying for mercy, and others in ecstasies of joy.

"The preachers went among the mourners and encouraged them and prayed with them. The private Christians did the same. Some were lying and struggling as if they were in the agonies of death; others lay as if they were dead. Hundreds of the believers were so overcome with the power of God that they fell down, and lay helpless on the floor, or on the ground; and some of them continued in that helpless condition for a considerable time, and were happy in God beyond description. When they came to themselves, it was generally with loud praises to God, and with

tears and expressions enough to melt the hardest heart. The oldest saints had never before seen such a time of love, and such displays of the power of God.

"The next day the society met early, in order to receive the Lord’s supper.

"While the society was collected in the house, some of the preachers went into the woods to preach; and while they were preaching, the power of the Lord was felt among the people in such a manner that they roared and screamed so loud that the preacher could not be heard, and he was compelled to stop. Many scores of both white and black people fell to the earth; and some lay in the deepest distress until the evening. Many of the wealthy people, both men and women, were seen lying in the dust, sweating and rolling on the ground, in their fine broadcloths or silks, crying for mercy. As night drew on the mourners were collected together. and many of them were in the most awful distress, and uttered such doleful lamentations that it was frightful to behold them, and enough to affect the most stubborn-hearted sinner. But many of these were filled with the peace and love of God in a moment, and rising up, would clap their hands and praise God aloud. It was then as pleasing as it had before been awful to behold them.

"Many of these people who were happily converted, left their houses and came to the meeting with great opposition to the work of God; but were struck down in an unexpected manner, and converted in a few hours. So mightily did the Lord work, that a great change was wrought in a little time.

"Soon after this, some of the same preachers who had been at the quarterly meetings mentioned above, held a meeting at Mr. F. Bonner’s, ten miles from Petersburgh, where a large concourse of people were assembled; and the Lord wrought wonders among them on that day. As many as fifty persons professed to get converted at that time before the meeting closed. The cries of distressed sinners under conviction, and the shouts of happy Christians, were heard afar off. Some that were careless spectators in the beginning of the meeting were happily converted before the meeting ended, and went home rejoicing in God, knowing that he had forgiven their sins.

"They had another meeting at Jones’ Hole Church, about twelve miles from Petersburgh; many people assembled. They began to sing and exhort each other before the preachers came, and the Lord wrought among them, and many were crying for mercy. The preacher began to preach, but it was with difficulty that he could keep the people quiet enough to hear him at all. The old Christians were all alive to God, and the young converts were so happy that they could not well hold their peace, but were ready to break out in loud praises to God. They kept in for a while; but toward the close of the sermon some of them broke out into strains of praise the flame spread immediately through the whole house, and hundreds were deeply affected. Some prayed as if they were going to take the kingdom by violence: others cried for mercy as if they were dropping into eternal misery; and some praised God with all their strength, till they dropped down helpless on the floor. The poor awakened sinners were wrestling with the Lord for mercy in every direction, some on their knees, others lying in the arms of their friends, and others stretched on the floor not able to stand, and some were convulsed, with every limb as stiff as a stick. In the midst of this work several sleepers of the house broke down at once, which made a very loud noise; and the floor sank down considerably; but the people paid but little or no attention to it, and many of them knew nothing of it, for no one was hurt. On that day many souls were brought into the liberty of God’s children. Sinners were struck with amazement at seeing so many of their relations and neighbors

converted, and few of them were left without some good desires to be converted themselves.

"The great revival of religion in 1776, which spread extensively through the south part of Virginia, exceeded any thing of the kind that had ever been known before in that part of the country. But the revival this year far exceeded it.

"It was thought that in the course of that summer there were as many as sixteen hundred souls converted in Sussex circuit; in Brunswick circuit about eighteen hundred; and in Amelia circuit about eight hundred. In these three circuits we had the greatest revival of religion but in many other circuits there was a gracious work, and hundreds were brought to God in the course of that year. To give a full description of that remarkable outpouring of the Spirit would exceed the bounds of this history. I have only given a short sketch of a few meetings. There were many other meetings not much inferior to those I have noticed. But the work was not confined to meetings for preaching; at prayer meetings the work prospered and many souls were born again; and the meetings often continued all night, without intermission. In class meetings the Lord frequently set the mourning souls at liberty. It was common to hear of souls being brought to God while at work in their houses or in their fields. It was often the case that the people in their corn-fields, white people, or black, and sometimes both together, would begin to sing, and being affected would begin to pray, and others would join with them, and they would continue their cries till some of them would find peace to their souls. Some account of this work was published in the newspapers at different times, and by that means spread all through the United States."

John Robertson and James Foster located this year.

Richard Owings had died. In the notice of his death, it is said that he was "one of the first local preachers on the continent." Before he entered the traveling ministry, which he did about two years before his death, he labored much in the back settlements; and, being a plain, honest, and good man, was very useful. He died at Leesburgh, Virginia, and no doubt rested from his labors. The success of this year’s labor may be seen in the following account of the Numbers in the Church.

Whites This Year, 21,949, Last Year, 18,791, Increase, 3,158; Colored This Year, 3,893, Last Year, 1,890, Increase, 1,003; Total This Year, 25,842, Last Year, 20,681, Increase 5,161; Preachers This Year, 133, Last Year, 117, Increase 16. 1788. This year there were seven conferences, as follows: -- Charleston, South Carolina, March the 12th; Georgia, on the 9th of April; in Holstein, on the 19th of May; Amelia county, Virginia, on the 17th of June; in Uniontown, on the 22d of July; in Baltimore, on the 10th of September; in Philadelphia, on the 25th of September. By the division of some of the old circuits, and the addition of new ones, there were added to the list nineteen this year, making in all eighty-five; but as the names of the circuits were undergoing changes almost every year, and new ones added, it is thought not advisable to swell this history with every new name, noticing those only which were formed in new parts of the work. Two new circuits were added in North Carolina, called Seleuda and Waxsaws, and one in South Carolina, called Anson; French-Broad, and West River, in the back settlements, among the mountains of Virginia; Buckingham, Gloucester, and Rockingham, below the mountains. In Maryland, Annapolis, Harford, and Cecil were formed; Bristol and Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania; Dutchess, Shoreham, New City, Cambridge, and Lake Champlain, in New York conference. This year was also distinguished by very extensive revivals of religion, some of the most remarkable of

which will be noticed. As may be seen by the preceding chapters, the Lord had raised up a number of zealous young men, who had entered the field of itinerancy with hearts fired and filled with love to God and the souls of men. Several of these were placed under the charge of Mr. Garrettson, who was requested by Bishop Asbury to penetrate the country north of the city of New York, and form as many circuits as he could. A great portion of this country was entirely destitute of religious instruction, more especially the northern and western parts of New York state, and the state of Vermont. There were, to be sure, some small scattered congregations of Lutherans, and Dutch Reformed, along the banks of the Hudson River, and some Congregationalists and Baptists in Vermont. It is manifest, however, that experimental and practical religion was at a very low ebb; and in most of the places, particularly in the new settlements on the west side of the Hudson River, where not even the forms of it were to be found. The following is Mr. Garrettson's own account of the manner in which he was led in this holy enterprise: --

"I was very uneasy in my mind, being unacquainted with the country, an entire stranger to its inhabitants, there being no Methodist societies farther north than Westchester; but I gave myself to earnest prayer for direction. I knew that the Lord was with me. In the night season, in a dream, it seemed as if the whole country up the North River, as far as Lake Champlain, east and west was open to my view.

"After conference adjourned, I requested the young men to meet me. Light seemed so reflected on my path that I gave them directions where to begin, and which way to form their circuits. I also appointed a time for each quarterly meeting, requested them to take up a collection in every place where they preached, and told them I should go up the North River to the extreme parts of the work, visiting the towns and cities in the way, and on my return, I should visit them all, and hold their quarterly meetings. I had no doubt but that the Lord would do wonders, for the young men were pious, zealous, and laborious." This plan, so wisely conceived, was carried into execution, and the result was as anticipated. Many houses and hearts were opened to these men of God; and although they suffered some persecution from those who understood not their character and motives, God wrought by their hands in a wonderful manner, so that in the minutes for the next year upward of six hundred were returned as members of the Church on those circuits. As an instance of the infatuation under which some persons labored respecting the character and objects of the Methodist preachers in that day, take the following, which is related on the authority of Mr. Garrettson: -- A gentleman from Vermont, on his way down the country, informed the people that these preachers were spread all over those parts through which he had come, and that some one had circulated a report, which many, it seems, believed, "that the king of England had sent them to disaffect the people toward their own government; and they doubted not but they would be instrumental of producing another war." Others, however, not quite as sagacious in political science, but better versed, as they thought, in theology, gave it, as their opinion, that these itinerants were a flying army of the false prophets spoken of by our Saviour, who should come in the last days, and deceive, if it were possible, the very elect! And then, again, the settled clergy were alarmed by an apprehension that they would break up their congregations, and thus deprive them of their "livings." These things, however, moved not those heralds of mercy from their steadfastness, nor turned them aside from their course. This year Bishop Asbury crossed the Allegheny Mountains; and as it will give the reader a correct perception of the manner in which he performed his duties in those days, and the privations to which he and his companions were often

subjected, as well as the reflections of a pious and observant mind, I will give his own account of this journey.

"Thursday 10. We had to cross the Allegheny Mountain again, at a bad passage. Our course lay over mountains and through valleys, and the mud and mire was such as might scarcely be expected in December. We came to an old forsaken habitation in Tygers' Valley: here our horses grazed about while we boiled our meat: midnight brought us up at Jones's, after riding forty, or perhaps fifty miles. The old man, our host, was kind enough to wake us up at four o'clock in the morning. We journeyed on through devious lonely wilds, where no food might he found, except what grew in the woods, or was carried with us. We met with two women who were going to see their friends, and to attend the quarterly meeting at Clarksburg. Near midnight we stopped at A_____'s, who hissed his dogs at us: but the women were determined to get to quarterly meeting, so we went in. Our supper was tea. Brothers Phoebus and Cook took to the woods; old _____ gave up his bed to the women. I lay along the floor on a few deerskins with the fleas. That night our poor horses got no corn; and the next morning they had to swim across the Monongahela: after a twenty miles' ride we came to Clarksburg, and man and beast were so outdone that it took us ten hours to accomplish it. I lodged with Col. Jackson. Our meeting was held in a long close room belonging to the Baptists: our use of the house, it seems, gave offense. There attended about seven hundred people, to whom I preached with freedom; and I believe the Lord's power reached the hearts of some. After administering the sacrament, I was well satisfied to take my leave. We rode thirty miles to Father Haymond's, after three o'clock, Sunday afternoon, and made it nearly eleven before we came in; about midnight we went to rest, and rose at five o'clock next morning. My mind has been severely tried under the great fatigue endured both by myself and horse. O, how glad should I be of a plain, clean plank to lie on, as preferable to most of the beds; and where the beds are in a bad state, the floors are worse. The gnats are almost as troublesome here as the mosquitoes in the lowlands of the seaboard. This country will require much work to make it tolerable. The people are, many of them, of the boldest cast of adventurers, and with some the decencies of civilized society are scarcely regarded, two instances of which I myself witnessed. The great landholders who are industrious will soon show the effects of the aristocracy of wealth, by lording it over their poorer neighbors, and by securing to themselves all the offices of profit or honor: on the one hand savage warfare teaches them to be cruel; and on the other the preaching of Antinomians poisons them with error in doctrine: good moralists they are not, and good Christians they cannot be, unless they are better taught."

What has God wrought in those western wilds since that period! The above is given as a specimen of the labors of that great and good man. His Journal shows that this year, as usual, he penetrated almost every part of the country, old and new -- the cities, towns, and villages, not neglecting the remote settlements of the woods; thus setting an example to the younger preachers, and to his successors in office, of the labors of a primitive evangelist. In all the conferences he presided jointly with Dr. Coke, when the latter was present; and then he was away, leading on "God's sacramental hosts" to the grand work of saving the souls for whom Christ had died. The eastern and western shores of Maryland were blessed this year with an outpouring of the Spirit, and many were brought to the knowledge of the truth. But the most remarkable revival of religion was in the city of Baltimore; and as this was somewhat peculiar in those days, in some of its characteristics, it may be well to give it a particular notice. In imitation of a practice adopted with so much success

by Mr. Wesley, the preachers in and about Baltimore went into the fields and in the market-house on Howard's Hill, every Sabbath in the afternoon, after the service in the churches. By this means thousands were brought to hear the word of God, who otherwise, in all probability, would never have been reached by it. Through this instrumentality a number of persons had been awakened and converted before the session of the conference in September; and during the conference many more were brought from darkness to light. On the afternoon of Sabbath the 14th, Bishop Asbury preached in the church of the Rev. Mr. Otterbein, with whom he always maintained a Christian fellowship; and he remarks, "The Spirit of the Lord came among the people, and sinners cried aloud for mercy. Perhaps not less than twenty souls found the Lord from that time until Tuesday following." The work thus begun went on most rapidly, and in a short time there was such a noise among the people, particularly those who were smitten with conviction for sin, that many, even of the Christians, looked on with astonishment, having never seen things "on this wise;" while others, as if frightened at what they saw and heard, fled precipitately from the house, some making their escape through the windows. This strange scene soon drew multitudes to the church, "to see what these things meant," so that not only the house was filled, but many stood without in silent astonishment. In a short time some of those who were crying for mercy fell helpless upon the floor, or swooned away in the arms of their friends. But this scene soon changed. "Their mourning was turned to joy," and they arose "filled with all the fulness of God," and with joyful lips proclaimed his goodness to their souls. This had its happy effects upon the spectators, and the work continued to spread among the people, and several students in Cokesbury College were subjects of the revival. The consequence of this great work was, that about three hundred were added to the Church in the city of Baltimore. As this work commenced at the conference, many of the preachers received a new baptism of the Holy Spirit, and went to their several fields of labor "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," and God gave them many seals to their ministry.

Enoch Matson, Adam Cloud, and Thomas S. Chew were entered on the minutes as having desisted from traveling, but they were in fact expelled for improper conduct. Their names were entered in this way probably from tenderness toward them and their friends.

Caleb Boyer, Samuel Dudley, William Cannan, Joseph Wyatt, Michael Ellis, and Ignatius Pigman were returned as having a partial location on account of their families; but who, nevertheless, were subject to the order of the conference. The following had died since the last conference: --

1. Thomas Curtis, of whom it is said that he was of "upright life, successful in his labors, and triumphant in his death." He had been seven years in the ministry.

2. John Major, who was an honest, loving man, and who died as he lived, full of faith and the Holy Ghost. He was one of the first missionaries that went to the state of Georgia, and was frequently called, on account of the tenderness of his feelings, "The weeping prophet." He had been ten years in the ministry, and left behind him many witnesses to the blamelessness and usefulness of his life.

3. Woolman Hickson. He is said to have been a young man of promising abilities as a preacher, of an upright life and blameless conversation; but after traveling seven years he was taken from his labors by the consumption, to his eternal reward. His last labors were chiefly in the vicinity of New York, and he finally died and was buried in that city.

4. Elijah Ellis. An humble, diligent, and useful man, who, after laboring five years in the ministry, chiefly in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, died in peace.

Numbers in the Church: White, This year, 30,809, Last year, 21,949; Increase, 8,860; Colored, This year, 6,545, Last year, 3,893; Increase, 2,652; Total This year, 37,354, Total Last year, 25,842; Increase, 11,512; Preachers, This year, 166, Last year, 133; Increase, 33. This large increase shows the blessed effects of the revivals before mentioned, and which exerted an extensive influence upon the surrounding population.

1789. In consequence of the extension of the work in almost every direction, for the convenience of the preachers, and that the general superintendent might perform his work with greater facility and energy, there were eleven conferences this year, as follows: -- March 9th in Georgia; March 17th in Charleston, South Carolina; April 11th at McKnight's meeting house, on the Yadkin River, North Carolina; April 18th at Petersburgh, Virginia; April 28th at Leesburgh, Virginia; May 4th at Baltimore, Maryland; May 9th at Cokesbury, Maryland; May 13th at Chestertown; May 18th at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; May 23d at Trenton, New Jersey; May 28th in the city of New York. These conferences must have been very small, and it is stated that the having so many so near together gave dissatisfaction to many of the preachers, though it is manifestly impolitic for an annual conference to comprehend a very large territory. The following new circuits had been formed during the past year: -- Bush River and Little Peedee, in South Carolina; Pamlico, in North Carolina; Greensville and Bottetourt, in Virginia; Baltimore City was this year separated from the circuit, and for the first time a preacher was stationed in the city; Wilmington and Milford, in Delaware; Burlington, in New Jersey; Newburgh, Columbia, Coeyman's Patent, and Schenectady, in New York; and Stamford, in Connecticut. At the conference of 1787, in consequence of its having been pleaded by Dr. Coke that the conference was under obligation to receive Mr. Whatcoat for a bishop, because it was the wish of Mr. Wesley, the minute which had been adopted in 1784 declaring that "during the lifetime of the Rev. John Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the gospel, ready, in matters of church government, to obey his commands," was so far modified as to leave them at liberty to depart from his advice whenever they might think it incompatible with their rights and privileges as an independent Church. In justification of this proceeding it was said that the minute in question was a voluntary act of their own, and not a formal contract entered into with Mr. Wesley, and therefore without any violation of an agreement, they had a right to act in the premises as they thought proper; and more especially, as Mr. Wesley was in England, three thousand miles distant, he could not judge what was fit and right to be done here as well as those who were on the spot, and had actual knowledge of the state of things. On this account the resolution was rescinded in 1787, and a letter written to Mr. Wesley inviting him to come over and visit his American children, that he might more perfectly understand the state of things here from actual observation.

These proceedings were not agreeable to Mr. Wesley, especially as they seemed to imply an abjuration of his authority, inasmuch as his name was not inserted in the minutes. With a view therefore to remove all unpleasantness from his mind, and to give assurance that they intended no disrespect to him, nor any renunciation of his general authority, the following question and answer were inserted in the minutes for this year: --

"Question Who are the persons that exercise the episcopal office in the Methodist Episcopal Church in Europe and America?

"Answers John Wesley, Thomas Coke, and Francis Asbury, by regular order and succession."

There appears no little ambiguity in this question and answer. Did they mean to say that these persons exercised a joint superintendency both in Europe and America? Certainly not; for neither Thomas Coke nor Francis Asbury exercised any episcopal powers in Europe. What they meant to say evidently was this, that Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury acted in this country as joint superintendents over the Methodist Episcopal Church, while Mr. Wesley exercised a similar power singly in Europe, and a general superintendence in America. This is farther manifest from the next question and answer, which are in the following words: --

"Question Who have been elected by the unanimous suffrages of the General Conference, to superintend the Methodist connection in America?

"Answers Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury.3 This year was, on several accounts, an important era in these United States. The old federal constitution had been found wanting in those principles which were essential for an efficient government, and was this year superseded by the adoption of that constitution under the operation of which the country has ever since so greatly prospered, and Gen. Washington had been unanimously elected the first president. It was therefore thought advisable by the Methodist conference which sat in the city of New York at the time that the first congress assembled in the same city under the new constitution, for Bishops Coke and Asbury to present a congratulatory address to him as the public organ and head of the government. This was accordingly done. And as the author of a pamphlet quaintly called the "History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy," has seen fit to arraign the authors of this address before the public, and even to impeach their integrity, it is thought to be a duty which we owe to the venerable men who signed the address, as well as to the interests of truth, to set this matter in a fair point of light. The author above mentioned affirmed that the true date of the address was 1785;4 but as it was published under date of May 29, 1789, he inferred that for some sinister purpose, Bishops Coke and Asbury had altered the date, and thereby practiced a deception upon the public. This subject was fully investigated by the late Bishop Emory in his "Defence of our Fathers," and all the insinuations and false assertions of the above writer fully exposed and refuted. The following letter from the Rev. Thomas Morrell, who has recently gone to his reward, to the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, dated Elizabethtown, N. J., August 26, 1827, will throw much light on this subject: --

"With regard to the information you request concerning the address to General Washington, I can furnish you with every material circumstance respecting it, having acted as a sub-agent in the transaction, and having a distinct recollection of the whole business. The history of it is, That Mr. Asbury, in the New York conference in 1789, offered for the consideration of the conference the following proposal: -- Whether it would not be proper for us, as a church, to present a congratulatory address to General Washington, who had been lately inaugurated president of the United States, in which should he embodied our approbation of the constitution, and professing our allegiance to the government. The conference unanimously approved, and warmly recommended the measure; and appointed the two bishops, Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, to draw up the address. It was finished that day, and read to the conference, who evinced great satisfaction in its recital. Brother Dickens and myself were delegated to wait on the president with a copy of the

address, and request him to appoint a day and hour when he would receive the bishops, one of whom was to read it to him, and receive his answer. It was concluded that although Dr. Coke was the senior bishop, yet not being an American citizen, there would be an impropriety in his presenting and reading the address; the duty devolved of course on Bishop Asbury. Mr. Dickens and myself waited on the general; and as I had some personal acquaintance with him, I was desired to present him with the copy, and request his reception of the original by the hands of the bishops. The president appointed the fourth succeeding day, at twelve o'clock, to receive the bishops. They went at the appointed hour, accompanied by Brother Dickens and Thomas Morrell. Mr. Asbury, with great self-possession, read the address in an impressive manner. The president read his reply with fluency and animation. They interchanged their respective addresses; and, after sitting a few minutes, we departed. The address and the answer, in a few days, were inserted in the public prints; and some of the ministers and members of the other churches appeared dissatisfied that the Methodists should take the lead. In a few days the other denominations successively followed our example.

"The next week a number of questions were published, in the public papers, concerning Dr. Coke's signing the address. Who was he? How came he to be a bishop? Who consecrated him? &c., accompanied with several strictures on the impropriety of a British subject signing an address approving of the government of the United States; charging him with duplicity, and that he was an enemy to the independence of America; for they affirmed he had written, during our Revolutionary War, an inflammatory address to the people of Great Britain, condemning, in bitter language, our efforts to obtain our independence and other charges tending to depreciate the doctor's character, and bringing him into contempt with the people of our country. As I did not believe the assertion of the doctor's writing the address above mentioned, I applied to a gentleman who was in England at the time, to know the truth of the charge; he assured me the doctor had published no such sentiments in England during the Revolutionary War, or at any other period, or he should have certainly had some knowledge of it. And this was the fact; for the doctor had written no such thing. As there was no other person in New York, at that time, in our connection, who could meet these charges, and satisfactorily answer these queries, I undertook the task, and in my weak manner endeavored to rebut the charges and answer the questions. A second piece appeared, and a second answer was promptly published. No more was written on the subject in New York. The doctor afterward gave me his thanks for defending his character.

"Such are the material circumstances that occurred concerning the address to General Washington, and his reply: which you are at liberty to make use of in any way you think proper, -- and if you judge it necessary may put my name to it. Thomas Morrell.' "

" 'I certify that the above is a true extract of an original letter of the Rev. Thomas Morrell, addressed to me, bearing the above date, and now in my possession.

" 'Ezekiel Cooper. New York, September 7, 1827.' "

"To this we add the following copy of a letter from the Rev. Mr. Sparks, of Boston, to whom the papers of General Washington have been intrusted, for the purpose of making such selections for publication as he shall deem proper; in which important work this gentleman is now engaged. And for this polite and prompt reply to our inquiries, we here tender to Mr. Sparks our most respectful thanks.

" ’Boston, September 1, 1827.

" ’Dear Sir, -- Your favor of the 26th ultimo has been received, and I am happy to be able to furnish you with the information you desire. The "date" of the address presented by Bishops Coke and Asbury to General Washington is May twenty-ninth, 1789. It is proper to inform you, however, that I do not find the original paper on the files, but take the date as it is recorded in one of the volumes of "Addresses." It is barely possible that there may be a mistake in the record, but not at all probable.

" ’It is not likely that any address from any quarter was presented to Washington in 1785. I have never seen any of that year. He was then a private man, wholly employed with his farms.

" ’I am, sir, very respectfully, " ’Your obedient servant, " ’Jared Sparks.

" ’Mr. J. Emory.’ " That the reader may have all the information desirable in reference to this subject, I have copied the address itself from the Gazette of the United States for June 6, 1789, a file of which is preserved in the New York City Library.5 It is as follows: -- ADDRESS OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

" ’To the President of the United States: --

" ’Sir, -- We, the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, humbly beg leave, in the name of our society, collectively, in these United States, to express to you the warm feelings of our hearts, and our sincere congratulations on your appointment to the presidentship of these States. We are conscious, from the signal proofs you have already given, that you are a friend of mankind; and under this established idea, place as full confidence in your wisdom and integrity for the preservation of those civil and religious liberties which have been transmitted to us by the providence of God and the glorious revolution, as we believe ought to be reposed in man.

" ’We have received the most grateful satisfaction from the humble and entire dependence on the great Governor of the universe which you have repeatedly expressed, acknowledging him the source of every blessing, and particularly of the most excellent constitution of these States, which is at present the admiration of the world, and may in future become its great exemplar for imitation; and hence we enjoy a holy expectation, that you will always prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion, the grand end of our creation and present probationary existence. And we promise you our fervent prayers to the throne of grace, that God Almighty may endue you with all the graces and gifts of his Holy Spirit, that he may enable you to fill up your important station to his glory, the good of his Church, the happiness and prosperity of the United States, and the welfare of mankind.

" ’Signed in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

" ’Thomas Coke, " ’Francis Asbury.

" ’New York, May 29, 1789.’ " The following is the reply of President Washington: -- To the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

" ’Gentlemen, -- I return to you individually, and through you to your society collectively in the United States, my thanks for the demonstrations of affection, and the expressions of joy offered in

their behalf, on my late appointment. It shall be my endeavor to manifest the purity of my inclinations for promoting the happiness of mankind, as well as the sincerity of my desires to contribute whatever may be in my power toward the civil and religious liberties of the American people. In pursuing this line of conduct, I hope, by the assistance of divine Providence, not altogether to disappoint the confidence which you have been pleased to repose in me.

" 'It always affords me satisfaction when I find a concurrence of sentiment and practice between all conscientious men, in acknowledgments of homage to the great Governor of the universe, and in professions of support to a just civil government. After mentioning that I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, will have occasion to be convinced that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine vital religion -- I must assure you in particular, that I take in the kindest part the promise you make of presenting your prayers at the throne of grace for me, and that I likewise implore the divine benediction on yourselves and your religious community.

" 'George Washington.' "

Though the fact that Dr. Coke signed the above address to Washington exposed him to some keen censure from some of his friends in England, because they contended that it was incompatible with his duty as a subject of the British empire thus to eulogize the American constitution and the president of the republic, yet the act itself originated from the sincerest sentiments of veneration for the excellent Washington; and the spirit which the address breathes is evidence of the most genuine piety and patriotism. And whatever may be said for or against Dr. Coke on account of the double relation he held to the two bodies of Methodists in England and America, no whisper could be breathed against the propriety of Bishop Asbury's conduct in this affair, as he had become an American citizen, was cordially attached to the constitution and government of his adopted country, was seeking to promote its best interests, and regarded the newly elected president with ardent affection and profound veneration. Nor were the expressions of devotedness to the government and its president less the sentiments of the conference, and the Methodist people generally, than they were of the venerable men who signed it. The high estimation in which Bishop Asbury held Washington may be seen from the following remarks which he made on hearing of the death of that great man. He was then at Charleston, South Carolina, and had just adjourned a conference which had been held in that city, January 1800. He says, --

"Slow moved the northern post on the eve of new year's day, and brought the distressing information of the death of Washington, who departed this life December 14, 1799.

"Washington, the calm, intrepid chief, the disinterested friend, first father, and temporal saviour of his country under divine protection and direction. A universal cloud sat upon the faces of the citizens of Charleston -- the pulpits clothed in black -- the bells muffled -- the paraded soldiery -- the public oration decreed to be delivered on Friday the 14th of this month -- a marble statue to be placed in some proper situation, -- these were the expressions of sorrow, and these the marks of respect paid by his fellow-citizens to this great man. I am disposed to lose sight of all but Washington. Matchless man! At all times he acknowledged the providence of God, and never was he ashamed of his Redeemer. We believe he died not fearing death. In his will he ordered the manumission of his slaves -- a true son of liberty in all points."

I have made this quotation, the sentiments of which seem to have been the spontaneous effusion of the writer's heart in respect to this universally beloved and respected man, for the purpose of showing that the above address was not intended as an unmeaning compliment, merely to court the popular favor by a servile fawning at the feet of a great man; but that it contained the genuine feelings of the heart, and was intended as a tribute of gratitude to God for favoring the American people with such a noble monument of his wisdom and goodness in the person of this illustrious chief, and in that admirable constitution which his hands helped to frame, and which he was now called upon, by the unanimous suffrages of a free people, to administer and carry into practical effect.

It was indeed but natural for those who had suffered so many privations through a bloody and protracted war, and had since contended with many sorts of opposition from malignant foes, and not a little low scurrility from the exclusive spirit of sectarian bigotry, to rejoice in beholding the adoption of a constitution which guarantied to all denominations their rights and privileges equally, and to see this constitution committed to the hands of men who had ever manifested an impartial regard for each religious sect, and for the inalienable rights of all mankind. As this year was the beginning of Methodism in New England, perhaps it may be proper to give some account of the state of that part of our country, that the reader may duly appreciate the difficulties with which it had to contend.

It has already been seen in the introduction that Congregationalism was the prevalent system of Christianity established in this portion of the country. As the early settlers fled here on account of the persecutions which they endured at home, and built themselves up in a separate community, their religious and civil regulations were interwoven, so that they were made mutually to support each other. Thus churches were built, ministers settled and supported, schools and colleges established according to law; and a tax was laid upon the people, in proportion to their property, to sustain these things in conjunction with their civil institutions. In thus providing by law for their own support, they took care to guard against the introduction of other sects, as far as they consistently could, simply tolerating them in holding their meetings, while they were abridged of many of their rights. According to these regulations all were born members of the Congregation Church, and, when grown maturity, were obliged to pay their proportion toward its support, unless they lodged a certificate in the office of the town clerk that they had attached themselves to some other society. But the Ideological creed of the country differed in some important particulars from that of the Methodists. I need barely say that the Congregationalists of New England were Calvinist: of the highest order, and, at that time, excessively rigid in their opposition to Arminian or Methodistical doctrines, professing to esteem them as heretical, and dangerous to the souls of the people. And, moreover, as there were very generally ministers established in every parish -- for the whole country was divided into parishes -- they considered it an encroachment upon their rights for a stranger to intermeddle with them. This was the general state of things in New England. Professing a system of religion which had been handed down to them from their Puritan fathers, guarded and supported by their laws, and defended too in the pulpit by men in general well educated, they wanted not motives to resist the intrusions of Methodist itinerants, who could boast little from their human learning and science, though they certainly stood high for their piety, and were by no means inferior to their fellows in their knowledge of divine things. But with all these advantages -- and surely they were not few -- "pure religion" was not generally pressed upon the

people from the pulpit. Among the Baptists, some congregations of whom were found scattered through the country, experimental religion was enforced, and no doubt enjoyed by many. But generally speaking, I believe it may be said that, at the time of which we are now speaking, experimental and practical religion was at a very low ebb throughout the churches of New England and in some portions of the country, particularly in Massachusetts, the Unitarian heresy was beginning to show itself in some of the congregations, more especially in and about the city of Boston. This destructive heresy has since spread itself extensively in Massachusetts, has taken possession of Cambridge College, and infected most of the churches in Boston and its vicinity. This was the general state of things when the Rev. Jesse Lee entered this field of labor.6 It was on the 17th of June, 1789, that he preached the first Methodist sermon ever delivered in the state of Connecticut, in the town of Norwalk. Such was the state of feeling in that country that no house could. be procured for preaching, all being afraid to open their houses to the stranger. Mr. Lee, therefore, who was not to be intimidated by such discouragements, went into the street, began to sing, and then to pray; and this being heard by a few, a tolerable congregation soon collected, to whom he preached, no one interrupting him. On the 21st of June he preached for the first time in the city of New Haven. He proceeded in his work until he formed a regular circuit, including the towns of Norwalk, Fairfield, Stratford, Milford, Redding, Danbury, and Canaan, with several, intermediate places. The manner of his preaching, without notes, the fervency of his spirit, as well as the doctrines he delivered, so opposite to the Calvinism which they had been accustomed to hear, excited much curiosity and drew multitudes to hear him; and some, he says, were brought to feel the weight of the truths he uttered. But they were by no means mere passive hearers. Priests and people, men, women, and children, from their education and habits of life, were fond of disputation, and often, after the preaching, would enter into controversy with the preacher, and especially upon those points on which he differed from the prevalent doctrines of the day. Their objections, however, were generally founded upon the erroneous representations, drawn by themselves as an inference from what they had heard, that the Methodists held to salvation by the merit of good works. This they inferred from the denial of the doctrine of irresistible grace, unconditional and personal election and reprobation, and not because that dogma had ever been asserted; for no such doctrine had ever been held or promulgated by Mr. Wesley or any of his preachers. Mr. Lee, however, endeavored to avoid, as much as possible, all thriftless controversy, by striving to direct their attention to the more important inquiry, whether they had ever been "born of the Spirit," and whether, as a consequence, they now enjoyed "peace with God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." The silent manner in which these questions were listened to, showed evidently that the disputants were more anxious about "lesser matters," than they were concerning "the things which accompany salvation." The first Methodist society which was formed in Connecticut was in Stratford, which was on the 26th day of September, and consisted of only three females; but this was a nucleus around which others gathered after much labor and toil, and which has since become a large and flourishing society. The next class was formed in the town of Redding, consisting of a male and female; the former, Aaron Sandford, became a local preacher, and continues such to this day, having lived to see his children, and many of his grand children, members of the Church, with a large and influential society gathered around him; he has a son and a son-in-law in the ministry, and I believe one grand son. The first Methodist church ever built in New England was on this (Stratford) circuit, in the town of Weston. It was called, in honor of the first Methodist preacher who penetrated into that part of the country, Lee’s Chapel. It stood until

the year 1813, when it was rebuilt; and the writer of this [Nathan Bangs] preached the dedication sermon in the new house, on "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts," Hag. ii, 9. In the month of February, 1790, three preachers, Jacob Brush, George Roberts, and Daniel Smith, were sent by Bishop Asbury to the help of Mr. Lee. They met him in Dantown, where he was holding a quarterly meeting in a house of worship not yet finished -- which was the second built in the country. The coming of these brethren was a great comfort to Mr. Lee, and they strengthened each other's hands in the Lord. During the preaching on Sabbath, the power of the Lord was so manifested that many cried aloud for mercy, a thing so unusual in that part of the country that some were very much alarmed, and fled from the house in consternation, and others who were in the gallery jumped out on the ground. In the midst, however, of the confusion occasioned by these movements, those who had an experience of divine things rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

Notwithstanding the exterior respect which was paid to religion in this "land of steady habits," the coming of the Methodist preachers excited no little opposition. They were generally called by the settled clergy, "wolves in sheep's clothing," the "false prophets who should come in the latter day," &c., and hence the people felt themselves at liberty to ridicule and persecute them in a variety of ways. As many in the pulpit harangued their people in opposition to those "itinerating peddlers of a false doctrine," as they were sometimes called in derision, the people caught the spirit, and echoed back upon them the opprobrious epithet, mingling with their jeers such unruly conduct as often disturbed them in their solemn assemblies. Hence they have been known to roll stones into the houses where they were assembled in the time of worship, and otherwise interrupt their devotions. These things, however, disheartened not these messengers of mercy in their work, nor impeded their progress in their endeavors to evangelize the people. The writer of this [Nathan Bangs] remembers perfectly well, when but a boy, of hearing the remarks which were made by some of the people on returning one evening from hearing a Methodist preacher. The wonder was whence they came! They finally concluded, as they had come up from the south, that they were a set of broken merchants, who, having become poor, and being too lazy to work, had taken to this method of preaching to procure a livelihood. I have mentioned this circumstance to show the ignorance which prevailed among the people generally in respect to the character and objects of those primitive Methodist preachers, and as an apology for the treatment they met with from the thoughtless and the gay. Good impressions, however, were made upon many minds, and Bishop Asbury, speaking of the commencement of his work, says, "New England stretcheth out the hand to our ministry, and I trust shortly will feel its influence. My soul shall praise the Lord." The revival noticed as having begun last year in Baltimore and in some parts of Maryland, went forward with great rapidity this year; and in Baltimore more particularly, Mr. Lee says it exceeded any thing which had been witnessed before. Such was the power which attended the word preached that some of the greatest revilers of the work were constrained to bow to its influence, and to confess that God was indeed is the midst of his people. The following is his own account of this work: --

"Some, were two, three, or four hours on their knees; others were prostrate on the floor, most earnestly agonizing for mercy, till they could rejoice in God their Saviour! "What power! what awe rested on the people!

"Some, after they went home, could not sleep, but wept and prayed all night. The next day was such a time as cannot be sufficiently described.

"Early in the morning, a preacher was sent for to visit a young woman who was under conviction. He exhorted her to believe in the Lord Jesus, and then sung and prayed with her.

"A considerable number of the members of society were collected to supplicate the throne of grace in her behalf. At last the Lord suddenly shed abroad his love in her heart, so that she lifted up her voice with others in loud praises to God.

"This was only a small part of that day's work. About ten in the morning, a company of mourners assembled together at a private house, where the work of conversion began. First one, and then another, entered into the liberty of the children of God. The news spread; the people collected till the house and street were filled with a crowd of believers, and a wondering multitude: and this continued without intermission till night. They then repaired to the church, which was presently filled, and they continued there until two o'clock the next morning before they broke up.

"Some who came there quite careless, and indeed making derision of the whole, were converted before they returned. Many hard-hearted opposers were conquered at last, and earnestly sought salvation.

"At the same time the country circuits throughout Maryland seemed to flame with holy love. On the eastern shore there was a powerful work; hundreds in different parts were turning to God."

Dr. Coke arrived again on the continent this year, and after attending some of the conferences, traveled extensively through different parts of the country, and was made a blessing to many. Speaking of the conference which assembled in North Carolina, Bishop Asbury says, "We opened our conference, and were blessed with peace and union; our brethren from the west met us, and we had weighty matters for consideration before us." But the glorious work which was breaking forth in every direction was much aided by the energetic labors of Bishop Asbury, who traversed almost every part of the continent, preaching and setting things in order. This year he followed in the track which had been marked out by Mr. Garrettson the preceding year, up the North River, through Dutchess county, surveying the length and breadth of the land, and in the midst of all his labors and bodily sufferings he exclaims, "My soul is so filled with God, that it appears as if all sense of pain was suspended by the power of faith." Thence he went south, through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, and witnessed the glorious revival which was going on in Baltimore. Under date of September 8, 1789, he says, --

"I preached in town and at the Point. The last quarterly meeting was a wonder-working time. Fifty or sixty souls were then and there brought to God. People were daily praying to God from house to house; some crying for mercy, others rejoicing in God, and not a few, day after day, joining in society for the benefit of Christian fellowship. Praise the Lord, O my soul! I spent some time in visiting from house to house, and in begging for the college. The married men and the single men, the married women and single women, I met apart, and was comforted. Many of the children of the Methodists are the happy subjects of this glorious revival. We have more members in Baltimore (town and Point) than in any city or town on the continent besides."

He did not, however, remain long pent up in the city, for under date of the 28th of this month we find him at Bush Forest Chapel, in the neighborhood of Abingdon, where he makes the following remarks "This was one of the first houses that were built for the Methodists in the state of Maryland, and one of the first societies was formed here. They had been dead for many years; --

of late the Lord has visited the neighborhood, and I suppose, from report, fifty souls have been converted to God." The work of God also extended in many places within the bounds of the new district formed last year by Mr. Garrettson. Mr. Philip Embury,7 who had been instrumental in founding the little society in the city of New York, after the arrival of the regular preachers in that city, moved to Ashgrove, and collected a small society in that place, chiefly of emigrants from Ireland. Before the time of which we now speak, they had made several attempts to obtain the aid of traveling preachers, but did not succeed until 1788, when, in answer to a petition to the conference, Mr. Garrettson sent Mr. Lemuel Green to their help. He brought the society under disciplinary regulations, and likewise extended his labors with good effect into the adjoining settlements. Thus this society at Ashgrove may be considered as the center of Methodism in all that region of country.

Long Island also, in the state of New York, was more particularly provided for this year. We have already seen that Captain Webb visited some towns on this island, as early as 1768, and many sinners were awakened under his powerful appeals to their consciences. The political troubles, however, which arose out of the War of the Revolution, had a most deleterious effect upon the religion and morals of the Long Islanders. The British army had the island in possession for several years, and many were the skirmishes, after the memorable battle upon Brooklyn heights, between the contending forces; and the people were perpetually harassed with the depredations committed upon their property by both of the belligerents. On the return of peace, however, the people began to long for the ordinances of religion, and as early as 1784 Mr. Philip Cox was stationed on Long Island; he found a number who remembered the preaching of Captain Webb. He was succeeded by the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, whose faithful and able ministry was made a blessing to many. Messrs. Thomas Ware, Peter Moriarty, and Robert Cloud followed Mr. Cooper, and their evangelical efforts were crowned with success. This year, 1789, Messr,. William Phoebus and John Lee were stationed here, and Long Island formed a part of the New York district.

Long Island has become somewhat famous as being the birthplace of Elias Hicks, the celebrated Quaker preacher, whose peculiar notions in religion, and his zealous manner of propagating them, have been a means of dividing that peaceable denomination, and, it is to be feared, of poisoning the minds of many with very erroneous views of Christianity. These notions, coming so directly in contact with some of the fundamental principles of Methodism, particularly as respects the deity and atonement of Christ, and the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper, were no small impediments in the way of those Methodist preachers who first labored here. The Lord of the harvest, however, was with them, and gave them access to the understandings and consciences of the people, so that at this time there were upward of two hundred members in the several societies on Long Island. That God exercises a particular providence over his people, and grants to them blessings in answer to their prayers, is abundantly attested in the holy Scriptures, as well as by the experience and testimony of his servants, in all ages of his church. Those who affect to question this doctrine if they profess faith in divine revelation, would do well to remember that they thereby impeach the veracity of the divine promises, and render ineffectual even the fervent prayers of the righteous. God has said, "Ask, and be given" He also declares that "his ears are open and attentive to the prayers of the righteous." And will he not fulfil his promise to those who pray in faith? He certainly will -- else his promise is vain, and prayer is useless. The following

narrative respecting the introduction of Methodism into Southold, Long Island, strikingly illustrates the truth of the above remarks, and evinces that the good hand of the Lord is ever with his people. It Is related on the best authority: -- In 1794, a Mrs. Moore, who had been converted by the instrumentality of the Methodists, removed to Southold. Being destitute of a spiritual ministry, she united with two other females of a like spirit with herself every Monday evening in holding a prayer meeting, in which they prayed especially that God would send them a faithful minister. Twice they met at the house of a Mr. Vail, who, though not a professor of religion, was willing that the meeting should be held in his house, as his wife was one of the three, engaged in this pious work. A circumstance occurring one evening which caused them to omit their social meeting, each one retired to her own house, determined to pour out the desire of their souls to God that the primary object of their prayers, namely, the gift of a faithful preacher, might be granted them. During the exercises of this evening they felt an unusual spirit of prayer; but more particularly Mrs. Moore, who continued in strong prayer until near midnight, when she received an assurance that God had heard them, by the following word being deeply impressed upon her mind: -- "I have heard their cry, and am come down to deliver them:" and so strong was the conviction upon her mind that she praised God for what she believed he would most assuredly do. At this very time, Wilson Lee, one of the early Methodist preachers, was at New London, Connecticut, and had put his trunk on board of a vessel with a view to go to his appointment in New York: Contrary wind prevented his departure on the same night in which these pious females were praying in their separate apartments on Long Island, for God to send them a "shepherd after his own heart," this man of God, detained by contrary winds in New London, felt an unusual struggle of mind for the salvation of souls, attended with a vivid and powerful impression that it was his duty to cross the Sound and go to Long Island. Powerful, indeed, was this impression, that though he tried to resist it, he at length resolved that if a way opened he would proceed. On going to the wharf next morning, he found, to his surprise, a sloop ready to sail for Southold, and without farther hesitancy he immediately embarked and on landing, in answer to his inquiries, was conducted to the house of Mrs. Moore. On seeing him approach the house, and recognizing him from his appearance for a Methodist preacher, though a total stranger, she ran to the door, and saluted him in the following words: -- "Thou blessed of the Lord, come in!" They mutually explained the circumstances above narrated, and rejoiced together, "for the consolation." A congregation was soon collected, to whom Mr. Lee preached with lively satisfaction. God blessed his labors -- a class was formed, and from that, period the Methodists continued, with various degrees of prosperity, in Southold, and gradually spread through the length and breadth of the island.

Having thus noticed the progress of the work of religion in different parts of the country, let us return to the doings of the conference. In consequence of the extension of the work on every hand, spreading over such a large territory, there were two difficulties which arose in the way of proceeding in the manner they had done heretofore.

1. It was very inconvenient for all the members of the conference to assemble together in one place to transact their business. Hence, as we have already seen, the bishops had appointed several separate conferences for the dispatch of their ordinary affairs.

2. But any thing which was done in these separate conferences was not binding, except simply the ordinations and stationing the preachers, unless sanctioned by them all. And as this could rarely be expected, constituted as human nature is, it was plainly seen that there was danger of their

falling to pieces, or of having divers administrations. To provide against this evil, and to remedy the inconvenience above mentioned, it was determined this year, as the best thing which could be devised, to have a council, for the reasons and purposes, and with the powers set forth in the following questions and answers: --

Question Whereas the holding of general conferences on this extensive continent would be attended with a variety of difficulties, and many inconveniences to the work of God; and whereas we judge it expedient that a council should be formed of chosen men out of the several districts as representatives of the whole connection, to meet at stated times; in what manner is this council to be formed, what shall be its powers, and what farther regulations shall be made concerning it?

"Answers

1st. Our bishops and presiding elders shall be the members of this council; provided, that the members who form the council be never fewer than nine. And if any unavoidable circumstance prevent the attendance of a presiding elder at the council, he shall have authority to send another elder out of his own district to represent him; but the elder so sent by the absenting presiding elder shall have no seat in the council without the approbation of the bishop, or bishops, and presiding elders present. And if, after the above-mentioned provisions are complied with, any unavoidable circumstance, or any contingencies, reduce the number to less than nine, the bishop shall immediately summon such elders as do not preside, to complete the number.

2dly. These shall have authority to mature every thing they shall judge expedient.

1. To preserve the general union: 2. To render and preserve the external form of worship similar in all our societies through the continent: 3. To preserve the essentials of the Methodist doctrines and discipline pure and uncorrupted: 4. To correct all abuses and disorders: and, lastly, they are authorized to mature every thing they may see necessary for the good of the church, and for the promoting and improving our colleges and plan of education.

"3dly. Provided nevertheless, that nothing shall be received as the resolution of the council, unless it be assented to unanimously by the council; and nothing so assented to by the council shall be binding in any district till it has been agreed upon by a majority of the conference which is held for that district.

4thly. The bishops shall have authority to summon the council to meet at such times and places as they shall judge expedient.

5thly. The first council shall be held at Cokesbury, on the first day of next December."

Mr. Asbury gives the following account of the first meeting of the council: --

"Thursday, December 4. Our council was seated, consisting of the following persons, viz.: Richard Ivey, from Georgia; R. Ellis, South Carolina; E. Morris, North Carolina; Phil. Bruce, north district of Virginia; James O'Kelly, south district of Virginia; L. Green, Ohio; Nelson Reid, western shore of Maryland; J. Everett, eastern shore; John Dickens, Pennsylvania; J. O. Cromwell, Jersey; and Freeborn Garrettson, New York; all our business was done in love and unanimity. The concerns of the college were well attended to, as also the printing business. We formed some resolutions relative to economy and union, and others concerning the funds for the relief of our suffering

preachers on the frontiers. We rose on the eve of Wednesday following. During our sitting, we had preaching every night; some few souls were stirred up, and others converted. The prudence of some had stilled the noisy ardor of our young people; and it was difficult to rekindle the fire. I collected about œ28 for the poor suffering preachers in the west. We spent one day in speaking our own experiences, and giving an account of the progress and state of the work of God in our several districts; a spirit of union pervaded the whole body; producing blessed effects and fruits." This shows the purity of mind by which those were actuated to whom the affairs of the Church were at that time committed. But though the preachers generally voted for the plan when it was submitted to them by the bishops, dissatisfaction soon sprang up in their minds in reference to it, on account of its being dangerous, as they thought, to their liberties. It was contended that as the council was composed of the bishops and presiding elders, and as the latter were appointed by the bishops, and changed at their pleasure, it was virtually concentrating all the authority of the Church in the hands of the bishops, and thus creating an aristocracy of power incompatible with the rights and privileges of the entire body.

There was, moreover, one clause in the laws which were to control them, which went to nullify their proceedings, and frustrate the very design for which the council was constituted. It was in these words "Nothing unanimously assented to by the council shall be binding in any district, till it has been agreed upon by a majority of the conference which is held for that district." Such a regulation, every one must perceive, tended to a dilution of the body, by introducing dissensions: for it could not be expected that so many independent bodies, acting separately, should entirely agree in many important particulars. Such, accordingly, was the opposition manifested to the organization of this council, that it assembled only twice, and therefore it seems unnecessary to give a detailed account of its proceedings. But though it had but an ephemeral existence, it evinced the necessity more strikingly than ever of an organization which should concentrate the power of the Church in some body which might exercise it with prudence for the general harmony of ministers and people; and this was afterward provided for in a General Conference, which should meet once in four years, at such time and place as might be agreed upon. This year I find the first mention made of a book steward. And as the printing and circulating of religious books forms a very important feature in the economy of our Church, this seems the most proper place to give some account of this establishment.

Among the means adopted by Mr. Wesley for the diffusion of gospel truth and holiness, and for guarding his people against erroneous doctrines, was that of printing and circulating books; hence he established a press under his own control. Here his own works, and those he extracted from others, were printed; and they were distributed by his preachers as extensively as possible among the people. Whatever profits might arise from the sale of these books were to be appropriated to charitable purposes, and to assist in spreading the gospel by means of an itinerant ministry. The establishment thus begun by Mr. Wesley, has been carried on by the Wesleyan Methodists in England to this day; and has been one of the most powerful auxiliaries in promoting the cause of Christ by that body of ministers. In 1778 Mr. Wesley commenced the publication of the Arminian Magazine, a periodical filled with various sorts of information, containing a museum of divinity and a great variety of miscellaneous reading. It has been continued, greatly enlarged, since his death to this day, now called the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, making in all sixty large volumes. In the early history of Methodism in this country, the preachers were supplied with books from England.

But this method of procuring supplies became troublesome and expensive, which led to the establishment of a similar agency here, for the supply of the people in useful knowledge. By a reference to the books of the agency, in the handwriting of John Dickens, who was the first book-steward, it appears that the first book printed was "A Kempis." This entry is dated August 17, 1789. The first volume of the Arminian Magazine was published the same year, also the Hymnbook, Saints' Rest, and Primitive Physic.

I merely notice this here, intending hereafter to devote a chapter to a complete history of this institution, its objects, and the influence it has exerted on the community.

Robert Ayers and William Patridge desisted from traveling this year. The following preachers had died: --

1. Henry Bingham, a native of Virginia. He had been four years in the ministry, had labored successfully as a pious, humble man, and died in peace.

2. William Gill. He was a native of the state of Delaware, and had been in the ministry about twelve years, and stood among the first in the conference, both for his experience and knowledge of divine things. He was therefore an able preacher, and a deeply devoted man of God, inspiring confidence in his wisdom and integrity by all who knew him; and in his death religion shone most conspicuously by enabling him to die in the triumphs of faith.

3. John Cooper, who had traveled fifteen years, and was greatly beloved by all who knew him, as a pious and holy man. He had been the subject of much affliction, but bore it all without murmuring, and finally ended his days in peace.

4. James White, a native of Maryland. He had been about eight years in the work of the ministry, was much esteemed as a pious and faithful man of God, successful in his work, and resigned in his death.

5. Francis Spry. He had traveled four years only, was a man of a pious life, of sound judgment, a useful preacher, and patient and resigned in his death.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This year, 35,019, Last year, 30,809; Increase, 4,210; Colored This year, 8,243, Last year 6,545; Increase, 1,698; Total This year, 43,262, Last year, 37,354; Increase, 5,908; Preachers This year, 196, Last year, 166; Increase, 30.

1790. The following conferences were held this year: -- February 15th, in Charleston, South Carolina; March 2d, in Georgia; April 26th, in Kentucky; May 17th, in Holstein; May 24th, in North Carolina; June 14th, Lane's Church; July 29th, in Uniontown, Pennsylvania; August 26th, in Leesburgh, Virginia; September 6th, in Baltimore, Maryland; September 11th, in Cokesbury, Maryland; September 16th, at Duck Creek; September 22d, in Philadelphia; September 28th, in Burlington, New Jersey; October 4th, in New York.

Twenty new circuits were added to the list, as follows: -- Savannah, Savannah Town, and Catawba, in the southern part of the work; Lexington, Limestone, Madison, Russel, Green, and Lincoln, in the western country; Contentney, in the lower part of North Carolina; Surry, in the South of Virginia; Stafford and Kanawha, in the northern part of the state; South River, in Maryland; Bethel and Randolph, in New Jersey; New Haven, Hartford, and Litchfield, in Connecticut; and

Boston, in Massachusetts.

We find the following question and answer in the minutes of this year: -- Question What can be done in order to instruct poor children, white and black, to read?

"Answers Let us labor, as the heart and soul of one man, to establish Sunday schools in or near the place of public worship. Let persons be appointed by the bishops, elders, deacons, or preachers, to teach, gratis, all that will attend and have a capacity to learn, from six o'clock in the morning till ten, and from two o'clock in the afternoon till six, where it does not interfere with public worship. The council shall compile a proper schoolbook, to teach them learning and piety. This is the first account we have of Sabbath schools in this country; and they appear to have been established chiefly for the instruction of children, whether white or black, who had not the advantages of day schools. It was found, however, on experiment, that it was extremely difficult to induce those children to attend the schools, and in a short time the teachers, who had tendered their services gratuitously, became discouraged, and the schools were discontinued.

Such schools had been in successful operation in England for several years, were warmly patronized by Mr. Wesley, his preachers and people, and were exerting a salutary influence on the poorer part of the rising generation. In this country, it seems, the Methodists at that time were alone in their efforts to introduce this mode of instruction among the children and youth of their congregations; and hence, not succeeding according to their wishes, prematurely laid it aside. They scarcely thought, it is presumed, that this practice would thereafter be so generally adopted as it since has been, by Christian denominations, and become such an integral part of religious instruction. May it never be discontinued, until the whole population of our globe shall become imbued with the light and power of Christianity! This year was also distinguished by several powerful revivals of religion. Speaking of the conference which was held in Charleston, South Carolina, Bishop Asbury says, "I have felt fresh springs of desire in my soul for a revival of religion. O may the work be general;" and then remarks that, after preaching, "extracts from sundry letters from New York and Baltimore were read in the congregation, at which saints and sinners were affected."

After the close of the conference he set off on a journey to Kentucky, which was then a comparative wilderness. In this tour he crossed the Allegheny Mountains, which, in some places, he says, "were rising before him like the roof of a house." "Those who wish," he adds, "to know how rough it is, may tread in our path. What made it worse to me was, that while I was looking to see what had become of my guide, I was carried off with full force against a tree that hung across the road some distance from the ground, and my head received a very great jar, which, however, was lessened by my having on a hat that was strong in the crown." After pushing their way rough the wilderness, often having to swim the creeks with their horses, sleep in log huts, or encamp in the woods, he makes the following entry in his Journal: -- "From December 14, 1789, to April 20, 1790, we compute to have traveled two thousand five hundred and seventy-eight miles. Hitherto has the Lord helped. Glory! glory to our God!" And the reader will recollect that neither steamboats nor railroads were in use in those days; but they were forced to wend their way through the new settlements in the best way they could, chiefly on horseback. As to the preachers who traveled this rough and poor country, they had to submit to all manner of hardships, so that Bishop Asbury says of them, "I found the poor preachers indifferently clad, with emaciated bodies, and subject to hard

fare; but I hope they are rich in faith." That the reader may see the difficulties with which these primitive Methodist preachers had to contend, as well as the hardships and privations they endured, the following extracts from Bishop Asbury's Journal are given: -- After crossing the Kentucky River he says, --

"I was strangely outdone for want of sleep, having been greatly deprived of it in my journey through the wilderness, which is like being at sea in some respects, and in others worse. Our way is over mountains, steep hills, deep rivers, and muddy creeks; a thick growth of reeds for miles together, and no inhabitants but wild beasts and savage men. Sometimes, before I was aware, my ideas would be leading me to be looking out ahead for a fence, and I would, without reflection, try to recollect the houses we should have lodged at in the wilderness. I slept about an hour the first night, and about two the last. We ate no regular meal; our bread grew short, and I was very much spent."

Bishop Asbury stopped at the house of a gentleman whose wife, he says, "a tender, gracious soul, was taken a prisoner by the Indians during the last war, and carried to Detroit." He then adds, "I saw the graves of the slain -- twenty-four in one camp. I learn that they had set no guard, and that they were up late playing at cards. A poor woman of the company had dreamed three times that the Indians had surprised and killed them all: she urged her husband to entreat the people to set a guard, but they only abused him and cursed him for his pains. As the poor woman was relating her last dream the Indians came upon the camp: she and her husband sprang away, one east, the other west, and escaped. He afterward came back, and witnessed the carnage. These poor sinners appeared to be ripe for destruction. I received another account of the death of another wicked wretch who was shot through the heart, although he had vaunted with horrid oaths that no Creek Indian could kill him. These are some of the melancholy accidents to which the country is subject for the present." This shows the jeopardy to which those were often exposed who traversed this newly settled country in quest of immortal souls, and the intrepidity displayed in encountering these "perils by land," by those who first penetrated these western wilds as heralds of peace and good will. In Lexington, Bishop Asbury met the preachers in conference, the business which, he says, they "went through with in great love and harmony." They had preaching at "noon and night, souls were converted, and the fallen restored. My soul," he adds, "has been blessed among these people, and I am exceedingly pleased with them. I would not, for the worth of all the place, have been prevented in this visit, having no doubt but that it will be for the good of the present and rising generation. It is true, such exertions of mind and body are trying; but I am supported under it if souls are saved, it is enough." At this conference a plan was devised for a district school, and three hundred dollars were subscribed, in land and money for its establishment. The school afterward went into operation, but for want of adequate support was finally discontinued. After visiting some places on the west of the mountains, Bishop Asbury set off on his return to the Atlantic slates. The following is his own account of the manner in which this tedious journey was performed: --

"Monday 24. We set out on our return through the wilderness with a large and helpless company; we had about fifty people, twenty of whom were armed, and five of whom might have stood fire. To reserve order and harmony, we had articles drawn up for, and signed by our company, and I arranged the people for traveling according to the regulations agreed upon. Some disaffected gentlemen, who would neither sign nor come under discipline, had yet the impudence to murmur

when left behind. The first night we lodged some miles beyond the hazelpatch. The next day we discovered signs of Indians, and some thought they heard voices; we therefore thought it best to travel on, and did not encamp until three o'clock, halting on the east side of Cumberland River. We had gnats enough. We had an alarm, but it turned out to be a false alarm. A young gentleman, a Mr. Alexander, behaved exceedingly well; but his tender frame was not adequate to the fatigue to be endured, and he had well nigh fainted on the road to Cumberland Gap. Brother Massie was captain; and finding I had gained authority among the people, I acted somewhat in the capacity of an adjutant and quarter-master among them. At the foot of the mountain the company separated; the greater part went on with me to Powell's River; here we slept on the earth, and next day made the Grassy Valley. Several of the company, who were not Methodists, expressed their high approbation of our conduct, and most affectionately invited us to their houses. The journeys of each day were as follows: Monday, forty-five miles; Tuesday, fifty miles; Wednesday, sixty miles." From this time Bishop Asbury traveled very extensively through the several states where Methodist societies had been established, and contributed much by his labors to promote the work of God, which was extending powerfully in many places, and particularly in some parts of New England, under the labors of the Rev. Jesse Lee and his helpers. This year Methodism was introduced into the city of Boston. It is true, that about eighteen years previous to this time, Mr. Boardman had visited Boston, and formed a small society; but as he was not succeeded by any minister of the same order, the society gradually diminished, and finally became extinct. Mr. Garrettson had also passed through Boston, on his way from Nova Scotia, and preached a few sermons in a private house; but no society had been formed by him. On the arrival of Mr. Lee, no house could be procured for preaching; he therefore went upon the Common, stood upon a table, and began to sing and pray. When he commenced there were only four persons present; but before he had concluded there had collected, as he thought, not less than three thousand. The word preached had an effect upon the minds of a few who attended, so that on the next Sabbath, at the same place, the number of hearers was greatly increased; and a way was thus opened for the establishment of a small society in the town of Boston. It is an evidence, however, of the determined opposition which was felt here to Methodism, that Mr. Lee was in the city for about a week, using every means in his power to procure a house to preach in, but was denied in every instance in which he made application either publicly or privately, and was finally forced either to abandon the place without preaching at all, or to go on to the Common. Here, therefore, he set up his banner in the name of the Lord, and many have since, though not without much hard toiling and many privations, flocked around it.

While in Boston, Mr. Lee received an invitation from a gentleman in Lynn, about ten miles from Boston, for him to visit that place. This gentleman, a Mr. Benjamin Johnson, had heard Methodist preaching about twenty years before, in one of the southern states. Mr. Lee was, therefore, very cordially received, and he soon found himself among "a people prepared of the Lord" to embrace the pure doctrines of Jesus Christ. After giving an account of a sermon he had delivered at Mr. Lye's, at Wood End, he says, --

"I felt great enlargement of heart, and much of the divine presence, while I was warning the people not to be deceived. The presence of God was in the assembly, and some of the hearers appeared to be greatly lifted up in love and thankfulness. O! that God may continue the serious impressions in their minds, till they are brought to the knowledge of God. I have not met with a company of

people for a long time that had so much of the appearance of a Methodist congregation as this." The word preached in Lynn took such effect that in about two months after Mr. Lee first visited the place, February 20, 1791, a society of thirty members was formed, and by the month of May following upward of seventy had received certificates that they attended Methodist meeting. So rapidly did the work progress, that on the 14th of June following, they began to build a house of worship; and "the people had such a mind to work" that the house was raised on the 21st, and dedicated on the 26th of the same month. This is said to have been the first Methodist church which was built in the state of Massachusetts.

Many other towns in this state were visited by Mr. Lee in the course of this year; in all which, notwithstanding the opposition generally manifested by the settled clergy and many of their congregations, he found access to the people. Salem, Newburyport, Danvers, Marblehead, and Charlestown were severally visited, and regular preaching established; and a foundation was thus laid for Methodism in that land of the "pilgrim fathers." The circuits also in Connecticut were greatly enlarged, and several new ones added by those enterprising preachers who followed in the track of Mr. Lee. Many amusing and instructive anecdotes might be related respecting the manner in which these preachers were received and treated in this part of the country. As they did not suppose any man could be qualified to preach the gospel without a classical education, almost the first question asked by the ministers with whom they came in contact would be, whether they had a "liberal education." Mr. Lee was a shrewd man, and was seldom at a loss for an answer suited to the occasion. He says, in one place, "The woman of the house asked me a few questions, and in a little time wanted to know if I had a liberal education. I told her I had just education enough to carry me through the country." Soon after a similar question was propounded to him by one of the principal men of the town, before he would give his consent for Mr. Lee to preach in the court house, to whom he replied, "I have nothing to boast of; though I have education enough to carry me through the country." On another occasion, a young lawyer, with a view to puzzle Mr. Lee, addressed him in Latin, to whom he replied in German -- a language not understood by either the speaker or his friends, who were anxiously listening to the conversation. " There," said a gentleman who was in the secret of the lawyer’s intentions, "the preacher has answered you in Hebrew, and therefore he must be a learned man." This repartee of Mr. Lee silenced the inquisitiveness of the facetious lawyer, and gave the former the decided advantage over his antagonist. But the most effectual method adopted by the Methodist preachers was, when they came in company with those who were fond of disputations, and this was very general in New England, to urge upon the people the necessity of being soundly converted to God, and of enjoying an evidence of their acceptance in his sight, through faith in the Lord Jesus. And through, their persevering diligence in this good work, God blessed their labors abundantly in various places, so that a foundation was laid by their labors and privations for that extensive spread of evangelical principles, and piety which we have lived to see in that part of our country. But the most difficult place to plant the tree of Methodism was in the city of Boston. It was a considerable time, as already related, before they could procure even a private house to preach in; and when they succeeded thus far, such was the general prejudice against them that they could not long retain possession of it. At length they succeeded in obtaining the use of a school-house, but this was soon after denied them. They then rented a chamber in the north end of the town, where they continued regularly for a considerable time. A small society had been formed on the 13th of July, 1792, and though few in number, and generally poor, with a view to obviate the difficulties they

had to contend with, they undertook to build a house of worship. To aid them in this pious design, money was begged for them on the eastern shore of Maryland, in the state of Delaware, Philadelphia, and in New York. By the aid thus afforded they were encouraged to proceed in their labors; and on the 28th day of August, 1795, the corner stone for the first Methodist church was laid in Boston. It was a wooden building, forty-six feet in length and thirty-six in breadth. At this time there were but forty-two members in the Church in Boston, two of whom were colored persons. After the opening of this house the congregation very considerably increased, especially in the evenings, at which time many, who were ashamed to be seen going to a Methodist meeting by daylight, would assemble to hear the "strange doctrine," as it was called. In Salem, on some of his first visits, Mr. Lee was invited by the minister, the Rev. Mr. Hopkins, into his pulpit; but at length he was informed by Mr. Hopkins, that though he could not find any particular fault with his preaching, yet such was the opposition of some of his people, that he thought not prudent to admit Mr. Lee to his pulpit any more. Mr. Lee then thanked him for his former kindness, and they parted with mutual good will.

Hitherto I have recorded the names of those who were located, expelled, or had died; but as the continuance of these records would swell this history beyond reasonable bounds; and as their names, with a brief sketch of the characters of those who had died in the work, will be found in the minutes of the conferences, it is thought to be inexpedient to insert the names of all such, but only those who may have been most eminently useful in the cause of God. This year eight received a location, and three had departed this life. One of these last, John Tunnel, was elected to the office of an elder at the Christmas conference in 1784, and was eminently useful as a minister of Christ. He had traveled extensively throughout the United States, was highly esteemed for the depth and uniformity of his piety, his indefatigable labors, and his commanding talents as a preacher. He died in great peace near the Sweet Springs, in Virginia, the Church deeply lamenting loss of such a devoted and useful servant.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This year, 45,949, Last year, 35,019, Increase 10,930; Colored This year, 11,682, Last year, 8,243, Increase, 3,439; Total This year, 57,631, Last year, 43,263, Increase, 14,369; Preachers This year, 227, Last year, 196, Increase, 31. This was by far the largest, increase which had been realized in any one year, and shows the happy effects of the revivals we have mentioned.

1791. There were thirteen conferences held this year, at the following times and places: -- At Charleston, South Carolina, on the 22d of February; in Georgia, on the 16th of February; at Mr. McKnight’s, North Carolina, on the 2d of April; at Petersburgh, Virginia, on the 20th of April; at Hanover, on the 26th of April; in Alexandria, District of Columbia, on the 2d of May; in Baltimore, on the 6th of May; at Duck Creek, on the 13th of May; in Philadelphia, on the 18th of May; in New York, on the 26th of May; in Connecticut, on the 23d of July; in Uniontown, on the 28th of July; in Albany, on the 23d of August.

Ten new circuits were added to the list, namely, Edisto Island, in South Carolina; Union, in Virginia; Queen Anne’s, in Maryland; Northumberland, in Pennsylvania; Otsego and Saratoga, in New York; Stockbridge, in Massachusetts; and Kingston, in Upper Canada. Boston was exchanged for Lynn in the minutes. As this is the first notice we have of a circuit in Canada, it is considered expedient to give some account of the state of things in that country.

Though Canada was discovered by the English as early as 1497, yet it was first settled by the French in 1608. In 1763, after the capture of Quebec by General Wolfe, the whole country passed into the hands of the English, and so remains to the present day. As this country was first settled by the French, the Roman Catholic religion chiefly prevailed there, but more particularly in the lower province. After the conquest of the country by the English, the Church of England was established by law, though at the same time the Roman Catholic Church had all their religious rights and privileges guarantied to them by an act of the king and parliament of Great Britain. These provisions, however, did not exclude other sects from settling among them, and of enjoying their respective peculiarities, with the exception of solemnizing the rites of matrimony. But while the great majority of the people of Lower Canada were French Catholics, the upper province was settled principally by Protestant refugees from the United States, disbanded soldiers from the British army, and by English, Scotch, and Irish emigrants but at the time of which we are now speaking, the country was extremely destitute of the word and ordinances of Christianity. For though the English Church had a name to live there, but few of her ministers were found among the people, and even these few were destitute of the requisite qualifications of ministers of the sanctuary. Hence the people generally were living in ignorance of God, alike destitute of the ordinances of religion for themselves, and the means of education for their children. In this state of things, Upper Canada was visited by William Losee, a member of the New York conference, in the year 1791. He went through the wilderness of the western part of the slate of New York, suffering numerous privations and hardships, and crossed the lower part of Lake Ontario to Kingston. In attempting to form a circuit along the banks of the lake and of the bay of Quinte, he found here and there an individual who had heard the Methodist preachers in England or in the United States. By these he was cordially received; and he succeeded in forming a circuit, and establishing a few classes. The next year Darius Dunham was sent to Canada. He and brother Losee extended their labors from the bay of Quinte down the banks of the river St. Lawrence, forming what was called the Oswegotchie circuit; and the next year there were returned on the minutes of conference, as the fruit of their labors, one hundred and sixty-five members of the Church. From this time the work of God went on gradually in Canada, until it eventuated in one of the most glorious revivals of religion we have on record in these modern days. It will be noticed more particularly in the proper place. This year, with a view to guard against imposture, the brethren and friends were cautioned, in the minutes of conference, to which Mr. Hamitt took exceptions, and which has been before quoted, against receiving any in the character of Methodist preachers, unless they came recommended by the proper authorities of the Church. Perhaps no people have been more exposed to impositions of this character than the Methodists; by reason of their peculiar organization, and the constant habit, at that time especially not much practiced by other denominations, of itinerating so extensively through the country, and the numerous emigrants from Europe, many of whom, having lost their character at home, sought a shelter from their disgrace in America. Yet there is no necessity of suffering from these impostors, if the people would only examine those who come among them in the character of preachers, and ascertain whether or not they are furnished with proper credentials. This year was also highly favored with the outpourings of the Spirit of God in many places. In New England especially many doors were opened, and solicitations sent for Methodist preaching, notwithstanding the opposition which was manifested to the peculiarities of Methodism. The doctrines of universal redemption, conditional election and perseverance, and more especially of Christian perfection, were most violently opposed by the

"standing order" in this country, and the preachers were frequently called upon to defend these truths against subtle and powerful adversaries. Although they in general endeavored to avoid disputations of this character, they were often reluctantly drawn into them in the midst of the people, or they must abandon to their antagonists what they considered the truths of God. Their doctrines, however, gradually gained upon the understandings and affections of many of the people, and commended themselves to their approbation by the happy effect which they produced in the hearts and lives of such as had embraced them.

Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury traveled extensively through the southern states, and rejoiced together in beholding the prosperity of the work of God in many places. We have already seen that the Council had become unpopular among the preachers, and that they were obliged, after the second year's trial, to abandon it. It seems that, among others who were much opposed to committing the affairs of the Church to so few hands, James O'Kelly was one of the foremost, and that by letters from him Dr. Coke's mind had become influenced against it. Hence Bishop Asbury, with whom the Council was a favorite, remarks, "I found the doctor had much changed his sentiments since his last visit to this continent, and that these impressions still continued. I hope to be enabled to give up for peace' sake, and to please all men for their good to edification." In this spirit of sacrifice he yielded to the general wish for the substitution of a General Conference in the place of the Council.

After traversing the southern and middle states, generally preaching every day, Bishop Asbury, for the first time, visited New England this year; and the following extracts from his Journal will show how he felt on his entrance into this land of the Puritans, and what were his first impressions on beholding the state of things here. Under date of June 4, he says, --

"I went on to Redding. Surely God will work powerfully among these people, and save thousands of them." -- "This country is very hilly and open, not unlike that about the Peak of Derbyshire. I feel faith to believe that this visit to New England will be blessed to my own soul, and to the souls of others. We are now in Connecticut, and never out of sight of a house, and sometimes we have a view of many churches and steeples, built very neatly of wood." -- "There may have been a praying ministry and people here, but I fear they are now spiritually dead, and am persuaded that family and private prayer is very little practiced. Could these people be brought to constant, fervent prayer, the Lord would come down and work wonders among them." From this place he traveled through various towns, preaching the "gospel of the kingdom" to all who would come and hear, and on the 9th came to the pleasant city of New Haven, the Athens of New England. His appointment having been published in the newspapers, many came to hear, among whom was the president of Yale College, the Rev. Dr. Stiles, and several other clergymen. He remarks, that though they heard with attention and gravity, yet, after meeting, no one asked him to his house; and though he attended the college at the hour of prayer, no one gave him an invitation to visit the interior of the college buildings. This cold reception, he says, reminded him of the words of Mr. Whitefield to Messrs. Boardman and Pillmore, on their arrival in America: --

"Ah," said he, "if ye were Calvinists, ye would take the country before ye." "Should Cokesbury or Baltimore," he adds, "ever furnish the opportunity, I, in my turn, will requite their behavior by treating them as friends, brethren, and gentlemen. The difficulty I met with in New Haven for lodging, and for a place to hold meeting, made me feel and know the worth of Methodists more

than ever." From New Haven Bishop Asbury passed on through Middletown to New London, and thence to Providence in Rhode Island where he took sweet counsel with the Rev. Mr. Snow, a pious Congregational minister, then aged about seventy years, who had been brought to the knowledge of the truth by the Rev. Mr. Tenant, "whose memory," says the bishop, "I revere." Of the people of Providence he makes the following remarks: --

"They appear to be prudent, active, frugal; cultivating a spirit of good family economy; and they are kind to strangers. They have frequently had revivals of religion. I had faith to believe the Lord would shortly visit them again, and that even we shall have something to do in this town. From Providence he went on to Boston, where he met with a very cold reception, owing to the want of boldness and energy in the few who professed to be friends. Such were the discouragements thrown in his way in this place that he says, "I have done with Boston until we can obtain a lodging, a house to preach in, and some to join us." In Lynn he met with a most cordial and welcome reception, and says, which indeed is proved to have been prophetic, "Here we shall make a firm stand, and from this central point, from Lynn, shall the light of Methodism radiate through the state." From hence he passed on through Worcester and the intervening towns to Hartford, and from thence to Albany, N. Y., where he arrived on the 20th of July. After a short review of his recent travels in New England, and observations upon the religious state of the people, he says, --

"I am led to think the eastern church will find this saying hold true in regard to the Methodists, 'I will provoke you to jealousy by a people that were no people; and by a foolish nation will I anger you.' They have trodden upon the Quakers, the Episcopalians, the Baptist -- see now if the Methodists do not work their way."

I have been thus particular in following the first tour made by Bishop Asbury into New England; that the reader may see with what indefatigable industry this man of God fulfilled the high and important office he sustained in the Methodist Church, and the influence which his labors exerted in the cause of Christ in that part of our country. His office was no sinecure, but one of increasing toil and sacrifice, and in the exercise of it he gave the most devoted attention to the best interests of mankind; nor were his impressions respecting the state of things in New England, and his anticipations of the success of Methodism among that people, either erroneous or chimerical; for they have since been verified by the course of events. From this land, where Christianity was interwoven with the civil institutions, have shot forth those branches which have since extended even to the far west, and are now flourishing in all the freshness of perennial growth in those new states and territories. This year was distinguished by the death of that eminent man of God and founder of Methodism, the Rev. John Wesley. Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury were in Virginia when this melancholy news reached them; and the following are the reflections which the latter makes on hearing this mournful event: --

"The solemn news reached our ears that the public papers had announced the death of that dear man of God, John Wesley. He died in his own house in London, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, after preaching the gospel sixty-four years. When we consider his plain and nervous writings; his uncommon talent for sermonizing and journalizing; that he had such a steady flow of animal spirits; so much of the spirit of government in him; knowledge as an observer; his attainments as a scholar; his experience as a Christian; I conclude his equal is not to be found among all the sons he hath brought up; nor his superior among all the sons of Adam he may have left behind. Brother

Coke was sunk in spirit, and wished to hasten home immediately. For my part, notwithstanding my long absence from Mr. Wesley, and a few unpleasant expressions in some of the letters the dear old man has written to me, occasioned by the misrepresentations of others, I feel the stroke most sensibly; and I expect I shall never read his Works without reflecting on the loss which the church of God and the world have sustained by his death." The death of Mr. Wesley, though from his great age it must have been generally expected by his friends, was an event mournfully felt throughout the Christian church, and more especially through all the ranks of Methodism. His character is now so well known that it is scarcely necessary to add any thing here to what has already been said in the published accounts of this great and good man. As long as pure Christianity shall remain, So long will the name of Wesley be held in grateful remembrance. For among all those who have been raised up in modern days to revive and diffuse abroad the pure principles of the gospel, no one shone so conspicuously, nor exerted such a holy and extensive influence, as did John Wesley. His writings will speak for him, and proclaim him the sound divine, the ripe and finished scholar, the deep and sincere Christian, and a man of the most enlarged philanthropy, so long as pure Christianity shall be held in esteem, while the scribblings of his defamers shall be held in execration by all pious and well-informed ChristiAnswers And the society he was instrumental in raising up and establishing in Great Britain, as well as the Church which was organized under his direction in America, shall remain as monuments of his wisdom in devising and executing plans for the diffusion of gospel truth and holiness, and for the permanent establishment of such associations as be instrumental in transmitting these blessings from generation to generation. That the Church, in both hemispheres, should mourn the loss of such a man is nothing more than what could have been expected, while the fact that he had been instrumental in raising up men, as his sons in the gospel, competent to carry out, and to continue in operation, the plans he had devised for the salvation of the world, evinces the wisdom and energy with which he had applied himself to his work. While, therefore, his weeping friends stood around his bed, and heard his last dying words, "The best of all is, God is with us," they gathered fresh courage to trust in the God of his life for a continuance of his blessing upon his mourning Church. In consequence of this afflictive intelligence, Dr. Coke hastened to prepare for his departure from the continent, that he might mingle his sorrows with his brethren in Europe over the loss they had sustained in the death of Mr. Wesley. On his way he stopped at Baltimore, and on Sabbath preached a sermon on the occasion of the death of Mr. Wesley, in which he mentioned some things which gave offense to his American brethren. His profound sorrow at the loss of Mr. Wesley, though an event which, in the ordinary course of nature, must have been anticipated as near at hand, and the keen sensibilities of his heart to every thing which had the remotest tendency to tarnish the glory of that great man, led him to say, in the above sermon, that the act of leaving Mr. Wesley’s name from the minutes probably hastened his death. This circumstance would be hardly worthy of notice, had not some persons, more distinguished for their petulance than their candor, seized upon it for the purpose of disparaging the character of the American conference. In addition to what has already been said in reference to this matter, the following particulars may serve to vindicate the conduct of the conference, as well as to apologize for the precipitancy of Dr. Coke in making the assertion, erroneous in itself, in so public a manner -- a fault amply atoned for by the sincerity and frankness with which he afterward deported himself toward his American brethren. Were the judgments of mankind infallible in all cases, we should be saved the necessity of offering apologies for such venial instances of human infirmity. That we

may rightly understand this subject, it is necessary to review some of the doings of the conferences of 1784 and 1787. The minute of the conference of 1784, already noticed, respecting obeying Mr. Wesley during his lifetime, stood unrepealed until 1787, when it was omitted. Among other reasons for this omission, one unquestionably was, to prevent any one from accusing them, as some had already done, of being under the dictation and control of a British subject, who had written against the American revolution, and thereby of subjecting themselves to the suspicion of disloyalty to their own government; and also to remove every apprehension of having Bishop Asbury, whom they so highly respected and affectionately loved, taken from among them. This was an event the more to be deprecated, as they knew of no one who could fill his place. He had grown up with them -- had suffered and sympathized with them during a protracted and sanguinary war -- had fully identified his interests, his weal or woe, with t heirs and had, moreover, become familiar with their character and peculiar circumstances, both as American citizens and as Methodist preachers; and hence, whatever deference they might have felt for Dr. Coke -- and they certainly were not deficient in love and respect for him -- past experience convinced them that he did not understand their affairs so well as did Bishop Asbury. And that which gave origin to their fears that such a dictation as has been supposed might be exercised over their affairs, was the fact heretofore alluded to, that in 1787, Dr. Coke, at the request of Mr. Wesley, altered the time of holding the General Conference, without consulting the American preachers, and also requested Mr. Whatcoat to be elected a joint superintendent with Bishop Asbury.8 That Mr. Wesley was dissatisfied with this omission is certain, from some expressions in his letters to Bishop Asbury about that time, to which the bishop alludes in the above notice of Mr. Wesley’s death, and which probably led to the famous letter in which Bishop Asbury is censured for taking the title of bishop, concerning which so much has been said by the enemies of Methodist episcopacy.9 As to the minute to which allusion has been made, it was a voluntary act of the conference, and not a contract mutually entered into between them and Mr. Wesley, and therefore its omission in 1787 was no violation of a pledged faith between the parties. But as some of the enemies of Bishop Asbury have blamed him in this business, it seems proper to give his own version of these acts of the conference, with a view to justify himself in reference to this affair. He says, "I never approved of that binding minute," alluding to the minute of 1784, in which they promised obedience to Mr. Wesley in matters of church government: --

"I did not think it practical expediency to obey Mr. Wesley at three thousand miles’ distance, in all matters relative to church government; neither did brother Whatcoat, nor several others. At the first General Conference I was mute and modest when it passed, and I was mute when it was expunged. For this Mr. Wesley blamed me, and was displeased that I did not rather reject the whole connection, or leave them, if they did not comply. But I could not give up the connection so easily, after laboring so many years with and for them." But although Mr. Wesley suffered a momentary displeasure to arise in his mind on account of their rescinding the rule in question, and with characteristic plainness expressed his dissatisfaction to Bishop Asbury, yet when the thing was fully explained to him, together with the motives which prompted them to that act, he became satisfied with the uprightness of their conduct, and expressed, only twenty-nine days before his death, his unabated attachment to his American brethren, in the following letter to the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper: -- Near London, Feb. 1, 1791.

"My Dear Brother, -- Those who desire to write, or say any thing to me, have no time to lose; for time has shaken me by the hand, and death is not far behind. But I have reason to be thankful for the time that is past: I felt few of the infirmities of age for fourscore and six years. It was not till a year and a half ago that my strength and sight failed. And still I am enabled to scrawl a little, and to creep, though I cannot run. Probably I should not be able to do so much, did not many of you assist me by your prayers. I have given a distinct account of the work of God which has been wrought in Britain and Ireland for more than half a century. We want some of you to give us a connected relation of what our Lord has been doing in America, from the time that Richard Boardman accepted the invitation, and left his country to serve you. See that you never give place to one thought of separating from your brethren in Europe. Lose no opportunity of declaring to all men that the Methodists are one people in all the world; and that it is their full determination so to continue, Though mountains rise, and oceans roll, To sever us in vain. To the care of our common Lord, I commit you; and am your affectionate friend and brother, "John Wesley."

After reading such an epistle as this, who can doubt of the writer's affectionate regard for his American brethren, as well as his strong desire for their indissoluble union with their brethren in Europe? -- Such sentiments were highly worthy the apostolic character which Mr. Wesley sustained, as well as the position he occupied as the founder and leader of the entire denomination on both sides of the Atlantic -- standing, as he did, upon the margin of time, with eternity full in his view! May it ever be the aim of both families of the Methodists to cultivate the spirit herein recommended!

Having arranged his affairs for his departure to England, on the 14th of May, after an affectionate parting with Bishop Asbury and several of the preachers who were assembled in Philadelphia, Dr. Coke set sail for London, where he arrived in safety after a short and pleasant voyage. On his arrival in England, at this eventful crisis in the history of Methodism, he found that suspicions had been engendered in the circle of his acquaintance respecting the purity of his motives in hastening from his work in America. Though his future conduct put to silence all such suspicions, yet to a mind alive to every thing which would affect his reputation, and thereby wound the holy cause in which he was engaged, it was no small trial of his faith and patience to have the purity of his motives questioned, or his conduct unjustly censured. In the midst of these conflicts, confiding in the integrity of his own heart, and relying upon the protection of him who had been a never-failing source of consolation to him, both in adversity and prosperity, Dr. Coke silently bowed to the inscrutable ways of divine Providence, while in the meantime he was cheered by the reception of the following friendly and sympathizing letter from Bishop Asbury, which, as belonging to the history of the times, and as exemplifying the spirit and manner in which the writer employed his time, is given entire. It is as follows: --

"Rev. and Most Dear Sir, -- If yet in time, this brings greeting. Rejoice with me that the last has been a year of general blessing to the church of God in this wilderness. We humbly hope two thousand souls were born of God, one of which is well ascertained in Jersey and York. East, west, north, and south, the glory of God spreads.

"I have served the Church upward of twenty-five years in Europe and America. All the property I have gained is two old horses, the constant companions of my toil, six if not seven thousand miles every year. When we have no ferryboats, they swim the rivers. As to clothing, I am nearly the

same as at the first: neither have I silver nor gold, nor any property. My confidential friends know that I lie not in this matter. I am resolved not to claim any property in the Book Concern. Increase as it may, it will be sacred to invalid preachers, the college, and the schools. I would not have my name mentioned as doing, having, being any thing but dust.

"I soar, indeed, but it is over the tops of the highest mountains we have, which may vie with the Alps. I creep sometimes upon my hands and knees up the slippery ascent; and to serve the Church, and the ministers of it, what I gain is many a reflection from both sides of the Atlantic. I have lived long enough to be loved and hated, to be admired and feared.

"If it were not for the suspicions of some, and the pride and ignorance of others, I am of opinion I could make provision by collections, profits on books, and donations in land, to take two thousand children under the best plan or education ever known in this country. The Lord begins to smile on our Kingswood school.10 One promising young man is gone forth, another is ready, and several have been under awakenings. None so healthy and orderly as our children; and some promise great talents for learning. The obstinate and ignorant oppose, among preachers and people, while the judicious for good sense and piety, in church and state, admire and applaud. I am, with most dutiful respect, as ever, your son in the gospel, "Francis Asbury." This letter shows not only the high sense which Bishop Asbury entertained for the character of Dr. Coke, his ardent desire for his welfare, and the prosperity of the work of God in the conversion of sinners, but also the great interest he took in the cause of education, affirming that none but the "obstinate and ignorant" opposed their laudable efforts to extend its benefits to the youth of our land; and that the judicious in church and state admired and applauded the literary institution which they had established. And though Providence seemed to frown upon the praiseworthy attempts which they made in the case of education, it was never lost sight of by its friends, but, as we shall see in the course of our history, finally became an integral part of the general system of diffusing the lights of knowledge and Christianity among the inhabitants of this western world. That, however which cheered their hearts and animated them with fresh courage to pursue their way, in the midst of the signals of mourning which were hung out as tokens of sorrow for the loss of such a man as John Wesley, was the ingathering of souls into the fold of Christ, and the continual expansion of their field of gospel labor. While the strife of tongues was heard uttering reproach upon their character and conduct, conscious of the integrity of their hearts, and the purity of their motive, they rejoiced in beholding the right hand of their God stretched out to do them good, to sanction the efforts of their hearts and hands. The following will show the result of this year’s labor: --

Numbers in the Church: Whites This year, 50,385, Last year, 45,949; Increase, 4,436; Colored This year, 12,884, Last year, 11,682; Increase, 1,202; [Corrected] Total This year, 63,269,11 Last year, 57,631; Increase, 5,638; Preachers This year, 250, Last year, 227; Increase 23.

ENDNOTES

1 Mr. Lee assigns other reasons for the nonelection of Mr. Garrettson but the above is taken from Mr. G’s own account of the transaction, in which he corrects the mistake of Mr. Lee.

2 See "Defense of our Fathers," and "An Original Church of Christ."

3 See book iii, chap. ii.

4 How such an affirmation could have been made by any honest and intelligent American appears almost inconceivable, when it is so well known that General Washington was at that time, 1785, a private gentleman, living on his farm in Virginia, and was not elected president of the United States until 1789. The fact is, as stated in Mr. Morrell's letter, (which see,) that the address was written at the time it stands dated in the address itself, during the session of the New York conference in June, 1789, and at the very time the congress were assembled, and a few days after Washington had delivered his first inaugural address to the representatives of the nation. How could an address be presented to President Washington when there was no such official personage in existence! The supposition carries such self-evident absurdity on its face, that it is a wonder how malignant ingenuity itself could have ever hazarded its assertion. Its refutation therefore is rendered necessary only from the fact, that such is the state of human society that no absurdity is too glaring to gain some proselytes.

5 There is a trifling error in the date in Dr. Emory's account, as he says it was the 3d of June. The true date of the document, May 29, 1789, it will be perceived, corresponds with the date given to it by Mr. Sparks.

6 [Transcriber Endnote: See also P. Douglass Gorrie's Sketch of the Life of Jesse Lee among our data files -- Livesof.exe, Chapter 11. -- DVM]

7 Mr. Embury continued a faithful follower of Jesus Christ, and a diligent laborer in the gospel as a local preacher in the Methodist connection, until the year 1775, when he ended his days in peace in the above region of country; and his remains were buried about seven miles distant from Ashgrove, "in a spot of peculiar beauty in the gorge of two romantic hills, on a small elevation surrounded by a lovely scenery, and in view of two or three handsome cottages." In 1832, some of his surviving friends, moved by a pious respect to the memory of this humble and devoted servant of God, and with a view to deposit his bones in a burying ground in the midst of his children and friends, had them removed from their former resting place, and, with suitable religious services, in the presence of a large multitude of people who had assembled on the occasion, committed them to the earth in the Methodist burying ground in Ashgrove. Over them is placed a marble tablet, with the following inscription: --

PHILIP EMBURY, The earliest American minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Here found His last earthly resting place. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints, &c. The remainder of the epitaph need not be copied here. The widow of Mr. Embury was afterward married to a member of our Church by the name of Lawrence, who settled in Upper Canada, and they were the nucleus of a society in the place where they lived, which has continued to flourish to the present day.

8 Mr. Wesley undoubtedly alludes to this unpleasant affair in his Journal, under date of July 26, 1787. He says, "We were agreeably surprised with the arrival of Dr. Cake, who came from Philadelphia in nine and twenty days, and gave us a pleasing account of the work of God in America." -- "I desired all our preachers to meet me and consider the state of our brethren in America, who have been terribly frightened at their own shadow, as if the English preachers were just going to enslave them. I believe that fear is now over, and they are more aware of Satan's devices." Their fears, whether groundless or not, were removed by the assurance they received from Dr. Coke, that he would not again interpose his authority while at a distance from them, in

altering the time for holding their conferences; or when here, of stationing the preachers without the concurrence of Bishop Asbury.

9 For the clearing up of all these difficulties, and the vindication of Bishop Asbury, see Original Church of Christ, p. 143.

10 It is presumed that this alludes to the Cokesbury College, as it is not known to the writer that any other seminary or learning, under the patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was then in existence.

11 There is an error in the printed minutes for this year of 12,884 in the aggregate number of the whites, which is there stated to be 63,269. This error originated from adding the number of the colored to the whites, and at the same time retaining the number of the colored in a separate column.

01.03.03. Vol 1, Book 3, Chapter 03

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume I -- Book III FROM THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH IN 1784, TO THE FIRST REGULAR GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1792.

CHAPTER 3 An Account of the several Annual Conferences, and of the General Conference of 1792.

There were no less than eighteen annual conferences held this year, the particulars of which, however, it seem unnecessary to notice, except that the following new circuits were added: Scoperlong and Trent, in North Carolina; Highco, in the south; Oconee and Elbert, in Georgia; Staten Island and Tioga, in New York; Needham in Massachusetts; Providence, in Rhode Island; Cataraqua and Oswegotchie, in Upper Canada. The above-mentioned eighteen conferences were attended by Bishop Asbury in about eight months, during which time he traveled through most of the states in the Union, preaching, as usual, almost every day, and suffering many hardships: but in the midst of all, he rejoiced in beholding the extension of the work of God in many places. This year he passed into the state of Tennessee, and preached to the people in that newly settled country. And as this is the first account we have of the introduction of Methodism into that country, it seems proper to give some account of its early settlement. The earliest settlements made in Tennessee were about 1770, by emigrants from North Carolina and Virginia; and the country was considered a part of the former state until the year 1790, when it was erected by congress into the "Territory south of Ohio;" and in 1795, Tennessee was admitted into the Union as one of the federal states. As to the general state of religion and morals at the time the Methodist preachers first visited Tennessee, our information is very imperfect. It is to be presumed, however, that, as in most new countries, the means of grace were within the reach of but few, and that those hardy adventurers who first peopled the wilderness of this new territory were chiefly actuated by a desire to enlarge their earthly possessions, and not, like the pilgrims who first settled New England, to insure religious privileges, as these were fully enjoyed at home. Some idea, however, may be had, of the general state of society from the fact, that the tour of Bishop Asbury through the wilderness was in company with a guard, and amid "confused accounts of Indians," who, they feared, would intercept their path; and the following extract from his Journal, giving an account of his entrance from Tennessee into the state of Kentucky, will show some of the hardships which he and others had to undergo while carrying the "glad tidings of salvation" into this wilderness, and likewise exhibit some of the honors conferred upon this "strutting bishop," as some of his heartless revilers have called him. He says, --

"Wednesday 5. This morning we again swam the river," (namely, Laurel River,) "and the west fork thereof. My little horse was ready to fail. I was steeped with water up to the waist. About 7 o’clock, with hard pushing, we reached the Crab Orchard. How much I have suffered in this journey is only known to God and myself. What added much to its disagreeableness was the extreme filthiness of the houses."

Again he says, under date of May 1, --

"An alarm was spreading of a depredation committed by the Indians on the east and west frontiers of the settlements; in the former, report says, one man was killed; in the latter, many men, women, and children; every thing is in motion. There having been so many about me at conference, my rest was much broken I hoped to repair it, and get refreshed before I set out to return through the wilderness, but the continual arrival of people until midnight, the barking of dogs, and other annoyances prevented. Next night we reached Crab Orchard, where thirty or forty people were compelled to crowd into one mean house. We could get no more rest here than we did in the wilderness. We came the old way by Scagg's Creek and Rock Castle, supposing it to be safer, as it is a road less frequented, and therefore less liable to be waylaid by the savages. My body by this time was well tried. I had a violent fever and pain in my head; and I stretched myself on the cold ground, and borrowing clothes to keep me warm, by the mercy of God, I slept for five hours. Next morning we set off early, and passed beyond Richland Creek. Here we were in danger, if anywhere. I could have slept, but was afraid. Seeing the drowsiness of the company, I walked the encampment, and watched the sentries the whole night. Early next morning we made our way to Robinson's Station. We had the best company I ever met with -- thirty-six good travelers and a few warriors; but we had a packhorse, some old men, and two tired horses." He adds: -- "Through infinite mercy we came safe:" and then he exclaims, "Rest, poor house of clay from such exertions! Return, O my soul, to thy rest!"

Let the present race of Methodist preachers and missionaries look at this picture, and learn from it how the fields were won by such veteran soldiers of the cross.

Having performed this journey through these newly settled countries, he returned to the older states, and attended the several conferences, as before stated, preparatory to the General Conference, which met in the city of Baltimore. At these conferences, two preachers, namely, Beverly Allen1 and Andrew Harpending were expelled from the Church for immoral conduct. Thomas Weatherford, Peter Massie, and George Browning had died in peace. Fourteen were located The work of God was generally prosperous, though the increase was not so large as in some former years, as may be seen by the following statement: --

Numbers in the Church: Whites This year, 52,109, Last year, 50,385; Increase 1,724; Colored This year, 13,871, Last year, 12,884; Increase, 987; Total This year, 65,980, Last year, 63,269; Increase, 2,711; Preachers This year, 266, Last year, 250; Increase, 16.

General Conference of 1792 As has been seen in the preceding pages, the general affairs of the Church had been conducted heretofore chiefly in the several annual conferences, which were considered only as so many parts of the whole body; for nothing was allowed binding upon all unless it were approved of by each and every of these separate conferences. It is true, that the Christmas conference of 1784, at which the Church was organized, was considered a general conference, because all the preachers were invited to attend, for the transaction of the important business then and there to be submitted to them; and therefore the acts and doings of that conference were considered to be binding upon the whole Church. As the work continually increased and spread over such a large and extended territory, it was found impracticable for all the preachers to assemble annually in one place, without too great a consumption of time and expense; and hence the practice which had been adopted of appointing several conferences in the

same year in different parts of the country, for the convenience of both the bishop and the preachers; but as one of these conferences could not make laws for all the rest, nor yet all the rest for that one without its consent; and as it was not likely that so many independent bodies could be brought to harmonize in all things pertaining to the welfare of the Church; there was danger from this state of things of a dissolution of the body, and the establishment of a number of separate and distinct communities, acting independently of each other. To prevent evils of this character, and to create a center of union to the entire body, the council had been instituted; but this unpopular measure, not answering the end of its organization, was by general consent dissolved, and a General Conference called in its place. This was, it seems, agreed upon by the several annual conferences which had been held this year. This conference assembled in the city of Baltimore on the first day of November, 1792, and was composed of all the traveling preachers who had been received into full connection. As this was considered the first regular General Conference, and as those who composed it came together under an expectation that very important matters would be transacted, it seems proper to give a particular account of their acts and doings. Dr. Coke had returned from Europe, and presided, conjointly with Bishop Asbury, over their deliberations. As there were no restrictions upon the powers of this conference, the entire Discipline of the Church came up for review and revision; but to prevent, as far as possible, any improper innovation upon existing rules, or the premature adoption of new regulations, they agreed that "it shall take two-thirds of all the members of the conference to make any new rule, or abolish an old one; but a majority may alter or amend any rule."

They soon had an opportunity to try the strength of this rule in preserving them from an innovation upon established usage, in respect to the power of stationing the preachers. With a view to keep up the itinerancy through the medium of an efficient general superintendency it had been established at the Christmas conference, and incorporated as a rule of Discipline, that the power of appointing the preachers to their several stations should be invested in the bishops. With this some had become dissatisfied; and at this conference the Rev. James O’Kelly, a very popular preacher in the state of Virginia, who had acted as a presiding elder in that district for several years, brought forward the following resolution: --

"After the bishop appoints the preachers at the conference to their several circuits, if any one think himself injured by the appointment, he shall have liberty to appeal to the conference and state his objections; and if the conference approve his objections, the bishop shall appoint him to another circuit." This resolution elicited a very strong debate, which lasted for about three days, and was finally lost by a large majority. This gave great dissatisfaction to the mover and some of his particular friends, and the next morning he sent a letter to the conference, informing them that he could no longer hold his seat among them, because his appeal was rejected. With a view to remove his objections, and reconcile him to the present order of things, a committee was appointed by the conference to confer with Mr. O’Kelly and his partisans; but their labors were ineffectual, and they withdrew from the Church, and soon began to adopt measures for establishing a separate party.

During the discussion which arose on the above resolution, as it necessarily brought up questions in which the character and conduct of Bishop Asbury were deeply involved, with a view to leave the members of the conference at full liberty to speak their sentiments without restraint, the bishop withdrew from the conference room, and sent them the following note: --

"My Dear Brethren, -- Let my absence give you no pain: Dr. Coke presides. I am happily excused from assisting to make laws by which myself am to be governed: I have only to obey and execute. I am happy in the consideration that I never stationed a preacher through enmity or as a punishment. I have acted for the glory of God, and the good of the people, and to promote the usefulness of the preachers. Are you sure that if you please your selves, that the people will be as fully satisfied? They often say, 'Let us have such a preacher,' and sometimes, 'We will not have such a preacher -- we will sooner pay him to stay at home.' Perhaps I must say, 'His appeal forced him upon you.' I am one -- ye are many. I am as willing to serve you as ever. I want not to sit in any man's way. I scorn to solicit votes. I am a very trembling, poor creature, to hear praise or dispraise. Speak your minds freely; but remember, you are only making laws for the present time. It may be, that as in some other things, so in this: a future day may give you further light. I am yours, &c., "Francis Asbury."2 As the secession of Mr. O'Kelly from the Methodist Episcopal Church was the first of any considerable magnitude which had happened, I shall, after having completed the account of the doings of the conference, endeavor to place it fully before the reader, together with its effects upon the Church, as well as upon himself and his party. As before said, this conference entered into a full review of the doctrine and Discipline of the Church, altering some old, and introducing several new regulations, some of the most important of which I shall notice. The following was made respecting the selection, consecration, and trial of a bishop: -- "Question How is a bishop to be constituted in future?

"Answers By the election of the General Conference, and the laying on of the hands of three bishops, or at least of one bishop and two elders.

"Question If by death, expulsion, or otherwise, there be no bishop remaining in our Church, what shall we do?

"Answers The General Conference shall elect a bishop, the elders, or any three of them, that shall be appointed by the General Conference for that purpose, shall ordain him according to our office of ordination.

"Question To whom is the bishop amenable for his conduct?

"Answers To the General Conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary.

"Question What provision shall be made for the trial of an immoral bishop, in the intervals of the General Conference?

"Answers If the bishop be guilty of immorality, three traveling elders shall call upon him, and examine him on the subject; and if the three elders verily believe that the bishop is guilty of the crime, they shall call to their aid two presiding elders from two districts in the neighborhood of that where the crime was committed, each of which presiding elder shall bring with him two elders, or an elder and a deacon. The above-mentioned nine persons shall form a conference to examine into the charges brought against the bishop; and if two-thirds of them verily believe him to be guilty of the crime laid to his charge, they shall have authority to suspend the bishop until the ensuing General Conference."

Though a number of circuits had been given in charge to an elder, from the time of the organization in 1784, yet this had been done chiefly by the authority of the general superintendency, without any express enactment of the General Conference -- it was a usage which grew out of the exigencies of the case, the circumstances of the country, and the paucity of ordained ministers. As some had objected to this usage, and expressed doubts respecting the authority of the bishop to make such appointments, the present conference authorized the appointment of presiding elders by the bishop, who should change them at pleasure, provided, nevertheless, that he should "not allow an elder to preside in the same district more than four years successively;" and he was to receive his support out of any surplus money which might be found on a circuit, or if there were no surplus, he was to take his proportion with the several preachers on his district. For the particular duties of a presiding elder, see chap. i, sec. 5, of the Discipline.

Though temporary provision had been made for the wives of traveling preachers, yet until this conference no express rule existed giving them a claim upon the funds of the Church. A rule was now passed allowing the wife an equal claim with her husband, namely, "sixty-four dollars annually," the nominal amount which had been allowed to a traveling preacher, besides his traveling expenses.

It seems that heretofore the preachers had not been in the habit, nor was it considered lawful, to receive any thing for performing the marriage ceremony; but this prohibition was removed out of the way at this conference, by allowing them to receive whatever might be offered them by those whom they joined in matrimony. The former usage respecting marriage fees, as well as the following question and answer, which were adopted at this conference; shows how exceedingly scrupulous were our fathers in the church on the subject of compensation for preaching the gospel; and if they deserve censure for any thing, we might feel disposed to administer a gentle rebuke for carrying self-sacrifice to such unreasonable, and, as is thought, unscriptural lengths; for it seems to have led the people to believe that their ministers should hardly "live by the gospel," or "those which wait at the altar should" not be "partakers with the altar."

"Question What plan shall we pursue in appropriating the money received by our traveling ministers for marriage fees?

"Answers In all the circuits where the preachers do not receive their full quarterage, let all such money be given into the hands of the stewards, and be equally divided between the traveling preachers of the circuit. In all other cases the money shall be disposed of at the discretion of the district conferences." And at the close of the section the following paragraph was added, which, however, has long since ceased to be a rule: --

"No minister or preacher shall receive any money for deficiencies, or on any other account, out of any of our funds or collections, without first giving an exact account of all the money, clothes, and other presents of every kind, which he has received the preceding year."

Though this rule was made with the very laudable desire to reduce all to as equal a level as possible, and thereby to prevent jealousies which might arise from one being more highly honored than another in pecuniary matters, it was soon found to have an unfavorable bearing in many respects; and as before said, was finally, and with good reason, erased from the Discipline. With a

view to prevent impositions, from unworthy persons obtruding themselves into societies where they were not known, the following advice was given to all who had the charge of circuits: --

"To warn all, from time to time, that none are to remove from one circuit to another, without a recommendation from a preacher of the circuit in these words: -- A. B., the bearer, has been an acceptable member in C., and to inform them that without such a certificate they will not be received into other societies." This is a standing rule in the Discipline. The rule respecting the method of settling disputes which might arise between brethren "concerning the payment of debts," was adopted at this time and afterward modified from time to time, until at the first delegated conference, which sat in the city of New York, in 1812, it was made as it now stands in the Discipline, chap. i, sec. 9. There can be no doubt but that this regulation has had a most happy effect in preventing expensive lawsuits and all those litigations in reference to matters which engender strife and alienate affection. The section regulating the "method by which immoral traveling ministers or preachers shall be brought to trial, found guilty, and reproved or suspended, in the intervals of the conferences," was considerably modified at this conference; but it had been altered and amended from one General Conference to another, until 1836, when it was so amended as to read as it now stands in the Discipline, chap. i, sec. 18. The resolution not to "receive a present for administering baptism, or for burying the dead," was passed at this conference; and it remained unaltered until 1828, when the words "receive a present" were exchanged for "make a charge." See chap. i, sec. 21. The twenty-second section of the same chapter, relating to the manner of conducting public worship, was incorporated in the Discipline, and the twenty-fourth section of the same chapter so modified as to discourage the use of fugue tunes, and the attending of singing schools not under our direction. As provision had been made for supernumerary preachers, the conference appended the following explanatory note respecting the character of such: --

"A supernumerary preacher is one so worn out in the itinerant service as to be rendered incapable of preaching constantly; but at the same time is willing to do any work in the ministry which the conference may direct, and his strength will enable him to perform."

Before the conference adjourned, they passed a resolution to have another General Conference at the end of four years, to be convened in the city of Baltimore, November 1, 1796, and that it should be composed of all the traveling preachers who should be in full connection at the time it was to be held.

It was very manifest from what had taken place at this conference, and especially from the temper and conduct of Mr. O'Kelly and his partisans, that a spirit of insubordination was abroad, and that a division of the body would be likely to result from an improper indulgence in speaking against the constituted authorities of the Church. To prevent, as far as practicable, the evils naturally resulting from the course of conduct to be apprehended from those dissentient brethren, and such as they might influence to a spirit of opposition, the conference very opportunely passed the following rule: --

If a member of our Church shall be clearly convicted of endeavoring to sow dissensions in any of our societies, by inveighing against either our doctrine or discipline, such person so offending shall be first reproved by the senior preacher of his circuit; and if he afterward persist in such pernicious practices, he shall be expelled the society." This leads us to notice now more particularly the

secession of Mr. O'Kelly, and the effects it produced upon the cause of religion generally in that part of the country where he more especially operated, and finally upon himself and his adherents. It has already been remarked that Mr. O'Kelly was a very popular preacher, of considerable age and standing in the Church, had acquired great influence in Virginia, and particularly over the minds of the younger preachers in his district. The reasons which induced him to withdraw from the Church have been before stated. Mr. Lee says, that while he stood and looked at the old man as he took his departure from Baltimore, he felt persuaded that he would not long be idle, but would endeavor to put himself at the head of a party, which, indeed, soon came to pass. Mr. Lee moreover says, that a preacher informed him that O'Kelly denied the doctrine of the Trinity, as held by us; and that it was his intention to have had O'Kelly tried at the conference for preaching false doctrine; and therefore he believed that one cause of his leaving the connection was a fear of being censured for his anti-Methodistical views in respect to this doctrine. However this may be, he soon raised a cry against the Church he had left, and poured forth his anathemas more particularly upon the head of Bishop Asbury, whose power in stationing the preachers he had so violently opposed. To these complaints Bishop Asbury replies, in his sententious style as follows: --

"I bid such adieu, and appeal to the bar of God. I have no time to contend, having better work to do. If we lose some children, God will give us more. Ah! this is the mercy, the justice of some, who, under God, owe their all to me and my tyrants, so called. The Lord judge between them and me."

After Mr. O'Kelly set up for himself, he published a pamphlet, the contents of which it is not necessary at this day to recite, which was answered by the Rev. Mr. Snethen, in which the bishop is fully vindicated from all the aspersions of his enemies.

Though all the traveling preachers, except one, who withdrew with O'Kelly, returned to the Church, yet there were several local preachers, and a considerable number of private members, who became warmly attached to him, and they made several efforts to organize themselves into a church more in conformity to their notions of republican principles, until finally they renounced all creeds and confessions, and professed to take the New Testament alone for the role of their government, claiming the right, of course, to interpret it according to their own views of order and propriety; and as party politics ran high in Virginia at that time, they took the popular name of "Republican Methodists," with James O'Kelly as their head man. In the latter part of the year 1793 they began to form societies on a plan which should exclude all superiority of one preacher over another, and at the same time promised to the people greater liberties than they could enjoy among their old brethren. This popular theme took with many, by which means hundreds of the people were induced to forsake the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to join the standard of revolt, so that in some places whole societies were broken up, and others divided and thrown into confusion, taking with them some houses of worship, while others were voluntarily left by our preachers, to avoid a thriftless contention. As Mr. O'Kelly lived in the southern part of Virginia, the spirit of disaffection spread among some of the societies in North Carolina, infecting a number of local preachers, as well as several societies. What rendered this separation more destructive in its effects upon the interests of pure religion, was the bitterness of spirit with which it was conducted, especially in its hostility to bishops, and, as they called them, their servile creatures, the presiding elders -- though the leader of the party had himself been a presiding elder for several years. Such are the inconsistencies of fanaticism, when impelled on by personal animosity. This spirit, under the guidance of such minds, could not do otherwise than produce disastrous results to the

interests of true religion. Instead of contending against sin and its pernicious effects, the party seemed to exhaust all their powers against episcopacy, and those debatable points of church government and economy which have always elicited less or more of controversy, and which these disputants were least of all likely to set at rest. And this controversy had such an effect upon the minds of many who were not under the influence of a religious principle that they became deeply prejudiced against all religion; and thus the secession was doubtless a means of hardening them in their iniquity.

Finding at length that the title already assumed was not likely to answer the purpose intended, Mr. O'Kelly published a pamphlet in 1801, in which he called his party "The Christian Church." This device, however, did not dissolve the charm by which those deluded men were induced to follow their leader, until a happy thought led them to conclude that by assuming such a title they proscribed all others from the Christian character; and thus becoming startled at their own exclusiveness, they began to contend among themselves, and then to divide and subdivide; until in a few years scarcely a vestige of them was to be found in all Virginia. So ended this secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, which began in the obstinate attachment of a vain man to his favorite theory, and ended in the entire overthrow of his power and popularity, and carried along with it, as is greatly to be feared, many to destruction. But what were its effects upon the prime leader of the revolt? Though he succeeded for a time to draw off disciples after him, and to excite a deep-rooted prejudice against the General Conference and Bishop Asbury, he gradually declined in power and influence, lost the confidence and affection of the people generally, and finally died in comparative obscurity, leaving behind him a sad picture of human infirmity, and a melancholy evidence of the pernicious effects of cleaving so obstinately to a theory which, right or wrong, is condemned as inexpedient by a majority of the good men with whom he may be associated. As, however, Bishop Asbury bore such a conspicuous part in this controversy, and was made the butt of so many abusive epithets, it is pleasant to witness the Christian disposition he manifested toward his fallen antagonist near the close of Mr. O'Kelly's life. Under date of Friday, August 20, 1802, he says, --

"Mr. O'Kelly having been taken ill in town," (that is, the town of Winchester, Va.,) "I sent two of our brethren, Reed and Wells, to see him, by whom I signified to him that if he wished to see me, I would wait on him: he desired a visit, which I made him on Monday, August 23. We met in peace, asked of each other's welfare, talked of persons and things indifferently, prayed, and parted in peace. Not a word was said of the troubles of former times. Perhaps this is the last interview we shall have upon earth."

It is to be hoped, therefore, from the manner in which this interview was sought and obtained, conducted and ended, that ere death separated them, old differences and animosities were forgotten, and that the God of mercy extended that mercy to Mr. O'Kelley which they, as is presumed, extended to each other, and that he now rests where his "iniquities are forgotten and his sins covered."

It may be proper to remark, however, that it was a long time before the societies in Virginia fully recovered from the deleterious effects of this secession. The spirits of many were exasperated against each other, brotherly love was greatly diminished, and as a consequence necessarily resulting from this state of things, the influence of the Church upon the public mind was much

weakened and circumscribed, and the preaching of the gospel under these circumstances was not attended with its wonted effects. By a steady perseverance, however, these sad results of a pertinacious adherence to a favorite theory gradually subsided; and the cause of God, as proposed and advocated by the Methodist ministry, has since greatly prospered in that part of the country. A few remarks will close the present volume.

Methodism had now existed in this country about thirty-six years, and numbered in its communion, including preachers and people, white and colored, sixty-six thousand, two hundred and forty-six souls. The entire population of the United Stales at that time was about four millions; if we allow three minors and others, who attended upon public worship among them, to each communicant, the population of the Methodist Episcopal Church would amount to about one hundred and ninety-eight thousand. According to the this estimation, about one-twentieth part of the entire population were brought under Methodist influence in the short space of thirty-six years. This, it should he remembered, had been effected from nothing, that is, we had no church members with whom to begin, except the few solitary emigrants from Ireland, as noted in the second chapter of this work. In this respect our circumstances were different from all the principal denominations in the country. From the very beginning of the settlements, the members of the English Church, the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Dutch Reformed, Lutherans, and the Baptists were here established, some of them in some of the colonies by law, and in others in conformity to the ecclesiastical organizations in the respective countries whence they came. They were, therefore, all here before us, peaceably enjoying all their immunities, civil and religious. Whereas when the Methodists arrived they had to begin every thing anew, and to contend with all sorts of opposition, and to work their way unaided by any human power, except so far as they were favored by those, from time to time, who were convinced of the truth of their doctrine, and the Scriptural character of their economy. From these facts it is easy to perceive the vast advantages, so far as mere human agency is concerned, those denominations possessed over the Methodists. Those biases arising from religious habits, from education, and from legal protection, were all in their favor. The seminaries of learning, high and low, were under their control, and all the civil offices were filled by men belonging either to some one of these denominations, or from among those who had their religion yet to choose, or by such as were biased by infidel principles. And, moreover, for a period of eighteen years, which includes just one half the time we had had an existence here, the Methodists were but a society, and consequently were dependent upon other denominations for the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper. Yet, under all these disadvantages, they prospered abundantly, increased in number and strength, and had spread themselves over the length and breadth of the land.

Now the question which forces itself upon us is, To what were they indebted for this unexampled prosperity? It cannot be attributed to the influence they possessed over the public mind -- for, in fact, they had none, only so far as it was gained in the midst of obloquy and opposition, as their doctrine, character, and labors became gradually known to the people.

Neither can it be attributed to their learning or profound knowledge. Though their founders were both able and learned, yet the first missionaries who came to this country, though men of sound understanding and well read in the sacred Scriptures, were by no means learned, according to the common acceptation of that word; and as to those who were, from time to time, raised up here, some of them hardly understood their mother tongue correctly, and but few could boast of any

thing more than a common English education. While they were men of strong common sense and sound judgment, and some of them possessed a great flow of natural eloquence, yet, having been taken chiefly from the common walks of life, they enjoyed none of those qualifications which arise from a classical and scientific course of study. They were, however, "mighty in the Scriptures," "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," and "needed not that any one should teach them which be the first principles of Christ," for they could call "him Christ by the Holy Spirit," having received the "witness in themselves that they were born of God."

These facts force us to the conclusion that their prosperity must be attributed to the blessing of God upon their labors. They, in fact, encountered a host of opposers. The entire religious community, as well as the vicious rabble and the infidel part of the community, were arrayed against them. The prejudices of education, of sectarianism, of the depravity of unregenerate sinners, and the rivalry of denominational jealousy, were in hostility to the progress of Methodism. Yet, in spite of all this mighty phalanx of opposing forces, it won its way among the people, converting thousands to its standard. We therefore say again, that its forward course can be accounted for only by supposing the sanction of the most high God upon their labors. But will God give his sanction to bad men? Surely he will not. Those men, therefore, who were engaged in this cause were eminently holy and good. They professed to have an experience of divine things upon the heart, and to be moved by the Holy Ghost to this work. They spoke therefore of the things which they had felt and seen, and God bore testimony to their word. Instead of amusing the people with mere speculative truths, they addressed themselves directly to the heart, aiming, above all other things, to effect a radical reformation there, knowing full well that a reformation of life would necessarily follow. It was this mode of preaching which gave such success to their efforts, and inspired the confidence of those who had an experimental knowledge of divine things.

It has been said that God gave his sanction to their labors. We do not wish to be misunderstood upon this subject. We do not infer the blessing of God upon the labors of a ministry merely because proselytes are made. Mohammed made proselytes to his false religion by the power of the sword faster than Jesus Christ did by the power of his miracles and the purity of his doctrine. And any impostor, or mere formal minister, by the fascinating charms of his eloquence, or the cunning artifices to which he will resort, may succeed in proselytizing others to his party without at all benefiting their souls, or reforming their lives. The mere multiplication of converts to a system is no proof of itself that it has the sanction of the God of truth and love.

We have not, therefore, enumerated the communicants of the Methodist Episcopal Church as an evidence, of itself, that its ministry were moving in obedience to God’s will, and in the order of his providence. Though they had been as "numerous as the sands upon the seashore," had they been destitute of righteousness, they would be no proof that the instruments of their conversion were sent of God. But what we insist upon is, that these men preached the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ, and that those who were converted by their instrumentality were really "brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God" -- that such a reformation of heart and life was effected as resulted in a uniform obedience to the commands of God; and that those who were brought under the doctrine and disciplinary regulations of this Church, brought forth the "fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" -- thus giving evidence that they were indeed "born of the Spirit," and enjoyed His witness of their adoption into the family of God.

We speak of them as a body. Though it is not probable that there were many hypocrites who came among them -- there being no temptation to such to identify themselves with them -- yet there were doubtless some such, and others who imposed upon themselves and others; and some who apostatized from the faith -- these could not do otherwise than reproach the cause they had espoused. But whenever such were discovered, if they could not he reclaimed from their wanderings, the strict discipline which was enforced cut them off from the communion of the faithful; and thus was the Church freed from the responsibility of their conduct, and kept pure from their corrupting example. By this faithful preaching of the word, and enforcement of discipline, the main body was kept in a healthy state, and presented a living example of the purity and excellence of their religion. This was a resistless argument in their favor.

Another thing which made them more extensively useful was, their itinerating mode of preaching the gospel. Had these ministers confined their labors to insulated congregations, as most of the ministers of other denominations did, they never could have realized that diffusive spread of evangelical religion which actually accompanied their efforts. Had John Wesley, instead of going forth into the "highways and hedges" to call sinners to repentance, settled himself over a parish, Methodism had been either "hid in a corner," or never have had an existence. It was his itinerating so largely, and preaching wherever he could find access to the people, which gave such efficiency to his efforts, and such a wide spread to the gospel by his instrumentality. But in this country especially, many parts of which were newly settled, and therefore but sparsely populated, had not those preachers carried the gospel to the people by traversing the country, they had remained destitute of the means of salvation. We may, therefore, attribute the success which attended their labors to the blessing of God on an itinerant ministry -- on a ministry which went everywhere preaching, "not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power." This it was which enabled them to "reach even beyond themselves," in preaching the gospel of Christ, and of gathering thousands of souls into his fold.

These men devoted themselves entirely and exclusively to this work, remembering, as their Discipline admonished them, that it was "not their business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society, but to save as many souls as possible; to bring as many sinners as they can to repentance, and with all their power to build them up in holiness, "without which they cannot see the Lord." It was this diligence in their calling, of being in soul and body devoted to it, which enabled them to accomplish so much in so short a time, and that, too, in the midst of reproach and opposition.

It was, indeed, this very devotion, this diligence, these zealous efforts in the cause of their divine Master, which provoked much of the opposition which they had to encounter. The lukewarm clergy were aroused to indignation at seeing themselves rivaled by those whom they affected to despise on account of their erratic habits and inferiority in point of literature and science. And as these zealous itinerants made their pointed appeals to the consciences of sinners, denounced the just judgments of God upon hardened offenders, their ire was often kindled against those who thus "reproved them in the gate." Wherever these flaming messengers of Jesus Christ came, they disturbed the false peace of the lukewarm, awakened the conscience of the sleeping sinner, and gave him no rest until he surrendered his heart to Christ. They not only "preached in the great congregation" "in the city full," but "into whatever house they entered," they addressed themselves personally to its inmates, urging them to be "reconciled to God;" and they accompanied all their

efforts by earnest prayer, both public and private, that God would sanction their labors by sending upon them the energies of the Holy Spirit. The doctrines, too, which they principally insisted upon, had a direct tendency to produce the desired effect upon the heart and life. While they held, in common with other orthodox Christians, to the hereditary depravity of the human heart, the deity and atonement of Jesus Christ, the necessity of repentance and faith; that which they pressed upon their hearers with the greatest earnestness was, the necessity of the new birth, and the privilege of their having a knowledge, by the internal witness of the Holy Spirit, of the forgiveness of sins, through, faith in the blood of Christ; and as a necessary consequence of this, and as naturally flowing from it, provided they persevered, holiness of heart and life. On this topic they dwelt with an emphasis and an earnestness peculiar to themselves. The doctrine itself, though held by most orthodox churches, as is manifest from their articles of faith and formularies of religion, was allowed to sleep in their books, or was not brought before the people with that prominence which its importance demands, and with that particularity and definiteness which its vitality in the Christian system renders essential to the success of the gospel ministry. But on this vital point the Methodist ministers bent their whole force. If they pressed upon the sinner a sense of his depravity and actual guilt, it was to make him feel the necessity of repentance and forgiveness. If they presented to him the death of Christ, as the meritorious cause of the sinner’s salvation, it was to encourage him to look to that source for pardon in his blood. If the Holy Spirit was spoken of as the helper of our infirmities, and as a leader into all truth, it was that he might be claimed by the penitent sinner as the sealer of his pardon, and as a witnesser of his "acceptance in the Beloved." Thus all the doctrines of the gospel were brought to have a bearing on this point, that all who were induced to "seek after God" might have no rest until they found "redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." By preaching this doctrine everywhere, to all classes of people, making it prominent in every sermon, and exhibiting it as the common privilege of all penitent sinners to experience, they were blessed of God in their labors, and rejoiced over returning prodigals to their Father’s house. From all these facts -- and that they are facts is attested by every person who is at all acquainted with our history -- we conclude that this work was eminently the work of God. Who will say it was not? Whoever does this must also say, that men by mere human effort, unassisted by the Holy Spirit, may turn more sinners from the error of their ways, and bring them into all holy living, than all the clergy in the country beside! Or else they must deny that sinners were thus converted from the error of their ways. But to deny this, would be to fly in the face of the plainest facts on record -- facts attested by thousands of witnesses. And to assert the former, that such a reformation may be effected by human persuasion alone, is to deny the necessity of the gospel to reform sinners from their sinfulness -- it is, in fact, saying that the gospel is a "cunningly devised fable," totally unnecessary for the salvation of a lost world. For if sinners may be reformed by means of "enticing words of man’s wisdom," then may we dispense with the gospel, with the blood of Christ, and the energies of the Holy Spirit. But as all orthodox Christians acknowledge the indispensable necessity of these to renovate the sinner’s heart, and to make him holy all manner of conversation, it follows most conclusively, that the reformation which accompanied the labors of the Methodist ministry was the work of God.

Hence we have a right to infer that, to insure a continuance of his sanction upon our future efforts, all we have to do is to "walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing." Thus living and working, the same benevolent Being who guided, protected, and so abundantly blessed the labors of our fathers in the gospel, will not fail to pour upon us and our children the blessings of his salvation.

ENDNOTES

1 The end of this unhappy man reads a fearful lesson to all those who presume to trifle with sacred things. In the notice we have taken of the rise and progress of Methodism in Charleston, South Carolina, we have seen that Mr. Allen brought a great reproach upon the Church in that place by his apostasy. What the particular sin was by which he thus wounded the cause of God, I am not informed; but from a notice of him in Bishop Asbury’s Journal, vol. ii, page 184, it appears that in the bishop’s estimation he had been "going from bad to worse for seven or eight years," speaking hard things against the bishop among the people, and writing to Mr. Wesley and Dr. Coke, and thereby stirring up prejudice in their minds, as is presumed, against Bishop Asbury. On this account, says the bishop, "I have had my opinion of him these nine years, and gave Dr. Coke my thoughts of him before his ordination."

It seems he was at length arrested and committed to jail for shooting the Marshall of the district, Major Forsyth, through the head while the Marshall was attempting to serve a writ upon him. This happened two years after his expulsion. Of the particulars of his death I have not been able to find any account.

2 As this question respecting the power if the bishops to appoint the preachers to the stations has frequently been agitated in the conference, at a suitable time I shall endeavor to state it fully and fairly, with the substance of the argument, for and against it, until it was finally set at rest in the year 1828.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs

Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853)

BOOK IV From 1792 to 1812

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book IV Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 1 From the close of the General Conference of 1792 to the close of the Annual Conferences of 1796

We have hitherto traced the progress of Methodism in this country, from its small beginning in 1766 to the close of the first General Conference in 1792. Though it had difficulties, both internal and external, to contend with, it won its way through every opposition, maintaining the purity of its character, and exerting its hallowing influence on society, in the meantime molding itself into a more compact form and firmer consistency, until, we have seen, it was organized in One Supreme judicatory to which its destinies, under God, were committed. I shall now proceed to narrate, as accurately as possible, its subsequent progress, both in its general councils and in its various ramifications over this extended continent.

1793

Though the labors of the conference, detailed in the former chapter, were great, and the subjects of deliberation elicited very considerable controversy, yet the preachers generally departed to their respective spheres of labor with promptness and cheerfulness; and the people, with the exception of those who were poisoned with the O'Kelleyan schism, manifested great satisfaction at what had been done. It was, indeed, manifest to all impartial men that the members of this conference "sought not their own" glory, temporal aggrandizement, ease, or pleasure, but the glory of God and the good of mankind. This year there were no less than nineteen conferences held in different parts of the country, for the convenience of the preachers and people, and it was upward of eleven months from the time of the first to the last, -- the times and places of which, not affording much matter of general interest, I think not necessary now or hereafter to specify. In these several conferences the following twelve circuits were added: -- Swanino, in Virginia; Haw River, in North Carolina; Hinkstone, in the West; Washington, Maryland; Freehold, New Jersey; Herkimer and Seneca Lake, New York; Tolland and New London, Connecticut; Province of Maine, Maine; Prince George, in Maryland; Savannah, in Georgia. An effort was made this year for the erection of district schools, in imitation of the Kingswood School, established by Mr. Wesley, in England; and an address was drawn up by Bishop Asbury to the members of the Church, with a view to call their attention to the importance of this subject. Several such were accordingly commenced soon after; but whether for want of skill in their management, or patronage from the people, or more probably from both of these causes, they lingered for a short time, and then ceased to exist. These failures in an attempt to impart the benefits of a Christian education made an impression upon the mind of the good bishop and others that the Methodists were not called to attend to these things and hence for several years they were suffered to sleep. This subject has, however, more latterly awakened a very general interest in the Church, and the cause of education has been prosecuted

with vigor and success, as will be noticed in the proper place.

After the adjournment of the conference, Bishop Asbury commenced his tour of the continent by traveling through the southern states, and thence west over the Allegheny Mountains into Tennessee and Kentucky, contending with almost all sorts of difficulties, and yet everywhere scattering the seeds of eternal life. From the west he returned and visited the northern and eastern states, and on arriving at the city of New York, he says, after mentioning that be had been much afflicted in body, particularly with an inflammatory rheumatism in his feet, --

"I have found, by secret search, that I have not preached sanctification as I should have done. If I am restored, this shall be my theme more pointedly than ever, God being my helper. I have been sick upward of four months, during which time I have attended to my business, and rode, I suppose, not less than three thousand miles." In this journey he had the satisfaction to behold, in many places, a revival of the work of God, which, amid the gloom occasioned by his debility, the roughness of the roads, and the coarseness of his fare, particularly in the new countries, made him "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." While a foundation was laying for an extensive work of God in the western states, New England began more fully to "stretch out her hands to God." This year there were two districts in New England, one of which was under the charge of the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, and the other the Rev. George Roberts, both of whom were able ministers of the New Testament; and the Rev. Jesse Lee, who had opened a way for the spread of Methodism in this country, was stationed in the province of Maine, and Lynn. Through their labors, and those preachers who were associated together under their direction, several new circuits were formed in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, and many societies were established. But this work did not go on without opposition. Though the civil regulations of the country did not allow the standing order to interpose their authority to prevent the Methodists from preaching, yet they were not allowed the full exercise of their ministry, particularly as respects uniting people in matrimony. Hence Mr. Roberts was prosecuted and fined for performing the marriage ceremony. As, however, this sort of persecution was becoming unpopular among the people, the more they were oppressed in this way, "the more they prospered," until finally all those legal barriers were removed out of the way, and the Methodists, as well as others, are protected in all their rights and privileges.

Though it will be anticipating the chronological order of the history a little, yet I think it will give the reader a more intelligible idea of the progress of the work in this country, to connect a few particulars in this place. This year the New London circuit was formed. Though as early as 1789 preaching commenced in this city, yet no regular class was formed until the year 1793 and that consisted of fifty members. And it was not until 1798 that they succeeded in building a house of worship in New London, which was dedicated to God on the 22d of July of that year.

Warren circuit, in Rhode Island, which included Warren, Newport, Providence, Cranston, and several places in Massachusetts, appears on the minutes of this year; and the first Methodist church which was built in Rhode Island was in the town of Warren; and the first sermon was preached in it Sept. 24, 1794. As perfect religious freedom was secured to the people by the original charter granted to the state of Rhode Island, and of course no form of Christianity was established by law, the Methodists met with less opposition there than they did in some other portions of New England. In Provincetown, on Cape Cod, which was first included in the minutes

of 1795, there were some incidents attending the introduction of Methodism which, as they show the fruits of the carnal mind on the one hand, and the good providence of God on the other, may be worthy of record. It seems that a few in this place were brought under serious impressions, and began to hold meetings among themselves before they were visited by any preacher, and they had therefore no one competent to instruct and guide them. In this way they endeavored to strengthen each other's hands for some time, being much despised and persecuted by those who "knew not what spirit they were of;" until one of our preachers, who was on his passage from New York to St. John's, in New Brunswick, meeting with contrary winds, the vessel in which he sailed was compelled to anchor in the harbor of Provincetown. On going ashore, the preacher soon found these young converts, and at their invitation gave them a sermon. After staying with them a few days, and preaching several times, he left them with directions where they might apply for Methodist preachers. They accordingly sent to Boston for help, and were soon supplied. In consequence of these movements, when the Methodist preachers first visited the place, they were cordially received, treated with great kindness, and many attended their meetings. A society was soon formed, and several sinners awakened and converted to God, and added to the society. Their number daily increasing, they commenced building a house of worship. This provoked opposition, and the "sons of Belial" assembled in the night, took the greater part of the timber, which had been brought from a distance, at a considerable expense, threw it from the brow of a hill into the valley, cut it to pieces and built a pen with it, -- then taking a sailor's old hat, coat, and trousers, stuffed them so as to make them resemble a man, fastened the image on the top of the pen, and tarred and feathered it. This shameful conduct, so far from intimidating the brethren, or discouraging them in their efforts to erect a house for the worship of God, only served to stimulate them to renewed diligence; and by the month of January they had their house ready for use, and accordingly took possession of it in the name of the Lord.

James O'Kelley, Rice Haggard, John Robertson, and John Allen, were returned in the minutes this year as withdrawn. Eighteen were located, and one, James Bell, was expelled. Benjamin Carter and John Sproul had died, both in peace. In making the above record, we cannot but notice the number of locations which took place in those early days of the Church, and which, indeed, continued to be numerous for many years thereafter. That this practice has had an unfavorable effect upon the interests of the Church, by depriving it of some of its tried and experienced ministers, must be evident to all; for though many of those who located retained their piety, and also their usefulness to some extent, yet it is manifest that their ministerial labors were very much contracted, and their usefulness proportionally circumscribed. These locations, however, were owing, in some measure at least, to the scanty support which was made for men of families, and the great difficulty of contending, under those circumstances, with the hardships of an itinerant life, particularly in the new countries. Hence the temptations which were held out to locate that they might provide a livelihood for their growing families. If the Methodist Episcopal Church has erred in any one thing more than another, it has been in neglecting to make that provision for its ministers which they needed, and which the gospel authorizes them to receive. A remedy for this evil is to be found in that spirit of liberality which Christianity inculcates, and which is essential to the existence and usefulness of a gospel ministry. The effect of the labors of this year may be seen in the following statement: --

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 51,416; Last Year: 52,109; Decrease: 693 -- Colored This Year: 16,227; Last Year: 13,871; Increase: 2,356 -- Total This Year: 67,643; Last Year: 65,980 -- Increase: 1,663 -- Preachers This Year: 269; Last Year: 266; Increase: 3. The reader will perceive that though there was an increase of 1,663 in the total number, there was a decrease of 693 among the white members. The effects of the O'Kelleyan secession began to be felt, particularly in Virginia, and some parts of North Carolina.

1794 The number of annual conferences was reduced this year to fourteen, as some of the preachers had complained of there being so many at such short distances, among other reasons, because it prevented the minutes from being printed until near the end of the year. This inconvenience, however, should have been submitted to rather than to have made it necessary for the preachers to assemble from such a vast distance, at the expense of so much time and money, as many of them did when, afterward, the number of conferences was reduced to seven. At these conferences the following new circuits were returned in the minutes: -- Federal, in Maryland; Carlisle, in Pennsylvania; Leesburgh and Pendleton, in Virginia; Black Swamp, in South Carolina; New Hampshire, in New Hampshire; Marblehead, Orange, and Fitchburg, in Mass.; and Vermont, in Vermont; Oswegochee, in Upper Canada, was divided into two. In some of the southern states, Methodism was doomed to much suffering, arising out of the disputes and divisions occasioned by the O'Kelleyan secession, which has been already detailed. But while these things were transacting in those parts, to the grief of many pious hearts, the cause of Christ, through the labors of his faithful servants, was extending in more favored portions of our country We have before seen, that as early as 1786, the Methodist preachers had penetrated the Western wilderness beyond the Allegheny mountains, and that they had gradually extended their labors from year to year, being led on and encouraged in their work both by the example and precept of Bishop Asbury, who was generally in the foremost ranks when danger and hardship were to be encountered and endured. This year a conference was appointed to be held in Kentucky, on the 15th of April, and the bishop set off to meet his brethren at that place. On the 20th of January he reached the city of Charleston, S. C., where he found himself so unwell, that he was obliged to relinquish his intended journey to the west; and that the reader may see for himself the manner in which this apostolic man employed his time, the extent of his labors in the cause of God, and the privations to which he was often subjected, we will endeavor to follow him in some of his journeyings this year. After mentioning the kindness and hospitality with which he had been treated in his affliction, while at Charleston, he says, --

"I have written largely to the west, and declined visiting those parts this year. The American Alps, the deep snows, the great rains, swimming the creeks and rivers, riding in the night, sleeping on the earthen floors, more or less of which I must experience, if I go to the western country, might, at this time, cost me my life. I have only been able to preach four times in three weeks. I have had sweet peace at times since I have been here; the love of meetings, especially those for prayer, the increase of hearers, the attention of the people, my own better feelings, and the increasing hope of good that prevails among the preachers, lead me to think that the needy shall not always be forgotten, nor the expectation of the poor perish."

He remained in Charleston, employing his time in the best manner he could, while endeavoring to recruit his exhausted strength, until February 28th, when he set off on a tour through different parts of the southern country, visiting the churches, and setting things in order. On the 20th of March, he

says, --

"I directed my course, in company with my faithful fellow-laborer, Tobias Gibson, up the Catawba, settled mostly by the Dutch. A barren spot for religion. Having rode in pain twenty-four miles, we came, weary and hungry, to O_____'s tavern, and were glad to take what came to hand. Four miles forward we came to Homes' Ford, upon Catawba river, where we could neither get a canoe nor guide. We entered the water in an improper place, and were soon among the rocks and in the whirlpools. My head swam, and my horse was affrighted. The water was to my knees, and it was with difficulty we retreated to the same shore. We then called to a man on the other side, who came and piloted us across, for which I paid him well. My horse being afraid to take the water a second time, brother Gibson crossed and sent me his, and our guide took mine across. We went on, but our troubles were not at an end; night came on and it was very dark. It rained heavily, with powerful lightning and thunder. We could not find the path that turned out to Connell's.' In this situation we continued until midnight or past. At last we found a path which we followed until we came to dear old father Harper's plantation; we made for the house, and called; he answered, but wondered who it could be; he inquired whence we came; I told him we would tell him when we came in; for it was raining so powerfully that we had not much time to talk. When I came dripping into the house, he cried, 'God bless your soul, is it brother Asbury? Wife, get up.' "

After such a salutation they felt themselves at home, though much fatigued from their exposure and long ride.

After some farther remarks expressive of his thankfulness to God for the sweet peace of mind he enjoyed amid his physical sufferings and toilsome labors, he says, "This campaign has made me groan, being burdened." -- "I have provided brothers G. And L. for the westward. I wrote a plan for stationing, and desired the preachers to be, as I am, in the work. I have no interest, no passions, in their appointments; my only aim is to care and provide for the flock of Christ." -- "I feel that my sufferings have been good preaching to me -- especially in crossing the waters. I am solemnly moved in not visiting my Holstein and Kentucky brethren. It may be their interest to desire the preservation of my life. While living I may supply them with preachers, and with men and money. I feel resolved to be wholly the Lord's. Weak as I am, I have done nothing, I am nothing, only for Christ." From this part of the country he came north, though Virginia, and on to Baltimore, where he took sweet counsel in the midst of his old friends. Thence he passed on though Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, visiting all the principal cities and towns on his way, attending conferences and preaching to the people, and passed into the New England states. The following are some of his pointed remarks upon the state of things in this country: --

"Ah! here are walls of prejudice, but God can break them down. Out of fifteen United States, thirteen are free; but two are fettered with ecclesiastical chains -- taxed to support ministers, who are chosen by a small committee, and settled for life.1 My simple prophecy is, that this must come to an end with the present century.2 The Rhode Islanders began in time and are free. Hail, sons of liberty! Who first began the war?" (of the Revolution, doubtless is meant.) "Were it not Connecticut and Massachusetts? And priests are now saddled upon them. O what a happy people would these be, if they were not thus priest-ridden.3 It is well for me that I am not stretching along, while my body is so weak, and the heat so intense." "I heard -- read a most severe letter from a citizen of Vermont to the clergy and Christians of Connecticut, striking at the foundation and principle of the

hierarchy and the policy of Yale College, and the independent order. It was expressive of the determination of the Vermonters to continue free from ecclesiastical fetters, to follow the Bible, equal liberty to all denominations of Christians. If so, why may not the Methodists, who have been repeatedly solicited; visit these people also?"

These extracts show, in a striking manner, the immense labors performed by this primitive bishop, in the name of Jesus Christ. Nor was he alone in these labors. His example provoked others to follow in the footsteps, who, though they were not called to travel so extensively, were equally assiduous, and alike successful in their endeavors to plant the standard of Jesus Christ in various parts of this continent. Among others we may mention a William Watters, the first Methodist preacher raised up in America, who traversed the western wilds, and labored in the woods of Kentucky; a Garrettson, who opened the way into the interior of New York state, and penetrated even to Vermont; a Lee, who led the way into New England, and laid the foundation for that work of God there which has since reared itself in beauty and glory, amid "fightings without and fears within;" a Roberts and a Cooper, who followed in the track marked out for them by Lee, and nobly stood their ground amid storms of reproach, and labors more abundant." These leaders of "God's sacramental host" being aided by their associates, all zealous for God and for the salvation of souls, were scattering the "good seed of the kingdom" in every direction, and we who have followed them have had the happiness of seeing it" take root and bear fruit," in some places thirty, in others sixty, and in some a hundred fold. In the preceding extract from Bishop Asbury's Journal, we have seen that he alludes to Vermont, to which they had been solicited to send preachers. It is well known that in this state there were no legal barriers in the way of any denomination of Christians, but that all were permitted the free and unrestrained exercise of their peculiarities. Although as early as 1788 Mr. Garrettson had visited the southern borders of the state, and preached in a few places, it was not until this year that any of our preachers obtained a permanent foothold here; but this year, Joshua Hull was sent to Vermont, and his labors were made a blessing to many. Since that time the cause of Methodism has advanced rapidly among the people in almost every part of the state, to the reformation and salvation of thousands of souls. This year also Methodism was introduced into the province of Maine, by the indefatigable labors of Jesse Lee. In Portland he preached in the Congregational church, and then passed on though Freeport and Bath, crossed the Kennebeck river, and went as far as the town of Penobscot. In most of the places he was cordially received, and succeeded in forming a regular circuit, and this laid a foundation for the permanent establishment of Methodism in Maine. He gives the following account of his first visit to Portsmouth: --

"Sunday the 8th of September, I went to hear Mr. Watters in the forenoon and in the afternoon. After he was done, I went with some friends to the court-house, but the great men would not let us go into the house to preach, so I got on the step of the door of the court-house and began. When I commenced I had about a dozen people, but they soon began to flock together, and I had some hundreds of them to hear me before I had done. They stood in different parts of the streets. I found much freedom in speaking, and the word reached many of the hearts of the hearers, who were as solemn and attentive as though they had been in a meeting house."

It may be remarked that the settlements along the Penobscot river at that time had been newly formed, and were destitute of settled pastors; hence the people were much gratified with the visit of Mr. Lee, and those who succeeded him; and though he had to contend with many difficulties, as

a stranger bearing a message differing in so many particulars from what they had been accustomed to hear, yet God gave him favor in the eyes of the people, and strength to persevere in his good work, until he had opened a way for the establishment of regular preaching in that destitute part of the country.

New Hampshire was also visited about this time. John Hill was the first Methodist preacher sent into that state but with what success I cannot tell, as we do not find any members returned on the minutes in that state for this year. At the several annual conferences for this year, the following resolutions were passed: --

"It is most earnestly recommended by the conferences, that the last Friday in February, 1795, be set part throughout the United States, by the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as a day of solemn fasting and prayer, and that all worldly concerns be laid aside.

"It is also recommended by said conferences, that the last Thursday in October be set apart as a day of solemn and general thanksgiving, and that alL servile labor be laid aside, and those days be observed with all the solemnity of a Sabbath."

They furthermore said, "The bishops and conferences desire that the preachers generally change every six months, by the order of the presiding elder, whenever it can be made convenient." No less than twenty-eight preachers took a location this year, either in consequence of "weakness of body or family concerns." Two, Jeremiah Cosdon and Jethro Johnson, withdrew from the connection; and four were "dismissed for improper conduct." Four had died, namely, Philip Cox, Henry Birchett, James Wilson, and John Wayne. Of Philip Cox, who was an Englishman by birth, it is stated that he had been sixteen years in the ministry, during which time he had traveled extensively in several of the states, and preached the gospel with considerable success. He was a man of sound judgment, of quick apprehension, and a great lover of union, and often prayed and preached to the admiration of his hearers. He was among the pioneers of the western wilds, where he labored assiduously and strove to do good by the circulation of religious books. On his return from the west he was seized with a complaint which soon put a period to his existence. Though in his last moments, through the violence of his disease, he was, for the most part of the time, delirious, yet he gave evidence to his friends that he died in peace.

Henry Birchett fell a martyr to his work, after having been in the traveling ministry only between five and six years. He was a native of Brunswick county, Virginia. He volunteered his services for four years in the dangerous stations of Kentucky and Cumberland, and wore himself out in preaching the gospel in these new countries. His name, therefore, stands enrolled among those worthy and self-denying men who hazarded their all for the sake of carrying the glad tidings of the gospel to the poor and the destitute, exposed in hunger, cold, and nakedness, and to the degradations of savages: for such was the state of things in Kentucky and other places where he traveled, that often even the necessaries of life could not be had, nor the wildernesses traversed without the danger of being intercepted by savage foes. But the meekness, love, prayers, sermons, and sufferings in the cause of Christ of Henry Birchett, will not be forgotten by the sons and daughters of Kentucky, who have reaped spiritual benefit from the work which was commenced by his labors and sacrifices, and has been since carried forward by his successors in the ministry. Of James Wilson and John Wayne, it is said that, after the former had labored in the ministry about six, and the latter about four years, with general acceptance, they both died in

peace.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 52,794; Last Year: 51,416; Increase: 1,378 -- Colored This Year: 13,814; Last Year: 16,227; Decrease: 2,413 -- Total This Year: 66,608; Last Year: 67,643 -- Decrease: 1,035 -- Preachers This Year: 301; Last Year: 269; Increase: 32.

1795 The number of annual conferences was reduced this year to seven, greatly to the inconvenience of the preachers, and it is believed to the detriment of the work of God. This diminution in the number of the conferences was made in consequence of the general opposition of the preachers to having so many, by which they thought the powers of the conferences were abridged, and those of the bishop proportionally augmented; and hence, to take away all such ground of fear, the bishops yielded to the wishes of their brethren, notwithstanding they were satisfied that, otherwise, it was not for the best.

Some idea may be formed of the extent of the annual conferences at this time, when it is considered that the New York conference comprehended within its bounds most of the state of New York, the whole of New England, and the province of Upper Canada; out of which have been since formed, the New England, Maine, New Hampshire, Troy, Oneida, Black River, and part of Genesee and the Canada conferences; and the other conferences were proportionally great in extent. Some of the circuits at that time included a larger extent of territory than districts do now, -- a four weeks' circuit often being not less than four hundred miles in circumference, and including from twenty to forty appointments in thirty days. Such were the labors of the Methodist ministry in those days. In consequence of reducing the number of annual conferences to seven, some of the preachers, who labored in the frontier circuits, had to come from two to four hundred miles to attend the conferences, which obliged them to leave their regular work from three to six weeks, during which time the people were unsupplied with the word and ordinances of the gospel. This, in addition to the expense of time and money consumed in traveling such a distance, was an evil of no small magnitude, and against which, a remedy has been since wisely provided in an increase of the number of the annual conferences. But the reduction in the number of conferences diminished naught from the labors of the superintendent, nor of those preachers who were fighting the battle, of the Lord in different parts of the great field in which they were employed. The former made his usual tour of the continent, extending his labors this year into the state of Vermont, where he preached in the woods in the town of Bennington, to a congregation made up, he says, of Deists, Universalists, and other sinners, some of whom seemed to be melted to tenderness under the word.

About this time the minds of many people were corrupted by the deistical writings of Thomas Paine, whose effusions against the Bible were received with greater avidity by Americans on account of the eminent services he had rendered to his country during the war of the Revolution. But Thomas Paine as a politician and Thomas Paine as a theologian were very different men. His book, however, against the Bible, was published by the booksellers; which, together with others of a kindred character, were widely circulated, and they were exerting a most deleterious influence upon the minds of many of our citizens, and threatened to poison the fountains of knowledge with their pestiferous contents. It could hardly be otherwise, under these circumstances, than that immorality should abound, and the "love of many wax cold." And the unrestrained freedom of the press, together with the laxity with which the laws against vice were administered, threatened to

deluge the country with ungodliness. To impress upon all, and more especially upon the members and friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the necessity of a more thorough and extensive reformation among all orders of people, a "GENERAL FAST" was recommended by the several annual conferences, in the following address to the people of their charge: --

"It is recommended by the general traveling ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that the first Friday in March, 1796, should be held as a most solemn day of fasting, humiliation, prayer, and supplication. It is desired that it should be attended to in all our societies and congregations, with Sabbatical strictness -- that we should bewail our manifold sins and iniquities -- our growing idolatry, which is covetousness and the prevailing love of the world -- our shameful breach of promises, and irreligious habits of making contracts, even without the intention of honest heathens to fulfill them -- our superstition, the trusting in ceremonial and legal righteousness; and substituting means and opinions for religion -- the profanation of the name of the Lord -- the contempt of the Sabbath, even by those who acknowledge the obligation we are under to keep it holy, for many make no distinction between this and a common day, and others make a very bad distinction, by sleeping, walking, visiting, talking about the world, and taking their pleasure; too many also, in many parts of the country, profane the sacred day, by running their land and water stages, wagons, &c., -- disobedience to parents, various debaucheries, drunkenness, and such like -- to lament the deep-rooted vassalage that still reigneth in many parts of these free, independent United States -- to call upon the Lord to direct our rulers and teach our senators wisdom -- that tho lord would teach our people a just and lawful submission to their rulers -- that America may not commit abominations with other corrupt nations of the earth, and partake of their sins and their plagues -- that the gospel may be preached with more purity, and be heard with more affection -- that He would stop the growing infidelity of this age, by calling out men who shall preach and live the gospel -- that the professors may believe the truths, feel the power, partake of the blessings, breathe the spirit, and obey the precepts of this glorious gospel dispensation -- that Africans and Indians may help to fill the pure church of God." At the same time, with a view to manifest their gratitude for what God had done, and for the many temporal and spiritual mercies vouchsafed unto the people, a day of "GENERAL THANKSGIVING," was also recommended in the words following:--

"It is recommended, by the general ministry, to all our dearly beloved brethren and sisters that compose our societies and sacred assemblies, to observe the last Thursday in October, 1796, as a day of holy gratitude and thanksgiving -- to lay aside the cares of the world, and to spend the day in acts of devotional gratitude -- as a society, to give glory to God for his late goodness to the ancient parent society from whom we are derived: that they have been honored with the conversion of hundreds and thousands within these two years last past -- for such a signal display of his power in the Methodist society, within the space of twenty-six years, through the continent of America, as may be seen in the volume of our annual minutes, published in 1795 -- for the late glorious and powerful work we have had in Virginia and Maryland, and which still continues in an eminent and special manner, in some parts of our American connection -- for the many faithful public witnesses which have been raised up, and that so few, (comparatively speaking,) have dishonored their holy calling -- that we have had so many drawn from the depths of sin and misery, to the heights of love and holiness among the subjects of grace; numbers of whom are now living, and others have died in the full and glorious triumph of faith -- to take into remembrance the

goodness and wisdom of God displayed toward America, by making it an asylum for those who are distressed in Europe with war and want, and oppressed with ecclesiastic and civil tyranny; the merciful termination of our various wars; the pacifications of the savage tribes; and the rapid settlement and wonderful population of the continent; that we have been able to feed so many thousands, at home and abroad; that we have had such faithful, wise, and skillful rulers; that we have such good constitutions formed for the respective states -- for the general union and government, that this may be kept pure and permanent -- for the admirable Revolution obtained and established at so small a price of blood and treasure -- that religious establishments by law are condemned and exploded in almost every spot of this extensive empire. And for African liberty; we feel gratitude that many thousands of these poor people are free and pious." The work of God spread this year in several parts of New England, more particularly in the province of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, and also in the northern and western parts of the state of New York. But nothing occurred in this department worthy of special notice. No less than thirty-two preachers located this year, three withdrew from the church, and five had died.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 48,121; Last Year: 52,794; Decrease: 4,673 -- Colored This Year: 12,170; Last Year: 13,814; Decrease: 1,644 -- Total This Year: 60,291; Last Year: 66,608 -- Decrease: 6,317 -- Preachers This Year: 313; Last Year: 301; Increase: 12. This great decrease was owing, in a great measure, to the O'Kelleyan division, which was now at its height, and was spreading desolation in many of the societies in Virginia, and also in some parts of North Carolina.

1796

There were seven annual conferences held this year: and the following new circuits were added: Shelby and Logan; in the Western Conference; Bath and Kennebec, in the province of Maine; Cape May, in New Jersey; Chesterfield, in New Hampshire and Vershire, in Vermont. This year a conference was held at Green Briar, in the upper part of Virginia, which Bishop Asbury attended; after which be set off on another tour over the mountains and through the valleys.

"Frequently," he says, "we were in danger of being plucked from our horses by the boughs of the trees under which we rode. About seven o'clock, after crossing six mountains and many rocky creeks and fords of Elk and Monongahela rivers, we made the Valley of Distress, called by the natives of Tyger's Valley. We had a comfortable lodging at Mr. White's. And here I must acknowledge the kindness and decency of the family, and their readiness to duty, sacred and civil. Thence we hastened on at the rate of forty-two miles a day." -- "After encountering many difficulties, known only to God and ourselves, we came to Morgantown. I doubt whether I shall ever request any person to come and meet me at the levels of Green Briar, or to accompany me across the mountains again, as brother D. Hitt has done. O! how checkered is life! How thankful ought I to be that I am here safe, with life and limbs, in peace and plenty, at kind brother S_____'s."

After performing this fatiguing journey, visiting various places and preaching to the people, he once more found himself in more comfortable quarters in the older states, where he persevered with his wonted designs in the grand work to which he had been called, and in which his soul delighted. After arriving at Baltimore, he takes a "review of his journey for some months past," which, as it will give the reader some idea of the manner in which the bishop employed his time,

we will present in his own words.

"From the best judgment I can form, the distance" (I have traveled) "is as follows: -- from Baltimore to Charleston, S. C., one thousand miles; thence up the state of South Carolina two hundred miles; from the center to the west of Georgia two hundred miles; through North Carolina one hundred miles; through the state of Tennessee one hundred miles; through the west of Virginia three hundred miles; through Pennsylvania and the west of Maryland, and down to Baltimore, four hundred miles." And the reader will recollect that these journeys were performed generally on horseback, sometimes through creeks, morasses, and over high mountains, often lodging in log cabins, or on the ground, with coarse fare, and in the meantime preaching usually every day. It is true that in the older settlements he was not only cordially received and treated with great hospitality, but was blessed with an abundance of temporal comforts. And the above is but a fair specimen of the mode of life pursued by most of the Methodist preachers of that day, with this exception only, that they did not travel so extensively as Bishop Asbury did. The work of God spread this year in some parts of New England, particularly in the province of Maine, and in the states of New Hampshire and Vermont. Alluding to these things, while on his visit to that part of the country, Bishop Asbury remarks: --

"This day I was led out greatly for New England. I believe God will work among this people. Perhaps they have not had such a time here for many years. The power of God was present, and some felt as at heaven’s gate. Two or three women spoke as on the borders of eternity, and within sight of glory."

It may be proper to remark here, that Bishop Asbury, wherever he was, did not content himself simply with preaching to the people, but if time permitted, met the classes, explained to them the discipline, and attended to all the duties of a pastor. Thus, speaking of being in the city of New York, he says that he "preached morning, afternoon, and evening, alternately in each of the three churches then in the city, besides meeting six classes in the course of the day." In meeting the society, I observed to them, that they knew but little of my life and labors, unless in the pulpit, family, or class meeting," -- intimating that it was impossible for them to have any adequate idea of his general labors and sufferings through the country. This year that eminent servant of God, Benjamin Abbott, took his departure to another world. And as his life and labors made a powerful impression upon the community, and tended greatly to enlarge the work of God wherever he traveled, it seems suitable that a more particular account should be given of him than of some others.

He was born in the state of Pennsylvania, in the year 1732, and, grew to manhood "without hope and without God in the world," and so continued until the fortieth year of his age, when it pleased God to bring him to a knowledge of the truth by the instrumentality of Methodist preaching. Soon after his conversion he gave evidence of his call to the gospel ministry, and he entered upon this work with an ardor of mind which plainly evinced that he was moving in the order of God, and it may be truly said that "signs and wonders were wrought" by his instrumentality. For several years he labored merely as a local preacher, supporting himself and family by the labor of his hands. He continued in this way greatly pleased in his efforts to bring sinners to the knowledge of Christ, until April, 1789, when he joined the traveling ministry, and was stationed in Duchess circuit, in the state of New York. From this time till disabled by infirmities, he continued traveling and preaching

though various parts of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware states, edifying the church by his example and labors, and he was an instrument in the hand of God of the awakening and conversion of thousands of souls. As some portions of his life were attended with remarkable interpositions of divine Providence and peculiar manifestations of the grace of God, I think it will be both pleasing and profitable to the reader to present a few of the instances in this place. While laboring in the state of Delaware, he gives the following account:

"Next day I set out for my appointment, but being a stranger, I stopped at a house to inquire the way, and the man told me he was just going to that place, for there was to be a Methodist preacher there that day; and our preacher, said he, is to be there to trap him in his discourse, and if you will wait a few minutes until a neighbor of mine comes, I will go with you. In a few minutes the man came, who, it seems, was a constable. So we set off; and they soon fell into conversation about the preacher, having no idea of my being the man, as I never wore black, or any kind of garb that indicated my being a preacher, and so I rode unsuspected. The constable being a very profane man, he swore by all the gods he had, good and bad, that he would lose his right arm from his body if the Methodist preacher did not go to jail that day. This was the theme of their discourse. My mind was greatly exercised on the occasion, and what added, as it were, double weight, I was a stranger in a strange place, where I knew no one. When we arrived at the place appointed, I saw about two hundred horses hitched. I also hitched mine, and retired into the woods, where I prayed and covenanted with God on my knees, that if he stood by me in this emergency, I would be more for him, though grace, than ever I had been. I then arose and went to my horse, with a perfect resignation to the will of God, whether to death or to jail. I took my saddlebags and went to the house; the man took me into a private room, and desired I would preach in favor of the war, as I was in a Presbyterian settlement. I replied, I should preach as God should direct me. He appeared very uneasy and left me, and just before preaching, he came in again and renewed his request that I would preach up for war; I replied as before, and then followed him out among the people, where he made proclamation as follows: -- Gentlemen, this house is my own, and no gentleman shall be interrupted in my house in time of his discourse, but after he has done you may do as you please. Thank God, said I softly, that I have liberty once more to warn sinners before I die. I then took my stand, and the house was so crowded that no one could sit down. Some hundreds were round about the door. I stood about two or three feet from the constable who had sworn so bitterly. When he saw that I was the man he had so abused on the way, with so many threats and oaths, his countenance fell and he turned pale. I gave out a hymn, but no one offered to sing; I sung four lines, and kneeled down and prayed. When I arose, I preached with great liberty. I felt such power from God rest upon me, that I was above the fear of either men or devils, not regarding whether death or a jail should be my lot. Looking forward I saw a decent looking man trembling, and tears flowed in abundance, which I soon discovered was the case with many others. After preaching, I told them I expected they wanted to know by what authority I had come into that country to preach. I then told them my conviction and conversion, the place of my nativity and place of residence; also, my call to the ministry, and that seven years I had labored in God's vineyard; that I spent my own money and found and wore my own clothes, and that it was the love that I had for their precious souls, for whom Christ died, that had induced me to come among them at the risk of my life; and then exhorted them to fly to Jesus, the ark of safety -- that all things were ready -- to seek, and they should find, to knock, and it should be opened unto them. By this time the people were generally melted into tears. I then concluded, and told them on that day two weeks they might

expect preaching again. I mounted my horse and set out with a friendly Quaker for a pilot. We had not rode above fifty yards, when I heard one hallooing after us. I looked back, and saw about fifty running after us. I then concluded that to jail I must go. We stopped, and when they came up, I crave your name, said one, -- I told him, and so we parted. He was a justice of the peace, and was the person I had taken notice of in time of preaching, and observed him to be in great anxiety of mind. No one offered me any violence; but they committed the next preacher, on that day two weeks, to the common jail. I went home with the kind Quaker, where I tarried all night. I found that himself and wife were under serious impressions, and had had Methodist preaching at their house."

Though Mr. Wesley gives several accounts in his Journals of some persons being so affected under his preaching as to fall helpless to the floor or on the ground, yet such things had not been common in this country. It is true that in the great revival which took place in Virginia in the early days of Methodism, several such instances are recorded. But under the powerful preaching of Mr. Abbott many examples of a partial suspension of the animal functions occurred, as the following extract will show: --

"Next day I went on to my appointment, where we had a large congregation: I preached with life and power, and God attended the word with the energy of his Spirit. A Quaker girl was powerfully wrought upon, so that every joint in her shook, and she would have fallen to the floor, but four or five took and carried her out of the door; when she had recovered a little she went to a neighbor's house and told him that she had seen the dreadfulest old man the she ever saw in all her life, and that he almost scared her to death, for his eyes looked like two balls of fire, and that she expected every minute he would jump at her. But, said the neighbor, I know the old man, and he would not hurt nor touch you. I went on, and the power of the Lord continued among us in such a manner that many fell to the floor, and others cried aloud for mercy. One young woman to exhort the people; I stopped preaching, which I always judged was best, in similar instances, and let God send by whom he will send: she went on for some time with great life and power, and then cried out, Let us pray; we all kneeled down, and she prayed with life and liberty, until she was spent and so forbore. A preacher being present, I called on him, and he went to prayer, and while he was praying three were set at liberty; and, after him, myself and others prayed and several received justifying faith. The shout continued for the space of three or four hours. After meeting broke up, I thought it was not necessary to meet the class, as we had such a powerful time, and it had lasted so long already. The young woman who had given the exhortation and prayed, took five others with her, and retired to the barn to pray for the mourners, who went with them, where they continued until late in the evening, and three souls were set at liberty; another, as she was returning home, in sore distress fell on her face in the woods, where she continued in prayer until God set her soul at liberty to rejoice in his love. An old Presbyterian woman requested me to call at her house on the ensuing day, as she wanted to discourse with me on religion; I did call, and she received me very kindly, and then related her conviction and conversion, and added, that some years after, God had sealed her his to the day of eternity; and, said she, neither our preachers or people will believe me, when I tell them how happy I am. I then endeavored to explain to her the nature of sanctification, and what it was, and asked her if we should pray together; she replied, With all my heart. After prayer I departed in peace, having no doubt but what God had sanctified her soul and body. She was the first Presbyterian that I ever had met with, that would

acknowledge sanctification in its proper sense.

"I went to my next appointment, where I had put brother G. D., who professed sanctification, class leader, and the Lord attended his words with power. This had brought the man of the house where the class met into doubts, whether the work was of God or the devil; for the people had frequently fallen, both under his prayer and exhortation. Soon as I came to the house he related how great his exercises had been respecting the work. One day, said he, I thought I would go down to my stack yard, which stood some distance from the house, and there pray to God to discover the reality of it to me; and on my way thither, as I sat on a fence, I thought I saw a man sitting on the next pannel [sic]; I got off and went down to the stacks, and the man went with me, side by side, and when I kneeled down to pray, the man stood right before me. I prayed until my shirt was wet on my back, entreating God that he would give me some token, whereby I might know whether the work was of him or not. The man who stood before me said, Blessed are those that are pure in heart. I then arose to see whether he was a man or not, and went to put my hand upon him, and he said, Touch me not! I then turned myself round another way, and he stood right before me again, and said several other words which I do not relate, and then vanished, or ascended, as in a flame of fire. Now, said I, do you doubt about the matter, whether the work is of God or not? No, said he, I have no doubts about it, for God has sent his angel to confirm me. I then went and preached, -- the Lord was present. We had a glorious time, and several fell to the floor; we had a precious time also in class, and two joined Society.

"Next day I went to my appointment, and found a large congregation. I preached, and the power of the Lord attended the word. One young man sprang from the bench and called aloud for mercy, then fell on his knees and prayed fervently. I stopped preaching, and when he was done, I went to prayer with him, and after me several others; many wept, some cried aloud for mercy, and others fell to the floor. When I dismissed the people to meet class, I invited the young man in. Here we had a precious season among the dear people of God, and some mourners were set at liberty." * * * * * *

"I went home with brother M., and next day preached in a crowded house, with liberty: the power of the Lord arrested a young Quaker, and he fell to the floor as if he had been shot: his mother being present, cried out, My son is dead! My son is dead! I replied, Mammy, your son is not dead; look to yourself, mammy, your son is not dead; and in a few minutes we had a number slain before the Lord. An old Quaker man stood with tears in his eyes; I said to him, Daddy, look to yourself; this was the way with you, when you had the life and power of God among you. Read Sewel’s history of the people called Quakers, and you will find there that John Audland, a young man, was preaching in a field near Bristol, and the people fell to the ground before him, and cried out under the mighty power of God. The man of the house brought the book, and read the passage before the congregation, and he then acknowledged it to be the work of the Lord. I attempted to meet the class, but did not speak to above two or three, when the people fell before the Lord, as men slain in battle, and we had the shout of a king in the camp of Jesus: two or three professed that God had sanctified their souls. The young Quaker and several others professed that God had set their souls at liberty; several joined society, and we had a precious time. When I went on that circuit, there were about six or seven in society at that place, and when I left it there were about thirty-six, six or seven of whom had been Quakers. At this place, our meetings were generally so powerful that I never regularly met the class during the time I was on the circuit for we always had the shout of a

king in the camp of Jesus -- glory to God!"

These instances serve to show the power and authority by which Benjamin Abbott spoke in the name of the Lord; and though there might have been some human weakness mingling with these signal displays of the power of God, yet it is manifest that in most cases the work was genuine, as appeared by its fruits; for "by their fruits ye shall know them." The writer of his life gives the following very affecting account of an incident which strikingly exemplifies the tenderness of his conscience and the humility of his mind: -- On his way to a quarterly meeting, about the first of February, 1795, the presiding elder mentioned to him, that the people there thought he had power by faith to open or shut the gates of heaven. Mr. Abbott said to me, when conversing on this subject, 'It went though my soul like a dagger: I was grieved, for I saw that the idea led to idolatry, in ascribing to a poor mortal the power which is due to God only. I felt as if my usefulness were at an end; although I did not discover to brother W_____, the presiding elder, how exceedingly I was hurt, nor was he, I believe, sensible of it.' They attended the quarterly meeting in great harmony, and the Master of assemblies was present to the joy and consolation of many. At night Mr. Abbott was taken very ill, and never was able to attend a circuit as a traveling preacher, or scarcely ever to preach afterward; so that his usefulness, indeed, was, in one sense, at an end." The labors of Mr. Abbott were unremitting and most arduous, so that it may be said be literally wore himself out in the service of his divine Master. The last public service he performed was at the funeral of Mrs. Paul, in the town of Salem, N. J., in the month of April, 1796, and as it was attended with a remarkable incident, evincing the blessed results of ministerial faithfulness, I will give it in the words of the biographer. It is as follows: --

"A the funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Morford, he arose and gave an exhortation, and particularly addressed himself to Mr. W., a man whom he had loved as himself, and who had, through the subtlety of Satan, departed from better knowledge. In his exhortation he called to mind the happy hours he had spent under his roof; how much he (Mr. W.) had done for the cause of God; and how often they had rejoiced together as fellow-laborers in Christ Jesus; and then warned him in the most solemn manner of his impending danger, in the love and fear of God, until tears flowed, his strength failed, and he was unable to speak any longer.

"While the interment of the corpse took place, Mr. Abbott retired to a friend's house, unable to attend it. After the interment, Mr. W. addressed the audience on the occasion, and appeared angry, apprehending that he had been ill used. I spoke to him on the occasion, and endeavored to reason the case with him; but to very little purpose, for he apprehended that I had been the instigator of the supposed affront, and appeared as much offended with me as with Mr. Abbott. After my return from the interment, I went and informed Mr. Abbott of the matter: 'Why,' said he, 'if I were able to take my horse and go and see him, I should not have made use of that opportunity; but as I am not able to go and see him, I was convinced that if I let that opportunity pass, I should never have another; and I thought it my duty to speak as I did: therefore I leave the event to God. I am sure that it cannot hurt him, or do him any injury; for a man that is posting in the broad way to damnation, cannot be easily worsted. O!' said he, 'I have seen the time that we have rejoiced together as fellow-laborers in Christ, and it grieves my soul to see that the devil has got the advantage of him!' On Mr. W.'s return home, he wrote a letter to Mr. Abbott on the occasion, justifying himself and his conduct. However, the Spirit of God fastened it on him, as a nail in a sure place; for at our first quarterly meeting held at Salem, after Mr. Abbott's death, in the love feast,

Mr. W. arose and openly declared that God had healed all his backslidings, and that he had made his servant, Father Abbott, an instrument in his divine hand to bring about his restoration."

After lingering along the shores of time for several months, he finally closed his life in triumph on the 34th day of August, 1796, aged about sixty-four years. The following is an account of the closing scene of his life: --

"My brother went to see him, and found him very poorly, to whom he said, 'Brother Ffirth [sic], I am going to die, and tomorrow you must go to Philadelphia, for brother McClaskey to come and preach my funeral sermon:' to which my brother replied, 'Father Abbott, you may continue for some time yet, as the time of your death is uncertain.' 'No,' said he, 'I shall die before you would get back from Philadelphia, unless you should travel in the night.' My brother replied, 'It will not answer to go before your decease.' 'Why,' said he, ' I shall die, and I do not wish my body to be kept until it is offensive: you know the weather is warm and the distance is considerable.' "That is true,' replied my brother, 'but if I were to go to Philadelphia for brother McClaskey, to preach your funeral sermon, and you were not dead, the friends would laugh at me, and he would not not come.' 'Ah!' said he, 'it may be so; I never thought or that; perhaps it will be best to stay until I am dead.'

"Next day, observing a visible alteration in him, my brother concluded to tarry with him until his exit: during the day he continued in a rack of excruciating pain, which he bore with Christian patience and resignation. He was happy in God, and rejoiced at his approaching dissolution; and seemed much engaged in his soul with God. He appeared to possess his rational faculties to his last moments; and for some time previous thereunto he was delivered from that excruciating pain, to the joy of his friends; his countenance continued joyful, heavenly, and serene. His last sentence, that was intelligibly articulated, was, 'Glory to God! I see heaven sweetly opened before me!'

"After this, his speech so much failed that he could not be distinctly understood, only now and then a word, as, 'See! -- see! -- glory! -- glory!' &c."

Mr. Abbott was, in many respects, a remarkable man; not, indeed, on account of his intellectual or literary attainments, for he was extremely illiterate, and of very limited information. Were we, therefore, to measure his standard of excellence as a preacher by the usual rules by which it is determined, he would sink perhaps below mediocrity; for such was his deficiency in respect to his knowledge even of his vernacular tongue that he could scarcely express himself grammatically on any subject; yet with all these defects, he had drunk so deeply at the fountain of spiritual life, had made himself so thoroughly acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and had such an accurate knowledge of the human heart, and was, moreover, so deeply impressed by the Holy Spirit that it was his duty to call sinners to repentance, that whenever he spoke in the name of the Lord there was an "unction from the Holy One" attending his word, which made it manifest to all that he was sent from heaven to beseech mankind to be reconciled to God.

Though a Boanerges or son of thunder in the pulpit, especially in his appeals to the impenitent, yet in private circles, in conversation with his friends, and in his addresses to mourning penitents, he was all love and meekness, manifesting the simplicity and docility of a child. But that which distinguished him most eminently among his fellows was the power which he seemed to have with God in prayer. Perhaps he seldom entered the pulpit, or appeared before a congregation as God's

messenger, without previously "wrestling in the strength of mighty prayer," and God did indeed "reward him openly." Many were the instances in which his heavenly Father answered his "strong cries and tears," while pouring out the desire of his heart before him in prayer. And let it be recollected that such prayer, which takes hold on God, always supposes the exercise of strong faith in Jesus Christ, that faith which says, "I will not let three go unless thou bless me."

Such was Benjamin Abbott. And though we cannot enroll him among those who have distinguished themselves by scientific research, or deep theological knowledge, yet we may inscribe upon his tombstone, "Here lies a man whom God delighted to honor as the instrument of saving many sinners from the error of their ways." Through his energetic labors an impulse was given to the work of God in this country which has been felt through all our borders from that day to this; and hence his name may be fitly associated with those who were honored of God in building up our Zion as on a hill, from which light has been reflected on thousands who have been brought under its holy and happy influence.

Another distinguished, though humble and unpretending servant of God was taken this year from the militant to the church triumphant. Francis Acuff, born in Virginia, and brought up in Tennessee, has left a name in the west which will be remembered with grateful recollections while Methodism shall continue to live and flourish in that country. He resided in Holstein, Tennessee; and though only three years in the traveling ministry, yet such were his talents and indefatigable labors in the work, that he won the confidence and affection of the people for whose salvation he devoted his strength; they lamented over his untimely grave as over the remains of a departed friend. He had only attained to the twenty-fifth year of his age when he was cut down as a flower, in the morning, and taken to ripen in the paradise of God. As an instance of the strong attachment which was felt by those who were best acquainted with this man of God, I will give the following anecdote on the authority of the author of "Short Sketches of Revivals of Religion in the Western Country." An Englishman by the name of William Jones, on his arrival in Virginia, was sold for his passage. He served his time, four years, with fidelity, conducted himself with propriety, and was finally brought to the knowledge of the truth by means of Methodist preaching. As he had been greatly blessed under the preaching of Mr. Acuff, when he heard of his death, Billy, as he was called, determined to visit his grave. Though he had to travel a long distance though the wilderness, in which he had heard that the Indians often killed people by the way, yet his great desire to visit the grave of his friend and pastor impelled him forward, believing that the Lord in whom he trusted was able to protect him from savage cruelty, and provide for his wants. "When I came to the rivers," said he, "I would wade them, or if there were ferries they would take me over, and when I was hungry the travelers would give me a morsel of bread. When I came to Mr. Greene’s, in Madison county, I inquired for our dear brother Acuff’s grave. The people looked astonished, but directed me to it. I went to it, felt my soul happy, kneeled own, shouted over it, and praised the Lord!" Such a mark of strong affection in a simple follower of Jesus Christ speaks volumes in favor of the man over whose grave those grateful recollections were so piously indulged.

Another of the veterans who fell in the field this year deserves a passing notice. Reuben Ellis had traveled extensively, and preached with great acceptance for about twenty years. He is said to have been a man of rather a slow apprehension, but of a sound understanding, possessed of godly simplicity and sincerity, and that his preaching was weighty and powerful. In his life he manifested great deadness to this world, living as in the immediate view of eternity. He was a

native of North Carolina, and in the notice of his death it is stated that the people of the south "well knew his excellent worth, as a Christian and a minister of Christ."

After laboring in various parts of the country, leaving behind him evidences of his fidelity and deep devotion to the cause of God, he closed his useful labors in the city of Baltimore, in the month of February. 1796, in the full hope of everlasting life. Some estimate may be formed of the high character he sustained by the fact, that the record of his death says, "It is a doubt whether there be one left in all the connection higher, if equal, in standing, piety, or usefulness."

Jacob Bush, Stephen Davis, William Jessup, Richard Ivy, John Jarrell, and Zadoc Priest, of whom honorable mention is made, all died this year in the full hope of immortality and eternal life. In the early part of our history we have seen the kindness manifested to Mr. Asbury by Judge White of Kent county, Delaware, state, during his seclusion from the fury of his persecutors. It is pleasant to reflect on the latter end of such men, and to see how the Lord rewarded them for their attentions to his servants. Last year Judge White died "in the Lord," and though he was not a preacher, the death of such a man is deserving a place in this record of the Lord’s dealings with his church. The following is Bishop Asbury’s account of the character and death of this good man: --

"This day," May 21, 1795, "I heard of the death of one among my best friends in America, Judge White, of Kent county, Delaware. This news was attended with an awful shock to me. I have met with nothing like it in the death of any friend on the continent. Lord help us to live our short day to thy glory! I have lived days, weeks, and months, in his house. O that his removal may be sanctified to my good, and the good of the family! He was about sixty-five years of age. He was a friend to the poor and oppressed. He had been a professed Churchman, and was united to the Methodist connection about seventeen or eighteen years. His house and heart were always open; and he was a faithful friend to liberty in spirit and in practice; he was a most indulgent husband, a tender father, and an affectionate friend. He professed perfect love and great peace, living and dying."

Such a testimony is alike honorable to him who made it, and to him in whose favor it was recorded, showing the gratitude and affectionate remembrance of the one, and the disinterested friendship and fidelity of the other.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 45,384; Last Year: 48,121; Decrease: 2,737 -- Colored This Year: 11,280; Last Year: 12,170; Decrease: 890 -- Total This Year: 56,664; Last Year: 60,291 -- Decrease: 3,627 -- Preachers This Year: 293; Last Year: 313; Decrease: 20. The reader will perceive that there had been a diminution of numbers now for three years past. This is said to have been owing chiefly to the spirit of dissatisfaction which had been spread abroad by the controversy of O’Kelley and his party. Such are the pernicious effects of divisions of this character upon the interests of true religion.

ENDNOTES 1 It is not, I believe, generally the case, that a minister is settled for life.

2 It has come to an end, though not quite so soon as there predicted.

3 The bishop undoubtedly alludes to their being supported by law -- by a legal taxation, which he considered contrary to the gospel ... [some words at the end of this footnote were missing from our printed copy. -- DVM]

02.04.02. Vol 2, Book 4, Chapter 02

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book IV Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 2 An Account of the General Conference of 1796 The conference assembled in the city of Baltimore, October 20th, 1796, and was composed of one hundred and twenty members. As there were no restrictions upon the powers of the conference at that time, they felt themselves at liberty to review our entire economy, and to make such alterations and additions to the Discipline as they might consider would best promote the interests of the Church. Up to this time the bishops had a discretionary power to appoint as many annual conferences as they might judge would be most for the convenience of the preachers and people; but this conference fixed their bounds, and determined that their number should be but six, with a proviso that, if the bishop saw proper, they might form an additional one in the province of Maine.

We have already seen that the strength of the itinerating ministry was very much weakened, from year to year, by reason of the numerous locations which took place at the several annual conferences. This originated, in part at least, from the inadequate support which was provided for the preachers and their families, especially in the new settlements. The hardships to which they were exposed in traversing the wilderness, their scanty fare, and the excessive labors they were obliged to perform, brought on many of them premature old age, and in many instances they contracted those diseases which terminated in death. By these means, while some were doomed to linger on in feebleness and poverty, others were called to leave their widows and orphan children, to suffer from the privations brought upon them by the sacrifices of their devoted husbands and parents. With such prospects before them, many, as before stated, were induced to forsake the itinerant field, in the hope of providing more adequately for themselves and families, while it may be presumed that some were actuated more from mercenary motives than merely from a fear of temporal want. To remedy an evil of such magnitude, and take away, as far as possible, all temptations to forsake the work of spreading the gospel by an itinerant ministry, many of the most devoted friends of the cause had looked with anxious hearts for some suitable means. The subject came up for consideration before this General Conference, and they finally resolved to create a fund for the relief of necessitous preachers, their wives, widows, and orphans. This was soon after incorporated by the legislature of Pennsylvania, under the following "ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION Of the Trustees of the Fund for the Relief and Support of the itinerant, superannuated, and worn-out Ministers and Preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America their Wives and Children, Widows and Orphans.

ARTICLE 1. -- It is provided and declared, that the name, style, and title of this corporation shall be, 'The Trustees of the Fund for the Relief and Support of the itinerant superannuated, and worn-out Ministers and Preachers of the Episcopal Church, (in the United States of America,) their Wives and Children, Widows and Orphans;' and that the said trustees shall consist of John

Dickins, Thomas Haskins; Jacob Baker, Henry Manly, Burton Wallace, Josiah Lusby, Hugh Smith, Caleb North, and Cornelius Comegys, and their successors, qualified and appointed as is hereinafter mentioned. And they are hereby vested with full powers for carrying into effect the benevolent and charitable purposes in this instrument mentioned and declared.

ARTICLE 2. -- It is provided and declared, that the said trustees, and their successors, by the name, style, and title aforesaid, shall be able and capable in law to make, receive, have, hold, possess, and enjoy, all, and all manner of lands, tenements, rents, annuities, franchises, and hereditaments, and any sum or sums of money, and any manner and portion of goods and chattels, given, granted, or devised unto them or their successors, by any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, agreeable to the intention of the donors respectively, and according to the objects, articles, and conditions, in this instrument mentioned and declared; and by the name, style, and title aforesaid, shall be able and capable in law, to sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, in any court or courts, before any judge or judges, justice or justices, in all manner of suits, complaints, pleas, causes, matters, and demands whatsoever, and all and every matter therein to do, in as full and effectual a manner as any other person or persons, bodies politic and corporate, within this commonwealth may or can do.

ARTICLE 3. -- It is provided and declared, that in case of the death, resignation, or expulsion from membership (according to the rules and discipline from time to time adopted by the itinerant ministers and preachers of the said Church, in their General Conference assembled) of any one or more of the members of the said corporation, or their successors, then, and in such case, it shall be the duty of the remaining trustees to nominate double the number of those whose seats may have been vacated as aforesaid, and to make a representation thereof, in writing, to the itinerant ministers and preachers of the said Church in their next General Conference assembled; whose duty it shall be then and there to proceed to choose, and, by a majority of votes, appoint one or more persons (as the case may be) out of the whole number of those nominated by the trustees, as aforesaid, to fill such vacancy or vacancies, in order to keep up the number of nine trustees for ever: and upon such choice and appointment a certificate shall issue from the said General Conference signed by their president and countersigned by their secretary, and directed to the trustees of the said corporation, containing the name or names of the person or persons so chosen and appointed, which said certificate shall be registered in the books of the said corporation; and the person or persons thus chosen and appointed shall be vested with all the powers and immunities of a member of the said corporation -- provided, nevertheless, that no person or persons shall be eligible as a trustee or trustees of the said corporation who has not been a member of the said Church (according to the rules and discipline thereof, as aforesaid) at least five years next preceding his or their election and appointment as aforesaid, and who shall not be at least twenty-five years of age.

ARTICLE 4. -- It is provided and declared, that the said corporation shall meet at least once in every year (for the dispatch of their necessary business) at such time and place as a majority of them may judge most convenient and proper: and when so met they shall have power to make such by-laws, rules, and regulations for their government, in the management of their affairs, as a majority of them may judge necessary; and also at every such annual meeting they shall proceed to choose, and by a majority of votes appoint two of their own number to act, the one as president, and the other as secretary, to the said corporation, who may continue them in office from year to

year, as a majority of the said corporation may think proper.

ARTICLE 5. -- It is provided and declared, that if, at any time hereafter, a majority of the trustees should deem it expedient, by deed or otherwise, to grant, bargain, sell, convey, or otherwise dispose of any part or parcel of the estate, real or personal, of, and belonging to, the said corporation, or charge or incumber the same, then, and in such case, it shall be their duty to make a representation thereof in writing to the itinerant ministers and preachers of the said Church, in their next General Conference assembled, who shall then and there judge of the necessity or expediency of such proposed sale; and if two-thirds of the ministers and preachers, assembled as aforesaid, shall consent and agree thereto, a certificate shall issue from the said General Conference, signed by their president and countersigned by their secretary, declaring such approbation and consent, and specifying the kind and amount of the property to be sold or otherwise disposed of; which certificate shall be transmitted to the said trustees, who shall cause the same to be recorded in the books of the said corporation -- provided, always, that the moneys arising from such licensed sale shall be vested by the said trustees (as soon as conveniently may be) in such other securities and property as, in the judgment of a majority of them, will be most productive and safe; and provided farther, that the annual interest and income, arising from the money so vested, shall be exclusively applied in the manner and for the uses and purposes in this instrument mentioned and declared.

ARTICLE 6. -- It is provided and declared, that the annual rents, interest, and income of the estate, real and personal, which now does, or at any time hereafter may belong to the said corporation and their successors, shall by them be held subject to the exclusive order and control of the itinerant ministers and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, in their General Conference (from time to time) assembled: and the said ministers and preachers, thus assembled, are hereby vested with full powers to appropriate and point out the mode of applying the same to the objects, under the limitations, and for the uses and purposes herein mentioned and expressly declared.

ARTICLE 7. -- It is provided and declared, that the object and design of the fund hereby intended to be established is expressly for the purposes of relieving the distresses, and supplying the deficiencies of the itinerant and superannuated or worn-out ministers and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America who remain in connection with, and continue subject to, the order and control of, the General Conference; as also for the relief of the wives and children, widows and orphans, of such ministers and preachers, and for no other use, intent, or purpose whatever.

ARTICLE 8. -- It is provided and declared, that no sum exceeding sixty-four dollars shall in any one year be appropriated and applied to the use of an itinerant, superannuated, or worn-out single minister or preacher; also that no sum exceeding one hundred and twenty-eight dollars, in any one year, shall be applied to the use of an itinerant, superannuated, or worn-out married minister or preacher and that no sum exceeding sixty-four dollars, in any one year, shall be applied to the use of each widow of such ministers and preachers as are herein before mentioned and described and also that no sum exceeding sixteen dollars shall be applied, in any one year, to the use of each child or orphan, of such ministers and preachers as are herein before particularly mentioned and described.

ARTICLE 9. -- It is provided and declared, that no sum or sums of money, and or any pretense whatever, shall be drawn from the fund hereby intended to be established, other than for the uses and purposes, and under the limitations and restrictions, herein before expressly mentioned and declared -- provided, nevertheless, that the trustees of the said corporation and their successors shall have power to draw and apply, from time to time, so much money belonging to the said fund as in the judgment of a majority of them may be wanting to defray all the necessary expense of conducting the business of the said corporation.

ARTICLE 10. -- It is provided and declared, that it shall be the duty of the trustees to cause regular and fair accounts to be kept (in books to be provided for that purpose) of the funds of the said corporation, as well as it respects the kind and amount of the capital stock, and of the annual interest and income thereof, as of all and every sum or sums of money which shall from time to time be drawn therefrom, for the objects, under the limitations, and for the uses and purposes herein before particularly mentioned and declared. And farther, it shall be the duty of the said trustees and their successors, at every General Conference of the preachers as aforesaid, to prepare and lay before them a statement of the affairs of the said fund, for their inspection and examination; which said statement shall be signed by the president and countersigned by the secretary of the said corporation, certifying that the same is fair and correct."

It was provided, by a resolution of the General Conference, that the objects of this fund should be presented in an address to our brethren and friends, and that they should be invited to fill it up by voluntary contributions, donations, and bequests. This was accordingly done, and some subscribed liberally, while others stood aloof from it, thinking it most advisable to let the funds remain in the hands of the people, to be drawn out as they might be needed. Though the creation of the chartered fund originated from the purest motives, and has been kept up and superintended by some of the most benevolent spirits in the Church, yet it has never been able to pay more than from ninety to one hundred dollars a year to each annual conference; and as this small amount would not, when divided among the several claimants, give to each but about two dollars a year, it may be questioned whether, by inducing a false dependence in the public mind, this fund has not defeated the objects of its institution, and disappointed the expectations of its benevolent founders and patrons. It has continued, however, in existence, has gradually increased in its resources, and its avails are scrupulously applied according to the provisions of its charter; and hence for the good it has done we have reason to be thankful, and especially to those generous men who have, from time to time, gratuitously superintended its affairs, and impartially distributed its avails. At this conference, with a view to secure church property permanently to the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, according to the true intent and meaning of the donors and contributors, with as little expense as possible, the form of a deed of settlement was drawn up and inserted in the Discipline. The provisions of the Discipline, however, in respect to this deed, have been modified from time to time, so as to conform to the usages of law in the several states and territories, merely requiring deeds of trust to be so drawn as to "secure the premises firmly and permanently to the Methodist Episcopal Church," to be held in trust by a board of trustees -- elected by the people where the laws of the states respectively so require, or where no such laws exist, they are to be appointed by the preacher in charge, or by the presiding elder of the district -- for the use of the members of said church in the place where the property is located. See Dis., part ii, sec. 2. As many have affirmed that all church property is owned by the annual conferences, it may be proper

to remark, that they have no legal claim to the property, nor have they sought, nor do they seek, any other control over it than to be permitted "to preach and expound God's word" in the churches, and to administer the discipline and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As to the property itself, it is vested in a board of trustees, elected according to the provisions of law, where such law exists, who are held responsible as Methodists to the quarterly meeting conference of their circuit for the manner in which they discharge their trusts; while the conferences claim the right of using the houses of worship, in conformity to the object for which they were erected, for religious and spiritual purposes only, according to the requisitions of the doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is true, the trustees are not permitted to alienate the property for other purposes than those for which it was procured, nor are they permitted to exclude from the pulpits those ministers who are regularly sent to them according to the regulations of the Church to which they belong. And is not this as it should be? Should not church property be held sacredly for the sole purposes to which it has been devoted, and which were specified in the deed of settlement when it was enfeoffed to the church? ["enfeoffed to the church:" made a holding of, placed under the control of, the church-- DVM]

These remarks have been called for by the oft-repeated and oft-refuted slander, that the Methodist bishops and conferences are the legal owners of the houses of worship which are occupied within our bounds. The property belongs to the members of the church worshipping in that place, and they have committed it to trustees, generally of their own choosing, for safe keeping, that it may be used for the exclusive purpose for which it was procured, namely, to be devoted in perpetuity to the interests of true religion, as now taught, explained, and enforced by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

We have already seen that our economy recognizes a class of laborers denominated local preachers, who attend to secular concerns for a livelihood, and preach occasionally without fee or reward, as their dispositions and circumstances will allow. The number of these had become considerably increased in consequence of the numerous locations before noticed, as well by licensing those who were thought to possess gifts and grace for usefulness in the Church. This useful class of men were often called upon to assist the traveling preachers in their work, to fill vacancies occasioned by sickness or death, in addition to their regular appointments on the Sabbath. In consequence of these things, the present General Conference made the following provisions respecting a local preacher: --

1. He must receive a license, after being examined and approved, from the quarterly meeting conference, provided he be recommended by the class to which he belongs.

2. After improving his gifts acceptably for four years, by being suitably recommended to an annual conference, he was to be eligible to the office of a deacon.

3. Whenever a local preacher filled the place of a traveling preacher, if the latter were unable from sickness or other unavoidable means to fill his own appointments, he was to be allowed a sum in proportion to the allowance of the traveling preacher, to be raised by the circuit; or if the traveling preacher were absent from other causes, his substitute was to be paid out of his allowance.

4. But if the local preacher were distressed in his circumstances, in consequence of his services in the Church, by applying to the quarterly conference, he might receive such relief as they might see

proper to afford him, after the allowance of the traveling preachers and their families were paid.

5. A rule was made for the trial of a local preacher before his peers, differing but little from the one now in existence, which, as the regulations respecting them have been modified from time to time, I shall notice more particularly in another place. Before this rule was passed, local preachers had been tried before the society to which they belonged, the same as if they were but private members. Since this period, however, they have been amenable either to those of their own grade in the ministry or to the quarterly meeting conference. The following rule respecting the use and sale of spirituous liquors was made, and still continues, unhappily, [Bangs apparently thought that the regulation was faulty, in that it seemed to give tacit legitimacy to some use of spirituous liquors. -- DVM] the standing regulation on this subject: --

"If any member of our society retail or give spirituous liquors, and any thing disorderly be transacted under his roof on this account, the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit shall proceed against him as in the case of other immoralities; and the person accused shall be cleared, suspended; or excluded, according to his conduct, as on other charges of immorality." By turning to the form of Discipline published in 1789, which is said to be fifth edition, we find the following item in the General Rules: -- "Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them." This was an alteration from the rule of Mr. Wesley, as that allowed the use of them in cases of "extreme necessity," -- whereas this prohibits all use of them, as a drink, and even forbids the "buying or selling" them under any circumstances. At what time or by whose influence the rule was so altered as to read as it now stands in the Discipline, I have not been able to ascertain, but presume it must have been some time prior to the year 1796, as it seems the pernicious custom of retailing them had become so offensive at this time as to require a special enactment of the General Conference to check the unhallowed practice; for when people begin to make laws with a view to regulate any particular practice, it is an evidence that the practice itself is, in some sense, sanctioned. It is to be hoped that the time is not far distant when the entire use of spirituous liquors shall be banished from the world, but more especially from the church of God: and that to traffic in them, by either manufacturing, buying or selling them, shall be considered as dishonorable, as it is now to become inebriated by their excessive use. In consequence of the extension of the work, the frequent interruptions in the health of Bishop Asbury, and the long absence of Dr. Coke from the continent every year, it was considered expedient by many members to elect and consecrate some person as an assistant bishop. After consulting each other in reference to the manner in which the person should be elected, Dr. Coke put an end to the discussion by offering himself unreservedly to the American Methodists. This offer was accepted by the conference, and Dr. Coke gave them the following certificate in writing: --

"I offer myself to my American brethren entirely to their service, all I am and have, with my talents and labors in every respect, without any mental reservation whatever, to labor among them and to assist Bishop Asbury; not to station the preachers at any time when he is present; but to exercise all the episcopal duties, when I hold a conference in his absence, and by his consent, and to visit the West Indies and France, when there is an opening and I can be spared.

Signed, Thomas Coke." Conference Room, Baltimore, Oct. 27, 1796." This instrument was given and accepted in good faith, and the obligation was sacredly fulfilled on the part of Dr. Coke, until he was honorably released from it by his American brethren. In pursuance of this engagement, Dr.

Coke continued on the American continent as the "friend and colleague" of Bishop Asbury, laboring with great acceptance and usefulness among the people in different parts of the country, until the 6th of February, when he took his departure from Charleston, South Carolina, for Europe. Having a very tempestuous passage, the ship suffered severely, an though they arrived in the Irish channel in twenty-five days, they were there becalmed nearly sixteen days, during which time the following curious incident occurred, which shows the superstition to which seamen, otherwise intelligent, are often subjected.

During the calm Dr. Coke used his time in reading a large folio volume. "At length," says his biographer, "being impelled more violently by a tide of superstition, than his vessel was by natural breezes, the captain exclaimed in unequivocal terms, 'We shall never have a wind until that book is finished.' 'Sir, I will put it aside,' replied Dr. Coke. ' No,' rejoined the captain, that will not do; it must be finished, or we shall have no wind.' Dr. Coke continued reading, and 'I doubt not,' he observes, 'that the captain was somewhat confirmed in his opinion; for just as I had finished the book, the wind sprung up, and in six and thirty hours brought us into the harbor.' "

Having finished the labors of this conference, Bishop Asbury expressing his gladness that the session was over, went to his accustomed work, and the preachers to their respective fields of labor, being "determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

02.04.03. Vol 2, Book 4, Chapter 03

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book IV Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 3 From the close of the General Conference in 1796, to the commencement of the General Conference in 1800

1797

There were six annual conferences held this year, one of which was in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, the seventh that was held in New England. Three new circuits were returned on the minutes, namely, Pleasant River, in Maine; Sandwich, and Martha's Vineyard, in Massachusetts. This latter circuit included the island by that name belonging to the state of Massachusetts, about twenty-one miles in length, and was once the scene of missionary labors by some of our Puritan ancestors, who devoted themselves to the conversion of the aborigines of the country. But the fruit of these labors, though they abounded for a season, had long since disappeared; and among the white inhabitants who had taken their place, a few only welcomed the coming of a Methodist preacher; for we find that in 1798 no more than thirteen members of the Church are credited to Martha's Vineyard.

Though Bishop Asbury began the year with his wonted diligence, and set off upon his annual tour of the continent, yet his physical strength was not equal to the task, and he was compelled to yield, though with great reluctance, to the necessity of employing a substitute to preside in the conferences. He, however, in company with Dr. Coke, rode through several of the southern states until the doctor left the continent for Ireland. The following remark shows the intimate and endeared friendship which subsisted between these two servants of God. Speaking of the doctor's departure, he says, "Strangers to the delicacies of Christian friendship know little or nothing of the pain of parting." After spending some time in Charleston, in consequence of his great debility, during which, however, he was busy in setting things in order, preaching when able, and assisting them in building another house of worship, he set off on his western tour. "On my way," he says, "I felt as if I was out of prison. Hail ye solitary pines! the jessamine, the red-bud, and the dog-wood! How charming in full bloom! the former a most fragrant smell." He succeeded in crossing the Cumberland Mountains in the state of Tennessee, but such were his bodily afflictions, that, through the advice and persuasions of his friends, he relinquished his intention of visiting the Kentucky conference, and made his way back as he was able to endure the fatigue of traveling, to the city of Baltimore. While in the state of Virginia, he made the following reflections: --

"My fever left me, as I thought, from Monday until Friday night. I am kept cheerful, but very weak. My diet is chiefly tea, potatoes, Indian meal gruel, and chicken broth. My reading is only the Bible. I cannot think much, and write only a few letters. I think of my charge, of the conferences, and the Church, and of my dear parents, who will probably outlive me.1 I must he made perfect through

sufferings. I rest in rainy weather, and have to ride from eighty to one hundred miles in a week. The way we now go we have sometimes to ride thirty miles to get to a house." -- "I have traveled about six hundred miles with an inflammatory fever, and a fixed pain in my breast." In this state of pain and weakness did this holy man of God pursue his work, through the various sections of our country, for the sole purpose of building up the Redeemer's kingdom. On the tenth of June he arrived in Baltimore, where he had every attention paid to him which Christian love and esteem could devise; and notwithstanding his physical sufferings, he employed his time, so far as his feeble health would allow, in preaching occasionally to the people, visiting the classes, and in organizing an African Church. By a suitable attention to medical advice, and the nursing care of his affectionate friends, he soon so far recruited as to be able to resume his itinerant labors. Accordingly we find him on his Northern course passing though Pennsylvania and New Jersey, (stopping long enough in the most important places to preach and meet the classes,) to New York, and thence he went on his way with an intention to meet the conference at Wilbraham in Massachusetts; but his fever increasing, he was obliged to stop at Tuckehoe, at the house of Bishop Sherwood where he was treated with great kindness. While here he makes the following reflections, which show the feelings of a sensitive heart, struggling under the burdensome cares of a superintendent of the Church, of an obedient and affectionate son, still panting for an enlarged sphere of usefulness in the world: --

"The kindness of this Sherwood family is great; my dear mamma, and Betsy Sherwood, and Jonathan and Bishop also: if I had not been at home here, what additional distress of mind would have attended me! my friends also were welcome to come and see me. Sabbath day, at the widow Sherwood's, I had the pleasure of hearing our brother Matthias make a pointed, profitable, and powerful discourse. It is now eight weeks since I have preached -- awfully dumb Sabbaths! I have been most severely tried from various quarters; my fevers, my feet, and Satan, would set in with my gloomy and nervous affections. Sometimes subject to the greatest effeminacy; to distress at the thought of a useless, idle life: but what brought the heavy pang into my heart, and the big tear to roll, that never rises without a cause, was the thought of leaving the connection without some proper men of their own election, to go in and out before them in my place, and to keep that order which I have been seeking these many years to establish. My aged parents were dear to me in their advanced age and dependent state: like myself, they have spent what they had to spare for many years, nearly forty, in keeping open doors for the gospel and people of God: this burden hath been laid upon them. I am happy that I can now ride a little every clear day for my better health, and can eat and sleep better. I am left too much alone: I cannot sit in my room all day making gloomy reflections on the past, present, and future life. Lord help me! for I am poor and needy; the hand of God hath touched me, and I think Satan forts himself in my melancholy, unemployed, unsocial, and inactive hours."

While the bishop was thus hindered from attending the conference in Wilbraham, it was some consolation to him to know that there were those in the Church who could supply his place, without material detriment to the cause. He Accordingly wrote to Jesse Lee, requesting him to attend the Conference in Wilbraham, which he did, and the conference made choice of him to preside over their deliberations. This duty he discharged to their entire satisfaction, doing all the business of an annual conference except the ordinations. Afterward, at the request of the bishop, and on the recommendation of that conference, Mr. Lee left New England and accompanied Bishop Asbury,

with a view to aid him in his peculiar work, to some of the more southern conferences. After attending the Virginia conference together, the bishop, at the request of the conference, stopped to recruit his strength, now much wasted by sickness and fatigue, and Mr. Lee went on to attend the more southern conferences. This year the city of Philadelphia was severely visited by an epidemical disease which hurried into eternity thousands of its citizens, and induced thousands of others to flee for safety into the country. On this account the conference which was to have set in that city was removed to Duck Creek, in the state of Delaware. The number of locations still continued to embarrass the itinerancy, as not less than forty-three were returned this year "under a location through weakness of body and family concerns." How much more mighty in strength and comely in beauty would have been the Methodist Episcopal Church had she used the proper means to retain in her itinerant service all those men of God! Youth and inexperience were often called in to supply the lack of service occasioned by these premature departures from the regular work.

While the increase, though comparatively small among the members, shows the good effects resulting from a united effort to spread the knowledge of God our Saviour, the decrease in the number of preachers, as will be seen below, evinces a lamentable defect in securing the continued labors of all those who had entered the itinerating ranks.

Two preachers, namely, John Ragan and Albert Van Nostrand, closed their labors and life this year in peace, and went to their reward in glory.

Numbers in the Church

Last year and this, in the recapitulation of the numbers, I find them taken by states; and that the reader may see the relative strength of Methodism in the several states of the Union, I give them as they stand In the minutes for 1797.

Province of Maine --Whites: 616; Colored: 0 New Hampshire -- Whites: 92; Colored: 0 Massachusetts -- Whites: 905; Colored: 8 Rhode Island -- Whites: 175; Colored: 2 Connecticut -- Whites: 1,186; Colored: 15 New York -- Whites: 4,612; Colored: 238 New Jersey -- Whites: 2,438; Colored: 127 Pennsylvania -- Whites: 2,900; Colored: 198 Delaware -- Whites: 1,461; Colored: 823 Maryland -- Whites: 6,982; Colored: 5,106 Virginia -- Whites: 11,046; Colored: 2,490 North Carolina -- Whites: 7,251; Colored: 2,071 South Carolina -- Whites: 2,693; Colored: 890 Georgia -- Whites: 1,022; Colored: 148 Tennessee -- Whites: 534; Colored: 42 Kentucky -- Whites: 1,740; Colored: 57 Canada -- Whites: 792; Colored: 3 Total This Year -- Whites: 46,445; Colored: 12,218 Grand Total This Year: 58,663 Grand Total Last Year: 56,664

Increase: 1,999 Preachers This Year: 262 Preachers Last Year: 293

Decrease: 31

It will be seen by the above enumeration, that there were upward of twelve thousand people of color attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church. These were chiefly in the southern states, and had been gathered principally from the slave population. At an early period of the Methodist ministry in this country, it had turned its attention and directed its efforts toward these people, with a view to bring them to the enjoyment of gospel blessings. The preachers deplored, with the deepest sympathy, their unhappy condition, especially their enslavement to sin and Satan; and

while they labored unsuccessfully by all prudent means to effect their disenthrallment from their civil bondage, they were amply rewarded for their evangelical efforts to raise them from their moral degradation, by seeing thousands of them happily converted to God. These efforts added much to the labor of the preachers, for such was the condition of the slaves that they were not permitted, on working days, to attend the public administration of the word in company with their masters; and hence the preachers devoted the evenings to their instruction, after the customary labors of the day were closed. And although at first there was much aversion manifested by the masters toward these benevolent efforts to elevate the condition of their slaves, yet witnessing the beneficial effects of the gospel upon their hearts and lives, they gradually yielded their prejudices, and encouraged the preachers in their labors, assisted in providing houses to accommodate them in their worship, and otherwise protected them in their religious privileges. While, therefore, the voice of the preachers was not heard in favor of emancipation from their civil bondage, nor their remonstrances against the evils of slavery heeded, the voice of truth addressed to the understandings and consciences of the slaves themselves, was often heard with believing and obedient hearts, and made instrumental in their deliverance from the shackles of sin and the bondage of Satan. Those who were thus redeemed were enrolled among the people of God, and were consequently entitled to the privileges of the Church of Christ. In some of the northern cities, houses of worship were erected for their special and separate accommodation, and they were put under the pastoral charge of a white preacher, who was generally assisted by such colored local preachers as may have been raised up among themselves; for many such, from time to time, possessing gifts for edification, were licensed to preach the gospel to their colored brethren, and some of these have been eminently useful. In the more southern states, where the municipal regulations in respect to the slaves are more severe, some portion of the churches where the white population assemble is usually set apart for the blacks. Their behavior has generally been such as to insure the confidence of their masters and the protection of their civil rulers, though they labored under the disabilities incident to a state of servitude. This year, ten months from the time the former house was consumed by fire, on the 19th of October, the new church in Light Street, in the city of Baltimore, was consecrated to the service of almighty God.

1798

There were seven conferences this year, so arranged that the bishops might begin their labors in the southern states in the winter season, and travel on north in the spring and summer months. One of these conferences was held in Readfield, in the province of Maine, for the accommodation of that part of the work.

Chenango, in the western part of New York, Vergennes, in Vermont, and Providence, in Rhode Island, were added to the list of circuits. The western section of the state of New York was, at this time, a new country, just filling up with inhabitants, and was generally destitute of the word and ordinances of Christianity. To supply them with these several young men full of zeal for the cause of God, were sent into this newly settled country, under the care of the Rev. F. Garrettson, to whom the charge of the Albany district was confided. As early as 1792, Mr. Garrettson had traveled though various parts of this new country, preaching to the people in their log houses, in barns, and often holding his quarterly meetings under the foliage of the trees. Aided as he was by those zealous and indefatigable young preachers who entered this field of labor, he was instrumental in extending the gospel and its attendant blessings into these destitute places; by

these means those societies were established, which have continued to nourish and increase to the present time. Along the Mohawk river, as far as Utica, as well as the Chenango and Susquehanna rivers, those pioneers of Methodism penetrated, and laid the foundation for those extensive revivals of religion which have blessed that region of country. We may form some judgment of the good effects of these labors and sacrifices from the fact that there were returned in the minutes for this year, including the Tioga, Wyoming, Saratoga and Seneca circuits, 892 members of the Church. Had equal zeal been manifested at this early period in building suitable houses of worship, as the work enlarged with the progress of the settlements, Methodism would have taken a stand here more firmly, and have exerted a much more hallowed and extensive influence over the population. As it was, however, the permanency of the work has been manifested by its steady growth and leavening effects on that flourishing part of the country; and more latterly the defect alluded to has been in a great measure remedied by the zeal and industry of those enlightened men to whom the oversight of the work has been committed. A gradual extension of the cause was witnessed generally throughout our bounds, and much harmony and peace prevailed among preachers and people.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 47,867; Last Year: 46,445; Increase: 1,422 -- Colored This Year: 12,302; Last Year: 12,218; Increase: 84 -- Total This Year: 60,169; Last Year: 58,663 -- Increase: 1,506 -- Preachers This Year: 267; Last Year: 262; Increase: 5.

During the prevalence of the yellow fever in the city of Philadelphia this year, many estimable citizens were swept from time to eternity, and among others that eminent preacher of the gospel, John Dickins, whose useful services in the Church entitle him to a more special and lengthened notice than what has been given to some others.

He was a native of Great Britain, born and educated in the city of London. At what time he emigrated to this country is not stated; but it appears that in 1774 he was made a partaker of divine grace, and united himself to the Methodist society in Virginia. In 1777 he was admitted into the traveling ministry, and itinerated extensively though Virginia and North Carolina in the time of the Revolutionary war. For some cause he located in 1781, but two years after was readmitted into the conference, and was stationed in the city of New York, where he labored for several years acceptably and usefully. When the Book Room was established in the city of Philadelphia in 1789, he was appointed to its superintendence, and he managed its concerns with great skill and fidelity until his demise. For this station he was eminently qualified, not only on account of his strict fidelity, his theological attainments, and thorough acquaintance with the economy of Methodism, but also from his literary acquirements. His knowledge of the sciences was considerable, and besides his own language, he was familiar with the Latin and Greek. And, though not brilliant in his conceptions nor splendid as a preacher, he was of sound judgment, a close and conclusive reasoner, a plain, pointed, and successful preacher, always adapting, as nearly as might be, his discourses to the condition and circumstances of his hearers. As an evidence of the soundness of his views as a divine, may be mentioned the fact that the "Short Scriptural Catechism," which has been published for many years at our Book Room, was the production of his pen. And whatever may be said in behalf of others which have been since issued from the press, this is among the most excellent of them all, and should never be superseded by those of less intrinsic merit. It contains in fact a body of divinity in a few words, selected from the Holy Scriptures, arranged in due order, in the very phraseology in "which the Holy Ghost teacheth." The accuracy and fidelity

with which he discharged his duties as an editor, and also as a financier and bookkeeper -- for in each of these capacities did he serve while superintending the Book Concern in Philadelphia -- may be seen and appreciated by an inspection of the books of the establishment, by a recurrence to the manner in which it prospered in his hands, and the typographical correctness with which the books were executed. In the relations of husband and parent he sustained the purity and dignity of his station, mixing in all his deportment the tenderness of the warmest affection with the attributes essential to maintain his authority as the head of a family. In the relation of a father ever attentive to the best interests of his children, he devoted himself to their education, to training their minds to moral and religious duties, and to restraining them from those vices which corrupt the mind, and lay the foundation for present and future misery. The state of his mind may be seen by the following extract of a letter which he wrote to Bishop Asbury a short time before his death. The reader will recollect that the yellow fever was then raging in Philadelphia with awful and destructive violence, sweeping into eternity thousands of his fellow-beings, while others, to escape from this devouring plague, were flying into various parts of the country. Notwithstanding these alarming aspects in the heavens and the earth around him, John Dickins remained, as a faithful sentinel, at his post, giving warning to the impenitent, and counsel and consolation to the trembling and dying believer. In the midst of these things, he says to Bishop Asbury: --

"My much-esteemed Friend and Brother -- I sit down to write as in the jaws of death. Whether Providence may permit me to see your face again in the flesh I know not; but if not, I hope, though abundant mercy, we shall meet in the presence of God. I am fully conscious that I am an unprofitable, a very unprofitable servant; but I think my heart condemns me not, and therefore I have confidence in God. Perhaps I might have left the city, as most of my friends and brethren have done; but when I thought of such a thing, my mind recurred to that Providence which has done so much for me, a poor worm, that I was afraid of indulging any distrust. So I commit myself and family into the hands of God, for life or death."

Soon after writing the above, he was seized with the raging epidemic, and on the 27th of September, 1795, he took his departure to a better world, in the fifty-second year of his age. During his sickness, which he contracted while visiting the abodes of wretchedness and administering the consolations of the gospel to the dying, he was saved from those awful agitations of body and mind which are usually the accompaniments of this fatal disease, and with great tranquillity of mind he entered into his Master’s joy. From the testimony of his bereaved widow it appears that he said to her, on the first day of his illness, --

"I am very ill; but I entreat you in the most earnest manner, not to be the least discomposed or uneasy. Tell the children, I beg them not to be uneasy, for divine wisdom cannot err. Glory be to God! I can rejoice in his will, whether for life or death. I know all is well! Glory be to Jesus! I hang upon three. Glory be to thee, O, my God I have made it my constant business, in my feeble manner, to please thee -- and now, O God, thou dost comfort me." In this happy frame of mind did he meet the last enemy on his first approaches. Then clasping his hands together, he joyfully exclaimed, "Glory be to God! Glory! Glory be to God! My soul now enjoys such sweet communion with him, that I would not give it for all the world. Glory be to Jesus! O, glory be to God! I have not felt so much for seven years. Love him! Trust him! Praise him!"

Bishop Asbury bears the following testimony to the character of Mr. Dickins: -- "For piety, probity, profitable preaching, holy living, Christian education of his children, secret closet prayer, I doubt whether his superior is to be found either in Europe or America."

James King, and Michael H. R. Wilson, also finished their course and entered into their Master's joy.

Twelve were located; and for the first time, four were returned as supernumerary preachers this year. These were, John Smith, Thomas Morrell, Enoch Mudge, and Henry Willis.

1799 This year there were only six conferences, the first of which was in Charleston, S. C., January 1, and the last in the city of New York, June 19, 1799. As John Dickins, the book steward, had gone to his reward, by the recommendation of the Philadelphia Conference, Bishop Asbury appointed Ezekiel Cooper, to superintend the Book Concern, which was still carried on in the city of Philadelphia. This year was distinguished by several revivals of religion. In Upper Canada a gracious revival had commenced in 1797, chiefly through the instrumentality of Calvin Wooster, whose fervency of spirit led him forth in the work of reformation in a most remarkable manner, and with singular success. In company with Samuel Coate, he volunteered his services as a missionary to this distant field of labor, and after enduring almost incredible hardships on their way, for they lodged no less than twenty-one nights in the wilderness, they arrived in safety just in time to attend a quarterly meeting on the Bay of Quinte circuit. After the preaching on Saturday, while the presiding elder, Darius Dunham, retired with the official brethren to hold the quarterly meeting conference, brother Wooster remained in the meeting to pray with some who were under awakenings, and others who were groaning for full redemption in the blood of Christ. While uniting with his brethren in this exercise, the power of the Most high seemed to overshadow the congregation, and many were filled with joy unspeakable, and were praising the Lord aloud for what he had done for their souls, while others "with speechless awe, and silent love," were prostrate on the floor. When the presiding elder came into the house, he beheld these things with a mixture of wonder and indignation, believing that "wild-fire" was burning among the people. After gazing for a while with silent astonishment, he kneeled down and began to pray to God to stop the "raging of the wild-fire," as he called it. In the meantime, Calvin Wooster, whose soul was burning with the "fire of the holy Spirit," kneeled by the side of brother Dunham, and while the latter was earnestly engaged in prayer for God to put out the wild-fire, Wooster softly whispered out a prayer in the following words, "Lord, bless brother Dunham! Lord, bless brother Dunham!" Thus they continued for some minutes -- when, at length, the prayer of brother Wooster prevailed, and Dunham fell prostrate on the floor -- and ere he arose received a baptism of that very fire which he had so feelingly deprecated as the effect of a wild imagination. There was now harmony in their prayers, feelings, and views; and this was the commencement of a revival of religion which soon spread though the entire province for as brother Dunham was the presiding elder, he was instrumental in spreading the sacred flame throughout the district, to the joy and salvation of hundreds of immortal souls.

Calvin Wooster was a man of mighty prayer and faith. Frequently was his voice heard, by the families where he lodged, in the night season, when rising from his bed while others slept, he would pour out the desire of his soul to God, in earnest prayer for the salvation of souls. Such, indeed, was the strength of his faith in God, and the fervency of his spirit, as well as the bold and

pointed manner of his appeals to the consciences of his hearers, and particularly to the wicked, that few of these could stand before him -- they would either flee from the house, or, smitten with conviction, fall down and cry aloud for mercy while, in the midst of these exercises, the saints of God were shouting forth his praises. Nor was he alone in this work. The other preachers caught the flame of divine love, and were came forward under its sacred impulses in their Master's work. Many instances of the manifestations of divine power and grace might be narrated, which go to illustrate the authority by which these men of God spoke in his name; one of which I will relate. At a quarterly meeting in the Bay of Quinte district, as the preacher commenced his sermon, a thoughtless man in the front gallery, commenced, in a playful mood, to swear profanely, and otherwise to disturb the congregation. The preacher paid no attention to him until he was in the midst of his sermon, when, feeling strong in faith and the power of His might, suddenly stopping, he fixed his piercing eye upon the profane man, then stamping with his foot, and pointing his finger at him with great energy, he cried out, "My God! smite him!" He instantly fell, as if shot though the heart with a bullet. At this moment such a divine afflatus came down upon the congregation, that sinners were crying to God for mercy in every direction, while the saints of God burst forth in loud praises to his name. Similar instances of God's gracious presence were not uncommon in those days in that country, as they have been related to the writer on the most unquestionable authority. Indeed, this great work may be said to have been, in some sense, the beginning of that great revival of religion which soon after spread through various parts of the United States. The doctrine more especially urged upon believers was that of sanctification, or holiness of heart and life, -- a complete surrender of the soul and body, all their powers and affections, to the service of God -- and this was pressed upon them as their present privilege; depending for its accomplishment now on the faithfulness of God, who had promised to do it. When this baptism of the Holy Ghost which fired and filled the hearts of God's ministers at that time, and which enabled them so to speak that the people felt that their words were with "demonstration and power," and they could not well resist the influence of those "thoughts which breathed," and those "words which burned." Nor were they less assiduous to press upon the unconverted the necessity of immediate and instantaneous conversion, or a present justification by faith in Jesus Christ -- warning them in the most faithful and affectionate manner of the imminent danger of delaying one moment to repent of their sins, and surrender their hearts to God. O what awful sensations ran though the assemblies while Calvin Wooster, and others of a like spirit, were denouncing the just judgments of God against impenitent sinners, in such pointed language as made the "ear to tingle," and the heart to palpitate! Nor were they less affected while these men of God portrayed in such lively colors the beauty and amiableness of religion, the ability and willingness of the Lord Jesus Christ to save them, and concluded by urging them, in the most earnest manner, and with the most affectionate and pathetic strain of eloquence, to accept of pardon and invitation without a moment's delay.

"We are not to suppose that this work went on without opposition. In that country there was a marked line of distinction "between the righteous and the wicked," there being but few formal professors of religion to interpose between the two classes. And such was the general state of society, that those who did not embrace religion felt themselves at liberty to manifest their hatred to its doctrines by open acts of hostility, by scurrilous speeches, and in some instances by personal violence. But in the midst of the obloquy and reproach heaped upon the servants of God, they held on their way, boldly proclaiming the sacred truths of the gospel; and, not infrequently, some of the boldest opposers of the truth no sooner came within its hearing, than they were forced

to yield to its authority, when they willingly bowed their necks to the yoke of Jesus Christ. One instance among many others I will relate. A stout opposer of the Methodists, hearing that his wife was in a prayer-meeting, rushed violently into the room, seized the wife, and dragged her to the door, when, attempting to open it, he was himself seized with trembling, his knees failed him, and he fell helpless upon the floor, and was fain to beg an interest in the prayer of those very people whom he had so much despised and persecuted. He rose not until the Lord released him from his sins and made him a partaker of his pardoning mercy. This very man afterward became an itinerant minister, with whom I was personally acquainted, and had the relation of these facts from his own lips.

All, however, were not so fortunate. The Rev. James Coleman, calling to visit a woman under conviction for sin, while talking with her, was assailed by her husband, who struck him on the forehead so violently, that he carried the mark for a considerable time; and then, to add to the enormity of the offense, raised the scandalous report that Mr. Coleman was holding improper discourse with his wife, which, indeed, was believed by many, until the real cause was revealed, namely, the man's hatred to true religion. This seems a suitable place to notice the introduction of Methodism into the state of Ohio, which was received into the Union in 1802. It is said that the first settlement in Ohio was commenced in the town of Marietta in 1788, by emigrants from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. What is called the "Western Reserve," was chiefly settled by persons from Connecticut, who purchased the lands of that state about eight years after the first settlement was made. Like all the other new territories in our western wilderness, the settlers were at first destitute of the ordinances of religion, though many of those who removed to Ohio carried their Bibles with them, and retained the religions impressions which they had received at home.

It seems that about the year 1796, Francis McCormick, a local preacher, emigrated from Virginia, first to Kentucky, but not liking his situation, removed to what was then called the Northwestern Territory, now Ohio, and settled on the Little Miami, near where the town of Milford now stands. Having no associates like-minded with himself, he went to work in the name of the Lord, and was instrumental in forming a class of ten members, including himself and the members of his family. Being encouraged by this success, he began holding meetings wherever he could gain access to the people, and soon succeeded in forming two more classes, one at brother Ramsey's, on the Obannon's Creek, and another at brother Nutt's near Columbia, each consisting of about ten members. In these labors, though much opposed by the thoughtless and some bigoted professors of religion, he enjoyed much of the presence of the Lord, and often rejoiced over returning prodigals to their Father's house. Being attached to the itinerant plan of preaching the gospel, Mr. McCormick made several attempts to procure a regular preacher, but could not succeed, because there were not preachers enough to supply the circuits already formed and forming in Kentucky and Tennessee, and at the same time to answer his call. At length he was joined in his labors by Philip Gatch, who was among the first Methodist preachers raised up in America, for his name appears in the minutes as an assistant in 1774, and was stationed at that time on Frederick circuit in Maryland, his native state. He was now a local preacher, having desisted from traveling in 1778 -- and moving into this new country, became an efficient agent in building up the cause of God. They were soon after joined by some other pious families from various parts of the older states; and in 1799 they were visited by the Rev. John Kobler, from the Hinkstone circuit, in Kentucky. In

company with brother McCormick, he traveled up the Little Miami to the Mad river, as far as there were any settlements, and then down the Great Miami river. They met with some opposition from a few bigoted professors of religion, with whom they disagreed on some doctrinal points, but in general the people appeared ripe for the gospel; and thus these visits laid the foundation for that flourishing state of Methodism which has been witnessed in this thriving part of our country. They were soon after regularly supplied with preaching, and though the inhabitants, from their ignorance of the real character and motives of the preachers who came among them, seemed at first afraid to receive them into their houses or to hear them preach, yet they gradually succeeded in gaining their attention and confidence, and in bringing many of them from "darkness into the marvelous light of gospel." In 1803, John Collins, a local preacher from New Jersey, settled on the east fork of the Little Miami: his labors were greatly blessed among the people, and through his instrumentality several young preachers were raised up for the itinerancy, who became eminently useful. In 1807 brother Collins joined the traveling ministry, and has continued his useful labors to the present time. Through his and the labors of others who united with him in this work, circuits were formed, and societies established in that part of Ohio along the banks of the Great and Little Miami rivers, Mad River, Cesar's Creek, in Urbana and Xenia, Derby and Paint Creeks, so that in 1807 an annual conference was held in Chillicothie, at which time there were in the Ohio district 3683 members, and 17 preachers. In the Western Reserve, Methodism is about co-eval [contemporary] with the earliest settlement of the country. The first society was formed in Deerfield, in 1801, by a few persons who had emigrated from Massachusetts, namely, Lewis Day, Lewis Ely, their families, and a few others. The next year a society was formed, in the town of Hubbard, at George Frazier's, an emigrant from the Eastern Shore of Maryland. In the same year, Henry Shaul, an exhorter, and afterward a local preacher, moved from Georgetown, Pa., having previously traveled nearly forty miles though the woods to visit the brethren in that place, and settled in the town of Deerfield. About the same time William Veach and Amos Smith, local preachers, settled in Hubbard, and helped to build up the society; and Obed Crosby, a local preacher, established himself in the town of Vernon. These opened the way for the introduction of Methodism in the Western Reserve. In 1803, Shadrach Bostwick, who had been a traveling preacher for several years in the eastern conferences, was stationed as a missionary at Deerfield, which was at that time connected with the Baltimore conference. He was the first regular preacher sent to the Western Reserve, and he succeeded in forming a small circuit among the new settlements, which he traveled by following Indian trails and marked trees, from one little settlement to another, and at the next conference he returned sixteen Church members. For want of roads and bridge, he was compelled to desist from traveling in the winter months. He continued his labors until 1805, when he located, and the few appointments he had secured were connected with the Erie circuit, then under the charge of David Best and Joseph A. Shackleford. In this way the work commenced in this section of the state of Ohio, and it has continued from that day to this gradually and sometimes powerfully to advance, keeping an even pace with the progress of the settlements and the improvements of society. In many other parts of the country the work of God greatly prospered. The delightful harmony which prevailed among preachers and people, and the efforts which were made to extend the blessings of the gospel into the new settlements, east, west, north, and south, gave a vigorous impulse to the general cause, and became a means of bringing hundreds into the fold of Christ. In the month of January of this year, George Clark was sent to St. Mary's, in the state of Georgia. He found the people in general quite destitute of the gospel, and consequently

ignorant of its requisitions, some having arrived to maturity without the privilege of ever hearing a sermon or even a prayer. He bestowed his labors chiefly on the people in Glenn and Camden counties, and so unacquainted were they with Divine worship that he found it needful to teach them the very first elements of Christianity, even when they should kneel, and when sit, in time of public worship. His labors, however, were so sanctioned of God; that before the year closed, many of the people became constant hearers of the word, while a number of others were truly converted to God and thoroughly reformed in their lives. The first Methodist society in the town of Augusta, Ga., was formed in the month of December of this year under the labors of Stith Mead. Some time after this they succeeded in building a commodious house of worship, and the society has gradually enlarged its borders from that day to this. This year, Tobias Gibson volunteered his services as a missionary to Natchez, in the Mississippi Territory. Though this territory was not received into the confederacy as an independent state, until the year 1817, yet the people from several of the older states had emigrated into its bounds, and were forming settlement in various places along the banks of the Mississippi River, the chief of which, at that time, was the town of Natchez. Like other new settlements, they were generally destitute of religious privileges, and in danger of being carried away in the stream of moral pollution. Tobias Gibson, being released from his regular work, in consequence of ill health, feeling his mind drawn toward the people in that western country, set off to pay them a visit. Though he found them under the influence of different religious creeds, so far as any religious influence was felt, they received him as a messenger of God, and his labors were blessed to the awakening and conversion of souls. The report of his labors and success at the next conference was highly satisfactory, and accordingly, in 1800, his name appears on the minutes for Natchez, with eighty members in the church. He continued in this country until his death in 1804.

Some idea may be formed of the difficulties he had to encounter and the privations he endured, from the fact, that after traveling six hundred miles, much of the way though the wilderness, to Cumberland River, taking his saddle and traveling equipage into a canoe, he paddled himself down the Cumberland into the Ohio River, and thence into the Mississippi, a distance of upward of seven hundred miles more, to the town of Natchez. Four times he traversed the wilderness, a distance of six hundred miles, being conducted by some friendly Indians on his devious way. The burning love of God which impelled him on in this work, filled his mouth with persuasive arguments in behalf of the gospel, and made him instrumental in leading many a wanderer back to his Father’s house. When so worn down by his excessive labors and exposure, as to be unable to pursue his work with the wonted vigor, he came to the conference, and so earnestly plead the cause in behalf of those people, that in 1803 another, Moses Floyd, was sent to his help, and by their patient and indefatigable labors in this newly settled country, they laid a foundation for the erection of that superstructure of Methodism which has since reared itself in those western wilds. No less than twenty-nine preachers located this year, and ten were returned supernumerary. The following had died: --

John N. Jones and William Wilkerson, both of whom were natives of Virginia, the former having traveled eight, and the latter five years. They had been zealous and faithful, and died in the Lord.

Hezekiah Calvin Wooster also took his departure to another world this year. We have already seen something of his character in the notice we have taken of the work of God in Upper Canada. His name is "like ointment poured forth," to many in that country, and he used to be spoken of as an

extraordinary messenger of God, sent to declare his counsels unto a fallen and rebellious world. After exerting all his powers of body and mind in beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God, he returned home with the fatal consumption fastened upon his lungs. But even while in this feeble state, so reduced as not to be able to speak above a whisper, this whisper, being announced to the congregation by another, was frequently attended by such a divine energy and unction, that sinners would tremble and fall under the announcement, while the people of God felt the holy anointing running though their souls. It is said, indeed, that his very countenance exhibited such marks of the Divine glory that it struck conviction into the hearts of many who beheld it.

"Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." Though Hezekiah Calvin Wooster could not be regarded as a man of more than ordinary talents as a preacher, yet, such was the holy fervor of his soul, his deep devotion to God, his burning love for the souls of his fellow-men, that he was the happy instrument of kindling up such a fire in the hearts of the people, wherever he went, particularly in Upper Canada, that all the waters of strife and opposition have not been able to quench it. This testimony I consider due to such departed worth. The grace of God wrought mightily in him, and great was his glorying in the cross of Christ -- nor did he glory in aught else -- for he was as much distinguished for his humility, his deadness to self, and to self-applause, as he was for the fervor of his spirit, the strength of his faith, and the boldness and pointedness of his appeals to the consciences of the people. That he enjoyed "perfect love," was demonstrated, not only from the fact of his having recorded the time when he received this great blessing,2 but also and more especially from the whole tenor of his life, his constant self-denial, his watchings and fastings, and from the "fruit of the Spirit, love, faith, meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, and charity," which shone out conspicuously in all his deportment, in the temper of his mind, and the words of his lips.

It could not be expected otherwise than that such a man should be prepared to meet his "last enemy" with firmness, and to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," when drawing near to the termination of his earthly career. Accordingly, when so exhausted as to be scarcely able to speak, on being asked by his father if his confidence was still strong in the Lord, he answered with holy triumph, "Yes, strong! strong!" And a short time before his eyes were closed in death, he said, "The nearer I draw to eternity, the brighter heaven shines upon me." He thus "fell asleep in Jesus" on the 6th of November, 1798, in the 28th year of his age and the fifth year of his ministry. Though his race was short, it was brilliant -- its brilliancy arising not so much from the splendor of his talents as from the purity of his motives, the fidelity of his private and public life, and the holy and burning zeal with which he pursued his vocation until sickness and death put a stop to his activity. And when he sunk under the cloud of death, he left such a trail of light behind him, as shall, it is humbly hoped, never be extinguished. Such honor God puts upon those who honor him.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 49115; Last Year: 47,867; Increase: 1,248 -- Colored This Year: 12,236; Last Year: 12,302; Decrease: 66 -- Total This Year: 61,351; Last Year: 60,169 -- Increase: 1,182 -- Preachers This Year: 272; Last Year: 267; Increase: 5.

ENDNOTES

1 In this he was under a mistake, as he lived to pay a merited token of respect to both his parents on occasion of their death.

2 The following was found among his papers after his death: -- "Hezekiah Calvin Wooster was born May 20, 1771. Convicted of sin October 9, 1791. Born again December 1, 1791. Sanctified February 6, 1792."

02.04.04. Vol 2, Book 4, Chapter 04

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book IV Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 4 An Account of the General Conference of 1800

1800 As the oldest manuscript journal of a General Conference I have been able to find is the one for this year, I have been guided thus far from printed documents only, and from such facts as I have been able to collect from living witnesses. Hereafter recourse will be also had to the records of the General Conference for such information as relates to the general affairs of the Church, and to the alterations or additions which may have been made from time to time in the rules and regulations of the Discipline.

There were eight annual conferences held this year, the first beginning in Charleston, S. C., January 1, and the last in Lynn, Mass., on the 18th of July. But before we notice the extension of the work in the bounds of the several conferences, and in the new settlements of the western country, we will detail the doings of the General Conference, which was held from the 6th to the 20th day of May, in the city of Baltimore. By a reference to the journal of Bishop Asbury for the year 1799, it will be perceived that such was his physical debility, originating from excessive labors, the multiplicity of his cares, and his exposures to all sorts of weather, that, though he continued his annual tour of the continent, he was able to preach but seldom, and that it was with much difficulty he discharged his official duties at several annual conferences. In consequence of this general debility he entertained serious thoughts of resigning the superintendency at the ensuing General Conference, and accordingly wrote to several of his most judicious friends in reference to it, giving them information of his intention. So confirmed was he in the intention of resigning his office, and of taking a seat on a level with his brethren in the conference, that he had prepared a letter to that effect, with a design to present it to the conference, fully believing that his bodily health was not adequate to the discharge of the multitudinous and important duties of a superintendent. When the conference convened, and the subject of the bishop’s resignation was introduced, he informed them that in consequence of bodily infirmities, he had not been able to travel, as heretofore, on horseback, nor to preach as often as usual, and therefore had been obliged to take with him a traveling companion, that the appointments might be regularly filled -- and moreover that his labors were frequently interrupted for want of strength to perform them regularly; on which account he did not know that the conference were fully satisfied with the manner in which he had discharged his official trust. After some conversation on these topics, the following questions and answering were unanimously agreed to: --

"Question. Whereas, Mr. Asbury has signified his intention of resigning his official station in our Church on account of his weakness of body, what is the sense of the conference on this occasion?

"Answer 1. The General' Conference consider themselves under many and great obligations to Mr. Asbury for the many and great services which he has rendered to this connection.

"2. This conference do earnestly entreat Mr. Asbury for a continuation of his services as one of the general superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church as far as his strength will permit." This unequivocal expression of confidence and affection so satisfied the bishop of their unabated attachment to him, and of their approbation of his conduct, that he told them in answer, notwithstanding his feelings led him still to decline the arduous duties of his office, yet, as his general health was better than it had been, he was willing to continue his services in any way the conference might think best. This matter being set at rest, The next question which arose was, whether Dr. Coke, who was present as one of the presidents of the conference, might have liberty to return to Europe in conformity to an earnest request of the British Conference to that effect. This request was founded on the acknowledged right which the American Conference had to the exclusive services of Dr. Coke, in consequence of the solemn pledge he had given them in the year 1796, *[See Book IV., Chap. 3] and which had been gratefully accepted by the American Conference. And so sacred was this obligation considered by Dr. Coke, and recognized by the British Conference, that he would not consent to a withdrawal of his services from his American brethren without their approbation and consent. When, however, his engagement was first made known to the brethren in Great Britain, they expressed their deep regrets that the doctor had thus deprived them of his valuable services, particularly in the missionary department of their work. Accordingly, when he visited the continent in 1797, he brought with him an earnest and affectionate address from the British Conference to their American brethren, in which they urged the doctor's return to Europe with all practicable speed, as his presence and influence among them seemed necessary to secure their peace and harmony, and more especially for the efficient prosecution of their missionary enterprise, which was then in its infancy. But as the engagement of Dr. Coke was made with the General Conference, which would not again assemble until 1800, no official action could be had in reference to this subject at that time. The address, however, was submitted to the Virginia conference, at which Dr. Coke was present, and the following letter from Bishop Asbury will show the light in which the matter was viewed by them, as well as the high estimation in which Dr. Coke was held by his brethren on both sides of the Atlantic

Respected Fathers and Brethren: -- You, in your brotherly kindness, were pleased to address a letter to us, your brethren and friends in America, expressing your difficulties and desires concerning our beloved brother Dr. Coke, that he might return to Europe to heal the broach which designing men have been making among you, or prevent its threatened overflow. We have but one grand responsive body, which is our General Conference, and it was in and to this body the doctor entered his obligations to serve his brethren in America. No yearly conference, no official character dare assume to answer for that grand federal body. By the advice of the yearly conference now sitting in Virginia, and the respect I bear to you, I write to inform you that in our own persons and order we consent to his return, and partial continuance with you, and earnestly pray that you may have much peace, union, and happiness together. May you find that your divisions end in a greater union, order, and harmony of the body, so that the threatened cloud may blow over, and your divisive party may be of as little consequence to you, as ours is to us. With respect to the doctor's returning to us, I leave your enlarged understandings and good sense to judge. You will see the number of souls upon our annual minutes, and as men of reading, you may

judge over what a vast continent these societies are scattered. I refer you to a large letter I wrote our beloved brother Bradburn on the subject. By a probable guess, we have, perhaps, from 1,000 to 1,200 traveling and local preachers. local preachers are daily rising up and coming forward with proper recommendations from their respective societies, to receive ordination, besides the regulation and ordinations of the yearly conferences. From Charleston, South Carolina, where the conference was held, to the province of Maine, where another conference is to be held, there is a space of about 1,300 miles; and we have only one worn-out superintendent, who was this day advised by the yearly conference to desist from preaching till next spring, on account of his debilitated state of body. But the situation of our affairs requires that he should travel about five thousand miles a year, through many parts unsettled, and other thinly peopled countries. I have now with me an assistant who does every thing for me he constitutionally can: but the ordaining and stationing the preachers can only be performed by myself in the doctor's absence.

We have to lament that our superintendency is so weak, and that it cannot constitutionally be strengthened till the ensuing General Conference. How I have felt and must feel, under such critical and important circumstances, I leave you to judge.

"To write much on the subject would be imposing on my own weakness and your good understanding. I speak as unto wise men; judge what I say.

"Wishing you great peace and spiritual prosperity, I remain your brother, your friend, your servant for Christ's sake, Francis Asbury" In conformity with the permission given in this letter for his absence from America for a short season only, after remaining for a while and assisting Bishop Asbury, Dr. Coke returned to Europe, and was usefully employed in visiting the societies in various parts of the United Kingdom, particularly in Ireland during a rebellion which broke out in 1798, in which he was successful in his attempts to shield the Methodist preachers from all blame, -- until the session of this General Conference, when he appeared to fulfill his engagements with his American brethren, or be honorably released. After deliberating for some time upon the request of the British Conference for Dr. Coke's return, the following resolution was concurred in: --

"That in compliance with the address of the British Conference, to let Dr. Coke return to Europe, this General Conference consent to his return, upon condition that he come back to America as soon as his business will allow, but certainly by the next General Conference." In accordance with the spirit of this resolution, the conference addressed their British brethren in the words following: --

"We have considered, with the greatest attention, the request you have made for the doctor's return to Europe; and after revolving the subject deeply in our minds, and spending part of two days in debating thereon, we still feel an ardent desire for his continuance in America. This arises from the critical state of Bishop Asbury's health, the extension of our work, our affection for, and approbation of the doctor, and his probable usefulness, provided he continue with us. We want to detain him, as we greatly need his services. But the statement you have laid before us in your address, of the success of the West India missions under his superintendence, the arduous attempt to carry the gospel among the native Irish requiring his influence and support, and the earnest request you have added to this representation; 'believing it to be for the glory of God,' hath turned the scale at present in your favor. We have, therefore, in compliance with your request, lent the doctor to you for a season to return to us as soon as he conveniently can, but at farthest by the

meeting of our next General Conference.

"Signed by order and in the behalf of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, "Francis Asbury, "Richard Whatcoat. Baltimore, May 9, 1800."

Having thus consented to a partial release of Dr. Coke from his engagements, the next important desideratum was how to supply his lack of service. The debilitated state of Bishop Asbury, and the great extension of the work in almost every direction, rendered it next to impossible for him to supply the wants of the Church in its superintendency, or to sustain the interests of the itinerancy in its various departments of labor. After a full consideration of this subject, it was finally agreed that another bishop should be elected and consecrated at this conference.

Before, however, the conference went into the election, considerable conversation was had respecting the powers of the new bishop, some contending that he should be considered only as an assistant, and, in the absence of his principal, should have power to station the preachers, only with the advice and concurrence of a committee appointed by the annual conference. The views, however, of those prevailed who thought he should be every way equal in power with his senior in office, both as respected presiding in the conferences, ordaining and stationing the preachers, and the general superintendency of the work. This point being settled, they proceeded to ballot for a bishop. On the first count there appeared a tie between Richard Whatcoat and Jesse Lee. On the second balloting there were fifty-nine votes for Richard Whatcoat, and fifty-five for Jesse Lee, on which Mr. Whatcoat was declared to be duly elected. Accordingly on the 18th of May he was consecrated as a joint superintendent with Bishop Asbury, by prayer and the imposition of the hands of Bishops Coke and Asbury, assisted by some of the elders.

Mr. Whatcoat was one of the preachers who was ordained a deacon and elder by Mr. Wesley, and accompanied Dr. Coke to America in 1784. He was born in England in the year 1736, and brought up under the influence of a religious education, by which he was saved from those vicious practices to which many youth are addicted. At the age of twenty-two he was made a partaker of the witness, and immediately brought forth the fruits of the Holy Spirit. In 1769 he entered as a probationer into the itinerant connection of Wesleyan Methodist preachers, then under the superintendence of Mr. Wesley. In this work he continued a faithful laborer, much beloved and respected by the people and confided in by his coadjutors in this work, until he embarked for America, then in the 48th year of his age. He was, of course, one of those who assisted in the organization of our Church at the Christmas conference, and was highly distinguished for the meekness and quietness of his spirit, as much as the prudence of his conduct, and the exemplariness of his deportment. From the time of this conference until his election to the office of a bishop, he had, with the exception of three years, discharged the duties of presiding elder, which, in those days especially, required labors and privations of no ordinary character, as both the districts and circuits were large, the people in general poor, and the calls for preaching numerous, and often far part. In the fulfillment of his duties in this station, he gave, it is believed, general satisfaction, and acquired the confidence and affection of both preachers and people. Those, indeed, who withheld their votes from him were actuated more from a conviction, it is said, of his lack of those peculiar talents which seemed essential for the office of a bishop, than from any want of confidence in either the depth of his piety, or measure of his prudence; and also from that kindred feeling for his competitor, who had been raised among themselves as an American

preacher, and would therefore, as they thought, more familiarly enter into their feelings and views. To both the candidates, the Church had awarded the merit of sharing her confidence and affection, as having been many years distinguished for their pious zeal and indefatigable labors, as well as for their wisdom and consistency of conduct in council. But the manner in which Richard Whatcoat fulfilled the high trust confided to him, fully justified the wisdom of the conference in selecting him as one of their superintendents; for no man ever furnished more satisfactory evidence of his entire devotion to God, and of his unwavering attachment to the interests of religion, than Bishop Whatcoat did from the time of his consecration to his office till the day of his death. His meekness and modesty, his gravity and dignity of deportment, pointed him out as a fair sample for a primitive bishop, in whose integrity all could confide as a father and a friend, and his subsequent life justified the wisdom of the selection.

Hitherto the allowance of a traveling preacher had been sixty-four dollars a year and his traveling expenses. At this conference it was raised to eighty, and the same for his wife or widow, sixteen dollars a year for each child under seven years of age, and twenty-four dollars for those over seven and under fourteen years. The same provision was made for supernumerary and superannuated preachers, their wives, widows, and orphans; and so it remained until the General Conference of 1816, when the salary of the preachers, their wives and widows, was raised to one hundred dollars a year -- the allowance for children remaining the same as heretofore. In order to meet the increased demands for the support of the ministry, in addition to the class and quarterly collections, and the avails of the Book Concern, the money received for celebrating the rite of matrimony was to be brought to the conference, together with the income of the Chartered Fund, and what might be raised in public collections on the circuits and at the sessions of the conferences.

Among the rules adopted at the conference of 1784, was one requiring every preacher, when admitted into the traveling ministry, to pay two dollars sixty-seven cents, and by a subsequent rule every member of the conference was to pay two dollars annually. This was to constitute a fund for the support of worn-out preachers, widows, and orphans. At the present conference it was ordered that this money should be appropriated to make up the deficiencies, together with any surplus which might remain in the hands of the stewards, after paying off the allowance of the preachers on the circuits. On the recommendation of Dr. Coke, who always manifested a lively interest in the welfare of the preachers and their families, those rules were adopted by this conference which recommend to the people to provide for each circuit a parsonage, "furnished at least with heavy furniture," or otherwise to "rent a house for the married preacher and his family, and that the annual conferences assist to make up the rent of such houses, as far as they can, when the circuit cannot do it." The rule for the trial of accused members was amended at this conference, so that the members before whom the delinquent was brought for trial were to judge of his innocence or guilt, according to the weight of evidence adduced; and also, that if the preacher who sat as judge in the case should dissent from the decision of the committee, he had the privilege of an appeal to the quarterly meeting conference. The rule requiring preachers to give an account of private donations from their friends was at this conference rescinded. In fixing the boundaries of the annual conferences, the number of which were to be seven, the New England and New York received their respective bounds as separate and distinct conferences.

Hitherto no special provision had been made for the support of the bishops, they having had their temporal wants supplied by private benefactions, and from particular societies; but at this conference, and it has been a standing regulation ever since, it was ordered that each annual conference should pay its proportion toward their support. And that the annual conferences might feel a measure of responsibility to the General Conference for their acts and doings, they were required by a resolution of this conference to keep and send records of their proceedings to the General Conference that they might be inspected.

It was also resolved that no preacher should hereafter have a seat in the General Conference, unless he had traveled four years, and was in full connection at the time: The bishops were authorized to ordain those African preachers, in the places where there were houses of worship for their use, who might be chosen by a majority of the male members of the society to which they belonged, and could procure a recommendation from the preacher in charge and his colleagues on the circuit, to the office of local deacons. The rule giving this authority was not incorporated among the printed regulations of the Discipline, but by a vote of the conference was only to stand on its records. Richard Allen, of Philadelphia, was the first colored man who received orders under this rule. Since that time, however, many in different places have been elected and consecrated, and since the General Conference of 1812, when the bishops were authorized to ordain local deacons to the office of elders, after four years' probation as deacons, several have been ordained elders.

After passing these resolutions, and making sundry verbal alterations in the Discipline, not necessary to be particularly noticed, the conference adjourned on the 20th day of May to meet again in the city of Baltimore, on the 6th day of May, 1804.

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CHAPTER 5 From the close of the General Conference of 1800, to the end of the year 1803

Having, in the preceding chapter, detailed the doings of the General Conference of 1800, we will return to the annual conferences, and endeavor to give an account of the work of God in the various parts of their extensive fields of labor. This year and the two following were eminently distinguished for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and the enlargement of his work in various directions. The heavens and the earth, indeed, appeared to be shaken by the mighty power of God, and very many sinners were brought to feel their need of Christ, to seek and to find him as their only Saviour.

It seems that during the session of the General Conference much good had been done by the public and private labors of the preachers; and as they separated with much harmony of feeling, the Spirit of God wrought by their means in many of the places where they were stationed the present year.

During the conference, a work of God commenced in that section of Baltimore called Old Town. Meetings were held here in private houses, which were attended by some of the preachers while not engaged in the business of the conference, by which means several souls were brought to the knowledge of the truth. From this beginning, the work spread in different directions though the city, in the churches as well as in private houses. Such a glorious work had not been seen in Baltimore for several years, and the old professors were much excited and encouraged at beholding their children and neighbors coming into the fold of Christ.

About two weeks after the adjournment of the General Conference, an annual conference was held at Duck Creek Cross Roads, where many of the young converts, and some of the more experienced Christians from Baltimore, came for the purpose of attending the meetings. Here the Lord wrought powerfully. While the members of the conference were transacting their business in a private house, some of the younger traveling and some local preachers were almost constantly engaged in preaching to the people exhorting and praying with them; and such was the intenseness with which they pursued their work, that at the church, the meeting was held without intermission for forty-five hours.1 Often, during these meetings, the voice of the preacher was drowned either by the cries of the distressed or the shouts of the redeemed. As these effects were new to many, they at first looked on with silent astonishment, until, before they were fully aware of it, both saints and sinners would be seized with a shaking and trembling, and finally prostrated helpless upon the floor. The result of these exercises was, that not less than one hundred and fifty souls were converted to God during the session of the Conference. Such a time of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord" had never before been witnessed in that part of the country. From

this the work spread with great rapidity though the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and into the lower counties of the state of Delaware, bowing, in its course, the hearts of many stubborn sinners, who were brought to God by faith in Jesus Christ. Both preachers and people, in whose hearts the fire of Divine love had been kindled at these meetings, carried the sacred flame with them wherever they went, and thousands have doubtless praised God and are now praising him for the consolations of that blessed revival of godliness. It continued, indeed, to extend its hallowing influence on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and in some other places, through the remainder of the summer. As the result of this glorious work in the little village of Duck Creek, no less than one hundred and seventeen persons joined the Church. Nor was the revival confined to this part of the country. In Philadelphia, in various circuits in the vicinity of Baltimore, in the state of Vermont, in some portions of Canada, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, the Spirit of the Lord was poured out, and many, very many, sinners were brought to the knowledge of the truth. It seems, indeed, that most of the preachers had received a new baptism of the holy Spirit -- like that which had been showered upon Calvin Wooster, and others in Canada, the preceding year; and wherever they went they carried the holy fire with them, and God wrought wonders by their instrumentality. But the most remarkable work was going on in the western country.

Last year, 1799, was distinguished for the commencement of those great revivals of religion in the western country, which introduced the practice of holding "camp meetings." And as these revivals were characterized by signal displays of the power and grace of God, and eventuated in the conversion or thousands of souls, it will naturally be expected that a particular account should be given of their rise and progress. This work commenced under the united labors of two brothers by the name of McGee, one a Presbyterian and the other a Methodist preacher. The former, who had preached for some time in North Carolina and in the Houston country, moved into West Tennessee in the year 1796 or 1797, and in 1798 was settled over a congregation in Sumner county. In the year 1798, he latter, John McGee, moved into West Tennessee, and settled in Smith county. Though belonging to different denominations, those doctrines and usages by which each was distinguished from the other by no means interrupted the harmony of brotherly love. Hence they cordially united in their meetings, and strengthened each other’s hands in the work of the Lord. In the year 1799 they set off on a tour though what was called the "Barrens," toward the state of Ohio, and on their way they stopped at a settlement on the Red River, to attend a sacramental occasion in the congregation under the pastoral charge of the Rev. Mr. McGready, a Presbyterian minister. On being introduced to him, Mr. John McGee was invited to preach, with which he complied; and he preached with great liberty and power. He was followed by his brother, the Presbyterian minister, and the Rev. Mr. Hoge, whose preaching produced such a powerful effect that tears in abundance attested that the people felt the force of the truths delivered. While Mr. Hoge was preaching, a woman in the congregation was so powerfully wrought upon that she broke through all restraint, and shouted forth the praises of God aloud. Such was the movement among the people, evidently under the impulses of the divine Spirit, that, though Messrs. McGready, Hoge, and Rankins, Presbyterian ministers, left the house, the two yoke-fellows, the McGees, continued in their places watching the "movement of the waters." William McGee soon felt such a power come over him that he, not seeming to know what he did, left his seat and sat down on the floor, while John sat trembling under a consciousness of the power of God. In the meantime there were great solemnity and weeping all over the house. He was expected to preach, but instead of that he arose and told the people that the overpowering nature of his feelings would

not allow of his preaching, but as the Lord was evidently among them, he earnestly exhorted the people to surrender their hearts to him. Sobs and cries bespoke the deep feeling which pervaded the hearts of the people. This great and unusual work so excited the attention of the people that they came in crowds from the surrounding country, to inquire what these things meant; and this was the beginning of that great revival of religion in the western country which introduced camp meetings. The people came with horses and wagons, bringing provisions and bedding, and others built temporary huts or tents, while all, Presbyterians Baptists, and Methodists, united together in prayer, exhortation, and preaching, exerting all their energies to forward this good work. The good effects resulting from this meeting, thus casually, or rather providentially convened, induced them to appoint another on Muddy River, and then another on what was called the Ridge. Here a vast concourse of people assembled under the foliage of the trees, and continued their religious exercises day and night. This novel way of worshipping God excited great attention. In the night the grove was illuminated with lighted candles, lamps, or torches. This, together with the stillness of the night, the solemnity which rested on every countenance, the pointed and earnest manner with which the preachers exhorted the people to repentance, prayer, and faith, produced the most awful sensations in the minds of all present. While some were exhorting, others crying for mercy, and some shouting the praises of God in the assembly, numbers were retired in secluded places in the grove, pouring out the desire of their wounded spirits in earnest prayer. It often happened that these were liberated from their sins, and their hearts filled with joy and gladness while thus engaged in their solitary devotions; and then they would come into the encampment and declare what God had done for their souls. This information, communicated to their brethren in the artless simplicity of "new born souls would produce a thrill of joy which could hardly be suppressed: and thus they reciprocated with each other in their sorrows and joys, and excited one another to the exercise of faith in the promises of God, and to perseverance in the good work. The result of this last meeting was, according to the best estimate which could be made, the conversion of not less than one hundred souls. A still greater meeting of the same character was held soon after on Desha’s Creek, near the Cumberland River. Among the many thousands of people who attended this extraordinary meeting, many, very many, were made partakers of the grace of life. It is said by an eye witness,2 who himself largely participated of these solemn exercises, that at these meetings the people fell under the power of the word, "like corn before a storm of wind," and that many who were thus slain, "arose from the dust with divine glory beaming upon their countenances," and then praised God in such strains of heartfelt gratitude as caused the hearts of sinners to tremble within them. But no sooner had this first feeling of ecstasy subside than those young converts began to exhort their relatives and neighbors to turn to God and live. And truly it was difficult to resist the power of their words, for they spoke of what they felt, and their words were sharper than a "two-edged sword," piercing the heart, and extorting the cry, "What shall I do to be saved?"

Many of these were children of praying parents, and though uneducated, they spoke with a power and eloquence which "confounded the wisdom of the learned," and extorted the confession from many an unhumbled Pharisee, that "God was with them of a truth."

Among others who were brought to the knowledge of the truth at this meeting, was John Alexander Granade, who after an exercise of mind for a considerable time bordering on despair, came forth a "burning and shining light," as a the advocate for the cause of Christ. He soon

became distinguished among his brethren as the "western poet," and the "Pilgrims' Songs" were among the most popular hymns which were sung at those camp meetings, and perhaps became the fruitful source whence singing the numerous ditties with which the Church was, for some time, almost deluged. These songs, though thy possessed but little of the spirit of poetry, and therefore added nothing to true intellectual taste, served to excite the feelings of devotion, and keep alive that spirit of excitement which characterized the worshippers in those assemblies. Both Granade and Caleb Jarvis Taylor contributed much by their energetic labors to fan the flame of piety which had been kindled up in the hearts of the people in that country.

It is not to be supposed that these meetings went on without opposition. This would be calculating too favorably of human nature in its present state of moral perversity. Not only the openly profane, the nonprofessor of godliness, but many of those who "had a name to live, but were dead," as well as some whose piety was unquestionable, looked on these meetings and beheld these strange exercises with mingled emotions of pity and abhorrence. The natural enmity of the carnal mind, in the first, mingled with the pride of philosophy of the second, and the prejudices of religious education, alloyed with some portion of religious bigotry in the third, created, altogether, a formidable array of opposition, which showed itself in all the variety of ways which the peculiarity of views and feelings in the above characters might dictate. Some would scoff, others would philosophize, while the latter would dogmatize in no stinted terms of religious intolerance, while they beheld those manifestations of what the friends of the cause justly believed to be the power and grace of God. But there was one argument which silenced them all. Often those very persons who were most violent in their opposition, most vociferous in their hard speeches against what they denominated "wild fire," would become so warmed by its heat, that their hearts were melted within them, and "falling down on their faces, they would worship God, and report that God was in them of a truth." This argument was irresistible. It was demonstration. And many such were presented during the progress of these meetings. In such cases, those who before had been blasphemers, and mockers, persecutors, and bigoted dogmatizers, were not only struck dumb, but the "tongue of the dumb was made to sing," and those very opposers of the work became the living witnesses for its divine and genuine character, and stood forth as its bold and fearless defenders. In the meantime the numbers attending these meetings were continually increased, -- some from a sincere desire to be benefited; others were attracted from curiosity, and not a few from motives of speculation, to arm themselves with arguments of resistance to their progress. What tended not a little to give them notoriety, and to excite the public attention toward them, was, the newspapers of the day were teeming with accounts of these camp meetings, some in favor and some against them -- and all, whether friends or foes, were eager to gratify their curiosities, or benefit their soul, by becoming eye and ear witnesses of the manner in which they were conducted.

Accordingly, in 1801 the numbers who attended those which were held in Kentucky were immense, some as occasional visitors, and others as residents on the ground through the progress of the meetings. The numbers varied, of course, according to the density or sparsity of the population in their immediate neighborhoods; and they have been estimated from three to twenty thousand. At one held in Cabbin Creek a Presbyterian minister who was present, and zealously engaged in promoting its objects, estimated the number at not less than twenty thousand.

Though at this meeting the Methodists appeared to be the most actively engaged in the work, yet some of the Presbyterian brethren engaged heartily with them, while, others stood aloof, not knowing what judgment to form of it. Being, however, encouraged by the example of others, many of them united with zealous hearts in the cause, and at this great meeting the Methodists and Presbyterians joined their forces to push forward the work, and they seemed to bear down all opposition. The scene is represented as being indescribably awful! An eye witness thus writes concerning it: --

Few, if any, escaped without being affected. Such as tried to run from it, were frequently struck on the way, or impelled by some alarming signal to return. No circumstance at this meeting appeared more striking than the great number that fell on the third night; and to prevent their being trodden under foot by the multitude, they were collected together and laid out in order, or on two squares of the meeting house, till a considerable part of the floor was covered. But the great meeting at Cane Ridge exceeded all. The number that fell at this meeting was reckoned at about three thousand, among whom were several Presbyterian ministers, who, according to their own confession, had hitherto possessed only a speculative knowledge of religion. Here the formal professor, the deist, and the intemperate, met with one common lot, and confessed, with equal candor, that they were destitute of the true knowledge of God, and strangers to the religion of Jesus Christ." In consequence of such a vast assemblage of people, it was impossible for any one voice to reach the whole of them with intelligible language: hence they were divined into several groups, and addressed by as many different speakers, while the whole grove, at times, became vocal with the praises of God, and at other times pierced with the cries of distressed penitent sinners. As before said, the scene was peculiarly awful at night. The range of the tents -- the fires reflecting lights though the branches of the trees -- the candles and lamps illuminating the entire encampment -- hundreds of immortal beings moving to and fro -- some preaching -- some praying for mercy, and others praising God from a sense of his pardoning mercy -- all these things presented a scene indescribably awful and affecting. As an instance of the manner in which some of those who attended these meetings from a sportive disposition were arrested and brought to a better state of mind, the following is related: -- A gentleman and a lady, of some standing in the gay circles of life, attended the above meeting with a vow to divert and amuse themselves at the expense of those whom they considered as deluded with a strange infatuation. With these thoughts they agreed that if one of them should fall the other should not desert him or her. They had not been long on the ground before the woman fell! The merry gentleman, instead of keeping his promise, frightened at the sight of his female friend on the ground, fled with great precipitancy. He did not, however, proceed more than two hundred yards, before he also was prostrate upon the ground, and was soon surrounded by a praying multitude. In 1801 this work was greatly aided by the energetic labors of the Rev. William McKendree (afterward bishop) who was this year appointed to the Kentucky district. Having been in the midst of the revivals in the lower part of the state, and having his soul fired with the sacred flame which was burning with such intensity among the people, he went up into the center of the settlements and carried the tidings among them of what God was doing by means of those extraordinary meetings. His congregations, composed chiefly of Methodists and Presbyterians, were powerfully affected when he gave them, at the conclusion of his sermon, an animated account of the commencement and progress of this work. It is said that while he held up before them the truths of the gospel, intermixed with narrations of the work of God at these meetings, his whole soul seemed to be filled with glory and with God," and that his

very countenance beamed with brightness. While he related with artless simplicity, and with glowing warmth, the manner in which God wrought upon the souls of the people, the many happy conversions which had been witnessed, and the astonishing effects which attended the preaching of God’s word, the hearts of God’s people begin to beat in unison with his own, while sinners were weeping in every direction under the melting influence of the Spirit of God. By this means these same meetings were introduced into the center of the state, and spread though all the settlements in the western country; and such was the eagerness of the people to attend, that the roads were literally crowded with those that were pressing their way to the groves; so much so that entire neighborhoods would be forsaken, for a season, of their inhabitants. And as the Methodists and Presbyterians were generally united together in these meetings, they took the name of "General Camp Meetings." By these means they spread all through Tennessee, Kentucky, and some parts of Ohio, carrying with them fire and destruction into the enemy’s territories, and bowing the hearts of God’s people as the heart of one man to the yoke of Jesus Christ. Of their subsequent progress, and the influence they have exerted on society, I need not here speak, as these things are known to all.

Among the traveling preachers who entered into this work in those days, we may mention William Burke, John Sale, Benjamin Lakin, and Henry Smith, with a number of others, whose zealous efforts contributed greatly to spread the gospel in these new settlements. Mr. McKendree was the life and soul of this army of itinerants. Wherever he went, both by precept and example, he aroused the lukewarm to diligence, confirmed those who stood in the faith, and alarmed the fears of careless sinners by his powerful appeals to their consciences. By his means many local preachers who had moved into the country were induced to forsake their secular employments, and enter the ranks of the itinerancy, and they became powerful instruments of extending the revivals though the land. Despising alike the luxuries of life, and the frowns or flatteries of the world, they went forth under the banners of truth, everywhere proclaiming in the ears of the people that they must "fear God and give glory to his name, for the hour of his judgment is come."

It will be seen by the preceding remarks that these camp meetings were not the result of a previously digested plan, but like every other peculiarity of Methodism, were introduced by providential occurrences, and were embraced and followed up by God’s servants because they found them subservient to the grand design they had in view, namely, the salvation of the world by Jesus Christ. Indeed, they did not originate with the Methodist, but upon a sacramental occasion among the Presbyterians, at which time there was such a remarkable outpouring of the Divine Spirit in the people as inclined them to protract their exercises to an unusual period; and then this being noised abroad brought others to the place, and finally so many that no house could hold them; this induced them to go into the field, and erect temporary shelters for themselves, and to bring provision for their sustenance; and finding that God so abundantly blessed them in these meetings, they were led to continue them, until they at length became very general among the Methodists throughout the country. In order to give a connected view of the rise of camp meetings in the west, I have a little anticipated the regular date of the history, and shall therefore conclude what I have to say on this subject for the present, with a few reflections.

I have simply related the facts in respect to this extraordinary work as I find them recorded in the historical sketches of those times. No doubt many now, as then, will be skeptically inclined in regard to the genuineness of the work. To remove the skepticism from the minds of candid

inquirers after truth, (for such only will be convinced,) let it be remarked,

1. That as to the facts themselves, they are indubitable -- that is, there can be no room to doubt that such meetings were held as above narrated, and that sinners were prostrated to the earth under the preaching of God's word -- that they cried for mercy -- were delivered in answer to prayer -- and that such, as well a old professors of religion, often shouted aloud the praises of God -- and that many of these, perhaps most of them, afterward led "peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty." These facts are as well attested as any we have upon the pages of history.

2. It is admitted that in such vast multitudes, assembled in the open air, under circumstances of such peculiar excitement, and many of them not well instructed in science or morals, there must have been some disorder, some mingling of human passions not sanctified by grace, and some words and gesticulations not in accordance with strict religious decorum. Every action, therefore, and every thing which was said and done, I am by no means careful to defend or pledged to justify.

3. When we look into the book of God, we find some instances on record of persons having been affected in a similar way, who were manifestly under the divine influence. Thus Daniel says of himself, that when he saw the vision, "there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength" and when the Lord had spoken to him he "stood trembling". see Daniel x., 8-11. So Saul of Tarsus, when saluted by the voice from heaven, fell helpless upon the ground, was struck blind, and remained so for three days. And may not the strong cries and tears of those persons who were struck under conviction at those camp meetings, have been produced from a cause similar to that which is recorded in Mark ix, 26, where it is said, "that the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him?"

4. In examining the history of the work of God in his church at different periods, we find similar instances of mental and bodily exercises on record. Read, for example, President Edwards' account of the revival in New England, and Mr. Wesley's Journal, particularly from 1739 to 1742, and his correspondence with the Rev. Ralph Erskine of Scotland, in relation to this subject. In reference to the work in New England, in the early part of the eighteenth century, we have the following testimony of a convention of Congregational ministers, who assembled in Boston, July 7, 1743, for the express purpose of considering and reporting on the nature of this work. The following is an extract from their report:

"We never before saw so many brought under soul concern, and with distress making the inquiry, 'What must we do to be saved?' and these persons of all characters and ages. With regard to the suddenness and quick progress of it, many persons and places were surprised with the gracious visit together, or near about the same time and the heavenly influence diffused itself far and wide, like the light of the morning. Also in respect of the degree of operation, both in a way of terror and in a way of consolation, attended in many with unusual bodily effects. Not that all who were accounted the subjects of the present work have had these extraordinary degrees of previous distress and subsequent joy: but many, and we suppose the greater number have been wrought on in a more gentle and silent way, and without any other appearances than are common and usual at other times, when persons have been awakened to a solemn concern about salvation, and have been thought to have passed out of a state of nature into a state of grace. As to those whose inward concern has occasioned extraordinary outward distresses, the most of them when

we came to converse with them, were able to give what appeared to us a rational account of what so affected their minds, viz., a quick sense of their guilt, misery, and danger; and they would often mention the passages in the sermons they heard, or particular texts of Scripture, which were sent home upon them with such a powerful impression. And as to such whose joys have carried them into transports and ecstasies, they in like manner have accounted for them, from a lively sense of the danger they hoped they were freed from, and the happiness they were now possessed of; such clear views of divine and heavenly things, and particularly of the excellences and loveliness of Jesus Christ, and such sweet tastes of redeeming love as they never had before. The instances were very few in which we had reason to think these affections were produced by visionary or sensible representations, or by any other images than such as the Scripture itself presents unto us.

"And here we think it not amiss, to declare, that in dealing with these persons, we have been careful to inform them, that the nature of conversion does not consist in these passionate feelings; and to warn them not to look upon their state as safe, because they have passed out of deep distress into high joys, unless they experienced a renovation of nature, followed with a change of life, and a course of vital holiness. Nor have we gone into such an opinion of the bodily effects with which this work has been attended in some of its subjects, as to judge them any signs that persons who have been so affected were then under a saving work of the Spirit of God. No: we never to much as called these bodily seizures convictions, or spoke of them as the immediate work of the holy Spirit. Yet we do not think them inconsistent with a work of God upon the soul at that very time; but judge that those inward impressions which come from the Spirit of God, those terrors and consolations of which he is the author, may, according to the natural frame and constitution which some persons are of, occasion such bodily effects; -- and therefore that those extraordinary outward symptoms are not an argument that the work is delusive, or from the influence and agency of the evil spirit." This document is said to have been signed by no less than sixty-eight ministers, all of whom concurred in the views therein expressed, while only fifteen refused their assent to an article in the same report which accorded to the practice, at that time a novelty in New England, of itinerating from place to place to preach the gospel -- a practice introduced by Mr. Whitefield, and followed by a few others who had been awakened to activity by his zealous labors.

1. With these facts and examples before us, are we not justified in believing, that persons under the powerful operations of the Spirit of God, either convicting them suddenly and strongly of sin, or filling their souls with his own pure love, may have their animal functions suspended for a season, so that there shall "remain no strength in them?" Is there any thing either unscriptural or incredible in all this?

2. Will it be denied by any believer in divine revelation, or even by a deist, that God can, and often does, so work upon the mind of man, as to make that mind fully conscious of his presence? He who affects to doubt this might as well throw off all disguise at once, and turn an open atheist, and deny that there is any God who presides over the destinies of men, or exercises any control over their understandings and affections.

3. As the mind and body are so intimately connected that the one acts upon the other, is there, after all, any thing so very extraordinary in the supposition that under the strong excitement

produced upon the one by the sudden flashes of truth, the other should be equally and suddenly affected in the manner already described? How common are the instances in which persons have been known to swoon away by receiving sudden news either of a joyful or an alarming character? Either great anguish or excessive joy has often been the means of depriving individuals of their physical strength. And what sorrow is equal to that which an awakened sinner feels when he is suddenly brought to see himself as he in reality is, a rebel against his God, and consequently exposed to wrath and hell! And must not the joy of such a person be proportionally great when he finds himself instantaneously delivered from that load of guilt, and filled with a "peace unknown to sensual minds?"

4. It is frequently objected to exercises of this sort, that the passions are chiefly wrought upon. This indeed may be the case in many instances. And I would by no means plead for a religion which does not enter into the judgment, and influence the understanding as well as the affections. But yet, man is a creature of passions as well as of intellect. And as Christianity is not intended to destroy, but only to regulate the passions, as well as to enlighten the understanding and sanctify the heart, we must expect the passions to he moved, and the emotions of fear, hope, love, and joy to be excited in religious as well as in all other exercises. To these passions Christianity certainly addresses itself, as well as to the judgment, and moves man to action from fear, from hope, and from the promises of pardon, comfort, and protection, as well as from that eternal reward hereafter, which makes the Christian joyfully anticipate the pleasures of the future life. Those therefore who address themselves to the understanding only, as if men were merely intellectual beings, avail themselves of not one half of the motives with which the gospel furnishes its servants, to induce sinners to repent and believe in Christ, and to encourage believers to persevere in the path of duty.

5. These things being so, is it any matter of wonder that, when the awfully sublime and truly affecting subjects of Christianity are presented to the mind, corresponding effects should be produced upon the passions, and that these, when violently agitated with either religious fear or joy, should also affect the body?

6. But we do not place dependence upon these external signs as evidences in themselves of either penitence, conversion, or sanctification. As there may be a fear, a hope, and a love, which is not well founded, so there may be much bodily exercise without any spiritual profit. These things may or may not be. If a person who has had these exercises profess, in the meantime, to have experienced a change of heart, if he bring forth the fruit of righteousness in his subsequent life, we may then safely conclude that the work was effected by the Spirit of God; but if otherwise, if he still manifest the unhumbled spirit of the Pharisee, or bring forth the "works of the flesh," his profession cannot save him from the condemnation of the hypocrite, or the misery of the self-deluded.

These remarks are submitted to the candid reader with the hope that they may assist him in making up an unbiased judgment in respect to these things; and though, in the course of our history, we shall be compelled to admit the humiliating fact, that some of the subjects of the above revivals brought forth fruit unto death, yet it will be equally plain that the influence of others on society generally was of a very hallowed character. Not less than twenty-four preachers were located this year, three withdrew, and four had died in peace. These latter were, William Early, Thomas Haymond, Benton Riggin, and Robert Benham. These had all been faithful in their labors,

and died in the Lord.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 51,442; Last Year: 49,115; Increase: 2,327 -- Colored This Year: 13,452; Last Year: 12,236; Increase: 1,216 -- Total This Year: 64,894; Last Year: 61,351 -- Increase: 3,543 -- Preachers This Year: 287; Last Year: 272; Increase: 15.

1801

There were only seven annual conferences held this year, the first commencing in Camden, S. C., January 1, and the last in Lynn, Mass., July 17. The work of God which had commenced last year under such favorable auspices, and which has been so fully detailed, continued this year, in many places, with increased rapidity and power. Bishop Asbury and his colleague, Bishop Whatcoat, made their annual tour of the continent, not only in visiting and presiding in the conferences, but also preaching to the people in the various cities, towns, and villages, as well as the new and scattered settlements through which they were enabled to pass. The revivals of religion which had been witnessed, the unabated confidence and attachment which had been manifested toward Bishop Asbury by the conference, and the relief afforded him in his arduous labors by the consecration of Mr. Whatcoat as a colleague seemed to put new life into him, so that he remarks, after attending a conference in Philadelphia, "My health is restored to the astonishment of myself and friends."

"Surely," he says in connection with his allusion to the Philadelphia conference, "we may say our Pentecost is fully come this year."

Having so fully narrated the progress of the work of God in the western country under date of 1800, it is not necessary to add any thing in respect to it here. In other parts of the country, however, the work went on under somewhat different circumstances, but with equal indications of divine power and goodness. In New Hampshire and Vermont there were signal displays of the grace of God in the awakening and conversion of souls. One of the preachers writes in the following strain respecting the state of things there: --

"Landaff circuit, is New Hampshire, is all in a flame. Upward of one hundred have been converted to God; and the work goes on still in a glorious manner. In Chesterfield circuit nearly one hundred have joined our society, and the prospect is now brighter than it has been. In Vershire circuit, in Vermont, there is a good work. More than one hundred have joined society, and the power of the Lord is remarkably displayed; many fall down, being overwhelmed with the power of the Lord. Weathersfield circuit has been gradually gaining ground the whole year, and now the times of refreshing are come from the presence of the Lord. In the town of Athens we had a most melting time. The power of the Lord was present to heal, and eighty-three joined society on that day, although there was no society there before."

It seems that the revivals in Canada and the western country began to exert an influence in other parts of the work, and lead to a similar method in promoting the cause of God. In the latter part of May of this year, in the town of Dover, Delaware state, a meeting was held for several days, at which time the Lord wrought powerfully upon the hearts of the people, so that on the last day of the meeting one hundred and thirteen persons united with the Church. Many more took their departure to their homes under a deep conviction of their sinfulness, and earnestly groaning for redemption in the blood of Christ. In the Baltimore district, which included a number of large circuits, it was

estimated that upward of a thousand souls were converted to God in the space of a few months. In Annapolis, the metropolis of the state of Maryland, many were brought to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, and there was great joy in that city. In Upper Canada, the glorious revival which has been already mentioned had extended along up the shore of Lake Ontario, even to the head of the lake, to Niagara, and thence to Long Point on the northwestern shore of Lake Erie, including four large four weeks' circuits. The district this year was under the charge of the Rev. Joseph Jewell, who traveled extensively through the newly settled country, preaching in log houses, in barns, and sometimes in groves, and everywhere beholding the displays of the power and grace of God in the awakening and conversion of sinners, as well as the sanctification of believers. A great work of God was carried on this year under the preaching of Joseph Sawyer, whose faithful labors on the Niagara circuit will be long and gratefully remembered by the people in that country; and it was during this revival that the present writer, after four or five years of hard struggling under a consciousness of his sinfulness, was brought into the fold of Christ; and here he wishes to record his gratitude to God for his distinguished grace, in snatching such a brand from the fire, and to his people for their kindness, and more especially to that servant of God, the Rev. Joseph Sawyer, under whose pastoral oversight he was brought into the Church. Nor should the labors and privations, the prayers and sufferings in the cause of Christ of that faithful servant of God, the Rev. James Coleman, be forgot. Ten. He preceded Mr. Sawyer in the Niagara circuit3 and though not distinguished for shining talents as a preacher, he was beloved by the people of God for his fidelity in the work of the ministry, and for his deep devotion to their spiritual interests, evinced by his faithful attention to the arduous duties of his circuit. He had many seals to his ministry. And the writer of this remembers with gratitude the many prayers which James Coleman offered up to God in his behalf while a youthful stranger in that land, and while seeking, with his eyes but half opened, to find the way of "peace and pleasantness." The work also prevailed on the Bay of Quintie and Oswegochie circuits, under the labors of Sylvanus Keeler, Seth Crowell, and others. The latter was a young preacher of great zeal and of the most indefatigable industry; and going into that country he soon caught the flame of Divine love which had been enkindled by the instrumentality of Messrs. Wooster, Coate and Dunham. He entered into the work with great energy and perseverance, and God blessed his labors with much success. So greatly had God prospered the labors of his faithful servants in this province, that there were returned in the minutes of conference for this year 1,159 members of the Church. It had, indeed, extended into the lower province, on the Ottawa River, an English settlement about fifty miles west of Montreal. This new circuit was traveled by John Robinson and Caleb Morris, and they returned forty-five members in the Church.

Like the new settlements in the western country, Upper Canada was at that time but sparsely populated, so that in riding from one appointment to another, the preachers sometimes had to pass though wildernesses from ten to sixty miles' distance, and not infrequently had either to encamp in the woods or sleep in an Indian hut; and sometimes, in visiting the newly settled places, they have carried provender for their horses over night, when they would tie them to a tree to prevent their straying in the woods; while the preachers themselves had to preach, eat, and lodge in the same room, looking at the curling smoke ascending though an opening in the roof of the log house, which had not yet the convenience of even a chimney. But in the midst of these labors and privations, they seemed to be abundantly compensated in beholding the blessed effects of their evangelical efforts, and the cordiality and high gratification with which they were received and

treated, more especially by those whose hearts God had touched by his Spirit. For though these people were in the wilderness, and many of them poor, they seemed to be ripe for the gospel, and it was no less gratifying to its messengers than it was pleasurable to its recipients to behold its blessed effects upon the hearts and lives of such as "believed with a heart unto righteousness." While those who resisted the truth, often manifested their enmity by persecuting those who proclaimed it, such as did receive it in the love of it," evinced their affection and gratitude to those who published it, by making them welcome to their habitations, and entertaining them in the very best manner they could. For these self-denying labors, and sacrifices of these early Methodist preachers, thousands of immortal beings in Canada will doubtless praise God in that day "when he shall come to make up his jewels." A very serious affair occurred in Charleston, South Carolina, about this time. In 1801 and 1802 the Rev. Messrs. George Dougherty and John Harper were stationed in that city. Hearing that Mr. Harper had received some pamphlets from the north, containing resolutions to memorialize the legislature against slavery, notwithstanding the offensive documents were burned in presence of the mayor of the city, a lawless mob collected to avenge themselves on the person of Mr. Harper. He, however, providentially escaping from their fury, they seized on Mr. Dougherty, dragged him though the street to the pump, and having placed his head under the spout, commenced pumping water upon him, and in all probability they would have suffocated him, had not a pious woman, a Mrs. Kingsley, interfered in his behalf. With an intrepidity worthy of all praise, she resolutely placed herself between the infuriated populace and their intended victim, and stuffed her shawl into the mouth of the spout, and thus stopped the flowing of the water. This heroic act filled the persecutors of Dougherty with astonishment. In silent amazement they paused from their murderous work. At this moment of suspense, a gentleman with a drawn sword stood in the midst of them, and, taking Dougherty by the hand, boldly declared his intention to protect him from their violence at all hazards; and he then led him away, no one daring to interfere. Thus completing the victory which the "weaker sex" had so daringly begun, the man of God, thoroughly wet by the water of the pump, was rescued from the hand of violence, and restored to his friends in safety -- although it is said that his sufferings in this cruel affair laid the foundation of that pulmonary disease with which he afterward died. It is furthermore stated, that of all those concerned in this persecution not one prospered; most of them died miserable deaths, and one of them acknowledged that God’s curse lighted upon him for his conduct in this affair.

Thirty-two preachers located this year, three were returned supernumerary, and four, namely, James Tillotson, Abraham Andrews, Salathiel Weeks, and Charles Burgoon, after a faithful discharge of their duties as ministers of Christ, had died in the hope of everlasting life.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 57,186; Last Year: 51,442; Increase: 5,744 -- Colored This Year: 15,688; Last Year: 13,452; Increase: 2,236 -- Total This Year: 72,874; Last Year: 64,894 -- Increase: 7,980 -- Preachers This Year: 307; Last Year: 278; Increase: 29.

There was no account rendered of the numbers in Kentucky and Tennessee, where those great revivals of religion had occurred, otherwise the increase would have appeared much larger than it does. As it is, however, it shows the blessed results of those revivals which have been before detailed. On the 29th day of January of this year, the Rev. Devereaux Jarratt departed this life in the 69th year of his age; and though he was never in connection with the Methodists, yet as he favored them in the early period of their ministry, and was greatly instrumental in promoting the work of God in Virginia in those days, it seems proper to give some account of his character,

labors, and death. Mr. Jarratt was born in New Kent county, in Virginia, on the 6th of January, 1732, O. S. He was awakened to a sense of his lost and guilty condition by the reading of one of Mr. Flavel's sermons, and after a long course of mental discipline, a severe struggling against the inordinate corruptions of his heart, when about twenty-eight years of age, he was made a partaker of justifying faith in Jesus Christ. In his 30th year he began to prepare for orders in the English Church, and after due preparation he went to England and received consecration on Christmas day, in the year 1762. Before his return he preached several times in London, and such was the zeal with which he spoke in the name of his divine Master, that he even then was called by some a Methodist, an appellation commonly given to those who manifested more than usual zeal in their ministry. On his return to America, in 1763, he was settled in the parish of Bath, Dinwiddie county, Virginia, and became a zealous and evangelical minister of Jesus Christ, by which means he incurred the displeasure of the lukewarm clergy of his own Church, a well as of those members who had "the form of godliness, but denied the power thereof."4 This, no doubt, led him to seek for spiritual associates elsewhere, and we accordingly find him, as we have already seen, receiving and aiding the Methodist preachers when they came into his neighborhood -- for which service they to several instances recorded their gratitude.

Mr. Jarratt continued his friendship for his Methodist brethren in general until the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, when he manifested, if we may believe in the genuineness of the letters attributed to him which were published after his death, no little displeasure in their proceedings, and uttered some hard things against Dr. Coke, Bishop Asbury, and some others. But while he was dissatisfied with the Methodists, on account of their becoming an independent Church, he seemed equally as much so with most of the clergy of his own Church, because of their dereliction from the doctrines of their Church, and their manifest want of a conformity to the formularies of their religion, and especially those parts which enjoined experimental and practical piety. In this frame of mind he laments, in pathetic strains, the low state of religion in his Church, the want of evangelical zeal and enlightened piety in her clergy, and the general deadness to spiritual things throughout the country.

I have made this short record of Mr. Jarratt, 1. Because I think it due to him as an active, zealous, and successful minister of Jesus Christ, whose friendship for the Methodists when they first visited Virginia, and for a considerable time after, greatly aided them in promoting the cause of God. For a number of years he was indefatigable in his gospel labors, and was instrumental in the conversion of many sinners.

2. Because his posthumous letters have been referred to as an evidence of his regret that he had contributed so much to subserve the cause of Methodism. It is, indeed, to be lamented that any thing should have occurred to interrupt, in any degree, that harmony of Christian fellowship which evidently subsisted between him and the Methodists, and which had been for a number of years mutually beneficial, and had, accordingly, been reciprocated with the utmost good will. But on the organization of our Church, Mr. Jarratt found himself between two fires. On the one hand, he could not approve in his judgment of that organization, while his feelings held him to his old friends; and in this conflict between his judgment and feelings, the latter became somewhat irritated, and prompted him to say things which, it may be presumed, his more sober judgment would have condemned. On the other hand, while his judgment approved of the doctrine and formularies of devotion recognized in his own Church, he could not fellowship the conduct of her lukewarm clergy

and members; and hence, on perceiving this inconsistency between faith and practice, he loudly condemned the one, while he warmly applauded the other. In this dilemma, a situation much to be deprecated by every conscientious minister of Jesus Christ, he seems to have said some things which may justly be regretted by his friends in both communions.

It is not doubted, however, considering his general character, course of conduct, and the predominant tone of his writings, that his last end was "peace and assurance for ever" -- and that with Wesley and Fletcher, whom he so much admired, and with those Methodist preachers with whom he once took such sweet counsel, as well as with all those of every name who loved the Lord Jesus Christ, he is now united in ascribing salvation and honor to him who loved them and washed them in his own blood.

1802 This year there were seven annual conferences, and as they remained stationary, as to numbers, for several years; and were generally held for each section of the country about the same time of the year, I will here give the time and place of each, that the reader may see the general route taken by the superintendents every year.

Oct. 1, 1801, the conference for the western preachers was held in Ebenezer, Tennessee: Jan. 1, 1802, in Camden, South Carolina: March 1, at Salem meeting-house, North Carolina: April 1, in Baltimore, Maryland: May 1, in Philadelphia: June 1, New York: July 1, in Monmouth, Maine. There were about twenty new circuits added this year, but as circuits were almost continually increased by the addition of new, and the division of old ones, by which their names were changed, it seems inexpedient to particularize them, unless something special shall render it necessary. As an evidence of the good effects of the revivals we have noticed, we may remark that there were sixty-seven preachers admitted on trial, and only ten located. This good work continued in various parts of the country, particularly in the west, by the instrumentality of camp-meetings, and also in some of the southern states. In Virginia, where the cause of religion had suffered severely on account of the secession and subsequent conduct of O’Kelley and his partisans, the Lord began again to show himself in mercy in the awakening and conversion of souls. At Mabry’s and Merrit’s chapels, and in Greenville circuit, there were remarkable displays of the power and grace of God, which eventuated in bringing hundreds of sinners into the light of the gospel. Norfolk and Portsmouth shared in the blessed work. In Rockingham an account is given of a meeting which continued not less than nine days, during which time almost all secular business was suspended, so entirely did the concerns of eternity occupy the time and attention of the people. It seems, therefore, that protracted meetings, as they have been more recently called, were not unknown in those days. The chief difference between those and such as have been held within a few past years consists in this, that the former were introduced without any previous design, but were the result of providential occurrences, while the latter were appointed with the express intention of being continued for several days, and hence, at first, were called "four days’ meetings." The result of the one mentioned above was, that one hundred and seven in the immediate neighborhood were brought into the Church, exclusive of those who came from a distance, and were benefited by the meeting.

There was also a great work of God which began last year on Flanders’ circuit, in the state of New Jersey, under the labors of the Rev. Elijah Woolsey and his colleagues. Mr. Woolsey had proved himself a bold and hardy veteran in the cause of Christ, by volunteering his services for Upper

Canada, in the year 1794, in company with Darius Dunham and James Coleman, where he labored for two years with much patience and industry, and saw the fruit of his efforts in the conversion of souls. In 1801 he was stationed on Flanders' circuit, and after cutting off those corrupt members of the Church who could not be reformed, he finally saw the blessed result of his labors in one of the most manifest displays of the grace of God ever witnessed in that part of the country. This work commenced at a quarterly meeting, at which it was judged there were not less than six thousand persons present. It seems that before the meeting commenced both brother Woolsey and the presiding elder, the Rev. Solomon Sharp, had a presentiment that the Lord was about to work at this meeting, and hence they went in the exercise of strong faith in the promises of God that it would be even so. When brother Woolsey arose to address the assembly, feeling "the word of the Lord like fire shut up in his bones," he informed them that God would work among them; and accordingly a shaking and trembling began to be visible in the assembly, accompanied with strong cries to God for mercy. The meeting continued until eleven o'clock at night, and some, judged, remained all night in these solemn exercises. The work thus commenced spread throughout the circuit, and great was the rejoicing of the people, both among the young converts and the old professors of religion. This revival eventuated in the conversion of many souls, and created a hallowing influence on the surrounding population. In Alexandria, in the District of Columbia, the quarterly meeting which began on Christmas day, continued sixteen days, and terminated in the conversion of upward of one hundred souls. In the states of North and South Carolina, Maryland, and Delaware, the Spirit of the Lord was poured out among the people in such a manner that some of the meetings were continued day and night, and hundreds became the subjects of the grace of life. In Vermont, also, the good work was extended in many places, though the labors of God's faithful ministers. Joseph Mitchell, Joseph Crawford, Elijah Chichester, and Elijah (now bishop) Hedding, had been instrumental, in the three or four preceding years, of carrying the glad tidings of salvation to the inhabitants along the shores of Lake Champlain, both in New York and Vermont, and had established many flourishing societies, which have continued gradually increasing until this day. This year William Anson was sent to form a circuit on Grand Isle, and such was his success, that there were returned for the next year one hundred and two members of the Church.

Montreal, in Lower Canada, was visited this year by Joseph Sawyer. He found a few persons there who had belonged to the Methodist society in the city of New York before the Revolutionary War, who received him cordially, and assisted him in procuring a school-room for preaching. A Mr. McGinnis and his sister, both unmarried, were among the first who attached themselves to the society in Montreal, and they remained faithful during all the vicissitudes though which Methodism was called to pass in that city until their death. The Long Point circuit, in Upper Canada, was formed the latter part of this year, chiefly through the labors of Nathan Bangs [the author of this history -- DVM], who went into the work under the direction of the presiding elder of the district. In the towns of Burford and Oxford particularly there was a great work of God commenced under his labors which eventuated in the conversion of about one hundred souls. In the midst of this great work which was extending over the continent, and blessing thousands with its renovating influences, Bishop Asbury and his faithful colleague, Bishop Whatcoat, were moving among the churches, "as golden candlesticks," reflecting their luster on all around them, and, by their example, exciting them to activity and diligence in the cause of God. In imitation of the primitive evangelists, these bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church itinerated through the extent of the

work, east, west, north, and south, not neglecting the remotest settlements in the wildernesses. And that they might not interfere with each other, nor both travel over the same ground, we find them in the latter part of last year, after holding a council with some of their brethren, determining to meet the Virginia conference, and from thence accompany each other as far as the New York conference; after which one was to continue on east to superintend the conferences in that direction, visiting all the eastern and northern states, and on through the western section of New York state to Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, and thence though the districts of Virginia, until he met his colleague at the Virginia conference; the bishop who took the western tour was to pass on into the western states and territories, through Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, North and South Carolina, and so meet, as before stated, in the center of the work in Virginia. What a diocese was this! Each bishop was to have a traveling elder to accompany him.5

According to this wise arrangement they shaped their course thereafter, spreading themselves as far as possible over the entire field of itinerant labor, and, by the aid of their traveling companions, preaching, wherever they came, to the people, and giving a vigorous impulse to the work of God. And as a sample of the manner in which their time was occupied, and the kind of fare they sometimes were obliged to put up with, take the following from Bishop Asbury's Journal: --

"Why," says he, "should a living man complain? But to be three months together upon the frontiers, where generally you have but one room and fireplace, and half a dozen folks about you, strangers perhaps, and their families certainly (and they are not usually small in those plentiful new countries) making a crowd -- and this is not all -- for here you may meditate if you can, and here you must preach, read, write, pray, sing, talk, eat, drink, and sleep, or fly into the woods. Well! I have pains in my body ... which are very afflictive when I ride; but I cheer myself as well as I may with songs in the night." It certainly may be said of those who "desire the office of a bishop" in connection with laborings and sufferings such as these, if they do not "desire a good thing," they at least desire an office, not for its temporal emolument, nor for the sake of the ease and worldly grandeur it confers. After speaking of his arrival in New York for this year, he says, --

"We advance toward the completion of four thousand miles for the present year. I have had great exercises on going though rain and continual labor; but have been blessed with great peace by my good and gracious God." The following account of the conference which he attended in the city of Baltimore, together with his remarks respecting a portion of his journal which was printed during his life-time, is inserted as due to him as a writer, and to the benevolence of his heart as a superintendent of the Church, as they show, on the one hand, that he was not responsible for the errors in his journal, which all who saw lamented, and, on the other, that he rejoiced in the temporal as well as spiritual prosperity of the preachers under his care. He says, --

"Monday, 5. We had a day of fasting and humiliation for the conference, the continent, and the Church of God; I improved the occasion, and spoke from Acts xiv, 2:3. I was presented with a new impression of my journal; it is very incorrect; had I had an opportunity before it was put to press, I should have altered and expunged many things; the inaccuracies of grammar, and imperfections of composition incident to the hasty notices of a manuscript journal, are preserved in the printed copy. On Monday evening the conference rose: all the demands of the preachers were answered; money was advanced toward the purchase of horses; to those who had distant circuits and far to go, donations were made; and nearly two hundred dollars very liberally sent to the Monmouth

conference, which is to meet in July next. Within the circling lines of this conference, we report to this sitting an addition to the society of three thousand souls and upward, besides those who may have died within the last eleven months. John Pawson's letter, and fifty copies of a volume of sermons, came safely to hand; his, and other letters, concerning the work of God, I read to my brethren."

Among other tidings which came to him while at this conference, was that of the death of his pious mother, for whom he always felt a tender and filial regard; and as she belongs, in some sense, to the history of American Methodism, by having given birth to a son who was so closely identified with its interests, I think the reader will he pleased to read the following reflections which the bishop made on receiving the news of her death. The following are his remarks:

While in Baltimore, I received an account of the death of my mother, which I fear is true. And here I may speak safely concerning my very dear mother: her character to me is well known. Her paternal descent was Welch; from a family ancient and respectable by the name of Rogers. She lived a woman of the world until the death of her first and only daughter, Sarah Asbury; how would the bereaved mother weep and tell of the beauties and excellences of her lost and lovely child! pondering on the past in the silent suffering of hopeless grief. This afflictive providence graciously terminated in the mother's conversion. When she saw herself a lost and wretched sinner, she sought religious people, but in the times of this ignorance few were 'sound in the faith,' or 'faithful to the grace given:' many were the days she spent chiefly in reading and prayer; at length she found justifying grace and pardoning mercy. So dim was the light of truth around her, from the assurance she found, she was at times inclined to believe in the final perseverance of the saints. For fifty years her hands, her house, her heart, were open to receive the people of God and ministers of Christ; and thus a lamp was lighted up in a dark place called Great Barre, in Great Britain. She was an afflicted, yet most active woman; of quick bodily powers, and masculine understanding; nevertheless, 'so kindly all the elements were mixed in her,' her strong mind quickly felt the subduing influences of that Christian sympathy which 'weeps with those who weep,' and 'rejoices with those who do rejoice.' As a woman and a wife she was chaste, modest, blameless -- as a mother (above all the women in the world would I claim her for my own) ardently affectionate as a 'mother in Israel,' few of her sex have done more by a holy walk to live, and by personal labor to support the gospel, and to wash the saints' feet; as a friend, she was generous, true, and constant. Elizabeth Asbury died January 6th, 1802, aged eighty-seven or eighty-eight years. There is now, after fifty years, a chapel within two or three hundred yards of her dwelling. I am now often drawn out in thankfulness to God, who hath saved a mother of mine, and, I trust, a father also, who are already in glory, where I hope to meet them both, after time, and cares, and sorrows, shall have ceased with me; and where glory shall not only beam, but open in my soul for ever. Amen." On account of some difficulties in the Church in the city of Philadelphia, which, it seems, could not be amicably adjusted, a number of the members withdrew from the Church, and established a separate place of worship, in a building which had been erected by Mr. Whitefield for an academy, and in which he used to preach whenever be visited that city. -- Hence these brethren were distinguished for a number of years as belonging to the Academy station.

Believing them to have been influenced by pure motives, and as they adhered to the Methodist doctrine, and wished to be supplied with Methodist preaching, as well as to be governed by our discipline, the question was submitted to the conference, which sat in Philadelphia this year,

whether or not the bishop should grant their request to have a preacher stationed over them. After mature deliberation, it was agreed, with only one dissenting vote, that their request should be granted, on such terms as the bishop could make. From that time forward the Academy was considered as a branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and it has been recognized a and regularly supplied with preachers by the bishops and conference. And although for some time there was not a perfect union between them and those brethren with whom the difference originated, yet the disaffection gradually wore way, and they both have continued to prosper and increase in number and respectability to the present day; and it is believed that long since all alienation of feeling between the two sections has fully died away. Indeed, Methodism in the city of Philadelphia has gradually increased in its resources, both temporally and spiritually, from the period of its introduction by Captain Webb, in 1766, until the present time; and although it has had its share of difficulties to contend with, it has never been wanting in putting forth its energies in proportion to its means for the enlargement of the Redeemer’s kingdom, both at home and abroad. The increase of members for the present year, which may be seen below, shows the blessed effects of the numerous revivals which we have narrated for the two preceding years.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 68,075; Last Year: 57,186; Increase: 10,899 -- Colored This Year: 18,659; Last Year: 15,688; Increase: 2,971 -- Total This Year: 86,734; Last Year: 72,874 -- Increase: 13,860 -- Preachers This Year: 358; Last Year: 307; Increase: 51. This is the largest increase in any one year since 1790, when it was 14,369, being 509 more then than now. The friends of the cause had also reason to congratulate themselves on the greater proportionate stability and perseverance of those who had entered the ranks of the itinerancy, there being a much less number than usually heretofore who exchanged the traveling for the local ministry.

1803

There were seven annual conferences this year, the New England conference being held for the first time in Boston, and the New York in Ashgrove, in the northerly part of the state of New York.

There was an enlargement of the work of God this year in almost every direction, and "many people were added to the Lord." The camp-meetings which had commenced in the west under such favorable auspices, continued to spread with increased usefulness, thousands being attracted by the fame of their character, who otherwise might never have heard the gospel. This year they were introduced into various parts of the country. Two were held in the lower parts of Virginia, the first in Brunswick county, and the second at a place called the Barn, at both of which the Lord manifested himself in great power and goodness to the people.

Similar meetings were held in Georgia, South and North Carolina, and in Maryland, at all of which there were remarkable displays of the awakening and converting grace of God, so that it may be said in truth, there were great revivals of religion through all those parts of the country. At a field meeting held in the vicinity of Middletown, Connecticut, there was a gracious work of God commenced, which terminated in the conversion of a number of souls. This year the work extended in the western part of the state of New York, and Otsego, Black River, Westmoreland, Pompey, and Ontario were added to the list of circuits in that part of the country.

Samuel Merwin, Elijah Chichester, and Laban Clark, were this year sent as missionaries to Lower Canada; and Montreal, St. Johns, and Sorel, were included among the stations on the minutes of

conference. Mr. Merwin visited Quebec, but not meeting with much encouragement, he stayed only about six weeks, when he came to Montreal, and spent the remainder of the year there, while Mr. Chichester, who was in Montreal, returned to the United States. Mr. Clark, after encountering a variety of difficulties in striving to form a circuit in the settlements along the Sorel, was reluctantly compelled to abandon the enterprise as hopeless, and he accordingly left that part of the country, and spent the remainder of the year among his brethren in the United States. In the great revivals of religion we have noticed, many young preachers were raised up, who went into the world as flaming heralds, contributing much by the energy of their preaching, and the faithfulness of their pastoral duties, to diffuse the spirit of reformation among the people. But the camp meetings were among the most efficient means of awakening the attention of the people to the things of eternity. As I have, however, heretofore entered so particularly into the details of the character and good effects of these camp meetings, it seems unnecessary to repeat them here, only to observe in general, that wherever they were introduced, similar effects followed, until at length they became very general among the Methodists throughout the country, and were often seasons of great "refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

Four preachers; namely, Lewis Hunt, Edmund Wayman, John Leach, and Anthony Turck, after having fulfilled their ministry with fidelity and usefulness, took their departure this year from a scene of labor to a world of rest, as it is recorded of them all that they died in peace and triumph. Fourteen located, and six were returned supernumerary.

Until last year the stations of the preachers were printed under their respective districts, as Georgia, South Carolina, &C., without naming the conferences of which they respectively belonged. In the year 1802 the name of the conference was inserted at the head of the stations, so that it might be perceived at once to what conference each district, circuit, and preacher belonged. This year the same method was observed in taking the numbers, by which means the relative size and strength of each conference might be estimated. The following is the recapitulation of the Numbers in the Church By Conferences Western: Whites--7,738; Colored--464; Total--8,202 S. Carolina: Whites--9,256; Colored--2,815; Total--12,071 Virginia: Whites--13,099; Colored--3,794; Total--16,893 Baltimore: Whites--12,513; Colored--6,414; Total--18,927 Philadelphia: Whites--24,626; Colored--8,561; Total--33,187 New England: Whites--2,927; Colored--14; Total--2,941 New York: Whites--11,458; Colored--391; Total--11,849 Totals This Year: Whites--81,617; Colored--22,453; Grand Total--104,070 Totals Last Year: Whites--68,075; Colored--18,659; Grand Total--86,734 Total Increases: Whites--13,542; Colored--3,794; Grand Total Increase: 17,336 Preachers This Year: 383 Preachers Last Year: 350

Increase: 33 That we may see the comparative numbers of each conference in proportion to the extent of its territory, it is necessary to know the number of districts, circuits, and preachers of each, as well as the entire population of the territory comprehended in the bounds of each conference; but as the conferences were not bounded by state lines, it is not possible to estimate the comparative population of each; the following table, however, will exhibit the number of districts, circuits, preachers, and members in the several conferences respectively: --

Conference Western: Districts--3; Circuits--17; Preachers--27; Members--8,202 South Carolina: Districts--3; Circuits--19; Preachers--35; Members--12,071 Virginia: Districts--4; Circuits--32; Preachers--44; Members--16,893 Baltimore: Districts--4; Circuits--34; Preachers--59;

Members--18,927 Philadelphia: Districts--6; Circuits--49; Preachers--105; Members--33,187 New England: Districts--2; Circuits--24; Preachers--35; Members--2,941 New York: Districts--5; Circuits--38; Preachers--79; Members--17,336 By comparing the two largest conferences, Philadelphia and New York, we shall perceive that the former had a population of as one preacher to about three hundred and twenty-five members, and the latter as one preacher to about two hundred and twenty members. This difference may be accounted for in the sparsity of the general population of Vermont and the Canadas, both of which were comprehended in the New York conference, and although three preachers were stationed in Lower Canada, they were considered as missionaries sent to make a trial for the introduction of Methodism, and from which no members were returned: whereas the Philadelphia conference, though it embraced much of the new counties in the northern part of Pennsylvania and in western New York, comprehended also the other settled counties along the western bank of the Hudson River, the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, in some parts of which Methodism had, from its beginning, flourished more than in any other portion of our country. The peninsula of Maryland especially was considered the garden spot of Methodism in those days.

If we take the Western and New England conferences, which are the two least, we shall find that the latter had a population of as one preacher to about one hundred and twenty-two members, and the former as one to four hundred and eighty-two. This difference is easily accounted for. In the western country, the Methodists were the evangelical pioneers among the people, and amid the great revivals which had originated at their camp meetings, they took the lead, and had already reaped a rich harvest of souls as the reward of their labors and sacrifices; while in New England, though the general population of the country was more dense than in the west, the Methodists had many sorts of opposition to contend with, doctrines adverse to their own to encounter, the prejudices of education, and denominational jealousies to oppose their progress. On these accounts, Methodism made but slow advances in New England; those who first joined its standard were generally of the poorer class, able to yield but a scanty support to the preachers, and it had, moreover, to contend against a strong current of opposition which set in against it: hence its members were comparatively small for several years. Indeed, it was not until the bands of sectarian bigotry were broken, and the bland influences of the gospel had in some measure softened the asperities arising from denominational peculiarities, that Methodism could stand erect and assert her liberties in New England. From a review of the work for the last three years, we find abundant cause for thankfulness to the great Head of the Church for what he had done by the instrumentality of his servants. Methodism began to he felt throughout the country; and while it provoked the opposition of some, it had been the means of stirring up many other denominations to put forth their efforts for the spread of evangelical principles and holiness though the land; and if "righteousness exalteth a nation," may we not believe that those great revivals of religion had a most happy and conservative influence upon our national character? Had those principles of infidelity with which the minds of many of the leading men of our Nation had been infected, and which, at one time, were descending with fearful rapidity to the lower ranks of society, been permitted to operate unchecked by any other barrier than a mere lifeless form of Christianity, or those restraints which a secular and civil education might interpose, is there not reason to apprehend that such streams of moral and intellectual, as well as political pollution, would have poured their poisonous waters over the land, as must have washed our civil and religious institutions into the whirlpool of destruction?

Without attempting to disparage other denominations of Christians, who doubtlessly all contributed toward checking the overflowings of ungodliness by making a firm stand against the secret workings of infidelity, it must, I think, be admitted by all who reflect impartially on the subject, that the labors of the itinerating Methodist preachers tended mightily to purify the corrupt mass of mind, and to awaken attention to spiritual and divine things, and to call off the attention of the people from mere secular and political affairs, to the momentous concerns of eternity. And may we not hence see a reason why God wrought in such a remarkable manner, about this time, at the camp and other meetings? And why especially that he should have begun this work in the new countries? We know perfectly well, that in the settlement of new countries, being generally destitute of the ordinary means of grace, the minds of the people are apt to be occupied chiefly with temporal things, and thus, by habit, become forgetful of God and their eternal interests. In this state of things, and under such influences as were at work, our new territories were filling and growing up. And who should go after those wanderers? Who should follow them into the wilderness, and bring them into the fold of Christ? Let this duty devolve on whomsoever it might, the Methodists were among the first to discharge it. Their mode of preaching, too, plain, pointed, searching, extemporaneous, and itinerating from place to place, collecting the people in log houses, in school houses, in the groves, or in barns, was most admirably adapted to the state of society, and calculated to arouse the attention of a slumbering world to the concerns of religion.

Such were the means employed, and such were the effects produced. And who will say that God did not lead to the adoption of this method as best adapted to answer the ends of redemption, namely, the salvation of the lost. To awaken the men of that generation from their profound stupor, that they might shake off the slumbers of infidelity, and acknowledge the hand of God in their deliverance from the charms of error with which they were deluded, God, it seems, interposed in the remarkable manner before narrated, and by "signs and wonders" in the symbolical heavens convinced the people that he "ruled in the armies of heaven, and commanded among the inhabitants of the earth." By this means, as before said, the minds of the people were awakened to their eternal interests, religion became the topic of conversation, of inquiry, and investigation, and thus that light was poured into the understanding, and conviction into the conscience, which led men to see the errors of infidelity, the unsatisfying nature of a mere form of godliness, and to feel the conservative influence which vital, experimental, and practical Christianity exerts upon individual character, upon social and civil communities, and of course upon stales and empires.

What though the keen eye of criticism might detect some errors in doctrine or extravagance in conduct, originating from human weaknesses or unsanctified passions, -- shall we cast away the good on account of the bad? Who does not see that such a process would lead to the abandonment of every institution, civil as well as religious, on earth? That thousands of sinners were reformed, in heart and life, the most skeptical must acknowledge. And a thoroughly reformed sinner cannot be otherwise than a good citizen, a good ruler, husband, brother, and friend. To make Christian patriots, therefore, is to purify the political atmosphere from all poisonous exhibitions, and to make it a healthful medium for the civil respiration of all who move and have their being within its circumference. In addition to the direct influence which Christian principles were thus brought to exert on the heart and life, the itinerating mode of preaching had a tendency in the natural order of cause and effect, to cement the hearts of our citizens together in one great brotherhood. It is well known that our civil organization, into several state sovereignties, though

under the partial control of the general government, naturally tended to engender state animosities, arising out of local and peculiar usages, laws, customs, and habits of life. What more calculated to soften these asperities, and to allay petty jealousies and animosities, than a Church bound together by one system of doctrine, under the government of the same discipline, accustomed to the same usages, and a ministry possessing it homogeneousness of character, aiming at one and the same end -- the salvation of their fellow-men by means of the same gospel, preached and enforced by the same method -- and these ministers continually interchanging from north to south, from east to west, everywhere striving to bring all men under the influence of the same "bond of perfectness?" Did not these things tend to bind the great American family together by producing a sameness of character, feelings, and views? And all this too without entering into the arena of politics at all, or siding, as a Church, with any political party. For it is a well-known fact, that the Methodist Episcopal Church has never embarked on the rough sea of political warfare. She has left all her ministers and members free, to act as individual members of the civil community as they might list, only enjoining upon all a due submission to the "powers that be" -- never attempting to dictate to any of her communion to what political party they should lend their influence, nor ever making civil polity the end of her exertions. The influence therefore, which she has exerted upon the civil destinies of the republic, has been altogether of an indirect and collateral character, growing out of that moral and religious stamp with which she strives to mark and distinguish all her children. That this conservative influence has been felt on the civil destinies of our country, originating from our religious institutions and the mode of carrying them into effect, is what is here contended for, and what, it is believed, all candid, impartial observers of the history of events and the connection between causes and effects must acknowledge. Being foremost in congratulating the first chief magistrate of our republic on his elevation to that high and responsible office, she has remained unabatedly attached to the constitution of the country, inculcating obedience to its magistrates and laws, and promulgating those doctrines and enforcing those duties which, if believed and discharged, will ensure peace on earth, and lead ultimately to immortality and eternal life in heaven.

ENDNOTES

1 Here, then, was a protracted meeting held long before those which have been more recently established among us and some other denominations.

2 The Rev. John McGee, from whom much of this account is taken.

3 This part of the country was first visited by a local preacher from the United States by the name of Neel, who commenced preaching in the vicinity of Queenstown, amid much obloquy and opposition. He was a holy man of God and an able minister of the New Testament. His word was blessed to the awakening and conversion of many souls, and he was always spoken of by the people with great affection and veneration as the pioneer of Methodism in that country. Among those who first joined the society may be mentioned Christian Warner, who lived near what is now called St. David’s, who became a class leader, and his house was a home for the preachers and for preaching for many years. He was considered a father in Israel by all who knew him. The first Methodist meeting house erected in that part of the country was in his neighborhood. This was built in 1801.

Christian Warner has been dead many years; but several of his descendants are there, some of whom are members of the Church.

Mr. Neel lived to see large and flourishing societies established through all that country, and at length was gathered to his fathers in a good old age.

4 Bishop Asbury, who preached the funeral sermon of Mr. Jarratt, says of him, "He was a faithful and successful preacher. He had witnessed four or five periodic revivals of religion in his parish. -- When he began his labors, there was no other, that he knew of, evangelical ministers in all the province of Virginia." -- "He traveled into several counties, and there were very few parish churches within fifty miles of his own, in which he had not preached: to which labors of love and zeal, was added, preaching the word of life on solitary plantations, and in meeting houses. He was the first who received our despised preachers. When strangers and unfriended, he took them to his house, and had societies formed in his parish. Some of his people became traveling and local preachers among us." -- "I verily believe that hundreds were awakened by his labors. They are dispersed -- some have gone to the Carolinas, to Georgia, to the western country -- some perhaps are in heaven, and some, it may be, in hell." This is a strong testimony in favor of Mr. Jarratt. Little did the lid the writer think when he penned it that a future day would reveal an edition of Mr. Jarratt's posthumous letters, containing such hard censures against the Methodists as are therein found. Indeed these censures are so much unlike the general tone and spirit of Mr. Jarratt, as they were exemplified in his life and conversation, that some, who revere his memory, have expressed doubts of their genuineness, or at least that their editor foisted in expressions which are not in the originals. On the truth of such a conjecture it is scarcely possible to decide; but on the reading of the letters, there does not appear to me anything, except the general character of their reputed author, to cause one to suspect their genuineness. Mr. Jarratt doubtless thought he had cause to complain, and under the influence of this impression, he seems to have expressed himself in a strain of invective somewhat unbecoming the character he sustained.

5 Asbury's Journal, vol. iii, page 43.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book IV Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 6 The General Conference of 1804, and of the Annual Conferences of 1804-5-6-7 The fourth regular General Conference assembled in the city of Baltimore, on the 7th day of May, 1804. There were present one hundred and twelve members, but as the seats of five were, on examination, declared vacant, because the persons were not legally there, the conference was composed of one hundred and seven members, namely, four from New England, three from the Western, five from South Carolina, seventeen from Virginia, twenty-nine from Baltimore, forty one from Philadelphia, and twelve from New York Conference.1 Bishops Coke, Asbury, and Whatcoat were present as presidents of the General Conference.

After being organized, a motion was made and carried, that the conference proceed in the onerous task of reading and revising, in consecutive order, the entire Discipline, requiring, as before, that no old rule should be abolished without the concurrence of two thirds of the members present; but a motion to require a vote of two thirds to establish a new rule was lost. The right of fixing the times for holding the annual conferences was invested in the bishops, provided they should allow each conference to sit at least one week, while the places were to be fixed by the conferences themselves. The following provision was made in regard to presidents of conferences in the absence of a bishop: "But if there are two or more presiding elders belonging to one conference, the bishop or bishops may, by letter or otherwise, appoint the president; but if no appointment be made, or the presiding elder appointed do not attend, the conference shall, in either of these cases, elect the president, by ballot, without debate, from among the presiding elders." To restrict the power of the presiding elders in the employment of preachers whose application to be received into the traveling ministry had been rejected by an annual conference, it was ordered that such should not be employed without the consent of the conference, "under certain conditions."

Provision was also made for the trial of a bishop in the interval of the General Conference, making it obligatory on the accusers to present their accusation in writing, a copy of which must be given to the accused himself. The bishops were, at this conference, prohibited from allowing any preacher to remain more than two years successively in any circuit or station. This has been a standing rule to the present time. As the articles of religion were adopted under the reign of the "old confederation," the article respecting the government of the United States recognized the "Act of Confederation," as the general bond of union to the several states. At this conference the phraseology of that article was altered so as to recognize the Constitution of the United States as the supreme law of the land, and the federal union of the states as a to "sovereign and independent nation" which "ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction." The rule which made expulsion from the Church a penalty for marrying unawakened persons, was so altered at this conference, as to require that such should be put back on trial, with an explanatory note,

stating that they did not prohibit persons from uniting in matrimony with those who are not members of our Church, provided they have the form and are seeking the power of godliness. The Book Concern, which had hitherto been carried on in the city of Philadelphia, was removed to the city of New York, and Ezekiel Cooper was reappointed editor and general book steward, and John Wilson his assistant. A rule was passed recommending to the annual conferences to restrict our preachers from improper publications, making it obligatory on them to submit their manuscripts to the book committee at New York, or to their annual conference.

It was ordered that each quarterly meeting conference should appoint a secretary to take down its proceedings, in a book to be kept by one of the stewards of the circuit.

It was ordered at this conference that the Discipline should he divided into two parts, the first part to comprehend the spiritual, and the second the temporal economy; and the spiritual part was directed to be printed separately, more especially for the benefit of the colored members of the Church at the south.

It seems that in the address of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference to our General Conference, they earnestly solicited the return of Dr. Coke, whose labors among them they highly appreciated, more particularly in the missionary department of their work. This subject was referred to a committee to consider and report thereon, and they finally agreed to the following, which was concurred in by the conference: --

"Dr. Coke shall have leave from this General Conference to return to Europe, agreeably to the request of the European Conferences, provided he shall hold himself subject to the call of three of our annual conferences to return when he is requested, but at farthest, that he shall return, if he lives, to the next General Conference." In conformity to this resolution, the following letter was addressed to the British Conference: --

Very Dear and Respected Brethren: -- Your very kind and affectionate address, from your Manchester Conference, dated August 5, 1803, was presented to us by our mutual friend and brother, Dr. Coke. We always have received, and hope we ever shall receive such addresses from our European brethren, with the most cordial sentiments of Christian friendship; for it is our ardent wish that the European and American Methodists may improve and strengthen the bonds of Christian union, and, as far as possible, reciprocally build each other up in the great and glorious work, in which they are both so arduously employed. And we pray God, that our adorable Jehovah and Redeemer may graciously be pleased to prosper both you and us in the blessed work of proclaiming the honor of our God, and of saving the precious souls of mankind.

We truly rejoice in the information given us, that the gospel of Christ continues to prevail among you; and that the mission among the native Irish is marked with hopeful and flattering prospects. Also we are much pleased with the account of your prosperous mission in the principality of Wales, in the Welsh language. Whenever we hear of the prosperity of Zion and of the success of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, it gives us a pleasure far superior to our powers of expression: hence we are ready, upon such occasions, with overflowing hearts of love and gratitude, to proclaim with shouts of joy and gladness, 'Not unto us, not unto us; but unto the Lord' be more that human ascriptions of praise, of honor, and glory! May the united labors of your hands be prospered more and more!

We also feel peculiar satisfaction at the information of the union and harmony which subsist among you in doctrine and discipline and that you, our elder brethren, are steadfast and persevering in the divine articles of the essential divinity and efficacious atonement of Jesus Christ, and of all the benefits and privileges flowing from, and connected with the same; we cordially embrace the same important truths, and are determined to stand fast and immovable in the support of this essential foundation of all our hopes. The Lord has greatly prospered our labors in these United States. We have at present increased to considerably more than one hundred thousand members; and the work still goes on in a great and glorious manner. Our brethren are much in the spirit of active perseverance in this blessed work; and, by the blessing of God, our hearts are cemented together in love, and are bound in the ties of harmony and unity. With respect to our much-esteemed friend, and beloved brother, Dr. Coke, he arrived among us last autumn, and was received by us with the sincerest sentiments of respect and affection. Since he came into these states, he has traveled about three thousand miles, visiting our principal societies, and preaching to crowded assemblies of our citizens. His time, we trust, has been profitably and acceptably spent among us, and we hope agreeably to himself. Your request for his return was taken into our most serious and solemn consideration; and, after a full and deliberate examination of the reasons which you assigned in favor of his return, we have concluded that there is a probability of his being more eminently useful at present, in the way you point out, than for us to retain him, especially as our beloved brother Asbury now enjoys better health than he did some years ago, and as we believe, with the assistance he can receive from our esteemed brother Whatcoat, the work of superintending the Church and societies can be accomplished in the absence of Dr. Coke. We therefore have consented to the doctor’s return to Europe, upon the express condition that he will return to us at any time, when three of our annual conferences shall call him, or at farthest, that he shall return to our next General Conference. And now, dear brethren, we commend you to our common Lord, and to the word of his grace, hoping that you and we shall ever remain in the unity of the Spirit, and bonds of Christian and ministerial affection until we meet together around the throne of God. Pray for us. We are, very dear and much-respected brethren, truly and sincerely yours, in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Signed by order, and in behalf of the General Conference, "Francis Asbury, "Richard Whatcoat, "John Wilson, Secretary.

"Baltimore, May 23, 1804." This year, for the first time, I find the boundaries of the several annual conferences fixed by the General Conference, and printed in the form of Discipline. They are as follows: -- 1. The New England conference shall include the district of Maine, the Boston, New London, and Vermont districts.

2. The New York conference comprehends the New York, Pittsfield, Albany, and Upper Canada districts.

3. The Philadelphia conference shall include the remainder of the state of New York, all New Jersey, that part of Pennsylvania which lies on the east side of the Susquehanna River, except what belongs to the Susquehanna district, the state of Delaware, the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and all the rest of the Peninsula.

4. The Baltimore conference shall include the remainder of Pennsylvania, the Western Shore of Maryland, the Northern Neck of Virginia, and the Greenbrier district.

5. The Virginia conference shall include all that part of Virginia which lies on the south side of the Rappahannock River and east of the Blue Ridge, and in that part of North Carolina which lies on the north side of Cape Fear River, except Washington, also the circuits which are situate on the branches of the Yadkin.

6. The South Carolina conference shall include the remainder of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

7. The Western conference shall include the states of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio, and that part of Virginia which lies west of the great river Kanawha, with the Illinois and Natchez; provided, the bishops shall have authority to appoint other yearly conferences. A bare inspection of the map of the United States will show the immense territory included in each of these conferences; and when it is recollected that the districts and circuits were proportionally large, it will be perceived that the preachers of those days were no "idle shepherds," but were emphatically laborers in this vast and fruitful field.

These, with the exception of some important verbal amendments, and some regulations in reference to the Book Concern, which will be noticed in another place, comprehended the doings of this conference. The conference closed its session in peace on the 23d of May, and the members returned to their itinerant labors with renewed ardor, determined to spend and be spent in the cause of Jesus Christ.

It appears from the records of those days, that the introduction of camp meetings added a new stimulus to the work of reformation, and put, as it were, new life and energy into the hearts of God’s ministers and people. They were accordingly appointed in almost every part of our work, and were generally attended with most evident manifestations of the power and grace of God. It was estimated that about one thousand souls were brought from darkness to light, this year, at the various camp meetings which were held in the states of North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New York, besides those who were indirectly benefited by these meetings on their various circuits; for generally, the preachers and people returned from the camp meetings with their hearts fired and filled with the love of God, and were a means of carrying the sacred flame into their respective neighborhoods, where it was enkindled with fresh ardor, and burned with a steady blaze, consuming the sins of many a broken-hearted sinner. But while these extraordinary meetings were exerting a hallowed influence upon the older states, and were therefore hailed particularly by the Methodists as instruments of great good to the souls of the people, those in Kentucky ran into such wild excesses in some instances, as to bring them into disrepute in the estimation of the more sober part of the community.

We have seen that some of the Presbyterian ministers were among the foremost in promoting these meetings, and in favoring the revivals which resulted from them. These, however, were opposed by many of their brethren, particularly those who held fast the doctrines of Calvinistic decrees, and blended with them the doctrine of irresistible grace, thereby aiding, indirectly, and without intending it, the fatalism of infidelity, within which the minds of many of the Kentuckians had been infected. Some of these ministers, in the judgment of those who have recorded the transactions of those days, were strangers to experimental religion, and therefore, when they undertook to instruct those awakened sinners who came to them for advice, they knew not how to meet their cases, nor how to adapt their instructions to the peculiar state of their minds. This

created perplexity and confusion. Those whose souls were alive to God, by having received a baptism from above, were disgusted with the awkwardness of those spiritual advisers, and finally considered them to "physicians of no value." This led to disputings, and finally to a separation, which terminated in 1803 in the formation of what was called the "Springfield Presbytery." But these preachers, however sincere and fervent they might have been, did not surround themselves with those guards which are essential to the preservation of harmony, orthodoxy, and gospel order; and hence those who were licensed to preach by this presbytery, puffed up with their sudden elevation to office, and breathing in an atmosphere which inflated them with spiritual pride, threw off the restraints of a wholesome discipline, and soon proclaimed those destructive heresies which are subversive of all true religion. The Springfield Presbytery was dissolved in 1804, and some turned Quakers, and others ran into the wildest freaks of fanaticism. Hence originated those unseemly exercises so humiliating to recount, of jumping, dancing, jerking, barking, and rolling on the ground, by which these schismatics were at last distinguished and disgraced. And to finish the climax of absurdities, in the midst of this "confusion worse confounded," a company of Shaking Quaker preachers from the state of New York came among them with their new-fangled doctrines, and "drew away disciples" after them. Several of these dissentient ministers and quite a number of members were, by these means, drawn into this vortex of error and confusion.

Another thing which added to the evils so much to be deprecated by every friend to gospel order, was the introduction, by some men of eminent talents, and considerable influence, of the Socinian and Arian heresies. These, indeed, were the precursors, in some measure, of the evils we have mentioned, and tended, by their soft and subtle speculations, gradually to sap the foundation of the Christian’s hope, and to prepare the way for that wild confusion by which many minds became bewildered. These things, as before stated, tended to bring camp meetings into disrepute in Kentucky, and not a little to strengthen the cause of skepticism -- an infidelity to which many were strongly inclined, and which always battens itself upon the foibles and faults of religious professors -- a sort of food exactly suited to the vitiated and voracious appetite of an unbelieving multitude. But while these things were transacting among those who slid off from the mountain of gospel truth, the Methodists generally, and most of the Presbyterians who had favored these revivals, descried the danger from afar, and gave the alarm to their people. The latter, however, separated themselves from both the old Presbyterians, who were supposed to be defective in experimental religion, and too tenacious of the peculiarities of Calvinism, and from those wild fanatics we have already described, and established a community of their own under the jurisdiction of what has been called "The Cumberland Presbytery."2 These have continued to increase in numbers and respectability to the present time, and no doubt have exerted a salutary religious influence within the sphere of their labors. The Methodists, however, adhered to their standards, and promoted the cause of the revivals without involving themselves in the responsibility of those wild rhapsodies and unseemly gesticulations which hung on the skirts of the camp and other meetings in Kentucky. The union which had subsisted between the different denominations became, from various causes, weaker and weaker, until finally each, arranging itself under its own standard, and using those religious appliances which were considered lawful and expedient, endeavored to promote the cause of piety in its own peculiar way, without improperly interfering with its neighbor. And although, from the causes we have enumerated, camp meetings became unsavory in most places in Kentucky, their birthplace, they traveled into the new state of Ohio, and there displayed the banners of the cross with all that vigor and success which had marked their progress in Kentucky

and Tennessee, and also without suffering a deterioration from the wild excesses heretofore deprecated. What added to the beneficial influence of these meetings in Ohio, and tended to diffuse the spirit of reformation among the people in these new settlements, was, that many who had caught the sacred flame in Kentucky, from l803 to 1806, as if impelled by an invisible power, emigrated to Ohio; and while the Church was being sifted in Kentucky, and under the searching operation of a gospel discipline, much of the chaff was winnowed out, these pious emigrants were preparing a habitation for themselves and their children in a more congenial soil, better suited, from various circumstances, for the cultivation and growth of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. This year William Burke was the presiding elder of the Ohio district, and he contributed much by his labors and sacrifices to extend the Redeemer's kingdom in that newly-settled country. While William McKendree continued his labors in Kentucky, and exerted all his powers to check the progress of fanaticism which he saw afflicting the Church, as well as to confirm the wavering and the doubting, Mr. Burke, aided by several young men of zeal and perseverance, was carrying the spiritual warfare into the enemy's territories in Ohio, and thus was preparing the way of the Lord in that rising part of our country. This year a strong effort was made to introduce Methodism into the town of Marietta. In many places in the adjoining settlements it had taken firm hold of the hearts of the people, and several flourishing circuits had been formed; but as yet no impression had been made upon the inhabitants in Marietta, the oldest town in the state, and in which the Congregationalists held the religious sway. This year a camp meeting was appointed by the Rev. George Askins, on the public land in the immediate vicinity of the village; but though it was rendered a blessing to the people of God who assembled from a distance, no permanent impression appeared to be made on those for whom it was chiefly intended, and the meeting broke up with little hopes in the hearts of the preachers. They all agreed, however, to pray for an outpouring of the Spirit upon that place. The next year, under the superintendence of the Rev. Messrs. Jacob Young and George C. Light, another meeting was appointed, which was attended with the most blessed results; and among others who were made partakers of the grace of life was a professed disciple of Thomas Paine, by the name of Jonas Johnson. The change wrought in him was great and visible; and, being a most charming singer, by the exercise of his gift and his general deportment, he exerted great influence over others, and was instrumental of much good. He committed his infidel books to the flame, substituting in their place the Bible and Hymn book, and other religious books, and opened his house as well as his heart to the messengers of salvation. A class was soon formed of happy believers, which continued to flourish and increase in strength and numbers, and to exert a hallowed influence for many years on the surrounding population; and the church in Marietta, though at times suffering from the disaffection of some of its members, stands among her sister churches in Ohio as one of the stars to enlighten the minds of those who "sit in the land and shadow of death."

While these things were going on in the western states the Lord was not unmindful of other parts of his vineyard. As has already been related, by means of camp meetings, which may be considered as ushering in a new era in the history of revivals of religion, the work of God spread rapidly in many parts of the older states. In addition to the general notice already taken of those, we may remark that this year there was an encouraging revival in the city of Philadelphia; not less than one hundred souls had been converted to God, and brought into the fold of Christ, under the labors of Joshua Wells and his colleagues. In Bedford, Amherst, and Campbell counties in Virginia, and some other places, under the labors of Stith Mead, the Lord poured out his Spirit, and

more than eleven hundred souls were brought into gospel liberty in about six months. In the province of Maine there was a gracious work of God in several places. This began at the Conference which was held in the town of Buxton, upward of forty souls having been born unto God during the conference. In Beth and Readfield the work of God prevailed to a considerable extent. In Mississippi there was a number brought to the knowledge of the truth. This year Benjamin Young was sent as a missionary to Illinois, which at that time contained but few inhabitants, and these chiefly descendants of the French, who first settled in Kaskaskia and Cahokia in 1720. But though thus early explored by the French, and settlements commenced, the progress of the population in Illinois was extremely slow, as it is said that in 1800 the whole number of inhabitants was only two hundred and fifteen, and the territory was not erected into an independent state until 1818. Since that time, however, it has filled up with inhabitants within a surprising rapidity. The missionary so far succeeded in his labors that there were returned, on the minutes for the next year, sixty-seven members. This year, also, Nathan Bangs [the author of this work -- DVM] solicited and obtained the appointment of a missionary to a new settlement on the River Thames,3 in Upper Canada. This place had long been on his mind as a promising field for missionary labor, and he had frequently offered himself to explore it in the name of the Lord, but his presiding elder objected, on account of the feeble state of his health and the unhealthiness of the climate.4

While at the conference in New York this year, he made known his desires and impressions to Bishop Asbury, and he appointed him a missionary to that place. He accordingly left the city of New York in the latter part of the month of June, went into Upper Canada by the way of Kingston, thence up the country along the northwestern shore of Lake Ontario to the Long Point circuit, and thence on through Oxford to the town of Delaware, on the River Thames. Here he lodged for the night in the last log hut in the settlement, and the next morning, as the day began to dawn, he arose and took his departure, and after traveling through a wilderness of forty-five miles, guided only by marked trees, he arrived at a solitary log house about sunset, weary, hungry, and thirsty, where he was entertained with the best the house could afford, which was some Indian pudding and milk for supper, and a bundle of straw for this bed. The next day, about twelve o’clock, he arrived at an Indian village on the north bank of the River Thames, the inhabitants of which were under the instructions of two Moravian missionaries. While there the Indians were called together for worship, which was performed in a very simple manner, by reading a short discourse, and singing a few verses of a hymn. The missionaries and the Indians treated him with great respect and affection, and seemed to rejoice in the prospect of having the gospel preached to the white settlements on the banks of the river below.

About 3 o’clock, P. M., he arrived at the first house in the settlement, when the following conversation took place between the missionary and a man whom he saw in the yard before the house. After the introductory salutation, the missionary inquired, "Do you want the gospel preached here?" After some deliberation, it was answered, "Yes, that we do. Do you preach the gospel?" "That is my occupation." "Alight from your horse, then, and come in, will you?" "I have come a great distance to preach the gospel to the people here, and it is now Saturday afternoon, tomorrow is the Sabbath, and I must have a house to preach in before I get off from my horse." After a few moments of consideration, he replied, "I have a house for you to preach in, provender for your horse, and food and lodging for yourself; and you shall be welcome to them all if you will

dismount and come in." Thanking him for his kind offer, the missionary dismounted and entered the hospitable mansion in the name of the Lord, saying, 'Peace be to this house'. A young man mounted this horse and rode ten miles down the river, inviting the people to attend meeting at that house the next morning at ten o'clock, A. M. At the time appointed the house was filled. When the missionary rose up, he told the people that whenever a stranger makes his appearance in a place the people are generally anxious to know who he is, whence he came, where he is going, and what his errand is among them. "In these things," said he, "I will satisfy you in few words." He then gave them a short account of his birth and education, of his conversion and call to the ministry, and the motives which induced him to come among them, and concluded in the following manner: "I am a Methodist preacher, and my manner of worship is to stand up and sing, and kneel in prayer; then I stand up and take a text and preach, while the people sit on their seats. As many of you as see fit to join me in this method, you can do so; but if not, you can choose your own method." When he gave out his hymn, they all arose, every man, woman, and child. When he kneeled in prayer, they all, without exception, kneeled down. They then took their seats, and he stood up and gave out his text, "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may he blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;" and he preached, as he thinks, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Having concluded his discourse, he explained to his audience his manner of preaching, by itinerating through the country, his doctrine, and how supported, &c. He then said, "All you who wish to hear any more such preaching, rise up" -- when every man, woman, and child stood up. He then told them they might expect preaching there again in two weeks.

Such a commencement, in a strange place, he considered as a token for good. He then sent on appointments through the settlements along down the river, which he filled in a manner similar to the above, and was everywhere received with great cordiality. He proceeded down the shore of Lake St. Clair, visited Sandwich, on the Canada side of the outlet of the lake, crossed over to Detroit,5 and preached in the council-house, thence to Fort Malden, and down the shore of Lake Erie, in a settlement made up of Americans, English, Scotch, Irish, and Dutch emigrants. The people everywhere flocked together to hear the word. A more destitute place he had never found. Young people had arrived to the age of sixteen who had never heard a gospel sermon, and he found a Methodist family who had lived in that county for seven years without hearing a sermon preached. But although the people generally were extremely ignorant of spiritual things, and very loose in their morals, they seemed ripe for the gospel, and hence received and treated God's messenger with great attention and kindness. He continued among them about three months, when he left them for the Niagara circuit, intending to return again soon, but was prevented. He was succeeded the next year by William Case, who was instrumental of great good to the souls of the people. Societies and a regular circuit were formed, which have continued to flourish and increase to the present time.

Forty-eight preachers located this year,6 two were expelled, and four, namely, William Ormond, Nathan Jarrett, Rezin Cash, and David Brown, had died; having fulfilled their ministry with fidelity, they ended their lives and labors in peace.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 89,603; Last Year: 81,617; Increase: 7,986 -- Colored This Year: 23,531; Last Year: 22,453; Increase: 1,078 -- Total This Year: 113,134; Last Year: 104,070 -- Increase: 9,064 -- Preachers This Year: 400; Last Year: 383; Increase: 17.

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There were seven annual conferences held this year; and the minutes were so arranged that the stations of the preachers, as well as the questions and answers, were printed under their respective conferences, so that it might be seen, at one view, what was the relative strength of each section of the work.

Nothing out of the ordinary course of things occurred this year. The work of God went gradually on, and much good was accomplished by means of the ministry of the word in various parts of the country. The camp meetings spread more and more in the middle and northern states, and they were generally attended with increasing interest; many, from the novelty of their character being induced to attend, who might otherwise never have heard the sound of the gospel; and not a few of these were brought to serious and solemn thought. This year, for the first time, a camp meeting was held on the Bay of Quinte circuit in Upper Canada, which was attended by the writer, being the first he ever witnessed. It was held in an open field, and the exercises were accompanied by a mighty display of the awakening and converting, as well as sanctifying grace of God. On the third day of the meeting such awful sensations were produced under the preaching, that many stout-hearted sinners were bowed before the Lord, while the people of God were "filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory." A great revival of religion was the consequence of this blessed meeting, particularly in the Bay of Quinte and Augusta circuits, which eventuated in the conversion of hundreds of precious souls. In the state of New York, among others, Croton had been selected as a suitable place for camp meetings, and for many years was considered as a hallowed spot on which the people of God from the city of New York, and the neighboring circuits, assembled for the worship and service of the triune God. And here many sinners have been born of the Spirit, who perhaps, otherwise might never have heard the joyful sound of salvation. It has, however, latterly been abandoned for another place. This year the Church was called to mourn over the demise of some of her most eminent and useful ministers. Of Tobias Gibson, who first carried the gospel to the inhabitants of Mississippi, we have already spoken. He is represented as a modest, unassuming man, deep in Christian experience, and most indefatigable in his labors. His ardent thirst for the salvation of souls often led him to those exertions which were too much for his physical strength; and these together with his frequent exposures in the midst of the western wildernesses, to cold and hunger, and to sleepless nights on the ground, laid the foundation for those infirmities which, finally prostrated his feeble frame and brought him to a premature grave.

He preached his last sermon on New Year’s day, in 1804. Its powerful and searching appeals were made a blessing to many; and long did some of the inhabitants of Natchez, which was the principal center of his labors in the west, remember his fervent prayers and faithful admonitions, particularly of those which accompanied this his last effort for their salvation. Being greatly esteemed by the people of God, as well as honored by all who could estimate true worth of character, they mourned over his departure from among them, as one mourneth over a son that served him. But while they beheld his calmness of spirit amid the sufferings of his body, his meekness, patience, and resignation to the divine will, as death approached, as well as the firm hope of everlasting life with which he anticipated his dissolution, they saw such indubitable evidences of the reality and excellence of Christianity, that they could but mingle with their sorrows the rejoicings of such as have hope in God. Infidelity itself shrunk from an inspection of his life, and recoiled at a view of that death which, though dark and gloomy in itself, was surrounded with so

brilliant a light as to render the path into the other world luminous and inviting.

Such was Tobias Gibson -- such were his labors and sufferings -- such his deep devotion to the cause of Christ -- and such the peaceful and triumphant manner of his death -- that he has left a name and character behind him which "shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

Nicholas Watters was another of those burning and shining lights which, after having enlightened the world for a season, was this year extinguished by death. He was the brother of William Watters, the first Methodist preacher raised in America, and entered the itinerating ministry very soon after his younger brother. They were natives of Maryland, and after traveling and preaching with great acceptance in various parts of Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, on the 10th of August, 1804, he ended his life and labors in peace, in the city or Charleston, South Carolina.

Wilson Lee also exchanged the labors of an itinerant minister for the crown of glory prepared for the faithful. He entered the traveling connection in 1784, and soon went into the western country, where he continued in the exercise of his ministry, exposed to all the hardships incident to an itinerating life in new settlements, until 1792, when he returned to the older states, and was stationed on Salem circuit, New Jersey. From 1801 to 1803 he filled the office of presiding elder in the Baltimore district. In 1804 he found himself unable longer to do the duties of an efficient preacher, and was accordingly returned on the superannuated list. In the month of April of this year, while at prayer by the bed of a sick person, he had a sudden discharge of blood from the lungs; and from that time he lingered along the shores of immortality until October 11, 1804, when he died full of the hope of immortality, at the house of Walter Worthington, Ann Arundel county, in the state of Maryland.

Wilson Lee has been considered among the most laborious, successful, and self-denying of our early ministers. Though naturally of a slender constitution, he hazarded the hardships of an itinerating life in the western country, and exhibited there all that self-devotion, hardy enterprise, and untiring zeal in the cause of God, which distinguished those men of God who planted the standard of the cross among the early settlers of Tennessee and Kentucky. As he rode from one settlement to another, and from fort to fort, he was often exposed to the ferocious savages of the wilderness, as well as to hunger and thirst, to tiresome days and sleepless nights. But his unquenchable thirst for the salvation of souls, his strong faith in God, and his burning zeal to advance his holy cause, compelled him on in spite of all opposition, amid those "perils in the wilderness," rejoicing in being counted worthy to suffer a little in the cause of Christ. Here he spent the best of his days, and exhausted his strength in striving to win souls to Jesus Christ and when he returned to his brethren in the older settlements, with a constitution shattered by the intensity of his labors, it was only to share with them in pursuing the path of obedience to his divine Master, and filling up what remained of the afflictions of Christ. Professing the justifying and sanctifying grace of God, he bore all things with patience, exhibiting in his spirit an example of meekness and gentleness, in his personal appearance of neatness and plainness, and in all his deportment modesty united with a firmness of purpose in carrying into execution the discipline of the Church. He, indeed, left nothing he could do undone which he deemed essential to provoke the cause of God. But his ever active mind, his persevering industry in his Master’s work, operated so powerfully upon the material vehicle, that "the weary wheels of life stood still," while in the meridian

of his life and usefulness. He left, however, a name behind him, which was long remembered with affection and veneration by those of his contemporaries who survived him, and an example of devotedness to the cause of God which has stimulated many laborers to activity and diligence in cultivating their Master's vineyard.

Benjamin Jones, John Durbin, and Daniel Ryan, of each of whom it is said that he filled up his days in unselfishness, took their departure to a better world in the course of last year.

Two preachers, namely, Cyrus Stebbins and Roger Searl, withdrew from the connection, and joined the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 95,629; Last Year: 89,603; Increase: 6,026 -- Colored This Year: 24,316; Last Year: 23,531; Increase: 785 -- Total This Year: 119,945; Last Year: 113,134 -- Increase: 6,811 -- Preachers This Year: 433; Last Year: 400; Increase: 33.

1806 The seven annual conferences were held this year in the usual manner. This year a paper was submitted to the annual conferences, beginning with the Baltimore conference, by Bishop Asbury, in favor of calling a General Conference, of seven delegates from each annual conference, to meet in the city of Baltimore, in May, 1807, for the purpose of strengthening the episcopacy. This paper was referred to a committee, to consider and report thereon, and all the conferences, except Virginia, reported in favor of the proposition, and elected their delegates accordingly. The report set forth that, in consequence of the declining health of Bishop Whatcoat, who was then supposed to be near his end, the great extension of our work over the continent, and the debilitated state of Bishop Asbury's health, it had become necessary to strengthen the episcopacy, and likewise to provide for a more permanent mode of church government. The report, therefore, recommended that each of the seven annual conferences should elect seven delegates to meet in the city of Baltimore the succeeding May, and that, when so met, they should have power to elect one bishop or more, and also to provide for a future delegated General Conference, whose powers should be defined and limited by constitutional restrictions; for hitherto the General Conference possessed unlimited powers over our entire economy, could alter, abolish, or add to any article of religion or any rule of Discipline. As this depository of power was considered too great for the safety of the Church and the security of its government and doctrine; and as the assembling of all the elders, few or many, at the option of each annual conference, made the representation very unequal; and moreover, if all came who had a right to a sent, involved a great amount of expense, time, and money, Bishop Asbury was exceedingly desirous, before he should depart hence, to provide a remedy for these evils; and this desire was strengthened and excited to action at this time by the concurrent views and wishes of most of the oldest preachers in the conferences.

It is proper to remark that this plan was concurred in, and the delegates were elected by all the annual conferences, until it was submitted to the Virginia conference, where, being warmly opposed by the Rev. Jesse Lee, who had great influence in that conference, a majority voted against its adoption, and so the whole plan was abandoned for the present -- for it was the understanding that, unless all the conferences concurred in the measure, it should not be carried into effect. This defeat of a favorite project, so feasible in itself, and apparently so necessary to the prosperity of the Church and the perpetuity of her institutions, was a source of great grief to Bishop Asbury, as well as of regret to those who had concurred in his views.

After the return of Dr. Coke to Europe, he saw fit to change his relation from a single to a married life. He had married a Christian lady of a large fortune, of deep piety, and of ardent devotion to the cause of God, which she evinced after her marriage by cheerfully consecrating her income to advance the missionary cause, in which she found her husband, Dr. Coke, so deeply and zealously engaged. This fact he thought proper to communicate to his American brethren, together with a proposition to become a resident in America, on the condition that the continent should be divided into two parts, one of which to be under his superintendency, and the other under the superintendency of Bishop Asbury. This proposition was submitted to the several annual conferences, and an answer was returned to the doctor congratulating him on his happy marriage, but declining to accept of his proposal for a division of the work in this country according to his request, referring, however, the final decision of the question to the next General Conference. This year Methodism was introduced into some parts of Louisiana. This territory had been recently purchased by the United States from the French government for the sum of fifteen millions of dollars, and was admitted into the Union in 1811. The country was originally settled by the Spaniards and French, the descendants of whom, to distinguish them from other white inhabitants who have emigrated to the country, are called Creoles. In a large portion of the country the French language and manners prevailed, and their religious faith and practice were regulated by the Roman Catholic Church; but as the country is fast filling up by Anglo-Americans, and has been for some time connected with the Union as an integral part of the great American family, the language, manners, and institutions of Louisiana are becoming more and more conformed to those generally prevailing in other sections of the republic. At the time, however, of which we now speak, there were comparatively but few American settlers in the country, and these were scattered thinly in the wilderness or mingled among the French and Spanish inhabitants. As to true religion, it was a stranger to most of the people. Those who made any profession at all were chiefly of the Roman Catholic communion, and these were exceedingly loose in their morals, and much given up to sports and plays. The Sabbath was neglected as a day of sacred rest, or only attended to as a religious festival, alternately for devotional exercises and profane revelry. This being the general state of society as formed by the Creoles of the country, it could not be otherwise expected than that the emigrants who settled among them should gradually assimilate to their manners, modes of thinking and acting. Hence it is stated that profaneness of almost all sorts prevailed to an alarming extent, when, in 1806, the Rev. Elisha W. Bowman made his entrance among them as a messenger of the cross of Christ. The Mississippi district was this year under the presiding eldership of the Rev. Learner Blackman, whose charge included Nachez, Wilkinson, Claiborne, Ochitta, and Appalousas circuits, to the last of which Mr. Bowman was sent, with a view, if practicable, to form societies and establish regular preaching. He penetrated into some of the English settlements on the banks of the Mississippi River, amid many privations and hardships, and in some places was received by the people with gladness, while in others both himself and his message were rejected. He succeeded, however, in collecting congregations, and in forming a regular circuit, and a few classes, made up principally of members who had removed from the older states, who were happily reclaimed from their backslidden state by his instrumentality. The Rev. Thomas Lasley labored on the Ochitta circuit, which he found in a similar condition, in respect to religion and morals, to that of Appalousas. The success with which they cultivated this distant and wild field of labor may be estimated from the fact that they returned forty members of the Church, and that they opened the way for the successful prosecution of the work

by those who succeeded them, though it was some time before Methodism gained much influence in that part of the country. This year a new district was formed, called the Lower Canada district, which included Montreal, Quebec, and Ottawa. I have before spoken of Montreal and Ottawa. Nathan Bangs [the author if this history -- DVM] volunteered his services for Quebec. After spending a few weeks in Montreal, to supply them until their preacher, Samuel Coate, arrived, he sailed down the River St. Lawrence for Quebec, and arrived there on Saturday morning. Having a few letters of introduction, he delivered them, and by great exertions succeeded in hiring a room and getting it seated that day, and he preached his first sermon on the Sabbath morning following to a tolerable congregation. The majority of the people in Quebec were French Roman Catholics, bigotedly attached to all their peculiarities, and, of course, opposed to all Protestant innovations. The next in number and influence were the members of the Church of England, and next to them the Church of Scotland, all manifesting a deadly opposition to Methodism. He found, however, a few who received him cordially, though with much timidity. Among others he called on a Scotch missionary by the name of Dick, who had succeeded in collecting a small congregation, and was treated by him with much affection and respect.

It would doubtless be uninteresting to the reader to enter into a detail of the difficulties with which he had to contend, the mental trials he underwent in trying to plant the gospel in that hardened place, with but small means of support,7 and few to countenance his undertaking. For a while the congregation was respectable, as to numbers, but they soon dwindled down to not more than a dozen steady hearers, and not more than three or four of these seemed to be under religious impressions. He has frequently held a prayer meeting with only one besides himself, when each would pray and then dismiss the meeting, though inwardly conscious of the divine approbation, yet with but faint hopes of success. He, however, formed a small society, which, under more faithful and skillful laborers, has since increased to a considerable number, and Methodism has now a firm standing in Quebec. An attempt was also made this year to establish a mission for the benefit of the French Catholic population of Lower Canada, and William Snyder, who understood and could preach in the French language, was appointed to this service. He entered upon his work in a French settlement, in the vicinity of Ottawa River, and for a time was cordially received and listened to with much attention, so that great hopes were entertained of a successful issue of his labors. Having occasion, however, to be absent from his field of labor for a few weeks, the parish priest took the opportunity to go among the people and warn them of the danger of hearing the "Protestant heretic," threatening them with excommunication -- which, in their estimation, was a sure prelude to damnation -- if they did not desist. This so wrought upon their fears, that, upon the return of brother Snyder, not a soul dared to hear him or to receive him into his house. He was, therefore, reluctantly compelled to abandon the enterprise in despair, nor has any thing been done effectually for those people since. The charms of Roman Catholicism still hold them in bondage to their priests. In Massachusetts also, and in the province of Maine, the work so extended that New Bedford, Northfield, Centreharbor, Durham, and Vassalborough circuits were formed, while the work in many places on the older circuits was going forward with encouraging prosperity. Monongahela, Lycoming, and Staunton circuits, within the bounds of the Baltimore conference, were this year added to the list, which shows that the good work was still extending in the frontier settlements. But the most remarkable outpouring of the Spirit was among the people on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and in some parts of Virginia, chiefly through the agency of a camp meeting which was held on the Eastern Shore at which, during the five days and nights it

continued, it is stated that not less than one thousand souls were converted. This had been a favored place for Methodism from the time of its introduction; and this great work gave it a new impulse, and added fresh vigor to the souls of God’s ministers and people. Religion, indeed, prospered generally throughout the bounds of the conferences, as may be seen from the increase of church members.

Bishop Asbury, though deprived of the aid of his devoted colleague in consequence of sickness, attended to his duties with his usual diligence, and was much cheered with the prospects which loomed up before him in various parts of the work, more especially by the agency of the camp meetings, many of which he attended, and entered into their exercises with all the ardor of a youthful minister. We find him this year in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio, traversing the new settlements, and encouraging his brethren and sons in the ministry, by his presence and example. Being in the state of Kentucky during one of their camp meetings, he says, "I ventured on the camp ground again, and preached at eight o’clock. I was weak and unwell, but was divinely assisted while enlarging on Philip. i, 1. May this weighty subject rest on the minds of the preachers, and on none more than the heart of the speaker!"

After speaking of the Western conference, he says, "The brethren were in want, and could not suit themselves; so I parted with my watch, my coat, and my shirt." This was an instance of generosity rarely to be met with, and shows the deep interest he felt for his suffering fellow-laborers in that rugged field.

Finishing his work in this part of his charge, be recrossed the Mountains, in doing which, he says, "One of the descents is like the roof of a house for nearly a mile. I rode, I walked, I sweat, I trembled, and my old knees failed. Here are gullies, and rocks, and precipices; nevertheless, the way is as good as the path over the Table Mountain -- bad is the best." He passed on through North and South Carolina, and in the city of Charleston he rested for a few days from his toils, though he says that he was "neither unemployed nor triflingly," but was happy in the midst of his friends, and surrounded by all the comforts which kindness could bestow." "If we call," he remarks, "for social prayer seven times a day, there are none to complain; the house is our own, and profane people board not with us. My time is spent in reading, writing, and receiving all who come, whites and Africans" -- "God the Lord is here." What a contrast between his external comforts here, and those which he enjoyed in many other places! But while he could say in every place, "God the lord is here," he could not be otherwise than happy and contented inwardly.

Among the deaths of preachers which occurred this year was that of Bishop Whatcoat, who departed this life at the house of Richard Bassett, Esq., ex-governor of the state of Delaware, on the 5th of July, 1806, in the seventy-first year of his age. Of his early life, conversion, and call to the ministry, we have already spoken, when giving an account of his election and consecration to the episcopal office. From that important period of his life, he gave "full proof of his ministry," fulfilling his high trust with fidelity, honored and beloved by all who knew him. From the time of his entrance upon his work as an itinerant superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, until he was disabled by sickness and debility, he traveled regularly through his vast diocese, which extended over the entire continent, preaching almost every day to the people, visiting the annual conferences, sometimes in company with his venerable colleague, Bishop Asbury, and sometimes alone, discharging his responsible duties with marked satisfaction to all concerned. A complication

of painful diseases arrested his career of usefulness, and compelled him to remit those public labors in which his soul had so long delighted. For thirteen weeks he bore, with the most exemplary patience, and devout resignation to the divine will, the excruciating pains with which his body was afflicted, expressing, in the midst of them all, his faith in Christ and his firm hope of everlasting life, and finally triumphed over the "last enemy," being "more than a conqueror through Him who loved him."

Bishop Asbury, some time after Bishop Whatcoat's death, visiting the place of his sepulcher, at the Wesley Chapel, in Dover, Del., preached his funeral sermon from 2 Tim, iii, 10, "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience." In the course of his sermon he remarked, in substance, "I have known Richard Whatcoat, from the time I was fourteen years of age to sixty-two years most intimately, and have tried him most accurately in respect to the soundness of his faith, on the doctrines of human depravity, the complete and general atonement of Jesus Christ, the insufficiency of either moral or ceremonial righteousness for justification, in opposition to faith alone in the merit and righteousness of Christ, and the doctrine of regeneration and sanctification. I have also known his manner of life, at all times and places, before the people, both as a Christian and a minister; his long-suffering, for he was a man of great affliction, both of body and mind, having been exercised with severe diseases and great labors." And from this intimate acquaintance with the man and his work, the bishop declares, that such was his unabated charity, his ardent love to God and man, his patience and resignation amid the unavoidable ills of life, that he always exemplified the tempers and conduct of a most devoted servant of God, and of an exemplary Christian minister. As he had lived for God alone, and had assiduously consecrated all his time and powers to the service of his church, so he had neither time nor inclination to "lay up treasures upon earth" -- hence it is stated that he died with less property than was sufficient to defray the expenses of his funeral. He could therefore say more in truth than most of the pretended successors of St. Peter, who is claimed by some as the first link in the episcopal succession, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have," "my soul and body's powers," I cheerfully consecrate to the service of God and man.

These remarks of themselves sufficiently indicate the character of the deceased, without saying any thing more; yet it may be proper to add that though we do not claim for him deep erudition nor extensive science, he was profoundly learned in the sacred Scriptures, thoroughly acquainted with Wesleyan theology, and well versed in all the varying systems of divinity with which the Christian world has been loaded, and could therefore "rightly divide the word of truth, giving to every one his portion of meat in due season." For gravity of deportment, meekness of spirit, deadness to the world, and deep devotion to God, perhaps he was not excelled, if indeed equaled by any of his contemporaries or successors. "Sober without sadness, and cheerful without levity," says the record of his death, he was equally removed from the severe austerity of the gloomy monk, and the lightness of the facetious and empty-brained witling. His words were weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, and when uttered, either in the way of rebuke, admonition, or instruction, they were calculated to "minister grace to the hearer." It is said, that on a particular occasion, when in company with Bishop Asbury, the latter was complaining loudly of the perpetual annoyance of so much useless company: Bishop Whatcoat, with great modesty and meekness, mildly remarked, "O bishop, how much worse should we feel were we entirely neglected!" The former bowed an acquiescence to the remark, and acknowledged his obligations to his amiable colleague for the

seasonableness of the reproof, but much more for the manner in which it was administered -- an occurrence alike creditable to them both. His preaching is said to have been generally attended with a remarkable unction from the holy One. Hence those who sat under his word, if they were believers in Christ, felt that it was good to be there, for his doctrine distilled as the dew upon the tender herb, and as the rain upon the mown grass. One who had heard him remarked, that though he could not follow him in all his researches -- intimating that he went beyond his depth in some of his thoughts -- yet he felt that he was listening to a messenger of God, not only from the solemnity of his manner, but also from the "refreshing from the presence of the Lord," which so manifestly accompanied his word. The softness of his persuasions won upon the affections of the heart, while the rich flow of gospel truth which dropped from his lips enlightened the understanding.

Such was Bishop Whatcoat. And while we justly attribute to him those qualities which constitute an "able minister of the New Testament," we present, as the distinguishing trait of his character, a meekness and modesty of spirit which, united with a simplicity of intention and gravity of deportment, commended him to all as a pattern worthy of their imitation. So dear is he in the recollection of those who, from personal intercourse, best knew and appreciated his worth, that I have heard many such say, that they would give much could they possess themselves of a correct resemblance of him upon canvass. But as he has left no such likeness of himself behind, we must be content with offering this feeble tribute of respect to his memory, and then strive so to imitate his virtues that we may at last see him as he is, and unite with him in ascribing "honor and dominion to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever."

Benjamin Iliff also, after traveling about four years, in which he won the confidence and affection of all who knew him, was taken from his labors to his rest in heaven, bidding adieu to his friends with these words, "I have lost sight of the world. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Two, namely, Ralph Williston, and Comfort C. Smith, withdrew from the Church; the former connected himself first with the Lutheran, and then with the Protestant Episcopal Church, and was settled for some time in the city of New York, whence he removed to the south.

One, Sylvester Foster, was expelled, forty-eight were located, ten returned supernumerary, and six superannuated.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 103,313; Last Year: 95,629; Increase: 7,684 -- Colored This Year: 27,257; Last Year: 24,316; Increase: 2,941 -- Total This Year: 130,570; Last Year: 119,945 -- Increase: 10,625 -- Preachers This Year: 452; Last Year: 433; Increase: 19.

1807

Seven conferences were held this year, at which Bishop Asbury, being deprived of the services of his colleague, Bishop Whatcoat, was obliged to attend alone, and to discharge the duties devolving upon the episcopal office. Speaking of this hard toil, after traveling through Vermont, New Hampshire, and part of Massachusetts, he exclaims, "Must I walk through the seven conferences, and travel six thousand miles in ten months?" This, however, by the blessing of God, he was enabled to do, though it cost him many a wearisome day, in clambering the mountains, and crossing the valleys, in his journey from one extreme part of the continent to the other. In these journeyings he was frequently compelled to lodge in taverns; but, whatever might be the character of the house or the people, he always made it a point to propose prayer in every place

where he stopped, though it might be only for a breakfast or dinner, and seldom was he denied this privilege. In this way he performed the work of a missionary, in the most emphatical sense of that word. But that which he considered more than a compensation for all labors and sacrifices -- sacrifices to which few modern missionaries submit, was the consolation of religion in his own heart, and the spread of the work of God in almost every part of the continent. This year John Travis was sent to form a new circuit in the new territory of Missouri. Missouri at that time was considered a part of Louisiana, and the first settlers were chiefly of the Roman Catholic persuasion; but the tide of emigration, which was then setting toward the west with a strong current, was rolling the inhabitants from the older states into that country with great rapidity, and every year with increasing numbers. Though this territory was not admitted into the Union until 1820, yet at this time there were in it not less than 16,000 inhabitants, about one-fifth of whom were slaves. Though on the western bank of the Mississippi River the land is low and swampy, and of course untenable and unhealthy, yet beyond this the lands rise in beautiful undulations, and when brought under cultivation, proved to be rich and fertile, and therefore invited the industrious husbandman to take up his residence on them.

Though the population was sparse, the roads bad, and the people generally averse to the self-denying truths of the gospel, Mr. Travis succeeded in attracting the attention of some to the things of religion, and he returned the next year, as the fruit of his labor, fifty-six members of the Church; and the work of God has continued to spread through that southwestern section of country, keeping pace with the extension of the settlements as they gradually penetrated farther and still farther into the woods and prairies of Missouri.

Notwithstanding Savannah, the chief city in the state of Georgia, was visited by that distinguished servant of God, the Rev. John Wesley, as early as 1736, in the very infancy of the colony, yet it seems that no effectual efforts had been made since his departure amid the unmerited reproach heaped upon him by his enemies, to plant Methodism in that place until this year. Wesley left the town in 1737, and in 1740 Whitefield, who succeeded Wesley, founded his orphan house, which remains only to tell the benevolence of its founder in connection with the failure of his project -- for it has long since crumbled to ruins -- but it appears that during the seventy years of interval from the time that Wesley left those ungrateful people, no opening was presented for the establishment of Methodism, until 1807.

It is true that, as early as 1790, Hope Hull was sent to Savannah, and he preached a few times in a chair-maker’s shop belonging to a Mr. Lowry; but such was the opposition manifested toward him that he was assailed with mob violence, and his success was small and the prospects very discouraging. He was followed, in 1796, by Jonathan Jackson and Josiah Randle, but they left the place without making any permanent impression. In 1800 John Garvin made an ineffectual attempt to collect a society in Savannah, and though he succeeded, with many difficulties, in inducing a few to attend his meetings for a season, yet he also abandoned the place in despair. The next attempt was made by a Mr. Cloud, an apostate from Methodism, but who assumed the name of a Methodist preacher for the nonce [for the time being -- DVM]; and though he attracted some attention for a short time, and even procured from the corporation the lease of a lot on which he erected some buildings, yet he was soon forsaken by the people, and left to his own wanderings. This movement only tended to increase the existing prejudices of the people against the Methodists, and accordingly rendered their future progress the more difficult. At the South Carolina

conference held in Sparta, Georgia, December 29, 1806, the subject of making another attempt to establish Methodism in Savannah was presented to the conference by a forcible appeal from some warm friends of the cause. Bishop Asbury, whose heart burned with intense desire for the prosperity of religion, and who always had his eye fixed on all important posts, pressed the subject upon the conference with great earnestness, and the conference responded to the call with much cordiality and zeal. Commending the case to the Church for special prayer, Samuel Dunwody, at that time young in the ministry, but humble, bold, and zealous in the cause of his Master, was selected by the bishop, and sent to Savannah. He at first procured a small room, where he taught some children, and his ministerial labors were, for a time, confined to the family where he resided, to his school-room, poor-house and hospital. At the end of the year he returned twelve members, five whites and seven colored, as the reward of his labors.

Though a small beginning was thus made, it was some time before Methodism was established in Savannah. The prejudices of the people rose high, and the cause was much impeded by the imprudent conduct of two of the preachers who succeeded Mr. Dunwody. But, after hard toiling, they finally succeeded, by soliciting and from various parts of the country, in erecting a house of worship in 1812, which was dedicated to the service of almighty God by Bishop Asbury, and was called Wesley Chapel. This took place about seventy-five years after the town was visited by John Wesley, and the spirit which vented itself in opposition to him seems to have descended to their posterity, and shown itself to similar acts of hostility to his followers; yet by patient perseverance in well-doing, this prejudice has been measurably overcome, and the cause of Methodism has taken a firm stand in Savannah, and is exerting a salutary influence on its citizens. This was a very prosperous year generally throughout the connection, and many were brought to the knowledge of the truth and added to the Church through various parts of the United States. In the older states the camp meetings were multiplied, and attended with the most happy consequences, particularly in Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and Georgia. In the city of New York there was a remarkable revival of religion, attended, in some instances, with symptoms similar to those which had been exhibited at the camp meetings in the western country.

James Lattomus and Peter Jayne took their departure to a world of rest, leaving a testimony behind them of devotedness to the cause of God. Thirty-two were located, six returned supernumerary, eight superannuated, and one, Nathan Felch, had withdrawn and connected himself with the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 114,727; Last Year: 103,313; Increase: 11,414 -- Colored This Year: 29,863; Last Year: 27,257; Increase: 2,606 -- Total This Year: 144,5908; Last Year: 130,570 -- Increase: 14,020 -- Preachers This Year: 516; Last Year: 452; Increase: 64.

ENDNOTES

1 This is the first account I find of the names and number from each annual conference. And as it may be satisfactory to some, the names are given, as follows:-- New England Conference. -- George Pickering, Joshua Taylor, Thomas Lyell, Reuben Hubbard.

Western Conference. -- William Burke, Thomas Milligan, John Watson, Lowther Taylor.* South Carolina Conference. -- Josiah Randall, George Dougherty, Hanover Dunning, Moses Matthews, James Jenkin.

Virginia Conference. -- Jesse Lee, Samuel Risher, Daniel Hall, John Cocks, John Buxton, Humphrey Wood, Joseph Moore, Jesse Coe, Jonathan Jackson, Christopher Mooring, Daniel Ross, Samuel Gerrard, John Gainwell, William Allgood, Alexander McCaine, Joseph Pennell, Philip Bruce.

Baltimore Conference. --John Potts, Solomon Harris, Henry Willis, Enoch George, Hamilton Jefferson, Thomas Lucas, John Simmons, Jesse Stoneman, William Knox, Lawrence McCombs, Joshua Wells, John Pitts, Henry Smith, Seely Bonn, Peter B. Davis, David Stevens, James Ward, Samuel Coate, James Quinn, Daniel Hitt, Daniel Fiddler, John West, Nicholas Snethen, William Watters, James Hunter, Lasley Matthews, Thornton Fleming, Nathaniel B. Mills, James Paynter.

Philadelphia Conference. -- John McClasky, Thomas Sargeant, Thomas Ware, Thomas Smith, Joseph Everett, William McLenehen David Bartine, Richard Swaim, Joseph Totten, Anning Owen, Elijah Woolsey, William Vredenburgh, Robert Dillon, Gamaliel Bailey, Robert Sparks, Joseph Stone, Ezekiel Cooper, Walter Fountain, Benjamin Bidlack, William Colbert,, William Mills, Joseph Jewell, Richard Sneath, Johnson Dunham, Edward Larkins, John Crawford, James Smith, Daniel Ryan,* James Herron, Richard Lyon,* Jacob Gruber,* Solomon Sharp, Gideon Knowlton,* William Bishop, Eber Cowles, James Moore, Caleb Kindle, Morris Howe, George Roberts, William P. Chandler, David James.

New York Conference. -- Freeborn Garrettson, Michael Coate, Ralph Williston, John Wilson, Daniel Ostrander, Augustus Jocelyn, Joseph Crawford, Nathan Emery, James Campbell, Aaron Hunt, Abner Wood, Joseph Sawyer. Of these one hundred and seven who composed that conference, only eighteen are now, (Dec. 20, 1838,) in the itinerancy: G. Pickering, D. Hall, J. Paynter, N. B. Mills, J. Moore, W. Burke, J. Wells, J. Quinn, P. Fiddler, T. Fleming, T. Ware, D. Bartine, E. Woolsey, E. Cooper, John Crawford, J. Gruber, D. Ostrander, and A. Hunt; two have left us, and some others have located; but most of them, together with the three bishops who then presided, are dead; and fourteen of those who belonged to the conferences hold a supernumerary relation.

* Those marked thus (*) were not entitled to a seat, by a vote of the conference.

2 This presbytery, which was not established until 1810, abjured the offensive features of Calvinism, adopted the Arminian doctrine of general redemption, the universality of the atonement of Jesus Christ, and dispensed with a liberal education as a necessary prerequisite of a gospel minister.

3 This place was, through mistake, printed on the minutes, La French.

4 Perhaps no part of our country is more subject to fever and ague, or "lake fever," as it was called, than that along the banks of the River Thames, occasioned by the stagnant swamps which are formed a little distance from the river on each side, and the unwholesomeness of the water which the people were obliged to use. The missionary arrived there in the month of August, and in the month of September the fever began to rage; and during its progress, in almost every family less or more were sick, and in some instances every member of a family was prostrated at the same time, though it seldom proved fatal. When the missionary first visited their houses, he was generally presented with a bottle of whisky, and urged to partake of it as a preservative against the fever; but he declined the beverage, and told them they might, if they chose, drink their whisky,

and he would drink water and tea, and see who would have the better health; and when the fever commenced its ravages, as above described, so that he could visit scarcely a house without seeing more or less sick, he constantly traveled the country in health, until about the close of the sickly season, when he too was seized with the prevailing disease, but by timely remedies he escaped with only three paroxysms. This is mentioned chiefly to show the mistaken notion under which many people labor, who suppose that the use of ardent spirits is a preventive against any epidemical disease. It is believed that it induces it in nine cases out of ten, instead of preventing it.

5 Detroit, at that time, seemed to be a most abandon place. On his second visit, the missionary was introduced to a Congregational minister, who told him that he had preached in Detroit until none but a few children would come to hear; and, said he, if you can succeed, which I very mach doubt, I shall rejoice. On the third visit, which was on Sabbath, sure enough, only a few children came to the place of worship, and no one appearing to take any interest in hearing the gospel preached there, our missionary shook off the dust of his feet as a testimony against them, and took his departure from them. In about four weeks after this, the town was consumed by fire. The report was that it took fire from a man smoking a cigar in a stable, and the houses being chiefly built with wood, the flames spread so rapidly that nearly every house on each side of the main street was consumed.

It was, however, soon rebuilt, and has since greatly flourished, and now we have a large and influential church in that place.

6 Among these was the Rev. Thomas Lyell, who soon after joined the Protestant Episcopal Church, and succeeded the Rev. Joseph Pilmoor, in the city of New York. He is still living, had has maintained a reputable standing in that Church, and retains, it is believed, his affection for his Methodist brethren.

7 In those days we had no missionary society to furnish pecuniary aid to those preachers who went to "break up new ground," as it was called, though Bishop Asbury was in the habit of begging as he passed through the country to supply the wants of the most needy.

8 There is an error of nine in the printed minutes for this year.

02.04.07. Vol 2, Book 4, Chapter 07

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book IV Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 7 The General Conference of 1808 This conference assembled in the city of Baltimore, May 1, 1808, and was composed of one hundred and twenty-nine members, namely, nineteen from the New York, seven from the New England, eleven from the Western, eleven from the South Carolina, eighteen from the Virginia, thirty-one from the Baltimore, and thirty-two from the Philadelphia conference. For the first time since the organization of the Church in 1784, Dr. Coke was absent from the General Conference, and as Bishop Whatcoat had deceased, Bishop Asbury was the sole president of the conference. After the organization of the conference, by the appointment of a secretary and the adoption of rules for the government of its proceedings, the conference appointed a committee of correspondence, to take into consideration certain communications from the British conference, and from Dr. Coke, and to report thereon.

It will be recollected that, in accordance with the earnest request of the British conference, the General Conference of 1804 had agreed to the return of Dr. Coke to Europe, and that he might have liberty to reside there until this General Conference, unless sooner recalled by three of the annual conferences. After his return to Europe, and after his marriage, he made a proposal, as before related, to come over, and take up his permanent residence in America, on condition that the continent should be divided as nearly equal as might be, between him and Bishop Asbury, as the superintending bishops. Though this proposition was not agreeable to the American preachers, and therefore was not acceded to by them in their reply to Dr. Coke’s circular, yet it shows most manifestly the strong obligation which the doctor felt to fulfill his contract with the General Conference, and of his intention, provided his wishes were complied with, to make America his permanent residence in future.

It seems, however, that the answer to his circular gave him some uneasiness, from an apprehension that his American brethren were dissatisfied with his conduct. To remove, therefore, all cause of disquietude from their minds, and to explain more fully his views and wishes, he sent to this General Conference, the following letter:-- "To The General American Conference "City of Durham, (England,) Nov. 10, 1807

"Very ear and greatly respected brethren. My absence from your solemn meeting calls for a minute explanation of my motives for absence, and my future views. I did not expect, during my different short visits to your connection, to have any thing to do in the management of your work, except the honor of presiding at your General Conference, and preaching in your pulpits. I never returned to England without your leave, from the time I offered myself to be wholly yours and whatever my own private judgment might have been, I should, in every instance, have considered your vote as the voice of God, if you had, on the whole, judged it best to have refused that leave. The last time I visited you, I came over without any expectation of returning. I settled my little

affairs in this country, and brought over with me every thing I had, except those parts of my library which I should not soon want, but which I left in such a manner that on the shortest notice they might be sent over to me -- and also such copies of my commentary as I wished that my European brethren would be so kind as to sell for me. I did not take a decisive farewell of my brethren in Europe, as I was not sure whether you would, in your circumstances, as they respected Bishop Asbury, receive me as an efficient superintendent or bishop among you in any degree or manner: for this reason only I consented to carry over to you an address which contained a clause in it requesting my return to Europe. I should otherwise have strongly objected to the clause: however, I repeatedly gave very strong intimations, both to the British and Irish conferences, of the improbability of my return. I write not the above as if I did not highly prize my situation in the European connection. As general superintendent of their missions at home and abroad, as president of the Irish part of the connection, as having all their pulpits in the United Kingdom open to me when and as often as I please, and in many other respects possessing influence for great usefulness, I feel myself under unspeakable obligations to my European brethren. But I have made the above observations to convince you, that I held and kept my obligations and engagements to you, to strengthen your episcopacy whenever you pleased, most sacred. It is true, I wrote to you a circular letter, which, I now acknowledge, was out of order; and therefore I beg pardon for writing it: but I did not intend to be irregular. I hardly knew what to write in order to bring matters to an explanation. For I was assured that you yourselves, after due explanation, would not wish to draw me out of a very extensive and successful sphere of usefulness, merely to preach; and instead of strengthening the episcopacy, have less to do in the management of the work than the preacher who superintends the smallest circuit in America.

"And now, you will ask, 'What are we to expect from you.' I will answer with the most perfect candor. If it be your judgment and vote that my residence with you will probably assist to preserve your union; and you agree that I shall have a full right to give my judgment in every thing, in the general and annual conferences, on the making of laws, the stationing of the preachers, sending out missionaries, and every thing else, which, as a bishop or superintendent belongs to my office, I will, on receiving your answer, settle our affairs with the utmost expedition, and come over to you for life. You may observe, I do not desire any decisive power. I want no new condition. I only want to be perfectly ascertained, that if I reside with you, I shall be authorized by you to fulfill my office in the way above mentioned; without which our reciprocal engagements would be a perfect nullity, and I should be entirely the same among you, except in the article of preaching. By this proposal I break no engagement: I want nothing but a an explanation, and a part of that liberty which I have in the European connection. In Europe, I give my judgment in the two conferences, and in the representative meetings for preparing the stations of preachers for the conference, as far as I judge it my duty, on every point, and have also a vote when we do vote on any subject. In missionary matters I am here allowed a negative; and my committee a negative; this last I do not desire in America; but I desire the power of doing extensive good. If this cannot at present be granted by the authority of the Genera Conference, you may insert me in your minutes as formerly: or you may first insert the resident bishop or bishops, and add a N. B., Dr. Coke (or Bishop Coke, as you please) resides in Europe, till he be called to the States by the General conference, or by the annual conferences; or if this be not agreeable, you must expel me, (for dropping me out of your public minutes will be to all intents and purposes an expulsion,) and leave what I have done for your connection to God alone: and though you forget me, God will not forget me.

"I do assure you, very dear and respected brethren, that I love and esteem you highly, and am, with most unfeigned sincerity, your affectionate and faithful servant,

"T. COKE.

P.S. -- My precious wife desires that she may not be considered in the least degree in this business. She is no hindrance to me in any thing, but a blessing in all things. We are always, as it were, I traveling, and I annually visit and preach at more places than I did for many years before my marriage."

There was further cause of dissatisfaction with Dr. Coke. It seems that, in the spring of 179l, Dr. Coke, on the eve of his departure for England, addressed a confidential letter to bishop White, bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Pennsylvania, in which he proposed a union between that and the Methodist Episcopal Church, on certain conditions, with which the officers of that Church did not see fit to comply. As several versions have been given of this affair, to prevent misunderstandings hereafter, I think it proper to give the letter of Dr. Coke entire. It is as follows: -- "Right Rev. Sir -- Permit me to intrude a little on your time upon a subject of great importance.

"You, I believe, are conscious that I was brought up it the Church of England, and have been ordained a presbyter of that Church. For many years I was prejudiced, even I think to bigotry, in favor of it; but through a variety of causes or incidents, to mention which would be tedious and useless, my mind was exceedingly biased or the other side of the question. In consequence of this I am not sure but I went further in the separation of our Church in America than Mr. Wesley, from whom I had received my commission, did intend. He did indeed solemnly invest me, as far as he had a right so to do, with episcopal authority, but did not intend, I think, that an entire separation should take place. He, being pressed by our friends on this side of the water for ministers to administer the sacraments to them, (there being very few of the clergy of the Church of England then in the States,) went further, I am sure, than he would have gone, if he had foreseen some events which followed. And this I am certain of -- that he is now sorry for the separation.

"But what can be done for a re-union, which I much wish for; and to accomplish which, Mr. Wesley, I have no doubt, would use his influence to the utmost? the affection of a very considerable number of the preachers and most of the people is very strong toward him, notwithstanding the excessive ill usage he received from a few. My interest also is not small; both his and mine would readily, and to the utmost, be used to accomplish that (to us) very desirable object; if a readiness were shown by the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church to re-unite.

"It is even to your Church an object of great importance, We have now above sixty thousand adults in our society in these States, and about two hundred and fifty traveling ministers and preachers; besides a great number of local preachers, very far exceeding the number of traveling preachers; and some of those local preachers are men of very considerable abilities. But if we number the Methodists as most people number the members of their Church, viz., by the families which constantly attend the divine ordinances in their places of worship, they will make a larger body than you probably conceive. The society, I believe, may be safely multiplied by five on an average to give us our stated congregations; which will then amount to three hundred thousand. And if the calculation which, I think, some eminent writers have made, be just, three-fifths of mankind are un-adult, if I may use the expression,) at any given period, it will follow that all the families, the

adults of which form our congregations in these States, amount to seven hundred and fifty thousand. About one-fifth of these are blacks.

"The work now extends in length from Boston to the south of Georgia; and in breadth from the Atlantic to Lake Champlain, Vermont, Albany, Redstone, Holstein, Kentucky, Cumberland, &c.

"But there are many hindrances in the way. Can they be removed?

1. Our ordained ministers will not, ought not to give up their right of administering the sacraments. I do not think that the generality of them, perhaps none of them, would refuse to submit to a re-ordination, if other hindrances were removed out of the way. I must here observe, that between sixty and seventy only out of the two hundred and fifty have been ordained presbyters, and about sixty deacons (only.) The presbyters are the choicest of the whole.

2. The other preachers would hardly submit to a re-union, if the possibility of their rising up to ordination depended on the present bishops in America. Because, though they are all, I think I may say, zealous, pious, and very useful men, yet they are not acquainted with the learned languages. Besides, they would argue, -- If the present bishops would waive the article of the learned languages, yet their successors might not.

"My desire of a re-union is so sincere and earnest, that these difficulties almost make me tremble; and yet something must be done before the death of Mr. Wesley, otherwise I shall despair of success for though my influence among the Methodists in these states as well as in Europe is, I doubt not, increasing, yet Mr. Asbury, whose influence is very capital, will not easily comply; nay, I know he will be exceedingly averse to it.

"In Europe, where some steps had been taken, tending to a separation, all is at an end. Mr. Wesley is a determined enemy of it, and I have lately borne an open and successful testimony against it.

"Shall I be favored with a private interview with you in Philadelphia? I shall be there, God willing, on Tuesday the 17th of May. If this be agreeable, I will beg of you just to signify it in a note, directed to me at Mr. Jacob Baker’s, merchant, Market Street, Philadelphia; or, if you please, by a few lines sent me by the return of the post at Philip Rogers’s, Esq., in Baltimore, from yourself or Dr. Magaw, and I will wait upon you with my friend Dr. Magaw. We can then enlarge on these subjects.

"I am conscious of it, that secrecy is of great importance in the present state of the business, till the minds of you, your brother bishops, and Mr. Wesley, be circumstantially known. I must therefore beg that these things be confined to yourself and Dr. Magaw, till I have the honor of seeing you.

"Thus, you see, I have made a bold venture on your honor and candor, and have opened my whole heart to you on the subject, as far as the extent of a small letter will allow me. If you put equal confidence in me, you will find me candid and faithful.

"I have, notwithstanding, been guilty of inadvertencies. Very lately, I found myself obliged (for the pacifying of my conscience) to write a penitential letter to the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, which gave him great satisfaction: and for the same reason I must write another to the Rev. Mr. Pettigrew. When I

was last in America, I prepared and corrected a great variety of things for our magazines, indeed, almost every thing that was printed, except some loose hints which I had taken of one of my journeys, and which I left in my hurry with Mr. Asbury, without any correction, entreating that no part of them might be printed which would be improper or offensive. But through great inadvertency (I suppose) he suffered some reflections on the characters of the two above-mentioned gentlemen to be inserted in the magazine, for which I am very sorry and probably shall not rest till I have made my acknowledgment more public; though Mr. Jarratt does not desire it.

I am not sure whether I have not also offended you, sir, by accepting one of the offers made me by you and Dr. Magaw, of the use of your churches, about six years ago, on my first visit to Philadelphia, without informing you of our plan of separation from the Church of England. If I did offend, (as I doubt I did, especially from what you said on the subject to Mr. Richard Dellam, of Abington,) I sincerely beg yours and Dr. Magaw's pardon. I will endeavor to amend. But, alas! I am a frail, weak creature.

"I will intrude no longer at present. One thing only I will claim from your candor -- that if you have no thoughts of improving this proposal, you will burn this letter, and take no more notice of it (for it would be a pity to have us entirely alienated from each other, if we cannot unite in the manner my ardent wishes desire.) But if you will further negotiate the business, I will explain my mind still more fully to you on the probabilities of success.

"In the meantime, permit me, with great respect, to subscribe myself, right reverend sir, your very humble servant in Christ, Thomas Coke. Richmond, April 24,1791. "The Right Rev. Father in God, Bishop White." The following is Bishop White's answer: --

"Rev. Sir -- My friend, Dr. Magaw, has this day put into my hands your letter of the 24th of April, which, I trust, I received with a sense of the importance of the subject, and of the answer I am to give to God for the improvement of every opportunity of building up his Church. Accordingly, I cannot but make choice of the earliest of the two ways you point out, to inform you, that I shall be very happy in the opportunity of conversing with you at the time proposed.

"You mention two difficulties in the way of the proposed union. And there are further difficulties which suggest themselves to my mind. But I can say of the one and of the other, that I do not think them insuperable, provided there be a conciliatory disposition on both sides. So far as I am concerned, I think that such a disposition exists.

"It has not been my temper, sir, to despond in regard to the extension of Christianity in this new world: and in addition to the promises of the great head of the Church, I have always imagined that I perceived the train of second causes so laid by the good providence of God, as to be promoting what we believe to be his will in this respect. On the other hand, I feel the weight of most powerful discouragements, in the increasing number of the avowed patrons of infidelity, and of others, who pretend to confess the divine authority of our holy religion, while they endeavor to strip it of its characteristic doctrines. In this situation, it is rather to be expected, that distinct Churches, agreeing in fundamentals, should make mutual sacrifices for a union, than that any Church should divide into two bodies, without a difference being even alleged to exist, in any heading point. For the preventing of this, the measures which you may propose cannot fail of success, unless there

be on one side, or on both a most lamentable deficiency of Christian temper.

"I remember the conversation you allude to with Mr. Dellam: I hope I did not express myself uncharitably, or even indelicately. As to personal offense toward me, it is out of the question: for I had not at that time any connection with St. Paul's Church. But this, as well as the other parts of your letter, may be discoursed of at the proposed interview. Therefore, with assurance of the desired secrecy, and with requesting you to accept a like promise of candor to that which I credit from you, I conclude myself at present Your brother in Christ, "And very humble servant, "W. W."1

It will be perceived that the above correspondence was considered by the parties concerned as altogether confidential, and was so kept, according to Bishop White's account of the transaction, until the summer of 1804, when he communicated the fact, in answer to their inquiries, to the Rev. Simon Wilmer, of the Protestant, and the Rev. John McClaskey, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. "The matter being variously reported," says Bishop White, "a copy of the letter was, after some lapse of time, delivered to the Rev. Dr. Kemp, of Maryland, and at last published in a controversy raised in the diocese." The letter being thus made public, it is not strange that many of the friends of Dr. Coke, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to whom these things were unknown until now, should have been dissatisfied with Dr. Coke, and demand from him an explanation. Thus called from him the following letter to this General Conference2: -- "Near Leeds, (Yorkshire,) Jan. 29,1808.

"To The General American Conference

"My Very Dear Brethren: -- I wrote to you a letter about two months ago, directed to the care of my dear brethren, the Messrs. Cooper and Wilson, in which I briefly opened my mind to you concerning my relation toward you, observing, to this purport, that if you judged that my being with you would help to preserve your union, if I was allowed to give my opinion or judgment on every station of the preachers, as far as I chose, and also upon every thing else that could come under the inspection of the bishops or superintendents, you might call me; and we would settle our affairs in Europe as soon as possible, and sail for America, and be with you for life. Without your compliance with the latter point, viz., in respect to a full right of giving my judgment, I should be so far from being useful in preserving union, that I should merely fill the place of a preacher.

"But there is one point more which I must also notice. I find that a letter which I wrote to Bishop White in 1791 has been animadverted upon, though, if I mistake not, the letter itself has not been published.

"There are very few of you who can possibly recollect any thing of what I am next going to add. Many of you were then only little children. We had at that time no regular General Conferences. One only had been held in the year 1784. I had, indeed, with great labor and fatigue, a few months before I wrote this letter to Bishop White, prevailed on James O'Kelly and the thirty-six traveling preachers who had withdrawn with him from all connection with Bishop Asbury, to submit to the decision of a General Conference. This conference was, to be held in about a year and a half after my departure from the States. And at this conference, held, I think, the latter end of 1792, I proposed and obtained that great blessing to the American connection, a permanency for General Conferences, which were to be held at stated times. Previously to the holding of this conference, (except the general one held in 1784,) there were only small district meetings, excepting the

council which was held at Cokesbury College either in 1791 or 1792. Except the union which most justly subsisted between Bishop Asbury on the one hand, and the preachers and people on the other, the society, as such, taken as an aggregate, was almost like a rope of sand. I longed to see matters on a footing likely to be permanent: Bishop Asbury did the same: and it was that view of things, I doubt not, which led Bishop Asbury, the year before, to call and to endeavor to establish a regular council, who were to meet him annually at Cokesbury. In this point I differed in sentiment from my venerable brother. But I saw the danger of our situation, though I well knew that God was sufficient for all things. I did verily believe then, that, under God, the connection would be more likely to be saved from convulsions by a union with the old Episcopal Church, than any other way -- not by a dereliction of ordination, sacraments, and the Methodist discipline, but by a junction on proper terms. Bishop White, in two interviews I had with him in Philadelphia, gave me reason to believe that this junction might be accomplished with ease. Dr. Magaw was perfectly sure of it. Indeed, (if Mr. Ogden, of New Jersey, did not mistake in the information he gave me,) a canon passed the house of bishops of the old Episcopal Church in favor of it. Bishop Madison, according to the same information, took the canon to the lower house. 'But it was there thrown out,' said Mr. Ogden, to whom I explained the whole business, 'because they did not understand the full meaning of it.' Mr. Ogden added, that he spoke against it, because he did not understand it; but that it would have met with his warm support, had he understood the full intention of it.

"I had provided in the fullest manner, in my indispensably necessary conditions, for the security, and, I may say, for the independence of our discipline and places of worship. But I thought (perhaps erroneously, and I believe so now) that our field of action would have been exceedingly enlarged by that junction, and that myriads would have attended our ministry in consequence of it, who were at that time much prejudiced against us. All these things unitedly considered, led me to write the letter, and meet Bishop White and Dr. Magaw on the subject in Philadelphia.

"But it may be asked, why did I not consult Bishop Asbury, before I took these steps? I answer, It was impossible. I was at and near Philadelphia, and he was somewhere in the south. We had finished our district meetings, and he was to be in the state of Maryland about the time of my sailing for England. I wanted that every thing should he prepared against my return, God willing, in about a year and a half, for further consideration -- that Bishop White, &c., should have time to consult their convention -- and that I might also lay the matter before Bishop Asbury, and correspond with him upon the subject, and after that, if proper, bring the business before the General Conference, which was to be held in order to take into consideration James O'Kelly's division. Before I sailed for England, I met Bishop Asbury at New castle in the state of Delaware, (from which place I went on board,) and laid the matter before him, who, with that caution which peculiarly characterizes him, gave me no decisive opinion on the subject.

1. "The next objection (and, I think, the only important one remaining) is the following: 'If you did not think that the episcopal ordination of Mr. Asbury was valid, why did you ordain him? Was there not duplicity in this business?' I answer,

2. I never, since I could reason on those things, considered the doctrine of the uninterrupted apostolic succession of bishops as at all valid or true.

3. I am of our late venerable father Mr. Wesley's opinion, that the order of bishops and presbyters is one and the same

4. I believe that the episcopal form of church government is the best in the world, when the episcopal power is under due regulations and responsibility.

5. I believe that it is well to follow the example of the primitive church as exemplified in the word of God, by setting apart persons for great ministerial purposes by the imposition of hands, but especially those who are appointed for offices of the first rank in the church.

"From all I have advanced, you may easily perceive, my dear brethren, that I do not consider the imposition of hands, on the one hand, as essentially necessary for any office in the church; nor do I, on the other hand, think that the repetition of the imposition of hands for the same office, when important circumstances require it, is at all improper.

"If it be granted that my plan of union with the old Episcopal Church was desirable, (which now, I think, was not so, though I most sincerely believed it to be so at that time,) then if the plan could not have been accomplished without a repetition of the imposition of hands for the same office, I did believe, and do now believe, and have no doubt that the repetition of the imposition of hands would have been perfectly justifiable for the enlargement of the field of action, &c., and would not, by any means, have invalidated the former consecration or imposition of hands. Therefore, I have no doubt but my consecration of Bishop Asbury was perfectly valid and would have been so even if he had been re-consecrated. I never did apply to the general convention or any other convention for reconsecration. I never intended that either Bishop Asbury or myself should give up our episcopal office, if the junction were to take place; but I should have had no scruple then, nor should I now, if the junction were desirable, to have submitted to, or to submit to a reimposition of hands in order to accomplish a great object: but I do say again, I do not now believe such a junction desirable.

"I have thus simply and candidly, though in few words, told you my whole mind on this subject. I do not consider my solemn engagements to you invalidated by any thing I have done, or you have done. But I charge you by the glory of God, and by every tie of love, gratitude, and candor, that you take no step which may injure my character. And now I conclude with assuring you that I greatly love and esteem you; that it is a delight to me to pray for your prosperity, and that I am your very affectionate brother and faithful friend,

T. COKE."

These letters, having been read in the conference, were referred to the committee of correspondence, who reported the following answer to Dr. Coke: -- "Baltimore, May 25th, 1808

"Very Dear and Much-Respected Brother: -- Your letters of Nov. 6th, 1807, and Jan. 29th, 1808, together with the address of the British Conference to our General Conference, were severally read to us in our open conference; and the different subjects therein contained were seriously and solemnly considered, in all their various bearings and connections.

"We have answered the address of the British Conference in a separate letter from this, which you, as one of that body, will see. We have complied with their request, in agreeing that you may continue with them, till you are called to us by the General Conference, or by all the annual conferences respectively.

"Your two letters were respectfully received and had a salutary effect upon our minds. The reasons which you have assigned for some former transactions, and the ingenuous candor which you have manifested, in frankly acknowledging and declaring the motives and inducements that led you to those measures; together with your affectionate acknowledgment that in certain cases you were mistaken as to your views of some of the points in question; as likewise your manifest friendship and good will to this connection and your American brethren, and your evident solicitude to retain a place and standing among us; taking these circumstances collectively, they had a great influence upon some of our minds, in removing certain suspicious fears, which had been imbibed, rather unfavorable to your standing among us.

"You may be assured that we feel an affectionate regard for you; that we gratefully remember your repeated labors of love toward us; and that we sensibly feel our obligations for the services you have rendered us. We hope that no circumstance will ever alienate our Christian affection from you, or yours from us. We wish to maintain and to cultivate a good understanding and brotherly unity with you, and with all our European brethren. In full conference, of near one hundred and thirty members, we entered into a very long conversation, and very serious and solemn debate, upon sundry resolutions which were laid before us, relative to your case. Probably on no former occasion, in any conference in America, was so much said in defense of your character and to your honor as I ministerial servant of God and of his church. Your worth, your labors, your disinterested services, fatigues, dangers, and difficulties, to serve your American brethren, were set forth pathetically, and urged with the force of reason and truth, in an argumentative manner and our candid and impartial judgments were constrained to yield to the conclusion, that we were bound by the ties of moral and religious obligations to treat you most respectfully, and to retain a grateful remembrance of all your labors of love toward us. During the debate your name was mentioned, and your character spoken of with much respect and affection. Our deliberations and arguments on this head terminated to the adoption of the following resolutions, viz: --

1. Resolved, That the General Conference do agree and consent that Dr. Coke may continue in Europe till he be called to the United States by the General Conference or by all the American conferences respectively.

2. Resolved, That we do retain a grateful remembrance of the services and labors of Dr. Coke among us; and that the thanks of this conference are hereby acknowledged to him, and to God, for all his labors of love toward us, from the time he first left his native country to serve us.

3. Resolved, That Dr. Coke’s name shall be retained in our minutes, after the names of the bishops, in a ’N. B. Dr. Coke, at the request of the British Conference, and by consent of our General Conference, resides in Europe; he is not to exercise the office of superintendent among us, in the United States, until he be recalled by the General Conference or by all the annual conferences respectively.’

"Your name is accordingly printed in the minutes which were put to press after the adoption of the above resolutions.

"We have elected and set apart our beloved brother Wm. McKendree to the office of a bishop or superintendent, and he has entered upon the duties of the office. Our venerable Asbury is yet spared among us, and, although he bears the weight of more than threescore years, he is able to

travel and visit all the annual conferences. May his life be long preserved for God’s glory, and the service of his church!

"We have, upon the whole, had great peace, harmony, and unity, during our sitting in General Conference: we expect to close in a few days; and we trust in God that all things will work together for the divine glory and the promotion of the blessed work of religion.

"Our next General Conference is to be May 1st, 1812, in New York, and is to be composed of a select number, of one for every five members belonging to the annual conferences respectively.

"We judge it proper to inform you, that our brother Ezekiel Cooper has voluntarily resigned his office as editor and general book steward. It was the wish and desire of the General Conference, that he should continue to serve the connection in that important department; but he has given us a final answer, that he declines the appointment, and wishes another to be appointed to take his place. The conference have accordingly accepted his resignation, and voted their thanks to him for the great services he has rendered in that department, for nine years past; and they have also voted their full approbation of his conduct in the management of the book business, greatly to the advancement of that concern, and to the benefit of the connection.

"We have now chosen our brethren John Wilson and Daniel Hitt, the editors and general book stewards, who are to carry on the business in New York as usual. You will therefore consider and understand, that our brother Ezekiel Cooper, of his own voluntary choice, has resigned, and is released from any responsibility in any account you may have with the Book Concern; and that all your accounts and business with that department or the agents thereof are to be transferred to and done with the said John Wilson and Daniel Hitt in future.

"We have had a glorious work in various parts; we had an addition last year of 7,405; our connection now amounts to more than 150,000. Surely the Lord is with us.

"We hope, dear brother, that you will bear us in mind before the throne of grace. We shall certainly pray for our brother Dr. Coke, his beloved wife, and all our European brethren. May the Lord long preserve your life, and bless you with, every necessary favor of Providence and grace to complete your felicity in time and through eternity!

"We are, very dear and much-respected brother, yours affectionately in the bonds of the gospel and unity of the Spirit of grace.

"Signed in behalf and by order of the General Conference." The following resolutions also passed the conference in relation to his case: --

"The committee to whom was referred the case of Dr. Coke, taking into consideration the circumstances of the case, as it respects the request of the British Conference, the relative situation of the doctor, and the most prudent measures for us to adopt, in order to promote and perpetuate a good understanding and Christian unity between us and our European brethren, are of opinion we should comply with the request made in the address of the British Conference for the doctor’s continuance with them; and also, that we should respectfully retain the doctor’s name in our minutes, agreeably to his request in his second proposition on that head -- therefore, your committee report the following resolutions: --

1. "Resolved, That the General Conference do agree and consent that Dr. Coke may continue in Europe 'till he be called to the United States by the General Conference, or by all the annual conferences respectively.'

2. "Resolved, That we do retain a grateful remembrance of the services and labors of Dr. Coke among us and that the thanks of this conference are hereby acknowledged to him; and to God, for all his labors of love toward us, from the time he first left his native country to serve us.

3. "Resolved, that Dr. Coke's name shall be retained in our minutes after the names of the bishops, in a 'N. B. Dr. Coke, at the request of the British Conference, and by consent of our General Conference, resides in Europe: he is not to exercise the office of superintendent or bishop among us in the United States, until he be recalled by the General Conference, or by all the annual conferences respectively.'

4. "Resolved, That the committee of correspondence be, and are hereby directed, to draft two letters, one to the British Conference, the other to Dr. Coke, in answer to their respective letters to us; and therein communicating with them respectively the contents of the above resolutions.' The following address, referred to in the letter above inserted, of the British to the American Methodist General Conference, will show the state of feeling existing between the two bodies, and the earnest desire the former had for the continued services of Dr. Coke: --

"Very Dear Brethren in the Lord: -- The pleasing, account you gave us, in your last address, of the prosperity of religion in the United States, calls on us for the most lively expressions of thankfulness to God, who has so wonderfully displayed his love among you; the more so, as we have heard, by very recent accounts, that the operations of divine grace are continued, with increasing effect, on the hearts of thousands in your highly-favored country. May the Lord still prosper his blessed work, till the whole earth is filled with his glory!

"While we ascribe all the good that is done to God alone, as the sole fountain of light and life, we do not forget the instruments which it pleased him to employ. The names of Asbury and Whatcoat are mentioned in our assemblies with the greatest respect and affection. Mr. Whatcoat, we are informed, is called to his eternal ward. This is, doubtless, a very great loss to you, though to him an unspeakable gain. Yet, you well know, that the glorious Head of the church, who saw good to remove him, can supply his place with a pastor after his own heart, equally qualified to superintend his mourning flock. The venerable Mr. Asbury, whose praise is in all the churches, is still with you, -- a burning and a shining light. We never lose sight of the zeal he showed for the salvation of souls, at the hazard of his life, during the war on the continent, when all others forsook it and fled. To speak our sentiments on this subject, might pain his mind; we therefore restrain ourselves, being well assured that he needs no encomiums of ours to recommend him to you! May his last days be crowned with increasing success in his great ministerial labors!

"Respecting our union, dear brethren, we think of no separation from you, save the great Atlantic. Our doctrine, and manner of spreading the gospel, are the same, and we mutually rejoice in each other's welfare. On this principle, we conclude, that you will greatly rejoice to hear of the flourishing state of vital godliness among us. In this kingdom, so long distinguished by every privilege congenial to real religion, there has been this year an increase of above seven thousand members to our Society, near a thousand in Ireland, where the missionaries have been greatly blest in their

arduous undertaking, particularly in weakening the destructive influence of the man of sin and, we trust, in hastening the total overthrow of idolatry and superstition.

"What you have said concerning our present worthy secretary, the Rev. Dr. Coke, is no matter of wonder to us, who have long known his value, the honor which our Lord has put upon him, and have enjoyed the fruit of his labor. By a vote of our conference this day, he was requested to continue with us, in case his engagements with you, which he has repeatedly stated to us, should admit of it.

"Our conference has been numerous, and many important subjects have been brought before us; but, thanks be to God, we have been graciously preserved from the evil one, and are drawing toward a conclusion in the utmost harmony and love.

"That the eternal God may be your refuge, and the everlasting arms be underneath you; and that the good will of Him who dwelt in the bush may be ever manifested among you, is the earnest prayer of; very dear brethren, yours, in endless love.

"Signed, in behalf of the conference, "John Barber, President. "Liverpool, August 11, 1807." The answer of the General Conference to this is as follows: -- "Baltimore, 25th May, 1808

"Very Dear Brethren and Fathers in Christ: -- Your very affectionate address 'to the Methodist General Conference in America,' has been read in our conference, and afforded us great consolation. Feeling with you that 'our doctrine and manner of spreading the gospel are the same,' that we are united under one glorious Head, suffering in the same cause, and traveling to the same world of rest, we cannot but rejoice in your prosperity. Yes, brethren, we rejoice to hear that the great Head of the church has owned your labors, and given hundreds and thousands of precious souls to your labors and prayers. But above all, we feel constrained to return thanks to the Father of lights for presiding over your conference, and enabling you to draw to a close in harmony and love; and again to go out into the hedges and highways, the towns and cities, and lift up your united voice for the recovery of a lost and sinking world. O brethren, if God so wonderfully owned and blest the labors of the few that first engaged in spreading the gospel on the itinerant plan in your highly-favored land, so that 'a little one has become a thousand,' what may we not expect from the labors of hundreds and thousands, provided they continue equally pure in doctrine, holy in life, and zealous for the glory of the Redeemer's kingdom?

"We also, in this highly-favored country, have cause of unceasing gratitude and love to our common Lord, for his boundless love toward us. Although we have had a vast extent of country to travel over, in many parts stupendous chains of rocky mountains to climb, and uncultivated regions to explore, yet hitherto we have been kept one; and our labors have been crowned with success beyond our most sanguine expectations. Not only in our towns and populous cities, and the country adjacent to the Atlantic, have we seen the pleasure of the Lord prosper in our hand; but also to the westward beyond the river Ohio, to the Mississippi and the Missouri, we have seen the travail of the Redeemer's soul coming borne to God. In those places where but a few years ago the wild beast of the forest prowled after his prey, and the tawny savage lurked in wait to murder the innocent, now houses are raised for the worship of God, precious souls have been converted by hundreds and thousands, and the songs of Zion are heard. Truly the wilderness and the solitary place have become glad, and the desert blossoms as the rose. This is the Lord's

doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

"Our numbers are still increasing; we added more than seven thousand members to our societies the last year. There are now upward of one hundred and fifty thousand members within the bounds of our charge. The prospects are still opening and pleasing. The fields are white unto the harvest. Our missionaries in the interior and upon the frontier have been successful. But we wish to rejoice with trembling. All the honor and praise be ascribed to God for ever.

"Your request for the continuance of our beloved brother Dr. Coke among you has been taken into the most serious and solemn deliberation in our conference; and in accordance with your request, a vote has passed that he may continue with you until he may be called to us by all the annual conferences respectively, or the General Conference. We are, however, not insensible of his value, or ungrateful for his past labors of love. And we do sincerely pray that the everlasting God may still be with him, and make him a blessing to hundreds and thousands of immortal souls.

"Our venerable father, Mr. Asbury, is still spared to us; and notwithstanding he carries the weight of threescore and three years, he has been enabled regularly to visit all the annual conferences, and to preside in our General Conference. We esteem this a peculiar blessing. As the pious Whatcoat is taken from us to his eternal reward, we have elected and set apart our beloved brother William McKendree, who has been well tried and found faithful in the work of the ministry nearly twenty years, to fill his place as joint superintendent with Mr. Asbury. And we hope that the mantle of Elijah will rest upon Elisha. Our conference has been large, and business of the greatest importance has come before us; but through the infinite goodness of God we have been preserved in union, and are now drawing toward a close in harmony and love.

"Respecting our union, brethren, we can say with you, we know no separation save the Atlantic. And we wish, so far as circumstances will permit, ever to cultivate the most cordial affection.

"And now, dear brethren and fathers, praying that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may be your guide and support in life and death, and that we may all meet in our Father’s house above, we remain yours, in unceasing love.

"Signed by order and in behalf of the conference."3 As a variety of conflicting commentaries have been made on these proceedings, and especially upon the letters of Dr. Coke, some of them discreditable to his character, and others to the character of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it seems proper to subjoin a few remarks, with a view to set the matter in a just point of light, referring the reader, for a more full vindication of those transactions, to the book entitled, "An Original Church of Christ," and to the "Defense of our Fathers." Let it be remembered then,

1. That the letter of Dr. Coke to Bishop White was his own simply, for which no one is responsible but himself, for he consulted not the General Conference at all, nor even Bishop Asbury or Mr. Wesley. Nay, it appears from the letter itself that Dr. Coke was fully sensible that Bishop Asbury would be averse to the plan of the union between the two Churches. If, therefore, there be any thing reprehensible in the letter or in the plan proposed, neither the Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Asbury, nor Mr. Wesley is to be held responsible for it, as neither the one nor the other was at all consenting to the proposition. But,

2. It seems that Dr. Coke himself designed his letter only as preparatory to an interview on the subject with Bishop White, should the proposition be favorably viewed by the latter. It was, therefore, purely a confidential communication from one friend to another, the writer requesting Bishop White to burn the letter in case he should not view the subject favorably; and even if he should, the preliminaries were to be discussed afterward, and the whole subject submitted to the General Conference, whose negative would have nullified the entire proceedings. The letter, therefore, should be considered only as an incipient step towards a union which the writer greatly desired as a means, according to his judgment at the time, of realizing a greater amount of good than could be in their separate action. If, therefore, the end proposed could have been realized without any sacrifice of principle, or the use of unlawful means, it might have been sanctioned by all good men in each communion, without any impeachment of either motive or judgment. In the estimation of Bishop White himself, as appears from his answer to Dr. Coke, such a union might have been effected without any dereliction of duty on either side, provided the terms of the compact could have been made mutually agreeable. Futurity alone can fully declare whether the motive in making or rejecting the proposition were most in accordance with the Divine will, or most conducive to extensive and permanent good. In any, and in every event, the severe censures which have been cast upon Dr. Coke, and the unwarrantable conclusions respecting the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, are not justified or sustained by the facts in the case, however much we may deprecate the making or rejecting the movements of either party in the premises.

3. The most weighty objection, however, to Dr. Coke, in making the proposal, is, that he thereby expressed a doubt of the validity of his own ordination, and of course of those on whom he had laid his hands. The reader is requested to notice that this objection has been raised by the Protestant Episcopalians who consider presbyterial ordination invalid, and who profess a belief in the uninterrupted succession of a third order in the church, denominated bishops, made such by a triple consecration; but as this belief is founded upon no substantial proof, as such an order cannot be traced, nor therefore insisted upon as essential to constitute a valid ministry, the objection itself can have no solid foundation; more especially as Dr. Coke himself says expressly, in the above letter to The General Conference, that he had no confidence in the doctrine of succession, and therefore considered his consecration by Wesley and others as perfectly valid. But Dr. Coke's letter above quoted, sets this matter at rest by the most explicit avowal on this point. In whatever sense Bishop White might have understood him, it is manifest that Dr. Coke never meant to insinuate that his own ordination by Mr. Wesley, or that of those who had received it at his hands, was wanting in any thing to make it valid. This is a contradiction put upon the letter of Dr. Coke not authorized by the letter itself, and is expressly contradicted in the one he addressed to the General Conference.

1. But as before said, whatever error may have been committed in this affair, the Methodist Episcopal Church is not accountable for it. It is believed that Dr. Coke betrayed too much precipitancy in reference to this subject -- that his great desire for extensive usefulness led him to make the proposal, which he did without due consideration -- that before he thus committed himself to those who were watching him, with perhaps some jealousy, he should have consulted and obtained the consent of his worthy colleague, as well as Mr. Wesley's and the General Conference. It is, moreover, highly probable that Dr. Coke misunderstood the views of Mr. Wesley,

when he told Bishop White that had he foreseen some things, he would not have gone so far. No other intimation, so far as I have been able to learn, was ever given that Mr. Wesley ever repented of what he had done for his American brethren. His last letter to Ezekiel Cooper, but a few days before his death, and the record he made in his journal in reference to this business, both prove that Dr. Coke labored under a mistake when he said this. What Mr. Wesley said in regard to Mr. Asbury's calling himself a bishop, and to Cokesbury College, no more proves that he repented of what he had done, than it does that a father is sorry that he has a promising son, merely because he finds it necessary to chastise him for his good.

It should be observed that Dr. Coke does not say in his letter to Bishop White that he had authority from Mr. Wesley to say that the latter regretted the steps he had taken in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but gives it as his opinion only that such were Mr. Wesley's views and feelings. The fact is, Dr. Coke had become alarmed -- unnecessarily so, as subsequent events proved -- from the disposition manifested by O'Kelly and his partisans, fearing that a convulsion would take place in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that they would become scattered abroad. To prevent such a calamity, Bishop Asbury proposed the council, which had but an ephemeral existence, and did not answer the design of its institution, to which neither Dr. Coke nor O'Kelly was agreed, the former submitting to it from deference to Bishop Asbury, proposing in the mean time a General Conference as a substitute, which was brought about in 1792, at which time O'Kelly withdrew.

Under these alarming apprehensions for the safety of the church, Dr. Coke made the proposition for a union with the Protestant Episcopal Church, from a hope of enlarging the sphere of usefulness for his Methodist brethren, by creating a concentration of action for the ministry of both communions, and thereby inspiring more public confidence in the cementing principles of Christianity and the stability of its institutions. As, however, his fears were groundless, so the union proposed was both impolitic and unnecessary he himself lived to see and acknowledge.

It is hoped, therefore, that we may hear no more of the doubts of Dr. Coke respecting the validity of his ordination. And whatever errors he may have committed in this affair, let them find an apology in that common frailty of human nature from which none are exempt -- the imperfection of human judgment -- and be buried in the same tomb in which the remains are deposited which once shrouded a spirit of no common mold -- a spirit actuated by the noblest principles of philanthropy, piety, and faith.

We claim not for Dr. Coke perfection or infallibility of judgment; but we do claim for him an unsullied reputation, a purity of motive, guiding and actuating an extended desire for usefulness to his fellow-men, and which a close and critical inspection of his character and conduct makes to shine out with increased luster and a more enduring brightness. And if the same amount of goodness can be awarded to those who have made this vindication necessary -- if the same apology for merely human weaknesses will serve to set off their virtues in the same conspicuous light -- we shall rejoice in anticipating, by the abounding mercy of God in Christ Jesus, our eternal union with them all, in ascribing honor and glory to Him who hath washed them and us in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God for ever and ever.

There was another very important matter submitted to this General Conference. We have already seen in the preceding chapter, the efforts which were made by Bishop Asbury and most of the

annual conferences, to convene a delegated General Conference in 1807, but that the measure was defeated by the vote of the Virginia conference. Not despairing of accomplishing an object so desirable in itself; the subject was presented to this General Conference in the following memorial: --

"Very Dear Brethren: -- We are as one of the seven eyes of the great and increasing body of the Methodist Episcopal Church in these United States, which is composed of about five hundred traveling, and about two thousand local preachers, together with upwards of one hundred and forty thousand members; these, (with our numerous congregations and families, spread over an extent of country more than two thousand miles from one end to the other, amounting, in all probability, to more than one million of souls, which are, directly or remotely, under our pastoral oversight and ministerial charge,) should engage our most sacred attention, and should call into exertion all the wisdom and talents we are possessed of; to perpetuate the unity and prosperity of the whole connection, and to establish such regulations, rules, and form of government, as may, by the blessing of God in Jesus Christ, promote that cause of religion which is more precious to us than riches, honor, or life itself, and be conducive to the salvation or souls, among the generations yet unborn. The fields are white unto harvest before us, and the opening prospect of the great day of glory brightens continually in our view, and we are looking forward with hopeful expectations for the universal spread of scriptural truth and holiness over the habitable globe. Brethren, for what have we labored -- for what have we suffered -- for what have we borne the reproach of Christ, with much long-suffering, with tear: and sorrow -- but to serve the great end and eternal purpose or the grace of God, in the present and everlasting felicity of immortal souls?

"When we take a serious and impartial view of this important subject, and consider the extent of our connection, the number of our preachers, the great inconvenience, expense, and loss of time, that must necessarily result from our present regulations relative to our General Conferences, we are deeply impressed with a thorough conviction that a representative or delegated General Conference, composed of a specific number, on principles of equal representation, from the several annual conferences, would be much more conducive to the prosperity and general unity of the whole body, than the present indefinite and numerous body of ministers, collected together unequally from the various conferences to the great inconvenience of the ministry, and injury of the work of God.

"We therefore present unto you this memorial, requesting that you will adopt the principle of an equal representation from the annual conferences, to form in future a delegated General Conference, and that you will establish such rules and regulations as are necessary to carry the same into effect.

"As we are persuaded that our brethren in general, from a view of the situation and circumstances of the connection, must be convinced, upon mature and impartial reflection, of the propriety and necessity of the measure, we forbear to enumerate the various reasons and arguments which might be urged in support of it. But we do hereby instruct, advise, and request every member who shall go from our conference to the General Conference, to urge, if necessary, every reason and argument in favor of the principle, and to use all their Christian influence to have the same adopted and carried into effect.

"And we also shall and do invite and request our brethren in the several annual conferences which are to sit between this and the General Conference, to join and unite with us in the subject matter of this memorial. We do hereby candidly and openly express our opinion and wish, with the firmest attachment to the unity and prosperity of the connection; hoping and praying that our chief Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, the Lord Jesus Christ, may direct you in all wisdom, righteousness, brotherly love, and Christian unity.

"We are, dear brethren, in the bonds of gospel ties, most affectionately yours, &c.

"By order and in behalf of the New York conference, without a dissenting vote.

"(Signed) Francis Ward, Sec'y. "Coeyman's Patent, May the 7th, 1807." This memorial, it seems, had been submitted to several of the annual conferences, and concurred in, as appears by the record, by the New England, Ohio, and South Carolina conferences; and, accordingly, it had been requested, that as full a representation as practicable, should attend the present session of the General Conference, that a full expression of the voice of the several annual conferences should be heard in regard to this measure.

After the memorial was read, it was referred to a committee of two members from each annual conference, chosen by the representatives of each conference from among themselves; and the following members composed the committee: --

New York Conference -- Ezekiel Cooper, John Wilson; New England Conference -- George Pickering, Joshua Soule; Western Conference -- William McKendree, William Burke; South Carolina Conference -- William Phoebus, Josias Randle; Virginia Conference -- Philip Bruce, Jesse Lee; Baltimore Conference -- Stephen G. Roszell, Nelson Reed; Philadelphia Conference -- John McClaskey, Thomas Ware. On Monday, the 16th, the committee presented the following report, which, after a long debate, was rejected by a vote of 57 for and 64 against it: --

"Whereas, it is of the greatest importance that the doctrine, form of government, and general rules of the United Societies in America be preserved sacred and inviolable and whereas every prudent measure should be taken to preserve, strengthen, and perpetuate the union of the connection:

"Therefore, your committee, upon mature deliberation, have thought it advisable that the third section of the form of Discipline shall be as follows, viz: --

SECTION III "Of the General Conference * The General Conference shall be composed of delegates from the annual conferences.

* The delegates shall he chosen by ballot without debate, in the annual conferences respectively, in the last meeting of conference previous to the sitting of the General Conference.

* Each annual conference respectively shall have a right to send seven elders, members of their conference, as delegates to the General Conference.

* Each annual conference shall have a right to send one delegate in addition to the seven, for every ten members belonging to such conference, over and above fifty, so that if there be sixty members they shall send eight; if seventy, they shall send nine, and so on in proportion.

* The General Conference shall meet on the first day of day, in the year of our Lord 1812; and thenceforward on the first day of May, once in four years perpetually, at such place or places as shall be fixed on by the General Conference from time to time.

* At all times when the General Conference is met, it shall take two thirds of the whole number of delegates to form a quorum.

* One of the general superintendents shall preside in the General Conference; but in case no general superintendent be present, the General Conference shall choose a president pro tem.

* . The General Conference shall have full powers to make rules, regulations, and canons for our church, under the following limitations and restrictions, viz: o "The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our articles of religion; nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine. o "They shall not lessen the number of seven delegates from each annual conference, nor allow of a greater number from any annual conference than is provided for in the fourth paragraph of this section. o "They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or to destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency. o "They shall not revoke or change the general rules of the United Societies. o "They shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers of trial by a committee, and of an appeal. o "Neither shall they appropriate the produce of the Book Concern, or of the Charter Fund, to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, superannuated, supernumerary and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children. o "Provided, nevertheless, that upon the joint recommendation of all the annual conferences, then a majority of two thirds of the General Conference succeeding, shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions."

After discussing this report for one whole day, it was, by a vote of the conference, postponed until the reconsideration of the question respecting the manner in which the presiding elders should thereafter be appointed. After it was decided that they should continue to be appointed as heretofore by the bishops, on Wednesday the 18th, the consideration of the report was resumed, and after some debate the entire report was, as before stated, rejected by a majority of seven votes. The rejection of this report was a source of much regret and disappointment to most of the older preachers who were present, and particularly to Bishop Asbury, as they clearly saw the necessity of adopting some plan by which the doctrines of the church, its form of government, and its general rules, might be preserved from deterioration, and also by which a more equal representation from the several annual conferences should be secured. These things led to further consultation upon the subject, and it issued finally in the adoption, almost unanimously, of the following regulations and limitations: -- Question Who shall compose the General Conference, and what are the regulations and powers belonging to it?

Answer

1. The General Conference shall be composed of one member for every five members of each annual conference, to be appointed by seniority or choice, at the discretion of such annual conference; yet so that such representatives shall have traveled four full calendar years from the time they were received on trial by an annual conference, and are in full connection at the time of holding the conference.

2. The General Conference shall meet on the first day of May, in the year of our Lord 1812, in the city of New York, and thenceforward on the first day of May once in four years perpetually, in such place or places as shall be fixed by the General Conference from time to time; but the general superintendents, with or by the advice of all the annual conferences, or, if there be no general superintendent, all the annual conferences respectively, shall have power to call a General Conference, if they judge it necessary, at any time.

3. At all times when the General Conference is met, it shall take two thirds of the representatives of all the annual conferences to make a quorum for the transacting of business.

4. One of the general superintendents shall preside in the General Conference; but in case no general superintendent be present, the General Conference shall choose a president pro tempore.

5. The General Conference shall have full powers to make rules and regulations for our Church, under the following limitations and restrictions, viz.:

1. The General Conference shall not revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, nor establish any new standards or rules of doctrine, contrary to our present existing and established standards of doctrine. 2. They shall not allow of more than one representative for every five members of the annual conference, nor allow of a less number than one for every seven. 3. They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or to destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency. 4. They shall not revoke or change the general rules of the United Societies. 5. They shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers of a trial by a committee, and of an appeal; neither shall they do away the privileges of our members of trial before the society or by a select number, and of an appeal. 6. They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern or of the Charter Fund to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children. 7. Provided, nevertheless, that, upon the joint recommendation of all the annual conferences, then a majority of two-thirds of the General Conference succeeding, shall suffice to alter any of the above resolutions." The unanimity with which these restrictive regulations were adopted by the conference, shows the deep sense which was very generally felt of the propriety of limiting the powers of the General Conference, so as to secure for ever the essential doctrines of Christianity from all encroachments, as well as those rules of moral conduct, so succinctly and precisely embodied in the General Rules, and also to prevent the appropriations of the available funds of the church from being diverted to other objects than those for which they had been established. Call these rules, therefore, restrictive regulations, or a constitution of the Church -- for we contend not about names merely -- they have ever since been considered as sacredly binding upon all succeeding General Conferences, limiting them in all their legislative acts, and prohibiting them from making inroads upon the doctrines, general rules; and government of the church.

Before this, each General Conference felt itself at full liberty, not being prohibited by any standing laws, to make whatever alterations it might see fit, or to introduce any new doctrine or item in the Discipline, which either fancy, inclination, discretion, or indiscretion might dictate. Under this state of things, knowing the rage of man for novelty, and witnessing the destructive changes which have frequently laid waste churches, by removing ancient landmarks, and so modifying doctrines and usages as to suit the temper of the times, or to gratify either a corrupt taste or a perverse disposition, many had felt uneasy apprehensions for the safety and unity of the church, and the

stability of its doctrines, moral discipline, and the frame of its government; and none were more solicitous upon this subject than Bishop Asbury, who had labored so long with an assiduity equaled by few, if indeed any, and suffered so much for the propagation and establishing of these important points; he therefore greatly desired, before he should be called hence, to see them fixed upon a permanent foundation. The lively satisfaction, too, with which this act of the conference was received generally, both by ministers and people, abundantly proves the wisdom which presided in that council which devised these resolutions, and applauds the prudence and caution with which they were so cordially adopted. And although the progress of events has dictated the expediency of some modification in the iron-like bond of the proviso, yet time and experience have borne a faithful testimony to the salutary influence of the restrictions themselves, on the peace and unity of the church. The death of Bishop Whatcoat, and the absence of Dr. Coke, left Bishop Asbury alone in the superintendency. This was a burden, in the present enlarged state of the work, he was not able long to bear; and hence a resolution passed the conference on the twelfth day of its session, for the election and consecration of an additional bishop. Before, however, this motion prevailed, a motion for the election of seven additional bishops, one for each annual conference, with Bishop Asbury at their head, was largely and ably discussed by some of the leading members of the conference on each side. Those, however, who were in favor of this motion, were also in favor of either abolishing or greatly restricting the office of presiding elder, and making the episcopacy so large as in a great measure to supersede the necessity of that office. But as it was finally settled by a large majority of the conference, that this officer should be continued in the church, and likewise continue to be appointed by the bishop, so the motion for adding seven additional bishops, notwithstanding the plausibility with which the measure was urged upon the conference, was finally rejected by a strong vote.

It was then moved that two additional bishops be elected and consecrated. This also, after a free interchange of views, was decided in the negative, when the resolution in favor of one was adopted almost unanimously. The next question to be decided, was, who should be the man. On the same day on which the resolution passed, the conference proceeded to the election by ballot, and on counting the votes, it was found that out of 128, the number of members present, William McKendree had 95 in his favor,4 and was therefore declared to he duly elected; and on the 17th of May, 1808, he was consecrated in the Light Street church by Bishop Asbury, assisted by the Rev. Messrs. Freeborn Garrettson, Philip Bruce, Jesse Lee, and Thomas Ware.

Mr. McKendree had been commended to the attention and approbation of the conference, by a long, laborious, and faithful service in the itinerant field of labor, during which time God had set his seal to his ministry in a most remarkable manner.

William McKendree was born of reputable parents, in King William county, in the State of Virginia, on the 6th day of July, 1757, and was educated in the Church of England. In the year 1787, in the 30th year of his age, under the ministry of the Rev. John Easter, Mr. McKendree was awakened to a sense of his lost condition, and thence led to seek and obtain an interest in the atoning blood of Christ. Impelled by an inextinguishable thirst for the salvation of souls, he was led into the "ministry of reconciliation," and in 1788 was received on trial in the Virginia conference. He soon gave evidence of great ardor of mind in the cause of God, and of superior abilities as a preacher of the gospel. In the great agitation which was produced by the conduct of O'Kelly and his partisans, his mind became for a short season greatly perplexed with the controversy which arose out of the

questions which were then mooted, and, fearing that the course taken by the conference might prove injurious to the cause of religion, he declined taking a regular appointment for that year. He was, however, soon convinced of his error, and, at the request of the bishop, was stationed in Norfolk, Va., in 1793. These things led him to a more critical inquiry into those points of controversy then agitated, and the result was a more thorough conviction than ever of the scriptural character of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of his duty to adhere to it with firmness and fidelity, which he did to the end of his life. In 1796 he was appointed to the charge of a district in the Virginia conference, which trust he fulfilled with great fidelity and success for three years, when he was removed to the Baltimore district, over which he presided one year with great dignity and usefulness, laboring with assiduity to spread "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins." At the end of this term he was selected by Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat, who were going on their tour to the western country, to take charge of the district which then comprehended the whole of the western conference. Here he had to travel about fifteen hundred miles every three months, in order to pass around and through his district. He entered upon this new field of labor with that enlightened zeal which had heretofore distinguished him, and was the happy and honored instrument of extending the Redeemer’s kingdom far into these new settlements, in some parts of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. While here, the camp-meetings commenced, before described, which were instrumental in promoting the extensive revivals of religion with which those parts of the country were so highly favored. Into this work he entered with all his soul, traveling and preaching through the settlements, and was everywhere hailed as a messenger of God. Here he was instrumental, in connection with those associated with him in this good work, in laying the foundation of that living temple which has been erected in that country.

It was from this field of labor that Mr. McKendree came to the General Conference in 1808. And such was the confidence inspired in his wisdom and integrity, in his zeal and prudence in promoting the cause of God, and such a halo of glory seemed to surround his character, that the finger of Providence appeared to point to him as the most suitable person to fill the office of a superintendent.

Though personally unknown to most of the younger members of the conference, yet a sermon which he delivered in the Light Street church on the Sabbath morning previously to the day of his election, had such an effect on the minds of all present, that they seemed to say, with one accord, "This is the man of our choice, whom God hath appointed to rule over us." He was accordingly elected and consecrated as before related; and his subsequent life and conduct prove that the choice fell upon the right man, though his administration was often subjected to the severest test and most critical scrutiny. At this conference, Ezekiel Cooper resigned his station as editor and general book steward, and John Wilson and Daniel Hitt, the former having served four years as the assistant of Mr. Cooper, were elected to fill the station. A rule also passed the conference prohibiting any one to serve in this office more than eight years successively. The following regulation was adopted in respect to the election and consecration of local preachers to the office of deacons: --

"The bishops have obtained liberty, by the suffrages of the conference, to ordain local preachers to the office of deacons, provided their characters pass in examination, and obtain the approbation of the yearly conference, with a testimony from the quarterly meeting of their respective circuits, after proper examination, signed by the president and countersigned by the secretary." The following

rules respecting raising supplies were adopted: --

Every annual conference has full liberty to adopt and recommend such plans and rules as to them may appear necessary, the more effectually to raise supplies for the respective allowances. "If the respective allowances are not raised, as provided for, the connection shall not be accountable for the deficiency, as in case of debt." The section respecting the trial and expulsion of members for a delinquency in the payment of debts, and other disputes, was so amended as to allow a legal process when it is judged the case is such as to require it. In the question respecting permitting "strangers" at the meeting of the class and society, the word "strangers" was exchanged for the words, "those who are not of our society," so as to read, "How often shall we permit those who are not of our society to meet in class or society?"

After these transactions, together with a few verbal alterations in some sections of the Discipline, which do not much affect the sense, on the 26th day of the month the conference adjourned, never more to meet under the same circumstances, as hereafter the conference was to be composed of delegates chosen by the respective annual conferences. In conformity to the resolution of the conference in relation to Dr. Coke, the following was inserted in the minutes: --

Dr. Coke, at the request of the British Conference, and by consent of our General Conference, resides in Europe. He is not to exercise the office of superintendent among us in the United States, until he be recalled by the General Conference, or by all the annual conferences respectively." From this period, therefore, Dr. Coke resided in Europe, until he commenced the missionary voyage to Asia, in which he fell a martyr to his work, in the midst of the Indian ocean, where he was entombed beneath its coral sands, until the last trumpet shall bid his "sleeping dust" awake to everlasting life and glory.

ENDNOTES 1 Memoirs Protestant Episcopal Church, page 343.

2 This and the former letter to the General Conference, are among the documents of said conference, preserved in the handwriting of Dr. Coke himself, italicized as herein printed.

3 The proper signatures are wanting in the copies whence the above letters are taken.

4 I do not find on the journal of the conference any record of the names of those for whom the others voted, but I believe they were divided between Ezekiel Cooper and Jesse Lee, the former having 8 votes in his favor.

02.04.08. Vol 2, Book 4, Chapter 08

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book IV Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 8 From the close of the General Conference of 1808, to the commencement of the General Conference of 1812

1808

There were no additional conferences created this year, the whole of the work in the United States and Territories, as well as in Upper and Lower Canada, being comprehended in the seven already existing.

It appears that both preachers and people were generally satisfied with what had been done by the last General Conference, and the experience of thirty years has abundantly tested the wisdom of the plan of securing an equal representation from the sever annual conferences, acting, when together, under the limitations which that conference saw fit to impose. The preachers, therefore, went to their several stations with hearts burning with love to their fellowmen, and a determination to devote themselves entirely to their peculiar work. And though but few new circuits were added this year, yet the work of God gradually increased and spread among the people, both in the old and new countries.

Bishop Asbury felt himself greatly relieved from the burden of responsibility resting upon him as the sole superintendent, by the active and diligent manner in which the newly elected and consecrated bishop entered upon the labors of his office: -- "The burden," he remarks, "is now borne by two pair of shoulders instead of one -- the care is cast upon two hearts and heads." He, however, by no means remitted any of his labors, but with the same characteristic ardor and diligence, we find him moving through the general work, giving tone to the spirit of reformation which was now pervading different portions of the country, particularly through the agency of camp-meetings. Hence we find him this year, in company with Bishop McKendree, after passing through some of the older settlements of Pennsylvania, crossing the mountains and descending into the valley of the Mississippi and notwithstanding the growing infirmities of body under which he often groaned, he visited several of their camp-meetings, and preached to the people, exhorting them to steadfastness in the faith.

While here he had an opportunity of manifesting the tender sensibilities of his soul over the grave of one of his departed friends. Passing by the grave, he says: --

"It was as much as I could do to forbear weeping I mused over her speaking grave. How sweetly eloquent! Ah! the world knows little of my sorrows -- little knows how dear to me are my many friends, and how deeply I feel their loss. But they all die in the Lord, and this shall comfort me." His colleague, Bishop McKendree, also entered upon his work with equal diligence, making the entire

circuit of the continent from year to year. One reason assigned by Bishop Asbury why it became him to visit, as nearly as practicable, every part of the work was, that the preachers and people ought to know their bishop, and that he ought to know them, so as to be able to sympathize with them in their wants and sufferings, to understand their true state, as well as to set an example to all which they might safely and profitably imitate. Hence, while in the western country, he says, "I feel for the people of this territory; but we must suffer with them if we expect to feel for them as we ought; and here are the disadvantages of a local episcopacy, because it cannot be interested for its charge as it should be, because it sees not, suffers not with, and therefore feels not for the people." And therefore for the first year of Bishop McKendree's episcopal labors, his father in the gospel led him around from one part of the work to another, introduced him to the conferences, and made him acquainted, as far as possible, with the people of his charge. And what a charge! To travel from Georgia to Maine, from thence through Vermont and along the lakes unto the western states, following the waters of the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Tennessee and the Cumberland rivers, ascending the hills and crossing the intervening valleys, lodging sometimes in log huts, and not infrequently in the woods, attending the conferences, preaching almost every day, receiving visitors, writing letters, and hearing the grievances of discontented individuals! This was labor! and labor, too, actually performed by those who were at that time honored with presiding over the Methodist Episcopal Church. And does the reader wish to hear how such travels and labors were performed? Let Bishop Asbury answer. Speaking of his departure from a camp-meeting which he and Bishop McKendree had attended in Tennessee, he says: --

"The right way to improve a short day is to stop only to feed the horses; and let the riders, meanwhile, take a bite of what they may have been provident enough to put into their pockets." As they thus moved around from one annual conference to another, Bishop Asbury could direct the attention of his colleague to the fields which had been sown by those who had already cultivated the ground.

Take another extract from his journal for this year, as an instance of the mode in which they traveled, and of the feelings which were inspired under these things, and the prospects before them. They were now in the state of Georgia, having crossed the mountains from Tennessee and arrived among the older settlements. While here he says: --

"My flesh sinks under labor. We are riding in a poor thirty dollar chaise, in partnership, two bishops of us, but it must be confessed that it tallies well with the weight of our purses. What bishops! Well -- but we have great news, and we have great times, and each western, southern, and the Virginia conference will have one thousand souls truly converted to God. Is not this an equivalent for a light purse? And are we not well paid for starving and toil? Yes, glory to God!"

This, indeed, was the reward for which he looked, for it may surprise some readers to know that the salary of these bishops amounted to the enormous sum of eighty dollars a year, besides their traveling expenses. Yet this is the fact, and from this pittance they had to supply themselves with clothes and traveling apparatus. Hence he refers in the above extract, to the "weight of their purses."

While, however, they were, in some places, called upon to suffer these privations, yet, in other places, they knew "How to abound, having all things" needful for temporal comfort, surrounded by the kindest friends, and comforted by their unaffected greetings of friendship. Under these

circumstances, they poured out their hearts in grateful acknowledgments to God for his goodness in raising them up friends to comfort them and administer to their wants, at the same time expressing a fear lest those abundant marks of favor should make them forget their dependence on God, or neglect him as the "Giver of every good and perfect gift." But whether in want or abounding in plenty, they went on their way, rejoicing it all the good things which the Lord was doing for the people, and contributing by their preaching and example to invite all their brethren to diligence and perseverance in their respective spheres of labor. This was an efficient general superintendence, worthy of the name, and answering the end of its institution.

Among other places, the new settlements in some portions of the state of Ohio were this year visited with outpourings of the Divine Spirit. We have already noticed the influence which the camp-meetings exerted on the inhabitants of that country, and that their continuance, freed from the wild irregularities which had rendered them suspicious in some places, was a means of diffusing the spirit of reformation and of sound piety through the settlements. Along the banks of Paint Greek and the Great Miami, the work flourished greatly during this and several subsequent years, so that, as before stated, in the mouth of September, 1807, an annual conference was held in Chillicothe, and another in 1809. This year was distinguished by a very considerable revival of religion in the Mad river country. Among others who were made partakers of divine grace, was a Mr. Kenton, who was one of the first adventurers into the wilderness of Kentucky and Ohio, and had been a companion of the celebrated Boone, the hardy pioneer into Kentucky. Kenton, after living for some time near Maysville in Kentucky, finally settled on the banks of Mad river. He had often displayed the most intrepid courage in contending with the savages of the wilderness, in conquering and slaying the wild beasts of the forest, and enduring all those hardships which are incident to the life of a rover through the western woods and prairies. And though once or twice taken a prisoner by the savages, yet such was his vigilance and fearlessness, that he escaped from their grasp, and survived all the perils of a hunter’s life. Yet this haughty lord of the forest fell before the "sword of the spirit which is the word of God." He who had fled from the face of civilization, and more than once moved his residence to avoid coming in contact with his white neighbors who were settling around him, was at length caught in the Gospel net, and brought a willing captive to the Lord Jesus Christ.

About this time, a camp-meeting was held in his immediate neighborhood. Attracted by the fame of their character, and wishing to gratify a laudable curiosity, Kenton mingled with the crowd who attended the meeting, and listened with attention to the ambassadors of Christ. Light broke in upon his understanding, and conviction penetrated his conscience. He who had boldly grappled with the wild beasts of the forest, and fearlessly contended with ferocious Indians, was now seen to tremble and weep under the power of Gospel truth. After laboring some time in silence under the pressure of that guilt which he now felt preying upon his spirits, he asked and obtained an interview with the preacher, the Rev. Mr. Sale, to whom he unbosomed himself in the following strain: --

"Sir, I wish to open my mind to you freely, but must enjoin the most profound secrecy. I have been a wretched sinner; but the Lord has spared my life. I have been in so many battles, encountered so many dangers, so many times taken prisoner by the Indians -- have run the gauntlet -- have been taken into the woods by the Indians, stripped, and tied fast on the back of a wild colt, stretched and lashed fast with my hands under its flanks, my heels under its breast, and then let

loose to the mercy of the wild animal, till some of my limbs were broken; and I at last miraculously escaped. I have been wounded so often, and encountered various other difficulties; but after all have been firm to my purpose and unshaken in my resolutions and determinations. And now, sir, by the help of God, I am determined to get religion and serve the Lord. Do you think sir, I will ever give it up?"

After an interchange of some thoughts in reference to this momentous subject, and enjoining secrecy upon Mr. Sale, they returned to the encampment. That night the general -- for such was his title -- was in great agony of mind, and was earnestly engaged in seeking for redemption in the blood of Christ. The next morning he was heard proclaiming aloud himself, what he had the night before so solemnly requested to be kept a profound secret. He was declaring what God had done for his soul, and many praised God on his account.

Such a change, on such a man, could not but have a most powerful and salutary influence on the minds of others, especially as his subsequent life gave irrefutable evidence of the reality of the work. This is given as one specimen among hundreds which might he selected, in proof of the good effects of these meetings. In the southwestern part of the country a new circuit was formed along the banks of the Tombigbee river, by the labors of Matthew P. Sturdevant. This being a new and thinly settled country, the preacher was subjected to those difficulties and hardships which were inseparable from the mode of life adopted by the Methodist itinerants of those days. He succeeded, however, in forming a circuit, so that in 1810 to we find, on the minutes of conference for Tombigbee, eighty six members -- seventy-one whites, and fifteen colored. In New England the work of God had slowly progressed in several places, and this year Smithfield and Palmyra circuits were added to those heretofore formed. The latter was in the Kennebeck district, much of which embraced the newly settled countries in the province of Maine. Through the labors of such men as the Rev. Messrs. Elijah Hedding, Joshua Soule, Thomas Branch, John Broadhead, Elijah R. Sabin, and Oliver Beale, who were this year the presiding elders in the New England conference, Methodism was gradually, and in some places powerfully, advancing, both in the older and in some of the new settlements in the New England states. While Thomas Branch was leading forward the young men under his care in the regions of Vermont, where Methodism now numbered about one thousand six hundred members, Elijah Hedding (now bishop) was equally indefatigable in exploring the settlements and villages among the hills and valleys of New Hampshire; and the province of Maine was blessed with the labors of Joshua Soule (now bishop) and Oliver Beale, whose example in the work committed to their care, stimulated the preachers on their respective districts to activity and diligence in their respective spheres of labor. But among those whose early labors that were devoted to the salvation of the people in New England, we must not forget to mention the name of Rev. George Pickering. As early as 1795 we find him stationed in Hartford, Connecticut; and, after filling the stations of New London, Lynn, and Boston, he was appointed a presiding elder in 1797, which office he filled for several terms, with the needful intervening years in stations, until age and infirmities obliged him to intermit his more extensive labors for those better suited to his declining years. When Mr. Pickering entered this field, in 1793, there was but one district, which was then in charge of Jesse Lee, including eighteen circuits, twenty-six preachers, and two thousand two hundred and sixty members. At the time of which we are now speaking, there were six districts, fifty-four circuits, seventy-five preachers, and eight thousand eight hundred and twenty-five church members. Mr. Pickering, therefore, may be said, in some

sense, to have grown up with the Methodist Episcopal Church in New England, as he very soon followed Mr. Lee, and has ever since shared in its weal or woe, during all the vicissitudes through which it has passed in that part of our work; and he still lives to labor and rejoice with his brethren. And though the above number may appear small in comparison with most of the other conferences, yet it must be remembered that Methodism in that country had to contend with an opposition of a peculiar character, arising from the modes of thinking and habits of the people on religious subjects, and also that other churches were, in many instances, as much benefited by the labors of the Methodist ministry as were the Methodists themselves. Here, as well as in some other places, many who were awakened and converted to God by our ministry, were received into other communions, and a spirit of reformation, by this means, was diffused among the various evangelical denominations. These things are mentioned not by way of complaint against others, but merely as matters of fact, for we rejoice in all that the Lord our God has done, or may do, by whatever instrumentality he may see fit to work.

While these things were going forward in the more exterior parts of the field of labor, God was not unmindful of the people in the cities and villages in the other states. In the city of New York, the work of reformation continued with encouraging prosperity, and many were made partakers of the "grace of life." In the city of Philadelphia also, there was an outpouring of the Spirit upon the congregations, and quite a number was added to the church. Through the agency of camp-meetings many parts of the country were blessed, particularly on the eastern shore of Maryland, where hundreds of sinners were happily converted to God; and his people were made to rejoice abundantly in beholding these manifest displays of the mercy and love of God toward their fellow-men, as well as in their own enjoyment of the reviving influences of the Holy Spirit. A remarkable work of God commenced this year in the penitentiary of Richmond, in Virginia, under the faithful labors of the Rev. Stith Mead, who undertook to carry the consolations of religion to those unhappy people. By preaching to them himself, and procuring the help of other ministers, and by circulating among them small religious books, their minds were led to consider their ways, a godly sorrow for sin was awakened in their hearts, and they were directed to look by faith to Jesus Christ for pardon and salvation. The result of this good work was, that in the course of a few months about thirty of these prisoners were formed into a society, furnishing satisfactory evidence that they had "passed from death unto life."

Twenty-nine preachers were located this year, seven were returned supernumerary, seven superannuated, one had been expelled, and two, John Richards1 and Dyer Burg, had withdrawn. George Dougharty Bennet Kendrick, Henry Willis, and Richard Swaim had died. The obituary notices of preachers now began to be considerably lengthened in the published minutes, and as all can have recourse to these for information respect mg their character, labors, and deaths, I must, to make room for other matters more essentially connected with the history of the Church, continue to omit, or modify these, as the nature of the case may seem to require. Of George Dougharty we have already spoken in the account of the work in Charleston, S. C. It is stated that his character stood exceedingly high in his conference, both as a preacher and a presiding elder, furnishing the most indubitable evidence of his readiness and qualification to fill with dignity and usefulness any department of the work to which he might be called. After filling the stations allotted him in the church with great fidelity, and discharging the duties of his office as long as he was able to move, he manifested his courage in the cause of God, by bringing forward a resolution in the

last conference he attended, in 1807, declaring "that if any preacher should desert his station through fear, in time of sickness or danger, the conference should never employ that man again."

It is said that he sustained this resolution, however rigid it may appear, with such force and energy of argument, that he carried his cause, and thus, like a general who dies in the arms of victory, he triumphed in this last public act of his life over all opposition. His last sufferings were indescribably severe; but he bore them with that meek submission to the divine will by which he had ever been distinguished during his active life; and on the 23d day of March, 1807, he took his departure from a world of labor and suffering, to a land of rest and joy, after having devoted the last nine years of his life to the services of the sanctuary. His abilities as a preacher were of a high order, and they were guided in their exercise by that wisdom and prudence, and attended by that "unction from the holy One," which made them subservient to the advancement of the cause and interests of Jesus Christ. Whenever he spoke in the name of God, he most evidently spoke of what he knew and felt, and not merely from a speculative knowledge of the truths of God. And hence his word was in "power, and in much assurance, and in the Holy Ghost," the hearts of God’s people vibrating to the truths he uttered, while sinners were made to feel that they stood in the presence of a man commissioned of "God to show unto them the way of salvation." The life of such a man is an expressive comment upon the gospel he preaches, and his death a powerful attestation to its truth and excellence. He indeed, while struggling in the arms of death, and in full view of eternity, said with holy triumph, "The goodness and love of God to me are great and marvelous, as I go down the declivity of death." And so unclouded was his understanding and tranquil his spirit in the hour of his dissolution, that his true greatness was never before so fully appreciated by his friends.

Henry Willis was also a "burning and a shining light." He was naturally of a strong mind, and this he diligently improved by an assiduous application to reading and observation. After he became so debilitated that he was not able to devote himself exclusively to the traveling ministry, considering that his call to this work was from God, he did not dare desist from doing all he could, while he so applied himself to temporal business as not to be dependent on the church for a support. Systematic in all his movements, zealous in whatever he undertook to do, and uniform in his obedience to the commands of God, he accomplished much in a short time, and with comparatively slender means. In the various relations he sustained, whether as a son, a husband, a father, or a minister of Jesus Christ, he exemplified the duties originating from them, thus giving evidence that real religion has its appropriate duties, and that all could be discharged without interfering one with another.

He commenced his ministry in 1779, and from that time forth filled some of the most important stations in the Church, in the states of South and North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and in the new countries west of the Allegheny mountains; and he continued his exertions in the cause of God until 1795, when, being worn down with labor, he received a supernumerary relation, and was stationed in the city of Baltimore. This relation he held from this time until the day of his death, laboring, as before said, with his own hands, that he "might be chargeable to none," for the support of himself and family. He was everywhere received as a messenger of God, and was long remembered by those who sat under his ministry, with most affectionate veneration, as having been an instrument of lasting benefit to their souls. The record of his death, which states that he died with a triumphant faith in Jesus Christ, calls him a "great man of God," an appellation which shows the high estimation in which he was held by those best

capable of appreciating his worth.

He died early in the year 1808, in the full hope of "immortality and eternal life," leaving behind him, as the most valuable legacy which a father can bequeath to his children or a minister to the church, a "good name" -- the remembrance of which "is as precious ointment poured forth." Of Bennet Kendrick excellent things are said, as well as of Richard Swaim. They were both faithful and successful in their ministry, and died the peaceful death of the righteous. The following account of Captain Thomas Webb, which should have appeared under date of 1796, was inadvertently omitted until those pages were printed off.2 But as he was one of the two first Methodist preachers who came to America, he deserves a respectful notice among the worthies of that chivalrous age of Methodism when the sword of the Lord and of Wesley was so successfully wielded in conquering souls to Jesus Christ.

It has indeed been affirmed by some, that Capt. Webb was the founder of Methodism in New York but this, I am confident, is a mistake, as I took much pains to ascertain the facts in relation to the society in this city, and received them from the lips of persons who had a personal knowledge and perfect recollection of all the circumstances as they are related in the second chapter of the first volume of this work.

Nevertheless, Capt. Webb contributed much by his prayers, preaching, and example, to build up the cause of God, to increase the number, and to strengthen the hearts and hands of the society in the city of New York.

He was a soldier of the British army, and was with Gen. Wolfe at the conquest of Quebec in 1758, and during the engagement on the plains of Abraham, under the walls of the city, he received a wound in his arm and lost his right eye, on account of which he ever after wore a bandage over that part of his head, as may be seen by an inspection of the likeness which accompanies this volume [not included with this electronic edition -- DVM]. At this time, the fear of God was not before his eyes; but on his return to England, in the year 1764, he was brought to see himself a sinner through the preaching of Mr. Wesley in the city of Bristol. He then became acquainted with an evangelical minister of the establishment, and through him with the Methodists, with whom he soon after united himself, and found the "pearl of great price."

Having his heart fired with love to God and his fellow-men, he began to entreat them to "flee the wrath to come," and to believe in Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls. In his first appearance in public as a preacher, which was in the city of Bath, in England, he dwelt chiefly on his own experience of divine things; but the people who heard him were edified and refreshed under his public exercises, which greatly encouraged him to persevere in this labor of love. Not long after this, in the year 1765 or 1766, he was appointed barrack-master of Albany, in the colony of New York. Here he set up family prayer in his own house, which some of his neighbors frequently attended, to whom he gave a word of exhortation and advice. The blessing of God attending these incipient efforts to do good, he was induced to extend his labors, and He began holding meetings among his fellow-soldiers and others who wished to attend.

After the arrival of Mr. Embury and his associates in New York, Capt. Webb, hearing of their having begun to hold meetings, paid them a visit. His first appearance among them was in the public assembly, and as he wore the uniform of a British captain, the little society were fearful at

first, that he had come to "spy out their liberties in Christ " but, as already related in the account given of the rise of this society, when they saw him kneel in prayer and devoutly participate with them in their acts of devotion, their fears were exchanged for joy, and they hailed "him as a brother beloved." He was therefore soon invited to preach, which he did with great energy and acceptance. His appearance in the pulpit in the costume of a military officer, with his sword either lying by his side or swinging in its scabbard, was a novelty that attracted much attention and excited no little surprise among the citizens who attended the meetings. His preaching, however, was in demonstration and power, and he generally related his own experience as an evidence of the truth of his doctrine respecting experimental religion. But his experience being very deep, as he had a severe struggle while passing from death to life, and also obtained an unclouded witness of his acceptance in the Beloved, it is stated by those who heard him in those days, that he always took care to guard weak believers against "casting away their confidence," because they could not realize the same bright testimony of their justification by faith in Christ with which he had been so highly favored.

He did not, however, confine his labors to New York and Albany. The records of those days represent him as visiting Philadelphia and Long island, where he preached with success, the Lord setting his seal to the words of his servant. He was, indeed, mighty in the Scriptures, and very pointed in his appeals to the consciences of unconverted sinners; and the result proved that the Spirit of God accompanied his energetic labors, to the awakening and conversion of souls.

How long he remained in America I cannot tell; but in 1772 we find from a letter of Mr. Wesley, that he was in Dublin in Ireland, and Mr. Wesley says of him, "he is a man of fire, and the power of God constantly accompanies his word." In 1773 Mr. Wesley speaks of his preaching at the Foundry in London, and says, "I admire the wisdom of God in still raising up various preachers, according to the various tastes of men. The captain is all life and fire; therefore, although he is not deep or regular, yet many, who would not hear a better preacher, flock together to hear him. And many are convinced under his preaching; some justified; a few built up in love." Ten years after this he speaks of Capt. Webb, having "lately kindled a flame here," (in the neighborhood of Bath,) "and it is not yet gone out. Several persons were still rejoicing in God. I found his preaching in the street of Winchester had been blessed greatly. Many were more or less convinced of sin, and several had found peace with God. I never saw the house before so crowded with serious and attentive hearers." In 1785 he bears a similar testimony to his usefulness, in kindling up the fire of devotion among the people. From these testimonies it appears that Capt. Webb retained his piety and zeal in the cause of God, although Charles Wesley, whose charity was sometimes a little cramped by his high notions of Church order, said, in a letter to Joseph Benson, that the captain was "an inexperienced, honest, zealous, loving enthusiast." His enthusiasm was that of a warm-hearted, "zealous, honest, and loving" servant of God, whose powers were devoted to the highest interests of mankind, -- although we may allow that he lacked that extensive knowledge which is acquired only by a laborious application to study. His death is said to have been sudden. Having a presentiment of his approaching dissolution, a few days before his death he expressed his wishes to a friend respecting the place and manner of his internment, adding, -- "I should prefer a triumphant death but I may be taken away suddenly. However, I know I am happy in the Lord, and shall be with him, and that is sufficient." A little after 10 o’clock, on the 20th of December, 1796, after taking his supper and praying with his family, he went to his bed in apparent good health; but

shortly his breathing became difficult; he arose and sat at the foot of the bed; but while Mrs. Webb was standing by him, he fell back on the bed, and before any other person could be called, he sunk into the arms of death without any apparent pain, aged 72 years.

It is matter of gratitude to God that Capt. Webb, as well as Mr. Embury, " held fast his confidence steadfast unto the end," and therefore "received the full reward" of his labors. Mr. Embury, after laboring successfully in the cause of Christ in New York, removed to Ashgrove, where he ended his days in the service of his God, and where he lies entombed, mingling his ashes with his relatives who have followed him to the grave, waiting for the "final doom," when the trump of God shall awaken him to life and immortality. Capt. Webb, after "sowing the good seed of the kingdom" in various places in this country, returned to Europe, and spent the remainder of us days in "kindling the fire" of divine love in the hearts of God's people, in warning sinners of their impending danger, and pointing penitent mourners to the "Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." While therefore the one shall arise at the voice of the Son of God" from his "dusty bed" in America, and receive the plaudits of those of her sons and daughters who were brought to God by his ministry, the other shall come forth in obedience to the same mandate from his resting-place in England, and hail each other blessed amid the shouts of the redeemed, while all, whether white or black, whether from the eastern or western continent, shall unitedly, and with one voice, ascribe the GLORY OF THEIR SALVATION To GOD AND HIS LAMB FOR EVER. In the meanwhile, were the happy spirits of these individuals, so obscure in their life time, and by some considered as merely "honest and loving enthusiasts," permitted to look down on this American continent, and behold the thousands which have been "taken out of the horrible pit and miry clay," and had "their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb," since they commenced their humble efforts in the city of New York, would not their souls exult in praises to God and the Lamb for having redeemed them from the earth, and placed them among the princes of his people!

Captain Webb was no doubt somewhat eccentric in his movements, limited in his knowledge, and of moderate talents as a preacher of the gospel; but, from the testimony of Mr. Wesley and others who knew him well, his soul was fired with an ardent zeal for God, and was drawn out with an unquenchable thirst for the salvation of his fellow-men, and the building up of the Redeemer's kingdom. As such, God honored him with his blessing -- and as such we honor his memory, and record this feeble tribute of respect to him, as one of the first Wesleyan preachers who published the gospel on these American shores.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 121,687; Last Year: 114,727; Increase: 6,890 -- Colored This Year: 30,308; Last Year: 29,863; Increase: 445 -- Total This Year: 151,995; Last Year: 144,590 -- Increase: 7,405 -- Preachers This Year: 540; Last Year: 516; Increase: 24.

1809 The same number of conferences was held this year as last, and they were attended by the two bishops in the usual manner.

Several new circuits were added within the bounds of the Western conference, by which the work in that country was considerably enlarged. And, in addition to the sketches which have already been given of the commencement and progress of Methodism in Ohio, may be added the following, taken chiefly from the narrative of the Rev. Henry Smith, who was among the first who carried the gospel into some portions of the country bordering upon the Ohio, and lying between the Big and Little Miami rivers, and the Sciota river.

It seems that as early as 1799 Mr. Smith visited the settlements along the banks of the Miami river, including the Miami and Sciota counties, and being assisted by Mr. Hunt, formed a six weeks' circuit, which they traveled with no small difficulty. He found the country thinly inhabited, but among those who had settled there, were a number who had been Methodists in the countries whence they came, some retaining their piety, and others in a backslidden state. On the Scioto Bush creek, and at the mouth of the Scioto river, he found several Methodist families, among the latter of whom was a local preacher by the name of William Jackson. Here he formed a class.

Over this country, along the banks of the Miamis and their tributary streams, he traveled, often exposed to hardships and privations which few could well endure, but was abundantly compensated by a consciousness of the divine approbation, and by witnessing the blessing of God on his labors. Many sinners were brought to the knowledge of the truth by his agency, who afterward brought forth the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God. From this time, as we have already seen, the work continued to spread in various directions, until the time of which we now speak, when Miami was the district of a presiding elder, with six circuits, employing thirteen preachers, including the presiding elder; and in 1810 there were four thousand seven hundred and eighty-four members in the Church.

Though we had no Missionary Society at that time, nor consequently any funds for the support of those who went into the new settlements, yet Bishop Asbury was in the habit, as he passed through the more wealthy portions of the work, of soliciting donations from benevolent individuals for the purpose of sustaining those who might volunteer their services to "break up new ground," as it was then not unaptly called. And this year we find Robert Cloud attached as a missionary to the Muskingum district, James H. Mellard to the Seleuda district, to labor between the Ashley and Savannah rivers, and James E. Glenn to the Camden district, to occupy the country between Santee and Cooper rivers. By this means, the gospel was sent to these destitute settlements, "without money and without price." William Case was also sent as a missionary to Detroit in the Michigan territory; and an attempt was made to introduce the gospel at the Three rivers in Lower Canada, a place about midway between Montreal and Quebec. A new circuit was formed this year in the bounds of the western conference, called Cold Water, Upper Louisiana, in the fork of the Mississippi, by the labors of John Crane, a young man of precocious genius, and remarkable for the early exhibitions of talent and piety, and those powers of pulpit oratory which attract the attention of the multitude. In this new country he had a full opportunity for the exercise of all his energies in contending with hardship; in combating the errors and prejudices of the people, and in striving to establish societies in the pure doctrines of Christ. He succeeded so far as to return the next year seventy-five members of the Church as the fruits of his ministry. He was reappointed in 1810 to the same field of labor, with the Missouri circuit added to Cold Water, which made his rides long, and the more difficult, for want of roads and bridges, as he was frequently obliged to swim his horse over the Missouri river in passing from one appointment to another -- a practice by no means uncommon in those days, when the forests were falling beneath the strokes of the woodsman's axe, and the traveler was wending his way by Indian tracks, or merely guided by marked trees. In addition to this enlargement of the field of labor in the exterior settlements, prosperity attended the efforts of God's servants in various portions of the work, in the older countries, and in several of the principal cities. The brethren in Boston had suffered much inconvenience on account of the smallness of their house of worship. To remedy this

inconvenience, they had commenced a larger house in Bloomfield lane, some two or three years before; but as the members of the society were comparatively poor, they found themselves embarrassed with a heavy debt, which they were unable to pay. To relieve them from this pressure, the General Conference of 1808 had authorized a general subscription to be taken among the more wealthy societies, by which they were enabled to pay off a portion of their debt, and thus to accommodate the people who wished to attend the Methodist ministry. This gave a new impulse to the cause in that city, and it has steadily progressed from that time with more encouraging success than heretofore. The camp-meetings continued to be held more generally than ever, and were owned of God to the awakening and conversion of sinners, and tended much to quicken the people of God in their own souls, and to stimulate them to more vigorous exertions for the salvation of others. And as this history may be read by some who have never attended these meetings, it may not be out of place to give a description of the manner in which they are attended.

We have already seen that they were introduced casually, or it may be more proper to say, providentially, in the western country, at a sacramental occasion, when such a number of people attended that no house could be found large enough to accommodate them. The good effects resulting from these meetings soon led to a regular method of holding them in different parts of the country by previous appointment and preparation. For this purpose, a grove is generally selected, in the neighborhood of good water, and, if possible, in such a place that the people may go by water, in sloops or steam-boats. The under brush is cleared away, seats of boards or plank and a stand for the preachers are prepared in convenient order. On the ground thus prepared tents are erected, from twenty to two hundred in number, of different sizes and material, some of cloth and some of boards, but more generally of the former. These temporary shelters are of various sizes, some for single families, and some sufficiently large to hold from twenty to fifty, and perhaps a hundred individuals, and others, for the accommodation of such as choose it, are for boarding-tents. On the day appointed, the people are seen assembling from various directions, some in carriages or wagons from the country, and a multitude of others from the cities and villages along the water course; in sloops or steamboats, with their bedding, cooking utensils and provisions; for the meeting generally continues four or five days, and in some instances eight or nine days. These all repair to their places, and, if not already done for them, erect their tents, and prepare for the solemn exercises of the meeting. The tents are generally arranged in a circular form in front of the stand, and in those held in the neighborhood of the city of New York, with which I am best acquainted, the rows of tents are from three to six deep, and arranged on several streets, numbered and labeled, so that they may be distinguished one from another, and passed between. The fires for cooking are in general behind the tents, so that the people may not be discommoded with the smoke, &c.

Lamps are prepared, and suspended on the trunks of the trees, and on the preachers' stand, in sufficient number to illuminate the entire encampment, and each tent must have a light burning in it through the night, and the utmost pains are taken to see that no disorderly conduct be allowed on the ground by either night or day. The rules and orders of the meeting are generally as follows, varying so as to suit different circumstances: --

1. he times of preaching are at 10 o'clock, A. M., and 3 and 7 o'clock, P. M., notice of which is given by the sound of a trumpet or horn at the preachers' stand.

2. The intermediate time between preaching is occupied in prayer meetings, singing, and exhortation.

3. In time of worship persons are prohibited from walking to and fro, talking, smoking, or otherwise disturbing the solemnities of the meeting.

4. All are required, except on the last night of the meeting; to be in their tents at to 10 o'clock, P. M., and to arise at 5, A. M.

5. At 6 o'clock, A M., they are required to take their breakfast, before which family prayer is attended in each tent occupied by a family.

6. In time of preaching all are required to attend, except one to take care of the tent.

7. That these rules may be observed, they are published from the stand, and a committee appointed to enforce them.

8. A watch is generally appointed to superintend the encampment at night, to keep order, to see that no strangers are on the ground, and to detect any disorderly conduct.

9. In some places there are large tents provided, at the expense of the society to which they belong, for the purpose of holding prayer meetings, more particularly in the evening, or in rainy weather.

10. In the city of New York the entire arrangement and preparation of the meeting, providing tents, putting them up and taking them down, is under the superintendence of a committee appointed for that purpose by the presiding elder of the district, who also procure the steamboat to take the people to and from the meeting; and each person who chooses to go pays a certain amount, commonly about one dollar, for passage, use of tent, fuel, straw, &c. This is a general description of a camp-meeting. The number attending varies from five hundred to ten thousand -- and, as we have before seen, when they were first introduced in the west, to twenty thousand in proportion to the paucity or density of the population. That good has resulted from these meetings must be evident to every impartial person who has either attended them or witnessed their effects -- although it must be admitted that some accidental evils have flowed from them. But these have originated chiefly from the attendance of persons who have gone for other purposes than to worship God. Though most of the state legislatures have passed laws to protect the free exercise of religious meetings, and some to protect camp-meetings in particular, yet there are those in the community who, actuated by mercenary motives, will go and set up hucksters' shops, sell strong liquors and other things, and then invite the thoughtless rabble to convene for convivial purposes, to the annoyance of the peaceable worshipers of God. These have often created disturbance; and they always, when arranged along the road leading to the encampment, present a spectacle to the sober mind of a disgusting character. But they who provide those things and partake of them, are alone responsible for the evils which they create. Neither camp-meetings nor those who attend them for religious purposes are accountable for the disorderly conduct of those who, in defiance of law, of religion, and decency, violate the order of the meeting, and bring on themselves the disgrace of being disturbers of the peace. For such conduct the friends of camp-meetings are no more responsible than the builders of churches and those who peaceably worship God in them, are accountable for any disturbance which a wicked rabble may make within, or for the conduct of

a riotous mob without these sacred temples. Were all who come within the encampment, or who go to the meeting, to observe the order prescribed, there need be no more disorder than there should be in a house of worship.

It has been objected that professors of religion themselves often violate the rules of religious order by unseemly gesticulations and boisterous exclamations. It may, indeed, be so -- and we no more justify these things than we do the same exceptionable conduct in other places -- but there is nothing in the time, the place, or the object of coming together, which need excite these censurable manifestations, more than in any other place of worship. "Let all things be done decently and in order" at camp-meetings, and they shall still be rendered a blessing, as they have heretofore been, to the souls of the people. There is greater danger at present arising from their degenerating into seasons of idle recreation, that of their being abused by ranting fanaticism. In the neighborhood of large cities, where the meetings are easy of access by steamboats, which ply constantly to and from the encampment, there is an alluring temptation for the idle and the gay, as well as for the luke-warm professors of religion, to go to the meetings as mere matters of amusement, and thus to make the nominal service of God a pretext to gratify a roving and inquisitive disposition. Whenever these and similar evils shall threaten to counterbalance the good, the friends of pure religion will either apply the corrective or abandon camp-meetings as a nuisance or as a means susceptible of an incurable abuse. But while they are kept under the control of a sober judgment, and attended from a pure desire to advance the cause of Christ, they will be patronized by the pious as one of the prudential means of effecting the salvation of men.

I know not that I can furnish the reader with a juster idea of a well conducted camp-meeting, than by inserting the following account of one held at Cowharbor, Long Island, in the state of New York, August 11, 1818. It was written indeed under the impulse of those vivid sensations which were produced by a participation in the solemn exercises of the occasion, and by a glow of fervent feeling which may have betrayed the writer into a warmth of expression which none but those similarly situated know how to interpret and appreciate. If this, however, be a fault, it should be considered a pardonable one, as it arises principally from a strong and lively feeling of devotion which the writer felt at the time; and yet, I humbly trust, it was written under the dictates of a cool and reflecting judgment, chastened and hallowed by a grateful recollection of the goodness of God. The following is the account alluded to: --

"An unusual number of people were assembled on Tuesday, when the exercises began under the most favorable auspices. The word of the Lord which was delivered, was received by the people with apparent eagerness and delight. Great peace and harmony prevailed; and the prayers of God’s people were fervent and incessant. In the evening there were some conversions.

There were between forty and fifty sloops in the harbor; and it was judged that there were from six to eight thousand people on the encampment; and, what was most desirable, great order and solemnity prevailed.

According to the order of the meeting, the people this night retired to rest at ten o’clock. The next morning opened a delightful prospect to a contemplative mind. The rising sun in the east, darting his lucid beams through the grove, which was now rendered vocal by the voice of morning prayer in the several tents, announced the superintending care, and proclaimed the majesty of him who maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good. The gentle zephyrs softly whispering through

the foliage of the beautiful grove, now consecrated to God, was an expressive emblem of that divine Spirit which so sweetly filled the soul and tranquilized all the passions of the human heart. Not a turbulent passion was permitted to interrupt the sacred peace and divine harmony which the heavenly Dove had imparted to God's beloved people. The exercises of this day were solemn, impressive, and divinely animating. The falling tear from many eyes witnessed the inward anguish which was produced in the hearts of sinners by the word of eternal truth. Whose trembling sinners, groaning under the weight of their sins, were encircled by God's people, and lifted to his throne in the arms of faith and prayer. Some were disburdened of their load; and their shouts of praise testified that Jesus had become their Friend.

"The departure of the sun under the western horizon indicated the time to have arrived for the intelligent creation to lose themselves once more in 'Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep.'

But, while some obeyed the impulse of nature, and suffered the soft slumbers of the evening shades to lock up their external senses, others, animated by the love of God, and attracted by the sympathetic groans of wounded sinners whose piercing cries ascended to heaven, committing themselves to the protection of God, assembled in groups, and united their petitions and intercessions to almighty God in behalf of themselves and their mourning fellow-creatures. Neither did they labor in vain; for some of these mourning penitents entered into the liberties of the gospel. About midnight I was attracted by the shouts of an intimate friend, who had been sometime overwhelmed upon the stand with the power of God. In company with some of the young disciples of Christ, I drew near, while he proclaimed the wonders of redeeming love. I at first looked on with the criticizing eye of cool philosophy, determined not to be carried away with passionate exclamations. Bracing myself as much as possible, I was resolved my passions should not get the ascendancy over my judgment. But, in spite of all my philosophy, my prejudice, and my resistance, my heart suddenly melted like wax before the fire, and my nerves seemed in a moment relaxed. These devout exercises were finally interrupted by a shower of rain; but the showers of grace descended so plentifully that sleep could not be persuaded to visit many of our eyes. So we sang 'With thee all night I mean to stay, And wrestle till the break of day.' The next day was remarkable on account of the presence of "Him who dwelt in the bush." The sermons were pointed, lively, and solemn. The prayers were ardent, faithful, and persevering. The singing melodious, and calculated to elevate the mind to the third heaven. The shouts of redeeming love were solemnly delightful; and the cries of penitent sinners deep and piercing. Notwithstanding the almost incessant labors of the last twenty-four hours, when night came on many seemed determined not to intermit their religious exercises. Their souls being knit together by divine love, they persevered in their prayers and exhortations; some heavy-laden sinners, delivered from their sins, were enabled to praise God for his pardoning mercy.

Friday was the day appointed to close our meeting. It had been unusually solemn, and profitable to many, very many souls; and the hour of separation was anticipated with reluctance. The exercises of this day were attended with an uncommon manifestation of the power and presence of God. The mournful cries of penitent sinners were many and strong; and the professors of religion were ardently engaged in praying for them; and not a few were groaning for full redemption in the blood of the Lamb. While engaged in this exercise, some of the preachers were baptized afresh with the holy Ghost and fire; and their cup ran over with love to God and to the souls of men.

"After the meeting was closed, circumstances rendered it expedient for the people from New York, and some others, to remain on the ground another night. This news was received by most of the people with delightful sensations. Indeed, the place had become a sanctified Bethel to our souls.

"At 6 o'clock, P. M., the people were summoned to the stand for preaching. The preacher who was to address them, after singing and prayer, read the following text: -- 'God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.' Not being able to proceed, a preacher standing near one of the tents, perceiving his situation, went on the stand, took the text which had been read, and made some observations upon it, which were attended with divine authority, and with the unction of the Holy One. Many fell to the ground under the mighty power of God, while the shouts of the redeemed seemed to rend the heavens, and to be carried on the waves of the undulating air to the distant hills, and in their rolling melody proclaimed the praises of Him who sits upon the throne and of the Lamb. This was one of the most awfully solemn scenes my eyes ever beheld. Such a sense of the ineffable Majesty rested upon my soul, that I was lost in astonishment, wonder, and profound adoration. Human language cannot express the solemn, the delighted, the deep and joyful sensation which pervaded my soul. Nor me alone. It was a general shower of divine love. It seemed as if the windows of heaven were opened, and such a blessing poured out that there was scarcely room to contain it. The glory of the God-man shone with divine luster all around, and filled every believing heart. Singing, prayer, and exhortation were continued more or less until 3 o'clock next morning, the hour appointed to prepare to leave the consecrated ground. Many were the subjects of converting grace; and great was the joy of the happy Christians.

About 8 o'clock, A. M., Saturday, those of us from the city embarked in the steamboat "Connecticut," [commanded by] Captain Bunker, whose polite attention deserves our warmest thanks. It seemed like leaving the place of the divine Shekinah, and going into the world again -- but still the presence of our God rested upon us.

"I trust the fruits of this camp-meeting will be extensively witnessed. Not only sinners were awakened and converted, but very many believers were quickened, and the work of grace was deepened in their heart's; and some who had been languid in their spiritual enjoyments formed resolutions to be entirely devoted to God. May they never violate their solemn vow, nor suffer their serious impressions to be effaced. Let no vain amusement, no trifling company, nor any worldly concern divert your attention, ye young professors of religion, or ever efface from your minds those solemn impressions of God, and of his goodness, which you have received.

"The writer of this imperfect sketch feels as if he should praise God in eternity for this camp-meeting. What a sacred fire has been kindled at this holy altar. May many waters never extinguish it. It is not a transient blaze or a sudden ecstasy. No; my soul bows with submission to my God, and thankfully acknowledges the continuance of his loving kindness. The bare recollection of that solemn pause -- when Jesus spoke -- with a voice more melodious than all the harps of the muses -- fills my soul with solemn delight.

"Sometimes when I have indulged in the cool speculations which worldly prudence would suggest, so many objections have been raised in my mind against camp meetings, that I have been ready to proclaim war against them; but these objections have uniformly been obviated. By witnessing the beneficial effects of the meetings while attending them. My theories have all been torn in

pieces while testing them by actual experiment -- but never more effectually than by the last. This is more convincing than all the arguments in the world. What I experience I know; and hundreds of others, equally competent to decide, would, were they called upon, bear a similar testimony. O ye happy souls that were bathed in the love of God at this meeting! May you ever evince to the world by the uniformity of your Christian conduct, that such meetings are highly useful.

"An indescribable pleasure is even now felt from reviewing those moments of solemn delight, while our kindred spirits, attracted by the love of Jesus Christ, joyfully adored the God of our salvation. May such seasons of refreshing often return. O! the depth of redeeming love!

'Angel minds are lost to ponder Dying love's mysterious cause.'

"One thing which contributed greatly to the promotion of the cause of God at this meeting was the order and regularity which prevailed. There was little or no disturbance from spectators; and but little confusion in any of the religious exercises. Sometimes, indeed, the ardor of the mind, when powerfully operated upon by the Spirit of God, would lead it to break over the bounds of moderation; but in general the exercises were conducted with much decorum and regularity. Hymns were selected which were solemn and impressive; and the prayers and exhortations, as well as the preaching, all indicated that the mind was under the direction of grace.

"How many were brought to the experience of redeeming grace, cannot be correctly ascertained; but the number must have been very considerable. New York, as well as other places, will, trust, be greatly profited by means of this meeting. A general quickening is already witnessed, and some sinners have been awakened and converted since our return. May their numbers be continually multiplied." That the reader may see that similar effects attended camp-meetings in other parts of the country, I give the following, which was written by the Rev. William Beauchamp -- since gone to his reward -- who was remarkable for the coolness and soundness of his judgment, and freedom from every thing bordering upon enthusiasm. This account is as follows: --

"A camp-meeting was lately held, about thirty-five miles from this place, in a southwesterly direction, under the superintendence of brother John Stewart, the traveling Methodist preacher having the charge of Mount Carmel circuit. It commenced on the afternoon of Friday, the 20th day of last month, and closed on the morning of the following Monday. The congregation was not large, usually about three hundred souls; on the Sabbath perhaps six hundred. This meeting was remarkable for seriousness, solemnity, and good order. Such a sense of the divine presence appeared to rest on the assembly, that those who might have been disposed to be rude were restrained, and awed into respectful deportment. It was obvious that the ministers who addressed the people were clothed, both in their sermons and exhortations, with power from on high; for their word fell upon the congregation in the demonstration of the Holy Ghost. Divine illumination seemed, at times, to flash like lightning upon the assembly, and produced the most powerful effects. The mild splendor of heavenly joy shone in the faces of the people of God; while the darkness of condemnation and the horrors of guilt hung, like the shadows of death, upon the countenances of the ungodly. The merciful power of God was manifested in a particular manner in the conviction of sinners and the justification of mourning penitents while believers were not destitute of its divine influence, by which they drank deeper into the spirit of holiness.

"In the intervals of preaching, it was common to see a number of mourning souls prostrate near the stand, for whom supplications were offered unto a throne of grace. And they were not offered in vain. About twenty professed to be reconciled to God through faith in the blood of Christ. Several joined our Church. On Monday morning, under the last sermon preached at this meeting, we seemed to be in the very suburbs of heaven. The subject was, 'The inheritance of the saints in light.' The preacher, apparently swallowed up in the subject, bore the congregation away with him into the celestial regions, in the contemplation of the glories of the world to come. It was a very precious time to the religious part of the assembly; and the irreligious part, I doubt not, received some very strong and deep impressions of the eternal world. I know not that there was one dry eye in the whole assembly.

"On the Friday following another camp-meeting commenced in the neighborhood of this place. In respect to numbers it was similar to the former one; nor was it less remarkable in regard to seriousness, solemnity, and good order. In this respect I can truly say, that, though I have been at many camp-meetings, I never saw such as these before. We had no guard; and at the last meeting no rules, for the regulations of it, were published. We needed none. God was our defense and salvation. He encamped with us in his gracious and glorious presence, to awe the wicked into respect for his worship, and to shed upon the children of faith the richest effusions of divine grace.

"The latter of these meetings was different, in some respects, from the former. The preaching did not appear to be attended with so much power, and such displays of divine illumination. But the prayer-meetings in the intervals were more abundantly distinguished by the communication of justifying grace, in answer to the supplications of the people of God. About forty-five professed to receive the forgiveness of sins, and twenty-three offered themselves to become members of our Church.

"One circumstance is worthy of particular notice, A Scotch family, remarkable for good breeding and propriety of deportment, attended this meeting. They were eight in number; the elderly gentleman, his lady, three daughters, two sons, and a nephew. The female head of this family was not destitute of the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. This treasure she had obtained in her native country. But the rest were not in possession of this pearl of great price. However, in the course of a few hours, at this meeting, they were all power fully convicted, and, I have reason to believe, truly converted to God.

"This is a singular circumstance. Such a family as this was is rarely found; and the conversion of seven persons out of eight belonging to it, under such circumstances, within the compass of a few hours, is, perhaps, almost without a parallel. It will not escape the notice of the pious mind, accustomed to reflect n the workings of nature and the operations of grace, that the self-righteousness of such persons generally presents the strongest barrier against faith. But the power of divine grace broke down this barrier in them; then they sunk, in humble confidence, on the merits of the Redeemer.

"The presiding elder who attended this meeting, informed me that many camp-meetings had been held in his district, and that they had been generally blessed with great displays of divine power. Since then I have received information through another medium, that a camp-meeting held not far from Shawneetown in this state was favored with an abundant outpouring of the grace of God. More than thirty persons professed to obtain the remission of their sins.

"The writer of this communication has remarked for a number of years past, that a large proportion of those who are brought to the possession of the life and power of godliness, are found among the rising generation. This was particularly so at the meetings above mentioned. Does this not strongly portend that God is about to effect some great and glorious purpose in favor of his church, by the generation which is to succeed us? Thanks be unto his name for what he has done. But he has more in store for our world than we can readily conceive. May his goodness be manifested in such gracious displays of Almighty Power as will bear down all opposition. Amen.

"Mount Carmel, Illinois, Aug. 15, 1821."

These accounts, together with the preceding historical sketches and remarks, will enable the dispassionate reader to form an estimate of the character of camp-meetings, and of their effects upon the church and society generally. No less than fifty-three preachers located this year; eight were returned superannuated, and one was expelled.

Three preachers, namely, Edmund Henly, Leonard Cassell, and Henry Martin, had ended their days in peace. They were all comparatively young in the ministry, but had discharged its duties with fidelity, giving evidence of fervent piety and improving talents.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 131,154; Last Year: 121,687; Increase: 9,467 -- Colored This Year: 31,884; Last Year: 30,308; Increase: 1,576 -- Total This Year: 163,038; Last Year: 151,995 -- Increase: 11,043 -- Preachers This Year: 597; Last Year: 540; Increase: 57.

1810 This year the Genesee Conference was formed, making eight in all. Such had been the increase of preachers and people in western New York and in the Canadas, particularly in the upper province, that the bishops thought it advisable, in the exercise of the authority invested in them by the last General Conference, to set off a new conference for the accommodation of that part of the work. This year the Western conference was held in Cincinnati, Ohio where Methodism had grown up with the growth of the place, and strengthened with its strength. And is this considered the "queen city" of the west, perhaps it may not be amiss to give some account of its location and first settlements, as well as the progress of the gospel among its inhabitants.

Cincinnati was first laid out as a town in 1789, when the copulation could not have been more that between two and three hundred, for in 1800 it was only seven hundred and fifty -- whereas now it numbers more than forty thousand.

It is beautifully located on the western bank of the Ohio river, in Hamilton county, on a plain, the hills behind it rising like a spacious amphitheater, giving a commanding view of the city, the Ohio river, and the surrounding country, variegated as it is by hill and dale. By whom and at what time Methodism was introduced into Cincinnati, I have not been able to learn, but presume it must have been about the year 1800, under the labors of Henry Smith, as he formed what was called the Miami circuit about that time, to which Cincinnati was attached until the year 1809. In the year 1805 Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat visited the town, and put up at the house of William Lives. At that time there were few in the place who feared God, and but a small society of Methodists. Bishop Asbury, however, gave them a discourse on "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found."3 In 1807 bishop Asbury was again in Cincinnati, and remarks that the brethren had succeeded in building a stone house of worship, forty feet by thirty, which, it is presumed, was the first built in that city. Here he preached on Sabbath, Sept. 26, to a crowded house, and then met the society

and ordained W. McNeachan and William Whitiker to the office of deacon.4

Before his arrival in Cincinnati the bishop had attended a camp-meeting at Hockhocking, and a conference at Chillicothie, of which he speaks as having a salutary effect upon the minds of the people. "Notwithstanding," he remarks, opposition from more than one quarter, our last camp-meeting was successful; the fruit is immediate; and where it is not it will yet be seen." In 1808, after traversing various parts of the country, attending camp and other meetings, we find him, in company with Henry Boehm, who preached to the people of Cincinnati in the German language, again in this place, where he preached on Sabbath morning to the people with much satisfaction, and again at 3 o'clock in the house of brother Lakin. He says in this connection, "I have advised the society here to invite the Western yearly conference to hold their session in Cincinnati." The next year, in company with Bishop McKendree, we find him once more in Cincinnati, when he remarks: -- "The house here is enlarged, and the society increased." Until the year 1809, the Miami circuit included Cincinnati, and contained one thousand two hundred and eighty church members. But at the conference for 1809 the name of the circuit was changed to Cincinnati, and Miami became the name of a new district. This year, 1810, there are returned on the minutes of conference for Cincinnati, eight hundred and twenty-one church members, under the charge of two preachers; but whether it included any other places than the city, I cannot tell. This year, as before said, in accordance with the advice of bishop Asbury, the Western conference was held in Cincinnati. He arrived there on Thursday, the 27th of September, and on Sunday preached morning and evening, met the society on Monday, and "I felt," says he, "an intimate communion with God, and great love to the people, saints and poor sinners;" and on Tuesday he "bid farewell to our loving and affectionate friends in Cincinnati," with a view to make an excursion into the country before the assembling of the conference, that no time might be lost in idleness or unnecessary recreation. The conference commenced on Thursday, Nov. 1, and it "progressed on well" during its sessions, and they found an increase of four thousand for the past year. Bishop McKendree was present at this time, and on Sabbath preached to the conference and the people who assembled.

Last year a new district was formed in the Western conference, called Indiana, and this year two new circuits, Cape Girrideau and Vincennes, were added to it, making in all six circuits, under the charge of Samuel Parker; whose labors in that part of the country were rendered a blessing to many. By this it will be seen that the work was still spreading in the west, keeping pace with the growing population of the country, so that the ordinances of religion might be established simultaneously with their civil and domestic institutions.

Vincennes is the oldest town in the state, and was settled, as its name indicates, by the French, as early as 1690, at the time when that enterprising nation, to secure their American colonies from the depredations of other nations, were stretching a line of military posts and small settlements from Quebec up the St. Lawrence, and along the shores of the lakes and rivers to New Orleans. But though thus early settled, its increase for a considerable time was exceedingly slow, exhibiting none of those marks of industry and rapid population which have more recently distinguished the rising counties and states of the west. It is stated indeed, that in 1800 the entire territory of Indiana contained only five thousand six hundred and forty one inhabitants; but in 1820, four years after it was admitted into the federal Union, it contained a population of one hundred and forty-seven thousand one hundred and seventy-eight; and in 1810, the time of which we are speaking, there

were twenty-four thousand five hundred and twenty inhabitants -- quite a sufficient number to demand the exertions, of a gospel ministry. The district over which Mr. Parker presided, included a large tract of country comprehending portions of Illinois, Missouri, and Indiana; and the two circuits above named, namely, Cape Girrideau and Vincennes, were traveled, the first by Jesse Walker and the second by William Winans. They must have cultivated this rugged field with considerable success, for we find in the minutes of conference for the next year, for Cape Girrideau, one hundred, and Vincennes one hundred and twenty-five members, and for the entire district, one thousand and nine.

We have mentioned that there was a great work of God in the city of New York in the two preceding years; and perhaps from the time the Society was formed in this city, there had not been so general a revival as this. In the two years the increase of members amounted to not less than five hundred and ninety-seven, making in all, including white and colored, two thousand; and a spirit of zeal seemed to characterize the entire body of Methodists in the city, so much so that in the year 1810 two new churches were built, one in Allen, and the other in Bedford Street, known then as Greenwich village and the good work still progressed with encouraging success in most of the churches. In other portions of the church there were prosperous times, and generally great peace and harmony prevailed through all our borders.

Locations, however, still continued to weaken the ministry, by depriving the Church of some of its more experienced ministers; for not less than fifty-one desisted from traveling this year in the several annual conferences; twelve were returned supernumerary; ten superannuated, and two, Reuben Hubbard and Clement Hickman, withdrew, the first of whom joined the Protestant Episcopal Church, and, it is to be hoped, retained his usefulness. Moses Black, Joseph Everett, and John Wilson had died in the Lord.

Joseph Everett was, in many respects, a remarkable man. He was a native of Queen Anns county, Maryland, and was born June 17th, 1732. Educated in the English Church, he was early biased in favor of her forms and ceremonies, though, as to the fundamental doctrines of the Church, or experimental and practical religion, he was entirely indifferent, and so remained until the year 1763, when he was awakened and converted by the preaching of the "New Lights," the followers of Mr. Whitefield. He accordingly became a member of the Presbyterian Church; but having only few associates like-minded with himself, and drinking in the doctrine of unconditional predestination, he gradually lost his religious enjoyment, and finally became more vicious than ever. In this state he continued for many years, during which time he volunteered as a soldier in the militia of Maryland in defense of his country’s rights in the time of the Revolutionary war; but in 1778, under the preaching of Mr. Asbury, he was aroused from his spiritual lethargy, and induced to seek again for redemption in the blood of Christ. After many hard struggles with unbelief and a rebellious heart, he was restored to the favor of God, and by consulting the able and luminous writings of Wesley and Fletcher, he was led to a new view of the plan of redemption and the way of salvation by faith in Christ, and more especially to, an enlarged and more comprehensive view of the divine goodness toward our fallen world. The result was, that he joined the Methodist Church, and in 1780 entered the traveling ministry.

Here was a new field for the exercise of his talents -- and it soon appeared that he was indeed anointed of God to preach the gospel. He was eminently distinguished for the boldness, the

pointedness, plainness, and energy with which he rebuked sin, and warned the sinner of his danger. And these searching appeals to the consciences of his hearers, made them tremble under the fearful apprehension of the wrath of God, and their high responsibility to him for their conduct. Great was the success which attended his faithful admonitions; for wherever he went he was like a flame of fire darting conviction into the understanding and conscience of the ungodly, and at the same time pointing the penitent to the blood of the Lamb for pardon and salvation. In this work he continued with untiring industry and indefatigable perseverance until, worn down with labor and toil, in 1804, he received a superannuated relation, but still bearing his pointed testimony for God as long as he was able to speak in his name, and manifesting to the last an unshaken confidence in God, and an unabated attachment to the doctrines and discipline of the church of his choice.

He died at Dr. White's, in Dorchester county, Maryland, it being the house whence he set out on his itinerant life, and on the circuit which he first traveled, on the 16th day of October, 1809, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, and thirtieth of his ministry. His last end "was peace and assurance for ever." At about twelve o'clock of the night on which he died, he awoke from a gentle slumber, and immediately broke forth in praise, shouting glory to God. In this exercise he continued for about twenty five minutes, to the joy and astonishment of his friends, and then ceased to speak and breathe at once. The name of Joseph Everett deserves to be enrolled among the early veterans of the cross of Christ. He joined the ranks of Methodism in its infancy in this country, and contributed largely to fix it on that broad basis on which it has since stood unshaken amid the storms and billows with which it had to contend.

It would, indeed, seem that the Methodist preachers of those days were so imbued with the spirit of their Master, and so entirely absorbed in their peculiar work, that they thought of little else but saving souls from death. And so deeply penetrated were they with the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," that their rebukes to the sinner were sometimes tremendously awful, and fearfully pointed and solemn. This was peculiarly so with Mr. Everett. His whole soul seemed to be thrown into his subject whenever he preached, and his warnings and entreaties were enough to melt the stoutest heart, while he wound the cord of truth so tightly around the sinner's conscience as to make him writhe and tremble under the wounds it inflicted. But he left him not here to welter in his blood. He presented to his troubled mind the "sin-atoning Victim," as a "balm for every wound," and as now ready, to "appoint to him the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." The rich promises of the gospel to penitent sinners dropped from his lips like honey descending from the honey-comb, and when believingly received by such, he rejoiced over them as a father rejoices over a returning prodigal, while with the happy believer he participated in all the fullness of perfect love.

John Wilson was an Englishman by birth, born in Poulten, Feb. B, 1763, where he received, through the assiduity of his pious parents, a religious education, and in his youth became a member of the Methodist Society. In 1793 he emigrated to this country. After settling in the city of New York in 1795, he received a new baptism of the Holy Spirit, and was led on, step by step, from a class-leader to a local preacher, until in 1797 he entered the traveling ministry, for which he was eminently fitted both by gifts and grace. He traveled and preached in a number of circuits with much usefulness, greatly beloved by the people, until 1803, when his ministerial labors were much restricted by an attack of asthma, from which he never fully recovered. This laid the foundation for his dissolution, on January 28th, 1810, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and thirteenth of his

ministry. In 1804 he was elected by the General Conference an assistant book agent, and in 1808 to the charge of the establishment. These offices he filled with great fidelity, for which he was well qualified by his previous habits and the course of his education. He was, indeed, a ready writer, an excellent accountant, of industrious and punctual habits, as well as of a sound judgment and courteous demeanor. He was also well skilled in his own, and in the Latin and Greek languages, and fully understood the various systems of theology with which the world abounds. In the midst, however, of the multifarious concerns of his agency, he never forgot his obligations as a minister of the sanctuary; and if he excelled in any one branch of Christian doctrine more than another, it was in explaining and enforcing sanctification, or holiness of heart and life. This formed the theme of all his discourses, to promote which he made all the other truths of the gospel and religious exercises subservient. And as this trait in the Christian system engaged much of his attention in his pulpit labors, so he was no less distinguished in his more private intercourse by the sweetness of his temper, the cheerfulness of his disposition, and the urbanity of his manners.

Bishop Asbury once said to him, in the examination of characters in the conference, "Brother Wilson, I am afraid you are not as spiritual as you used to be." He replied, with a pleasant smile upon his countenance, and a little pertness of manner, "Indeed sir, if you had heard me preach to the Africans last Sabbath, you would alter your opinion." He then, in most respectful terms, thanked the bishop for the reproof, and promised to endeavor to profit by it.

He was, indeed, an exceedingly pleasant companion buoyant in his spirits, and though apt at illustration by anecdotes, sometimes of a facetious character, he always took care to make them rebuke some folly, correct a foible, or exemplify the spirit of piety and Christian zeal. In the several relations he held to the Church, be maintained the dignity of the minister of Jesus Christ, the humility and meekness of the Christian, and the strict integrity of the sound moralist. Hence those who held intercourse with him were always pleased with their reception, from the gentleness of his deportment, the blandness of his manner, and his scrupulous regard to justice, goodness, and truth, which were manifested in all his conduct. Hence he was far removed from the hauteur [airs, conceit -- DVM] of the spiritual despot as from the effeminacy of the wily sycophant [apple-polisher -- DVM]. He was therefore at once beloved and respected by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance.

He died suddenly. Having prayed with his family in the evening of the 28th of January, he retired to rest, but awoke about five o’clock in the morning and found himself suffocating from the phlegm rising in his throat, which he was unable to discharge, and in a few minutes he ceased to breathe. His previous life declares more emphatically than words could express it, that his end was peace.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 139,836; Last Year: 131,154; Increase: 8,682 -- Colored This Year: 34,724; Last Year: 31,884; Increase: 2,840 -- Total This Year: 174,560; Last Year: 163,038 -- Increase: 11,522 -- Preachers This Year: 636;5 Last Year: 597; Increase: 39.

1811 For several years past our country had been much agitated "with rumors of war," sometimes with France, at other times with Great Britain, and not infrequently both assumed a belligerent attitude toward the people of America. This state of things had an unfavorable bearing upon the minds of religious people, as it led to frequent collisions on political subjects, on which the country was nearly equally divided. In the latter part of this year the note of preparation for hostile movements was sounded through the country, and Great Britain was selected as the chief object

of warlike feeling.

It is not the design of this history to enter into any detail of the causes which led to this state of feeling, nor to discuss or give a judgment on the merits of the questions that were at issue, any further than they had a bearing upon the interests of pure religion. That strong political feeling, more especially of a partisan character, which involves heated discussions and personal recriminations, is unfriendly to the advancement of true and righteousness, must be evident to all acquainted with human passions and the biases arising from long-cherished prejudices. And in a country where freedom of speech and of the press is allowed to all, these discussions often terminate in a settled hostility destructive of that peace and brotherly love which characterize holy and devoted Christians.

Notwithstanding these strong symptoms began to show themselves in the country about this time, attended with their usual concomitants, yet through the persevering efforts of God’s servants the work in which they were engaged was generally prosperous, and many were gathered into the fold of Christ. In the latter part of this year and beginning of 1812, the southwestern part of our country, particularly Missouri and Louisiana, was terribly shaken by earthquakes, by which the minds of the people were much alarmed, and it seemed to give a temporary check to the flood of emigration, which had been setting in that direction with such astonishing rapidity. They soon recovered, however, from the shock, and the streams of emigrants resumed their wonted course, and the march of improvement went gradually on. It led, in the mean time, many to serious reflection, and thus the workings of divine Providence in the physical world were overruled for the good of its inhabitants. While the earth was trembling and quaking beneath their feet, many were induced to call on God for mercy and salvation.

It will have been perceived from the preceding pages of this history, that in the early plantation of Methodism, especially in the new countries, the people were compelled to hold their meetings in private houses, in barns, and often in groves. As, however, the societies increased in number, it became necessary to erect houses of worship. This work, so essential to the prosperity of the cause, at first went on very slow, particularly in the country places, and often some obscure site was selected, remote from the center of population, where an indifferent building was erected, thus sacrificing convenience to a paltry economy. This unwise policy began to be injuriously felt in some places, and means were used to counteract it; but it was with much difficulty that the people could be generally brought to appreciate the importance of attending to this thing with that liberality and energy which its necessity demanded.

It would seem, indeed, that many of the members of our Church in some places had been accustomed to contribute so little for the support of the institutions of Christianity, that they apparently cherished the erroneous idea that they could be sustained almost literally "without money and without price." Hence the tardiness with which they came forward to build houses of worship, and the stinted manner in which they contributed for the support of the ministry and ordinances of religion.

These evils, perhaps unavoidable in some cases, in the circumstances in which they were placed, no doubt prevented a more steady and rapid growth of the societies in many places, and furnished a plausible excuse for the numerous locations we have been compelled to record.

Another defect, and which arose, in some measure, out of the ones just mentioned, was the neglecting to occupy the young and thriving villages which were rising into being by the hand of industry, in the new countries. In these countries the Methodist preachers were the gospel pioneers, and for many years, in various places, the people had no other preachers who "cared for their souls." They were accustomed to go among them in their lonely retreats, preach in their log buts, hold their quarterly meetings in barns or in the woods, and they seemed to have been so long accustomed to this mode of preaching and living, that they almost forgot, in many instances, to provide themselves with better accommodations; and before they were aware of it, other denominations came, took possession of the villages, erected houses of worship, and thus drew the weightier part of population around them. How much has been lost to the Methodist Episcopal Church by this neglect, who can tell? Latterly, however, a remedy has been, in some measure at least, provided, though it has been, in too many instances, after the damage had been sustained, and we have profited more by our losses than by prudent foresight.

Another inconvenience began to he sensibly felt; and that was the want of parsonages for the accommodation of preachers families. It is true that the General Conference of 1800, at the suggestion of Dr. Coke, had passed a resolution, recommending to the circuits to prepare convenient houses, and to have them furnished with heavy furniture. But, excepting some of the larger cities, this recommendation had been little heeded, and hence those preachers who had families were obliged either to locate or submit to the inconvenience of moving their families to circuits without having any place provided for them, or were compelled to purchase or hire a permanent residence for their families, and then go wherever they might be sent, however distant from their residences. These evils began to press heavily upon the connection, and it was plainly seen that, unless removed, must eventually very much impede, if not entirely stop, the wheels of the itinerancy. In the early days of Methodism, as most of the traveling preachers were unmarried, these embarrassments were not so sensibly realized; and in most instances the zeal for God’s house would so entirely "eat up" the cares of this world, that those devoted men God seemed regardless of their fare, "counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus;" for the sake of winning souls to him they were willing to forego, not only the riches and honors of the world, but also all the endearments of domestic life. At this time the case was somewhat altered. Many had families, some of them large and growing. To move these from place to place, without having a house prepared to shelter them, was an inconvenience, and more especially with the scanty allowance provided for their support, to which many thought themselves not called to submit. This, no doubt, was one cause of the numerous locations from one year to another. And though the embarrassments arising from this source are not yet wholly removed, yet the efforts which began to be put forth about this time, and which have been continued with various degrees of success, have supplied a partial remedy, and it is to be hoped that the efforts will not be slackened until every station and circuit shall have its parsonage, suitably furnished and comfortably supplied with the necessaries of life. But with all these disadvantages, many parts of the country were visited with outpourings of the Spirit of God, so that the work steadily advanced both in the Atlantic and in the northern and western states. This year bishop Asbury crossed the St. Lawrence into Upper Canada. After meeting the New England conference, which assembled this year in Barnard, in the state of Vermont, he took his departure on his intended tour into Upper Canada, a place he had long desired to visit. On Wednesday, June 26th, he crossed the Green Mountains, visited Middlebury, and preached in the court house, and afterward set forward a

subscription paper for building a house of worship in that place, fully believing, as he said, that "the Lord would visit Middlebury." He then passed on through Vergennes, Charlotte, and Plattsburgh, in each of which places he stopped and preached, until he arrived, after a fatiguing journey through the woods and swampy roads, at the Indian village of St. Regis, situated at the mouth of the river of that name, which empties into the St. Lawrence river. At this place he was ferried across the St. Lawrence, which is here nearly three miles in width. The first place he stopped at was Evan Roy's in the town of Cornwall, where there was a flourishing Methodist society, one of the oldest in the province. On landing in Canada, he says, "My strong affection for the people of the United States came with strange power upon me when I was crossing the line," and he inquires, with much apparent feeling, "Why should I have such new feelings in Canada?" No doubt that associations were called up by this visit which he little expected to realize in this world. He had left his native land in his youth -- had struggled through the difficulties of the Revolutionary War -- a war which eventuated in the severance of the United States from the land of his birth -- had lived to see these states rising and flourishing, and the Church whose affairs he had been called to superintend, numbering within its bosom six hundred and thirty-six traveling preachers, and 174,560 members -- and now, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and fortieth of his ministry in this country, he found himself once more under the shadow of his paternal government, in a distant province of the empire, among a people who had been raised up by his sons in the gospel, professing the same faith and adopting the same modes of worship with those with whom he first united himself in the mother country. Amid such reflections, how could it be otherwise than that "strange feelings should come over" him? And more especially as he must then have anticipated the near approach of another war between the United States and that government from which he had expatriated himself for the sake of building up His kingdom whose government shall have no end. The bishop passed along up the banks of the St. Lawrence, stopping and preaching in the most considerable places, gathering information from his own observation and the communications of others respecting the state of things in Canada, until he arrived at Kingston, where he preached in a new chapel the people had erected in that place. He says: -- "Our ride has brought us through one of the finest countries I have ever seen. The timber is of a noble size; the cattle are well shaped and well looking; the crops are abundant, on a most fruitful soil. Surely, this is a land that God the Lord hath blessed." And of the people he says: -- "My soul is much united to them." On Monday July 15th, he left Kingston, and crossed the lake in an open boat, in which he says they "had a tremendous passage," to Sacketts Harbor. After his arrival, he remarks: -- "Well, I have been to Canada, and I find it like all other stations in the extremities -- there are difficulties to overcome, and prospects to cheer us. Some of our laborers have not been so faithful and diligent as we could wish." On meeting with his colleague in the episcopacy, He says: -- "My spirit rejoiced on meeting with dear Bishop McKendree" -- and they jointly attended the Conference, which assembled on the 20th of July at Paris, Oneida county, in the state of New York. From this conference the bishops shaped their course through the western parts of New York and Pennsylvania, to Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, and thence through the southern states; preaching to the people and attending the conferences as usual. Speaking of the South Carolina Conference, bishop Asbury remarks: -- "Scarcely have I seen such harmony and love." -- I received letters from the extremities and the center of our vast continent, all pleasing, all encouraging."

During this long and tedious journey, the bishop speaks of suffering much from bodily affliction, sometimes to that degree, from an obstinate inflammation in his foot, that he could scarcely walk, and at other times he was obliged to desist from active labor altogether, not being able either to ride or preach. In these seasons, however, he employed himself in reading, prayer, and meditation, and in answering the numerous letters he was almost daily receiving from the presiding elders and others; for it may be observed that it was one part of the duty of a presiding elder to give information to the bishops, once a year at least, of the state of religion in his district. this, together with other correspondence, imposed no small tax upon the time and labor of the bishop to answer, as he was in the habit of doing, all these letters. But in the midst of all these things, he says: -- "I limped about, sung, talked, and prayed. My consolations exceedingly abound, though my sufferings are great." -- "Dr. Coke says fifteen hundred miles in nine weeks -- I may say sixteen hundred miles in sixty days." Such were episcopal labors in those days!

These extensive travels were less or more the practice of most of the preachers in the new countries, with only this difference, that these latter were performing their regular round of duties in a circuit from two to four hundred miles in circumference, once in four weeks. As late is 1810, according to the testimony of a writer in the Pittsburgh Conference Journal, in the Monongahela district, then under the charge of Rev. Joshua Monroe, there were eleven circuits, comprehending all the country from lake Erie southward, to the head of Tyger’s Valley, and from the summit of the Allegheny mountains to the Ohio river, including a portion of western Virginia, the whole of western Pennsylvania, and a considerable portion of the northeast corner of the state of Ohio. At that time Pittsburgh was in a circuit which embraced Greenburgh, Somerset, and Connellsville, in which there were four hundred and twenty-eight members of the Church. In Pittsburgh itself, in which there are now two large churches, with a membership of about one thousand three hundred, the Methodists assembled at that time in a private room prepared for that purpose, and had only about forty church members, and some of even these were from the adjacent country. In Meadville, (where we now have a college and a stationed preacher,) in Erie, Mercer, and Franklin, all which were then included in Erie circuit, there were no societies. This year, 1811, Erie circuit employed two preachers, James Watts and James Ewen, and the number of church members had increased to five hundred and one, scattered over an extent of country which now includes several presiding elders districts. The Pittsburgh circuit, which was this year under the charge of James H. Hanson, numbered five hundred and twenty-four members, though the society in the city was still small. Within the limits of their two circuits, there is now a large portion of two annual conferences, five entire districts, besides parts of some others, and not less than twenty-two thousand members of the Church. So greatly has the work enlarged in that field which was brought under culture by those men of God. It has since been divided and subdivided into smaller and more compact enclosures, and put under the care of a proportionate number of husbandmen, that it might bring forth fruit more abundantly, and that its fruit may remain.

Forty-five preachers located this year, nineteen were returned supernumerary, fifteen superannuated, and two expelled. Five, namely, Thomas Daughaday, Thomas Budd, William Keith, William Hunt, and Gideon A. Knowlton, ended their labors in peace, leaving behind them many testimonials to their fidelity and success in the "ministry of reconciliation."

One trait in the character of William Keith, mentioned in the notice of his death, is worthy of remembrance and of imitation -- that is, clearness of conception, readiness of utterance, and

comprehensiveness of argument. It has often been remarked that he possessed the happy art of expressing much useful matter in a few well-chosen words." It is added, "The happy, and sometimes astonishing effects of his ministry, demonstrated that he was sent by Jesus Christ to declare unto mankind the awful truths of Heaven, and to beseech sinners to be reconciled to God."

There was indeed a sweetness of manner, a persuasiveness of argument, which accompanied the public administrations of William Keith, that wrought upon the heart of the auditor, attracted his attention, and won his affection, in a manner which he could hardly resist. His intelligent countenance, the melody of his voice, the harmony of his sentences, and above all, the apparent sincerity with which he spoke, commanded the respect and inspired the confidence of all who were not prejudiced against the truth; and even many of these, on hearing him, have been overcome by the charming and persuasive eloquence with which he addressed them. He was, as was most evident, deeply imbued with the spirit of his Master, and this gave an unction and a pungency to all he said. In the early part of his ministry he was employed chiefly in western New York; and for some cause, unknown to the writer, he was induced to leave the Methodist Church and connect himself with another communion. He very soon, however, repented of his error, published a recantation, and was most cordially readmitted into the bosom of the church of his first love. He could hardly ever forgive himself this step, but adverted to it upon his dying bed as a source of grief to his mind. The two last years of his ministry he spent in New York, and the people appreciated his labors highly as a faithful and useful minister of Jesus Christ. Here also he ended his days with a lingering consumption, beloved and respected by all who knew him, leaving a testimony behind him more satisfactory than all the gold of Ophir -- for he departed in the full hope of immortality and eternal life. Of William Hunt, it is said that he professed to enjoy, and exemplified the grace of "perfect love" -- that few excelled him in the branches of learning which he pursued -- that he was thoroughly versed in the sacred Scriptures -- sound in doctrine, and an accurate judge of gospel order and discipline, illustrating in his own life the purity and excellence of that religion which he recommended to others. In addition to his exhibiting the graces of a Christian minister, it is said of Gideon A. Knowlton that he was so remarkably distinguished for his punctuality in attending to his appointments, that it became proverbial among the people in stormy weather, "It is Knowlton’s appointment; he will be there; we must attend." How worthy of imitation! Of Thomas Budd, it is said that he possessed strong natural abilities, had an improved mind, was remarkably frank in his manner, and of the strictest integrity in all his conduct.

Thomas Daughaday was an acceptable and useful preacher, manifesting an ardent thirst for the salvation of souls, and was an example of meekness and patience in his life, and departed full of the hope of immortality.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 148,835; Last Year: 139,836; Increase: 8,999 -- Colored This Year: 35,732; Last Year: 34,724; Increase: 1,008 -- Total This Year: 184,567; Last Year: 174,560 -- Increase: 10,007 -- Preachers This Year: 668; Last Year: 636; Increase: 32.

ENDNOTES

1 John Richards joined the Roman Catholics. When the writer of this history was stationed in Montreal in 1807 -- having been changed by the presiding elder from Niagara to Montreal -- Mr. Richards came there with a special recommendation from Bishop Asbury as a missionary. He was received with cordiality, and preached in our house with acceptance, and gave great satisfaction to

the people. After being there about two weeks, at his request he was introduced to a Catholic priest in Montreal, and afterward visited him nearly every day, without any suspicion being entertained of an intention on his part to leave us. At length, from various conversations had with the writer and several other members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which Mr. Richards pleaded the cause of the Roman Church, suspicions became rife that he was a Catholic, and great anxiety in the little society was felt on his account.

Within a few days after this became public, our doubts were all dissipated by receiving from him a written Protest against the Methodist Societies, as a "continuation of an ancient heresy which had long afflicted the church," declaring that he withdrew all connection with them, but that he should carry with him "into the bosom of the holy church a sincere regard for their welfare, and prayers for their salvation." After passing. Through the preliminary steps, he became, in a very short time, a priest in the Roman Catholic communion, and remains such to the present time. The reasons for this step remain unexplained, as Mr. R. declined giving any other than those contained in his written protest. It may, however, be proper to add, that Mr. R. was born and reared in the Romish Church, and received an education in Georgetown, D. C. Here, while a youth, he was professedly awakened and converted under the Methodist ministry, joined our church, and entered the traveling connection on trial in the Baltimore conference, in the year 1804. Whether it was from an early bias in favor of Roman Catholicism, from which he was never entirely delivered, or from a supposed conviction of the truth of its doctrine and usages, and a belief that he could, by entering that communion, become more extensively useful, are questions which are left to be solved in that day which shall disclose the secrets of all hearts. So far as is known to the writer, Mr. Richard has maintained a reputable standing in the church to which he attached himself.

2 [Transcriber Endnote: This Volume covers the years 1793 to 1816. Captain Webb died in 1796. The sketch of his life found here, properly placed, would be earlier in this very volume. Thus, users of this electronic edition could easily "cut" the Captain Webb text from its present location and "paste" it into the appropriate place in Part-10.tex covering the year 1796.] 3 See his Journal, vol. iii. P. 178.

4 See his Journal, vol. iii. P. 234.

5 This enumeration includes the supernumerary and superannuated preachers; and as they properly belong to the conferences, they will be hereafter included in the number of preachers.

02.05A Vol 2, Book 5A

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs

Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853)

BOOK IV From 1792 to 1812

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02.05A.01. Vol 2, Book 5A, Chapter 01

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book V Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 1 The first Delegated General Conference of 1812

We have traced the progress of Methodism from its origin to the present period. We have seen it beginning in a small class consisting of only five members in the city of New York, and under the auspices of divine providence and grace, growing up to a considerable society, and chiefly by the instrumentality of a local preacher who had little to recommend him to public favor but the sincerity of his zeal, the fervor of his piety, and the influence he derived from his connection with such a man as John Wesley; and thence breaking out, under the labors of Boardman and Pilmoor, and the more energetic exertions of Asbury, into circuits and quarterly meeting conferences; until, in imitation of the practice which had obtained in Europe, a regular conference was convened in Philadelphia under the superintendence of Rankin. As it continued to enlarge its dimensions by means of the labors of these men, their coadjutors, and successors, this conference became divided and subdivided into several others, until it was found expedient to concentrate the councils of the church in one General Conference, composed of all the traveling elders who might be disposed to attend.

As, however, the work continued to expand in every direction until it became co-extensive with the settlements which were spread over this large country, comprehending the cities and villages, the denser population of the other and the sparser settlements of the new states and territories, to prevent a useless expenditure of time, labor, and money, as well as to secure greater harmony in counsel and dispatch of business, it was found necessary to lessen the number who should compose this General Conference, by selecting a specific number from among the elders of each annual conference. To bring all the traveling elders together, scattered as they were among the circuits and stations from Maine to Louisiana, and thence along the waters of the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio, and their tributary streams; the shores of lakes Erie and Ontario and the banks of the St. Lawrence to Montreal and Quebec, would be involving an expense of time and money which neither members the preachers nor people were able to bear, or if able, they could give no reasonable account for such a waste of expenditure. On the other hand, if those in the extreme parts of the work were deterred from attending the General Conference, on account of the difficulties arising from distance or poverty, or from the hazards to the souls of the people by such a long absence from their charge, then the affairs of the Church would be left in the hands of some of the most central of the annual conferences, who might not understand the circumstances and wants of their brethren in the exterior parts of the work. Every consideration, therefore, of justice and expediency dictated the policy of the measure which, in 1808, provided for a delegated General Conference. This conference assembled in the city of New York, on the first day of May, 1812. And as this is the first delegated General Conference, the reader will doubtless be pleased

to have the names of the delegates, which are here given as they stand on the Journal of the conference. They are is follows: -- New York Conference:

William Anson, Nathan Bangs, Truman Bishop, Laban Clark, Seth Crowell, Freeborn Garrettson, Aaron Hunt, Samuel Merwin, Daniel Ostrander, William Phoebus, Eben Smith, Henry Stead.

New England Conference:

Oliver Beale, Elijah Hedding, Asa Kent, George Pickering, Solomon Sias, Joshua Soule, William Stephens, Daniel Webb, Joel Winch.

Genesee Conference:

Elijah Batchelor, James Kelsey, William B. Lacy, Timothy Lee, Anning Owen, William Snow.

Western Conference:

James Axley, Lawner Blackman, John Collins, William Houston, Benjamin Lakin, Samuel Parker, William Pattison, Isaac Quinn, James Quinn, John Sale, Frederick Stier, Thomas Stillwell, David Young, South Carolina Conference:

Daniel Asbury, Samuel Dunwody, James Glenn, Hilliard Judge, William M. Kennedy, Lewis Myers, Lovick Pierce, Joseph Tarpley, Joseph Travis.

Virginia Conference:

John Ballew, James M. Boyd, Philip Bruce, John Buxton, Charles Callaway, Thomas L. Douglass, John Early, Cannnellum H. Hines, William Jean, Richard Lattimore, Jesse Lee.

Baltimore Conference:

Robert Burch, Christopher Frye, Enoch George, Jacob Gruber, Hamilton Jefferson, Nelson Reed, Robert R. Roberts, William Ryland, Asa Shin, Henry Smith, James Smith, Nicholas Snethen, Joseph Toy, Joshua Wells.

Philadelphia Conference:

David Bartine, James Bateman, Thomas Boring, Thomas Burch, Michael Coate, Ezekiel Cooper, John McClaskey, Stephen G. Roszel, Thomas F. Sargent, Asa Smith, Richard Sneath, John Walker, Thomas Ware, George Woolley.

Bishops Asbury and McKendree were present, and the conference was opened by the former, by reading a portion of the Holy Scriptures and prayer; after which the names of the delegates were called by a temporary secretary, and they presented the certificates of their election by the several annual conferences. This being finished, Daniel Hitt, the book agent, not being one of the delegates, was elected secretary. This being a delegated conference, acting under the restrictions imposed upon it by the body by which it was constituted, it was found necessary to frame a set of new rules to guide the members in their deliberations and decisions. A committee was accordingly appointed for the purpose of preparing rules, and a long time was spent in discussing and adopting them, and after they were adopted, being an abridgment of the congressional rules found in Jefferson’s Manual, they were to the conference something like Saul’s armor to David: they did

not like them; and they have long since been laid aside as not only useless but perplexing. Men of plain common sense, acting with a simple desire to accomplish the greatest good by the use of the best means, need but a few plain and simple rules, easily understood, to guide then in their action.

After the adoption of the rules, and the transaction of some other preliminary business, a letter (a copy of which I have not been able to find) from Dr. Coke was read to the conference, expressive of his determination to visit the East Indies on a grand missionary enterprise, and of his unabated attachment to his American brethren1 After this, Bishop McKendree presented the conference with the following address, which was the first time that either of the presidents submitted his views to the conference in writing: -- "To the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, now assembled in the city of New York.

"Dear Brethren: -- My relation to you, and the connection in general, seems, in my opinion, to make it necessary that I should address you in some way, by which you may get possession of some information, perhaps not otherwise to be obtained by many of you.

"It is now four years since, by your appointment, it became my duty jointly to superintend our extensive and very important charge. With anxious solicitude, and good wishes, I have looked forward to this General Conference. The appointed time is come, and the Lord has graciously permitted us to meet according to appointment, for which I hope we are prepared jointly to praise and adore his goodness.

"Upon examination, you will find the work of the Lord is prospering in our hands. Our important charge has greatly increased since the last General Conference: we have had an increase of nearly forty thousand members. At present, we have about one hundred and ninety thousand members, upward of two thousand local, and about even hundred traveling preachers, in our connection, and these widely scattered over seventeen states, besides the Canadas and several of the territorial settlements.

Thus situated, it must be expected, in the present state of things, that the counsel and direction of your united wisdom will be necessary to preserve the harmony and peace of the body, as well as co-operation of the traveling and local ministry, in carrying on the blessed work of reformation which the Lord has been pleased to effect, through our instrumentality. To deserve the confidence of the local ministry and membership, as well as to retain confidence in ourselves, and in each other, is undoubtedly our duty; and if we consider that those who are to confide in us are a collection from all classes and descriptions from all countries of which the nation is composed, promiscuously scattered over this vast continent, men who were originally of different educations, manners, habits, and opinions, we shall see the difficulty as well as the importance of this part of our charge.

"In order to enjoy the comforts of peace and union among us, we must ’love one another;’ but this cannot abide where confidence does not exist and purity of intention, manifested by proper actions, is the very foundation and support of confidence; thus, ’united, we stand;’ each member is a support to the body, and the body supports each member; but if confidence fails, love will grow cold, peace will be broken, and ’divided, we fall.’ It therefore becomes this body, which, by its example, is to move the passions and direct the course of thousands of ministers, and tens of thousands of members, to pay strict attention to the simplicity of gospel manners, and to do every

thing as in the immediate presence of God. If we consider the nature of our business, and the influence of civil governments, and political measures, it will hardly be expected that every individual in so large a body as you form will continually be sufficiently and strictly evangelical in all cases; it is therefore hoped in cases of failure, that the wisdom and firmness of your united prudence as a body will counteract evil effects by a well-ordered and prudent disapprobation and better example. Church and state should never be assimilated.

"Connected as I am with you, and the connection in general, I feel it a part of my duty to submit to your consideration the appointment of the Genesee Conference; and perhaps it may be for the general good, if, in your wisdom you should think proper to take into consideration a division of the work in the western country, and a proper arrangement of the work in general and the magnitude and extent of the work which the Lord has graciously pleased to prosper in our hands, may make it proper for you to inquire if the work is sufficiently within the oversight of the superintendency, and to make such arrangements and provision as your wisdom may approve. I would also suggest the necessity of keeping in view, not only the traveling, but the relation and situation of our local brethren; and to pursue that plan which may render the whole the most useful; and it may also be proper to bring into view any unfinished business (if any) which we had under consideration at our last General Conference. Hitherto, as a body, we have been preserved, by our well-digested system of rules, which are as sinews to the body, and form the bonds of our union. But it is evident, both from Scripture and experience, that men, even good men, may depart from first principles and the best of rules; it may therefore be proper for you to pay some attention to the administration, to know the state both of the traveling and local ministry, as it relates to doctrine, discipline, and practice.

Before I conclude, permit me, my dear brethren, to express a few thoughts concerning the view I have of the relation in which I stand connected with this body. It is only by virtue of a delegated power from the General Conference; that I hold the reins of government. I consider myself bound by virtue of the same authority to exercise discipline in perfect conformity to the rules of the Church, to the best of my ability and judgment. I consider my self justly accountable, not for the system of government, but for my administration, and ought therefore to be ready to answer in General Conference for past conduct, and be willing to receive information and advice, to perfect future operations and I wish my brethren to feel themselves perfectly easy and at liberty.

"I shall take the liberty here to present my grateful acknowledgments for the high degree of confidence which my beloved brethren have placed in me, and especially for the able counsel and seasonable support afforded by many, which has, I believe, with the divine aid, preserved and supported me. Dear brethren, such are the effects of our high responsibility, connected with a consciousness of the insufficiency of my talents for so great a work, that I move with trembling. Your eyes and the eyes of the Lord are upon me for good. We shall rejoice together to see the armies of Israel wisely conducted in all their ranks, carrying the triumphs of the Redeemer’s kingdom to the ends of the earth and the Lord will rejoice to make his ministers a flame of fire. In you I have confidence, and on you I depend for aid, and above all, I trust in divine aid. Influenced by these considerations, and with my situation in full view, I cannot entertain a thought of bearing such awful accountability longer than I am persuaded my services are useful to the Church of God, and feel a confidence of being aided by your counsel and support, which is with you to give in any way or form you judge proper. And while I join with you, my dear brethren, in pure gospel

simplicity, to commit and recommend ourselves and our several charges to the special care of the great head of the Church, I remain, with sentiments of love and confidence, your servant in the gospel of Christ, "William. McKendree.

"New York, May 5th, 1812." This address was referred to appropriate committees, after which Bishop Asbury, addressing himself extemporaneously to Bishop McKendree, and through him to the conference, gave a historical sketch of the rise and progress of Methodism in this country, its present state and prospects, and concluded by urging upon the General Conference the expediency of increasing the number of annual conferences for the convenience of the preachers, and as a measure of economy to the whole Church; and the committees were instructed to take these matters into consideration, in connection with the several portions of Bishop McKendree's address.

After a full interchange of thoughts in reference to adding one more to the number of bishops, as recommended by Bishop McKendree, as it was understood he intended by the question "whether the work is sufficiently within the oversight of the superintendency," the committee reported that they "did not see their way clear to recommend any alteration or additions" which was concurred in by the conference.

Bishop Asbury had, previous to the session of this conference, expressed a desire once more to visit his native land from which he had now been absent about forty-one years; and in his communication to the conference he requested them to give him their advice on the propriety of doing it soon after the adjournment of conference. The committee on the episcopacy, having reported against increasing the number of bishops, say in reference to this subject: "It is our sincere desire and request, that Bishop Asbury would relinquish his thoughts of visiting England, and confine his labors to the American connection so long as God may preserve his life." In this the conference fully concurred, and the bishop cheerfully relinquished his design. In regard to creating the Genesee conference, respecting which some had demurred on account of the illegality of the measure, as they alleged, the conference voted in its favor, and this justified the bishops in what they had done in the premises. In respect to the division of the work in the western country, which was earnestly recommended by both the bishops, the conference consented to divide the Western conference into two, to be called the Ohio and Tennessee conferences; the former to comprehend the Salt river, Kentucky, Miami, and Muskingum districts; the latter, the Holston, Nashville, Cumberland, Wabash, and Illinois districts; and then gave authority to the bishops, in the interval of the General Conference, if they should find it necessary, to establish another conference down the Mississippi, provided that no circuit or district shall be incorporated in such conference, without its consent -- a precaution that marks the jealousy with which the General Conference guarded the rights of annual conferences, against what they considered the encroachments of episcopal prerogative -- and also a disposition, frequently exemplified before, to comprehend as large a territory as possible within the bounds of each annual conference, however inconvenient it might be to preachers and people -- mistaken policy, it is believed, which has been since gradually rectified. The most important act of this General Conference was the making local deacons eligible to the office of elders. This measure elicited a very strong debate, in which the talent of the most able members was brought into requisition, both for and against it. Those who were in favor of the measure, contended that the services of such were needed in the various parts of the work, where the number of traveling elders was few, to administer the

ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to perform the ceremony of marriage and burial of the dead; -- that being recognized by our church as ministers of the gospel, they were also entitled, equally with their traveling brethren, to full powers as elders in the Church of God; -- and as conferring them would add dignity and importance the their character, it would also increase their usefulness, and consequently attach then more strongly to their traveling brethren. To this it was answered that the ordination service implied a covenant transaction, in which the person receiving orders took upon himself the charge of the flock of Christ, which a local elder in our Church could not do, and therefore could not fulfill his covenant obligations, inasmuch as he did not, nor could he as a mere local minister, devote himself exclusively to the work of the ministry; -- that as to the right he had to full orders, we must distinguish between original, unalienable, and acquired rights, between civil, political, and ecclesiastical rights. As to original or natural right, no one pretended that a local preacher had it; -- as to acquired, according to the economy of our Church he could not acquire it, because no such provision had been made as the reward of services, however meritorious, this being reserved for traveling preachers alone, who sacrificed their all of temporal emolument and devoted themselves entirely to the service of the Church; as to civil or political right, he could claim none, as the civil polity of our country did not interfere in religious matters at all; -- and therefore it only remained to inquire whether our local deacons had an ecclesiastical right to the order of elders; and this was the very question at issue, and therefore they could have none until it be given to them by the Church to which they belong. The question then must be decided, it was contended, on the principles of expediency and the probable utility of the measure; and the majority finally decided that the privilege ought to be granted them on this ground -- they might be needed, and might therefore be useful.

Having thus decided in favor of granting them elders' orders, the following regulations were adopted as the conditions on which the bishops were permitted to confer them, which show plainly that this privilege was granted solely on the presumption that in every case where ordinations of this character were allowed, there was an imperious call for the services of such elders, and not because they could claim them as a right originating from their relation to the Church. The regulations were as follows: -- A local deacon shall be eligible to the office of an elder, and on the following regulations and restrictions, viz., he shall have preached four years from the time be was ordained a deacon; and shall obtain a recommendation of two-thirds from the quarterly conference of which he is a member, signed by the president and countersigned by the secretary, certifying his qualifications in doctrine, discipline, talents, and usefulness; and the necessity of the official services of such local elder in the circuit where he resides. He shall, if he cannot be present, send to the annual conference a note certifying his belief in the doctrine and discipline of our Church: the whole being examined and approved by the annual conference, he shall be ordained -- provided that no slaveholder shall be eligible to the office of local elder, in any state or territory where the civil laws will admit emancipation, and suffer the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom." The following item was added to the section inspecting the settlement of disputes which might arise among brethren in the Church: --

"Whenever a complaint is made against any member of our church for the nonpayment of debt: when the accounts are adjusted, and the amount properly ascertained, the preacher having the charge shall call the debtor before a committee of at least three, to say why he does not make payment; and if further time is requested, the committee shall determine whether it ought to be

granted, and what security, or if any, should be given, to secure the payment and in case the debtor should refuse to comply, he shall be expelled: but in such case shall have the privilege of appealing to the quarterly meeting conference, who shall decide on the case, and their decision shall be final. And in case the creditor shall complain that justice is not done him, he shall have the privilege of laying his grievance before the quarterly-meeting conference, who shall decide on the case, and the decision shall be final; and in case the creditor refuse to comply, he shall be expelled." The necessity of publishing a periodical work was strongly urged upon this conference by some of its leading members, and strenuously opposed by others. The subject was referred to the consideration of the committee on the Book Concern, and they finally recommended, and the conference concurred, "That the book agents be directed to resume the publication of the Methodist Magazine, two volumes having been published" (namely, in 1789 and 1790) "to commence publishing the third volume at farthest by January next." And with a view to secure this object, an additional agent was appointed, and Daniel Hitt being, re-elected the principal, and Thomas Ware the assistant agent. The mandate of the conference, however, was never obeyed, and unhappily for the literature and character of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we had no Magazine, nor scarcely any publication of American growth, until 1818, when the Methodist Magazine was recommenced. This is the more to be regretted, because it occasions the dearth of materials for such a history of this period as is most desirable, and which is now most painfully felt. For though some members of the Magazine abound in rich material for history, especially those sketches furnished by Theophilus Arminius and some others, to which I have been much indebted for many facts and graphic descriptions of Methodism in the west, yet these and others of a similar character generally terminate about the year 1812, and we in vain look for anything satisfactory out of the ordinary records of the Church, from that time to about the year 1820. This period, therefore, quite contrary to my expectations when I commenced writing, seems to be the most barren of interesting incidents and those historical details which are essential to render history engaging and edifying, of any period of our Church.

During a number of years, it appears that education of all sorts, as well as writing for the public eye, was laid aside as useless, and we seem to have come to the strange conclusion that we had naught else to do but simply to preach the gospel, and attend to those other duties connected with the pastoral office, in order to assure the blessing of God on our labors; hence the Magazine had been discontinued for more than twenty years, and scarcely anything issued from our press except what was imported from Europe, and much of this, even, was brought before the public through other mediums.2 Here and there a small pamphlet made its appearance, but only to disappear generally before it had time to breathe the breath of life; for it seemed to be taken for granted that American Methodists were doomed to that state of nonage which unfitted them to instruct one another through the medium of the press.

It is true that a few sighed over this state of things in secret, and sometimes vented their feelings to each other, in accents of sorrow and regret, but they almost despaired of obtaining redress. It was this feeling which prompted them to bring this subject before the General Conference in 1812; but though they succeeded in getting a bare majority so far to second their views as to order the resumption of the Methodist Magazine, yet such was the general apathy on this subject, that the agents either refused to obey the order of the conference, or could not obtain sufficient encouragement to justify them in the enterprise; and either alternative proves a lamentable state of

things in regard to literature and science among us at that time.

One consequence resulting from this inertness is reference to periodical literature and other branches of mental improvement, was, that when assailed by our adversaries -- and this was not infrequently the case -- we had no adequate means of defense; and hence the reading public were left to draw their inferences respecting Methodist doctrine and economy from the distorted representations of those who felt it a duty to caricature or present us in a false position. These things were irksome, yet they were unavoidable under the circumstances. From these humiliating facts it became proverbial that the "Methodists were enemies to learning," and it must be confessed that there was too much reason for the taunting remark; and it was not without much labor that the reproach has been, in some measure at least, rolled away from us. The fact is, that the destruction of Cokesbury College, and the failure in attempting to establish district schools and academies, seemed to throw a damper upon the spirits of those who had abetted learning, and to furnish those who were either inimical or indifferent to its interests with arguments against it while the bungling attempts of some, who prematurely sent their ill-digested effusions into the world, disgusted all men of correct taste and wise discernment with their puerile productions. These causes operated conjointly to frustrate all attempts to revive the spirits of those who felt the necessity of furnishing our brethren and friends with that character of literature which the state of the Church and of society generally imperiously demanded.

Add to this, as an apology for the neglect, that many of our preachers were most assiduously engaged in the frontier settlements, preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the poor in log huts, and had therefore neither the time nor the means to devote to literary pursuits; and it seemed to others, that the pecuniary means at command were needed to supply the immediate wants of those who were this engaged in winning souls to Jesus Christ from among the outcasts of men. In this most praiseworthy work they were eminently blessed. But whatever may have been the cause, or how reasonable soever may have been the excuse, for suffering ourselves to be for so long a time destitute of medium of instruction and information, and of mutual edification, such are the facts in the case, and such are their consequences upon this portion of the Church’s history. That a brighter day has dawned upon us in this respect is matter of congratulation among all the friends of the Church, of religion, science, and morals. In 1810 Mr. Lee’s History of the Methodists made its appearance; but it by no means satisfied the friends of the cause, and the General Conference of 1808, to which the manuscript was submitted, had reported adverse to its merits. To secure, therefore, a more perfect history of the Church was the anxious desire of Bishop Asbury and many others. To effect this object the subject had been submitted to the annual conferences, and they had appointed some members of their own body to collect facts and historical incidents for a future history, and to bring or forward them to this General Conference. Some few were presented, and they were referred to a committee to examine and report thereon. On examination it was found that though some of the facts collected were valuable, yet, on the whole, they were considered meager and unsatisfactory. This appears evident from the following remark of the committee: --

"We are of opinion that the letters submitted to us for examination contain some valuable information; and good materials for a history of Methodism, as far as they go; but we think they are not sufficiently full on different points."

After this the committee go on to state their views of the sort of materials which they considered essential to form a complete history, such as accounts of the state of the country and the time when Methodism was introduced; its difficulties and success biographical sketches of eminent preachers and others, &c., &c.; and then they recommend that each annual conference should appoint a committee of three to collect the needful information, directing that the presiding elders and preachers be instructed to aid in this work; and then the New York conference was authorized to engage a historian to digest and arrange the materials thus furnished, and prepare them for the press. In this report the conference fully concurred.

All this was very well. But like many other good schemes which are never executed, merely because left to many hands, without any individual who should be responsible for its execution, this proved an abortion. Nothing effectual was ever done in the premises. Yet the adoption of this report by the General Conference had its use. It no doubt served to direct the attention of individuals to this subject, and to call forth the talents of those brethren who have at different times since written those sketches of Methodism to which the present history is much indebted. The following clause was added to the section on the legal settlement of church property: --

"But each annual conference is authorized to make such modification in the deeds as they may find the different usages and customs of law require in the different states or territories, so as to secure the premises firmly, by deed, and permanently, to the Methodist Episcopal Church, according to the true intent and meaning of the following form of a deed of settlement, any thing in the said form to the contrary notwithstanding." The conference ordered that every "local elder, deacon, and preacher shall have his name recorded on the journal of the quarterly meeting conference of which he is a member."

Hitherto the stewards of the circuits had been appointed by the preacher in charge; but this conference resolved that the nomination of the preacher should be submitted to the quarterly-meeting conference, for its concurrence or rejection, and likewise made the stewards amenable to said conference for their official conduct. A memorial having been presented from the quarterly meeting conference in the city of New York, praying the General Conference to adopt some means to raise a fund for the relief of the members of conference, it was resolved, after considerable discussion,

"That each annual conference shall be authorized to raise, if they think proper, a fund, as in their wisdom they shall see fit, to be considered a fund for the relief of the wives, widows, and children of traveling preachers, and also for the relief of supernumerary and superannuated preachers, and affording supplies for missionary purposes." This is the first action which I have found on the records of the conference especially regarding missions; and the reason is, not because the conference was at any time indifferent to the situation of those portions of the country which were destitute of the gospel, but because the whole system of Methodism had been very justly considered missionary in its character from its beginning; but now so many inconveniences, not to say suffering embarrassments, had been realized from the poverty of the preachers, and also of the people in the new settlements, that the attention of some had become awakened to the importance of affording pecuniary relief, more effectually than it could be in the ordinary way, to those who were thus destitute, and to those who were willing and desirous to supply them with the ordinances of religion. And though this was but an incipient step, it led finally to more important

results, which will be noticed at the proper time. In respect to the fund which the annual conferences were authorized to raise for the relief of worn-out preachers, widows, and children, several of the conferences have availed themselves of it at different times, under such regulations as they deemed expedient, some under the control of conference, and others by forming a society exclusively of such members as chose to become subscribers to the institution. But with all these helps, nothing like an adequate supply has ever been furnished those most needy and deserving members of the Methodist community. Most assuredly the widows and orphans, and those preachers who have worn themselves out in the service of the Church, ought not to be "neglected in the daily ministrations." The conference closed its labors on the 22d day of May, 1812, and sent out the following address as expressive of their feelings and views at this important period of our history: --

"The Address of the General Conference to the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

"Dearly Beloved Brethren: -- When we retrospect the divine goodness toward us as a people, our hearts are animated with sentiments of praise and thanksgiving. We have been favored with repeated manifestations of the power and grace of God. The Redeemer has planted his standard in the midst of us, and given astonishing success to our labors, and annually made accessions of thousands to our number. From the cold provinces of Canada to the sultry regions of Georgia -- from the shores of the Atlantic to the waters of the Mississippi -- in populous cities, improved countries, and dreary deserts, God has extended the triumphs of his grace. Infidelity trembles in the presence of the cross, superstition yields to the mild influence of the gospel, and ignorance vanishes before the auspicious beams of truth. In the revolution of a few years our number has almost amounted to two hundred thousand, exclusive of expulsions, withdrawings, and the many happy souls who have departed in the faith and gone to their reward in heaven. We have mutually participated in our prosperity.

"The blessings you have received from God should humble you to the dust. A recollection of his mercies should inspire you with gratitude and love. All the divine benedictions conferred upon you have been unmerited and free. Undeserved blessings have been strewed in your paths, and distinguished compassion manifested in all your ways. Whilst myriads of your fellow-creatures grope in pagan darkness and Mohammedan delusion, you enjoy the light and truth of the gospel of Christ. In the midst of civil and ecclesiastical convulsions, you have enjoyed repose and tranquillity. You are therefore under peculiar obligations to grace. 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' To Him, therefore, ascribe the glory of your past and present prosperity.

"Frequently in our solemn assemblies we have witnessed the effusions of grace, and joyfully experienced the overwhelming showers of redeeming love. We are bound to you by ties, which death itself cannot dissolve. With you again we renew our covenant, to live and die your servants in Jesus Christ. You will, therefore, we hope, receive from us the word of exhortation.

"The pursuit of internal religion in all its branches, we most ardently insist on. The religion of the Bible does not consist in rites and ceremonies; in subscribing creeds and becoming violent partisans; in the reveries or a heated imagination, nor the paroxysms of agitated passions but in the mind which was in Jesus Christ; in a victory over sin, and a conformity to the will of God; 'in

love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance;' in all the amiable virtues which center in the moral character of God. Without this holiness, we shall never enter into the kingdom of glory. 'Be ye holy, for I am holy,' said the almighty God. And no unclean thing shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, said Jesus Christ. Therefore pursue this holiness with all the ardor of faith and hope. Never give sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids, until you awake with the lovely likeness of Christ.

"Whilst we insist on internal, we do not forget external religion. You are commanded to 'let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven;' to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, and to be careful to maintain good works. The duties which God has enjoined on us should be discharged with inviolate fidelity. The eyes of God are upon us; the enemies of religion behold us, and our conscience will accuse or excuse us. O let us be holy in all our outgoings and incomings.

" 'Search the Scriptures,' said Jesus Christ, 'for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.' God has not left us to learn his nature and will merely from his works and providence; he has revealed himself in the pages of inspiration, with all the perspicuity necessary to make us wise unto salvation. This holy revelation should be studied with industry, attention, and candor. We beseech you, read it in your families and in your closets. A proper knowledge of it will render you happy in all the calamities of life, support you in the pangs of death, and prepare you for an endless enjoyment of heaven.

"A strict attention to the Christian ordinances we deem indispensably necessary. Christ himself instituted the holy ordinances of baptism and the sacrament of his supper. We trust his professed followers will never neglect them. They should be precious in our memory, and dear to our heart. 'Go ye,' said Jesus Christ, 'and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' And in reference to his supper he said, 'This do in remembrance of me.' The Sabbath of the Lord deserves your serious consideration and attention. It should be wholly consecrated to his service. All labor, vain conversation, worldly-mindedness, and visiting, should be carefully avoided. Prayer, praise, searching the Scriptures, meditation, and waiting on God, should be our only employment. 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,' is the language of God.

"It is with regret that we have seen the use of ardent spirits, dram-drinking, &c., so common among the Methodists. We have endeavored to suppress the practice by our example, that it is necessary that we add precept to example; and we really think it not consistent with the character of a Christian, to be immersed in the practice of distilling or retailing an article so destructive to the morals of society, and we do most earnestly recommend the annual conferences and our people to join with us in making a firm and constant stand against an evil which has ruined thousands, both in time and eternity.

" 'Be not conformed to this world,' said the Apostle St. Paul, 'but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.' We should unanimously arise, and oppose the fashions and maxims of this ungodly world; particularly in the article of dress. We are creatures of a moment, hastening to the grave, and soon shall stand before God in judgment; therefore let us not copy the fashions of the gay and thoughtless, especially by putting on gold, and costly apparel; but dress with simplicity, gravity, and neatness.

"The important duty of fasting has almost become obsolete. This we are afraid will be productive of melancholy effects. We yet have abundant cause for deep humiliation before God and one another. Our country is threatened, calamities stare us in the face, iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. O let us again resort to fasting and humiliation.

"The propriety of religiously educating your children, we wish seriously to impress upon your minds. To instruct them in the arts and sciences may be useful, but to teach the knowledge of God and their own hearts is absolutely necessary. It is only religion which can render them useful in society, happy in life, and triumphant in death. The effects of indifference to the education of children, must be seen and lamented by every friend to religion. Children who grow up in iniquity become obdurate in sin, and prepared for almost every species of vileness. They transgress the laws of God, violate the principles of humanity, and frequently terminate their unhappy career covered with iniquity and disgrace. Instruct your children, therefore, in the principle and excellence of religion. Whilst young, take them by the hand and lead them into the salutary paths of wisdom and virtue. And rest assured, your labor shall not be in vain. For, said Solomon, 'train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.'

"Now, unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." The Presiding Elder Question -- Council for stationing the Preachers As this question was largely discussed at the above conference, as well as before and since, and has, at times, occasioned considerable uneasiness in some minds, this seems as suitable a place as any to redeem my pledge to present the question fully and fairly before the reader. That it may be rightly understood, it is necessary to advert to the circumstances under which the practice of fixing the stations of the preachers originated. When Mr. Wesley commenced his evangelical labors, and helpers were raised up to him from among his sons in the gospel, he was naturally led to appoint them to their particular fields of labor, and to change them as often as he judged it expedient; and thus, from usage introduced in this way, it became an established law, so long as Mr. Wesley lived, to appoint each preacher to his circuit, to change him as often as he might think the state of the work required; and I believe he never allowed any preacher to remain longer than two, or at most three years in one place. But after Mr. Wesley's death, this power devolved upon the conference, who appoint a stationing committee every year, whose duty it is to fix the stations of the preachers, subject to an appeal to the conference, if any one thinks himself aggrieved. As this power was lodged in the hands of Mr. Wesley, and as his assistant in America acted as his representative, doing that which he would have done if present; this assistant was in the habit of stationing the preachers, of removing or changing them as often and to whatever place it was judged the state of the work and the talents of the preachers might render it expedient. According to this usage, which had grown up with the growth of the societies in America, at the General Conference in 1784, when the societies were organized into a church, it was made the duty of the bishop "to fix the appointments of the preachers for the several circuits and in the intervals of the conference to change, receive, or suspend preachers, as necessity may require." In the account given of the secession of O'Kelly and its causes, we have seen that he moved for an appeal to the conference from the appointment of the bishop, with the privilege, if any preacher thought himself injured by his appointment, to state his objections, and if they were considered by the conference valid, the bishop should appoint him to another circuit. This motion

was, as heretofore related, after a full discussion of its merit, decided in the negative by a very large majority. This decision put the question so completely at rest, that we find nothing more in relation to it until the General Conference of 1800, when Dr. Coke, after it had been determined to elect an additional bishop, presented the following resolution for the consideration of the conference: --

"That the new bishop, whenever he presides in an annual conference, in the absence of Bishop Asbury, shall bring the stations of the preachers into the conference, and read" (them) "that he may hear what the conference has to say upon each station." This motion was withdrawn by the mover; and another, that the "new bishop, in stationing the preachers, be aided by a committee of not less than three, nor more than four preachers, to be chosen by the conference," was, after an exchange of opinions in reference to it, rejected by the conference; as well as several other attempts which were made by different members to restrict the power of the new bishop. From these movements it would appear that even those who were in favor of abridging the prerogative of the episcopacy in the work of stationing the preachers, were so fully convinced of the wisdom and strict integrity of Bishop Asbury, that they had no desire to curtail his conceded rights in this respect -- a conviction highly creditable to him as the superintendent of the Church -- and the majority determined that the new bishop should go into office clothed with the same powers which had been ceded to the senior bishop.

I find nothing more on the records of the General Conference in reference to this question until 1808, when a motion was made to make the office of presiding elder elective by the votes of the annual conferences. This motion was largely, and by many of the speakers very ably and eloquently discussed, but was finally decided in the negative by a majority of twenty-one, fifty-two voting in favor and seventy-three against it. As this motion was, at the special request of the mover, disposed of before the resolutions providing for a delegated general conference were passed, it has been strongly urged by some that it should be considered unconstitutional either to elect the presiding elders or to associate a committee with the bishops in stationing the preachers; while others contend that as there is nothing in the restrictive regulations bearing specifically on these points, it is still left optional with the conference to modify or change the manner of appointing those officers as may be judged expedient, and also to elect a committee to assist the bishop in stationing the preachers.

Whether this be so or not, the subject was agitated from one General Conference to another, until the year 1823, since which time it has been allowed to sleep in peace. At the conference of 1812 the same question was introduced by a motion from a member of the New York conference, and fully discussed, but was lost by a majority of three, forty-two voting in favor and forty-five against it. It may be proper to observe here that the delegates in the Philadelphia, New York, and Genesee conferences were all in favor of this measure, the majority in each being for it, and accordingly sent delegates who coincided with them in opinion; but they were seconded by a few only from the southern and western delegates. The same fate attended a similar motion in 1816, although one of the bishops elected at that conference was known to be favorable to the proposed change in the mode of selecting the presiding elders. The resolution of this conference was, as finally acted on, in the following words: --

"The bishop, at an early period of the annual conference, shall nominate an elder for each district, and the conference shall, without debate, either confirm or reject such nomination. If the person or persons so nominated be not elected by the conference, the bishop shall nominate two others for each vacant district, one of whom shall be chosen. And the presiding elder so elected and appointed shall remain in office four years, unless dismissed by the mutual consent of the bishop and conference but no presiding elder shall be removed from office during the term of four years, unless the reasons for such removal be stated to him in presence of the conference, which shall decide without debate on his case."

It was then provided, in another paragraph, that the presiding elders thus selected, should form a council to assist the bishop in stationing the preachers.

Perhaps a greater amount of talent was never brought to bear on any question ever brought before the General Conference, than was elicited from both sides of the house in the discussion of this resolution. Some of the speeches were deep, pungent, and highly argumentative, the speakers throwing their whole souls into the subject, and winding themselves up to the highest pitch of impassioned eloquence, often concluding with a tremendous appeal to the understandings and consciences of their antagonists, both sides invoking the future prosperity of the Church as an auxiliary to their arguments. The vote ultimately declared the voice of the conference to be against the measure, thirty-eight voting in favor and sixty-three against it. The same question was brought forward in the General Conference of 1820, and after debate had thereon was again decided in the negative. As however, considerable uneasiness was manifested, particularly by the advocates of the measure, it was moved by Nathan Bangs, and seconded by William Capers, the former friendly and the latter adverse to the measure,

"That three of the members who desire an election of the presiding elders, and an equal number of those who are opposed to any change of our present plan, be a committee to confer with the bishops upon that subject, and that they report to us whether any, and if any, what alterations might be made to conciliate the wishes of the brethren upon this subject, and that they report tomorrow." This resolution having passed the conference, the following were appointed members of the committee: Ezekiel Cooper, Stephen G. Roszel, Nathan Bangs, Joshua Wells, John Emory, William Capers.

After a conference with the bishops, agreeably to their instructions, the committee unanimously concurred in the following report: --

"The committee appointed to confer with the bishops on a plan to conciliate the wishes of the brethren on the subject of choosing presiding elders, recommend to the conference the adoption of the following resolutions, to be inserted in their proper place in the Discipline, namely: --

"1. That whenever in any annual conference there shall be a vacancy or vacancies in the office of presiding elder, in consequence of his period of service of four years having expired, or the Bishop wishing to remove any presiding elder, or by death, resignation or otherwise, the bishop or president of the conference having ascertained the number wanted from any of these causes, shall nominate three times the number wanted; -- provided, when there is more than one wanted, not more than three at a time shall be nominated, nor more than one at a time elected; -- Provided also, that in case of any vacancy or vacancies in the office of presiding elder in the interval of any

annual conference, the bishop shall have authority to fill the said vacancy or vacancies, until the ensuing annual conference.

"2. That the presiding elders be and hereby are made the advisory council of the bishop or president of the conference in stationing the preachers." This report was signed by all the members of the committee above named, and submitted to the conference in the afternoon session of May 20th, and, after some little conversation in respect to its merits, was passed by a majority of thirty-six votes, sixty-one in favor and twenty-five against it. As this was presented and adopted in the spirit of compromise, it was hoped by many on both sides of the house, that this long agitated question would be allowed to rest in quiet. In this expectation they were, however, disappointed; for the Rev. Joshua Soule, who had been elected on the 13th to the episcopal office, after a prayerful and mature consideration of the subject, signified to the conference that if consecrated a bishop, inasmuch as these resolutions were adopted after his election, and were, in his judgment, unconstitutional, he could not consistently with his views of duty, be controlled by them and Bishop McKendree, whose health would not permit him to participate much in the doings of the conference, on the 23d, three days after their passage, came into the conference, and, after assigning sundry reasons, entered his objections against them as unconstitutional, and, as he apprehended, subversive of the grand system of an efficient and general superintendency and itinerancy. The judgment of these two men, both justly respected, -- the one on account of his office, long and laborious services, his age and experience, the other for having the confidence of a majority of his brethren for one of the superintendents of the Church, -- had great influence upon the minds of many, and led to a serious suspense in respect to the expediency of the measure.

These movements, indeed, created quite a sensation in the minds of those who were the most deeply interested in the stability and prosperity of our institutions on both sides of the question, and the more so, as the bishop elect had tendered his resignation, which was finally accepted by the conference. Hence, after an ineffectual attempt to get the above resolutions reconsidered, a motion was at length made and carried, that they be suspended for four years, and that in the mean time the government should be administered as heretofore. In 1824, their suspension was continued, and at the General Conference in Pittsburgh, in 1828, they were called up, and with but a feeble opposition were rescinded, and the subject has not been since agitated.

I have this endeavored to furnish the reader with a true and impartial narration of the facts in relation to a question which has caused more agitation in our Church, and sometimes seemed to threaten more disastrous consequences, than any other which, up to that time, had been canvassed on the floor of the General Conference. It only remains now, that the prominence and importance given to it may be duly appreciated, to state the outlines of the arguments which were used for and against the proposed alteration, by those who entered most deeply into the discussion:

Those in favor of the change, alleged,

1. That it is more in conformity to the genius of the American people to have a voice in the election of those who are to rule over them; and as the presiding elders were, by the usages of the Church, entrusted with a controlling influence over the preachers, they ought to have a choice in their selection.

2. It was contended that so long as they were appointed by the bishop, it necessarily augmented the power of the episcopacy, as, by virtue of this appointment, the presiding elders were amenable to the bishop alone for their official conduct, and not to their brethren in the conference.

3. Hence, the preacher, let him be oppressed ever so much in his appointment, has no medium of redress within his reach, as his case is represented to the appointing power through an ecclesiastical officer over whom he has no control, and who is completely in the bishop's confidence and at his disposal.

4. These things, it was contended, were incompatible with the natural and civil rights of freemen, and especially with that equality among brethren of the same ministerial order, as are the presiding elders and all the other elders in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

5. As to a council to advise with the bishops in stationing the preachers, it was pleaded that however wise and good the bishop might be, it was impossible for him to have that knowledge of the local state of the people and peculiar circumstances of the preachers, which is essential to enable him to make the most judicious appointments; and hence he assumed a responsibility for which he could not rationally account.

6. And then to give one man the complete control over five hundred others, many of whom may be equal to him in age and experience, and perhaps also in wisdom, learning, and goodness, and as likely to be as disinterested in their views and feelings, was an anomaly in legislation and an absurdity in practice for which no arguments could be adduced, derived from either Scripture or the fitness of things.

7. That however safely this prerogative might he exercised by Bishop Asbury, especially in the infancy of the Church, when the number of preachers was few, it had now become impossible, on the increase of preachers and people, for a bishop to exercise such a tremendous power intelligibly and safely to all concerned. Bishop Asbury, it was argued, was the father of the connection, and felt for the entire family in a way that no one else could, and therefore no one else ought to be entrusted with the same power which he had exercised.

8. The example of our British brethren was cited, who, after the death of Mr. Wesley, had given the power of stationing the preachers to a committee, and then they were allowed an appeal to the conference. To these arguments, it was answered,

1. That the Church of Christ was founded, in some respects, upon very different principles from those on which civil governments rested, and therefore, though analogous in some particulars, yet in others the contrast was so obvious as to neutralize all analogical arguments. That though the people elected their legislators, president, and governors, yet most of the executive officers were appointed by the president; and as presiding elders were executive officers, their appointment by the bishop might be justified even from analogy.

2. Though it was admitted that they strengthened the hands of the episcopacy, yet being appointed by him saved the Church from an evil more to be dreaded than mere episcopal power, and that was an electioneering spirit, which must keep the conferences in perpetual agitations -- engendering a strife incompatible with the spirit of harmony and brotherly love.

3. Hence, though a preacher might, either from inadvertence or design, be injured in his appointment, yet to make the presiding elder dependent on the choice of an annual conference might make him fear to do his duty, in respect to enforcing discipline, and in exacting vigilance from those under him in the discharge of duty; moreover his redress was always with the bishop and the annual conference, to whom conjointly the presiding elder is responsible for his official conduct.

4. As to natural and civil rights, it was retorted, that though a Methodist preacher retained them as a citizen, yet the moment he entered the itinerancy, he became subject to ecclesiastical restraints which, though not incompatible with his rights as a freeman, were nevertheless essential to the preservation and efficient operation of the itinerancy.

5. In respect to the necessity, arising from the limited information and want of local knowledge of a bishop, of associating others with him in stationing the preachers, this was remedied in practice by his receiving all the information he could from presiding elders and others, and then acting according to the dictates of an unbiased judgment, which was less likely to be influenced by local prejudices than those who, from their more limited sphere of information, were liable to be biased by partial interests and local feelings.

6. As to an unlimited control over five hundred men, more or less, while it was admitted that many of them might be equal to the bishop in general wisdom and experience, yet they could not, from their position, have that comprehensive knowledge of the whole work, and that experience arising from extensive travel and information which belonged to an itinerating episcopacy; and, moreover, this control had a check in annual conferences, who might ultimately determine whether a preacher was justified or not in refusing to go to his appointment, and also by the General Conference, under the inspection of which the bishop’s conduct passed every fourth year.

7. Though it be admitted that Bishop Asbury sustained a fatherly relation to the Church which none of his successors could, and had a more intimate knowledge of preachers and people, both from his having grown up with them, and the comparative smallness of their number, yet it was contended, that the having an increased number of bishops, together with those restraints constantly thrown around them by the watchful vigilance of their brethren in the annual and general conferences, would prevent a wanton exercise of power, and render it still safe in their hands. As to our British brethren, they had no other visible head than their conference. But we have, and therefore can act more efficiently through this medium, than we could do by a stationing committee. It was still further contended, and with great force of argument, that if this power were taken from the bishops, it would be extremely difficult to keep up an interchange of preachers from one annual conference to another, a difficulty not felt in England, where they were all united in one conference, in which all their business was transacted. In the course of this discussion two opposite views were taken of the doctrine of responsibility. Some of those who contended for reserving this power in the hands of the bishop, insisted that the episcopacy was responsible for the entire executive administration, in all its ramifications, and therefore, in order that it might exercise it safely, it must have the control of the appointments, not indeed to office, but to the several stations, so that if those acting under its appointment did not discharge their trusts with fidelity, they might be removed or changed at pleasure; and as a strong and commanding motive for a wise and faithful execution of this high trust, the episcopacy was held responsible to the

General Conference, which had entrusted to the bishops the preservation of our itinerancy in all its parts; and this they could not do if the power of appointment were taken from them. To this it was replied, that though this seemed very plausible in theory, it was not possible to exemplify it in practice -- that it was loading the episcopacy with a weight of responsibility too heavy for any mortal and fallible man to bear, and therefore must ultimately crush the episcopacy beneath its pressure. To prevent this it would be most judicious to divide the responsibility among the several annual conferences, and hold the presiding elders especially strictly responsible to them for their official as well as their moral and Christian conduct -- as it was admitted on all hands that the preachers were held accountable to their respective conferences for their ministerial and Christian conduct, it was in vain to contend that the episcopacy should be made liable to censure for their malversation. The former traced responsibility from the General Conference, who made the regulations and judged of episcopal acts, to the episcopacy, and thence down through the several grades of Church officers: the latter traced it up through the societies, to quarterly and annual conferences, to the General Conference; while others contended, with more truth than either, it is believed, that each body and officer was accountable for its and his own conduct, and the latter to the tribunal from which he received his authority, and held the right to call him to an account for his acts and deeds.

These several topics, with others of a collateral character, were enlarged upon and amplified at the several stages of this discussion, according to the peculiar views and feelings of the several speakers who distinguished themselves on each side of the question, until the subject seemed to be exhausted; when finally, other matters of weightier importance and more seriously affecting the vital principles of Methodism, called off the attention of all from this question, and led them to a union of effort to preserve our institutions from deterioration and this union served to convince both that if they had at any time indulged suspicions of each other’s attachment to the essential principles of our economy, they had labored under erroneous impressions. That such suspicions were indulged to some extent, there is reason to believe; and it was this which sometimes gave an irritating poignancy to some of the remarks and arguments, and led to momentary interruptions of brotherly affection. But I think I may now venture to say without the fear of contradiction, that among those who advocated this modification in a feature of our government, there have been found those who have manifested an unabated attachment to the episcopacy, to the itinerancy, and the entire economy of our Church, and have done as much effectually to support it as any of their brethren; and I am equally well convinced that those who withstood all such alterations were actuated by the same hallowed motives, and that it was an honest fear that if admitted, they would impair the integrity and weaken the force and energy of the general system, and thus impede its progress in its career of usefulness; but now, having for the present buried all differences of opinion, both may rejoice together in working unitedly in carrying forward the grand cause in which we are mutually engaged, and in striving to hand down the Methodism, which we all love, unimpaired to the generations that may come after us.

It will be perceived by the attentive reader, that it was admitted on all hands that a power to station the ministry must exist somewhere, or the itinerancy would stop. For the moment it is admitted that a minister may choose his own station, or that the people may control it, the itinerancy falls to pieces. The only controversy therefore was, where can the stationing power be the most usefully, safely, and energetically lodged, and the majority have hitherto decided with the bishops -- and

there let it rest, unless future events shall reveal such an abuse of the power as will render it necessary either to dissolve the itinerancy or to commit its destinies to other hands -- neither of which, it is hoped, will ever be realized.

I know it has been contended by some that the people are hereby deprived of all their rights in the choice of their minister. This, however, is, I think, a great mistake. They choose and recommend them all, in the first instance, in their primary assemblies for no man can receive a license, either to exhort or preach, unless he be first recommended by the class or leaders' meeting to which he belongs. He then passes up through the quarterly-meeting conference, composed of his peers, and thence to the annual conference, in the meantime exercising his gifts among the brethren who are the ultimate judges of his qualifications and usefulness. In the next place the people have access to the stationing power, and are respectfully heard; for Bishop Asbury used to say, we must never deny our people the right of being heard by petition or remonstrance; as this is all the choice they either have or demand in respect to whom they will have to rule over and to preach to them; and therefore were this denied them, they might well complain of a spiritual despotism. Except the Congregationalists -- and I do not know that we ought to except3 even these -- the Methodists have as much of a voice in the choice of their ministers, as any other denomination; for the Presbyterians can neither settle nor dismiss a minister without the consent of the presbytery, nor the Protestant Episcopalians, or other Episcopal Churches, without the consent of their bishop. There must, in the nature of things, be an umpire somewhere, to decide this question; and the Methodist Episcopal Church has seen fit, for the reasons already assigned, to commit it to the episcopacy; and if it require a greater sacrifice on the part of the ministry to bow to its exercise than some others are willing to make, it must be admitted, I think, on all hands, that it is a mode of procedure which has so far worked energetically and most beneficially for the best interests of the people generally; for all classes have more or less either seen or felt its benign effects in bringing sinners from darkness to light, and preserving the Church in peace and purity.

ENDNOTES

1 As I speak from memory only, I may have mistaken the contents or this letter, but think I am correct. The letter, I believe, was addressed to Bishop Asbury, which, doubtless, is the reason why it is not found among the documents or the conference.

2 It is true we had a book-room, and the books which had been issued from it from time to time had done much good; but to show the meager state of this concern about this time, I will append a list of all the variety of all the variety of books which were on sale or issued from our press, as I find it in Crowther's Portraiture of Methodism in 1813, together with the price of each volume: -- " Coke's Commentary on New Testament, $20.00 (This was imported from Europe, though afterward republished in this country); Wesley's Notes on New Testament, $3.00; Wesley's Sermons, 9 vols, $6.50; Wood's Dictionary, 2 vols, $5.00; Fletcher's Checks, 6 vols., $5.00; Benson's Life of Fletcher, $1.00; Portraiture of Methodism, $1.00; Experience of several eminent Methodist preachers, 2 vols., $1. 00 each; The Saints' Everlasting Rest, $1.00; Methodist Hymns, 2 vols. bound together, 87«›; Law's Serious Call to a Holy Life, 75›; Experience and Letters of Hester A. Rogers, 75›; Fletcher's Appeal, 75›; Abbott's Life, 75›; Alleine's Alarm and Baxter's Call, 50›; Family Adviser and Primitive Physic, 50›; Methodist Discipline, 37«›; Watters' Life, 37«›; Confessions of James Lackington, 25›; Truth Vindicated, 31›; Thomas aKempis, 31›; Rowe's

Devout Exercises, abridged, 25›; A Scriptural Catechism, 6›. And in this list, the whole of which -- that is, a copy of each volume -- independently of Coke's Commentary, which was imported -- might be purchased for $29.75, there are but three American publications, namely, Abbott's and Watters' Life, and the Scriptural Catechism. Nor was it possible, under the circumstances -- for to our certain knowledge several attempts were made -- to increase the variety; such was the low state of feeling in the heads of the department, and the apathy in general on the subject of literature in our Church at that period. And be it remembered that the above books had been issued so repeatedly without adding anything to the variety, that it is believed if the Concern had gone on at this rate much longer, it would have run down for want of pecuniary support. The improvement, however, so much needed in this department, begun soon after, and has been gradually increasing ever since, as may be seen in the account given of this establishment in a subsequent chapter.

3 That the reader may perceive the reason why it is doubted whether or no any exception should be made, let him recollect that the Congregationalists claim to exercise the right of choosing their own ministers, and of dismissing them at pleasure. Now let us suppose in a certain district of country there are one hundred congregations and as many ministers to supply them; that among these one hundred ministers there are say twenty of eminent talents, thirty of middling, and the other fifty ranking among those of the more ordinary class. It may be supposed that each of the one hundred congregations will choose one of the twenty, but eighty of them must be disappointed; and then, allowing them to make choice of the other thirty, fifty of these must yet be disappointed, and must, therefore, either do without any, or take the man they do not want; for these congregations can no more be certain of the man if their choice, than they would if the ultimate decision were left with a third person.

Even in this respect, therefore, they are no more likely to be gratified in their choice than a Methodist congregation. In another respect the Methodists have greatly the advantage, both ministers and people. If the Methodist people get a minister who does not suit them, they may, by remonstrance to the appointing power, rid themselves of him at the end of one year, or at the end of two years he must be removed to another place. Not so with the Congregationalists, nor any of the other denominations we have mentioned. Some settle for life, and some for a term of years. In such cases they must, however disagreeable he may be, either keep him to the end of the term, or hire him to depart. Or if he be engaged from year to year, what fluctuations in uncertainty may agitate both minister and people; and if the former be dismissed, the latter are not sure of a better, while the minister himself is thrown out upon the world penniless, until he can ingratiate himself unto the favor of some other people less particular than those he left, in respect to ministerial qualifications.

Now these evils are, in a great measure at least, remedied by the system adopted by the Methodist plan of stationing the preachers. It has another immense advantage over the other -- it diffuses ministerial gifts, by a yearly or biennial interchange, over the whole surface of the Church; and thus, "if one suffer all suffer with it," and all are equally partakers of the gifts and graces of the entire ministry.

02.05A.02. Vol 2, Book 5A. Chapter 02

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume II -- Book V Volume II (Third Revised Edition, Published in 1853) BOOK IV FROM 1792 TO THE FIRST DELEGATED GENERAL CONFERENCE IN 1812

CHAPTER 2 From the close of the General Conference of 1812 to the death of Bishop Asbury, in 1816

Soon after the adjournment of the conference, namely, on the 18th of June, the United States declared war against Great Britain. Though this event had been expected for some time, yet it created a great sensation throughout the country, and particularly among those who regarded religion as breathing naught but peace and good will to man. The note of preparation, however, was soon sounded through all our borders; and as it was expected that the war would rage principally along our western and northwestern frontiers, where the inhabitants of the United States and of the Canadas approximated each other, it was foreseen that the Methodists in these two countries must necessarily come into unhappy collisions with each other, and perhaps be obliged, however reluctantly, to spill each other’s blood.1

Only one preacher, therefore, Thomas Burch, who volunteered for Canada from the United States, arrived there; the other, Nathan Bangs, who was appointed presiding elder in the lower province, but was to have charge also of Montreal, by the consent of the bishops, relinquished his journey, after removing from New York as far as Lansingburgh, and remained in the United States. In consequence of this state of things the brethren in Upper Canada were prevented from attending the Genesee conference, to which they were now attached; and as all friendly intercourse between the two countries was suspended, they were necessarily left to take care of themselves in the best way they could. This laid the foundation of that uneasiness in the Canadas which eventuated in the separation of the work in those provinces from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and led to their connection finally with the Wesleyan Methodist Conference.2 The great success which accompanied the labors of the Methodist itinerants in the western states and territories, and the growing importance in a national point of view, of those parts of the federal union, began to attract the attention and to call forth the energies of other denominations. Hitherto these had, on many occasions, affected to treat the Methodists with silent contempt, as unworthy of notice. But their growing prosperity in almost every direction, seemed at length to awaken others to activity in striving to imitate them but their zealous efforts to extend the gospel by means of missionary labors in the new countries and elsewhere. In 1810 the American Board of Commissioners commenced its operations, and not long after, with a view to furnish them with suitable agents, who might be willing to endure the fatigues and privations incident to a missionary life in the new countries, "The Charitable Society for the Education of Pious Young Men for the Ministry of the Gospel" was instituted. And in order to ascertain the true state of things in the western country, a commission was sent about this time on an exploring expedition through the new states and territories, and Schermerhorn and Mills were intrusted with its execution. The report of their travels

was published; and as they animadverted quite freely upon the economy of the Methodist Church, upon the conduct of its ministers, and general plan of operations, it roused the indignation of many, and more especially of those who had spent their life and sacrificed their all of mere earthly enjoyments to plant the standard of the cross in those new countries.

One thing seemed to astonish these gentlemen very much, and shows their want of information in regard to the economy of our Church, and that was in almost every settlement they visited they found not only Methodists and Methodist preachers, but also Methodist books, and the query was, whence they came when, lo and behold! they were informed that these were sold, and the proceeds forwarded to New York to furnish means to print and circulate more! And thus the imagination of those gentlemen and their honest readers was filled with the alarming apprehension that the country was in danger of being flooded with Methodist publications.

Another danger to be apprehended was the pernicious consequences resulting to the population of the west from the prevalence of Methodist doctrine and usages; and, in order to give effect to the note of alarm, and the danger to be apprehended from the rapid increase of the societies, they told their readers that persons were received into the Church with only the "expression of desire," thus mutilating the language of the "General Rules of the United Societies," for the purpose, as it would seem, of lowering the character of Methodism in the public estimation; for the readers of this report would not know whether the condition of membership was a "desire" for riches, for honor, or a desire merely to become Methodists -- whereas the "rules" specify. The character of the desire, and likewise state the evidence of its real existence -- "a desire to flee the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins," affirming that evidence of such a desire is manifested "by avoiding evil of every kind, and doing good of every possible sort, according to their power and opportunity."

Those who read this pamphlet, and who were acquainted with the state of things in the west, were somewhat surprised that while the people there were growing up into settlements, towns, and villages, destitute of the ordinances of religion, those who sustained the present commission manifested no concern at all for their spiritual welfare; but that now, since the towns were built, the "wilderness turned into a fruitful field," and Methodist circuits, societies, districts, and even annual conferences established there, they should all at once awake as from a profound sleep, and casting a hasty glance over the land, should discover that the people were going fast to destruction, and that Methodism was poisoning the fountains of knowledge and religion with its pestiferous breath!

These things are mentioned because they form, in some respects, a new era in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, particularly in the west, and led to a new sort of warfare which we have been called upon to sustain in order to rescue our institutions from reproach, and to preserve our plans of procedure from being frustrated by new modes of attack. The sequel of our history will develop all these things, and place them in a true point of light.

Bishop Asbury, though he continued his annual tour of the continent, and attended the conferences in company with his colleague, Bishop McKendree, began to totter under the infirmities of age, and frequent attacks of disease. He was in New England when the proclamation of the president of the United States announced to the people that war was declared against Great Britain. He who had passed unscathed through a bloody contest of seven years' duration, suffering numerous hardships in striving to preserve a pure conscience while propagating a

religion of peace and good-will, could not behold the approach of another struggle of a similar character, without feelings of anxiety and alarm. These he expressed in a very emphatic manner to the writer of these pages, remarking, in reference to our intercourse with our Canadian brethren, "there is no mercy in war, and hence we must expect much suffering on our frontier settlements," and concluded by saying, that "doubtless our sins as a nation had provoked the divine indignation against us, and therefore we must expect to suffer."

He, however, kept on his way, exclaiming with pious resignation, "I live in God from moment to moment." Beholding the demoralizing tendency of strong drink, in a certain neighborhood, he observes, "They are decent in their behavior, and would be more so, were it not for vile whiskey. This is the prime curse of the United States, and will be, I fear much, the ruin of all that is excellent in morals and government in them. Lord, interpose thine arm!" How would his soul have expanded with gratitude and delight to have beheld the temperance reformation which began its salutary operations since his day! And would he not have deprecated any effort to weaken its force, especially by those who claim to be his sons in the gospel?

After traversing various parts of the country, often trembling under the infirmities of a sickly body, crossing the Allegheny mountains, and descending into the valley of the Ohio, attending several camp-meetings in his route, he says, "I shall have traveled six thousand miles in eight months, met in nine conferences, and have been present in ten camp-meetings." But then he adds soon after, in reference to his labors and physical sufferings, for such was his debility that his friends sometimes had to lift him into his carriage, "O let us not complain, when we think of the suffering, wounded, and dying of the hostile armies! If we suffer, what shall comfort us? Let as see -- Ohio will give us six thousand for her increase of members in our new district." This indeed was his reward; all he asked or sought of his labors and sufferings. And it shows also, that notwithstanding hostile armies were already measuring swords, the God of Israel was still at work for the salvation of the people.

It appears, indeed, that in the midst of the agitations occasioned by the war which began to rage on the frontier, and in some places upon the sea-board, God wrought in a powerful manner in various parts of the country, particularly on the James River district, where not less than six hundred were brought into the Church, chiefly through the agency of camp-meetings. In the New London district also there was a gracious work of God, including some towns in Rhode Island, in which upward of one hundred souls were brought into gospel fellowship, some of whom connected themselves with other denominations.

Forty-eight were located this year, ten returned supernumerary, eighteen superannuated, one was expelled, and six had died. These last were Samuel Mills, Nathan Weedon, Jesse Pinnell, Lansford Whiting, Samuel Thomas, and Greenleaf N. Norris. Some of these had labored long and faithfully, and they all died witnessing a good confession, and are, no doubt, gathered to their fathers in a better world.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 156,852; Last Year: 148,835; Increase: 8,017 -- Colored This Year: 38,505; Last Year: 35,732; Increase: 2,773 -- Total This Year: 195,357; Last Year: 184,567 -- Increase: 10,790 -- Preachers This Year: 678; Last Year: 668; Increase: 10.

1813

There were nine annual conferences this year, the Mississippi Conference which was authorized to be formed, if the bishops saw it needful, not having been established.

These times were distressing along the lines between the United States and the Canadas, as those places were the principal scenes of the war which was now raging with increasing violence between the two countries. This not only broke off all friendly intercourse with each other, but kept the inhabitants in a continual state of alarm and irritation, quite unfriendly to the progress of pure religion. But notwithstanding this state of things, there were very extensive revivals of religion in other places, so that the increase of members was considerably more than it had been for several years previously, as may be seen below. Probably many were led to pray more fervently and to labor more faithfully in consequence of the afflictions which were felt in the country, while others were induced to think more seriously on their latter end.

Among those who located in the New England Conference this year, was Pliny Brett, whose admission into the conference had been deferred for one year at the time he was eligible to be received into full connection. Soon after his location he withdrew from the Church, put himself at the head of a party under the denomination of "Reformed Methodists." He lured from the Church several local preachers, and a considerable number of members, almost entirely breaking up some small societies, and thereby occasioned much uneasiness where he commenced his operations, which was in Cape Cod, in Massachusetts. From thence his influence extended into Vermont, where he was seconded in his endeavors to draw away disciples after him by a local preacher by the name of Baily. They succeeded in raising a considerable party, which, for a short season, made some inroads upon our Church; and though Mr. Baily succeeded in establishing some congregations, and still lives to enjoy the fruit of his labors, yet the influence of the party is very limited, and furnishes another evidence that it requires a union of deep piety and much talent to found a distinct denomination of sufficient magnitude to command public confidence, and to exert an extensive influence on the community.

While these things were testing the faith and patience of some, and "garments rolled in blood" were frightening others with fearful apprehensions for the stability of our political institutions, the faithful servants of God, keeping aloof as much as possible from the strife of party and the war of words, steadily pursued their way in search of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." It is due to truth, however, to remark, that while ministers of the gospel, biased perhaps too much by some influential members of their congregations, refused even to pray for their rulers and country,3 Bishop Asbury, who had long since adopted this country as his own, and most cordially loved its institutions, declared most plainly and pointedly, on the floor of an annual conference, that he who refused, at this time especially, to pray for his country, deserved not the name of a Christian or a Christian minister, inasmuch as it was specifically enjoined on all such, not only to honor magistrates, but to pray for all that are in authority, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty."

It was very manifest to all who saw him, that Bishop Asbury was sinking under the infirmities of a sickly body, weakened from time to time by exposures to inclement seasons, continual labors, and oppressed with a multitude of cares, known only to those who feel the weight of such a responsible station. Nevertheless, although his friends sometimes remonstrated against it, he still performed his annual tour of the continent, shunning no danger, deferring no duty which might be

performed today, from a fear that he should not have strength for the morrow, but both publicly and privately admonishing all who came in his way of the danger of sin, and encouraging the good to persevere in their work. To aid him in scattering the good seed of the kingdom, he furnished himself with religious tracts, sometimes getting them printed at his own expense -- for as yet we had no tract society -- Bibles, and Testaments, which he distributed among the poor; and to assist in extending the work in the poorer settlements, the handed his "mite subscription" to all whom he considered able to give, allowing no individual to subscribe over one dollar, though, if they chose, each member of the family might become a donor.

Apprehensive, as it seems from notices in his journals, that he had not many years to live, he dictated a valedictory address to his colleague, Bishop McKendree, on the order and institutions of the primitive Church; and on Friday, October 29th, he says: -- "On the peaceful banks of the Saluda I wrote my valedictory address to the presiding elders." In another place he speaks of having made his will, in which he says that, through the benevolence of some kind friends who had died childless, about two thousand dollars had been bequeathed to him, which he should leave to the Book Concern. "Let it return," he remarks, and continue to aid the cause of piety." In the labors of the conferences he often speaks in terms of eulogy upon the help afforded him by Bishop McKendree, who, if he did not always travel by his side, generally met him at the annual conferences, and discharged most of the active duties of president, and assisted in the ordinations and other services of the sanctuary. He needed not indeed any other stimulant to active exertions than his own burning zeal for God, and the example constantly set him by his senior in office. Mutual affection and respect bound them together, and made them "true yoke-fellows" in the laborious exercise of their joint superintendency. By this means they threw around the general itinerancy, and the entire work, a weight of influence not easily resisted, but it was felt from the center to the circumference of the connection.

Thus by the example of their superintendents, whose joint labors produced a most happy effect, the presiding elders upon their districts, the elders, deacons, and preachers upon their several circuits and stations, were stimulated to active diligence, and the members of the Church generally participated in the spirit which actuated their leaders. By this united and harmonious action, as before said, notwithstanding the noise of battle was heard along the frontiers, heightened as it sometimes was by the war-whoop of hostile Indians who were invading some of the defenseless settlements, the Church was generally prosperous, sinners were converted, and saints "built up on their most holy faith."

Yet sixty-three preachers were located! eleven became supernumerary, twenty superannuated, three were expelled, and one; William B. Lacy, withdrew, and afterward connected himself with the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Thomas Branch, John Crane, Jacob Rumph, Jesse Brown, William Young, Lasley Matthews, John Smith, Robert Hebard, John Russell, and Ebenezer White, having fulfilled their ministry with fidelity, had taken their departure to another world during the past year.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 171,448; Last Year: 156,852; Increase: 14,596 -- Colored This Year: 42,859; Last Year: 38,505; Increase: 4,354 -- Total This Year: 214,307; Last Year: 195,357 -- Increase: 18,950 -- Preachers This Year: 700; Last Year: 716; Decrease: 16.4

1814 The more than usual increase during the past year, in the midst of the agitation of war and its attendant evils, shows that religion had a strong hold upon the affections of the people, and that while the clarion of war sounded along our frontiers and echoed over the waters of the lakes, as well as upon the waves of the ocean, men were not unmindful of their duty to God and to one another. Indeed, those who viewed war among the sorest of God's judgments, and whose hearts were panting for the return of peace, were led to humble themselves by fasting and prayer, that the God of peace and love might visit his heritage more plentifully with the showers of his grace. And how much these faithful prayers might have contributed to hasten a termination of the bloody conflict, and to bring about the blessings of peace, who but the Omniscient can tell? If in answer to the prayer of faith in his Son, "He lets his lifted thunder drop" -- if "God's hands or bound or open are, as Moses or Elijah prays" -- and if God would spare the devoted "cities of the plain". For the sake of ten righteous persons may we not believe that he might have inclined the hearts of the rulers of Great Britain and America to pacific measures in answer to the prayers of his people on both sides of the Atlantic? That there were many such we know. That they deprecated this war as unnatural, and as tending to desolate the earth in vain, is equally certain. And hence the united prayers of many went up before the throne, that the olive-branch of peace might supplant the bloody flag of war. But the time was not yet. The war still raged this year with more violence than ever. And perhaps party politics, particularly in the eastern section of our country, never ran higher than they did about this time. Indeed, many feared that a severance of our happy union would result from this feverish excitement. Yet the God of our fathers would not have it so. Just as this storm was ready to burst upon our heads, He who "rides upon the stormy sky, and calms the roaring seas," appeared to hush the contending elements, and to bid the hostile forces cease their bloody strife. In the mean time, the disastrous effects of these things began to be more sensibly felt on the interests of true religion. Although those who were deeply devoted to God held on their way, and poured out their desires to God for the return of peace and the prosperity of the cause of Christ, yet many, lured by the glare of military glory, or seized with a spirit of revenge for the merciless warfare waged by the hostile Indians on defenseless women and children, or fired with a zeal to vindicate their country's rights against the invasions of their foes, in many instances, having lost the fervor of their piety, entered into the war with renewed ardor. The enemy indeed pushed more closely upon us now on every side. The burning of Washington, the attack upon Baltimore, and the threatening attitude assumed toward the cities of New York, Boston, and other places, and the invasions on our frontiers, roused a warlike feeling throughout the nation, and excited such a general spirit of resistance to these aggressions, that for a season the spirit of religion seemed to be absorbed in the feeling of patriotism, and the war-whoop took the place of thanksgiving and prayer to God. Add to this the domestic disputes arising from various opinions respecting the policy of the war, which pervaded all ranks of society, from the halls of legislature to the circles around the fireside, and we shall see reasons enough why religion did not prosper in the hearts of the people as it had done heretofore. In the midst of these "shakings and tremblings," on the earth, while some were rejoicing over victories won by our fleets upon the ocean and the lakes, or boasting of the prowess exhibited by our armies upon the land, and others affecting to lament the superior skill and bravery of our enemies, there were not wanting those who sighed in secret and in public for "the abominations which make desolate," and who exerted their energies for the "salvation of Israel." These, keeping aloof as much as possible from political strife, were still crying aloud to sinners to "repent and give glory to God," and exhorting His people to steadfastness in

the faith. And though they did not always find the "Son of peace" in every house into which they entered, yet the peace of God rested upon them, as the reward of their endeavors to promote "peace on earth and good will to men." A heavy affliction this year came upon Bishop Asbury, and for some time his life was held in suspense. Though suffering under great bodily weakness, by the kind and unremitting attention of his traveling companion, John Wesley Bond, of whom the Bishop speaks in terms of the warmest affection and approbation, he was enabled to perform his usual tour from one annual conference to another, until he arrived, in the latter part of April, at Bethel, in the state of New Jersey. Here he was seized with an inflammatory fever, with which he suffered severely, and for some time his valuable life was despaired of by his physicians and friends. Dr. T. F. Sargent, of Philadelphia, attended him as his medical friend, with unremitting attention; and the New York Conference, then in session in the city, dispatched a special messenger, the Rev. Daniel Hitt, to present to him their affectionate respects, and to inquire after his health; they were rejoiced to hear on his return, that the bishop was likely to recover. Referring to this event in his journal, he says: --

"We should have failed in our march through New Jersey, but we have received great kindness and attentions, and have had great accommodations. I return to my journal after an interval of twelve weeks. I have been ill indeed, but medicine, nursing, and kindness, under God, have been so far effectual, that I have recovered strength enough to sit in my little covered wagon, in which they left me." -- "I would not be loved to death, and so came down from my sick room, and took to the road, weak enough. Attentions constant, and kindness unceasing, have pursued me to this place. I look back upon a martyr's life of toil, and privation and pain; and I am ready for a martyr's death. The purity of my intentions -- my diligence in the labors to which God has been pleased to call me -- the unknown sufferings I have endured -- what are all these? The merit, atonement, and righteousness of Christ alone make my plea. My friends in Philadelphia gave me a light, four-wheeled carriage; but God and the Baltimore Conference made me a richer present -- they gave me John Wesley Bond as a traveling companion. Has he his equal on earth for excellence of every kind as an aid? I groan one minute with pain, and shout glory the next!" And where would the reader expect to find this sick, limping, skeleton of a man next? Under the hands of a nurse, beneath the roof of some hospitable mansion, surrounded by kind-hearted and sympathizing friends? He will be disappointed. For although after he so far recovered as to be lifted into his "light, four-wheeled carriage," the gift of his Philadelphia friends, he appeared more like a walking skeleton than a living man; yet on the 23d of July, four days only after penning the above paragraph, we find him in Pittsburgh, west of the Allegheny mountains, "bending his way," to use his own words, "down the west side of the Ohio to Swickley," where he was detained two days; and thence, in company with his faithful companion, John Wesley Bond, he urged his way through rough roads, swamps, and dismal causeways, to Steubenville, where he remarks: -- "My health is better:" -- "I live in patience, in purity, and the perfect love of God." And thus he performed his western tour, sometimes preaching, though unable to preside in the conferences, and finally returned to the Atlantic states, somewhat improved in health, borne up by the conscious smiles of his heavenly Father, the sympathy and affectionate attentions of his numerous friends. But Bishop Asbury never after recovered his wonted vigor. His countenance was fallen and pale -- his limbs trembled, and his whole frame bore marks of decay. Indeed, there was a something in his appearance which, while it indicated a "soul full of glory and of God," struck the beholder with an awe which may be better felt than described. Not being able to stand while he addressed an

assembly, he sat upon a seat prepared for that purpose, and while thus sitting -- his whitened locks speaking the honors of age, his pallid countenance testifying his general debility, his head involuntarily dropping forward until the chin apparently rested upon his beast -- no sooner did he begin to speak than his deep sonorous voice, uttering words in the name of his God, would arouse the attention of the auditory to such thoughts of eternity as overwhelmed them with breathless awe and silent astonishment. Though I can remember, I cannot describe, his appearance on those occasions. Something, indeed, more than merely human seemed to lighten up his countenance when his subject inspired him with those "thoughts which breathe" and "words which burn;" and he appeared to soar above the infirmities that pressed him down on ordinary occasions; at the same time an unearthly appearance, full of dignity, majesty, and yet softened with the graces of meekness and patience, sat upon his visage and played through the wrinkles of his cheeks.

Yet in the midst of all these weaknesses he journeyed from place to place, saying, "God is with me in all my feebleness" -- "My spiritual consolations flow from God in great abundance -- my soul rejoices exceedingly in God." Happy he who can thus testify to the goodness of God to him personally, while trembling under the infirmities of age, disease, care, and labor.

Among those who had taken their departure to another world this year, was the Rev. Philip V. Otterbein, the German minister who had assisted in the consecration of Mr. Asbury to the office of a bishop, and with whom he ever after held an intimate, Christian, and ministerial fellowship. Though not formally attached to the Methodists, yet as he always favored their cause, invited them to his pulpit, and reciprocated with them in acts of brotherly love, it seems proper that some notice should be taken of him in this place. The following, though it includes an account of several others besides Mr. Otterbein, yet as it contains interesting information, and would suffer from an abridgment, is given as I find it in the Methodist Magazine, vol. vi., pp. 210, 249. It was furnished at the special request of Bishop Asbury, some time before his death, by his friend, F. Hollingsworth, who transcribed the bishop’s journal, and prepared it for the press. It is as follows: --

"Jacob Boehm, the great grandfather of one of the distinguished subjects of the following notices, was of a respectable family in Switzerland; and, as is presumed, a member of the German Presbyterian Church. His son Jacob was put to a trade; and after faithfully serving out his time, he, according to the custom of his country, set out upon his three years’ travels. In his wanderings through Germany he fell in with the Pietists; a people in their faith, discipline, and worship, resembling, in a good degree, the Methodists, but more closely the societies and congregations formed by William Otterbein and Martin Boehm. Upon our traveler’s return to the parental roof he talked in a style that neither his father nor the parson could comprehend; they were natural men, and understood not the things of God. His evangelical conversation mingled, most probably, with reproof of the vices and Pharisaism of the day, brought, by necessary consequence, persecution upon him; and he was sent, guarded by an elder brother, to prison. He escaped, however, from his confinement, and sought a refuge in Germany, where he remained, having settled near the Rhine. He shortly after attached himself to the Menonists, became an honored elder in that church, and, we trust, died in the Lord. His son Jacob, the third, was also a member in the Menonist church. He gave an example of sobriety, temperance, and industry to his children and neighborhood before and after his emigration to Pennsylvania, in 1716 or ’17; and was honored in both countries. As a professor of religion he lived up to the light he had; but it was under the ministry of his better instructed son, Martin Boehm, that he was blest with superior illumination. He died in peace at the

family plantation on Pecaway, Conestoga town ship, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, aged eighty-seven years. The son of Jacob Boehm the third, Martin Boehm, of whom we desire to speak more particularly, was born in November, 1725. The labors and experience of his life, as a professor of religion and minister of Christ, may be pretty justly estimated by what we learn from himself, communicated in answers to certain questions propounded to him by his son Jacob, which we here transcribe: -- 'Question Father, when were you put into the ministry?'

'Answer My ministerial labors began about the year 1756. Three years afterward, by nomination of the lot, I received full pastoral orders.'

'Question What had been your religious experience at that time?'

'Answer I was sincere and strict in the religious duties of prayer in my family, in the congregation, and in the closet. I lived and preached according to the light had. I was a servant, and not a son; nor did I know any one at that time who could claim the birthright by adoption but Nancy Keagy, my mother's sister; she was a woman of great piety and singular devotion to God.'

'Question By what means did you discover the nature and necessity of a real change of heart?'

'Answer By deep meditation upon the doctrines which I myself preached of the fall of man, his sinful state, and utter helplessness, I discovered and felt the want of Christ within. About the year 1761, hearing of a great work of God in New Virginia among the New Lights, as they were called, I resolved to find the truth more fully. I accordingly visited those parts, and saw many gracious souls who could give a rational and Scriptural account of their experience and acceptance with God; these assurances roused me to greater efforts to obtain the blessing. On my return, very large congregations assembled to hear the word, not only on the Sabbaths, but on week-days also. My zeal displeased some of my brethren in the ministry; but my heart was enlarged, and I had an earnest travail of soul to extend the knowledge of salvation to Jew and Gentile. I enlarged the sphere of my labors as much as my situation in life would permit.'

'Question Were your labors owned of the Lord in the awakening and conversion of souls?'

'Answer Yes many were brought to the knowledge of the truth. But it was a strange work; and some of the Menonist meeting-houses were closed against me. Nevertheless, I was received in other places. I now preached the gospel spiritually and powerfully. Some years afterward I was excommunicated from the Menonist Church on a charge, truly enough advanced, of holding fellowship with other societies of a different language. I had invited the Menonites to my house, and they soon formed the society in the neighborhood which exists to this day: my beloved wife Eve, my children, and my cousin Keagy's family, were among the first of its members. For myself, I felt my heart more greatly enlarged toward all religious persons and to all denominations of Christians. Upward of thirty years ago I became acquainted with my greatly beloved brother, William Otterbein, and several other ministers, who about this time had been ejected from their churches, as I had been from mine, because of their zeal, which was looked upon as an irregularity. We held many and large meetings in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New Virginia, which generally lasted three days: at these meetings hundreds were made the subjects of penitence and pardon. Being convinced of the necessity of order and discipline in the church of God, and having no wish to be at the head of a separate body, I advised serious persons to join the Methodists, whose doctrine, discipline, and zeal suited, as I thought, an unlearned, sincere, and simple

hearted people. Several of the ministers with whom I labored, continued to meet in a conference of the German United Brethren; but we felt the difficulties arising from the want of that which the Methodists possessed. Age having overtaken me, with some of its accompanying infirmities, I could not travel as I had formerly done. In 1802 I enrolled my name on a Methodist class-book, and I have found great comfort in meeting with my brethren. I can truly say my last days are my best days. My beloved Eve is traveling with me the same road Zionward my children, and most of my grandchildren, are made the happy partakers of the same grace. I am, this 12th of April, 1811, in my eighty-sixth year. Through the boundless goodness of my God, I am still able to visit the sick, and occasionally, to preach in the neighborhood: to his name be all the glory in Christ Jesus!'

Martin Boehm died on the 23d of March, 1812. His death was thought to have been hastened by an imprudent change of dress. Bishop Asbury, in a sermon preached upon the occasion of the death of his long-known and long-loved friend, improved the opportunity by mentioning some further particulars of him, of his friends, and of the work of God in which he and they had labored. His observations are, with the alteration and substitution of a few sentences and words, as follow: -- 'Martin Boehm had frequent and severe conflicts in his own mind, produced by the necessity he felt himself under of offending his Menonist brethren by the zeal and doctrines of his ministry: some he gained; but most of them opposed him. He had difficulties also with his United Brethren. It was late in life that he joined the Methodists, to whom, long before, his wife and children had attached themselves: the head of the house had two societies to pass through to arrive at the Methodists, and his meek and quiet spirit kept him back. Honest and unsuspecting, he had not a strange face for strange people. He did not make the gospel a charge to any one; his reward was souls and glory. His conversation was in heaven. Plain in dress and manners, when age had stamped its impress of reverence upon him, he filled the mind with the noble idea of a patriarch. At the head of a family, a father, a neighbor, a friend, a companion, there was one prominent feature of his character which distinguished him from most men; -- it was goodness; you felt that he was good. His mind was strong and well stored with the learning necessary for one whose aim is to preach Christ with apostolic zeal and simplicity. The virtue of hospitality was practiced by his family as a matter of course; and in following the impulse of their own generous natures, the members of his household obeyed the oft-repeated charge of their head to open his doors to the houseless, that the weary might be solaced and the hungry fed. And what a family was here presented to an observant visitor! Here was order, quiet, occupation. The father, if not absent on a journey of five hundred miles in cold, hunger, privations, and labor, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to his dispersed German brethren, might, by his conduct under his own roof, explain to a careful looker-on the secret of a parent's success in rearing a family to the duties of piety, to the diligent and useful occupation of time, and to the uninterrupted exhibition of reflected and reciprocated love, esteem, and kindness in word and deed. If it is true, as is generally believed, that the mother does much toward forming the character of their children, it will be readily allowed that Martin Boehm had an able help-mate in his pious wife. The offspring of this noble pair have done them honor -- the son Jacob, immediately upon his marriage, took on himself the management of the farm, that his excellent father might, 'without carefulness,' extend his labors more far and wide. A younger son, Henry, is a useful minister in the Methodist connection, having the advantage of being able to preach in English and German. We are willing to hope that the children of Martin Boehm, and his children's children to the third and fourth and latest generations, will have cause to thank God that his house, for fifty years, has been a house for the welcome reception of gospel

ministers, and one in which the worship of God has been uninterruptedly preserved and practiced! O ye children and grandchildren! O, rising generation, who have so often heard the prayers of this man of God in the houses of your fathers! O, ye Germans, to whom he has long preached the word of truth, Martin Boehm being dead yet speaketh! -- O hear his voice from the grave, exhorting you to repent, to believe, and to obey.'

"But our beloved brother, who has gone to his high reward, was not the only laborer in the vineyard. Will it be hazarding too much to say that in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, there were one hundred preachers and twenty thousand people in the communion of the United Brethren? Many of these faithful men have gone to glory; and many are yet alive to preach to congregated thousands. Pre-eminent among these is William Otterbein, who assisted in the ordination which set apart your speaker to the superintendency of the Methodist Episcopal Church. William Otterbein was regularly ordained to the ministry in the German Presbyterian Church. He is one of the best scholars and the greatest divines in America. Why then is he not where he began? He was irregular. Alas, for us; the zealous are necessarily so to those whose cry has been, put me into the priests' office, that I may eat a morsel of tread. Ostervald has observed, 'Hell is paved with the skulls of unfaithful ministers.' Such was not Boehm. Such is not Otterbein; and now, his sun of life is setting in brightness: behold the saint of God leaning upon his staff, waiting for the chariots of Israel!

"I pause here to indulge in reflections upon the past. Why was the German reformation in the middle states, that sprang up with Boehm, Otterbein, and their helpers, not more perfect? Was money, was labor made a consideration with these primitive men? No; they wanted not the one, and heeded not the other. They all had had church membership, as Presbyterians, Lutherans, Moravians, Dunkers, Menonists. The spiritual men of these societies generally united with the reformers; but they brought along with them the formalities, superstitions, and peculiar opinions of religious education. There was no master-spirit to rise up and organize and lead them. Some of the ministers located, and only added to their charge partial traveling labors; and all were independent. It remains to be proved whether a reformation, in any country, or under any circumstances, can be perpetuated without a well-directed itinerancy. But those faithful men of God were not the less zealous in declaring the truth because they failed to erect a church government. This was wished for by many; and among the first, perhaps, to discover the necessity of discipline and order, was Benedict Swoape of Pipe-creek, Frederick county: he became Otterbein's prompter as early as 1772, and called upon him to translate the general rules of the Methodists, and explain to their German brethren, wandering as sheep without a shepherd, their nature, design, and efficacy. Otterbein, one of the wisest and best of men, could only approve: when urged to put himself forward as a leader, his great modesty and diffidence of himself forbade his acceptance of so high a trust. His journeys, nevertheless, were long, his visits frequent, and his labors constant; so that, after he came to Baltimore, he might be called a traveling preacher, until age and infirmities compelled him to be still. Surely I should not forget his helpers. I may mention once more Benedict Swoape: he removed to Kentucky, and preached until near his death at eighty years of age. There was the brother-in-law of Otterbein, and his great friend, Doctor Hendel, a man of talents, lettered and pious, and a great preacher. Hendel was first stationed, as a German Presbyterian minister, in Tulpahocking and Lancaster, and his last labors were in Philadelphia, where, late in life, he fell a victim the yellow fever of 1798. Wagner, a pupil of Otterbein's, was

stationed in Little York, Pennsylvania, and permanently, thereafter, in Fredericktown, Maryland: he was, we have reason to hope, a good and useful servant of his Lord. Henry Widener, first a great sinner, and afterward a great saint, was a native of Switzerland; as is usual with his educated countrymen, he spoke in German and French with equal fluency. His preaching was acceptable and useful; he had for the companion of his itinerant labors, John Hagerty; and the gospel of our Lord was preached by these men in German and English to thousands between the north and south branches of the Potomac. Widener died in peace near Baltimore; Hagerty is still with us. George Adam Gedding, a native of Germany, has been a most acceptable man in the work: he still lives near Sharpesburg, in Maryland. Christian Newcomer, near Hagerstown in Maryland, has labored and traveled many years. His heart's desire has always been to effect a union between his German brethren and the Methodists. Are there many that fear God who have passed by his house and have not heard of or witnessed the piety and hospitality of these Newcomers? Worthy people!

I will not forget Abraham Traxall, now in the west of Pennsylvania: a most acceptable preacher of method and energy. Henry and Christian Crumb, twin-brothers born, and twin-souls in zeal and experience: these were holy, good men, and members of both societies. John Hersay, formerly a Menonist; an Israelite: he is gone to rest. Abraham and Christian Hersay; occasional itinerants, good men; busy and zealous. David Snyder possessing gifts to make himself useful. Neisch Wanger, a good man and good preacher. Most of these men were natives of Pennsylvania. May I name Leonard Harburgh, once famous, gifted, laborious, useful? He is now only a great mechanic, alas! The flame of German zeal has moved westward with emigration. In Ohio we have Andrew Teller, and Benedem, men of God, intrusted with a weighty charge, subjecting them to great labors. But our German fathers have lost many of their spiritual children. Some have led away disciples after them, and established independent churches; some have returned whence they or their fathers came; and some have joined the Dutch Baptists. Our German reformers have left no journal or record, that I have seen or heard of by which we might learn the extent of their labors; but from Tennessee, where the excellent Baker labored and died, through Virginia and Maryland into Pennsylvania, as far eastward as Buck's and Berk's counties, the effects of their ministry were happily seen and felt. We feel ourselves at liberty to believe that these German heralds of grace congregated one hundred thousand souls; that they have had twenty thousand in fellowship and communion, and one hundred zealous and acceptable preachers.

"The following paper was found in the handwriting of Bishop Asbury, and, as it is believed, of the Rev. Wm. Otterbein: -- 'To the Rev. William Otterbein. Sir, -- Where were you born?'

Answer In Nassau, Dillenburg, in Germany.

Question How many years had you lived in your native land?

Answer Twenty-six years.

Question How many years have you resided in America?

Answer Sixty years, come next August.

Question Where were you educated?

Answer In Herborn; in an academy.

Question What languages and sciences were you taught?

Answer Latin, Greek, Hebrew, philosophy, and divinity.

Question In what order were you set apart for the ministry?

Answer The Presbyterian form and order.

Question What ministers assisted in your ordination?

Answer Shrim and Klinghoaffer.

Question Where have you had charge of congregations in America?

Answer First in Lancaster; in Tulpahocking, in Fredericktown in Maryland, in Little York in Pennsylvania, and in Baltimore.

Question In what parts of the United States have you frequently traveled through, in the prosecution of your ministerial labors?

Answer In Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

Question How many years of your life, since you came to this country, were you in a great measure an itinerant?

Answer The chief of the time since my coming to this continent, but more largely since coming to Baltimore.

Question By what means were you brought to the gospel knowledge of God and our Saviour?

Answer By degrees was I brought to the knowledge of the truth while in Lancaster.

Question Have you an unshaken confidence in God through Christ of your justification, sanctification, and sure hope of glorification?

Answer The Lord has been good to me; and no doubt remains in my mind but he will be good; and I can now praise him for the hope of a better life.

Question Have you ever kept any account of the seals to your ministry?

Answer None.

Question Have you ever taken an account of the members in the societies of the United German Brethren?

Answer Only what are in Baltimore.

Question Have you taken any account of the brethren introduced into the ministry immediately by yourself, and sent out by you? Can you give the names of the living and the dead?

Answer Henry Widener, Henry Becker, Simon Herre, in Virginia; these are gone to their reward. Newcomer can give the names of the living.

Question What ministerial brethren who have been your helpers, can you speak of with pleasure, and whose names are precious?

Answer Guedick, Widener, Herre, Newcomer, and others.

Question What is your mind concerning John Wesley, and the order of Methodists in America?

Answer I think highly of John Wesley. I think well of the Methodists in America.

Question What are your views of the present state of the church of Christ in Europe and America, and of prophecy?

Answer In continental Europe the church has lost, in a great degree, the light of truth. In England and America the light still shines. Prophecy is hastening to its accomplishment.

Question Will you give any commandment concerning your bones, and the memoirs of your life? your children in Christ will not suffer you to die unnoticed.' No answer to this last question." In his journal the bishop makes the following remarks respecting Mr. Otterbein: -- By request I discoursed on the character of the angel of the Church of Philadelphia, in allusion to P. W. Otterbein -- the holy, the great Otterbein -- whose funeral discourse it was intended to be. Solemnity marked the silent meeting in the German Church, where were assembled the members of our conference and many of the clergy of the city. Forty years have I known the retiring modesty of this man of God -- towering majestic above his fellows in learning, wisdom, and grace, yet seeking to be known only of God and the people of God. He had been sixty years a minister, fifty years a converted one." This year also, the Church, in both hemispheres, was called to mourn over the death of Dr. Coke. Having been released in 1808, from his obligations to the American conference, he devoted himself thenceforward to the cause of God in Europe, with his accustomed zeal and fervor, but more especially to the cause of missions. While engaged in this work his attention was directed to the deplorable state of things in British India. The researches of Buchanan, and the accounts of others who had traveled in that country, had awakened a zeal in the hearts of British Christians for the salvation of the idolaters of Asa, which now burned with intense ardor in the breast of Dr. Coke, and he determined, if Providence favored his design, to establish a mission for their benefit. Having made the necessary preparations, in company with seven others whom he had selected to accompany him as assistant missionaries, on the 30th of December, 1813, he took an affectionate leave of his friends at Portsmouth, and on the 1st of January, 1814, they all proceeded down the English Channel, and slowly entered upon that voyage which for ever separated Dr. Coke from the land of his nativity and the scene of his active labors. On the morning of the 3d day of May, 1814, in latitude two degrees twenty minutes south, and longitude fifty-nine twenty-nine minutes east from London, when the servant went, according to his orders, to call Dr. Coke from his slumbers, on opening the door of his cabin, he found, to his utter amazement, the body of the doctor stretched lifeless upon the floor! The intelligence of this mournful event being communicated first to the captain of the ship, and then, at his request, to the missionaries, produced, as might be expected, a sensation of sorrow not easily described. It was supposed by the medical gentlemen who, at the request of the missionaries, made a post mortem examination, that he died of a fit of apoplexy. As his body was stiff and cold when it was discovered, at about half past five o'clock in the morning, and was found stretched upon the floor, it was concluded that, feeling unwell in the night, he had arisen from his bed to obtain some medicine, when he fell at about midnight to rise no more until the resurrection of the just and unjust.

Finding it impracticable to preserve the corpse in that hot climate to be brought back to England, according to his request in his will, to be deposited by the side of his two wives whom he had buried in Brecon, his native town in Wales, at about half past five o'clock, P. M., of the same day, the dead body was committed to the deep with suitable religious ceremonies, the performance of which, under these solemn circumstances, produced very serious impressions on all present.

Thus ended the life and labors of Thomas Coke, LL.D., and first bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. And while we record his death, we cannot well forget the many obligations we, as a Church, are under to him for his most zealous and disinterested labors among us in the infancy of our Church, and the consequent feebleness in which we were when he first visited our Zion.

It is not, however, my intention to attempt a portraiture of his character, nor to enumerate the instances of his labors and sacrifices. This has been amply and ably done by his biographer, to whom the reader is referred for a full account of the life, education, conversion, and ministerial labors, both as a preacher and writer, of Dr. Coke. And the proceeding pages will show the high estimation in which he was held on both sides of the Atlantic, the relation he sustained to us, the labors he performed and the lively interest he manifested in the welfare of American Methodism. It is due, nevertheless, to him and to the cause he contributed so maternally to and in this country, to say, that he crossed the Atlantic no less than eighteen times, at his own expense, to serve his American brethren -- that while here he exerted a powerful and salutary influence in favor of pure religion, by his preaching and the weight of his character -- and that, though he might, on one or two occasions, have incautiously committed himself and his brethren to those who watched his movements not with the most friendly eye, yet he deserves and receives the thankful and affectionate remembrance of those who have been benefited by his labors, and know how to appreciate his excellences. And if at any time he was not treated, in his intercourse with his American brethren, with that respectful attention which was due to his character -- as was doubtless the case -- he manifested the spirit of his Master and Saviour, in throwing over all such instances of human frailty the mantle of forgiveness and oblivion, neither abating the ardor of his love nor slackening the speed of his diligence to do them good, by serving them so long as his services were required. And if his spirit, disenthralled from its cumbersome house of clay, is now permitted to look from its mansion above, over the wide space covered by the ministry and Church he helped to organize and set in motion, he no doubt derives one source of his joy from the recollection of what he suffered and did in maturing and executing the plan which have resulted in the redemption and salvation of so many souls, and looking up to the holy throne, he unites with all the redeemed from among men, in ascribing the honor of all this to God and the Lamb. At the session of the New York conference in 1815, which assembled that year in the city of Albany on the 12th day of May, the melancholy news of Dr. Coke's sudden death had just reached our shores through the public papers, and, at the request of the conference, Bishop Asbury preached his funeral discourse. In this discourse the bishop bore ample testimony to the exalted character, the Christian and ministerial virtues, of his deceased friend and colleague. The following are some of his remarks, as I find them recorded in his journal: --

"He was of the third branch of the Oxonian Methodists -- of blessed mind and soul -- a gentleman, a scholar, and a bishop to us -- as a minister of Christ, in zeal, in labors, and in services, the greatest man of the last century."

Locations still continued to weaken the ranks of the itinerancy by forcing us to supply the circuits with young and inexperienced men, who, though they were zealous and active, were necessarily deficient in that sound practical wisdom which is desirable in the ministry, more especially for the judicious administration of discipline. No less than sixty-five were located this year, namely, in the Ohio conference nine, The Tennessee five, the South Carolina twelve, the Virginia fifteen, the Baltimore five, the Philadelphia seven, New York one,5 New England eight, and Genesee three. There were twenty returned on the supernumerary list, and twenty-two on the superannuated, and one was expelled. Ralph Lotspeich, Leroy Merritt, William Mills, Peter Moriarty, Francis Ward, Abner Clark, and Anning Owen, having fulfilled their ministry with fidelity, had taken their departure from the field of labor to the land of rest.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 168,698; Last Year: 171,448; Decrease: 2,750 -- Colored This Year: 42,431; Last Year: 42,859; Decrease: 428 -- Total This Year: 211,129; Last Year: 214,307 -- Decrease: 3,178 -- Preachers This Year: 687; Last Year: 678; Increase: 9. This unusual decrease shows that the effects of the war, as has been remarked above, had been unfriendly to the interests of religion.

1815 At this the time principal labor of the superintendency devolved on Bishop McKendree, the wisdom of whose administration was generally appreciated by both the ministry and membership; for Bishop Asbury, though still moving around among the churches, was too feeble to render much assistance in the active business of the conferences. He, however, met his colleague at the conferences, fixed the stations of the preachers, preached occasionally, and for a short season at a time took his seat in the conferences. Here he was uniformly greeted with a hearty welcome, and venerated as the patriarch of the American Methodist Episcopal Church.

After recording the incidents of his travels through the several states, preaching often, distributing Testaments to the poor, visiting families and praying with them, as well as soliciting pecuniary aid for the poorer preachers by presenting to his friends his "mite subscription," he gives the following account of his interview with Bishop McKendree: --

"We had a long and earnest talk about the affairs of our Church, and my future prospects. I told him my opinion was, that the western part of the empire would be the glory of America for the poor and the pious -- that it ought to be marked out for five conferences, to wit, Ohio, Kentucky, Holston, Mississippi, and Missouri -- in doing which, as well as I was able, I traced outlines and boundaries. I told my colleague, that having passed the first allotted period, (seventy years,) and being, as he knew, out of health, it could not be expected that I could visit the extremities every year, sitting in eight, it might be twelve conferences, and traveling six thousand miles in eight months. If I was able still to keep up with the conferences, I could not be expected preside in more than every other one. As to the stations, I should never exhibit a plan unfinished, but still get all the information in my power, so as to enable me to make it perfect, like the painter who touches and retouches until all parts of the picture are pleasing. The plan I might be laboring on would always be submitted to such eyes as ought to see it; and the measure I meted to others I should expect to receive."

How fallacious often is hope! This conversation, though it exhibits a mind ever intent on the best in interests of the Church, in thus maturing plans for its future prosperity, was like the flickering light of an expiring lamp, which, before it is entirely extinguished, flares up suddenly and then goes out

for ever. Such indeed was the general debility of Bishop Asbury that he had to be lifted in and out of his carriage, and if he visited the conference room at all, it was only to astonish his friends with the sudden coruscations of light which beamed from a mind pent up in a body trembling under the ravages of disease and the infirmities of age. But he had been so long accustomed to constant traveling and preaching, that this habitual exercise seemed essential to life and comfort, and no doubt contributed to lengthen his days, which were now nevertheless speedily drawing to their close. The war, which had now raged with various degrees of violence and success, for about three years, was near its termination. Though the battle of New Orleans was fought on the 8th of January, 1815, and several naval victories were won upon the ocean after that event, yet the articles of peace were signed by the British and American commissioners at Ghent on the 24th of December, by which an end was soon put to this bloody struggle, greatly to the joy of the friends of human happiness on both sides of the Atlantic, and much more to those along the lines of Canada and the United States, where so much human suffering had been realized. But though such places had severely felt the deleterious effects of this scourge of humanity, especially on the interests of true religion, yet in places not so much exposed to the ravages of war the work of God had prospered during the past year. Since, however, the commencement of hostilities, there had been a check put upon the extension of the work among the people on the frontiers, as well is upon the advancement of the settlements themselves. The Indian tribes had been generally enlisted on one side or the other of the belligerents, had invaded each other's territories, and thus kept the exterior settlements in a continual state of fear and alarm, of excitement and irritation -- a state of things exceedingly unfriendly to religious enjoyment and effort. It will therefore be seen that, after deducting for withdrawings, extensions, and deaths, which is always done in taking the number of Church members, the increase this year was very small, and hence it may be presumed that the spirit of piety was rather low throughout our borders generally.

Sixty-seven were located, thirteen were returned supernumerary, twenty-two superannuated, one expelled, and four had died. Two of the last, namely, John McClaskey and Michael Coate, had been long and favorably known to the Church, highly distinguished for their deep piety, indefatigable and useful labors; and in their death they gave a lively testimony to the power of religion to sustain them in their passage to immortality and eternal life. Though the race of the others, Lewis Hobbs and William S. Fisher, was comparatively short, yet it was brilliant, and ended as it began, in the grace of God, and in the hope of an eternal reward.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 167,978; Last Year: 168,698; Decrease: 720 -- Colored This Year: 43,187; Last Year: 42,431; Increase: 756 -- Total This Year: 211,165; Last Year: 211,129 -- Increase: 36 -- Preachers This Year: 704; Last Year: 687; Increase: 17.

1816

Peace being restored to the country, business began to resume its usual channel, and the people to attend to their concerns with their wonted cheerfulness and diligence, and we find this year Upper and Lower Canada, which had been insulated [we would now say, "isolated" -- DVM] during the war, was included among the districts of the Genesee conference, though Quebec was supplied, at the request of the people in that place, by the mission committee in London. But though this calm appeared in the civil atmosphere, the effects of the late storms of war and bloodshed were still visible along the highways and fields in which God's servants were called to

labor. The southwestern frontiers were in some places disturbed by Indian depredations, and in other parts of the country the exasperations of spirit which had been excited by conflicting opinions respecting the policy of the late war, and the manner in which it was waged, were not yet wholly allayed, and hence the spirit of piety had not yet recovered its wonted healthy tone and vigorous action; and the manner in which the rejoicings and thanksgivings for the return of peace were held, in many instances, served rather to feed than to extinguish the flame of political strife and animosity, as well as to call forth and strengthen the warlike propensities of the human heart. In some places, however, a spirit of devout gratitude to the Author of all good was cherished in the sanctuary, where the people of God prostrated themselves before His throne, and after lifting their hearts to Him in fervent acknowledgments of praise and thanksgiving for the restoration of peace and its attendant blessings, were entertained from the pulpit with a rehearsal of his loving-kindness to the nation and to the Church. These were seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and tended to enlarge the soul with enlightened views of the divine character and goodness, to revive and nourish the spirit of piety, and to unite the feeling of true patriotism with a sense of pious gratitude.

But, though the superintendents, as far as they were able, attended to their duties in the general work, and the preachers watched over their respective flocks with their wonted diligence and zeal, there were no special revivals of the work of God, and hence the increase of numbers was small, notwithstanding the members in Canada were this year included in the enumeration.

We have already seen that Bishop Asbury's declining health prevented him from performing much active service, and that consequently the duties of the superintendency devolved chiefly on Bishop McKendree. He accordingly moved around among the churches, attended the northern conferences alone, and by his example of diligence, and his advice in the councils of the Church, endeavored to diffuse the spirit of piety and active zeal throughout our borders. And all things considered, we had reason for thankfulness to God that he had not forsaken his Church in the wilderness.

Sixty-three were located this year, eight returned supernumerary, thirty-two superannuated, two were expelled, and one had withdrawn. The following had exchanged the field of labor for the land of rest: --

Learner Blackman, who embraced religion in his youth, and in 1800 entered the traveling ministry. After making full proof of his ministry in various circuits in the older conferences, in 1805, at the request of the bishops, he followed in the track of Tobias Gibson into the Mississippi Territory, and was stationed on the Natchez circuit. In performing this journey through the wilderness, in which he was compelled to encamp in the woods ten or eleven nights, he was called to endure hardships which the Methodist preachers of those days felt more sensibly than it is easy adequately to describe. But neither the savages of the wilderness, the lonely deserts through which they were obliged to pass to reach their destined post, nor the labors to be performed or privations to be endured, could prevent such souls as that which actuated Blackman from pressing forward in the path of duty. On his arrival in Natchez, though he found a few who had been brought to God by the instrumentality of his eminent predecessor, Tobias Gibson, yet Methodism was in its infancy, and he had to contend with a variety of hindrances which were thrown in his way by the lukewarmness of some, the entire indifference of others, and the open hostility of not a few.

He continued west of the mountains, laboring with pious zeal and indefatigable industry, filling, for a number of years, the office of presiding elder, until the day of his death. This mournful event heightened the sorrow of his friends by the manner in which it occurred. He and his consort were returning from a visit on the west side of the Ohio river, and while recrossing that river in a ferry-boat, their horses became frightened, and leaping out threw him into the river and he was drowned. His eulogy is written in the affections of the people who had been blessed under his ministry. And though his death was sudden, and brought about in circumstances which forbade his friends from catching his dying words, yet the purity of his life, the faithfulness of his preaching, and the diligence with which he pursued his calling as an overseer of the flock of Christ, speak more emphatically than mere words could do, in favor of his preparedness to meet his Judge, in the hope of acceptance through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Richmond Nolley was another of those soldiers of Jesus Christ who won laurels of celestial glory in the western wilds. He entered the ranks of the itinerancy in 1808, and after traveling some circuits in the south, by which he gave evidence of his willingness to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ," he went on a mission to Tombigbee, in the territory of Alabama. Here he devoted two years of hard labor, filling his appointments with fidelity, though often walking on foot with his saddlebags upon his shoulders, besides instructing the people, black as well as white, from house to house. Being in this country at the commencement of the hostilities between the United States and Great Britain, he had to contended with difficulties that arose from the movements of hostile Indians, which compelled the people in that new country to screen themselves from their fury in temporary forts. He, however, would not relax his labors, but went fearlessly from fort to fort, warning and instructing the people, often hazarding his life, and wearing out a constitution naturally weak, for the sake of communicating spiritual benefit to immortal beings. From this place he was removed, in 1814, to Attakapas circuit, in Louisiana. Here he was exposed to all the perils and hardships which are incident to such a new country, with bad roads, deep waters to cross, often scanty fare, flies and mosquitoes in the midst of the wilderness, together with the intense heat of the summer, and the mud and mire of the winter months. None of these things, however, disheartened him. He went forward with firmness and patience, seeking for the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." But his race was short, and his death sudden and sorrowful to his surviving friends. On the 24th of November, the weather being wet and cold, after having passed the previous day through a vast and dreary swamp, and over the Mississippi, he set off to visit some distant appointments. On the evening of that day he lodged with a friendly family; the next morning he pushed forward in a direction uninhabited by any white person, and employed an Indian to assist him in passing a creek, which he was apprehensive would be so swollen as to be difficult to ford. On arriving here, his expectations were realized; but he concluded to make the experiment to ford the stream. Leaving his saddle-bags, valise, and some books with his Indian guide, he mounted his horse and attempted to ride through the creek. The current bore his horse down below the usual place of landing, so that when they arrived on the other side, the bank was so precipitous that the horse could not ascend it, and in the struggle he and his horse were separated, the horse swimming back to the shore he had left, and brother Nolley landing on the opposite bank. He then walked on with a view to reach the first house, which was about two miles distant. The wet and cold, however, so prostrated his physical strength that he was able to proceed only about one mile, where he was found next morning a lifeless corpse. It seems, from appearances, that, becoming conscious of his inability to proceed farther, he kneeled down and

commended his spirit to God; and here in the wood. He was found with his eyes neatly closed, his left hand on his breast, his right hand fallen off a little, while his immortal spirit had, beyond all doubt, ascended to its mansion above. The name of Richmond Nolley lives in the recollection of the people in Alabama and Louisiana, and his ministerial and Christian virtues are embalmed in their affections. He fell a martyr to his work in the eighth year of his ministry, and has left behind him a testimony of his fidelity in the fruit of his sacrifices and labors.

Zachariah Witten, Joel Arrington, Edwin Johnson, George Askin, Nathan Lodge, and James Quail, had also taken their departure to another world, honored and beloved in their life as ministers of Christ, and lamented in their death by those who had been benefited by their labors, and by their more intimate relations. But a greater than either had fallen. The death-knell had sounded over the coffin of our American patriarch, and assured us that our Asbury was no more! And as this was the year in which Bishop Asbury closed his life and labors, I shall, as seems most fit, close the present volume with a brief account of the closing days of that great and good man, together with some remarks on his general character and manner of life.

We have already seen that disease was making fearful inroads upon a constitution which had been shattered by frequent attacks of sickness, often induced from exposure to wind and weather, to hardships, privations, constant labor and care, and that he consequently exhibited symptoms of approaching dissolution. After the interview with Bishop McKendree, before mentioned, he still journeyed on, attended by his ever faithful companion, John Wesley Bond, passing through the state of Ohio to Kentucky, where, after preaching in Lexington, he says: --

"My soul is blest with continued consolation and peace in all my great weakness of body and crowds of company. I am a debtor to the whole continent, but more especially to the northeast and southwest; it is there I usually gain health, and generally lose it in the south and center. I have visited the south thirty times in thirty-nine years. I wish to visit Mississippi, but am resigned."

It would appear then that even the bounds of the ten conferences were not a sufficiently large range to fill his capacious desires -- he wished still to visit Mississippi! But here again he found that his wishes must yield to the pressure of a body tottering on the confines of another world. Mississippi must be left to his sons in the gospel, while the father is forced to "withdraw his feet" even from the ordinary business of a conference, for on the 21st of this same month of October, after remarking that he had preached to the Tennessee conference, and ordained the deacons, he says, --

"My eyes fail. I will resign the stations to Bishop McKendree. I will take away my feet. It is my fifty-fifth year of ministry, and forty-fifth of labor in America. My mind enjoys great peace and divine consolation. My health is better, which may be in part because of my being less deeply interested in the business of the conference. But whether health, life, or death, good is the will of the Lord. I will trust him; yea, I will praise him. He is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. Glory! glory! glory!" Fit language for a veteran of the cross of Christ, just ready to receive his crown. In this frame of mind he passed on from place to place, stretching across the country from Tennessee into South Carolina, until, under date of Dec. 2, he says, "My consolations are great. I live in God from moment to moment;" and then Dec. 7, which is the last entry in his journal, and probably the last line he ever wrote, he says, -- "We met a storm and stopped at William Baker’s Granby."

It appears, however, from the published notice of his death, that he persevered in his customary way, in his close carriage, to journey on through the country, until March 24, 1816, when he came to Richmond, Virginia, where he preached his last sermon. His text was Rom. ix, 28, "For he will finish his work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." This closed his pulpit work. So feeble was he that his friends endeavored to dissuade him from making this effort. He, however, resisted their importunities by remarking that he must once more deliver his testimony in that place. They therefore assisted him from his carriage -- for he was unable either to walk or stand -- to the pulpit, and seated him on a table which had been prepared for that purpose: and though his debility was such that he was obliged to make frequent pauses in the course of the sermon, yet the audience were much affected by the manner in which he delivered his last solemn message, but much more with his appearance, venerable with age, standing on the borders of eternity, pale and tremulous with debility, while the deep intonations of his commanding voice, rising with the grandeur of his subject, gave a solemnity to the whole scene of a most impressive character.

Having thus delivered his last testimony for God, he was assisted from the sanctuary to his carriage, in which he returned to his lodgings. On Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, he moved on his way, and finally came to the house of his old friend, Mr. George Arnold, in Spottsylvania, Virginia. Here the unfavorable state of the weather and his increasing debility obliged him to stop. He had, indeed, flattered himself with living to meet the General Conference which was to assemble in Baltimore on the second day of the ensuing May; but he had approached the termination of his journeying in this world, and he humbly bowed to the decree of his heavenly Father in this as well as in all other things.

Here he passed a very restless night. In the morning, his friends, perceiving his great distress and increasing weakness, urged the propriety of calling in the aid of a physician. He gave them to understand that it would be of no use, saying, that before the physician could come to him his breath would be gone, and the doctor would only pronounce him dead. Being then asked if he had any thing to communicate, he replied, that as he had fully expressed his mind to Bishop McKendree in relation to the Church, he had nothing more to add.

About eleven o’clock on Sabbath morning he inquired if it were not time for meeting; but soon recollecting himself, he requested the family to be called together. This being done, brother Bond sung, prayed, and expounded the twenty-first chapter of the Apocalypse, during which the bishop appeared calm and much engaged in devotion. After these exercises were closed, they offered him a little barley wafer, but such was his weakness that he could not swallow it, and his power of utterance began to fail. On observing the anxiety of his beloved companion, who had attended him with such commendable assiduity for so long a time, he raised his dying hand, and at the same time looked at him joyfully. On being asked by brother Bond if he felt the Lord Jesus precious, exerting all his remaining strength in token of a complete victory, he raised both his hands. In a few minutes after this, as he sat on his chair with his head reclining upon the hand of brother Bond, without a struggle, and with great composure, he breathed his last on Sabbath the 31st of March, 1816, in the seventy-first year of his age. His remains were deposited in Spottsylvania, in the family burying ground of Mr. Arnold, at whose house he died. But on the assembling of the General Conference in Baltimore, by its order, and at the request of the brethren in that city, the mortal remains of Bishop Asbury were removed to Baltimore, and deposited under the recess of

the pulpit of the Eutaw Street church, in a vault which had been prepared for that purpose. The corpse was followed from the conference room in Light Street, by the members of the General Conference, several clergymen of other denominations, and by a vast concourse of the citizens of Baltimore, being preceded by Bishop McKendree as the officiating minister, attended by Mr. Black, a representative from the British to the American conference, to the Eutaw Street church, where a funeral oration was delivered by Bishop McKendree. After this the body of this great man of God was committed to its tomb, to await the hour when "all that are in their graves shall come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." The following inscription reminds the visitor to this sacred spot of the man to whose memory the polished marble was erected SACRED To The Memory Of THE REVEREND FRANCIS ASBURY, Bishop Of The Methodist Episcopal Church.

He was born in England, August 20th, 1745; Entered the ministry at the age of 17; Came a missionary to America, 1771; Was ordained Bishop in this city, December 27th, 1784; Annually visited the conferences in the United States; With much zeal continued to "preach the word," For More Than Half A Century. And literally ended his labors with his life, near Fredericksburg, Virginia, in the full triumphs of faith, on the 31st of March, 1816. Aged 70 years, 7 months, and 11 days. His remains were deposited in this vault, May 10th, 1816, by the General Conference then sitting in this city. His journals will exhibit to posterity his labors, his difficulties, his sufferings, his patience, his perseverance, his love to God and man. A number of funeral sermons were preached in different places for our departed superintendent, some of which were afterward published; and the Baltimore conference engaged a gentleman of competent talents to write his life, which, however, was never completed; and after waiting until 1824 for its appearance the General Conference selected the Rev. William Beauchamp to complete the task, but he was called home before he had time to enter upon his work; and thus a life of Bishop Asbury has never been furnished the world. This defect I have endeavored, so far as my general plan would admit, to supply, by giving some of the most important items in his experience, travels, labors, and shall conclude by a few general remarks on some prominent features of his character. But even these must necessarily be imperfect, not only from my want of ability to do justice to a character so exalted, seen through such a variety of mediums, and presenting so many varying points, but also for want of room to say all that truth and justice would seem to require.

1. The first thing we notice is the depth of the experience as a Christian. This infused a new principle of action, constituted the purity of his motives, and sanctified all his conduct. This experience of divine grace penetrates into the depths of the soul, and brings up, having changed the heart and sanctified the affections, new desires, excites new emotions, and gives new views of God, of man, of human destiny, and the end of all human actions.

Let those who have been accustomed to estimate human conduct from motives of self-interest, ambition, or worldly policy, recollect that when the heart is renewed by grace, there springs up new motive of action, and new hopes of reward, which exalt the individual as far above the mere man of the world as the heavens are high above the earth. That young Asbury was blessed with this new creation, by that Holy Spirit which ever after wrought mightily in him to the subduing of all unholy propensities, must be manifest to all who have consulted the preceding pages.

2. His call to the work of the ministry was evidently of a divine character. Born in humble life, destined by his parents and his own choice for a mechanical pursuit, neither he nor they had any thought of his becoming a minister of the sanctuary, until it was made manifest to him and to others competent to judge, that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him. He was then not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but entered upon his work with all his soul and strength, and continued with unabated ardor and diligence until he ceased "at once to work and live."

3. His talents as a preacher must be estimated in connection with those other duties which devolved upon him as the superintendent of the Church. It is said by those who had the privilege of hearing him in the vigor of manhood, before time and care had wrinkled his forehead, that he was deep and systematical in his discourses, ably and "rightly dividing the word of truth," fluent and powerful in his delivery, as well as remarkably pointed in his appeals to the consciences of his hearers. His attitude in the pulpit was graceful, dignified, and solemn; his voice full and commanding; his enunciation clear and distinct; and sometimes a sudden burst of eloquence would break forth in a manner which spoke a soul full of God, and like a mountain torrent swept all before it.

I remember an instance of this in the city of Baltimore in 1808, while he was preaching on a Sabbath morning in the Eutaw Street church, in the presence of many members of the General Conference, and among others, the Rev. Mr. Otterbein sat by his side in the pulpit. The bishop was discoursing upon the duty of parents to their children. Having uttered a severe reproof to those who neglect this duty and indulge their children in the frivolities of the world, he suddenly paused, and then said, "But you will say this is hard. Alas," he added -- letting his voice which had been raised into that high commanding tone which gave such a majesty to what he uttered, suddenly fall to a low and soft key, -- "It is harder to be damned!" These words, dropping from his lips in a manner which indicated the deep sensations of his heart, fell upon the audience, now wrought up to the highest pitch of intensity by what had preceded them, like the sudden bursting of a cloud upon the mown grass, and they were in a moment melted into tears -- sobs and groans were heard al over the house. The venerable Otterbein, noble and dignified in his appearance, was turned into a little child -- the tears furrowing his cheeks -- bespeaking the deep feelings of his heart. But though Bishop Asbury was thus able and systematic in his preaching in the earlier days of his ministry, as other duties accumulated, the cares of the superintendency multiplied, and his travels necessarily enlarged, it seemed impossible for him to give that attention to reading and study which is essential for a full development and vigorous exercise of the mental powers. Hence in his latter days his manner of preaching changed -- he was often quite unmethodical in his arrangement -- sometimes abruptly jumping, if I may so express it, from one subject to another, intermingling anecdotes of an instructive character, and suddenly breaking forth in most tremendous rebukes of some prevalent vice, and concluding with an admonition full of point and pathos. Yet he always exhibited a mind deep and solemn, ever intent upon securing the salvation of his own soul and the souls of those who heard him.

4. For diligence in his calling, he was surpassed by no one, unless we may except the ever active Wesley; and for suffering privations and enduring hardships, he even far exceeded his prototype; inasmuch as the former was not called, in the discharge of his important duties, to such a rugged and extensive field of labor as that into which Bishop Asbury was thrust.

During the forty-five years of his ministry in America, allowing that he preached on an average one sermon a day -- and he often preached three times on the Sabbath -- he delivered not less than sixteen thousand four hundred and twenty-five sermons, besides his lectures to the societies, and meeting classes; allowing him six thousand miles a year, which, it is believed he generally exceeded, he must have traveled during the same the about two hundred and seventy thousand miles, much of it on the very worst of roads; from the time of the organization of the Church in 1784, to the period of his death, thirty-two years, allowing an average of seven conferences a year, he sat in no less than two hundred and twenty-four annual conferences, and in their infancy their entire business devolved chiefly on himself; and he probably consecrated, including traveling and local preachers, more than four thousand persons to the sacred office! Here, then, is a missionary bishop worthy of the name, whose example may be held up for the imitation of all who engage in this sacred work.

We have spoken of his travels. He was no idle traveler, nor did he ever journey for pleasure. As before noticed, to aid him in scattering the good seed of the kingdom, he distributed religious tracts, Bibles, and Testaments; and "into whatsoever house he entered," he not only said, "Peace be to this house," but he addressed himself to its inmates personally on the subject of religion, and let their character be whatever it might, unless absolutely prohibited, he never left them without prayer. In this exercise he was indeed mighty. As he frequently remarked that "He lived in God from moment to moment," so his prayers indicated the most intimate communion with Him and with his Son Jesus Christ. Though great in the pulpit, and strong in the government which he exercised, yet prayer seemed to be his forte, the delightful element of his soul. Though never boisterous in his manner, but solemn and devout, yet his prayers were comprehensive, frequent, and fervent, and sometimes attended with such an unction from the holy one, as made it evident that he was in truth in audience with the Deity.

5. With all his other excellences, perhaps Bishop Asbury never appeared so great as in the tact of governing the conferences. He had deeply studied the character of man, and well understood the various springs of human action. But that which gave him such a commanding influence over others, was the confidence which he had inspired in his wisdom and integrity. The manner in which he had deported himself from the time he first landed on our shores, convinced all with whom he had intercourse that he "sought not his own but them," and that the high ends he aimed to accomplish, were the present and future salvation of immortal beings. His deadness to the world, to human applause, to riches and worldly honors, and his deep devotion to God, made an impression upon all who bore witness to his spirit and conduct, that he was actuated by the purest and most elevated motives and views. This pervading impression wrought that confidence in the uprightness of his intentions and wisdom of his plans, which gave him such a control over both preachers and people as enabled him to discharge the high trusts confided to him, with so much facility and to such general satisfaction. Hence the apparent ease with which he managed the complicated machinery of Methodism, guided the councils of the conferences, fixed the stations of the preachers, and otherwise exercised his authority for the general good of the entire body.

It is true, he did not escape censure. "The archers shot at him;" but "his bow abode in strength." That a man occupying such an elevated station, and exerting such an extensive influence as he did, should wholly escape censure, is more than could be expected, constituted as human society is. But these censures generally fell harmless at his feet. Armed as he was "with the whole armor

of God," he repelled "all the fiery darts" of his adversaries, and stood firm in the defense of the cause he had espoused, and in a holy consciousness of an upright mind and a blameless conduct.

It has indeed been objected to him that in the exercise of that attribute of power with which he was invested, he sometimes manifested a sternness bordering upon a hardheartedness which cannot be justified. Not knowing the sympathies of a husband and a father from actual experience,6 and accustomed as he was to make continual sacrifices himself in the cause of his Master, that he did not always make sufficient allowance for human frailties, and for the unavoidable ills which accompany a married traveling preacher, may be admitted without any impeachment of either his wisdom, goodness, or the tenderness of his nature. But those who think Bishop Asbury was unfeeling, have very much misunderstood his character. Though he suitably detested that squeamishness of nature and whining disposition which leads some men always to complain of their hard lot, yet no man was usually more alive to the happiness of others, or more assiduously endeavored to accommodate the feelings and meet the wishes of all, so far as a good conscience and the dictates of a sound judgment would allow. I have heard him in open conference request the preachers to give him a representation of their cases before making out their stations, that he might understand their peculiar circumstances, and act accordingly -- and also, even after the conference adjourned, have I known him to make alterations to accommodate a brother who thought himself aggrieved, or to meet a case not before known. In these respects he felt and acted as a father among his family.

It is true that in some instances, when oppressed with a multiplicity of cares, and assailed with numerous opposing claims, such as are known only to those who have had some experience in disposing of the stations of so many men, and perhaps thwarted in his good intentions by restless and fastidious spirits, who consulted their own interests more than the general good, he manifested some impatience and appeared unyielding in the decisions of his own mind. But if, at any time, he betrayed this weakness of human nature, like the well-tempered sword which, while it bends under the hand of him who tries its metal, quickly resumes its natural position, he soon regained his equanimity of mind, and sought the earliest opportunity to soothe the spirit of him he might have wounded.7 And whatever errors he may have committed of this sort -- and who is exempt from errors? -- it was manifest to all that he aimed at the right, and perhaps oftener hit it than those who attempted to correct him, or who complained of his defective administration. Allowing the truth of what he says in one place, "the measure he meted to others he expected to receive," he must have acted under the influence of the golden rule in meting to others their portion of ministerial labor; and his constant example refuted all the calumnies of those who accused him of laying burdens upon others which he himself was unwilling to bear.

6. His charity knew no bounds but his ability. If a "bishop must be given to hospitality," and that he may be the more hospitable, "be temperate in all things," then did Bishop Asbury exhibit this excellent trait of the episcopal character. He literally begged from door to door to collect money to supply the wants of poor preachers, and so to aid them that the "poor might have the gospel preached to them." How often, when cases of distress were revealed in an annual conference, would he arise from his chair, seize his broad-brimmed hat, and, with a pleasant smile upon his countenance, first drop in a piece of money himself, and then hand it round to the others, making all, by the humorous manner in which he did it, feel glad of the opportunity of contributing, though it might be nearly their last shilling, for such an object! Thus, by his example, he provoked others to

liberality.

I believe, notwithstanding the change of the times, he never allowed himself to take over sixty-four dollars annually, and his traveling expenses; and though through the kindness of some friends who had bequeathed it to him, he was worth, when he died, besides his traveling apparatus, about two thousand dollars, yet he touched it not, but left it to the Book Concern, merely taxing it with the gift of a Bible to each of his nominal children, and an annuity to a dependent widow of a Methodist preacher.

7. He was not only "temperate in all things," but he seemed to hold in utter abhorrence all approaches to external pomp, and the trappings of worldly glory. The same broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat, which was in vogue when he entered the ministry, his entire costume corresponding with it in plainness and cheapness, he wore until the day of his death. And though the General Conference of 1812 passed a resolution requesting him to sit for his likeness to be drawn by a portrait painter of Philadelphia, yet on the adjournment of conference, he fled so precipitately from the city, that the secretary found it necessary to write a letter of apology to the gentleman concerned, stating the reluctance of the bishop to have his portrait taken. And it was with no small difficulty that he was finally prevailed upon by his friends to gratify them with this boon. He, however, at last submitted to their importunity. The gaudy tinsels of fashion, the feastings of the rich and luxurious, the struttings of upstart young men who strive to ape the giddy and the gay, drew from him the most severe and very often most mortifying reproofs. But his own example was a justification for his severity in this respect. Yet he was always neat in his personal appearance, being as far removed from the negligence of the sloven, as he was from the fashionable airs of the supercilious fop [fop = an affectedly elegant or fashionable man; a dandy. Oxford Dict. -- DVM].

8. In this plain dress, with a mind richly stored with knowledge and a heart seasoned with grace, Bishop Asbury seemed a fit representative of a primitive evangelist, wearing not the tinseled miter and flowing robes which decorate the persons of some modern bishops, but the grave attire which became an apostle, with his head silvered over with locks which had grown gray in a long and laborious service of his divine Master. Having a slender constitution, abstemious in his habits and living, suffering often from disease, and constantly exposed to wind and weather, burdened also with "the care of all the churches," there was rather a somber cast upon his countenance, and at times somewhat of a forbidding aspect in an eye naturally bright and piercing.

Yet Bishop Asbury was not generally melancholy. Though at times subject to depression of spirits, and to temporary gloom, yet generally he was of a lively and cheerful disposition; sometimes, in conversation with his friends, humorous and playful, yet always directing his anecdotes, of which he had a fund, to some good end, to render vice the more odious or virtue the more lovely.

9. In the discharge of his official duties in consecrating men to the office of deacons, elders, or bishops, he was remarkably solemn, dignified, and impressive. Who that has ever heard him say, in that solemn and commanding tone of voice which was to him natural and unaffected, "Take thou authority to preach the word of God, and to administer the holy sacraments in the congregation," has not felt a sensation of awe come over his mind, from the impressive and solemn manner in which the words were pronounced! In reading the several parts of the consecration services, he would sometimes, from the overflowings of a full heart, break forth in an extemporaneous effusion,

in language of deep affection, admonition, or instruction, in a manner which indicated the lively interest which he felt in the welfare of those to whom he addressed himself. But these extemporaneous addresses were always short, pithy, and directly to the point; for Bishop Asbury never wearied an audience with a dull prosing harangue on common-place topics, as if previously prepared for the nonce [the time being], and much less on occasions when an attempt to mend is only to mar the beautifully appropriate services, as laid down in the examination of candidates, and in the ordinal of the book. And the manner in which he propounded those pointed questions, plain and intelligible in themselves, made them sufficiently impressive without the aid of a lengthened comment, which more frequently weakens than strengthens the sense; and the holy breathing of a devout soul which accompanied the devotional parts of the ordination services, which was so apparent when performed by Bishop Asbury, superseded the necessity of any extemporaneous effusions, especially in language less appropriate. This he knew perfectly well, and acted accordingly.

Yet, sometimes, when he arose from his knees, and commenced reading, he would occasionally throw sentences, which for their point and appropriateness, would fall upon the ear with a force and emphasis that could hardly be resisted; and they were the more valuable because they seemed to come unpremeditatedly, springing up from a heart overflowing with the holiest and therefore the kindliest feeling.

I remember on one occasion, when laying his hands upon a young man who was kneeling at the altar to receive the office of deacon, the bishop, instead of commencing in the ordinary way, lifting up his eyes toward heaven, with his soul heaving under a pressure he seemed to feel, began thus: -- "From the ends of the earth we call upon three, O Lord God Almighty, to pour upon this thy servant the Holy Spirit, that he may have authority," &c.; and this was accompanied with such an unction from the Holy One, that the young minister was suddenly suffused in tears, while his nerves became so relaxed that he could hardly sustain himself on his knees. At another time, being somewhat displeased at the gay attire of one of the candidates, and perceiving, as was supposed, an air of self-confidence in another, the bishop burst out into a strain of rebuke, mingled with the tenderest expostulation, in a manner which made the ears of all that heard it to tingle, creating, in the mean time, a sudden sensation of abhorrence against every thing beneath the dignity, the gravity, and the holiness of the ministerial character. The words he used on this occasion are forgotten by the writer, but they were few, well chosen, and delivered with that deep feeling and solemnity, which no man unless he possess the same gift need attempt to imitate, lest he come under the suspicion of uttering what he neither feels nor understands.

These sententious [pithy, concise, moralizing], and often abrupt sentences, usually made a more deep and lasting impression upon the mind and heart than the most finished composition could have done, because they were thoughts of sudden inspiration, uttered spontaneously from the fullness of a heart always hearing upon it an impress of the divine image-a heart breathing in an atmosphere sanctified by the constant presence of his God.

What a thrill did he send through the congregation on a certain occasion, when, after having completed the ordination service in the city of Albany, he lifted up the Holy Bible, and exclaimed with an emphasis peculiar to himself, "This is the minister’s battle-axe. This is his sword. Take this therefore and conquer!" These same words might have been uttered by another, and yet produce

no effect. For it was not the words simply, but the manner and the occasion of using them which invested them with that sublimity, that solemn grandeur, and overwhelming pathos and power which produced the thrilling effect I have in vain attempted to describe. Those now living [in 1838] who have heard him may, however, comprehend my meaning, and hence make up from their own recollection for the imperfection of my description.

10. Another trait in the character of Bishop Asbury was, the influence which he exerted over others in the social circle. In whatever company he appeared, whether religious or irreligious, whether high or low, learned or unlearned, he generally had such ascendancy over the minds of others, that he could easily lead the conversation, and thereby exert an influence in favor of religion highly beneficial to all concerned. Where he was known, such was the respect felt for his character, that great deference was paid to his judgment, and hence a greater desire was generally manifested by others to listen to his discourse, than to intrude their own opinions in the social circle.

It has already been observed that he seldom, if indeed ever, either visited others or received visitors, without praying with them before they separated. On a certain occasion, being indisposed, two of the most eminent physicians were employed to afford him their medical advice. When they had ended their services, the bishop asked them the amount of their demand. They very courteously and respectfully replied, that they desired nothing more than his prayers. The bishop then remarked that he never suffered himself to be in debt, and therefore he would discharge this obligation without delay, and instantly bowed upon his knees, and offered up a most fervent prayer to almighty God for the salvation of his generous medical friends. This took them upon surprise. It is said, indeed, that one of them was skeptically inclined, and was somewhat abashed to find himself so unceremoniously brought upon his knees for the first time in his life, to listen to the prayer of a Christian bishop, offered up in the name of a Savior in whom he had little or no faith. The other who was in attendance, the late Dr. Benjamin Rush, with whom Bishop Asbury was on terms of intimacy, being as eminent for his Christian virtues as he was for his medical skill, was no less edified than delighted in this opportunity of participating with his friend in an act of devotion so highly creditable to his head and heart. This perfect command of himself and of others enabled him to keep at a respectful distance all frivolous company, to awe into silence the facetious witling, as well as to secure the respect, love, and confidence of the wise and good with whom he associated. And though sometimes, in his extensive travels, he was thrown into promiscuous assemblages of men, especially when obliged to lodge in the public inns, he always availed himself of the opportunity drop a word for God, nor would he depart without proposing prayer, and seldom, such influence had his personal appearance over the minds of others, was he denied the privilege of performing this duty.

11. It may be expected that I should speak of his faults. But what need of this? Have not all human beings human frailties? Why then dwell upon that which is common to man? But all men have not the virtues which adorned Bishop Asbury. These therefore may be selected, not so much indeed in praise of the man, as to "glorify the grace of God in him," which wrought mightily, to the destroying of all sinful desires, and which enabled him to "wrestle" necessarily against "principalities and powers," and to "triumph in Christ Jesus" over all opposition. In the midst, therefore, of these infirmities which are common to man, this grace of God in Christ shone out consciously, made him equal to his herculean task, and finally crowned him "more than a conqueror through Him who loved him." But the sun has its spots. And though mindful of the maxim that we should "tread

lightly on the ashes of the dead," I will venture to mention two things in which I think, with great deference indeed, he erred in his administration. In the first place, he and Dr. Coke having been baffled in their earlier attempts to establish seminaries of learning, I think Bishop Asbury, becoming discouraged from these failures, was at length too indifferent to this subject, especially in the ministry.

Probably having beheld the deleterious effects upon the Church by trusting to learning alone as a qualification for the ministry, and also seeing the disgusting pedantry of some who had a smattering knowledge of the sciences, he might have imbibed an undue prejudice against learning and a learned ministry, fearing that learning and deep piety were not easily associated in the same man. He had also long been a witness to the deadening effects of a lifeless, though learned ministry, upon the interests of true religion on the one hand, and the enlivening effects of a spiritual though unlearned ministry on the other; and he doubtless persuaded himself that it was extremely difficult to pursue the one without sacrificing the other. And as to general education, he thought that the Methodists were not called to devote their energies to the promotion of this, but to preach the gospel, not considering probably that this might be done without leaving the other undone. But whatever consideration might have influenced him, it is certain that after the destruction of Cokesbury College, and the failure of the district schools, he did not sufficiently encourage the pursuit of literature and science, and that some preachers who, in despite of every obstruction thrown in their way, manifested a determination to acquire all the knowledge within their reach, were sometimes checked in their progress from a fear of incurring the suspicion of being more ambitious to shine in the galaxy of literature than to be useful as ministers of the sanctuary. And it is highly probable that some who gave evidence of the existence of this weakness, by drawing forth the rebukes of the bishop, may have given birth to the suspicion. He knew perfectly well that "knowledge" without charity "puffeth up" the soul with vanity; and that while it is possible to be "spoiled with philosophy and vin conceit," it is equally possible for the minister of Christ, though destitute of the embellishments of human literature and science, to be useful to his fellow-men. But though these considerations are offered as an apology for the indifference manifested by Bishop Asbury on the subject of education, they are not intended as a justifiable excuse for its general neglect for so many years by the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was a fault which will require years of bitter repentance and assiduous amendment to atone for, as it has thrown us behind the age in scientific and mental improvement, with whatever care and diligence we may now redeem the time. It is, however, cause of gratitude that a redeeming spirit has gone abroad, which augurs well for the future prosperity and rising glory of the Church. But whatever indifference he might have manifested toward the cause of education in general, he by no means neglected the improvement of his own mind. Though his constant traveling and the other indispensable duties of his office, prevented him from any regular and systematic pursuit of knowledge, yet he was, as far as his circumstances would permit, a hard student, a man of general information, much addicted to reading and study, and a close observer of passing events, of men, manners, and things. He was, indeed, in the habit of reading the sacred Scriptures in the languages in which they were first written, though his modesty in this respect prevented him from making any ostentatious show of learning. It is manifest, however, from his journal, though they were all erased in the revision which was made under his own inspection up to the year 1807, and was well known to his friends, that he was in the habit of referring for the illustration of difficult texts, to the original Scriptures, and to the critical interpretation of certain passages. Such, indeed, was the rich store of his knowledge,

that he could bring "from his treasury things new and old," and he applied it all for the promotion of experimental and practical godliness. The other defect in Bishop Asbury's administration, as I think, was the not encouraging the people sufficiently in making provision for their ministers, particularly for men of families. He did not, certainly, wish them to suffer from poverty, for he often, as we have before seen, exerted himself, and gave his own money to supply their wants; but while he wished them to be above suffering pecuniary distress, he seemed to fear, that if they were too well off as it respects this world's goods, they would lose their zeal and spirituality, and thus cease to be useful; and as it was very congenial to that covetous disposition so natural to men, to withhold when they are not compelled to pay, many such quoted Bishop Asbury to justify their want of practical liberality.8

He was, no doubt justified in his fears respecting the freezing effects of worldly prosperity upon the spiritual interests of the soul, by the example of many, as well as by the admonitory language of the Saviour respecting the danger of riches; but it should be recollected that extreme poverty is as often associated with the vices of murmuring and fretfulness as riches are with luxurious indulgence; and that therefore, to avoid both the one and the other, a reasonable competency is the most desirable way, agreeably to the prayer, "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me."

Bishop Asbury considered the itinerant ministry, under God, as the grand instrument of the world's salvation. To support this therefore, in all its vigor and spirituality, he bent all his energies. And he feared that were the ministry to become wealthy there would be so many temptations to locate that they could hardly be resisted. Hence, to prevent a catastrophe which must come upon the Church by the substitution of a located for a traveling ministry, he thought it essential to keep it aloof from the world, by preventing it from accumulating worldly property; yet it may be questioned whether more have not been induced to locate from a feeling or a fear of poverty, than by the enjoyment of a competency. This, at least, has been the pretense, and no doubt, in numerous instances, the real cause. And had a competent provision been they made for the support of itinerant ministers, and for the suitable education of their children, I have no doubt we should have been far stronger every way, in wisdom, in numbers, in ministerial talent and usefulness, if not also in holiness and general prosperity.

Thus have I, according to the best of my judgment, and under a consciousness of the infirmities which are the common lot of humanity, honestly expressed my views of the character of one of the most holy, laborious, and useful men that ever trod the American soil. Others may have exceeded him in general literature, in systematic and various branches of knowledge; but in the depth and genuineness of his experience, in his knowledge of the human heart and character, as well as of theological truth, in the art of government, in varied and useful labors, in the extent of his travels, and severity of his sufferings in the cause of Christ, he stands perhaps unrivaled among American preachers. The defects above noticed no more detract from the general excellence of his character than the fleeting clouds do from the glory of the sun. They are lost amid the general effulgence which shines out from every aspect of his moral and intellectual countenance. He has, indeed, imprinted his image upon the institutions of the Church he was instrumental in building up in this western world; and he "finished his course with joy," went down to the grave with an unsullied reputation, and bequeathed to his brethren in the ministry and to the Church generally a name and a character not only untarnished, but resplendent with every ministerial and Christian

virtue.

Concluding Remarks When I commenced writing, my intention was to complete the history by bringing it down to the present time, in two moderate-sized volumes, but it has lengthened out on my hands far beyond my expectation, when I began; and being frequently exhorted by friends in whose judgment I have much confidence, not to abridge, and my own convictions coinciding with theirs respecting the expediency of furnishing a complete history of all our affairs, so as to give the reader a full view and a right understanding of our doctrine, economy, labors, and success, as well as the difficulties with which we have to contend, -- I am thus compelled to close this volume here, without even adding, as I intended, a chapter in relation to the Book Concern. On reviewing my work I am very far from being satisfied with what I have done. In addition to some incidental errors, which seem almost unavoidable in carrying a work through the press, though I have labored most assiduously to present every thing in consecutive order, yet the whole appears more like scraps and shreds than like a connected history. The reader may rest assured, however, that this was unavoidable, at least with the present writer, from the very manner in which he has attempted, year after year, to weave the materials together. And the labor necessary to produce a work of this character can be known only to those who may have made the trial, as I have frequency labored for hours, turning from one document to another, comparing and collating, in order to sift out the truth, to ascertain a fact that may have been recorded in a line or two. This perplexing labor might, indeed, have been avoided, by writing what is called the philosophy of history, and by sliding over important facts, neglecting true historical details: and slurring over difficulties without attempting to remove them. The work, nevertheless, has, on the whole, been pleasant and profitable to myself, by increasing, as I humbly trust, my gratitude to God for having done so much for this branch of his Church.

I have aimed at truth -- and in telling it have ventured to commend or censure, as I thought that sterling attribute required. In doing this, however, I have not lost sight of that consciousness of fallibility which so strikingly distinguishes human beings, and have uttered my thoughts with the same cautious freedom and impartiality with which I hope myself to be judged and spoken of by others. With these remarks the present volume is dismissed, by only adding that whether I shall proceed further in the history is somewhat uncertain, and will depend on those contingencies over which human beings have but little control.

ENDNOTES 1 See note A at the end of the volume [Below Endnote 8].

2 This event, with the causes which led to it, belongs to another period of our history, and will be noticed in its proper place.

3 It is stated, on good authority, that in the time of the war, a number of clergymen in the city of New York held a meeting for the purpose of deliberating on the propriety of praying for their civil rulers, and they finally came to the grave conclusion that they could not do it conscientiously. This, however, was by no means the case with all, though I believe most of the clergy in the eastern states were very much opposed to the measures of the government.

4 The preachers in Canada, owing to the war, are not included in this enumeration, which makes the apparent decrease: nor are the members, else the increase would have appeared nearly three thousand more.

5 For a few years past, some of the older members of the New York conference, deprecating the weakening effects of these numerous locations, determined to hold on to the itinerancy themselves, whatever the sacrifice might be, and induce as many others as possible to follow their example.

6 It is generally known, I believe, that Bishop Asbury was never married. And as it will give the reader an idea of his thoughts on this subject, together with the reasons for his celibacy, I will here insert them, as I find them in his Journal, vol. iii, p. 128.

"If I should the in celibacy, which I think quite probable, I give the following reasons for what can scarcely he called my choice. I was called in my fourteenth year; I began my public exercises between sixteen and seventeen; at twenty-one I traveled; at twenty-six I came to America; thus far I had reasons enough for a single life. It had been my intention of returning to Europe at thirty years of age; but the war continued, and it was ten years before we had a settled, lasting peace: this was no time to marry or be given in marriage. At forty-nine I was ordained superintendent bishop in America. Among the duties imposed upon me by my office was that of traveling extensively, and I could hardly expect to find a woman with grace enough to enable her to live but one week out of the fifty-two with her husband: besides, what right has any man to take advantage of the affections of a woman, make her his wife, and by a voluntary absence subvert the whole order and economy of the marriage state, by separating those whom neither God, nature, nor the requirements of civil society permit long to he cut asunder: It is neither just nor generous. I may add to this that I had little money, and with this little administered to the necessities of a beloved mother until I was fifty-seven if I have done wrong, I hope God and the sex will forgive me: it is my duty now to bestow the pittance I may have to spare upon the widows and fatherless girls, and poor married men."

7 As an evidence of this disposition of mind, so amiable in itself, I give the following extract of a letter which I have in my possession, dated in New York, May 7, 1812. It seems the bishop had before written to the person to whom this letter was directed, in which the latter thought the bishop in some indirect way, had accused him of a species of duplicity, and the preacher had requested an explanation. To this the bishop answers in the following manner: --

"My Dear Brother and Son: -- It is impossible for me to enter into explanations. Unhappily suspicions have taken place, I said, I think, among us, including myself. I confess I had better not have said any thing. I did not mean a charge against you nor any innocent person. I am sorry I am not more prudent; but when I am called upon so often to speak and write, I am not sufficiently on my guard. I hope you will bear with me. I am persuaded of your uprightness. Brother * * * * has spoken in the highest terms of you to me, in word and letter. You will pardon me, and pray that I may say, [blotted text here -- DVM] and preach, and write better. "I remain thine in Jesus, "Francis Asbury."

I need hardly say that this letter melted the heart of the young preacher into tenderness, entirely removed his apprehensions, and gave him a more exalted opinion of his venerable bishop than he ever had before, and indeed made him feel ashamed of himself for having laid the bishop under an obligation to make such a concession.

Many such instances of ingenuous acknowledgment, in the same conciliatory strain, might be mentioned, greatly to the credit of his head and heart. As he was conscious that he was too fallible net to err, so he was too wise and good to persist in an error when convinced he had committed one; a virtue of rare occurrence among those who willfully go astray, because the same perverse disposition which impels them to the one prevents them from the performance of the other. Sincere and honest himself, whatever errors he may have committed, they were of a venial character, and were therefore atoned for with the same frankness and readiness with which an honest mind would forgive and forget them.

8 A certain steward of a circuit, when urged to exert himself to make a more ample provision for the support of their preachers, remarked that he had heard Bishop Asbury pray to the Lord to keep the preachers poor! The presiding elder to whom this was said replied, that "such a prayer in that place was quite unnecessary, as he and the people would, without any such prompting, see that this was done to perfection."

Note A The following extract of a letter I received from the Rev. William Case, in answer to one I wrote to him requesting information respecting the state of things on the lines, feeling, as I did, very anxious for the fate of those who were exposed to the calamities of war, many of whom, I was well aware, might be among my former acquaintances. The affecting description of the scene at Sackett's Harbor, contained in the following extract, struck me with such force at the time, that I received permission of the author to make it public. In answer to this, under date of July 24, 1814, the writer says, -- "I submit to your wisdom and prudence the propriety of publishing part of my last letter to you." Of this permission, however, I have not availed myself until now, and it is published at this time with a view to illustrate the horrors of war, as well as to show that its anticipations mentioned in the text were fully realized, as also to exhibit the pious concern which was felt by God's faithful servants for those who were compelled to suffer in the calamities of a war which was then raging along the frontiers and in Canada.

Extract of a letter from the Rev. William Case, dated Utica, May 29, 1813

"I was present a few hours after the battle at Sackett's harbor, where I witnessed a scene of death and carnage more moving than all I ever saw before. Numbers lay cold in death! Many were groaning with their wounds and bleeding in their gore! ... Myself and two more preachers were in Rutland, about ten miles from the harbor, and were about to commence clearing off a camp ground, but on hearing the cannon and constant roll of small arms we gave up the idea of work, and betook ourselves to prayer. Such sensations I never realized before! We knew many of our acquaintances were there, among whom were brethren in the Lord. We thought on the condition of women whose husbands and sons were exposed, the welfare of our country, where so much interest was at stake, and the honor of the nation concerned! But more than all this a thousand times, the immortal interest of thousands who were engaged in the contest. And here I know not that I felt any partiality for Americans more than for Englishmen: all of one creation -- alike the subjects or redeeming blood, all accountable to the King of kings, and deserving the same condemnation! With these reflections we immediately called the household and fell upon our knees in prayer, and the Lord poured on us the spirit of supplication. We wept aloud and prayed most fervently to the Ruler of nations and the Savior of men that he would pardon our national crimes, save men from death, protect the harbor from conquest, and have mercy on the precious

souls of those who were constantly falling in battle. You may suppose that the constant sound of the instruments of death gave weight to our concern, and ardency to our petitions with, all that our grace could inspire.

"We then mounted our horses and set out for the scene of action, that if possible we might afford some assistance as ministers, and administer consolation to the wounded and dying. When we reached the harbor the British had retreated to their shipping, leaving part of their dead and wounded on the field of battle. These, with our own men, were brought in from the field, the dead were stretched side by side in rows, and the wounded on beds and straw in as comfortable a condition as could be expected. We were conducted by a friend to the several hospitals, where I saw the distress of about eighty wounded. I cannot describe my feelings, to hear the groans of the wounded and dying, some pierced through the body, others through the head, some bruised by the falling of the timbers of trees, others with broken bones, and one whose face was shot away (save his under jaw) by a grape shot. He was yet breathing strong. This was a shocking view ... Some were in such pan they could not be conversed with, others being fatigued and broken of their rest were asleep. But we conversed with many who manifested seriousness, whom we pointed to the suffering bleeding Savior, and exhorted them to look to him for mercy. Here I saw how useful a faithful and feeling chaplain might be. The best opportunity would present in alleviating the miseries of men in some degree, by procuring such things as the distressed most needed, and by comforting them in their afflictions. And here he might be heard though at other times his counsel would be slighted.

"In conversation with the British wounded I found a serious young man who had been a hearer of the Methodists in Ireland, Quebec, and Upper Canada; his name was Hornbrook, and he belonged to the 100th regiment. Also a brother, Charles Pratt, one of our own militia, badly wounded. Both were very glad to see and talk with their preachers.

"Having been without bread a long time, many of the militia were very hungry. Some wanted coffee, some milk, some bread. We gave them the biscuits we carried down, but could procure no milk for them. I really desired to stay with them, my heart thirsted to do them good. One young man who was wounded told me his brother was killed in battle. His parents, I think, live east of Connecticut River ... We were then conducted to the remains of Col. Mills, of the Albany volunteers. He and the British General Gray were laid out together, both brave, "by mutual wounds expired," but now slept peaceably together. Among the wounded I heard no swearing. In this battle several of our brethren suffered. Brother Graves, an ensign in the militia, living near the harbor, and several others, were taken prisoners. He has since written from Montreal to his family. Brother Fay, of Ellisburgh, was wounded in the first part of the action, and in attempting to make his way through the woods toward home, fell in with a body of Indians who had landed farther up, who shot him several times, scalped and mangled him in a horrible manner. His body was found some time after and interred by his father near the place. It seems the Indians were somehow interrupted, and in their hasty flight left the scalp and knife, which were found near the body. Brother F.'s money was found near him on a root; his scalp is in the possession of the widow.

"On leaving the harbor we called on some brethren, who, with their neighbors, carried down several gallons of milk, and distributed among the wounded. We also represented their case to the congregation at the close of the camp meeting, when twenty-five dollars were contributed and put

into proper hands, who purchased coffee, sugar, and other delicacies which they most needed, and from time to time distributed among them. For this they were very thankful, and both English and American blessed me with many good wishes when I again visited the hospital four weeks ago. I found Hornbrook had recovered so far as to be able to hobble about. Of about seventy-five of our wounded twenty-one died; of twenty-four British wounded seven had died. They carried most of their wounded off the field to their boats in the of battle. Brother Pratt has also recovered ... The body of Col. Mills was removed to Watertown, where his funeral was attended by a numerous assembly of soldiers and citizens, where a sermon was preached on Prov. xxii, 1, when several traits in the character of the amiable colonel were proposed for imitation. The assembly were moved and wept.

"Our preachers on the lines have frequent opportunities of preaching to the soldiers, who are very fond of hearing. We find it necessary to avoid all political discussions, both in public and private." The following extract from the same writer will show the deep interest he and others of a like spirit felt for those who were suffering the consequences of this bloody contest.

Albany, Oct. 26, 1813 "This moment I have returned from a visit to the barracks, in Greenbush, in company with brother Merwin.

"Having been kindly indulged by Col. Larned, commandant to the prisoners, we most joyfully embraced the privilege of proclaiming to them the sweet liberty of the gospel. They were called together by their officers, and a more attentive congregation I never expect to address again. As soon as we began to sing there was weeping; and immediately on our kneeling to prayer they all knelt down, and here and there we heard the voice of Amen to our petition for their salvation. I could not solve this till after the service. To my great surprise and mingled grief and joy, several brethren and acquaintances from Canada came and made themselves known to us; they were militia in arms, and were taken near Fort George; among these were Messrs. George Lawrence, leader at Four Mile Creek, William Clinton, from the head of the lake, and Russell Hawley, brother of David Hawley of Bay of Quintie; their captivity was an affliction which made friends more consoling.

"By them I was informed, that in consequence of the troubles there had been no preaching in that part for some time: that Mr. Ryan and others were traveling and doing all they could for God and souls: that none of our brethren in that part had been killed.

"Brother Merwin has permission to preach to them every week, and he has appointed to do so every Tuesday afternoon, if the weather will permit. They are a mixed multitude of English, French, &c., amounting to about five hundred and fifty-nine, but were very anxious for meetings. Brother Merwin is to send them Bibles from the society in this place, and other books. O, pray for them!"

Much individual suffering was experienced in various places, and many instances of Christian sympathy were exhibited by ministers as well as private Christians, highly creditable to themselves and recommendatory of that religion which breathes good-will to man. On the return of peace, the first national ship which anchored in the port of New York, under the command of Commodore Chauncey, by his permission, was visited by one of our preachers, who delivered a sermon to the officers and men, which was listened to with serious attention, and for some time thereafter regular preaching was kept up at the navy-yard in Brooklyn, and at the barracks on Governor’s Island and

the other military posts in the bay of New York. These efforts have been crowned with success, many of the sailors and soldiers having given evidence of a thorough reformation of heart and life.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume III -- Book V Volume III, Published in 1841 (From The Year 1816 To The Year 1828)

CHAPTER 3 From the Death of Bishop Asbury to the Close of the General Conference of 1816 In the closing part of the last volume an incidental allusion was made to a controversy which arose in this country between us and other denominations, but more particularly the Calvinists.

It is well known that not long after Mr. Wesley began his career of usefulness, he was joined by Mr. Whitefield, whose stirring eloquence in the pulpits of the Establishment created a great sensation among both clergy and people, and drew such multitudes to hear him, that he ventured, in imitation of his Divine Master, into the fields, where he proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to listening thousands. Wesley soon followed the example, and great was the effect produced by their joint exertions in this novel way of preaching Christ and him crucified.

Unhappily, to human appearance, a difference arose between these two great and good men. Whitefield, being much opposed and persecuted by the lukewarm clergy of the Establishment, gradually contracted an intimacy with the Dissenters, and, on his coming to America, became acquainted with the pious and talented Edwards -- afterward president of Princeton College -- then settled at Northampton, Massachusetts. Finding among these people more of the appearance of evangelical doctrine, and of experimental and practical piety, than with those of the Establishment, Whitefield soon drank in their doctrine of predestination and its correlatives, eternal election and final perseverance. This led to a controversy between him and Wesley, which eventuated in a partial separation -- a separation in their respective fields of labor and sentiment, though not in heart and affection -- for they always esteemed each other highly as devoted Christian ministers. This took place in the year 1741, Whitefield rallying under the banner of Calvinistic decrees, patronized by Lady Huntingdon, and supported by many of what were called the evangelical clergy of the Establishment in England, and by the most zealous of the Presbyterians and Congregationalists of America -- while Wesley and his brother Charles hoisted the flag of Arminius, fortifying themselves with the standards of their own church, and defending themselves by direct appeals to the Holy Scriptures and the dictates of common sense and sound reason. This brought on a protracted warfare between the parties, both from the pulpit and the press, during which the doctrines and measures of Mr. Wesley passed through the severest ordeal of critical investigation, and most heart-searching appeals to Scripture and reason. This brought the vicar of Madeley, the pious and peace-loving Fletcher, from his retreat in the obscure parish where he had chosen to labor for the salvation of souls, and obliged him, quite contrary to his pacific disposition, to buckle on the armor of a polemic, in which he acquitted himself with singular success. He, indeed, seemed to be providentially raised up for the crisis, and he entered the arena of controversy fully furnished by sound and various learning, by deep and genuine piety, by meekness, patience, and love, and by a power of comprehension and nice discrimination, which peculiarly fitted him to sustain with dignity, firmness, and success, the high and holy cause he was

called to defend. It is not saying too much to affirm, that he vanquished all his antagonists, cleared the field of controversy of the thorns and briers of error, and at the same time maintained the spirit and temper of the Christian, while he powerfully wielded the sword of truth, and brought the warfare to a successful issue, sustaining through the entire conflict the character of an able divine, a sound moralist, a consistent minister of Jesus Christ, and an acute and conclusive reasoner.

Though assailed often by bitter railing and biting sarcasm, he maintained the gravity of the minister of Christ and the meekness of the consistent Christian. If at any time he turned the weapon of irony upon his antagonists -- as he sometimes did with most powerful effect -- it was divested of the venom of bitterness, and dipped in the sweet waters of brotherly love. His masterly defenses of Wesleyan theology remain unanswered, and, it is believed, unanswerable, and will long remain as a monument of his piety, of his devotion to the cause of truth, as well as a lofty beacon to apprise future mariners who may embark upon the rough sea of controversy, of the dangerous shoals and rocks upon which so many heedless men have been wrecked -- at the same time distinctly and accurately marking the channel of truth through which the spiritual ark may be safely guided to the harbor of eternal repose.

Armed with the panoply thus furnished them, the Wesleyan missionaries who first visited our shores were prepared to promulgate and defend the doctrines and to enforce the discipline of their founder. As before said, however, they mainly insisted on experimental and practical godliness, urging upon all, high and low, rich and poor, the necessity of a change of heart, -- such a change as should be productive of a reformation of life and conduct, in order to insure everlasting salvation. Instead of exhausting their strength in controversial preaching on those debatable points about which they differed from Calvinists, Unitarians, Arians, and Universalists, they generally contented themselves with a plain and unvarnished statement of their doctrinal views, with urging upon the people experimental and practical religion, and with defending themselves when assailed by others. This defense, however, often became necessary, more especially in the northern and eastern states, where the people were more accustomed to a critical examination of doctrinal points, and questions of doubtful disputation. For some time, however, the number of Methodists in this country was so inconsiderable, that other denominations affected to treat them with silent contempt; and if occasionally they condescended to notice them at all, it was more in the way of caricature and misrepresentation than by sober argument, or an attempt at a fair and direct refutation of their doctrine and usages. The High Churchman would sneer at our ordination, and, wrapping himself in the cloak of apostolical succession, with an air of assumed dignity, prate about "John Wesley’s lay bishops," as though these jokes were sufficient to put us out of countenance. Others, panoplied in the stern decrees of Calvin, and priding themselves in their exclusive orthodoxy, would tantalize us with "salvation by the merit of good works, the omnipotency of free-will, and the unsoundness of our doctrine of justification;" while some would smile at "baby baptism," as an affront offered to the Deity, and an innovation upon apostolic usage. These all united to ridicule our itinerant plan of preaching the gospel, as a novelty which must soon come to an end; and, to give point and poignancy to their sarcasms, our itinerant preachers were called "circuit-riders," as if to ride a circuit were their distinguishing badge, not caring to inform the people whether as preachers or itinerant physicians.

These reproaches were borne with as much patience as possible, and our ministers continued to deserve them more and more by persevering in their peculiar work, and by endeavoring to prove

their falsity by a faithful exhibition of the true doctrines of their church, and also to refute the slanderous representations of their mode of life and manner of preaching, by the exemplariness of their conduct. To those who became intimately acquainted with them from personal intercourse, they commended themselves for the depth and uniformity of their piety, as well as by the soundness of their doctrine and the laboriousness of their lives. In all such a confidence was inspired in the strictness of their integrity, as well as in the wisdom of their plans of doing good to the souls and bodies of men.

But, as before said, these controversies and modes of defense were confined chiefly to the pulpit, and to a republication of a few of Wesley's and Fletcher's doctrinal and practical tracts and sermons, the reading of which was confined mostly to our own societies and their immediate friends.; we had no writers of note on this side the Atlantic, and no periodical through which we could speak to the public ear; for, as I have before remarked, after the discontinuance of the Arminian Magazine, in 1790 -- two volumes only having been published -- with the exception of a few straggling pamphlets, which scarcely survived the day of their birth, our press was as silent as the grave in respect to uttering a sentiment from an American author, and the Magazine was not resumed until the year 1818, and even then, as its respected editor announced, with much fear and trembling for its success.

Yet, as the Methodists increased in number and respectability, and their influence upon the public mind was proportionately augmented, other denominations began to awake from their slumber, to look about them for other means than those heretofore used for offensive warfare, as well as to defend themselves against the inroads which Methodism was making upon their congregations, and the impression it produced upon the public mind. For these "circuit-riders" were no idle shepherds. They not only rode circuits, but they "went everywhere preaching the kingdom of God," breaking over parish lines, entering into every open door, and with a loud, distinct voice, proclaiming to all they could prevail on to hear them, that they must "fear God and give glory to his name." Hence the opposition to our distinctive doctrines and modes of procedure became more serious and systematical; our opponents began to feel the necessity of meeting us in the field of argument with more fairness; and instead of drawing ridiculous caricatures for the amusement of themselves and their readers, to state our doctrines as we hold them. This, we say, became necessary, for the eyes of the public were becoming somewhat enlightened in respect to what Wesleyan Methodists really believed and taught, and were thence led to hear, and read, and compare for themselves. The consequence was, that the offensive features of Calvinism were becoming more and more repulsive, and the creed by which its nominal followers were distinguished underwent some modifications, better suited, as was thought, to the temper of the times. Thus, instead of ascribing the final destinies of mankind to an omnipotent decree, the subtle distinction was introduced between the natural and moral abilities of men, making the latter the only potent barrier to the sinner's salvation. This theory, which for some time was confined to comparatively few, seems to have been an improvement upon President Edwards's system "On the Will," and was invented by Dr. Hopkins, of Newport, R. I., and thenceforth called, by way of distinction, Hopkinsianism. This, it was thought by many, would enable them to meet and obviate the objections which were brought against the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, by placing the criminality of all sinful actions in the perversity of the human will, called "moral inability," especially as they contended that the sinner possessed a "natural ability" to do all which

God required. Hence the doctrine of eternal decrees, as taught by John Calvin, though still held in theory, was studiously kept out of sight by those who embraced these new views, and the theory of "natural ability and moral inability" was substituted in its place. This subtle theory, however, by no means answered the proposed end. The Methodists still insisted that this "natural ability," however potent, could never overcome the efficient operation of an immutable decree, which had fixed the destinies of all mankind before the worlds were made -- nor would the moral ability or inability alter that which had been made unalterable by the eternal fiat [determination -- DVM] of the Almighty.

These conflicting theories somewhat changed the points of controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians. While Wesley and Fletcher were compelled, from their position, to meet their antagonists on the old points of controversy which had been mooted in the Protestant world from the days of John Calvin, his system had now assumed, under the improving hands of some of his most distinguished followers, so many new traits, that new arguments of defense were called for by the advocates of universal atonement and conditional salvation. Under these circumstances, many, on both sides of these controverted points, thought it their duty to enter the field of theological discussion. This they did with all the ardor of new recruits. And among those who distinguished themselves in conducting this theological warfare, might be mentioned men who had grown gray in the cause of Christ, as well as others of younger years, whose youthful temperament may have betrayed them into a harshness of expression, on some occasions, incompatible with the meekness and soberness of the Christian minister -- faults of human beings, for which the Christian system alone provides an adequate atonement and mode of forgiveness. At length circumstances led the author of this History into a public debate with a Presbyterian minister, which was held in the town of Durham, N.Y., May 10, 1810. The discussion involved the "Five Points," so long mooted by Calvinists and Arminians, and some of the other subjects of dispute already indicated. Not long after, the pastor of the congregation in whose church the debate was conducted, the Rev. Ralph Williston, published a volume of sermons, in which he entered into a discussion of the topics which had been the subjects of controversy in the public debate, and concluded the whole with an examination into the character of "Satan’s ministers," in which it was broadly insinuated that our ministers, on several accounts, might be classed under that denomination. As it was thought by many that these sermons gave a distorted view of some of our doctrines, and must exert an injurious influence upon our ministry, a reply was published in 1815, in six letters addressed to the author of the sermons, in which an attempt was made to rectify his mistakes, to refute his arguments in favor of the Calvinistic and Hopkinsian theory, and to vindicate the doctrines and ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Some portions of these letters were severely animadverted upon by the Rev. Mr. Haskil, of Vermont, to which an answer was published in a small book, called "Predestination Examined." Soon after, Mr. Williston sent out a second volume, in reply to the "Errors of Hopkinsianism," the title of the book containing the letters addressed to that gentleman, called "A Vindication of some of the essential Doctrines of the Reformation." This attempt to identify the peculiarities of Hopkinsianism with the essential doctrines of the reformers, called forth "The Reformer Reformed," the title being suggested by the impression, that if the Reformation carried with it errors of such a pernicious consequence, as it was believed must flow from the doctrine of an efficient operation of universal and immutable decrees, the Reformation itself needed reforming -- a sentiment not retracted on more mature consideration.

It by no means becomes me to express an opinion of the character or results of this protracted discussion, though I may be allowed to indulge a hope that it had its use in bringing our doctrines more prominently before the public, in rectifying some erroneous impressions respecting our ministry and usages, and in awakening public attention to the precise points of difference between us and our Calvinistic brethren. The subject, however, has been thus introduced here, because these things belong properly to the history of the times, and also to show the position we occupied in the ecclesiastical affairs of the country, as well as the duties which seemed to devolve on us to defend, as far as we were able, our doctrines and usages from all unjust imputations. It will be found in the sequel that we were called upon to sustain an arduous conflict with our brethren of other denominations, as well as with some of our own household, who, for various reasons, "went out from us," in order to rescue our ministry from reproach, and our doctrines, government, and usages from the numerous objections which were preferred against them.

Another thing tended about this time to direct our attention to the general state of the religious affairs in our country. Allusion has already been made to the "Charitable Society for the Education of pious Young Men for the Ministry of the Gospel," and of the commission which was sent to explore the western country, and to report the religious state of things in that portion of our republic. To awaken public attention to the necessity and importance of sustaining this society, Dr. Lyman Beecher, in behalf of the society, issued an address to the churches, calling on them for pecuniary aid, to support and educate indigent pious young men for the ministry, assigning, among other reasons, the peculiar fitness of such young men, from their more hardy character and habits of life, to enter upon this rugged field of labor. To make the deeper and more powerful impression upon the Christian community in favor of the object proposed, the address went into a statistical account of the religious state of the several portions of our country, and concluded by a most rousing appeal to the sympathies and liberality of the people in behalf of the Education Society. In describing the moral and spiritual desolation of these United States, the address disclosed the astounding fact, that, in addition to those already in the services of the sanctuary, there were wanting "five thousand competent ministers," to supply the entire population of our country with the word and ordinances of the gospel. At the announcement of this fact, the Christian community awoke as from a deep slumber. They began to look around them for the data on which this calculation was founded. On examination, it was ascertained that the address assumed the necessity of one minister to every one thousand souls -- that, as there were at time eight millions of inhabitants in the United States and territories, and as there were, says the address, only three thousand educated ministers in the land, there remained five millions of the inhabitants destitute of a competent ministry. This was an alarming conclusion.

Among others who published strictures on this strange production, the late Rev. Freeborn Garrettson wrote a small pamphlet, in which he showed the effect which the statements set forth in the address must have upon other denominations. He, as well as others who examined the statistics of Dr. Beecher, concluded that he meant to exclude all other ministers than those of the Calvinistic order from being "competent" to the work in which they were engaged; for, on a very moderate calculation, there were even then more than three thousand ministers belonging to the Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and Congregational churches; and it is believed that among the Baptist, Lutheran, Protestant, and Methodist Episcopal Churches, without saying any thing of the minor sects, there were more than five thousand ministers, many of whom would by no means

suffer from a comparison with their brethren of the other denominations; hence, allowing the accuracy of this calculation, there was at that very time more than one minister for every one thousand human souls; the irresistible conclusion therefore was, that the address excluded from the catalogue of competent ministers all except those who belonged to one or the other of the Calvinistic churches above named. And this conclusion is strengthened by the fact, that the address dwelt so emphatically upon the necessity of "an educated ministry" as being essential to the efficient discharge of its duties, as it is well known that most of the other churches, however highly they might appreciate human learning, do not consider it an essential prerequisite to a gospel ministry.

Such a disclosure of opinions, so deeply implicating the character and competency of so many ministers, many of whom had furnished the most irrefutable evidence of their efficiency in spreading the doctrines of God our Saviour, taken in connection with the report from the commission sent to explore our western country, might well alarm the apprehensions of all concerned; and hence a deep tone of dissatisfaction was heard throughout the churches, and a general burst of indignation against the assumptions of the address was simultaneously expressed by the several denominations who felt that their ministry were proscribed by its unwarrantable conclusions. The zeal, too, with which the address urged its claims upon the churches more immediately interested in its objects, showed that a mighty effort was making to carry into practical effect its comprehensive plans. As an evidence of this take the following extract: --

"To produce such a combination and such an effort, the wretched state of our country must be made known. The information contained in this address may with propriety, it is believed, be communicated on the sabbath to all our worshipping assemblies, and the investigation commenced in it be continued, until a regular and minute account be given of the religious state of our land. The newspaper, the tract, and magazine must disclose to our slumbering countrymen their danger. The press must groan in the communication of our wretchedness; and from every pulpit in our land the trumpet must sound long and loud. The nation must be awakened to save itself by its own energies, or we are undone."

We have no right, nor have we any wish, to decide upon the character of men’s motives, any further than their words and actions proclaim it. And allowing that the end proposed by the gentlemen who wrote and sanctioned this address was purely the salvation of souls from sin, and the salvation of our country from its ruinous consequences, the means used were highly laudable, and the stirring language of the address, a fair sample of which is found in the preceding extract, was admirably calculated to arouse the slumbering energies of the church to a zealous activity in the cause of reform. Yet it could not but seem somewhat strange to us, that they should not have awakened to this all-important subject until just then -- at a time too when other denominations, and particularly the Methodists, had been blessed with the most extensive revivals of religion which had been witnessed in any age or land since the apostolic days. This is fully attested by the preceding volume of this History. Were the authors of this address ignorant of these facts? We had reason to believe that it was a knowledge of them which aroused their dormant energies, and led them just then to put forth their strength to counteract the growing influence of Methodism. For it was to the western country chiefly, and in the southern states, that this society were about to direct their efforts to supply the lack of ministerial service. And it was in the west more especially that our ministry had been so abundantly blessed. It was here, where the inhabitants from the older states

and from Europe were pouring in with unparalleled rapidity, that, through the agency of camp meetings, and a general itinerant ministry, Methodism had already wrought wonders, and was still going forward, keeping pace with the extension of the settlements, and bowing the hearts of sinners to the yoke of Jesus Christ. Had we not, therefore, reason to suspect that our ministry especially were denounced as incompetent, and that the fear was the country would become deluged with the bitter waters issuing from the corrupt fountain of Methodism! Whether true or false, such was the impression, and therefore, in conjunction with others who felt themselves deeply implicated by the assumptions of this remarkable address, we felt ourselves authorized to enter our protest against its doctrines, and to furnish the people with an antidote to its injurious insinuations. This, as I have before said, was done by Mr. Garrettson; and the following extract from his pamphlet will show the successful manner in which he exposed and refuted the erroneous calculations of the address. Addressing himself directly to Dr. Beecher, he thus shows the fallacy of his arguments: --

"You have placed your church in Connecticut on the highest scale among the several states in the Union. You have given a short history of it, and have, in your way, prostrated the southern part of our country. Probably you are a native of Connecticut; I was born in Maryland; and as you have, among other southern states, undertaken to degrade the religious character of the people of this state, I am willing to compare them with those of your state. I am well acquainted with about every part of both; and as you have fixed your eye on the Congregational Church in Connecticut, I shall fix mine on the Methodist Episcopal Church in Maryland.

"You say that you have upward of 200 congregations, averaging 50 members each, making about 10,000 church members. I have looked over our church records, and find that we have in Maryland1 more than 25,000 church members, who have the pure word of God preached, and the sacraments duly administered."

It was, moreover, the opinion of many, that the address had a political object in view. This opinion was founded on the following extract, taken in connection with the conclusion which seems to he warranted from the general tenor of the address, that ministers of other denominations were proscribed as being incompetent. After speaking of the defective character of the general government, on account of its not containing adequate provisions for its own permanency, the address adds

"A remedy must be applied to this vital defect of our national organization. But what shall that remedy be? There can be but one. The consolidation of the state governments would be a despotism. But the prevalence of pious, intelligent, enterprising ministers through the nation, at the ratio of one for a thousand, would establish schools, and academies, and colleges, and habits and institutions of homogeneous influence. These would produce a sameness of views, and feelings, and interests, which would lay the foundation of our empire on a rock. Religion is the central attraction which must supply the deficiency of political affinity and interest. Religion is the bond of charity, which in storms must undergird the skip."

We accord to the soundness of these sentiments, provided they apply to Christianity as a system of universal good-will to men, and as designed and calculated to connect the hearts of all together in one common brotherhood, and finally to produce, by its action on the heart and conduct, a conformity to its holy precepts. But the general contents and manifest tendency of the address

seemed to forbid such a construction, and to place its authors in the position of strong sectarists, who were laboring to build up a particular denomination at the expense of all the rest. This "homogeneous influence" -- this "sameness of views, and feelings, and interests," were to be produced by the multiplication of "educated and competent ministers," who should be trained up in the school of this society, who should receive their lessons of instruction from Andover, and thence go out clothed with authority to propagate Calvinism, whether under the form of the Old or New School Divinity, whether in the guise of Congregational or Presbyterian theology; while it appeared manifest that all others were proscribed as heterodox and incompetent, and therefore could not contribute to throw around the national ship, in time of a tempest, the strong cords of pure religion, and thus save the nation for a political wreck.

We do not indeed say that this was the real design of the authors of this address; but if it were not, it was most unhappily worded, and should have been either corrected or disavowed, neither of which, so far as is known to the present writer, has ever been done, although I believe that the inferences which were drawn from it, and the general indignation it produced in a great portion of the religious community, caused its authors to withdraw it from circulation.2

Thus much I have thought it a duty to say in respect to this controversy, because of its immediate bearing on the interests of our Church, and its more remote tendency upon its future history. It certainly tended to keep alive the fire of contention between us and the Calvinistic churches, and thus to widen the breach already existing between the two great families, the Calvinists and Arminians.

There was another event of general interest which occurred this year, and which had a favorable bearing upon our affairs, particularly in the state of Connecticut. In this state the original charter, which was received from the king of England on the first settlement of the country, had been the only constitution the state had possessed up to the time of which we now speak. It is well known that in the early settlement of that colony, provision was made by law that no person should vote at an election, or hold a civil office, unless he were a member of the church. This severe and impolitic law was afterward so far relaxed as to allow those who joined the "half-way covenant," in order to obtain Christian baptism for their children, to be eligible to civil offices, and to exercise the right of suffrage. Still, however, the law was exclusive in its demands, making it essential, in order to possess civil rights, to he either in the "half-way covenant," that is, members of the Congregational society, or otherwise to become full members of that church. By these civil regulations the Congregationalists were established by law, and were supported by a regular tax, while other sects were held under civil disabilities, being obliged, in addition to supporting themselves, to contribute their quota for the maintenance of the established clergy, at the same time that they were disfranchised from the privileges of freemen, by an exclusion from all offices of trust and profit. Nor could the clergy of the Dissenters perform the rites of matrimony even for members of their own congregations.

These severe and unjust regulations were so far modified from time to time as to allow those who belonged to dissentient sects the privilege of depositing a certificate in the town clerk’s office of their having separated themselves from the "standing order," and they were thereby exempted from paying ministerial tax for the maintenance of the established clergy. They were also entitled to hold offices in the state, and to vote at the elections.

Such was the general state of things in Connecticut, when some circumstances happened which resulted in the overthrow of this legal hierarchy, and placed all the religious sects upon an equal standing, both in civil and religious affairs.

During the war of 1812-1815, the militia of that state were called out, by order of the general government, to defend the people against the apprehended depredations of the enemy. The authorities of the state, however, refused to let their militia serve under United States' officers, but they were marshaled under those appointed by the state. The consequence was, that the general government refused to pay the expense of the campaign. After the restoration of peace, the state of Connecticut petitioned Congress to refund the amount which the state had expended in paying for the services of the militia during the late war, a part of which was granted by the general government, and paid into the treasury of the state. The legislature of Connecticut, with a view to conciliate all parties, resolved that the money thus refunded should be divided among the several religious denominations, which was accordingly done; but, in the estimation of the Protestant and Methodist Episcopalians and Baptists, the division was so unequal, such an undue proportion being given to the Congregationalists, that they took offense, some of them refusing to receive what was awarded to them, and all united to protest against the proceedings as illiberal, unequal, and unjust. This led to a union of effort between the dissatisfied denominations against the standing order; and, seizing upon the occasion as an auspicious moment to assert their rights, they succeeded in calling a state convention, by which the old charter of Charles II was abrogated, a bill of rights promulgated, and a new constitution framed and adopted, which abolished church taxes and exclusive privileges, and put all sects upon an equality in respect to civil and religious rights; and thus they enfranchised the proscribed portion of the community, making all alike dependent on the voluntary principle for the support of the clergy and other incidents of divine worship. This result was hailed as an auspicious period by the friends of equal rights, both in and out of the churches, as it did away the odious distinction between the privileged order, who had been so long established by law, and the various sects which had sprung up in the state, some of whom were nearly as numerous as were the Congregationalists themselves, and, when united with the others, formed a decided majority. This was breaking the last link of legal tyranny in religious matters in our country -- with the exception, perhaps, of some of its relics which are dangling upon the civil code of Massachusetts -- by proclaiming to all the rights of conscience, according to the laws of nature, of God, and the fundamental principles of our national constitution.

Having noticed these matters, because they had and still have a bearing upon our history, I shall now proceed in the narration of the affairs of our Church in their regular order. The death of Bishop Asbury, as related in the preceding chapter, left us with only one superintendent, Bishop McKendree, and he was in a very delicate state of health. He continued, however, to discharge his official duties, and was much supported in his labors by the good countenance of his brethren in the ministry and membership. The number of Church members for 1816 shows that the increase was small, as the country had not yet fully recovered from the shock it had received from the late war, nor was the spirit of revival and reformation in that holy and vigorous exercise, by which it had shown itself at some former periods. Indeed, a disputatious spirit, in respect to some points of church government, engrossed too much of the time and attention of many, it is to be feared, to the neglect of the "weightier matters of the law, judgment, justice, and the love of God."

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 171,931; Last Year:167,978; Increase: 3,953 -- Colored This Year: 42,304; Last Year: 43,187; Decrease: 883 -- Total This Year: 214,235; Last Year: 211,165 -- Increase: 3,070 -- Preachers This Year: 695; Last Year: 704; Decrease: 9.

It will be perceived from the above that there was a decrease of nearly nine hundred colored members. This was owing to a defection among the colored people in the city of Philadelphia, by which upward of one thousand in that city withdrew from our Church and set up for themselves, with Richard Allen, a colored local preacher and elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church -- at their head.

We have already had occasion to notice the labors of the Methodist ministry in behalf of the colored population of our country, both free and enslaved. Many thousands had become members of the Church, and were in general orderly and exemplary in their conduct; and some of those who were free had acquired wealth and respectability in the community. Among these converted Negroes a considerable number, possessing gifts for the edification of their brethren, had received license to preach, and several had been ordained deacons, and a few to the office of local elders.

Among the latter was Richard Allen, of Philadelphia. By habits of industry and economy, though born a slave in one of the southern states, he had not only procured his freedman, but acquired considerable wealth, and, since he had exercised the office of a preacher and an elder, obtained great influence over his brethren in the Church. By his assistance, and the assistance of their white brethren, they had built them a decent house of worship, and were regularly organized into a Christian church, according to our disciplinary regulations, and were put under the pastoral oversight of a white elder, stationed by the bishop presiding in the Philadelphia conference.

Under this state of things all seemed to go on well and prosperously. Mutual affection and confidence between the white and colored congregations, not in that city only, but also in most of the populous cities and villages in the Union, promised the most happy results of their united endeavors to promote their temporal and spiritual welfare. This harmony, however, was, by some untoward circumstances, interrupted. Mutual distrust and dissatisfaction succeeded, until finally Allen, and those who had been brought under his influence, separated themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church. This occurred in the month of April, 1816. At the secession they organized themselves into an independent body, under the title of the "African Methodist Episcopal Church," adopting our doctrines as their standards, and, as far as their circumstances would seem to allow, our form of discipline for their government. At their first General Conference, held in April of this year, Richard Allen was elected to the office of a bishop, and was consecrated by prayer and the imposition of the hands of five colored local elders, one of whom, Absalom Jones, was a priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Though the circumstances which led to this secession produced some exasperation of spirit on both sides, at the time, yet it is stated by one of their first ministers, that they have prospered considerably in various parts of the country. At their conference in 1828, one of their elders, Morris Brown, was elected and ordained a joint superintendent with Richard Allen; and after the death of the latter, in 1836, Edward Watters was set apart with the usual forms of consecration, as a joint superintendent with Mr. Brown.

Whether they are better or worse off than they would have been had they remained in connection with the Church and ministry to which they were indebted for their spiritual and ecclesiastical existence, is more than we have the means of knowing. Be this as it may, the secession created

for the time considerable uneasiness among our colored congregations in New York city and some other places, which resulted in their separation also, although they did not all arrange themselves under the banners of Allen. They adopted the itinerant mode of preaching, and have spread themselves in different parts of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Delaware states, though it is believed that their congregations, out of the city of Philadelphia, are generally small, and not very influential. There are also some in the western states, and a few in Upper Canada. The exact number belonging to this party I have not been able to ascertain. In the more southern states, the "Allenites," as they were called, by way of distinction, could make no favorable impression, as their preachers were not recognized by the laws of the states, and the slave population who were members of our Church had the character of our white ministry pledged as a guarantee for their good behavior.

General Conference of 1816 This conference assembled in the city of Baltimore, on the first day of May of this year, and was composed of the following delegates: --

New York Conference: William Anson, Nathan Bangs, Laban Clark, Samuel Draper, Nathan Emory, Freeborn Garrettson, Aaron Hunt, Samuel Merwin, Daniel Ostrander, William Phoebus, Peter P. Sandford, Eben Smith, Henry Stead, Thomas Ware, Ebenezer Washburn, Elijah Woolsey.

New England Conference: Oliver Beale, Elijah Hedding, Asa Kent, David Kilborn, Joseph A. Merrill, Philip Munger, George Pickering, Martin Ruter, Solomon Sias, Joshua Soule, Charles Virgin, Eleazar Wells.

Genesee Conference: Dan Barnes, William Case, Abner Chase, George Gary, Charles Giles, George Harman, Chandley Lambert, Seth Mattison, Isaac Puffer, Henry Ryan

Ohio Conference: Charles Holliday, Benjamin Lakin, Marcus Lindsay, Samuel Parker, Isaac Quinn, James Quinn, John Sale, David Young, Jacob Young, Tennessee Conference: James Axley, Peter Cartwright, Thomas L. Douglass, Samuel Sellers, Jesse Walker.

South Carolina Conference: Daniel Asbury, Henry Bass, Solomon Bryan, Samuel Dunwody, John B. Glenn, Hilliard Judge, William M. Kennedy, Thomas Mason, Lewis Myers, James Norton, Anthony Senter, Alexander Talley, Joseph Tarpley, Reuban Tucker.

Virginia Conference: John C. Ballew, Philip Bruce, Thomas Burge, Edward Cannon, Matthew M. Dance, Ethelbert Drake, Cannellum H. Hines, William Jean, Thomas Moore, Minton Thrift.

Baltimore Conference: Thomas Burch, Christopher Frye, Enoch George, Alfred Griffith, Jacob Grober, Andrew Hemphill, Hamilton Jefferson, Nelson Reed, Stephen G. Roszel, William Ryland, Asa Shin, Henry Smith, Beverly Waugh, Joshua Wells.

Philadelphia Conference: William Bishop, Henry Boehm, John Emory, Sylvester Hill, Stephen Martindale, Lawrence McCombs, Robert Roberts, Solomon Sharp, John Sharpley, Asa Smith, Joseph Totten, John Walker, George Woolley. The first thing which arrested the attention of all, and which seemed to spread a melancholy gloom over the house, was the absence of our venerated senior bishop, whose death and character I have recorded in the preceding volume.

After making preparations for the removal of his remains from the place of their first sepulcher, his valedictory address was read to the conference, which appeared to have been left in an unfinished state, containing merely the heads of what he would probably have drawn out at greater length, had his declining health permitted. It shows, however, the same intense and enlarged desire for the permanency and prosperity of the Church by which he had so long been characterized, expressed in his usually sententious [pithy, concise, moralizing -- DVM] style, and concluded with an earnest exhortation to the conference to hold fast the doctrines and discipline under the influence of which they had been hitherto bound together, blessed, and prospered.

After the conference was organized, by the appointment of a secretary, and attending to the usual preliminary business, Bishop McKendree, who, by the death of Bishop Asbury, was the only surviving superintendent, delivered to the conference an address -- a copy of which I have not been able to find in the general state of the work, and the necessity of adding strength to the episcopacy. He also made such suggestions as he thought fit in respect to future movements for the general peace and prosperity of our extended work. This address, and Bishop Asbury's valedictory, were referred to appropriate committees, the reports of which will be noticed in due time. The Rev. Messrs. Black and Bennett, of Nova Scotia, attended this conference as delegates from the British conference, in order to adjust, if possible, certain difficulties which had arisen in Canada, particularly in the lower province, out of what had taken place during the late war. As this sanguinary conflict had occasioned a temporary separation between us and the brethren in that country, the societies in Montreal and Quebec had petitioned the mission committee in London to supply them with preachers, and their petition had been granted and preachers sent. This occasioned some uneasiness in the minds of our preachers in that country, and led to unhappy collisions between the two bodies of Methodists, which resulted finally in the separation of the Methodists in those provinces from the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and their union with the Wesleyan Methodists in England.

Some correspondence had taken place between our bishops and the Wesleyan Methodist conference, in relation to this unhappy affair; and at this General Conference the following letter was received from the missionary committee of London, and submitted to the conference, in connection with communications from the Rev. Messrs. Black and Bennett, in behalf of the British connection, and Rev. Messrs. Ryan and Case, in behalf of the brethren in Canada. The letter, which follows, it appears, was addressed to Bishop Asbury, in answer to one they had received from him. It is as follows: -- "New Chapel, City Road, London, Feb. 7, 1816

"Very Dear Sir: -- It is by the particular request of the last British conference that we, as members of the missionary committee, address you, and our brethren in the United States, whom we very highly esteem as fellow-citizens of the saints, and fellow-laborers in the vineyard of our common Lord; most fervently wishing that peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost may abound in you and by you, to the praise of God and the glory of his grace.

"On reading your last very kind and affectionate letter, we sympathized with you, knowing how much it must have affected your mind, after being favored with so much spiritual prosperity, to have to lament a 'decrease of members in your societies;' but we trust, since it hath pleased Divine Providence to cause the terrors of war to cease, and to restore the invaluable blessing of peace between the two countries, that by this time you hail the dawn of a more auspicious day,

and see the returning glory of the Lord revealed, and the quickening power of the Spirit diffusing its reviving influence, and that the voice of joy and rejoicing is heard in the congregations of the righteous, 'Glory to God in the highest, peace upon earth, and good-will toward men.' Our united prayer and supplication for you is, 'O Lord, we beseech, O Lord, we beseech, send now prosperity!'

It is with gratitude to the Lord of all that we can say, he is still extending his kingdom among us, by the instrumentality of the preached word; and his servants have had much consolation in their labors, by seeing sinners powerfully convinced of sin, penitents born of God, and believers sanctified by the Spirit. God has lately been reviving his work in various places, particularly in the city of Bristol, at Salisbury, &c.: in the former place several hundreds have been brought to the knowledge of God their Saviour. We can assure you we love this 'good, old-fashioned religion,' of a deep conviction for sin, a clear sense of justification by faith, and entire sanctification of the soul from all moral pollution, as well, if not better than ever. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us, and does even now bless us, with these spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: and we ever pray with increasing desire, 'Thy kingdom come.'

"Our blessed Lord has greatly favored us with success in our missionary efforts, particularly in our new stations in the eastern world, Ceylon, &c., though this has been attended with its afflictive circumstances. Since the death of our venerable, highly esteemed, and much lamented friend and brother, Dr. Coke, our beloved brother Ault has been removed from a sphere of useful labor to his great reward. The other brethren are still preserved in their useful labors. A Buddhist priest of considerable learning has been converted to Christianity, and is now engaged in translating the Scriptures into two of the native languages. Several Moormen or Mohammedans have also received the truth, and are becoming useful preachers of the word of life; and thousands of the poor heathen flock to hear the joyful tidings of the gospel. Our missionaries have begun to build a large chapel, house, school, printing-office, &c., at Columbo, and have received the liberal support of the inhabitants. These buildings are to cost seven thousand dollars, six thousand of which have been already subscribed by the inhabitants. We have lately sent five more missionaries to that quarter of the globe, and one more is shortly to sail for Bombay. Thus the Lord is enlarging his kingdom, 'even from the rivers to the ends of the earth.'

"We rejoice in the ardent Christian affection you express toward your brethren in this country; and be assured they entertain the same lively feelings and sentiments of brotherly love toward you and your fellow-laborers in the Lord; and should we be favored with a visit from you or them, it would give us inexpressible pleasure to give you the right hand of fellowship, and every expression of our sincere Christian regard.

"To preserve a mutual good understanding, and the unity of the Spirit, and, as far as possible, a co-operation in promoting the good work of the Lord, we feel it our duty to state to you a subject of local difference, which to us has been painful, and which we feel a delicacy in stating, but to which we are compelled from the necessity of the case, that the word of the Lord be not hindered. In consequence of application being made to the British conference from the society at Montreal, a missionary was sent to that place, and received as the messenger of the gospel of peace; but we are sorry to learn that some misunderstanding has taken place between brothers Strong and Williams, our missionaries, and brother Ryan, your presiding elder for Lower Canada. From the

former we have received a statement of their proceedings, and from the latter a letter of complaint. We have also received a letter from brother Bennett, the chairman of the Nova Scotia district, who has visited Montreal, &c., and reported to us his proceedings.

"Upon a review of the whole, and from the most serious and deliberate consideration we are led to conclude that, considering the relative situation of the inhabitants of Montreal and of Canada to this country, and particularly as a principal part of the people appear to be in favor of our missionaries, it would be for their peace and comfort, and the furtherance of the gospel, for our brethren to occupy those stations, especially the former, and to which we conceive we have a claim, as a considerable part of the money for building the chapel and house was raised in this country. We trust our American brethren will see the propriety of complying with our wishes with respect to those places; not to mention their political relation to this country, which, however, is not of little importance, for we are conscious that their general habits and prejudices are in favor of English preachers, being more congenial to their views and feelings, which should certainly be consulted, and will tend to facilitate the success of the gospel, and their spiritual prosperity. As your and our object is mutually to diffuse the knowledge of him whose kingdom is not of this world, and by every possible means to promote the immortal interests of men, let us not contend -- we have one Master, even Christ -- but give place to each other, that the word of the Lord may have free course, run, and be glorified. We cannot but hope, that from the contiguity of the labors of the brethren belonging to the two conferences, the spirit of unity and love will be promoted, and by this measure a more perfect reciprocal intercourse established. As you have kindly invited our esteemed brethren, Messrs. Black and Bennett, to take a seat in your conference, we have directed them to pay you a visit at Baltimore for this purpose, and to amicably arrange and settle this business, whom we trust you will receive as our representatives and as brethren.

"Praying that our mutual love may abound yet more and more, and that we may ever enjoy and rejoice in each other’s prosperity, till the whole earth is filled with the glory of God, we remain your truly affectionate brethren in Christ Jesus.

(Signed for and in behalf of the committee.) "James Wood, Treasurer, Joseph Benson, James Buckley, Secretary." This letter, together with the written and verbal communications from the brethren above mentioned, was referred to a committee, and the following report, which was concurred in by the conference, will show the result of their labors: --

"The committee appointed by the General Conference to confer with Messrs. Black and Bennett, delegates appointed by the London Methodist Missionary Society to represent the British connection to this conference, and, if possible, to make an amicable adjustment of certain differences between our Church and the British connection, relative to Upper and Lower Canada, beg leave to submit the following report, viz.: --

1. Your committee have had several friendly interviews with the above-mentioned delegates on those subjects, and they are happy to state that there appears to be an earnest desire to have all existing difficulties terminated to the peace and mutual satisfaction of both parties, and to perpetuate the Christian union and good understanding which have hitherto existed.

2. It appears from written communications, as well as from verbal testimony, that unhappy dissensions have taken place in Montreal between certain missionaries sent (at the request of a

few official members of the society in that place, in time of the last war) by the London Missionary Society, and some American preachers, which have terminated in the division of that society.

3. Although the late hostilities between the two countries separated, for some time, those provinces from the immediate superintendency of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, yet all the circuits (except Quebec) were as regularly supplied as circumstances would admit of with American preachers.

4. It furthermore appears, from written and verbal communications, that it is the desire of the great majority of the people in Upper and Lower Canada to be supplied, as heretofore, with preachers from the United States.

5. In the two provinces there are twelve circuits and one station, (Montreal,) which have eleven meeting-houses, which have been hitherto supplied by American preachers.

"These things being duly considered, together with the contiguity of those provinces to the western and northern parts of the United States, your committee respectfully submit the following resolutions: --

"Resolved by the delegates of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in General Conference assembled,

1. That we cannot, consistently with our duty to the societies of our charge in the Canadas, give up any part of them, or any of our chapels in those provinces, to the superintendence of the British connection.

2. That a respectful letter be addressed to the London Methodist Missionary Society, explaining the reasons for the above resolution." A letter was accordingly addressed to the missionary committee of London, explanatory of the reasons which led to the conclusions stated in the above report, and requesting that the preachers of each connection might be permitted to occupy in peace their respective fields of labor; but, whatever might have been the pacific disposition of the two bodies of Methodists in Great Britain and the United States, and however sincere and ardent their desire for mutual good understanding and brotherly affection, there were local feelings existing in the societies in some places, particularly in Montreal and Kingston, which could not be so easily satisfied; hence the society in the former place remained in a divided state, one party being supplied from England, and the other from the United States: and thus Judah continued to vex Ephraim, until, after a lapse of some years, an amicable arrangement was made between the British and American connection.

It was beyond all controversy that the present state of the work required an additional number of bishops. Accordingly the committee on the episcopacy reported as follows in reference to this subject, which was concurred in by the conference: --

"1. It is the opinion of your committee that the state of the superintendency, in consequence of the ever to be lamented death of our venerable father, Bishop Asbury, and the impaired state of the health of Bishop McKendree, and the increasing extent of the work, is such as require immediate and adequate strengthening;" and hence they recommended that two additional bishops be elected and consecrated." On May 14, Enoch George and Robert Richford Roberts were elected by ballot, the former having fifty-seven and the latter fifty-five votes out of one hundred and six that

were cast. They were accordingly consecrated in due form, and, after the adjournment of conference, entered upon their peculiar work with zeal and energy. The effect of the numerous locations on the ministry, and the want of more efficient means for its intellectual improvement, induced this conference to appoint a committee to take these subjects into consideration, and, if practicable, provide an adequate remedy. And as the report of this committee, and the action of the conference thereon, had a very important bearing upon these interests, the report, as it was adopted by the conference, is given entire.

"The committee of ways and means, appointed to provide a more ample support of the ministry among us, to prevent locations, and the admission of improper persons into the itinerancy, have taken the subjects committed to them under serious consideration. They have found, with serious concern and deep regret, that, in the present state of things, there exist many evils, which threaten to undermine that system of itinerating preaching which, under the blessing of God, has been so successful in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. The small pittance allowed to our preachers, and, in many places, the inefficient means used to insure even that, we conceive to be one reason why so many of our useful ministers are induced to locate. Groaning under the pressure of poverty now, and looking forward to a superannuated state, without adequate means afforded them for a comfortable support in the decline of life, they sink under the melancholy prospect, and reluctantly retire from the field, that they may provide a morsel of bread for themselves, their wives, and children.

2. The many locations, from these and other causes, have a manifest tendency to weaken and embarrass the itinerancy, by obliging us to fill up the vacancies with persons not competent to the work assigned them, and to commit the administration, in some of its important branches, to the hands of young and inexperienced men.

3. To the same causes we may attribute the many partial locations, that is, families of traveling preachers which are immovably fixed. Their scanty allowance furnishes an excuse (whether justifiable or not, your committee presume not to determine) for combining farming, mercantile business, &c., with the ministration of God’s word. This practice, in the opinion of your committee, exceedingly embarrasses the general superintendency, in the frequent changes which, in the discharge of its duty, are unavoidable. In consequence of this, either those whose families are thus located must be subject to distant removals from their families, or others must be exposed to the inconvenience of frequent and distant removals, to make way for those who are in this partially located state.

4. We perceive a manifest defect among us, occasioned in some measure by the multiplicity of locations, in regard to ministerial qualifications. Although a collegiate education is not, by your committee, deemed essential to a gospel ministry, yet it appears absolutely necessary for every minister of the gospel to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. Every one, therefore, who would be useful as a minister in the Church, should, to a sincere piety and laudable zeal for the salvation of souls, add an ardent desire for useful knowledge; -- he should strive by every lawful means to imbue his mind with every science which is intimately connected with the doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ, and which will enable him to understand and illustrate the sacred Scriptures. But the early departure of many from the work of the ministry among us, of those whose piety, zeal, talent, and mental improvement justified the

expectation of their extensive usefulness in the Church, and the manifest indifference of some who remain with us to this important branch of ministerial duty, thus stripping the Church of some of its brightest ornaments, not only exposes her nakedness, but loudly calls for the prompt and vigorous interference of the General Conference. To obviate these evils, and to secure to the Church a succession of holy, zealous, and useful ministers, becomes at this time, in the humble opinion of your committee, the imperious duty of this conference. To accomplish these very desirable objects, your committee beg leave to recommend the following resolutions, viz.:

Resolved.

1. That it shall be the duty of the presiding elders and preachers to use their influence to carry the rule of Discipline relating to building and renting houses for accommodation of preachers and families into effect. In order to this, each quarterly meeting conference shall appoint a committee, (unless other measures have been adopted,) who, with the aid and advice of the preachers and presiding elder, shall devise such means as may seem fit to raise moneys for that purpose. And we furthermore recommend to each annual conference to make special inquiry of its members respecting this part of their duty. 2. That those preachers who refuse to occupy the houses which may be provided for them on the stations and circuits where they are from time to time appointed, shall be allowed nothing for house-rent, nor receive anything more than their simple quarterage for themselves, wives, and children, and their traveling expenses. Nevertheless, this rule shall not apply to those preachers whose families are either established within the bounds of their circuits or stations, or are so situated that, in the judgment of the stewards, or the above-mentioned committee, it is not necessary for the benefit of the circuit to remove them. 3. That that part of the Discipline which relates to the temporal economy of our Church be so altered as to make the annual allowance of preachers one hundred dollars, and that of their wives and widows one hundred dollars. 4. That there be a committee appointed by the quarterly meeting conference of every circuit and station, consisting of members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose duty it shall be to make an estimate of the amount necessary to furnish fuel and table expenses of the family or families of the preachers stationed with them, and that the stewards shall provide, by such means as they shall devise, to meet such expenses, in money or otherwise; -- provided that the quarterly allowance of the preachers shall first be paid by the stewards. 5. That there be a meeting in every district of one steward from each station and circuit, to be selected from among the stewards by the quarterly conference, whose duty it shall be, by and with the advice of the presiding elders who shall preside in such meeting, to take into consideration the general state of the district in regard to temporalities, and to furnish a house and provision for the presiding elders' families, in conformity to the first and fourth resolutions of this report.

"In order more effectually to provide for the distressed traveling, superannuated, and supernumerary preachers, their wives, widows, and children, your committee earnestly recommend,

6. That each annual conference, in such way and manner as they may think proper, raise a fund for these purposes, according to the 6th article of the 5th section of the temporal economy of our Church.

"Thinking the Discipline sufficiently explicit on those points which relate to the Christian experience, practice, &c., of preachers, your committee deem it needless to add any thing on

these subjects. But they beg leave to recommend,

7. That it be the duty of the bishop or bishops, or a committee which they may appoint in each annual conference, to point out a course of reading and study proper to be pursued by candidates for the ministry; and the presiding elders, whenever a person is presented as a candidate for the ministry, shall direct him to those studies which have been thus recommended. And before any such candidate shall be received into full connection, he shall give satisfactory evidence respecting his knowledge of those particular subjects which have been recommended to his consideration." The adoption of this report, it is believed, had a salutary influence upon the ministry and membership, by exciting a spirit of liberality, and leading to a more vigorous action in respect to acquiring a greater amount of ministerial qualification. From that time forth a regular course of study has been prescribed by the bishops for those on trial in the annual conferences, to which the candidates must attend, and give satisfactory evidence of their attainments, especially in theological science, before they can be admitted into full membership as itinerant ministers. Though the course of study at first was very limited in some of the conferences, and the examinations comparatively superficial, it has been gradually enlarged and improved, so much so as to require a great compass of knowledge to be able to pass an approved examination. Still there is much wanting to give that thorough training which is most desirable for the full and profitable development of the mental powers, and their energetic application in the field of usefulness. A committee of safety was also appointed, who reported that doctrines in some instances adverse to the standards of our Church were insinuating themselves among us -- that the building churches with pews to rent or sell was gaining an ascendency in some places, and that the rules on dress and the manner of ministerial support were but negligently enforced: whereupon the following resolutions were adopted: --

1. Resolved by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That the General Conference do earnestly recommend the superintendents to make the most careful inquiry in all the annual conferences, in order to ascertain whether any doctrines are embraced or preached contrary to our established Articles of Faith; and to use their influence to prevent the existence and circulation of all such doctrines.

2. Resolved, &c., That it be specially recommended to all the presiding elders and stationed and circuit preachers to take particular care that all our houses of worship be secured on the principles of our deed of settlement, in the form of Discipline.

3. Resolved, &c., That the manner of building houses of religious worship with pews is contrary to the rules of our economy, and inconsistent with the interests of our societies.

4. Resolved, &c., That it is the opinion of this conference that the practice of assessing and collecting taxes by civil law for the support of the ministers of the gospel is contrary to the temporal economy of our Church, and inconsistent with apostolic example; that it goes to impede the progress of experimental religion and destroy the itinerant plan. And the superintendents with all the annual conferences are hereby desired to take such measures as in their judgment will most effectually cure such an evil.

5. Resolved, &c., That the superintendents, together with all the presiding elders and assistant preachers, be, and hereby are, earnestly requested to carry into effect, in their several charges,

our rules on dress, family worship, love-feasts, class and society meetings.

6. Resolved, &c., That no preacher having the charge of a circuit shall be allowed to divide or in any way to lessen the circuit, without the consent and advice of the presiding elder.

7. Resolved, &c., That it be, and hereby is, recommended to the bishops and presiding elders, in the general and particular oversight of their charges, to guard against such divisions and reductions of districts and circuits, as in their judgment may be inconsistent with the temporal and spiritual interests of our societies, and the preservation of the energies of our itinerant system." No part of this report was incorporated in the Discipline, but it was ordered that it should be recorded on the journals of the several annual conferences, and, so far as relates to the building of churches with slips to rent or sell, it has remained a dead letter in many parts of our work. The practice of renting pews at that time was limited to a few places, but it has since extended more and more through the eastern and some of the more northern conferences, the people pleading the necessity of the case for a departure in this respect from the primitive usage of Methodism.

It may be regretted that the state of society requires us to relinquish the mode of building churches with free seats; but as it is not pretended to be in itself sinful to rent or sell the seats, the expediency of the measure must he determined by the probable utility in any given place of resorting to this method of providing houses of worship. And when the question is put, "Shall we have such a house or none?" as is the case in many parts of our country, it is believed that hesitancy should be at an end, and that we should be guilty of a dereliction of duty were we to refuse to avail ourselves of this means to provide homes in which we may preach the gospel to sinners.

It is, however, admitted, that houses with free seats, when they can be built and paid for, and the people induced to occupy them, are to be preferred; but if otherwise, it appears like an inexcusable pertinacity in so cleaving to a usage not expressly enjoined in Scripture, as to refuse to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances in a house of worship merely because the seats are rented.

Sundry memorials from local preachers were presented to this General Conference, praying for an enlargement of their privileges: 1. To have a representation in the councils of the Church: 2. Be permitted a share in the administration of the discipline; and, 3. To stipulate with the people who might wish for their services for a certain amount of salary. The committee appointed to take these memorials into consideration reported as follows: --

"Your committee are of opinion that the first request is inconsistent with the constitution of the General Conference; -- that the second is inexpedient; -- that as to the third, provision is already made for the relief of local preachers in certain cases, and it is the opinion of the committee that this General Conference ought not to make any further provision, except as is hereinafter recommended.

"From an attentive inquiry into the state of the local preachers in all parts of our vast continent, we are happy to be able to say, that the great body of that very respectable and useful class of our brethren are, in our judgment, the firm friends and supporters of our doctrines, discipline, and Church government; and that by far the greater part of them would be much grieved at any radical changes in our present regulations. But upon examining those parts of our Discipline which respect local preachers, your committee beg leave to recommend the following amendments." On

this recommendation the section relating to local preachers was so altered as to read as follows: --

"Before any person shall be licensed to preach as a local preacher among us, he shall bring a recommendation from the society or class of which he is a member, and be personally examined before the quarterly meeting conference by the presiding elder, or, in his absence, by the preacher having the charge, touching his acquaintance with the doctrines of our Church, to which he shall declare his assent, together with his gifts and grace for preaching; and if he be approved by the quarterly meeting conference in these respects, and they believe he will be generally acceptable and useful as a preacher, he shall then receive a license, signed by the presiding elder, or, in his absence, by the preacher having charge, which license it shall be the duty of such local preacher to have annually renewed."

After a few other verbal alterations, the section provided as follows: --

"Whenever a local preacher shall remove from one circuit to another, he shall procure from the presiding elder of the district, or the preacher having the charge of the circuit, a certificate of his official standing in the Church at the time of his removal, without which he shall not be received as a local preacher in another place." The following item respecting the manner in which exhorters should receive authority to exercise their gifts was ordered to be inserted in the Discipline, and was so done accordingly. The preacher in charge, among other duties, was to have authority: --

"To license such persons as he may judge proper to officiate as exhorters in the Church, provided no person shall be licensed without the consent of a leaders' meeting, or of the class of which he is a member, where no leaders' meeting is held; and the exhorters so authorized shall be subject to the annual examination of character in the quarterly meeting conference, and have their license annually renewed by the presiding elder, or the preacher having the charge, if approved of by the quarterly meeting conference." That part of the Discipline which relates to circuit stewards was so amended as to make them responsible to the quarterly meeting conference "for the faithful performance of their duties."

Hitherto it had been the duty of an annual conference, if it had any surplus money on hand after paying its own claimants, to send it to the next conference. This regulation was so altered at this conference as to make it the duty of the annual conference to "send such surplus forward to that conference they judge to be most necessitous." As the two bishops who had been elected and consecrated at this conference were men of families, and as no provision had been made in the Discipline for the support of such families, it was ordered that the "book agents, in conjunction with the book committee New York, be authorized to estimate the sum to defray the necessary expenses of the bishops' families, for which they shall be authorized to draw on the editor and general book steward."

Joshua Soule and Thomas Mason were elected book agents, and the conference renewed the order for the publication of the Methodist Magazine, in monthly numbers of forty octavo pages each, and required each annual conference to appoint a committee of three to receive and forward communications, and otherwise to furnish materials for the work. The Magazine, however, was not commenced till 1818, and the appointment of these committees answered no valuable purpose, as but little aid was afforded by them to the editors.

These include all the acts of this conference worthy of public record, or which went to affect the general administration. On the 24th of May the business closed by adjournment, to meet again in the city of Baltimore, May 1, 1820.

ENDNOTES

1 Dr. Beecher had represented the state of Maryland as being in a most deplorable condition. After having said that Virginia, with a population of 974,622, needed 900 ministers in addition to the 60 it already had to make up the one for every one of the inhabitants, he says, "Of the state of Maryland we cannot speak particularly. But from general information on the subject, we have no reason to believe the supply any better than that of Virginia;" that is, as 60 to 900. He must therefore have considered either that the Methodists were not worthy to be included among Christian ministers and members of the church, or otherwise greatly depreciated the religious character of the state of Maryland.

2 Dr. Beecher, who wrote the address, in a conversation with the writer of this History, remarked that he had been misunderstood, and therefore had suffered much abuse from the public press, on account of the sentiments set forth in the address. It was asked, "Why, then, do you not explain yourself, and set the public right?" The reply was, "I cannot do it without making matters worse." From this it was inferred that he found himself in a dilemma, from which he could not extricate himself without offending one party or the other. I think it, however, but justice to say, that he disavowed any intention of producing any other political influence than what should arise from a religious purification of the moral atmosphere, so that men should come to the polls under the restraints of Christian principles and that by an educated ministry he did not mean a collegiate, but only a theological education.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume III -- Book V Volume III, Published in 1841 (From The Year 1816 To The Year 1828)

CHAPTER 4 From the Close of the General Conference of 1816 to the Commencement of the General Conference of 1820

1817

There were, by an act of the foregoing General Conference, two new conferences, namely Mississippi and Missouri, added to the number, making in all eleven annual conferences to be attended by the three bishops. Though some had contended that it would be most convenient to divide the episcopal supervision so as to apportion a specified district of country to each bishop, yet the majority thought it most advisable to leave these things to be regulated by the bishops themselves, as they might judge most convenient for an efficient oversight of the whole work; and they concluded that this object could be accomplished most easily and energetically by an interchange of labors, so that each bishop should visit all the conferences at least once in the four years. This, it was contended, would best answer the character of a general itinerating superintendency, prevent local interests and jealousies from springing up, and tend most effectually to preserve that homogeneousness of character and reciprocity of brotherly feeling by which Methodism had been and should be ever distinguished. The bishops accordingly commenced their labors on this plan, and, as far as health and other existing circumstances would allow, steadily pursued it until the close of their quadrennial term. The "Tract Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church" was formed this year, by some members of our Church, with a view to furnish the poorer class of the community with religious reading. It is true that a small society, managed by a few pious and benevolent females, had been formed a short time previously, but its operations were extremely limited. The society now formed took a wider range, and commenced publishing its tracts and distributing them with spirit and energy. It has gone on from that time to the present, increasing the number and variety of its tracts, and enlarging the sphere of its operations; and has done much good by diffusing abroad the truths of the gospel, by issuing doctrinal, experimental, and practical illustrations of the Holy Scriptures. This method of scattering among the great mass of the people, in the cheapest possible form, and in a small compass, religious knowledge, was begun by Mr. Wesley at an early period of his ministry, and was one of the means to which he resorted to effect the reformation and salvation of the world. Under date of Dec. 18, 1745, he says: "We had within a short time given away some thousands of little tracts among the common people. And it pleased God hereby to provoke others to jealousy. Insomuch that the lord mayor had ordered a large quantity of papers, dissuading from cursing and swearing, to be printed and distributed to the trainband. And this day An Earnest Appeal to Repentance was given at every church door, in or near London, to every person who came out; and one left at the house of every householder who was absent from church. I doubt not but God gave a blessing therewith." Here was an example for the distribution of tracts long before any tract society existed

either in Great Britain or America; and Mr. Wesley continued the practice from that time forward with unexampled diligence, furnishing those who were willing to aid him in this good method of "sowing the seed of the kingdom" with short and pithy tracts, such as "A Word to the Drunkard," "A Word to the Swearer," to the "Smuggler," to the "Sabbath-breaker," &c., &c., for gratuitous distribution. This method, so admirably adapted to bring religious instruction within the reach of all classes of men, but more especially the poor, and those who have little time and less inclination to read, was afterward adopted by Miss Hannah More [sic], by which she contributed much to check the progress of infidelity, which about that time threatened to deluge the land. Following these examples, others had resorted to the same means for diffusing religious truth more effectually among the people, both in Europe and America. And, as we have before seen, Bishop Asbury had done much by his individual exertions in the same way. From a knowledge of the good effects resulting from this practice at the time of which we now speak, a combination of effort was made by forming the Tract Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which has resulted most beneficially to the best interests of mankind. After a few years of experiment, the whole concern, by an amicable arrangement, was transferred to the book agency, and thenceforward it has been conducted as a part and parcel of that establishment. The records within my reach do not enable me to notice any particular enlargement of the work in the new countries, nor special revivals in other places. There was, however, a gradual increase in many places, and an extension of the circuits in others, as may be seen by an inspection of the numbers in Church fellowship.

Fifty-two preachers located this year, fourteen were returned supernumerary, thirty-eight superannuated, two had been expelled, one withdrawn, and five had died.

Among those who had entered their rest the past year was the Rev. Jesse Lee. He was born in Prince George’s county, in the state of Virginia, in 1758. His parents were respectable, and they gave him that sort of education which it was common in those days to bestow on boys not destined for any learned profession. In the fifteenth year of his age he was happily brought to the knowledge of the truth, and made a partaker of the pardoning mercy of God. In the year 1783, one year before the organization of our Church, he entered the traveling ministry, and continued in it with great zeal and much success till his death, which happened on the 12th of August, 1816. As the preceding pages of this History have recorded much respecting his early labors in the cause of Christ, particularly in New England, it is not necessary to recapitulate them in this place. The last station he filled was Annapolis, the metropolis of Maryland. While here he attended a camp meeting near Hillsborough, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, where he preached twice with great acceptance and power; and in the evening of the day on which he preached his last sermon he was seized with a chill and fever, from which he never recovered. During this time he frequently expressed himself in terms of unshaken confidence in his God, and on one occasion shouted aloud, Glory! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Jesus reigns!" On the same evening he spoke for nearly twenty minutes with great deliberation, requesting, among other things, that a letter should be written to his brother, to let him know that he died happy in the Lord, and also that he was fully satisfied with the kind treatment he had received from brother Sellers, at whose house he died.

It seems that there had existed between Jesse Lee and Bishop McKendree some difficulty, by which a degree of alienation of affection had taken place, much to the grief of their mutual friends. Before, however, the former closed his eyes in death, he said to a friend of both, "Give my respects to Bishop McKendree, and tell him that I die in love with all the preachers; that I love him;

and that he lives in my heart." With these sentiments of brotherly love in his heart, and a consciousness of the peace of God overflowing his soul, this veteran of the cross and minister of Christ fell asleep in Jesus, at about half past seven o’clock in the evening of the twelfth of September, 1816, aged fifty-eight years, having been in the itinerant ministry about thirty-three years. When Jesse Lee joined the Methodists they were few in number, much despised and persecuted, and had therefore to contend with many sorts of opposition. Yet in the midst of these things he boldly espoused the cause, and early displayed that independence of mind for which he was ever afterward characterized. That same love of Christ which was shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit at his conversion, impelled him forward in the path of duty as a minister of Jesus Christ, and enabled him to bear up under the various sorts of reproach which were usually cast upon Methodist preachers in those days, and to persevere through all in the discharge of his high duties as an ambassador of God.

We do not, indeed, rank him among ministers of the most eminent talents as a preacher. His education was limited, his reading confined to a small circle of authors, and his mind was left principally to its own resources in handling the subjects which came up for investigation. Yet his talents were respectable, and his burning zeal in the cause of Christ compensated, in some measure at least, for the lack of those expanded views which might have been acquired by a more extended and critical knowledge of literature and science. But being possessed of strong common sense, of a ready wit, and sound understanding, and being brought, by his extensive travels, into contact with various classes of men, of different views and habits, he treasured up from his daily experience and observation much useful knowledge, of which he could avail himself in time of need, in defense of the truths he preached, and the plans of procedure he had adopted. This also gave him a deep insight into the human character, and qualified him to adapt himself with admirable facility to the variety of exigencies which arose before him. His preaching was chiefly of an experimental and practical character; and had he not sometimes lowered the dignity of the pulpit by facetious sayings, more calculated to "court a grin, or woo a smile," than they were to inspire respect "for that holy place, the pulpit," he might be more safely held up for the imitation of others. Though we by no means condemn an innocent sally of wit, nor that satire which dresses up vice and folly in their own native deformity, yet, whenever either of these is so far indulged as to leave the mind barren, or to divert the soul from the spirit of devotion, it evinces the necessity of laying a restraint upon this witty disposition of the mind, and of making it bow to the more sober dictates of manly truth and logical argument.

It has also been objected to Mr. Lee, that he evinced an ambitious mind; and his disappointment at not being elected a bishop at the time Richard Whatcoat was chosen to that office has been adduced as an evidence that he was ambitious of office. That he had reason to expect such an appointment must be granted. That Bishop Asbury had designated him, at one time, as a proper person for that office, is equally manifest. And hence, that he suffered some degree of mortification at his non-election, it is reasonable to suppose; and that this might have created some uneasiness in his mind, and have biased his judgment and feelings toward those who were preferred before him, is not at all unlikely. But these things by no means prove the existence of an unholy ambition, or an improper thirst for human fame. A man may be very improperly deprived of his rights by the unjust imputations of others, by intrigue, jealousy, and a mean compliance with the dictates of the spirit of rivalry. Without, however, pretending to decide whether or not Jesse Lee should have

been elected to the office of a bishop, he may have thought himself justly entitled to that distinction, and hence, from a simple desire to be more extensively useful, he might have desired it without subjecting himself to the charge of indulging in a criminal ambition. That he was ambitious to do good on the most extensive scale is manifest from the whole tenor of his conduct, from the sacrifices he made in the cause of Christ, and the manner in which he employed his time and talents. But whatever defects the keen eye of criticism may have discovered in his character or conduct, they must be ranked among those venial faults which are common to human beings -- defects of the head, not of the heart; of education, and not from moral or intellectual obliquity. The integrity of his heart, the uprightness of his deportment, and his indefatigable labors in the best of all causes, effectually shield him from all imputations of moral delinquency, and place him high on the pedestal of honor among his brethren of that age of Methodism.

He, indeed, opened the way for the introduction of Methodism in many new places, in doing which he had to contend with a variety of difficulties of a peculiar character; and the firm and prudent manner in which he encountered and overcame those difficulties evinced at once his moral courage, the purity of his motives, and the strength of his understanding. In New England especially, where the people were generally well instructed on religious subjects, and where he frequently came in contact with ministers of other denominations whose doctrinal views differed, in some important points, from his own, he was called upon to exercise all his ingenuity and patience in defending himself against his assailants, and in planting the standard of Methodism in that land of the pilgrims. And this was one of the best schools in which a minister could be educated. Coming in collision with error in all its various hues, with folly and vice in all the shapes they generally assume, whether in open profanity, or of a secret, disguised infidelity, hypocrisy, and "cunning craftiness," a minister must be armed at all points to be able effectually to ward off the attacks of his opponents, to unmask the hypocrite, to detect the sophistry of infidelity, and to establish the truth upon a firm foundation. Yet this was the work which Jesse Lee, and others engaged with him in that day, had to perform. He stood alone against a host. He manfully fought the battles of the Lord, and came off "more than a conqueror." Hence his name is remembered with gratitude and veneration by the men of that generation, who bore witness to his self-denying zeal and persevering efforts to do them good. His preaching was not distinguished by profound depth of thought, by a regular chain of argumentation, or by any sudden flights of oratory, but by a gentle flow of language, by apposite appeals to Scripture, by apt illustrations from experience and observation, and often by anecdotes which he had treasured up from his extensive travels and social intercourse with mankind. He generally addressed himself to the heart, and sought to effect a reformation there, knowing full well that a reformation of life would necessarily follow: and he won the affections of the sinner to Jesus Christ by the power of truth addressed to him in the persuasive language of the gospel, rather than by awakening his fears by the terrors of the law.

There was an engaging variety in his sermons. Having surveyed, as far as he was able, the whole field of theological truth, he was qualified to present it in all its various aspects, without tiring the hearer with a dull monotony of the same thing over and over again. As a writer, Jesse Lee is more distinguished for his industry in collating and his fidelity in recording facts, than he is for the chasteness and elegance of his style. There is, however, a pleasing simplicity in the plain and unvarnished manner in which his history is composed, far more to be commended than that labored and pompous style of writing with which some authors endeavor to decorate their pages.

Jesse Lee was the first historian of American Methodism. As such, he deserves the thanks of the Church for the faithful and accurate manner in which he has recorded the events of his day, though it is evident that his judgment was biased, in some instances, either by personal prejudice, or by too great a tenacity for his own peculiar views. It must be confessed, too, that his history is wanting in the variety of incident and copiousness of detail which are essential to excite interest and to satisfy the desire of those readers who wish for full information respecting the character, doings, and progress of this branch of the church of Christ. His personal appearance was respectable and commanding; his countenance intelligent, and marked with that shrewdness by which he was peculiarly distinguished and often a pleasant smile played upon his lips, which gave an air of cheerfulness to his conversation with his friends. As he advanced in life he became quite corpulent, so much so that it seemed a labor for him either to walk or ride. This, however, did not arise from a luxurious mode of living, for he was exceedingly temperate in his habits, as well as plain in his manners and dress.

Such was Jesse Lee, as nearly as I am able to describe him. If the portraiture be faulty, it must be attributed to want of skill in the painter, and not fidelity in the heart or hand which guided the pencil. As such he stands enrolled among those early Methodist preachers who contributed by their deep piety, their sacrifices, and labors, to lay the foundation of that superstructure which has since arisen in such beauty and grandeur in this western world. And having "finished his course, and kept the faith," he is now reaping the reward of his sacrifices and toils in the world of glory everlasting.

Samuel Waggoner, Peter Wyatt, John Van Schoick, and Stephen Richmond had also filled up the measure of their days in usefulness, and gone to their home in peace.

It seems proper to record here the death of another eminent servant of God who had exchanged worlds during the past year, namely, the Rev. George Shadford. As he had devoted several years to the service of his Master in America, justice requires that some notice should be taken of him in the history of our Zion.

He was born near Lincolnshire, at a place called Slotter, in England, January 19,1739. He was educated in the principles of the Established Church; was early taught by his parents to read the Holy Scriptures, the necessity of prayer, us well as to repeat his catechism; and at a suitable age was confirmed by the bishop, and received the sacrament of the Lord’s supper. Though he was thus taught the form of godliness, he remained unchanged in heart until he was in his twenty-fourth year, when, after various struggles against sin and error, he was brought into gospel liberty by the instrumentality of the Methodist ministry. He was soon after led forth into the ministry of the word, and in 1768 joined the itinerant ministry under the direction of Mr. Wesley. It soon appeared, by the blessed effects of his ministrations, that a dispensation of the gospel had been committed to him. After continuing in this work for about four years, during which time God had given him the most indubitable marks of his approbation, hearing Captain Webb speak of the state of things in America, and the great want of preachers, Mr. Shadford offered his services for this new field of labor. His offer being accepted by Mr. Wesley, in company with Mr. Thomas Rankin, on Good Friday, he set sail for America, and after a voyage of eight weeks safely landed in Philadelphia, where he was most cordially received by the people. He immediately entered upon his work, and God attended his word with his blessing. He visited Trenton and various parts of

New Jersey, and then came to New York. In all these places God gave him seals to his ministry. When he was about leaving the city of Philadelphia the following remarkable circumstance happened, which is related in his own words: --

"When I went," said he, "to the inn where my horse was, and had just entered into the yard, I observed a man fixing his eyes upon me, and looking earnestly, until he seemed ashamed, and blushed very much. At length he came up to me, and abruptly said, 'Sir, I saw you in a 'dream last night. When I saw your back as you came into the yard I thought it was you; but now that I see your face, I am sure that you are the person. I have been wandering up and down till now, seeking you.' 'Saw me in a dream,' said I, 'what do you mean?' 'Sir,' said he, 'I did, I am sure I did: and yet I never saw you with my bodily eyes before. Yesterday in the afternoon I left this city and went as far as Schuylkill river, intending to cross it, but began to be uneasy, and could not go over it; I therefore returned to this place, and last night, in my sleep, saw you stand before me; when a person from another world bade me seek for you until I found you, and said you would tell me what I must do to be saved. He said also that one particular mark by which I might know you was, that you preached in the streets and lanes of the city.' Having spoken this, he immediately asked, 'Pray, sir, are not you a minister?' I said, 'Yes, I am a preacher of the gospel; and it is true that I preach in the streets and lanes of the city, which no other preacher in Philadelphia does. I preach also every Sunday morning, at nine o'clock, in Newmarket.' I then asked him to step across the way to a friend's house, where I asked him from whence he came. He answered, 'From the Jerseys.' I asked whether he had any family; he said, 'Yes, a wife and children.' I asked where he was going; he said he did not know. I likewise asked, 'Does your wife know where you are?' He said, 'No; the only reason why I left home was, I had been very uneasy and unhappy for half a year past, and could rest no longer, but came to Philadelphia."

"I replied, 'I first advise you to go back to your wife and children, and take care of them, by obeying God in the order of his providence. It is unnatural,' said I, 'to leave them in this manner; for even the birds of the air provide for their young. Secondly, you say you are unhappy; therefore the thing you want is religion; the love of God, and of all mankind; righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. When this takes possession of your heart, so as to destroy your evil tempers, and root out the love of the world, anger, pride, self-will, and unbelief, then you will be happy. The way to obtain this is, you must forsake all your sins, and heartily believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. When you return to the Jerseys, go to hear the Methodist preachers constantly, and pray to the Lord to bless the word; and if you heartily embrace it you will become a happy man.'

"While I was exhorting him tears ran plentifully from his eyes. We then kneeled down to pray, and I was enabled to plead and intercede with much earnestness for his soul. When we arose from our knees I shook him by the hand: he wept much, and had a broken heart; but did not know how to part with me. He then set out to go to his wife in the Jerseys, and I saw him no more; but I trust I shall meet him in heaven." Of his subsequent labors in America, and the great success which attended his preaching, the reader will find an ample account in the first volume of this History, book ii, chapter 1. The following incident is related as the effect of his labors while in Virginia. Concerning the new converts who were brought to the knowledge of the truth during that great and glorious work, Mr. Shadford says: --

"Among these was a dancing-master, who came first to hear on a week-day, dressed in scarlet; and came several miles again on Sunday, dressed in green. After preaching he spoke to me, and asked if I could come to that part where he lived some day in the week. I told him I could not, as I was engaged every day. I saw him again at preaching that week, and another man of his profession. When I was going to preach one morning, a friend said to me, 'Mr. Shadford, you spoiled a fine dancing-master last week. He was so cut under preaching, and feels such a load of sin upon his conscience, that he moves very heavily; nay, he cannot shake his heels at all. He had a profitable school, but hath given it up, and is determined to dance no more. He intends now to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic.' I said, 'It is very well; what is his name?' He said, 'He is called Madcap!' I said, 'A very proper name for a dancing-master;' but I found this was only a nickname, for his real name was Metcalf. He began to teach school, joined our society, found the guilt and load of his sin removed from his conscience, and the pardoning love of God shed abroad in his heart. He lived six or seven years after, and died a great witness for God, having been one of the most devoted men in our connection." In 1778 Mr. Shadford, not willing to throw off his allegiance to the British government, and not being permitted to remain here in peace without taking the oath required by the law of the state of Maryland, to be an obedient citizen of this country, took his departure for England. After his return he continued with great diligence in the work of an itinerant minister, being everywhere received as a messenger of God, until, worn down with labor and weakened by disease, he was compelled, in 1791, to take a supernumerary relation. He did not, however, bury himself in obscurity, or lead a life of useless inactivity, but persevered in his work as his strength would permit the remainder of his days. His biographer gives the following account of his last hours, which is an instructive comment upon a life of piety and devotion to God: --

"On Monday, February 28, Mr. Shadford dined with his affectionate friend Mr. Blunt, in company with his brethren. He then appeared in tolerable health, and ate a hearty dinner. In the course of the week he felt indisposed, from a complication of diseases. He was under no apprehension at this time that his departure was so near, as he had frequently felt similar affections, and, by timely applications to his medical friend Mr. Bush, had been relieved. On Friday, March 1, he with some difficulty met his class, and afterward said it was impressed on his mind he should never meet it more. On the Saturday afternoon I called to inquire about his health, when he said, with unusual fervor, 'To patient faith the prize is sure; And all that to the end endure The cross, shall wear the crown.' His mind seemed fully occupied with the great and interesting realities of eternity, and he had no greater pleasure than in meditating and talking of the redeeming love of God. On the Lord's day morning, March 10, before I went to the chapel I called to see him and found he had slept most of the night; from this we flattered ourselves the complaint had taken a favorable turn, and were in hopes of his recovery. But when the doctor called he said the disease was fast approaching to a crisis, and it was impossible for him to recover. Upon this information Mr. Shadford broke out into a rapture, and exclaimed, 'Glory be to God!' Upon the subject of his acceptance with God, and assurance of eternal glory, he had not the shadow of a doubt. While he lay in view of an eternal world, and was asked if all was clear before him, he replied, 'I bless God, it is;' and added, 'Victory! victory! through the blood of the Lamb!' When Mrs. Shadford was sitting by him, he repeated, 'What surprise! what surprise!' I suppose he was reflecting upon his deliverance from a corruptible body, and his entrance into the presence of his God and Saviour, where every scene surpasses all imagination, and the boldest fancy returns wearied and

unsatisfied in its loftiest flights.

Two friends, who were anxious for his recovery, called upon him, and when they inquired how he was, he replied, 'I am going to my Father's house, and find religion to be an angel in death.' A pious lady, in the course of the day, was particularly desirous of seeing him, and she asked him to pray for her: he inquired, 'What shall I pray for?' She said, 'That I may meet you in heaven, to cast my blood-bought crown at the feet of my Redeemer:' he said, with great energy, 'The prize is sure.' His pious sayings were numerous, and will long live in the recollection of many; but a collection of them all would swell this article beyond due limits. His last words were, 'I'll praise, I'll praise, I'll praise;' and a little after he fell asleep in Jesus, on March 11,1816, in the 78th year of his age." The following remarks upon his character are as just as they are true:

"For nearly fifty-four years Mr. Shadford had enjoyed a sense of the divine favor. His conduct and conversation sufficiently evinced the truth of his profession. For many years he had professed to enjoy that perfect love which excludes all slavish fear; and if Christian tempers and a holy walk are proofs of it, his claims were legitimate. Maintaining an humble dependence upon the merits of the Redeemer, he steered clear of both Pharisaism and Antinomianism: his faith worked by love. Truly happy himself, there was nothing forbidding in his countenance, sour in his manners, or severe in his observations. His company was always agreeable, and his conversation profitable. If there was any thing stern in his behavior, it was assumed, to silence calumniators and religious gossips. In short, he was a man of prayer, and a man of God.

"His abilities as a preacher were not above mediocrity; yet he was a very useful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. In illustrating the doctrines of the gospel he was simple, plain, and clear. His discourses, though not labored, were methodical, full of Scriptural phraseology, delivered with pathos, and accompanied with the blessing of God. He did not perplex his hearers with abstruse reasoning and metaphysical distinctions, but aimed to feed them with the bread of life; and instead of sending them to a dictionary for an explanation of a difficult word, he pointed them to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

"Mr. Shadford was free and generous. His little annual income, managed with a strict regard to economy, supplied his wants, and left a portion for the poor and needy. In visiting the sick, while he assisted them by his prayers and advice, he cheerfully administered to their wants. He spent no idle time in needless visits or unmeaning chit-chat; and though many of his kind friends in Frome would have considered it a high favor if he could have been prevailed upon to partake of their bounty, yet he always declined it, except once a week, at the hospitable table of his generous friend Mr. Blunt, where he generally met the preachers with some part of their families. He loved his brethren in the ministry; and, like an old Soldier who had survived many a campaign, he felt a plea-sure in retracing the work of God, in which he had been engaged for more than half a century. He claimed it as a right, and deemed it a privilege, to have the preachers to take tea with him every Saturday afternoon. There was nothing sordid in his disposition, and, as far as I could ever observe, covetousness formed no part of his character. He considered the rule of his Saviour as having a peculiar claim upon his attention: 'Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven.'

"His patience and resignation to the will of God were such, that he has left few superiors in those passive graces. Some years since he lost his eyesight, and continued in this state of affliction for several years; but instead of murmuring at this dispensation of Providence, he bore it with

Christian fortitude. This did not altogether prevent his usefulness; for though the sphere of his action was circumscribed by it, he could still pray with the afflicted, converse with the pious, and meet several classes in the week. In this state he was advised to submit to an operation for the recovery of his sight. The trial proved successful; and when the surgeon said, 'Sir, now you will have the pleasure of seeing to use your knife and fork,' Mr. Shadford feelingly replied, 'Doctor, I shall have a greater pleasure; that of seeing to read my Bible.' This luxury he enjoyed; for when he was permitted to use his eyesight, the first thing he did was to read the word of life for three hours, reading and weeping with inexpressible joy. During the whole of his last short illness he betrayed no symptoms of uneasiness, but cheerfully submitted to the will of God. Through the last few years of his life he glided smoothly down the stream of time. The assiduous attention of Mrs. Shadford to all his wants, her sympathy in the moments of his pain, and unwearied attempts, either to prevent his sufferings or lessen their force, greatly tended to soften them down. She has lost a pious and an affectionate husband, and the Methodist Society in Frome one of its best members."

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 181,442; Last Year: 171,931; Increase: 9,511 -- Colored This Year: 43,411; Last Year: 42,302; Increase: 1,107 -- Total This Year: 224,853; Last Year: 214,235 -- Increase: 10,618 -- Preachers This Year: 716; Last Year: 695; Increase: 21. This year marks a favorable epoch in the history of our Church, by the recommencement of the Methodist Magazine, the first number of which was published by J. Soule and T. Mason, in January, 1818. As has already been remarked, the General Conference of 1812 ordered the resumption of this work, but the order was never executed. The order was renewed in 1816, yet from some cause it was not recommenced until this year. Its appearance, even at this late period, was hailed, by the friends of literature and religion, as the harbinger of brighter days to our Zion, as it promised to become a medium of information and instruction to our people generally, and a permanent record of those facts and incidents which might throw light upon our history in a future day. As the issuing of this work was entering on an untrodden path by those who were to guide its course and watch over its destinies, it is no wonder that its editor, the Rev. Joshua Soule, felt some anxiety for its success, and a trembling sense of the responsibilities he was about to assume. These he expressed, in the preface to the first number, in the following language: --

"In publishing this periodical, the editors feel all those sensibilities which arise from a conviction that its merits are to be tested under the inspection of an enlightened community. The care and labor inseparable from the agency of the Book Concern forbid our devoting as much time and application to the selection and arrangement of materials for publication in the Magazine as its nature and importance demand. But notwithstanding these embarrassments exist, we trust the work will be found both useful and entertaining to the real friends of Zion." The design of the work, and the manner in which it was proposed to carry it into execution, were thus announced: --

"The great design of this publication is to circulate religious knowledge, a design which embraces the highest interests of rational existence, as the sum of individual and social happiness increases in a scale of proportion with the increase of spiritual light and information.

"In the execution of this design the strictest care will be taken to guard the purity and simplicity of the doctrines of the gospel against the innovations of superstition on the one hand, and of false philosophy on the other.

"In admitting controversial subjects into this work, the heat of party zeal and personal crimination will be carefully avoided." As before said, the appearance of this work gave great satisfaction to the most enlightened and intelligent friends of our communion, and hence a commendable zeal was exemplified in procuring subscribers, that it might have as wide a circulation as possible among the people of our charge; and I believe that not less than ten thousand were procured the first year, though its circulation in subsequent years did not answer the expectations raised by this promising commencement. An effort was made last year to resuscitate the cause of education among us. Dr. Samuel K. Jennings, aided by several benevolent and public spirited individuals in the city of Baltimore, laid the foundation of a literary institution, denominated the Asbury College; and it into operation under apparently favorable auspices, an account of which was published in the March number of the Methodist Magazine for this year. With this account, however, the friends of education, who estimated things as they are, were not much gratified, as it seemed to promise more than could be rationally expected, and was rather calculated to blazon forth the attainments of the professors than to enlighten the public by a sober statement of facts.

It continued for a short time, and then, greatly to the disappointment and mortification of its friends, went down as suddenly as it had come up, and Asbury College lives only in the recollection of those who rejoiced over its rise and mourned over its fall -- a fatality which had hitherto attended all attempts to establish literary institutions among us. This year was distinguished by some powerful revivals of religion. In the city of Baltimore the Rev. Stephen G. Roszel gives an account of one of the most extensive and encouraging revivals ever beheld in that city. It was preceded by observing days of fasting and prayer, and began at Fell’s Point, whence it spread throughout the entire city, in the progress of which nearly one thousand souls were brought into church fellowship. The subjects of this great work were from twelve to eighty and even ninety years of age, many of whom were heads of families, of respectable standing and influence in society, and others in the bloom of life, young men and maidens of promising talents, who became pillars in the Church. The work entered the penitentiary, and quite a number of the convicts became subjects of the grace of life. Such was the impression made upon the public mind by this powerful reformation, that even those who were not its immediate subjects were awed into silent submission, being constrained to acknowledge the hand of God. In many other places also, in the bounds of the New York and New England conferences, there were gracious outpourings of the Spirit of God, and great was the rejoicing of happy believers over the conversion of penitent sinners. Southold, on Long Island, and some circuits within the bounds of the Kennebec district, in Maine, and other places which might be named, were favored with manifestations of the power and grace of God in the awakening and conversion of sinners. In Upper Canada, particularly on the Augusta, Bay of Quinte, Hallowell, and Niagara circuits, there was a great ingathering of souls into the fold of Christ, among whom were several Roman Catholics, and eight persons who were over sixty years of age. This work commenced at an annual conference held at Elizabethtown in June, 1817, the first ever held in that province, and thence spread in a glorious manner through the above-mentioned circuits, bowing the hearts of hundreds, young and old, and in some instances whole families, to the yoke of Jesus Christ. During the progress of this great work about one thousand souls were brought from darkness to light, and added to the Church.

We have heretofore seen that camp meetings, by reason of the irregularities which brought them into discredit, gradually declined in Kentucky, and were indeed generally abandoned for several

years, especially in the central part of the state. Their usefulness, however, in other parts of the country, induced some of the friends of the cause to make an effort to introduce them again into the interior of Kentucky. The Rev. Le Roy Cole, who joined the traveling ministry as early as 1777, had located and moved into Clarke county, Ky.; but, being much devoted to the work of God, he had entered the itinerancy, and was again zealously engaged in promoting revivals. This year he appointed a camp meeting in the neighborhood of Cynthiana, in Harrison county. For the first and second days every thing tended to discourage them -- the rain descended in torrents, and a company of rude young men came on the ground, with bottles of whisky in their pockets, evidently determined on mischief. The friends of religion, however, persevered in their work, and on Saturday night there was a mighty display of the convincing power of God. Those very young men, who came for sport, became much alarmed; some, throwing away their whisky bottles, fell upon their knees in prayer, while others ran into the woods, to escape, if possible, from their fears; but even here their cries for mercy testified to the deep anguish of their souls. This was the commencement of a great revival of religion in that part of the country, which eventuated in the conversion of about four hundred souls in Cynthiana and its vicinity, under the ministry of Absalom Hunt, Le Roy Cole, and others, who assisted them in their work. From this the reformation afterward spread its hallowing influence in various directions through the country, and camp-meetings regained their lost character in that part of Kentucky. It is, indeed, said, that during this great and good work several traveling preachers were raised up, who have since distinguished themselves for usefulness in the Church. The general superintendency of the Church, as has been seen in the account given of the General Conference of 1816, was now committed to three hands, all of whom entered upon their work with commendable zeal and diligence, traveling through the length and breadth of their charge, alternately changing with each other, so that each could pass through his great circuit at least once in four years. Bishop McKendree, however, enjoyed but a feeble state of health, and could not, therefore, render that efficient service which was desirable. But his colleagues were comparatively young and vigorous, their labors incessant, and their services highly appreciated by the Church generally. Of the living it would be unseemly to speak in terms of fulsome flattery, while of the dead they may be told without the fear of censure for either praise or dispraise. Of Bishop McKendree we have already spoken, while giving an account of his election to office. Bishop George was a man singularly devoted to God, of great natural eloquence, and his preaching was "in the demonstration of the Spirit and power;" and wherever he went he diffused the spirit of piety and of Christian and ministerial zeal among preachers and people. And it is enough to say that his colleague, Bishop Roberts, gave equal evidence of his strong attachment to the cause he had espoused, and general satisfaction to his brethren by the manner in which he discharged his duties. In the hands of such men the government was administered with fidelity, the conferences attended with punctuality, and the union, peace, and prosperity of the Church generally secured and promoted. But though the health of Bishop McKendree was delicate, he was enabled to move around among the churches, and to discharge a portion of the duties of the superintendency. This year he traveled through the southern and western states, extending his visits to Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Mississippi, and Missouri, in which he passed through several tribes of Indians. Though his bodily infirmities were such that his friends had to assist him in mounting and dismounting his horse, yet his zeal for God and perishing souls impelled him forward, and enabled him to triumph over all the difficulties of his journey, and to perform, with such assistance as he could procure, the duties of

his office. Such, however, was his feebleness when he came to the Tennessee conference, that he had to be taken from his bed and supported by two preachers while he performed the ordination services, which he did on the camp ground where the exercises were held on the sabbath. The rest of his journey was pursued in a like state of feebleness and pain, and his sufferings were heightened by his being obliged to lodge in the woods eight or ten nights while passing through the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations of Indians. In these labors he was borne up by a consciousness of the divine approbation, and cheered by the good countenance and affectionate attentions of his brethren and friends.

Fifty were located, seventeen returned supernumerary, thirty-eight superannuated, and five, namely, William Patridge, Anthony Senter, Henry Padgett, Hezekiah Harryman, and Gad Smith, had died in peace. A strong testimony in favor of all these is left on record; but the last mentioned, Gad Smith, was one of the most devoted, diligence, and useful young ministers I ever knew. His race was short, but it was attended with most evident marks of the divine favor.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 190,447; Last Year: 181,442; Increase: 9,035 -- Colored This Year: 39,150; Last Year: 43,411; Decrease: 4,261 -- Total This Year: 229,627; Last Year: 224,853 -- Increase: 4,774 -- Preachers This Year: 748; Last Year: 716; Increase: 32. The reader will perceive that while there was an increase of white members amounting to 9,035, there was a decrease of 4,261 of the colored members, reducing the actual increase to 4,774. This diminution in the number of colored communicants was owing to the influence of the Allenite secession, before mentioned, which had now spread into the city of New York and some other places, exciting quite a spirit of dissatisfaction in the minds of many of this class of our membership. Indeed, a desire to become independent of the white preachers had manifested itself for some time among a portion of our colored congregations, not because they were oppressed, -- for our services had been rendered mostly gratuitous, the entire colored congregation in the city of New York not paying more, at any time, than two hundred dollars a year for the support of the ministry, -- but chiefly from a disposition to manage their own affairs in their own way, without check or control from their white brethren, pleading that they had piety and talent among themselves sufficient to guide them in their counsels, to supply their pulpits, and to exercise the discipline of the Church. It is not known, however, that they departed in any degree from the, doctrines which they had received, or from the General Rules of the United Societies. In this respect, therefore, they remained Methodists still, while they declared themselves independent in regard to a general control over their societies and church property.

1819 This year was distinguished for the origin and commencement of the Missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

It is true that Methodism had been justly considered missionary in its character from its beginning. Among all modern missionaries, John Wesley was the greatest, the most evangelical, laborious, and successful. The method which he adopted and pursued to the end of his most useful life included in it all the elements of a missionary society, missionary plans, and operations. And the manner in which our Church was organized in this country partook of the like missionary character. The first Wesleyan ministers who came to this country were missionaries, in the proper sense of that word; and it was by carrying out the spirit and plans which they adopted, itinerating as extensively as possible through the country, that the gospel took such a rapid spread through the

instrumentality of their successors.

Yet, on the increase of our work, bringing the circuits, districts, and conferences into a more regular and compact order, it was found that it was losing somewhat of its missionary character, and therefore needed, that it might take a still wider range of usefulness, something by which a more expansive field of labor might be occupied. This could be done only by grafting upon the original stock the branch of a missionary society, subject to such regulations as should bring it strictly within the control of the general superintendency.

It was found also that there were many parts of our country, both in the old and new settlements, where the people were either too poor or too indifferent about their eternal interests to grant any thing like a competent support to those who might be sent to preach the gospel to them. With these difficulties we had long contended, and many of our preachers had suffered all sorts of hardships in conveying to the people in these circumstances the glad tidings of salvation. But as they had succeeded in raising up societies, many of which had become comparatively wealthy, it was thought to be nothing more than a duty which the Church owed to God and to mankind, that its members should contribute a portion of their earthly substance to aid in supplying the spiritual wants of those destitute places. Under these impressions it was concluded that if a united and systematic plan could be devised to call forth the ability and liberality of the Church, that amount of human suffering arising from pecuniary embarrassments might be greatly diminished, the gospel be more extensively spread among the poor and the destitute, and those men of God who were willing to devote their energies to this noble enterprise be relieved from the anxieties arising from present or prospective want and suffering. These thoughts had long occupied the minds of some of the most enlightened and warm-hearted ministers and members of our Church. This subject accordingly became the topic of conversation among several individuals in the city of New York in the beginning of this year, some for and some against the measure. At length, at a meeting of preacher’s stationed in New York, and the book agents, the Rev. Laban Clark presented a resolution in favor of forming a Bible and missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At this time the following preachers were present, namely, Freeborn Garrettson, Joshua Soule, Samuel Merwin, Nathan Bangs, Laban Clark, Thomas Mason, Seth Crowell, Samuel Howe, and Thomas Thorp. After a free interchange of thoughts on the subject the resolution was adopted, and Freeborn Garrettson, Laban Clark, and Nathan Bangs were appointed a committee to prepare a constitution to be submitted at a subsequent meeting of the above-mentioned preachers. This committee, on coming together, agreed that each member should draft a constitution, and at a subsequent meeting the one should be adopted which might appear the most suitable. On comparing these drafts, the one prepared by the present writer was preferred, and at a full meeting of the preachers before mentioned, after undergoing some verbal alterations, was unanimously concurred in, and ordered to be submitted to a public meeting of all the members and friends of the Church who might choose to attend the call, in the Forsyth Street church, on the evening of April 5, 1819. This was accordingly done, when Nathan Bangs was called to the chair. Addresses were delivered by the Chair, by Freeborn Garrettson, Joshua Soule, and some others, when, on motion of Joshua Soule, seconded by Freeborn Garrettson, the constitution which had been prepared was adopted. It is as follows: --

CONSTITUTION

Article I. This association shall be denominated The Missionary and Bible Society of The Methodist Episcopal Church in America; the object of which is, to supply the destitute with Bibles gratuitously, to afford a cheap supply to those who may have the means of purchasing, and to enable the several annual conferences more effectually to extend their missionary labors throughout the United States and elsewhere.

Article II. The business of this society shall be conducted by a president, thirteen vice presidents, clerk, recording and corresponding secretary, treasurer, and thirty-two managers, all of whom shall be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The president, first two vice presidents, clerk, secretaries, treasurer, and the thirty-two managers, shall be elected by the society annually; and each annual conference shall have the privilege of appointing one vice president from its own body.

Article III. Fifteen members at all meetings of the board of managers, and thirty at all meetings of the society, shall be a quorum.

Article IV. The board shall have authority to make by-laws for regulating its own proceedings, fill up vacancies that may occur during the year, and shall present a statement of its transactions and funds to the society at its annual meeting; and also lay before the General Conference a report of its transactions for the four preceding years, and state of its funds.

Article V. Ordained ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whether traveling or local, being members of the society, shall be ex officio members of the board of managers, and be entitled to vote in all meetings of the board.

Article VI Auxiliary societies, embracing the same objects, shall be supplied with Bibles and Testaments at cost, provided such societies shall agree, after supplying their own districts with Bibles, to place their surplus moneys at the disposal of this society.

Article VII. Each subscriber paying two dollars annually shall be a member; and the payment of twenty dollars at one time shall constitute a member for life.

Article VIII. Each member shall be entitled, under the direction of the board of managers, to purchase Bibles and Testaments at the society’s prices, which shall be as low as possible.

Article IX. The annual meeting of the society shall be held on the third Monday in April.

Article X. The president, vice presidents, clerk, secretaries, and treasurer, for the time being, shall be ex officio members of the board of managers.

Article XI. At all meetings of the society and of the board, the president, or, in his absence, the vice president first on the list then present, and in the absence of all the vice presidents, such member as shall be appointed by the meeting for that purpose, shall preside.

Article XII. The minutes of each meeting shall be signed by the chairman.

Article XIII. This constitution shall be submitted to the next General Conference, and, if the objects of the society be approved by them, they shall have authority to insert such article or articles as they may judge proper, for the purpose of establishing the society wherever the Book Concern may be located; and also for the equitable and equal application of its funds for the

accomplishment of the objects herein expressed, and for the purpose of depositing its funds with the agents of the Book Concern, and of having their aid in printing, purchasing, and distributing Bibles and Testaments: Provided always, That the revenue of the society shall never be used or appropriated otherwise than for the printing, purchasing, and distributing Bibles and Testaments under the direction of the managers; and for the support of missionaries who may act under the direction of the bishops and conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Article XIV. This constitution, being submitted and approved according to the provisions of the preceding article, shall not be altered but by the General Conference, on the recommendation of the board of managers."

After receiving subscribers to the constitution, the following officers and managers were elected: --

"Rev. William McKendree, President. Enoch George, 1st Vice President. Robert R. Roberts, 2d Vice President. N. Bangs, New York conference, 3d Vice-President. Mr. Francis Hall, Cler. Daniel Ayres, Recording Secretary. Rev. Thomas Mason, Corresponding Secretary. Joshua Soule, Treasurer.

"Managers. -- Joseph Smith, Robert Mathison, Joseph Sandford, George Suckley, Samuel L. Waldo, Stephen Dando, Samuel B. Harper, Lancaster S. Burling, William Duval, Paul Hick, John Westfield, Thomas Roby, Benjamin Disbrow, James B. Gascoigne, William A. Mercein, Philip I. Arcularius, James B. Oakley, George Caines, Dr. Seaman, Dr. Gregory, John Boyd, M. H. Smith, Nathaniel Jarvis, Robert Snow, Andrew Mercein, Joseph Moser, John Paradise, William Myers, William B. Skidmore, Nicholas Schureman, James Woods, Abraham Paul."

Having thus formed the society, and created a board of officers and managers, the next question was, how we might best enlist the feelings and engage the co-operation of our brethren and friends generally in this important cause. To do this the more effectually, at the first meeting of the managers the following address and circular, prepared by the author, who had been appointed for that purpose, were adopted, and ordered to be printed and circulated, both in pamphlet form and in the Methodist Magazine.

ADDRESS Of the Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America At a time when the Christian world is alive to every sentiment of humanity, and awake to the temporal and spiritual wants of men, every effort directed to the accomplishment of the grand climax of human felicity will, by the philanthropic mind, be viewed with pleasure and delight.

"It is the peculiar office of Christianity to inspire in the breasts of its votaries an ardent desire for the happiness of man. Expanding the soul with the purest benevolence, wherever its influence is felt it expels that selfishness which is fed and strengthened by avarice. And this divine principle, occupying the heart, prompts its possessor to the selection of the most suitable means to accomplish the object of his desire. Ever active, and directing his activity to exalt the glory of God, and to effect the present and future happiness of man, whenever suitable means are presented they are applied with assiduity, and with certain hope of success.

"Such, we trust, are the objects of the patrons of this society. Beholding with pleasure the extensive diffusion of Scriptural knowledge, through the medium of missionary, Bible, and tract societies, and believing that more efficient means to extend the Redeemer’s kingdom were within

their power, the members of the Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America have agreed to unite their strength for the purpose of contributing their mite toward sending the messengers of peace to gather in the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

"In presenting their institution to their brethren and to the Christian public, they deem it expedient to explain, in a few words, their ultimate design: -- it is, as expressed in the first article of the constitution, To enable the several annual conferences more effectually to extend their missionary labors throughout the United States and elsewhere; to afford a cheap supply of Bibles and Testaments to those who may have the means of purchasing; and to supply the destitute gratis.

"The primary intention, therefore, of this institution is an extended operation of the great missionary system, the success of which has been witnessed among us for so many years; and the Bible is only so far associated with it as to be made subservient to the main design. That this ought to be the leading design of every association which has for its final object the diffusion of Christianity, will appear evident to those who consider, that it has been the invariable method of God to bring mankind to the knowledge of the truth by means of a living ministry. The Bible is the infallible judge to which the living messenger appeals for the correctness of his message; but it is the word of truth, addressed by the ambassador of Christ to the understandings and consciences of men, that generally lays open the nakedness of the human heart, and brings the guilty sinner to Jesus Christ. Send, therefore, the living messenger of God, with the Bible in his hands, and let that finally decide the controversy between the sinner and the truths delivered. This method, we believe, will be the most effectual to convey the glad tidings of salvation to those who are perishing for lack of knowledge.

Moreover, as it is the design of this society to extend itself, if possible, by means of auxiliary societies, throughout the United States, and to engage especially the co-operation of all the annual conferences, provision is made in the constitution for the formation of auxiliary societies, and a circular addressed to them on the subject; and as none are so competent to take an impartial and comprehensive view of the various parts of our extensive continent as the General Conference, in which is concentrated the episcopal authority and the general oversight of the whole Church; and as it would, in our opinion, very much facilitate the operations, and greatly contribute to accomplish the benevolent objects of the society, to unite in some measure its counsels and operations with the book agency; we have provided for the attainment of these objects, by ceding to the General Conference a power of inserting such articles for these purposes as they may judge proper, as well as for the equitable apportionment of the funds of the society among the several annual conferences. As our ultimate object is the general good of mankind, by the extensive diffusion of experimental and practice godliness, we are principally solicitous to raise an adequate supply for such men of God as may volunteer their services in the cause of Christ, leaving to the episcopacy the selection of the men, as well as the place of their destination. We take the liberty of observing, however, that our views are not restricted to our own nation or color; we hope the aborigines of our country, the Spaniards of South America, the French of Louisiana and Canada, and every other people who are destitute of the invaluable blessings of the gospel, as far as our means may admit, will be comprehended in the field of the labors of our zealous missionaries. To accomplish so great and so glorious an object, time, union, liberality, patience, and perseverance are all necessary. And we hope to exhibit, in our future exertions, evidence of our zeal in providing pecuniary aid to the extent of our power, and in our fervent prayers and

earnest wishes for the success of our institution.

"With an object of such magnitude and importance before us, we think we cannot appeal in vain to the liberality of our brethren and friends for their hearty cooperation.

"When we review our ministry from the commencement of our existence as a separate communion, and mark its successful progress, we are constrained to say, What hath God wrought!

"Contending with numerous impediments, they have persevered with great success in extending the triumphs of the cross among mankind. We ourselves are, we humbly trust, the trophies of this ministry. By the blessing of God upon their labors, it was this same ministry, crossing the 'watery world' in the character of missionaries, that gave the first impetus to that mighty exertion in the Christian cause, by which the present generation in this western world is distinguished. And shall we be wanting in our efforts to send this 'gospel of the kingdom' to our fellow-men, millions of whom are yet dwelling in darkness and in the shadow of death?

"Arise, brethren, in the majesty of your strength: in the name of Immanuel, God with us, go forward: concentrate your force in this society; and, by a united exertion, help to people the regions of perennial happiness, by contributing to send the word of life to the destitute inhabitants of our fallen world. What heart can remain unmoved, what hand unemployed, when called to action in a cause so important, so interesting, so sacred! Let but the friends of Zion give half as much for the support of missionaries, and for the distribution of the word of life, as the intemperate do to gratify and pamper their appetites, and there shall be no lack. "Although the constitution which accompanies this address requires the payment of two dollars annually to constitute a member, and the payment of twenty dollars at one time to constitute a member for life, yet this does not exclude donations to any amount, great or small. Remember, the mite of the poor widow was not only accepted, but her liberality was highly applauded by her Lord, because she put in all her living. 'It is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.' And if every one will become a cheerful giver, 'according to the ability which God giveth,' we shall soon witness the rising glory of the Church; 'the solitary places shall be glad for them' -- the messengers of Zion -- 'and the wilderness shall blossom as the rose;' the pagan nations, which inhabit the wilds of America, and the desolate inhabitants of our new states and territories, shall hail the effects of your bounty; -- nations unborn shall rise up and call you blessed. Let, then, all hearts be warm, and all hands active, until the 'ends of the earth see the salvation of our God.' "

CIRCULAR

"The managers of the Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America beg leave to present to the several annual conferences, and through them to the members of our Church generally, a copy of their address and constitution, with an earnest solicitation that efficient means may be adopted to establish societies auxiliary to this.

"Having long been convinced of the necessity of some institution, by which pecuniary aid could be afforded to enable the conferences to carry on their missionary labors on a more extended plan, the object of their desire is at length so far accomplished in the formation of this society, the real and professed object of which is, to extend the influence of divine truth, by means of those missionaries who may, from time to time, be approved and employed by the bishops and

conferences for that purpose.

"You are referred to the preceding address for more particular information of our views, and the reasons for some of the articles of the constitution. Any amendments which may be suggested by either of the annual conferences can be forwarded to the managers, and, if deemed expedient, the General Conference, agreeably to the provisions of the last article of the constitution, can adopt them.

"You are likewise presented with the draught of a constitution deemed suitable for auxiliary societies, leaving it to you to make such alterations as local circumstances may seem to require. This is done with a view to produce as much uniformity in the operations of the various auxiliaries as circumstances will admit.

"The managers beg leave to suggest the propriety of forming one society only auxiliary to this, in each conference, to be located in the most populous town or city within the bounds of the conference, such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, Boston, &c., &c., and that the other societies which may be formed within the limits of each conference become branches of that. This method, it is thought, will greatly facilitate the operations of the society, and produce greater energy in the execution of its benevolent designs, than it would to make every subordinate society immediately auxiliary to the parent society. And if the several annual conferences unite their counsels, and recommend the subject to the people of their charge, with practical zeal and energy, it is believed that auxiliary and branch societies may be established in every City and circuit throughout our extensive work.

"According to a recent report of the 'General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society,' now in successful operation in England, our brethren in Europe, during the last year, have raised upward of eighty thousand dollars for the support of domestic and foreign missionaries! Through this generous pecuniary aid they now employ one hundred and three missionaries. How much, therefore, may we do, if efficient means are used to combine our strength!

"The object contemplated by this society, the managers think, is of sufficient importance and utility to recommend itself to every considerate and pious mind; and therefore they need say no more, than to add their prayers, and request yours, that we may all be guided by the wisdom that cometh from above in all our attempts to promote peace on earth and good-will among men.

"Signed by order of the board of managers, N. Bangs, Chairman. New York, April 21, 1819.

"P.S. As soon as any auxiliary society is formed, it is requested that official notice thereof be forwarded to our corresponding secretary, Rev. Thomas Mason, No. 41 John Street, New York."

Soon after the society was thus organized, our plans and proceedings were submitted to the Baltimore conference by the Rev. Joshua Soule; and it was no small encouragement to be assured that the brethren of that conference most heartily approved of our objects, and passed spirited resolutions to carry our plans into effect. The Virginia, New York, and New England conferences passed similar resolutions, recommending the society to the patronage and support of the people of their charge. The first auxiliary society was the Female Missionary Society of New York, which was organized in July, 1819. Then followed the Young Men's of New York, Courtlandt, Stamford, Genesee conference, the Domestic Missionary Society of Boston, and Columbia, of

South Carolina, all which became auxiliary in the course of the year. These movements were sources of much comfort, and greatly encouraged the officers and managers to persevere in the work they had so happily begun.

Soon after our organization a letter was addressed, by order of the managers, to Bishop McKendree, stating to him the plan and objects of the society, and requesting his opinion respecting the practicability and the most suitable means of sending the gospel to the French of Louisiana, and to the destitute inhabitants of Florida. The following is an extract from the bishop's answer "Your plan meets my views of preaching the gospel to every creature better than any one I have yet seen.

1. Because that body of missionaries whom you intend to employ have mutually agreed to renounce ease and worldly interest, and devote their time, their talents, and their labors. They know no geographical boundaries; but, like the gospel which they preach, embrace the poor as well as the rich of every nation and condition of men; and in order to perpetuate the blessings of the gospel to all classes of men, they voluntarily subject themselves to a system of rules and regulations calculated to promote so desirable an end, and labor for the reformation and happiness of mankind, which is the ultimate design of the gospel.

2. It promises that pecuniary aid, for want of which we have had the mortification of seeing many well-devised plans frustrated, and many hopeful prospects fade away.

"You are sufficiently acquainted with the state of things in Canada, Florida, the state of Louisiana, and the Missouri territory form our western frontiers, and furnish a large field for missionary enterprise. In these bounds there are many French, some of them friendly to our views of religion. Believing that it would be productive of much good, we have long wished for, and frequently endeavored to procure, ministers who would be itinerant ministers indeed, to send to our western frontiers to preach to their inhabitants in French; but we have been hitherto disappointed."

About the same time that this society was established in the city of New York, the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the bounds of the Philadelphia conference was formed; and though it has never thought it best to become auxiliary, it has pursued the even tenor of its way from that time to this, appropriating its funds for the promotion of the same benevolent objects, and has done much in furtherance of the cause of missions.

While these efforts were making to enlarge the sphere of our operations by means of missionary institutions and labors, the work in general, on the circuits and stations, was in a state of prosperity, as may be seen by reference to the number of Church members. In the Scioto and Ohio districts, in Chillicothe, Ohio, and in Schenectady, New York, and some other places, there were encouraging revivals of religion. There was, however, a very considerable secession among the colored people in the city of New York.

We have already seen that the secession of Allen and his party created much uneasiness in the minds of the colored members of our Church, both in Philadelphia and New York, and that quite a number, particularly in the other city, were induced to join the disaffected party. Allen had succeeded also in establishing a small congregation in the city of New York, over which he had ordained a preacher by the name of Miller,1 who had been for several years a local preacher in our Church.

There were in this city, altogether; about one thousand colored people attached to our Church, among whom were several local preachers of piety and talent. These had heretofore been under the pastoral oversight of a white elder, stationed by the bishop, who administered to them the ordinances, exercised discipline, held love-feasts, and generally preached to them once every sabbath-the other appointments being filled by their own local preachers. For this service the trustees of the white churches thought it no more than just that the colored congregation should pay something toward the support of the preacher who had charge of them. This became one source of complaint, while others thought it was degrading to them to be in any way dependent upon white men for the administration of the ordinances and the government of the Church. Accordingly symptoms of dissatisfaction had shown themselves for several years on these and collateral subjects; and though various attempts had been made to remove their grounds of complaint, they had proved unavailing; this year, therefore, they declared themselves independent.

They did not, however, connect themselves with the Allenites. As they had succeeded in building them a commodious house of worship in Church Street, had several local preachers and some elders among themselves, and not having full confidence in Allen and his partisans, they saw fit to organize themselves into an independent body, called the African Methodist Episcopal Church, under the government of elders of their own choosing, altering our Discipline so far as to make it conform to their peculiar organization, electing annually one of their elders as a general superintendent, without, however, setting him apart to that office by prayer and imposition of hands. With these exceptions, it is believed that they retain the doctrines and discipline of the Church they have left, having their annual and quarterly conferences, class meeting, love-feasts, and sacramental services, as provided for in our Discipline.

One principal reason assigned by themselves for this separate organization was, that colored preachers were not recognized by our conferences as traveling preachers; and, therefore, however much a local preacher might labor in word and doctrine for the benefit of his colored brethren, he could neither exercise the functions of pastor in the governmental department, nor receive a pecuniary support for his services. To remedy this inconvenience, and remove the disability under which they labored in this respect, they withdrew from our pastoral oversight, established a conference of their own, and commenced the itinerant mode of preaching the gospel. By this secession we lost fourteen colored local preachers, and nine hundred and twenty-nine private members, including class leaders, exhorters, and stewards. But though they thus "went out from us," they have never, I believe, manifested any rancorous or bitter spirit toward their old friends, but have cultivated a feeling of friendship and brotherly affection; and there is reason to believe that, though they may not have prospered in the same ratio in which they did before their separation, they have retained their piety and zeal, and have managed their affairs in an orderly manner.

It is now (1839) twenty years since the secession took place, and the degree of their prosperity may be estimated from the following statement of their number of circuits and stations, preachers and members, taken from their minutes for 1839.

Circuits 21; preachers 32; members 2,608. These circuits and stations are found in the states of New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. In the City of New York,

where the secession originated, they have a membership of 1,325, making an increase of 396 in twenty years, which is by no means in a ratio with their increase while they remained under the care of their white brethren. In the city of Boston, however, their success has been greater in proportion. In 1819 they had only 33; but now, in 1839, they have 126.

They will not allow any slaveholder to become or remain a member of their church. As the Methodist Episcopal Church never derived any temporal emolument from them, so we have sustained no other damage by the secession than what may arise from missing the opportunity of doing them all the good in our power as their pastors. And if a desire for independence on their part has deprived us of this opportunity, having done what we could as Christian ministers to prevent the rupture, I trust we shall be absolved from all blame, be the consequences what they may. We cannot do otherwise than wish them all spiritual and temporal blessings in Christ Jesus. Though formally separated from us in name, we still love them as our spiritual children, and stand ready to aid them, as far as we may, in extending the Redeemer's kingdom among men.

Forty-seven preachers located this year, fifteen were returned supernumerary, thirty-six superannuated, two were expelled, and nine had finished their work and gone to their reward. These latter were, Fletcher Harris, Thomas Lucas, Joseph Stone, John Wesley Bond, Joseph Totten, Daniel Moore, Thomas Thorp, Stephen Jacob, Jason Walker.

Joseph Totten had long been a faithful laborer in his Lord's vineyard, having entered the traveling ministry in 1792, and continued steadfast in his work until death signed his release.

Thomas Thorp was young in the ministry, but was a man of precocious genius, possessing a remarkable aptitude for the acquirement of knowledge, and for imparting it to others.

John Wesley Bond was for several years the traveling companion of Bishop Asbury during the close of his days, and attended him with the fidelity and affection of a son, was with him in his last sickness and death, watching his parting breath, while the bishop leaned his dying head upon his arm. Of his excellent spirit, his integrity, and faithful services, particularly toward him as his traveling companion, Bishop Asbury bears an ample testimony. He ended his days in peace and triumph. The others enumerated were faithful in their calling and happy in their death.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year:201,750; Last Year: 190,477; Increase: 11,273 -- Colored This Year: 39,174; Last Year: 39,150; Increase: 24 -- Total This Year: 240,924; Last Year: 229,627 -- Increase: 11,297 -- Preachers This Year: 812; Last Year: 748; Increase: 64. The secession of the colored people in the city of New York, amounting to about nine hundred, accounts for the small increase of that class to the membership; while the general increase shows the happy results of the work among the white population.

1820

Previously to the session of the General Conference, May 1 of this year, the Ohio, Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi, South Carolina, Virginia, Baltimore, and Philadelphia Conferences held their sessions and elected their delegates -- the New York, New England, and Genesee conferences, having held theirs after the session of the General Conference, elected their delegates the year before. The reports from various parts of the work this year were highly favorable, the increase to the membership being nearly twenty thousand. The establishment of the

Tract and Missionary Societies, and the publication of the Methodist Magazine, added a fresh stimulant to preachers and people, and tended much to enlarge the field of labor, as well as to encourage the hearts of those who were panting for the salvation of the world.

But, before giving a detailed account of these things, we shall notice the doings of the General Conference.

ENDNOTES

1 He afterward left the Allenites and Connected himself with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and is now an elder among them.

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CHAPTER 5 The General Conference of 1820 This conference assembled in the city of Baltimore, May 1, 1820, and was composed of the following delegates: --

New York Conference: Nathan Bangs, Samuel Draper, Freeborn Garrettson, Samuel Merwin, Daniel Ostrander, Phineas Rice, Marvin Richardson, Peter P. Sandford, Eben Smith, Joshua Soule, Henry Stead,Ebenezer Washburn, Elijah Woolsey.

New England Conference: Oliver Beal, Daniel Fillmore, Elijah Hedding, David Kilbourn, Joseph A. Merrill, Timothy Merritt, Erastus Otis, George Pickering, Main Ruter, Solomon Sias.

Genesee Conference: William Case, Israel Chamberlin, Abner Chase, Charles Giles, Loring Grant, Marmaduke Pearce, Henry Ryan.

Ohio Conference: John Collins, Alexander Cummins, William Dixon, James B. Finley, Walter Griffith, James Quinn, Jonathan Stamper, Jacob Young.

Missouri Conference: John Scripps, Samuel H. Thompson, Jesse Walker.

Mississippi Conference: Thomas Griffin, John Lane.

Tennessee Conference: William Adams, James Anley, Peter Cartwright, Jesse Cunningham, Charles Holliday, Marcus Lindsey.

South Carolina Conference: James Andrew, Daniel Asbury, William Capers, Samuel Dunwody, Samuel K. Hodges, William M. Kennedy, Lewis Myers, James Norton, Joseph Travis.

Virginia Conference: Peyton Anderson, Edward Cannon, William Compton, Matthew M. Dance, Ethelbert Drake, Daniel Hall, James Patterson, John Weaver.

Baltimore Conference: Thomas Burch, John Emory, Lewis R. Fechtig, Joseph Frye, Alfred Griffith, James McCann, Nelson Reed, Stephen G. Roszel, Beverly Waugh.

Philadelphia Conference: James Bateman, Ezekiel Cooper, Joseph Lybrand, Stephen Martindale, Lawrence McCombs, Andrew Monroe, Gerard Morgan, James Ridgway, William Ryland, Solomon Sharpe, James Smith, Thomas Ware, Joshua Wells, George Woolley.

Bishops McKendree, George, and Roberts were present, and the conference was opened by Bishop McKendree by reading a portion of the word of God, singing, and prayer; and he then informed the conference that, in consequence of ill health, he should not he able to discharge the duties of the chair, but should avail himself of every opportunity which his health might permit to assist his colleagues in guiding the counsels of the conference. I regret that I am not able to find a copy of the written address which he afterward presented, containing recommendations of such

subjects as he considered worthy the attention of the conference. From the character and duties of the committees, however, it appears that the address referred to the state of the episcopacy, -- the local preachers, -- to the instruction of children -- to the condition of the slaves, -- to the cause of missions -- to the use of spirituous liquors, -- to the condition of our houses of worship, and to the boundaries of the annual conferences -- all which were referred to appropriate committees.

Bishops George and Roberts, in a verbal communication, called the attention of the conference to the state of things in Canada, and to the subject of locating traveling preachers without their consent, which were referred to committees. The following is an extract from the report of the committee on the episcopacy: --

After approving of the manner in which the bishops had discharged their onerous duties during the past four years, the committee add --

"In relation to strengthening the episcopacy, they have regarded with deep and affectionate concern the declining health and strength of our senior superintendent. Worn down by long, extensive, and faithful labors in the service of God and the Church, your committee feel a solicitude, which they doubt not is equally felt by the conference, that every practicable provision may be made for his relief and comfort, hoping that by a prudent relaxation from labor for a time, the Church may yet be blessed with the benefit of his very desirable services and counsel."

Whereupon the following resolutions were submitted by the committee and concurred in by the conference: --

1. That it is the wish and desire of this General Conference that Bishop McKendree, during his afflictions and debility, should travel in such directions, or remain in such places, as he may judge most conducive to his own health and comfort, and that he be accordingly, at the close of the conference, respectfully and affectionately requested so to do.

2. That, whenever Bishop McKendree shall think himself able, it is the desire of this conference that he should continue, so far as his health will permit, the exercise of his episcopal functions and superintending care.

3. That the committee appointed by the last General Conference, to make provision for the families of the bishops, are hereby continued, and that the same committee be directed to take into consideration the present state of Bishop McKendree’s health, and to provide for defraying any extra expenses which, in their judgment, his afflictions may make requisite." This affectionate regard of the conference for the bishop was a source of great consolation to him, and counterbalanced, in some measure at least, the mental anxieties he suffered at this conference, in consequence of the conflicting opinions respecting the manner in which the presiding elders should be appointed, and in what their duties should consist. But as all these things, together with the election and resignation of another bishop, have been fully detailed in vol. ii, page 330 [separate pages not transcribed into the electronic text -- DVM], I shall add nothing more in reference to them here, only to say, that Bishop McKendree expressed his high gratification for the respect and sympathy thus manifested toward him by the conference in his afflictions, and for the confidence reposed in the integrity with which he had administered the government of the Church.

We have before remarked that the cause of education had been abandoned by our Church since the destruction of Cokesbury College the second time by fire, and that the consequences of this long neglect of so important a cause began to bear injuriously upon the character and prosperity of the Church. This had been painfully felt and feelingly expressed by some of the most enlightened members of our Church, both ministers and people, and some incipient steps had been taken by the New England and New York conferences to remedy the evil. In 1817 an academy had been established in Newmarket, N.H., under the patronage of the New England conference, and another in the city of New York in 1819, under the patronage of the New York conference. Wishing to secure also the patronage of the General Conference, as far as might be consistent, and likewise to awaken a spirit favorable to the cause of education generally, the friends of these institutions presented to this General Conference their respective constitutions and plans of procedure, praying that the bishops might be authorized to appoint principals from among the traveling preachers for a longer space than two years. This authority was granted, and the whole subject was referred to a committee, the report of which, in the following words, was adopted by the conference: --

"The committee appointed to take into consideration the propriety of recommending to the annual conferences the establishment of seminaries of learning, having had the subject under deliberation, beg leave to submit the following report: --

"Your committee regret the want of time, as well as talent, to take that extended and comprehensive view of the subject which its importance demands; but it is cause of greater regret still, considering the rapid improvement of society in almost every science, and the extension of our Church through the propagation of those divine principles which we consider so unspeakably precious, that this subject has not sooner claimed the attention of the General Conference.

"Almost all seminaries of learning in our country, of much celebrity, are under the control of Calvinistic or of Hopkinsian principles, or otherwise are managed by men denying the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. If any of our people, therefore, wish to give their sons or daughters a finished education, they are under the necessity of resigning them to the management of those institutions which are more or less hostile to our views of the grand doctrines of Christianity.

"Another capital defect in most seminaries of learning, your committee presume to think, is, that experimental and practical godliness is considered only of secondary importance; whereas, in the opinion of your committee, this ought to form the most prominent feature in every literary institution. Religion and learning should mutually assist each other, and thus connect the happiness of both worlds together.

"On account, however, of the different usages which prevail in the several sections of our widely extended country, originating from state regulations, &c., your committee think it impossible for the General Conference to adopt a system of regulations on this subject uniformly the same for each annual conference. But that each conference should exert itself to adopt some method for such advantages to the rising generation as may be had from literary institutions which combine religion and learning together, it is thought, there can be no doubt.

"Your committee rejoice in being able to say, that two of your annual conferences, namely, New England and New York, have established seminaries, which, in a good degree, answer the

description your committee would recommend. These institutions afford an encouraging prospect of usefulness. Your committee therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolutions, viz.:

1. Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, that it be, and it is hereby, recommended to all the annual conferences to establish, as soon as practicable, literary institutions, under their own control, in such way and manner as they may think proper.

2. Resolved, &c., That it be the special duty of the episcopacy to use their influence to carry the above resolution into effect, by recommending the subject to each annual conference.

3. Resolved, &c., That the following amendment to the second answer of the third question of the fourth section of the first chapter of the Discipline be adopted, viz.: after the word preachers, let there be added, And the presidents, principals, or teachers of seminaries of learning, which are or may be under our superintendence.

4. Resolved, &c., That the principals of the Wesleyan Academy and Wesleyan Seminary be requested to forward a copy of their constitutions to each of the annual conferences.

5. Resolved, &c., That a copy of this report be recorded on the journals of the several annual conferences." The adoption of this report by the General Conference, no doubt, tended greatly to subserve the cause of education, and to diffuse among us more generally than heretofore a desire to avail ourselves of the advantages to be derived from literary and scientific improvement. That opposition should be manifested to these efforts to raise the standard of education, by any of the disciples of the illustrious Wesley, whose profound learning added so much splendor to his character as an evangelical minister, may seem strange to some. This, however, was the fact; and their unreasonable opposition, exemplified in a variety of ways, tended not a little to paralyze, for a season, the efforts of those who had enlisted in this cause; while the apathy of others retarded its progress, and made its final success somewhat uncertain. And it has not been without much labor and persevering industry that this opposition has been measurably overcome, and the dormant energies of the Church awakened and excited to action in favor of this noble enterprise. Its onward march, however, has been hailed with no less delight by its friends than deprecated by its enemies, while its success thus far has added greatly to the character which Methodism was acquiring in the public estimation. All we now want, to place our literary institutions on a permanent foundation, and make them eminently useful, is the simultaneous and general effort of the members and friends of the Church to contribute liberally for their support and endowment.

It has been seen in a preceding chapter that difficulties had arisen in Canada, growing chiefly out of the state of things which had been brought on by the war of 1812. In compliance with the request of the brethren in Quebec, and some members of the church in Montre, the British conference had supplied these places with missionaries; and through the solicitations of some individuals in Upper Canada missionaries had also been sent into that province, where our preachers had long labored with great success, amid many privations and sufferings, and were still working to the satisfaction of the great majority of the people. This state of things had been productive of much irritation among the societies in Upper Canada, protesting conflicting views and interests mutually injurious, and of course tending to impede the progress of pure religion. At this General Conference the subject came up for consideration, by numerous memorials and

petitions from the several circuits in Upper Canada, protesting against the interference of the British missionaries, and praying that they might still be supplied with the ministry and ordinances of religion by the American conference. After a due consideration of the subject, the following resolutions were adopted: --

1. Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That it is the duty of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to continue their episcopal charge over our societies in the Canadas, all except Quebec.

2. Resolved, &c., That the following address be sent to our brethren in Canada: --

"Dear Brethren: -- We have received and read with deep interest the affectionate memorials and addresses from the several circuits in the provinces of Canada, in which you have expressed your strong attachment to us, and your ardent desire for the continuance of our ministerial care over you. We most cordially reciprocate the sentiments of brotherly affection and Christian attachment you have expressed, and pledge ourselves to use our best endeavors for your spiritual and eternal interest.

"We sincerely deprecate those evils of which you complain, and which have grown out of the conduct of the missionaries sent by the British conference to labor in Canada. Confiding, however, in the integrity of that conference, and believing they have been misled by partial and erroneous statements, sent by interested persons in Canada, we still hope that the existing embarrassments will be removed, and that an amicable adjustment of this unhappy affair may be brought about.

"We can assure you that no means which, in our opinion, will be likely to produce this desirable result, shall be left untried.

"That you may be convinced that we have neither been inattentive to your interests nor unmindful of the respect due to our British brethren, we beg leave to lay before you a brief statement of what has been done in reference to this subject.

"It is doubtless well known to you that your case was fully laid before us at our last session in this city, and impartially considered in the presence of brothers Black and Bennett, who were sent as representatives by the British conference; and after hearing all that could be said on both sides of the question, it was resolved most expedient, among other reasons because we understood it was your earnest desire, to continue, as we had done heretofore, our ministerial labors among you. That the British conference might be fully apprised of the course we had taken, an address was sent to them, stating the reasons which had directed our decision in relation to Canada, and requesting that some arrangements might be made for an amicable adjustment of the existing difficulties. To this Communication we have received no direct answer.

"Similar communications have been since sent, by Bishops McKendree and George. The letter sent by Bishop George contained a full development of the affairs of Canada; but neither has an answer to this been received. As some of the circuits have petitioned to have a separate annual conference in Canada, this subject has been considered, and it is thought to be inexpedient for the present, because, among other reasons, it might prevent that interchange of preachers, so very desirable, and so essential to your prosperity.

"After assuring you of our unabated attachment to you as a branch of the Church over which we are called, in the providence of God, to extend our oversight, and of our determination, at your earliest request, as well as from a consciousness of imperious duty, to continue to afford you all the ministerial aid in our power, we exhort you to steadfastness in the faith, to unity and love, and to perseverance in all holy obedience.

3. Resolved, &c., That the following note be inserted in the Discipline, under the twenty-third article of our Church, viz.: 'As far as it respects civil affairs we believe it the duty of Christians, and especially all Christian ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of the country where they may reside, and to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to the powers that le: and therefore it is expected that all our preachers and people who may be under the British or any other government will behave themselves as peaceable and orderly subjects.'

4. Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That this conference address the British conference on the subject of a mutual exchange of delegates, as representatives of the one conference to the other." The first resolution was afterward so modified as to authorize the delegate who might be sent to England to allow the whole of the lower province to be given up to the British connection: and then the following was added: --

5. That the episcopacy be requested, if practicable, to send a delegate to the British conference at their next session in July, or at any time thereafter, and furnish him with the requisite instructions, and also to draw on the Book Concern for the amount necessary to defray the expense.

6. Resolved, &c., That the episcopacy, by and with the advice and consent of the Genesee conference, if they judge it expedient, previous to the sitting of the next General Conference, shall have authority to establish an annual conference in Canada." The Rev. J. Emory was appointed delegate, who, in addition to an adjustment of the existing difficulties in Canada, was instructed to Convey to that body the affectionate attachment of the American conference to their British brethren, and to request a regular interchange of delegates from one connection to the other, at such times as might be mutually satisfactory. As an assurance, however, that there existed a disposition, on the part of the missionary Committee in London, to remove all just cause of complaint, and to prevent any improper interference of their missionaries in the houses and places occupied by our preachers in Upper Canada, the following document had been received by Bishop McKendree and submitted to the General Conference: -- "Wesleyan Mission House, 77 Hatton Garden, London, 25th February, 1819

"Dear Sir: -- We transmit for your information the following resolutions, lately entered into by the committee of the General Wesleyan Missionary Society in London, relative to the British missionaries in Canada, and which resolutions have been transmitted to those missionaries.

1. "Resolved, That it be recommended to the brethren in Canada to preach in a chapel which is now jointly occupied by the American brethren, and, for the sake of peace, to pursue their labor separately, and not to continue their labors in any station previously occupied by the American brethren, except when the population is so large, or so scattered, that it is evident a very considerable part of them must be neglected.

2. "Resolved, That they are to act under the general instruction of the committee of June 26, 1818, viz.:

"1. That it be communicated to the missionaries there that the conference and the committee never intended that the missionaries sent out by them should invade the societies raised up by the preachers appointed by the American conference, and to divide them; but that they should communicate the benefits of the Christian ministry to those parts of the country where the inhabitants are destitute of them, and to labor in those towns and villages where the population is so large that the addition of their labors to those of other ministers is demanded by the moral necessities of the people.

"The foregoing resolutions will, we hope, satisfy yourself and the American conference that the British conference and the missionary committee in London feel sorry that any interference should have ever taken place between your missionaries and those sent by the British conference, who most earnestly wish that their missionaries may labor in harmony with all good men.

"'Praying that Christian kindness and good-will may prevail and abound, we are, dear sir, with Christian affection, your obedient servants, "Jabez Bunting, Richard Watson, Jos. Taylor, General Secretaries."

Though the final result of this negotiation could not be known until some time after the adjournment of the conference, yet it seems most proper to finish the account of it in this place. And it is recorded with the more pleasure, because it evinces the disposition and determination, on the part of both the English and American conferences, not to allow the collisions which had unhappily occurred in Canada between individual preachers of the two connections to interrupt their harmony, or to weaken the strength of their friendship and fraternal regards.

Mr. Emory bore with him to the British conference the following address: -- "Baltimore, May 27, 1820

"The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, to the British conference of ministers and preachers, late in connection with the Rev. John Wesley.

"Reverend and Dear Brethren: -- Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied to you, and to the Israel of God under your charge, both at home and in foreign countries. With a sincere and earnest desire to establish and preserve the most perfect harmony and peace with you, our elder brethren, we have adopted measures for opening such friendly intercourse as will, we devoutly pray, tend to the accomplishment of this desirable end.

"Situated so remotely from each other, and under different forms of civil government, it is believed that no mode of correspondence will so effectually unite the European and American Methodists as an interchange of delegates from our respective conferences.

We are encouraged to hope that such correspondence will be acceptable to you, from the consideration of the visit of Messrs. Black and Bennett, at our last session, and from the friendly opinion of our dear brother, the Rev. William Black, who has been with us during our present sitting in this city.

"Should such a friendly intercourse be approved, we shall receive with cordiality your representative at our succeeding sessions, and, with the most sincere friendship and affection, reciprocate the visit.

"The prosperity of your missions, both at home and in foreign countries, is matter of praise and thanksgiving to the great Head of the church; and our unceasing prayer is, that they still may increase more and more.

"The last four years have been distinguished by no ordinary success within the field of our labor: our borders have been greatly enlarged, and the wilderness has budded and blossomed as the rose. The last year especially has been attended with an abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the increase of our numbers has exceeded that of any former year.

"The field of missionary labors is opening and extending before us, and the Divine Providence appears to be preparing the way for the conversion of the Indian tribes on this vast continent.

"The bearer, the Rev. John Emory, has been appointed our delegate to your body, and will be able to give you a more particular account of the work under our charge, and especially of our commencement and progress in the missionary cause.

"Most earnestly praying that the Methodists may be identified in their doctrine, experience, and practice, in every part of the world, and that the Father of lights may pour upon you and upon us the Spirit of grace, and preserve us in the unity of faith, and in the fellowship and peace of his Son Jesus Christ, we remain, reverend and dear brethren, yours in the gospel of our common Lord.

"Signed by order and in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Enoch George, President, Alexander McCaine, Secretary." To this address the following answer was sent, together with the resolutions in relation to the existing difficulties in Canada: -- "To the General Superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America

"Dear Brethren: -- We inclose to your care the resolutions passed by the conference after the letters addressed to us by the American General Conference, and delivered by the Rev. John Emory, had been read and considered.

"In addition to the expression of our sentiments contained in those resolutions, on the renewal of intercourse between the two conferences, we are directed to request you to convey to your next General Conference our Warmest thanks for those declarations o unabated brotherly affection toward us and the connection which your letters contain, and for the appointment of Mr. Emory as your representative.

"In him we have recognized the purity of your doctrine and the fervor and simplicity of your piety. We have received him, not as a stranger, but as a 'brother beloved.' Our hearts are as his heart; and it will be remembered as one of the most pleasing circumstances Connected with the conference held in this town, that our personal intercourse with you was here restored, and that this 'work of love' was committed to so able and excellent a brother, whose public ministrations and addresses in our conference have been equally gratifying and instructive to us and to our people.

"From the statements made by Mr. Emory as to the progress of the work of God in the United States, we have received the greatest satisfaction. We offered our united thanksgivings to God that the doctrines of primitive Methodism, the preaching of which God has so eminently owned in the salvation of men and the edification of believers, are not only continued among you in their purity, but have been so widely extended by your great and persevering efforts; and that the same

holy discipline, in all its essential parts, continues, wherever you form societies, to guard and confirm the work which God has made to prosper in your hands.

"For the state of our affairs in Great Britain and Ireland, and in our missionary stations, we refer you to Mr. Emory, who, as health would allow, has attended our sittings, and to those publications with which, before his departure, we shall be happy to furnish him, to be laid before you.

"You will see that we have had to rejoice with you in the great extension of the work of God into the various parts of the British empire, and that the institutions of Methodism, which we have proved to be so well adapted to promote and to preserve true religion, are known and valued in every quarter of the globe. May we, with you, be the honored instruments of turning the disobedient to the wisdom of the just in every place, and of hastening the universal kingdom of our Lord.

"The resolutions on the disputes in the Canadas were adopted after a calm and patient consideration of the case, in which we were greatly assisted by Mr. Emory. We hope that they will lead to a full adjustment of those disputes, and that the affection which exists between the two connections generally will extend itself to the brethren and societies in the Canadas. This is the disposition which we shall earnestly inculcate upon those under our care in those provinces, and we have full confidence that the same care will be taken by you to extinguish every feeling contrary to love among those over whom you have control and influence.

"With earnest prayers for you, dear and honored brethren, in particular, on whom devolve the general direction of the affairs of the great body of Methodists in the western world, and labors so severe, but so glorious, -- that you may be filled with wisdom for counsel, and strength to fulfill the duties of your great office; -- and also praying that all your churches may have rest, and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, be abundantly multiplied, we are, dear brethren, yours most affectionately in Christ Jesus, "Jabez Bunting, President, George Marsden, Secretary. Liverpool, August, 1820."

"Resolutions of the British Conference on American Affairs

1. That the conference embraces with pleasure this opportunity of recognizing that principle which, it is hoped, will be permanently maintained, that the Wesleyan Methodists are one in every part of the world.

2. That the British conference has frequently rejoiced in the very favorable account which they have received, year after year, of the great and glorious work which God is graciously carrying on in the United States of America; but that it is with peculiar pleasure that they receive a representative from the General Conference in America. The statement given by our beloved brother, Mr. Emory, of the present state of Methodism in America, has been received with much joy; and the conference also expresses its high satisfaction, not only in the declaration, but in the proof, of the love of our American brethren in fully opening the way for a brotherly intercourse between the European and the American societies.

3. The conference particularly rejoices in the zeal which is manifested by our American brethren in carrying the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Indian tribes, and in the success which God has already given to their labors in that natural and moral wilderness; and hopes that the time is drawing near when the aborigines of that vast continent shall become the mild and gentle followers

of our gracious Redeemer.

4. That it is the earnest wish of this conference that the kind and friendly intercourse which is now opened between the British and the American conference should be continued; and that, prior to the time of holding the next General Conference in America, the British conference will appoint one or more of their body to visit our brethren in America, to be present at their General Conference.

5. That a letter shall be sent to the American brethren, containing these resolutions, and strongly expressing our high approbation of the selection of our highly esteemed brother, Mr. Emory, as their representative to our conference, and of our earnest desire and prayer that, in the spirit of Christian love, we may ever be one in Christ Jesus.

6. That there shall be a regular exchange of Minutes, magazines, missionary reports and notices, and all new original works, published by the European and American Methodists, from their respective book rooms.

"On the subject of the unpleasant circumstances which have occurred in the Canadas between the American preachers and our missionaries, referred to the conference by the missionary committee in London, with their opinion that Upper Canada shall be left in possession of the American brethren, and that our missionary exertions shall be confined to the lower province, this committee recommend to the conference the adoption of the following principles and arrangements

1. That, as the American Methodists and ourselves are but one body, it would be inconsistent with our unity, and dangerous to that affection which ought to characterize us in every place, to have different societies and congregations in the same towns and villages, or to allow of any intrusion on either side into each other’s labors.

2. That this principle shall be the rule by which the disputes now existing in the Canadas, between our missionaries, shall be terminated.

3. That the simplest and most effectual manner of carrying this rule into effect appears to us to be, to accede to the suggestion of the American conference, that the American brethren shall have the occupation of Upper Canada, and the British missionaries that of Lower Canada, allowing sufficient time for carrying this arrangement into effect, with all possible tenderness to existing prejudices and conflicting interests on both sides; the arrangement to be Completed within a period to be fixed as early as possible by the missionary committee. But should insuperable difficulties occur in the attempt to execute this plan, (which, however, we do not anticipate,) either party shall be at liberty to propose any other mode of accommodation which shall assume as its basis the great principle laid down in the first of these resolutions, and which we are of opinion should be held most sacred in every part of the world.

4. That if hereafter it shall appear to any of our brethren there, either British missionaries or American preachers, that any place on either side the boundary line, now mentioned, needs religious help, and presents a favorable opportunity for usefulness, the case shall be referred by the Canada district meeting to the General Conference, or by that body to the Canada district; and if either shall formally decline to supply the place on their own side the boundary, then the other shall be at liberty to supply the said place, without being deemed to have violated the terms of this

friendly compact.

5. And it shall be explicitly understood in this arrangement, that each party shall be bound to supply with preachers all those stations and their dependencies which shall be relinquished by each of the connections, that no place on either side shall sustain any loss of the ordinances of religion in consequence of this arrangement.

6. That the missionary committee be directed to address a letter to the private and official members, trustees, &c., under the care of our missionaries in Upper Canada, informing them of the judgment of the conference, and affectionately and earnestly advising them to put themselves and their chapels under the pastoral care of the American preachers, with the suggestion of such considerations, to incline them to it, as the Committee may judge most proper.

7. That the bishops of the American connection shall direct a similar letter to the private and official members, trustees, &c., under the care of the American preachers in the province of Lower Canada, requesting them to put themselves and their chapels under the care of the British missionaries." The instructions to the missionaries, sent out in pursuance of the above arrangement, are so replete with Christian urbanity and kindness, and so fully exemplified the spirit by which all Christian associations should be actuated in their intercourse with each other, that I am persuaded the reader will be gratified with their perusal They are as follows: --

"Copy of a letter of instructions from the Missionary Committee in London, to the Rev. Messrs. R. Williams and the other British missionaries in the provinces of Canada."

"Dear Brothers: -- Herewith we transmit you a copy of resolutions, passed at our late conference, on the subject of the disputes which have unhappily existed between our American brethren and us, relative to our missions in Canada.

"The preceding resolutions are general, and refer to the renewal of the intercourse, by personal deputation, between the American and British conferences, by the visit of Mr. Emory. We have given you the resolutions in full, that you may see that we have recognized the principle that the Methodist body is ONE throughout the world, and that therefore its members are bound to cordial affection and brotherly union.

"The resolutions of the committee, passed some time ago, and forwarded for your guidance, prohibiting any interference with the work of the American brethren, would show you that the existence of collisions between us and them gave us serious concern, and that the Committee were anxious to remove, as far as they, at that time, were acquainted with the circumstances, every occasion of dispute.

"Certainly the case of Montreal chapel was one which we could never justify to our minds, and the committee have in many instances had but a partial knowledge of the real religious wants of the upper province, and of its means of supply. The only reason we could have for increasing the number of missionaries in that province was, the presumption of a strong necessity, arising out of the destitute condition of the inhabitants, the total want, or too great distance of ministers.

"On no other ground could we apply money raised for missionary purposes for the supply of preachers to Upper Canada. The information we have had for two years past has all served to show that the number of preachers employed there by the American brethren was greater than we

had at first supposed, and was constantly increasing.

"To us, therefore, it now appears, that though there may be places in that province which are not visited, they are within the range, or constantly coming within the range, of the extended American itinerancy; and that Upper Canada does not present to our efforts a ground so fully and decidedly missionary as the lower province, where much less help exists, and a great part of the population is involved in popish superstition.

"We know that political reasons exist in many minds for supplying even Upper Canada, as far as possible, with British missionaries; and however natural this feeling may be to Englishmen, and even praiseworthy, when not carried too far, it will be obvious to you that this is a ground on which, as a missionary society, and especially as a society under the direction of a committee which recognizes as brethren, and one with itself, the American Methodists, we cannot act.

1. Because, as a missionary society, we cannot lay it town as a principle that those whose object is to convert the world shall be prevented from seeking and saving souls under a foreign government, for we do not thus regulate our own efforts.

2. To act on this principle would be to cast an odium upon our American brethren, as though they did not conduct themselves peaceably under the British government, which is, we believe, contrary to the fact.

3. That if any particular exceptions to this Christian and submissive conduct were, on their part, to occur, we have not the least right to interfere, unless, indeed, the Americas conference obviously neglected to enforce upon the offending parties its own discipline. Upon any political feeling which may exist, either in your minds or in the minds of a party in any place, we cannot therefore proceed. Our objects are purely spiritual, and our American brethren and ourselves are one body of Christians, sprung a common stock, holding the same doctrines, enforcing the same discipline, and striving in common to spread the light of true religion through the world.

"In conformity with these views, we have long thought it a reproach, and doing more injury, by disturbing the harmony of the two connections, than could be counterbalanced by any local good, that the same city or town should see two congregations, and two societies, and two preachers, professing the same form of Christianity, and yet thus proclaiming themselves rivals to each other, and, in some instances, invading each other's societies and chapels, and thus producing party feelings. The purposes of each, we are ready to allow, have been good, though mistaken; and we rather blame ourselves for not having obtained more accurate information on some particulars, that intimate any dissatisfaction with the missionaries la the Canadas, with whose zeal and labors we have much reason to be satisfied.

"A part of the evil has also arisen from the want of personal communication, by deputation, between the two conferences, now happily established. These considerations had long and seriously occupied our minds before the arrival of Mr. Emory, charged by the General American Conference to bring these matters under our consideration. The committee, previous to the conference, went with him fully into the discussion of the disputes in the Canadas, and recommended those principles of adjustment which the conference, after they had been referred to a special committee during the time of its sitting, adopted, and which we now transmit to all the brethren in the Canada station.

"You will consider these resolutions as the fruit of a very ample inquiry, and of serious deliberation.

"None of the principles here adopted by us do indeed go farther than to prevent interference with each other's labors among the American and British missionaries, and the setting up of 'altar against altar' in the same city, town, or village; but, knowing that circumstances of irritation exist, and that too near a proximity might, through the infirmity of human nature, lead to a violation of that union which the conference has deemed a matter of paramount: importance to maintain, we have thought it best to adopt a geographical division of the labor of each, and that the upper province should be left to the American brethren and the lower to you. The reasons for this are, --

1. That the upper province is so adequately supplied by the American conference as not to present that pressing ease of necessity which will justify our expending our funds upon it.

2. That Mr. Emory has engaged that its full supply by American preachers shall be, as far as possible, attended to.

3. That this measure at once terminates the dispute as to Montreal.

4. That it will prevent collision without sacrifice of public good.

5. That Lower Canada demands our efforts rather than Upper, as being more destitute, and the labors of the brethren there being more truly missionary.

"A transfer of societies and places of preaching will of course follow. Our societies in Upper Canada are to be put under the care of the American brethren; theirs in the lower province under yours.

"It is clear that this, under all circumstances, will require prudent and wise management, and we depend upon you to carry the arrangement into effect in the same spirit of kindness and temper in which the question has been determined by the conference and Mr. Emory.

"Feel that you are one with your American brethren, embarked in the same great cause, and eminently of the same religious family, and the little difficulties of arrangement will be easily surmounted; and if any warm spirits (which is probable) rise up to trouble you, remember that you are to act upon the great principle sanctioned by the conference, and not upon local prejudices. The same advices Mr. Emory has pledged himself shall be given to the American preachers, and you will each endeavor to transfer the same spirit into the societies respectively. When the preachers recognize each other as brethren, the people will naturally fall under the influence of the same feeling.

"We have appointed our respected brethren, Messrs. Williams and Hick, who are to choose as an associate a third preacher in full connection, to meet an equal number of preachers to be appointed by the American bishop, who shall agree upon the time in which the chapels and societies shall be mutually transferred, and the arrangements of the conference be carried into effect. The place of the meeting they are to fix for their mutual convenience, but the meeting is to be held as early as possible after the receipt of the instructions of the committee, that the report of the final adjustment of the affair may appear in your next district minutes.

"We conclude with our best wishes for your personal happiness and usefulness. May you ever go forth in the 'fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace,' and be made the honored instruments of winning many souls to the knowledge and obedience of the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"We are, dear brother, yours very affectionately,

"Jos. Taylor, Richard Watson, Secretaries. " Wesleyan Mission House, 77 Hatton Garden; 23d August, 1820." As it was agreed that our bishops should send similar instructions to those brethren to whom the carrying the above resolutions into practical effect should be committed, the following communication was sent to the Rev. William Case: -- "Alexandria, (D. C.,) Oct. 16, 1820.

"Dear Brother: -- I transmit you herewith a Copy of the resolutions of the late British conference, received through brother Emory, our representative to that body, on the subjects embraced in his mission; and also of the instructions of the missionary committee in London to the Rev. Messrs. R. Williams and the other British missionaries in the provinces of Canada, predicated on those resolutions.

"From these documents you will perceive that the desire of our General Conference, both for the establishment of a personal intercourse by deputation between the two connections, and for the amicable adjustment of the afflicting differences in the Canadas, has been happily accomplished. Indeed it appears, not only from those papers, but from the communications of our representative, that this desire was met, both by, the British conference and the missionary committee, with a promptness and brotherly affection which we should take equal pleasure in acknowledging and reciprocating.

"This it now devolves upon me (my colleagues being necessarily at a great distance, in the discharge of their official duties in the south and west) to enjoin it upon you to do; and to promote the same spirit of kindness toward our British brethren, among all the preachers, traveling and local, and all the official and private members within your district, to the utmost extent of your power.

"To remove the prejudices and allay the unpleasant excitements existing will, no doubt, require much prudent care. But in this 'labor of love' I expect in you a ready mind. Let the difficulties you may meet with only stimulate you to the exertion of your best and most persevering efforts in this behalf. Remember, 'Blessed are the peacemakers.' 'Seek peace, then, and ensue it.' If it even seem to flee from you, follow it: 'Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness, springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be deified.'

"In the present state of things, (your acquaintance with which renders detail unnecessary,) we have thought it best to agree to a division of our field of labors in the Canadas by the provincial line. In the expediency of this measure you will see that the missionary committee in London and the British conference have concurred; so that our labors there are to be confined, in future, to the upper province, and those of the British missionaries to the lower.

"A transfer of societies and places of preaching will of course follow. Our societies in Lower Canada are to be put under the care of our British brethren, and theirs, in the upper province, under ours.

"For the execution of these arrangements I have appointed brother Ryan and yourself, with authority to associate with you a third preacher in full connection, to meet the Rev. Messrs. R. Williams and Hick, appointed by the missionary committee, and such other preacher as they may associate with them. The time and place of meeting you will agree on with them, for your mutual convenience. The missionary committee have instructed their agents that the meeting is to be held as early as possible after the receipt of the instructions of the committee, that the report of the final adjustment of the affair may appear in the next district minutes. In this we concur. You will, therefore, immediately on the reception of these instructions, in conjunction with brother Ryan and your associate, correspond with the Rev. Messrs. Williams and Hick and their associate on the subject; and fail not to use every means in your power for the prompt execution of the arrangements in the best faith, and in the most harmonious and affectionate manner. In the language of the missionary committee we cordially unite to say, 'Feel that you are one with your' British 'brethren, embarked in the same great cause, and eminently of the same religious family, and the little difficulties of arrangement will be easily surmounted; and if any warm spirits rise up to trouble you, remember that you are to act on the great principles now sanctioned and avowed by the two Connections, and not upon local prejudices.' If each endeavor to transfuse this spirit into the societies respectively, the people will much more easily be brought under the influence of the same feeling, when it shall be found to possess and actuate the preachers. In any event, let there be no deficiency on your part in spirit, word, or deed. We commit to you a sacred work, which you are bound to perform, not only as to the matter, but in the manner, in the temper, in which, as these instructions are intended to show you, we ourselves would perform it, could we be present. Attend strictly to this, that we may have joy and consolation in your love, the bowels of the saints being refreshed by you; and forward to us, as early as possible, regular and full copies of all your correspondence and proceedings in this business.

"Should it be found practicable to complete the arrangements previously to the next Genesee annual conference, you will of course take care to provide for the supply of those circuits, societies, and places of preaching in the upper province which may be transferred to us by our British brethren, as they are to provide for those which are to be simultaneously transferred to them in the lower province. You will also take care, from time to time, to extend supplies to any remaining places which may be found destitute in the upper province, as far as possible.

"There are several circuits, I believe, in Lower Canada, attached to the New York and New England conferences. These are included in the arrangement. You will therefore forward a copy of these instructions to each of the presiding elders within whose districts those circuits are embraced, and request them to be prepared to cooperate with you in the final execution of the business, and to report the same at their ensuing annual conferences respectively.

"The missionary committee in London having kindly furnished us with a copy of their instructions, we shall transmit a copy of these I now send you to them. You will also show them, when you meet, to the Rev. Messrs. Williams and Hick and their associate, and, if they desire it, give them a copy, that you may go on in this good work as we have happily begun, with that frankness and kindness which become brethren in such a cause.

"By the sixth resolution of the British conference on the Canadian business, it is provided that the missionary committee be directed to address a letter to the private and official members, trustees,

&c., under the care of the missionaries in Upper Canada, informing them of the judgment of the Conference, and affectionately and earnestly advising them to put themselves and their chapels under the pastoral care of the American preachers, with the suggestion of such considerations to incline them to it as the committee may judge most proper. And by the seventh resolution it is provided that we shall address a similar letter to the private and official members, trustees, &c., under our care. I accordingly inclose a letter which you will use for this purpose, after you have met with Messrs. Williams and Hick, &c., and agreed with them on the time of making the transfer of the societies, chapels, &c., but not to be used before. At the same time, after this meeting and agreement, you will also forward a copy of this letter to each of the presiding elders in the New York and New England conferences whose districts embrace circuits in Lower Canada, to be used by them.

"Confiding in your faithful discharge of the several trusts committed to you, I commend you to the Lord, and remain, dear brother, yours in love.

"Wm. McKendree." The following was also addressed to the brethren therein mentioned in Lower Canada: -- "To the private and official members, trustees, &c., of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Lower Canada

"Very Dear Brethren: -- You are aware that, for several years past, very unpleasant collisions have occurred in various parts both of the upper and lower provinces, between the British missionaries and some of our brethren. This has been a source of great affliction to us, and has led to the adoption of various and successive measures for the correction of the evil.

"Our late General Conference, being earnestly desirous of restoring the amicable relations of the two connections, authorized the deputation of a representative to the British conference for this purpose. One was accordingly sent. And, after a deliberate investigation, it has been mutually thought best, for the sake of peace and love, under all the circumstances of the case, to divide our labors in the Canadas in such a manner as to guard effectually against all collisions in future.

"With this view, it has been agreed that our British brethren shall supply the lower province and our preachers the upper; yet so that no circuits or societies on either side shall be left destitute by the other. This has been sacredly attended to, and mutual pledges for the performance of it have been passed. It now becomes our duty, therefore, to inform you of this agreement, and to advise you, in the most affectionate and earnest manner, to put yourselves and your chapels under the care of our British brethren, as their societies and chapels in the upper province will be put under ours.

"This communication to you, we confess, is not made without pain; not from any want of affection for our British brethren, but from the recollection of those tender and endearing ties which have bound us to you. But a necessity is laid upon us. It is a peace-offering. No other consideration could have induced us to consent to the measure. Forgive, therefore, our seeming to give you up. We do not give you up in heart, in affection, in kind regard, in prayers.

"The British and American connections have now mutually recognized each other as one body of Christians, sprung from a common stock, holding the same doctrines, of the same religious family, and striving in common to speed the light of true religion through the world; and they have agreed to keep up a regular intercourse by deputation, in future, for the maintenance of this brotherly union.

"Let any past differences, therefore, be forgotten. Let them be buried for ever. Confirm your love toward our British brethren, and receive them as ourselves; -- not as strangers, but as brothers beloved. By this shall all men know that we are Christ's disciples, if we love one another. Love is of God, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. May the God of love and peace be with you, and crown you with the blessedness of contributing with us to heal the wounds of the Church, and to establish that 'fellowship of the Spirit' which shall enable us to say, 'Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments. As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountain of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.'

"For any farther information that you may desire I refer you to the presiding elder, to whom it is given in charge to make this communication to you; and remain, dear brethren, with the same affection for you, in the bonds of the gospel of peace, and the best wishes and prayers for your happiness and salvation, "Wm. McKendree. "Alexandria, (D. C.,) October 16, 1820."

These proceedings gave general satisfaction, and tended not a little to allay the uneasiness which had resulted from the collisions of individuals in the two provinces, as well as to soften the asperities of those who had suffered the heat of party zeal to carry them beyond the bounds of Christian moderation. This result also shows how little the individual and local interests of a few affect those whose position gives them a commanding and impartial view of the whole ground of controversy, and who consequently feel for the whole as for every part, and for every part as for the whole. And it is no small commendation of the Christian spirit by which each of the contracting parties was actuated, to find them thus ready to sacrifice individual and local interests for the sake of binding the entire Methodist family together in one great brotherhood. An improved edition of our Hymn Book was ordered by this General Conference to be printed by the book agents. The first hymn book printed in this country for the use of the members and friends of our Church was small, containing, to be sure, a choice selection, but not a sufficient variety of hymns to suit the different states of the human heart, and the several subjects which might be introduced into the pulpit, and other exercises of social worship and private devotion. This had been remedied, as was supposed, by adding, in 1808, a second book, consisting chiefly of hymns taken from the original hymns of John and Charles Wesley; but, unhappily, those who made this selection had taken the liberty to alter many of the hymns, by leaving out parts of stanzas, altering words, shortening or lengthening hymns, without much judgment or taste. By this injudicious method the poetry was often marred, and the sentiment changed much for the worse.

These things led the New York conference, at its session in 1819, to request the book committee in New York, in conjunction with the book agents, to prepare a revised edition of our Hymn Book, to be presented to this General Conference, which was done accordingly. The conference approved of the copy, and ordered it to be printed. The following extract from the preface will show the extent of and reasons for the alterations: --

"The Hymn Book heretofore in use among us has been thought by many to be defective, partly on account of the mutilated state of some of the hymns, and partly because of its being divided into two books. To remedy these inconveniences, measures have been adopted to prepare a revised edition of our Hymn Book, such a one as should exclude the defects and retain the excellences of

the one heretofore published.

"The greater part of the hymns contained in the former edition are retained in this, and several from Wesleys' and Coke's collections, not before published in this country, are added. The principal improvements which have been made consist in restoring those which had been altered, as is believed, for the worse, to their original state, as they came from the poetical pen of the Wesleys; for the following hymns were, except a few which have been taken from other authors, composed by the Rev. John and Charles Wesley -- names that will ever be held dear and in high estimation by every lover of sacred poetry." This edition of the Hymn Book has been in use ever since, unaltered, except the addition of the names of the tunes at the head of each hymn, and, in 1836, of a supplement, which was prepared in conformity to the recommendation of the General Conference of 1832. Up to this time our people had not been furnished with a tune book suited to the various meters of our most excellent hymns. This General Conference ordered the editors to adopt such measures as they might judge most fit to supply this deficiency; and they accordingly, soon after the adjournment of conference, appointed a committee of competent persons to make a selection of such tunes as were needed to enable our congregations to use, in their devotional exercises, any and every hymn in the published collection they might choose, without being compelled to omit, for the want of a suitable tune, those particular meters especially, which are among the most experimental, spiritual, and poetical in the book. The following preface to this collection of tunes will show the reasons for and the manner in which the work was accomplished: --

"Singing forms such an interesting and important branch of divine service, that every effort to improve the science of sacred music should meet with corresponding encouragement. Nothing tends more, when rightly performed, to elevate the mind, and tune it to the strains of pure devotion. Hence the high estimation in which it has been constantly held by the Christian church. Indeed, every considerable revival of true godliness has been attended, not only with the cultivation and enlargement of knowledge in general, but of sacred poetry and music in particular. Singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord is the natural result of having the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit. The melodious notes of many voices, harmoniously uniting to sound the praises of God, cannot but inspire the heart of the Christian to devotion, and elevate the affections to things spiritual and divine. Who, then, can be uninterested in the improvement of a science so beneficial to the church of God! What hear t that has ever vibrated to the inspiring sounds of sacred and vocal music, but must exult in every attempt that is made to cultivate and diffuse the knowledge of this useful auxiliary in spreading the knowledge of God our Saviour!

"Though the Methodist Episcopal Church has never been insensible to the advantages resulting from the knowledge and practice of vocal music, having always used it perhaps more than most other denominations of Christians -- in public assemblies and private associations; yet a suitable tune book, adapted to the various hymns and meters of its Hymn Book, has long been a desideratum in its spiritual economy. Several efforts, indeed, have been made, by individuals, to supply this deficiency. The subject was brought before the General Conference at its last session; and it was finally referred to the discretion of the book agents.

"Believing such a collection of tunes, as should be suited to the various meters and subjects of our hymns, would be highly advantageous to the members and friends of our Church, soon after the conference closed its session, the agents adopted measures to accomplish this very desirable object. For this purpose a committee, consisting of members of our Church, was appointed, who, besides their competency to this undertaking, felt a deep interest in the reputation and utility of this very important part of divine service. They were requested, in conformity as nearly as practicable to the requisition of our Discipline, to make a selection of tunes from authors of approved merit, keeping in view the various sections of our widely extended connection, that the peculiarity of taste, in the choice of tunes, might, as far as possible, be gratified. They entered upon their labor with cheerfulness, and persevered with conscientious care and diligence until they brought their work to a close: and the tunes comprised in the following selection will evince the result of their exertions, and their communication to the agents, with which we close this preface, will explain the manner in which they executed the trust confided to them.

"'Dear Brethren: -- Your Committee, whose task it has been, by your request, to compile a book of tunes for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, report: That they have been fully aware of the extreme difficulty of making such a collection of tunes as should in all respects be accommodated either to the fancy or taste of every section of our widely extended connection. In the use of any particular style of tunes, so much generally depends upon education, local feelings, or mental constitution, that, except with those who are skilled in the science of music, the choice of a tune is seldom Caused by a discovery of its intrinsic worth, or its adaptation to the solemnities of Christian worship. Your committee, therefore, will neither be surprised nor disappointed if their selection, in coming before the public, meet with some of those discouragements which have attended works of a similar nature.

"'Your committee, however, have not been regardless of the partialities of our societies in different parts of the Union. They have availed themselves of standard works which have obtained celebrity in the eastern and southern states, as well as those that are in general use among us. The best European authors have also been consulted. Books edited by members of our Church, or with a design to suit our Hymn Book, have received particular attention. They have neglected no means of ascertaining the wishes of our friends, and of accommodating, as far as possible, their plan to those wishes.

"'It may be proper to suggest that the primary object of your committee has been, not to prepare a collection of tunes for social circles or singing associations, (though they hope the work will not be unacceptable even in this light,) but, according to your own directions, for the use of worshipping congregations. They have therefore, in the first place, carefully avoided the choice of all such tunes as, from the intricacy or unsuitableness of their style, are incapable of being easily learned by ordinary congregations; for one of the most important objects of public singing is lost when every tuneful voice in the house of God cannot join in the solemn exercise.

"'Secondly, In cordial approbation of that clause of our Discipline which disapproves of fugue tunes, they have (with the exception of a very few, the use of which has been established by general practice) passed by those distinguished by that peculiarity.

"'Thirdly, In order to assist leaders of singing, they have carefully affixed over each hymn in the new Hymn Book the name of such tune as, in their opinion, is suitable to that hymn.

"'Your committee have thought proper to insert brief instructions in the rudiments of music, which will be found of great utility where the work is introduced into singing schools.

"'Thus, after the labor of nearly a twelvemonth [a quaint term for "year" -- DVM], your committee have the pleasure of delivering into your hands the result of their joint exertions: they are happy in having this opportunity of contributing their part toward the improvement of one of the most delightful, as well as one of the most devotional parts of divine worship. Uninfluenced by the expectation or desire of any pecuniary recompense, they only wish as a reward for their labors the approbation of their brethren, beloved in Christ, who compose the general and annual conferences, and that of the membership of the Methodist Church. We have long needed a work which might be considered as a standard of music for our connection in America. That which your committee present to you is an attempt for this, according to the best of their judgment.

"'Finally, praying that the blessing of Heaven may accompany their efforts, they would subjoin the language of our bishops as a just expression of their own sentiments: "We exhort all to sing with the Spirit and with the understanding also; and thus may the high praises of God be set up from east to west, from north to south; and we shall be happily instrumental in leading the devotion of thousands, and shall rejoice to join them in time and eternity." -- All which is respectfully submitted.

" 'New York, October 23, 1821.' " This book continued in use until 1832, when a revised edition of these tunes was published, in obedience to the orders of the General Conference. In 1836, believing that a greater variety of tunes was needed to meet the wants of our growing Church, better suited to the various tastes and peculiar habits of the several sections of our country, our book agents and editors adopted the very judicious course of selecting a committee composed of a member from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, who prepared the edition now in use, and which, I believe, gives general satisfaction. With a view to prevent, as far as practicable, our people from running heedlessly into debt in procuring houses of worship, to secure them permanently for the use of the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the places where they should be built, as well as to check the practice of selling or renting the slips, the following resolutions were adopted, and ordered to be incorporated in the Discipline, in answer to the question, "Is any thing advisable in regard to building?"

1. That from this date no house of worship under our charge shall be built, or the building commenced, until the site or ground on which such house or houses are to be located is secured to the church as our deed of settlement directs, and said deed is legally executed.

2. That from and after this date no house of worship under our charge shall be commenced until three-fourths of the money necessary to complete the building be in hand or subscribed. The estimate of the sum necessary for the whole expense of said house or houses to be made by a judicious committee, to consist of at least three members of our Church, to be chosen by the quarterly meeting conference of the circuit or station in which such house or houses are designed to be built.

3. That it be made the duty of each presiding elder and preacher in charge to make proper inquiry in their districts, circuits, and stations respecting the title we have to our houses of worship; and in all cases where a title is found deficient, to adopt the most judicious and prudent measures to have them secured as directed in our deed of settlement, and whenever a vacancy is found in the

trusteeship to have it filled, as directed in the Discipline.

4. That the practice of building houses with pews, and the renting and selling said pews, is contrary to our economy, and that it be the duty of the several annual conferences to use their influence to prevent such houses from being built in future, and, as far as possible, to make those free which have already been built with pews.

5. That in future we will admit of no charter, deed, or conveyance for any house to be used by us as a house of worship, unless it be provided in such charter, deed, or conveyance that the trustees of said house shall at all times permit such ministers. and preachers, belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, as shall from time to time be duly authorized by the General Conference of said Church, or by the annual conference, to preach and expound Gods holy word, and to execute the rules and discipline of the Church, and to administer the sacraments therein, according to the true meaning and purport of our deed of settlement." The rule in reference to the preliminary steps to be taken in regard to procuring funds for building churches has been but little heeded, our people thinking, probably, that they understand this matter better than the General Conference, and hence, in many instances, debts have been contracted to such an amount as to render the situation of the trustees extremely embarrassing, if not indeed almost ruinous. Nor has all that has been said and done to prevent the renting or selling of slips checked the practice, for it has gone on steadily increasing among us in most of the northern conferences. It would seem, however, that the advocates for the exclusive free seat system were determined at this conference to make a strong effort to annihilate the practice; for in the first answer to the above question, which until now read, "Let all our churches be built plain and decent," were added the words, "and with free seats." This amendment, however, was not carried without great opposition from those delegates who felt the necessity, either to have no houses at all, or to permit them to be built with a view to rent or sell the seats. A very important alteration was made at this conference in respect to local preachers. Until now they had been identified with the quarterly meeting conferences, had received their license to preach on the recommendation of this meeting, and were amenable to it for their moral, Christian, and official conduct, with the privilege of an appeal to an annual conference in case they had been censured, suspended, or expelled by the quarterly conference. A little uneasiness had been manifested at times, by some of the local preachers, because they thought they had been abridged of some of their rights, in not being permitted to be examined, licensed, and tried by their peers exclusively. To remove the cause of their dissatisfaction by granting the privilege of transacting the business which related to themselves exclusively, this General Conference created a District Conference," to be composed of "all the local preachers in the" (presiding elder's) "district who shall have been licensed two years." Of this meeting the presiding elder of the district, or, in his absence, such person as the district meeting might elect for the purpose, was to be president. This conference was authorized to grant licenses to proper persons to preach as local preachers, to renew their licenses, to recommend to annual conferences suitable persons for deacon's or elder's orders in the local ministry, for admission on trial in an annual conference, to try, suspend, expel, or acquit such local preachers as might be accused; but it could not license any man to preach unless he were recommended by a quarterly meeting conference: in fact, all the powers formerly belonging to the quarterly conference, which related to local preachers, except simply the privilege of recommending the candidates to the office of local preachers, were transferred to this district conference. As was foreseen by some who were opposed to this startling

innovation upon a long established usage, this conference by no means worked well. Many of the local preachers themselves were much dissatisfied with it, and hence, in various parts of the country, it was difficult to convene a sufficient number to do business; while in others, where they were most active in procuring the passage of the law creating and defining the powers of this conference, a spirit of insubordination, incompatible with the rights and privileges of the itinerancy, began to manifest itself; and there can be no doubt that this injudicious measure, which had been presented to and carried through the conference with some precipitancy, tended to foment that spirit of radicalism which ended in the secession of the party who styled themselves "Reformers," and who have since organized under the name of the "Protestant Methodist Church." In consequence of witnessing these effects of the present organization, the powers of the district conferences were from time to time somewhat abridged, replacing in the quarterly meeting conference the power of transacting the affairs relating to local preachers, where and when the district conference did not assemble, until finally, in 1836, the district conference was dissolved, and its rights, powers, and privileges reverted back to the quarterly meeting conference, where they have been and are now exercised, to the general satisfaction of all concerned. As the constitution of our Missionary Society contemplated the co-operation of the General Conference, having given authority to that body to incorporate an article for the appointment of missionaries, and for regulating the manner in which the funds for their support should be drawn, the subject came up for consideration before this General Conference, and its deliberations resulted in the adoption of the following report, which was drawn up, I believe, by the late Bishop Emory: --

"Your committee regard the Christian ministry as peculiarly a missionary ministry. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,' is the very foundation of its authority, and develops its character simultaneously with its origin.

"The success which attended the itinerant and missionary labors of the first heralds of salvation farther establishes the correctness of this view, and demonstrates the divine sanction of this method of spreading the gospel.

"In process of time, however, the missionary spirit declined, and the spirit of genuine Christianity with it. Then it pleased the Lord to raise up the Messrs. Wesleys, Whitefield, and others, through whose itinerant and missionary labors a great revival of vital piety was commenced, the progress and extent of which, at present, your committee cannot but regard as cause of unbounded thankfulness and pleasure.

"The missions of Boardman and Pilmoor, of Wright, of Asbury, and others, are events in our history not soon to be forgotten. A grateful people feel their happy influence and hold their memory dear, and generations yet unborn will rise up and call them blessed.

"Can we, then, be listless to the cause of missions, We cannot. Methodism itself is a missionary system. Yield the missionary spirit, and you yield the very lifeblood of the cause.

"In missionary efforts our British brethren are before us. We congratulate them on their zeal and their success. But your committee beg leave to entreat this conference to emulate their example. The time, indeed, may not yet be come in which we should send our missionaries beyond seas. Our own continent presents to us fields sufficiently vast, which are opening before us, and whitening to the harvest. These, it is probable, will demand all the laborers and all the means

which we can command at present.

"You will permit your committee to mention some of those missionary grounds which may have a peculiar claim to your first attentions. They are the Canadas, the Floridas, the state of Louisiana, the territories of Arkansas and Missouri, our western frontiers generally, having regard to those who use the French, Spanish, or other foreign languages, as well as to those who use the English; together with any destitute places in the interior in which circuits may not yet have been formed, and where it may be judged important to have efficient missions.

"In a particular manner the committee solicit the attention of the Conference to the condition of the aborigines of our Country, the Indian tribes. American Christians are certainly under peculiar obligations to impart to them the blessings of Civilization and Christian light. That there is no just cause to despair of success, through grace, in this charitable and pious undertaking, is demonstrated by the fact that there are already gathered into Church fellowship about sixty members of the Wyandot tribe, in the state of Ohio; and that a successful mission, under our direction, is now in operation among them. Why might not similar success attend other missions among other tribes? Is the Lord’s arm shortened that he cannot save our brothers of the forest? or is his ear heavy that he will not hear in their behalf?

"The government of the United States has manifested a disposition toward the Indians which may contribute much, not only to their civilization, but to their evangelization. Ten thousand dollars annually have been appropriated by congress for the establishment of schools among them. By this act it is required that the plan of education embrace, for the boys, in addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic, the practical knowledge of agriculture, and of such of the mechanic arts as are suited to the condition of the Indians; and for the girls, spinning, weaving, and sewing. This your committee consider a very judicious regulation, and perfectly compatible with the duties of missionaries, if men of families who might be established among them, as teachers in those schools, while their wives would assist in the instruction of the girls in their appropriate departments. The civilization of the Indians will promote their evangelization.

Indeed, your committee are decidedly of opinion, that it is the rising generation among the Indians to whom your attention should be chiefly directed; and that the institution of schools among them, on the government plan, and under the government patronage, should be your first care. It will be necessary, at the same time, in the appointment of teachers to select suitable persons, with a view to the ulterior object of Christian instruction, both to the youth and the adult; which object, it is evident, will be greatly promoted by means of a common language; by the influence which a teacher will have over the youth; and by the free access which will be gained, through them, to their parents and friends. This is the course which has been pursued by our missionary brethren of the British connection in the island of Ceylon, and, your committee believe, with great success.

"Several denominations have already availed themselves of the proffered aid of government above mentioned, and have flourishing schools, of a missionary character, now in operation among different tribes.

"The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions have an establishment of this kind on the Chickamaugah, in the Cherokee country, and another among the Choctaws. At the first are about one hundred Indian Children, and at the second from forty to sixty. This board have also

directed their attention to the country west of the Mississippi, and an establishment similar to those above named is already in a state of forwardness there. Besides these, branches are organized in different parts of the Cherokee and Choctaw Countries; and measures are in operation to establish two other principal schools, one for the benefit of the Creeks and the other for the Chickasaws.

"The Baptist society have a school in Kentucky, at the Great Crossings, to which fifteen or twenty Indian children have been sent from the Indian country: and they are about to organize a school at the Valley Towns, in the Cherokee country.

"At Spring-place, in the Cherokee nation, there has been a school for fourteen years, under the care of the Moravians, which is said to have been productive of much good.

"The United Foreign Missionary Society of New York are about organizing a school west of the Mississippi, and also for the benefit of the emigrant Cherokees. It is supposed they will go into operation in the course of this spring and summer.

"Your committee had felicitated themselves on the pleasing and inviting openings for such institutions which had appeared, particularly among the Wyandots; of which tribe many, through the instrumentality of our missions, have already been turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. But while we have been delaying, others have stepped in. The agent of that tribe has informed a member of your committee that he has written to the secretary of war to place the proportion of the ten thousand dollars per annum, allowed by congress, which may be allotted to that agency, at the disposal of the committee of Friends on Indian concerns, in this city; and they have it in contemplation to open three schools, the ensuing summer, in the said agency.

"Your committee hope not to be understood as expressing any regret at the zeal of other denominations in so good a cause. Far from it. The mention of this is intended rather to provoke ourselves to love and to good works. There yet is room.

"From the above sketch it will be seen how the spirit of missions is diffusing itself in our country. It ought to be cherished and rightly directed. If we do not cherish it, others will. It is of God, and will prevail.

"Indeed, many of the Indians themselves, bordering on our improved settlements, are roused to a sense of their deplorable condition. With outstretched arms they cry to us, and say, 'Come and help us!' Your Committee believe it a call of Providence, which should be obeyed. With these views they submit the following resolutions, viz.: -- "Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled,

1. That this Conference do highly approve of the institution of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York, and, on the recommendation of the managers thereof; do agree to and adopt its constitution.

2. That it be, and hereby is, earnestly recommended to all the annual conferences to take such measures as they may deem most advisable for the establishment of branch societies, auxiliary to the parent Methodist Missionary Society at New York, in all convenient and practicable places within their bounds; and that it be the duty of the general superintendents to communicate this recommendation to the said conferences, and to use their best endeavors and influence to have it

carried into speedy and general effect.

3. That this conference do fully approve of the plan of education for the civilization of the Indians, required by a circular, in conformity with an act of congress, issued from the department of war, by the Hon. J. C. Calhoun, on the 3d of September, 1819, and by a supplement thereto, issued from the department on the 29th of February last; and that they do hereby authorize the general superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and any others who, under their direction, may be engaged in establishing, organizing, or conducting such school or schools, to act in conformity therewith.

4. That the superintendents be, and hereby are, requested to, keep in view the selection of a suitable missionary station westwardly or southwestwardly -- where a person may be appointed, as soon as they may deem it expedient, to have charge of the missions which are or may be in that direction, in the absence of the general superintendents.

5. That a more particular and regular attention ought to be paid to the instruction of the destitute souls in our cities, towns, and country places; and that the same be and is hereby earnestly urged on all our preachers who may be appointed to such places respectively; and more especially in stations where such instructions may be given with the greatest regularity and effect: in which good cause the said preachers are advised and requested, by all prudent and affectionate means, to engage, as far as possible, the aid of our brethren the local preachers.

6. That this conference do highly approve of the pious zeal which caused the institution of the Mite Society of Philadelphia, for promoting domestic and foreign missions; that the thanks of this conference be, and hereby are, rendered to the said society for the same, and for their friendly address to this conference on the subject; but that, having adopted a modified constitution of a missionary society, to be established in New York, from the objects of which the publishing of Bibles has been separated, for the reasons contained in the said address from Philadelphia, and also on the recommendation of the society in New York, and contemplating very important advantages from having the parent missionary society located where the Book Concern is conducted, so that the editor and general book steward for the time being may always be treasurer thereof, this General Conference do respectfully and affectionately recommend to the society in Philadelphia to become auxiliary to that in New York.

"All which is respectfully submitted. "Wm. Ryland, Chairman. "Baltimore, May 15, 1820."

It will be perceived from the sixth resolution of this report that our brethren in Philadelphia had also presented an address to the conference, in reference to their missionary society, and likewise the reasons for the preference given to the one which originated in the city of New York; the chief of which was, that the location of the parent society might be in the same place with the Book Concern, as it was expected that these two institutions would greatly aid and mutually support each other, and experience has proved that the expectation was well founded. At the formation of this society it was intended to print and circulate Bibles and Testaments gratuitously, in connection with spreading the gospel by means of missionary labors; and hence it was called the "Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church;" but being convinced, upon more mature reflection, that the American Bible Society, which was now in successful operation, was fully adequate to the task of supplying the community with the sacred Scriptures, the society

recommended to the General Conference to strike the word Bible from the title, that it might confine its efforts exclusively to missionary labors, and so more effectually fulfill the primary design of its organization. This was accordingly done, and the word "America" was also stricken out, as this was unnecessary to designate the character of the society, there being no other missionary society of the "Methodist Episcopal Church" in existence. As the original constitution of this society has been altered from time to time by the General Conference, on the recommendation of the board of managers, that the reader may see at once how the affairs of the society are conducted, and for what ends, I will insert the constitution as it now stands, (1839,) without referring to the minutiae of those amendments by which it has been brought to its present improved character. It is as follows: -- "REVISED CONSTITUTION Of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church

Article 1. This association, denominated 'The Missionary Society of The Methodist Episcopal Church,' is established for the express purpose of enabling the several annual conferences more effectually to extend their missionary labors throughout the United States and elsewhere; and also to assist in the support and promotion of missionary schools and missions in our own and in foreign countries.

Article 2. The payment of two dollars annually shall constitute a member; the payment of twenty dollars at one time a member for life.

Article 3. The officers of this society shall consist of a president, vice presidents, clerk, treasurer, and assistant treasurer, who, together with thirty-two managers, shall form a board for the transaction of business. They shall all be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and he annually elected by the society. Each annual conference shall have also the privilege of appointing one vice president from its own body.

Article 4. There shall also be a resident corresponding secretary appointed by the General Conference, whose salary shall be fixed and paid by the board of managers, who shall be exclusively employed in conducting the correspondence of the society, and, under the direction of the board, in promoting its general interests, by traveling or otherwise. With the approbation of the managers, he may employ such assistance, from time to time, as may be judged necessary for the interests of the cause; the compensation for which shall be fixed by the board. He shall be, ex officio, a member of the board of managers. Should his office become vacant by death, resignation, or otherwise, the board shall have power to provide for the duties of the office until the next session of the New York conference, which, with the concurrence of the presiding bishop, shall fill the vacancy until the ensuing General Conference.

Article 5. The board shall have authority to make by laws for regulating its own proceedings, to appropriate money to defray incidental expenses, and to print books at our own press, for the benefit of Indian and other foreign missions, fill up vacancies that may occur during the year, and shall present a statement of its transactions and funds to the society, at its annual meeting, and also shall lay before the General Conference a report of its transactions for the four preceding years, and the state of its funds.

Article 6. Ordained ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whether traveling or local, being members of this society, shall be, ex officio, members of the board of managers.

Article 7. The annual meeting, for the election officers and managers, shall be held on the third Monday in April, in the city of New York.

Article 8. At all meetings of the society and of the board, the president, or, in his absence, the vice president first on the list then present, and in the absence of all the vice presidents, a member appointed by the meeting for that purpose, shall preside.

Article 9. Twenty-five members, at all meetings of the society, and thirteen at all meetings of the board of managers, shall be a quorum.

Article 10. The minutes of each meeting shall be signed by the chairman.

Article 11. It is recommended, that within the bounds of each annual conference there be established a conference missionary society, auxiliary to this institution, with branches, under such regulations as the conferences shall respectively prescribe. Each conference, or other auxiliary society, shall annually transmit to the corresponding secretary of this society a copy of its annual report, embracing the operations of its branches, and shall also notify the treasurer of the amount collected in aid of the missionary cause, which amount shall be subject to the order of the treasurer of the parent society, as provided for in the thirteenth article.

Article 12. Any auxiliary or branch society may appropriate any part or the whole of its funds to any one individual mission, or more, under the care of this society, which special appropriation shall be publicly acknowledged by the board: but in the event that more funds be raised for any individual mission than is necessary for its support, the surplus shall go into the general treasury of the parent society, to be appropriated as the constitution directs.

Article 13. The treasurer of this society, under the direction of the board of managers, shall give information to the bishops annually, or oftener, if the board judge it expedient, of the state of the funds, and the sums which may be drawn by them for the missionary purposes contemplated by this constitution: agreeably to which information the bishops shall have authority to draw upon the treasurer for any sum within the amount designated, which the missionary committee of the annual conferences respectively shall judge necessary for the support of the missions and of the mission schools under their care; provided always, that the sums so allowed for the support of a missionary shall not exceed the usual allowance of other itinerant preachers. The bishops shall always promptly notify the treasurer of all drafts made by them, and shall require regular quarterly communications to be made by each of the missionaries1 to the corresponding secretary of the society, giving information of the state and prospects of the several missions in which they are employed. No one shall be acknowledged a missionary, or receive support out of the funds of this society, who has not some definite field assigned to him, or who could not be an effective laborer on a circuit.

Article 14. Whenever a foreign mission is to be established, either among the aborigines of our country or elsewhere, it shall be the duty of the bishop making such appointment immediately to notify the treasurer of the missionary society of the place, the number of missionaries to be employed, together with the probable amount necessary for the support of any such mission; which information shall be laid before the managers of the society; and they shall make an appropriation according to their judgment, from year to year, of the amount called for to sustain and prosecute the mission or missions designated; for which amount the missionary, or the

superintendent of the mission or missions, shall have authority to draw on the treasurer of the society, in quarterly or half-yearly installments.

Article 15. In all cases oft he appointment of a missionary, the name of such missionary, and the district in which he is to labor, together with the probable expenses of the mission, shall be communicated by the bishop or the mission committee of each annual conference to the treasury of this society; that a proper record of the same may be preserved.

Article 16. This constitution shall not be altered but by the General Conference, upon the recommendation of the board of managers."

It was ordered that five hundred copies of the report on missions together with the amended constitution, should be immediately printed, that the delegates might furnish themselves with copies to carry to their respective districts and circuits.

These doings of the conference in relation to the Missionary Society exerted a most favorable influence upon the cause, and tended mightily to remove the unfounded objections which had existed in some minds against this organization.

Having witnessed much confusion in the conference when appeals from the lower tribunals had been presented, the following clause was added to the Discipline, with a view to regulate the manner in which appeals should be hereafter conducted

"In all the above-mentioned cases it shall be the duty of the secretary of the annual conference to keep regular minutes of the trial, including all the questions proposed to the witnesses, and their answers, together with the crime with which the accused is charged, the specification or specifications, and also preserve all the documents relating to the case, which minutes and documents only, in case of an appeal from the decision of an annual conference, shall be presented to the General Conference, in evidence on the case. And in all cases when an appeal is made, and admitted by the General Conference, the appellant shall either state personally or by his representative (who shall be a member of the conference) the grounds of his appeal, showing cause why he appeals, and he shall be allowed to make his defense without interruption. After which the representatives of the annual conference, from whose decision the appeal is made, shall be permitted to respond in presence of the appellant, who shall have the privilege of replying to such representatives, which shall close the pleadings on both sides. This done, the appellant shall withdraw, and the conference shall decide. And after such form of trial and expulsion, the person so expelled shall have no privileges of society or sacraments in our Church, without confession, contrition, and proper trial."

These are all the acts and doings of this conference worthy of record, except what has been heretofore noticed concerning the election and duties of presiding elders, and the resolutions regarding the Book Concern and slavery, which will be noted in another place. It may be proper, however, to add, that Nathan Bangs was elected principal, and Thomas Mason assistant agent and editor of the Book Concern; and as this conference resolved to establish a branch at Cincinnati, Martin Ruter was appointed to its agency. The conference adjourned May the 27th, to meet again in the city of Baltimore, May 1, 1824. The conflicting opinions in relation to the presiding elder question, on slavery, and concerning renting pews in churches, and some other matters, had elicited considerable debate, and sometimes, as is usual on such occasions, not of

the most hallowed and conciliatory character, by which means the feelings of some of the members were somewhat chafed, and they went home under a state of mind not the most friendly one toward another. Time for calm deliberation, however, and the mutual interchange of sentiments and feelings in their respective annual conferences, gradually wore away this momentary irritation, and restored them to that fervor of spirit and devotion to the cause of God by which they had been heretofore distinguished.

ENDNOTE

1 The spirit of this requirement is complied with by the report of a superintendent of any missionary district, in which he embraces a general account of the several missions under his care.

03.05B.06. Vol 3, Book 5B, Chapter 06

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume III -- Book V Volume III, Published in 1841 (From The Year 1816 To The Year 1828)

CHAPTER 6 From the Close of the General Conference of 1820 to the Beginning of the General Conference of 1824

According to the decision of the late General Conference, there was an additional annual conference created this year called Kentucky making in all twelve. This conference, it was stated, "shall include the Kentucky, Salt River, Green River, and Cumberland districts, and that part of the state of Virginia included in the Green Brier and Monroe circuits, heretofore belonging to the Baltimore conference, and the Kenawa and Middle Island circuits, heretofore belonging to the Ohio conference." This division of labor into twelve annual conferences gave to each effective bishop -- for, as Bishop McKendree had been released from effective labor in consequence of his debility, there were but two -- six conferences to attend, which, in the extension of the work, particularly in the west and southwest, made their labors extremely arduous. They, however, entered upon their work with diligence and zeal; and although Bishop McKendree was not required to perform effective service, yet he attended as many of the conferences as his strength would allow, and was particularly useful in the missionary department of the work, in which be took a deep and lively interest.

Notwithstanding what had been done to supply the destitute portions of our country with the word and ordinances of Christianity, there were yet many parts unprovided for, particularly in the southwestern states and territories. The state of Louisiana, which contained at this time not less than 220,000 inhabitants, about one fourth of whom were slaves, was almost entirely destitute of evangelical instruction. About three fourths of the population were French Roman Catholics, but few of whom could either speak or understand the English language, and the greater proportion of these had never heard a Protestant minister. In this large territory there was a presiding elder’s district, including only two circuits, called Attakapas and Washataw, in which there were one hundred and fifty-one white and fifty-eight colored members, under the charge of three preachers, including the presiding elder. How inadequate they were all to meet the spiritual wants of the people, may be inferred from the fact, that one of these preachers traveled not less than five hundred and eighty miles every five weeks, in order to preach to as many of the people in their scattered settlements as he possibly could. In this state of things the few whose hearts the Lord had touched sent up a loud and urgent call to the rulers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and made their earnest appeals to the managers of our Missionary Society for ministerial help. After consulting with Bishop McKendree in reference to the best manner of answering these earnest appeals, the managers selected a young preacher of promising talents, Ebenezer Brown, who was approved of and appointed by Bishop George, and, with a view to qualify himself for his work, he entered upon the study of the French language. He went finally to his field of labor, but the enterprise proved a failure. Such were the prejudices of the French population, fomented as they

were by priestly influence, that the missionary could gain no access to the people; and hence, after spending some time in preaching to an English congregation in New Orleans, he returned to the New York conference, in which he continued until he located. But though these efforts to send the gospel in that direction, like many others of a similar character which had been made to benefit the Catholic population, were unsuccessful, the prospects in other places, particularly among the aborigines of our country, were more flattering. These long neglected people, the original lords of the soil, began to attract the attention of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and by one of those singular providences which so strikingly indicate the wisdom and power of God in selecting the means for the accomplishment of his purposes of mercy, a work of grace had been commenced among the Wyandot Indians in Upper Sandusky, in the state of Ohio. That the reader may duly estimate the difficulties with which the missionaries had to contend, in their efforts to convert these savages to the Christian faith, it is necessary that he should know something of their superstitions, customs, and manner of living, as well as the great diversity of languages which are spoken by the several tribes.

Within the bounds of the United States and territories there were remaining, according to the most accurate estimate which could he made of all the numerous tribes which once inhabited this land, only about one hundred and thirty thousand; and there were supposed to be in the Canadas, chiefly of the Chippeway [sic], Mohawk, and Missisauga tribes, about fifty thousand more. Such inroads had disease, wars, and intemperance made upon this once numerous and powerful people, the aboriginal lords of the soil, that these several tribes of Indians were but fragments of what they once were, scattered about in small insulated groups, some of them half civilized, and many melted down to mere handfuls in comparison to their former numbers.

These one hundred and thirty thousand were divided into not less than sixty-five different tribes, speaking almost as many languages, some reduced to as few as thirty in a tribe, while the largest number did not exceed thirty thousand in any one tribe. What a difficulty does this single circumstance present in the way of their conversion! And how hopeless must their case have appeared to all who looked at them merely with the eye of human reason! But the faith of the Christian surveyed them with very different feelings, and prompted him to adopt measures for their melioration and salvation.

Though each tribe may have some religious notions and customs, as well as modes of life, peculiar to itself, yet in the general outline of heathen superstitions and manner of savage life they all agree; and hence a general description of these things may answer the purpose of conveying an accurate idea of their character and religious and social condition.

Though most of them believe in one supremely good Spirit, whom they call Ke-Sha-Muneto, yet as they think he is goodness itself, they conclude he can do no evil, and therefore they neither fear nor offer to him any propitiatory sacrifice. To the evil spirit, who is called Manche-Muneto, they offer sacrifices, as an object of fear and dread, that they may appease his wrath. In addition to these two great and powerful beings, they believe in the existence of a multitude of subordinate deities, who are distinguished by the simple name of Muneto. These are, like the gods of the ancient heathen, local deities, who have their abodes in caves of the earth, in great waterfalls, in large and dangerous rivers and lakes, which, together with whatever natural phenomenon is calculated to inspire the mind with awe and dread, are under the control of these inferior and local

deities. To the care of these subordinate gods the souls and bodies of individuals are committed, and it is a subject of much solicitude for each person to ascertain to which of the Munetos his destinies are to be consigned, that he may render to it the proper homage. For the purpose of acquiring this knowledge they go through a most painful process of fasting and other bodily austerities for several days in succession, and when reduced by this means to great physical weakness, they become perturbed in sleep, and the thoughts which flit through their minds in that state are interpreted in such way as to lead them to infer that either a bear, a deer, a snake, or some other animal is to be the representative of their guardian Muneto; and thenceforward the animal selected by the individual becomes the object of his superstitious reverence through all the vicissitudes of his future roving life.1 But they have also their priests, who hold a preternatural intercourse with the invisible world, and interpret the will of the gods unto the people. These are called Paw-waws, or Conjurors. These profess to hold a correspondence with invisible and absent spirits, whether dead or alive, and teach the deluded people to believe that they can inflict punishment upon their enemies, even though at a great distance from them -- that they can, by their conjurations, cure diseases, expel witches and wizards, and control the power of evil spirits. These conjurors have their medicine-bags, with which they perform a variety of antic tricks, beating their tum-tum, a sort of drum, and singing their monotonous tunes over the sick, attempting by this means to drive away the evil spirit and restore the patient to health; but they more frequently increase the sufferings or hasten the dissolution of the diseased person than effect his cure. In addition to these ordinary priests there is another order of a peculiar character, -- whose business is to guard the "Council Fire." This is kept by each tribe in a place selected for that purpose, where an altar, something in the form of a rude oven, is erected, and here the eternal fire, as it is called, is kept perpetually burning. That it may not be extinguished or desecrated by rude or vulgar hands, four persons, two males and two females, husbands and their wives, are appointed as its guardians. The wives are required to cook and do the domestic work, while their husbands, who are destined more especially to the sacred duty of guarding the council fire, are likewise engaged in hunting and providing all needful things for the household. These four persons are relieved from all secular cares, that they may the more entirely devote themselves to the holy trust confided to them. In this priesthood a perpetual succession is kept up by the appointment of the head chief and his spouse, the former selecting the husband and the latter the wife of the survivor. And so sacred is the duty of guarding the eternal fire considered, that death is inflicted as a punishment upon him who violates his trust.2 The custom of ridding themselves of the encumbrance of the aged and infirm, by putting an end to their life, is continued among these heathen with all its shocking barbarities. The following, as corroborative of the truth of this, is related on the authority of the Rev. William Case, whose labors among the Indians of Upper Canada, and intimate acquaintance with their customs, entitle him not only to credit, but also to the thanks of the whole Christian community. He says: "Many years since an aged respectable gentleman, being at the head of the Bay of Quinte, found an assemblage of Indians. On inquiring the cause, he was informed that they had assembled to perform one of their ceremonies. Out of respect to our informant they permitted him to witness the scene. They were ranged in Indian file, at the head of which was an aged man, and next to him a lad, his son, with a hatchet in his hand. They all moved slowly until they arrived at a place nearly dry in the ground. Here they halted. The old man kneeled down. The son stood for a moment, and then deliberately stepped up and struck the tomahawk into his father’s head. He fell under the stroke, was buried, and the ceremony ended

by drinking freely of ardent spirits." In justification of this inhuman conduct, they alleged that this was not a punishment for any crime, but merely because the old man could no longer follow them in their wanderings. So powerfully does the selfish principle predominate over filial love and obedience. But these superstitions are not the worst things with which the Christian missionary has to contend. Had these heathen been left in their native condition, their conversion to Christianity might be effected with much more ease. It is, indeed, lamentable to reflect, that their proximity to the white population, and their intermingling with them for purposes of traffic, instead of bettering their condition, have made it far worse, and furnished them with an argument against Christianity of peculiar point and force. I allude to the introduction of ardent spirits by mercenary traders, to the custom of profane swearing, to gambling, and to those diseases to which they were heretofore strangers. These things have debased their minds, corrupted their morals, impoverished their tribes, thinned their ranks, and hardened them against the truths of the gospel. And this is the more to he lamented, because these evils have been superinduced by those who have called themselves Christians, and professed to enjoy the advantages of civilization. In consequence of these things, the semi-civilized Indians, who skirt our settlements, and have intermingled with their white neighbors, are the worst, to whom the appellation of "miserable, half-starved Indians" most appropriately belongs to those in the interior, far removed from civilized life, being much more industrious, better clad, enjoy better health, and are more easily reached by gospel truth. This state of things renders it imperative for the missionary, on his first introduction to these semi-barbarians, to remove the objections to Christianity arising from the corrupting example of those professed Christians who have cheated them, made them drunk with "fire waters," and turned the edge of the sword against them, until they have been compelled to seek a shelter from the hot pursuit of their enemies by plunging farther and farther into the trackless wilderness -- by leaving their paternal inheritances, and taking up their abodes amidst bears and wolves, and other wild beasts of the forests. To do this -- to meet and obviate their objections arising out of this inhuman treatment, by distinguishing between a cause and its professed advocates, between nominal and real Christians, and by discriminating between pure Christianity and that corrupted form of it which has been made to accommodate itself to the debased passions of men -- to do this effectually and satisfactorily to the inquisitive mind of an Indian requires no little ingenuity and patient perseverance. And yet it must be done before an entrance can he gained to his heart by the truth. He must he convinced that the missionary is honest in his purpose, and then the latter must adapt himself, in his mode of instruction, to the condition, the intellect, and the moral habits of his pupil.

Such were the difficulties existing among the Indian tribes to whom the gospel was sent by the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church about this time; and yet it met with a success unparalleled among Indian missions. The Wyandot Indians, among whom the reformation commenced, called by the French Hurons, were once a powerful nation, the most ancient settlers and proprietors of the country on both sides of the Detroit river, extending northwest as far as Mackinaw. By frequent wars, however, and the destructive influence of those vices contracted by their contiguity to the white population, they had now become greatly reduced in number and influence, and were at this time settled on a reservation of land in Upper Sandusky. This reservation was about nineteen miles in length from east to west, and twelve in breadth from north to south, containing in all nearly one hundred and fifty thousand acres of land. This tract, through which the Sandusky river winds its way, together with five miles square at the Big Spring, includes

all the soil remaining to this once numerous and powerful tribe, whose dominion had extended, in their more palmy days, over such a vast region of country. Their chief settlement, where the mission was commenced, and the mission premises have been established, is about four hundred and seventy miles north of Columbus, the capital of the state of Ohio. As early as the year 1816, John Steward, a free man of color, born and raised in Powhatan county, in the State of Virginia, visited these people in the character of a Christian teacher. Having been brought to the "knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus," and become a member of our Church, it was deeply impressed upon his mind that it was his duty to travel somewhere northwest in search of some of the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." So strong were his convictions on this subject that he could have no rest in his spirit until he yielded obedience to what he considered the call of God. Unauthorized by any church, and in opposition to the advice of many of his friends, Steward took his departure from his "home and kindred," and continued his course until he arrived at Pipe Town, on the Sandusky river, where a tribe of the Delaware Indians dwelt. After holding a conference with these friendly Indians, and, through an interpreter, delivering to them a discourse on the subject of religion, impelled on by h is first impressions, the next morning he bade them an affectionate adieu, and pursued his journey toward Upper Sandusky, and soon arrived at the house of Mr. Walker, United States sub-agent, to whom Steward related his Christian experience, and the reasons which had induced him to come among them. Being finally satisfied that he was actuated by pure motives, Mr. and Mrs. Walker, both of whom could speak the Wyandot language, encouraged and assisted him much in his work. His first sermon was delivered to one old Indian woman. But recollecting that his Lord and Master had preached successfully to the woman of Samaria alone, Steward preached as faithfully to her as if there had been hundreds present. At his next appointment, "on the morrow," he had the satisfaction to find added to his congregation an old man. To these he addressed himself with such effect that they both were soon converted to the Christian faith. In this small way, and by these comparatively inefficient means, the work of reformation began among these people in the month of November, 1816, and by the faithful labors of Steward, assisted occasionally by some local preachers, who took an interest in their spiritual welfare, before any regular missionary was pointed to take charge of them, a large society of converted natives had been formed, all zealous for the salvation of their heathen brethren. Among these were several influential chiefs of the nation, Between-the-logs, Mononcue, Hicks, and Scuteash, together with two of the interpreters, Pointer and Armstrong; the first of whom, Between-the-logs, was one of the chief counselors of the nation, a man of vigorous intellect, who soon became an eloquent advocate for the Christian cause; nor was Mononcue much inferior to him in mental strength and useful labors. In 1819, the very year in which the Missionary Society was formed -- a coincidence not unworthy of notice -- this mission was taken under the superintendence of the Ohio conference, which held its session that year in Cincinnati, August the 7th, and the Rev. James B. Finley, who was appointed to the Lebanon district, took the Wyandot mission under his care. At a quarterly meeting, held in November of this year, on Mad river circuit, forty-two miles from Upper Sandusky, about sixty of these native converts were present, among whom were the four chiefs above mentioned and the two interpreters. And that the reader may judge for himself in respect to the genuineness of the work which had been wrought in the hearts and lives of these people, I will insert the following account of the manner in which some of them related their Christian experience. Between-the-logs arose first in the love-feast, and lifting his eyes to heaven, streaming with tears of penitence and gratitude, said: --

"'My dear brethren, I am happy this morning that the Great Spirit has permitted us to assemble here for so good a purpose as to worship him, and to strengthen the cords of love and friendship. This is the first meeting of the kind which has been held for us, and now, my dear brethren, I am happy that we, who have been so long time apart, and enemies to one another, are come together as brothers, at which our Great Father is well pleased. For my part, I have been a very wicked man, and have committed many great sins against the Good Spirit, was addicted to drinking whisky and many evils: but I thank my good God that I am yet alive, and that he has most perfectly opened my eyes by his ministers and the good book to see these evils, and has given me help to forsake them and turn away from them. Now I feel peace in my heart with God and all men; but I feel just like a little child beginning to walk; sometimes very weak, and almost ready to give up; then I pray, and my Great Father hears me, and gives me the blessing; then I feel strong and happy; then I walk again; so sometimes up and sometimes down. I want you all to pray for me, that I may never sin any more, but always live happy and die happy. Then I shall meet you all in our Great Father's house above, and be happy for ever.' This speech was attended with great power to the hearts of the people.

"The next who arose was Hicks, who had become a most temperate and zealous advocate for the Christian religion. His speech was not interpreted entire; but after expressing his gratitude to God for what he then felt, and hoped to enjoy, he exhorted his Indian brethren to be much engaged for a blessing, and enforced his exhortation in the following manner: -- 'When I was a boy, my parents used to send me on errands, and sometimes I saw so many new things to attract my attention, I would say, By and by I will ask, until I would forget what I was sent for, and have to go home without it. So it may be with you. You have come here to get a blessing, but if you do not ask for it you will have to go home without it, and the wicked Indians will laugh at you for coming so far for nothing. Now seek, now ask, and if you get the blessing you will be happy, and go home light, and then be strong to resist evil and to do good.' He concluded by imploring a blessing upon his brethren.

"Scuteash next arose, and, with a smiling and serene countenance, said, 'I have been a great sinner, and such a drunkard as made me commit many great sins, and the Great Spirit was very mad with me, so that in here -- pointing to his breast -- 'always sick -- no sleep -- no eat -- walk -- walk--drink whisky. Then I pray to the Great Spirit to help me to quit getting drunk, and to forgive me all my sins; and God did do something for me -- I do not know from whence it comes nor where it goes, but it came all over me'--Here he cried out, 'Waugh! Waugh!' as if shocked with electricity -- 'Now me no more sick. Me sleep, eat, and no more get drunk -- no more drink whisky -- no more bad man. Me cry -- me meet you all in our Great Father's house, and be happy for ever.' At the conclusion of the love-feast there were not less than three hundred white people assembled from the neighboring frontier settlements, to whom Mr. Finley preached with great effect. The manifest attention in the appearance and general deportment of the Indian converts, together with the preaching, had a most salutary effect upon the audience.

"The next evening, at the earnest request of the natives, the meeting was resumed. After an exhortation from Mr. Finley, Mononcue arose and exhorted his brethren to look for the blessing they sought now. He then addressed the white brethren as follows: --

" ’Fathers and brethren, I am happy this night before the Great Spirit that made all men, both red, white, and black, that he has favored us with good weather for our meeting, and brought us together that we may help one another to get good and do good. The Great Spirit has taught you and us both in one thing, that we should love one another, and fear and obey him. Us Indians he has taught by his Spirit; and you, white men, he has taught by your good book, which is all one. But your book teaches you, and us by you, more plainly than we were taught before, what is for our good. To be sure we served our Great Father sincerely, (before we were told by the good book the way,) by our feasts, rattles, and sacrifices, and dances, which we now see were not all right. Now some of our nation are trying to do better; but we have many hindrances, some of which I mean to tell. The white men tell us they love us, and we believe some do, and wish us well; but a great many do not, for they will bring us whisky, which has been the ruin of our people. I can compare whisky to nothing but the devil; for it brings with it all kinds of evil -- it destroys our happiness; it makes Indians poor; strips our squaws and children of their clothes and food; makes us lie, steal, and kill one another. All these and many other evils it brings among us; therefore you ought not to bring it among us. Now you white people make it, you know its strength and use, Indians do not. Now this whisky is a curse to yourselves why not quit making it? This is one argument used by wicked Indians against the good book; If it is so good; why do not white men all do good? Another hindrance is, white men cheat Indians, take away their money and skins for nothing. Now you tell us your good book forbids all this; why not then do what it tells you? then Indians do right too. Again, you say our Great Father loves all men, white, black, and red men, that do right; then why do you look at Indians as below you, and treat them as if they were not brothers? Does your good book tell you so? I am sure it does not. Now, brothers, let us all do right; then our Great Father will be pleased, and will make us happy in this world, and when we die then we shall all live together in his house above, and always be happy.’ " At the Ohio conference, which was held this year, 1820, in Chillicothe, the chiefs of the Wyandots presented a petition to the conference for a regular missionary to be appointed over them. It will doubtless be both pleasing and edifying to the reader to know the orderly method by which the whole affair of preparing and presenting this petition was conducted, as it will show that these people were governed by the principles of democracy in coming to a final determination of any important question, while the executive authority was confided to their chief men. The following is Mr. Finley’s’ account of this transaction: --

"Sunday, 16th July, in the Wyandot council house, Upper Sandusky, at the close of public worship, was my last address to the Wyandots by the interpreter. ’My friends, and you chiefs and speakers in particular, I have one word more to say; I expect to meet our good old chiefs and fathers in the church at Chillicothe before I come to see you again, and they will ask me how you come on in serving the Lord, and if you want them to keep sending you preachers any longer, to tell you the good word, or if you have any choice in preachers to come and teach you.’

"The answer. -- ’Our chiefs are not all here, and we must have all our chiefs and queens together, and they must all speak their minds, and then we will let the old father know.’

"They appointed to meet me at Negro town on Wednesday evening, on my return from Seneca town; and, having returned, found them assembled and prepared to answer. On entering in among them a seat was set in the midst of the room, and I requested to take the seat, which I declined; but took my seat in their circle against the wall, and directed the interpreter to take the middle seat,

which was done. After a short silence I spoke. ’Dear friends and brothers, I am thankful to find you all here, and am now prepared to hear your answer.’

"Mononcue, chairman and speaker for them all, answered: --

" ’We let our old father know that we have put the question round which was proposed on Sunday evening in the council house, and our queens give their answer first, saying,

" ’We thank the old father for coming to see us so often, and speaking the good word to us, and we want him to keep coming and never forsake us; and we let him know that we love this religion too well to give it up while we live, for we think it will go bad with our people if they quit this religion; and we want our good brother Steward to stay always among us, and our brother Jonathan too, and to help us along as they have done. Next we let the old father know what our head chiefs and the others have to say. They are willing that the gospel word should be continued among them, and they will try to do good themselves and help others to do so too; but as for the other things that are mentioned, they say, We give it all over to our speakers; just what they say we agree to; they know better about these things than we do, and they may let the old father know their mind.’

"The speakers reply for themselves: --

" ’We thank the fathers in conference for sending us preachers to help our brother Steward, and we desire the old father to keep coming at least another year when his year is out; and we want our brother Armstrong to come as often as he can, and our brothers Steward and Jonathan to stay among us and help us as they have done; and we hope our good fathers will not give us up because so many of our people are wicked and do wrong, for we believe some white men are wicked yet, that had the good word preached to them longer than our people; and our great heavenly Father has had long patience with us all; and we let the old father know that we, the speakers, will not give over speaking and telling our people to live in the right way; and if any of us do wrong we will still try to help him right, and let none go wrong; and we will try to make our head chiefs and all our people better, and we are one in voice with our queens, and we all join in giving thanks to our good fathers that care for our souls, and are willing to help our people; and we want them all to pray for us, and we will pray for them, and we hope our great heavenly Father will bless us all, and this is the last.’ " Their request was granted, and Moses Hinkle, senior, was appointed a missionary to Upper Sandusky. Being aided and encouraged by so many influential chiefs, and others of the tribe who had embraced the Christian faith, the missionary entered upon his work with a fair prospect of success; nor was he disappointed in his expectations, though it required much labor and skill to bring them into gospel order, according to our disciplinary regulations.

While these prospects were looming up before us in this and some other places, the Church in the city of New York was convulsed by an eruption which had been secretly working, and sometimes venting itself in low murmurings and disputings, for a considerable time before it broke forth in the manner now to be described. It would doubtless be tedious, and probably uninteresting to the reader, for me to enter into a minute detail of all the circumstances which led finally to a secession of a traveling preacher and upward of three hundred members, including three trustees and quite a number of class-leaders. In contests of this character there is generally more or less of blame on both sides in respect to the manner in which the controversy is conducted, while only one can be right in regard to the main principle contended for, or as it respects the measures and things to be

sustained or sacrificed. And that in the discussions which arose on the present occasion there were hasty expressions and precipitate measures on the one side as well as the other, I have good reason to know, while I am equally well convinced that the seceders themselves had no just cause for their complaints, and the means which they employed to accomplish their ends. The origin of the difficulty may be traced to the rebuilding of John Street church, in the year 1817, although long prior to this there had appeared a jealousy between the uptown and downtown people, and more particularly between the east and west portions of the city. But the manner in which this church was re-edified, being a little more neat and costly than the other churches in the city, furnished a plausible opportunity, for those who seemed to want one, to censure the conduct of the trustees and those preachers who favored their plan of building, and thus the spirit of discontent among the members of the Church was much increased. Unhappily for the peace of the Church, the malcontents were strengthened in their opposition at the first by at least one preacher, who made no secret of his dissatisfaction at the measures which had been pursued in relation to the John Street church, and other matters connected with the administration of discipline.

These things continued to distract the councils of the Church, and to disturb its peace and harmony more and more, until the session of the New York conference in 1820, when the conference adopted measures to remove, if possible, the source of the difficulties, by advising our people to petition the state legislature for such an act of incorporation as should "recognize the peculiarities of our form of church government," and thereby protect the administrators of discipline in their ecclesiastical rights and privileges. Though the conference meant nothing more than the removal of legal barriers, which they then thought existed, out of the way, yet the dissatisfied party seized hold of this circumstance with peculiar avidity, and made it subserve their purposes by raising the cry of "legal establishment," an "attempt to coerce the people by civil laws," &c., &c. Though all this was but idle gossip, yet it had its effect in raising a prejudice in the minds of many sincere members of our Church, and induced them to believe that their preachers were adopting measures to enslave them, or to deprive them of their just rights and privileges.

It is believed that the measures of the conference, though well meant, were unnecessary, even for the attainment of the end proposed, as subsequent experience has proved that the constitutions, both of the general and state governments, amply secure to all denominations the full enjoyment of all their peculiarities, and the free and unrestrained exercise of their disciplinary regulations, provided they behave as peaceable citizens, and do not infract any law of the land. This principle has been settled by the highest tribunals of justice, and therefore no special act is necessary to remove any legal barrier out of the way of the exercise of discipline, provided as above, because all such barriers, did they exist, are unconstitutional, and are therefore null and void. But this act of the New York conference, perfectly innocent in itself, and which was never carried into effect, furnished a plausible pretext to the discontented party, and was used with admirable effect in raising a prejudice against the constituted authorities of the Church. It finally ended, as before remarked, in the secession of a preacher, William M. Stillwell, and about three hundred members of the Church, some of whom were men of long standing and considerable influence. They formed themselves into an independent congregation, adopting the substance of our general rules for their government, and our doctrines as articles of faith, professing at the same time an attachment to the itinerating mode of spreading the gospel, and, drawing others after them in some portions of the country, formed an annual conference, made up chiefly -- for I believe no traveling preacher

joined them except Stillwell -- of local preachers, and those who had been exhorters in our Church. Their itinerancy, however; was of short duration, for those who seceded in the city of New York soon settled down upon the Congregational plan of church government, allowing even the females a voice in all matters of administration. As it will not be necessary to advert to these things again, except incidentally, it is proper to remark here, that most of those who left us at that time have since returned to the church of their first love. Having sufficiently tested the quality of the "new wine" to find it unsavory, and becoming restive under their new regimen, they made application to be restored to the privilege of drinking again the "old wine," and to the government from which they had expatriated themselves. Some afterward joined the "Reformer," improperly so called, and a few only of those who seceded remain attached to Stillwell. Two out of the three trustees who left us, most of the class-leaders, together with their members, have been, at their own request, restored to their former fellowship, in a way equally satisfactory to all concerned. Mr. Stillwell, however, remains over a congregation, made up chiefly of those who have been gathered in since the secession, and, so far as they may promote "the common salvation," we wish them success.

Notwithstanding these difficulties occurred in the city of New York and a few other places which were affected by these movements, by which many a sincere heart was made to palpitate with sorrow, and some of our ministers to suffer a temporary reproach, the work of God was generally prosperous, and great peace reigned among those who remained unmoved in the city of New York.

It was no small satisfaction to the projectors and friends of our Missionary Society to find that their labors were duly appreciated by their brethren, and that the spirit of missions was gradually diffusing itself throughout our ranks, exerting in its course a hallowing influence in the Church, and calling forth a spirit of liberality highly creditable to all concerned. Many of the annual conferences formed themselves into auxiliary societies, and adopted energetic measures to establish branches throughout their bounds, with a view to supply the pecuniary means needful to support those men of God who volunteered their services for the salvation of men. Numerous testimonies in favor of these measures, sent to the managers to cheer them on the way, might easily be adduced; but I shall content myself with inserting the following from the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass, of the Tennessee conference: --

"The plan," he remarks, "proposed in the Address of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, places things on very advantageous ground. The men to be aided and sanctioned as missionaries are to be approved by our annual conferences, and to act under the direction of our bishops. Men who, renouncing ease and worldly prospects, devoted to God and his Church, and qualified for the divine work in which they are engaged, will spread the word of life; and by uniting precept with example they will plant the standard of Immanuel, and diffuse light to thousands in regions where darkness now reigns. O! could our venerable father, Bishop Asbury, the apostle of America, have witnessed such a plan matured and carried into operation by his sons in the gospel, his great soul must have felt such rapture, that, like Simeon, he would have exclaimed, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace! Admirable system! The strength of Jehovah must be felt by the powers of darkness in the operation of such a plan.

"I think the publication of the Methodist Magazine and the establishment of the Missionary Society, both engrafted on the old itinerant missionary plan, are calculated to impart such energy and spirit

to the whole connection, that we shall not only keep up the life and power of religion where it is already planted, but renewed exertion and unequaled success, since the apostolic age, in saving souls from death, will be the resulting consequences.

"Nashville is certainly the most central as well as the most populous town within the limits of this conference, and therefore ought to be the place for the location of an auxiliary society, which I shall use my endeavors to establish as soon as possible."

Events have verified the truth of these anticipations respecting the blessed results of this society. An enlightened zeal distinguished the conduct of those who entered the most heartily into the missionary work, and the spirit of revival pervaded many portions of the Church during this and succeeding years. An auxiliary missionary society had been formed in Lynn, Mass., and the Rev. J. A. Merrill, who was appointed by the bishop as a missionary in the bounds of the New England conference, went to the upper Coos, along the upper waters of the Connecticut river, a tract of country almost entirely destitute of the gospel. God accompanied his labors with the energies of the Holy Spirit, so that many sinners were awakened and brought to the knowledge of the truth. He extended his labors into Vermont, some parts of New Hampshire, and Maine, and everywhere found a people eager to hear the word. The following extract from one of his letters will show the extent and effect of his labors: --

"Since my last communication I have made two visits into the upper Coos country, and am happy to state that the prospect still brightens. In Lunenburgh there is a gracious work of religion. I have attended a number of meetings in that place, and the power of God was evidently manifested among the people. The tears and sighs of mourners clearly discovered that the word was not delivered in vain. At one time nearly the whole assembly rose and requested prayers, and after the congregation was dismissed a number of mourning and weeping souls tarried, and still desired we should pray for them. They readily prostrated themselves at the foot of the cross, while our prayers were offered to God in their behalf. Several have professed faith in the Lord Jesus, and others are still struggling for deliverance.

"There is a good work in the Congregational society in this town. At a meeting not long since, the preacher, after giving an invitation to the people to rise to be prayed for, and counting forty, urged the importance of their kneeling, from the example of Christ and the apostles; he then kneeled, and was joined in this Scriptural and rational act by nearly all the congregation.

"About one hundred have been added to the societies on Stratford circuit since the last conference, and perhaps more than that number on Landaff circuit.

"I have made a tour of about five weeks into Maine; preached in the towns of Shelbourn, Rumford, Bethel, Livermore, Augusta, Sidney, Gardner, Litchfield, and Vienna. In some of these towns I preached four and five times, and have reason to think the labor will not be lost. The prospect in several towns is good; -- in Vienna about sixty have experienced religion of late, and the attention in most of these places is considerable.

"You observe in your letter that several wished to know how many miles I have traveled and how many sermons I have preached since my appointment. I am not much in favor of this practice, generally; but as it is the wish of my friends, and has been a practice among missionaries, I shall here state, for the satisfaction of the society, that I have visited and preached in seventy towns,

traveled three thousand six hundred and seventy miles, (in about eight months,) and preached two hundred and forty sermons; but how many families I have visited I cannot tell." In the town of Bristol, R. I., there was a gracious work of God. The following particulars respecting the commencement and progress of Methodism in this place will doubtless be interesting to the reader. About the year 1791 a sea captain, a citizen of Bristol, was brought to the saving knowledge of the truth under Methodist preaching in the city of New York. On his return to his native place he made known to some of his neighbors what God had done for his soul. Though many who heard these things treated them with contempt, others believed his testimony and received it with joy. Being encouraged by these, the captain, whose heart burned with love to the souls of his fellowmen, invited the Methodist preachers to visit Bristol; and though much opposition was manifested by some, yet others received the word with joyful and believing hearts, and a society was soon formed, consisting of eighteen persons. This was the beginning of Methodism in that place, and the society gradually increased in numbers and strength, so that in 1805 they were enabled to build a commodious house of worship. In 1812, under a powerful revival of religion, about one hundred were added to their number. This year, 1820, they were favored with another outpouring of the Spirit, during which not less than one hundred and fifty gave evidence of a work of regenerating grace, so that the whole number of Church members was four hundred and eight, including twenty-two colored. In Provincetown, Massachusetts, also, there was a remarkable work of God; -- so powerful was it in its effects, and so rapid in its progress, that it changed the entire moral aspect of the place. As this work began while many of the men were absent at sea -- the inhabitants living chiefly by fishing -- on their return they were astonished at the change which had taken place; but they soon became convinced that it was the power of God which had produced the reformation, and they also were soon made "partakers of like precious faith," whole families rejoicing together "for the consolation." About one hundred and forty in this little town were brought to God during this revival.

Chillicothe, Ohio, was also favored with manifest displays of the power and grace of God. In 1819 there had been a revival here which eventuated in the addition of three hundred and twenty to the Church. This year the work continued with increasing power, and, among others, the man who had been employed in finishing their house of worship, together with all his family, and all the hands employed on the house, were made partakers of the grace of life.

Many other places, too numerous to mention, were blessed with revivals, so that it may be said the Church very generally was in a prosperous condition.

Thirty-five preachers were located this year, fifteen were returned supernumerary, and forty-two superannuated, and three had been expelled. Two, John T. Brame and George Burnet, had died in the Lord.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 219,332; Last Year: 201,750; Increase: 17,582 -- Colored This Year: 40,558; Last Year: 39,174; Increase: 1,384 -- Total This Year: 259,8903; Last Year: 240,924 -- Increase: 18,966 -- Preachers This Year: 896; Last Year: 812; Increase: 84.

1821 The mission which had been commenced among the Wyandots continued to prosper, and the reports of its success had a most happy influence on the cause of religion generally. This year the Rev. James B. Finley was appointed to the superintendence of this mission. In addition to preaching the gospel to the adult Indians, he was instructed to establish a school for the education

of the children, both in letters and in domestic economy -- to teach the boys the art of agriculture, and the girls to sew, spin, and knit, and all the duties of the household.

It is a coincidence worthy of notice, that about the time this good work commenced among the natives of our forests, the government of the United States made an appropriation of ten thousand dollars annually for the support of native schools, in which it was ordered that the children should he taught the arts of civilized life, as well as to read, write, and keep accounts. This annuity was to be divided among the several schools which might be established among the aboriginal tribes by missionary societies, and the Wyandot school received its quota. To accomplish his object Mr. Finley commenced building a house, which might serve the double purpose of a house of worship and for teaching the children, and likewise inclosed a large farm, the land having been granted by the chiefs to the mission, on which he labored with his own hands, for the purpose of setting an example to the Indians, that they might habituate themselves to an agricultural life. These movements had a salutary effect upon their physical and moral condition. The converted natives were formed into classes, and the chiefs who embraced Christianity were appointed leaders. At the first offer that was made to receive them into class twenty-three came forward, with tears of mingled sorrow and joy, desiring to become members of the Christian church, while others stood trembling and weeping, crying aloud, "O, Shasus, Ta-men-tare!" that is, "O, Jesus, take pity on us!" In this way the good work went on during the year. With a view to send the gospel to the Creek Indians, who inhabited a tract of country lying within the bounds of the states of Georgia and Alabama, then under the chieftainship of McIntosh, the celebrated half-breed warrior, the Rev. William Capers undertook a tour through the state of Georgia, to ascertain the feelings of its citizens toward an attempt to establish a mission among that tribe of Indians. He was favorably received by the people generally, and the proposed mission was viewed with a friendly eye. He visited and preached in the most populous towns and villages in the state, and made collections for the support of the contemplated mission, which was begun the succeeding year. The feelings of the managers of the Missionary Society, in view of what God had already done through their instrumentality, may be seen by the following extract from their third annual report: --

"It is now only about three years since this society commenced its operations. Combining so large a field of labor, and comprehending in its plans so large a circle, as the whole of the Methodist conferences in the United States, it was but reasonable to expect that its progress would be slow; but it has been sure. Time and patient perseverance are necessary to set so many wheels in motion, to communicate life and vigor to each, and so to direct the movements of the whole as to produce a simultaneous and harmonious co-operation. But, blessed be the God of missions! the God of Wesley and Whitefield -- those eminent missionaries of the old world -- who inspired them with sufficient energy to set the mighty machine in motion -- of Asbury and Coke, who gave it such an impulse in the new world -- blessed be his holy name for ever, that he hath so far given success to the experiment. Already the impulse is felt more or less strongly from the center to the circumference of our connection. The mustard-seed first s own about three years since has taken deep root, has extended its branches, and many are reposing under their shadow. Young branches are shooting forth in various directions, and, instead of exhausting the strength of the parent stock, are daily adding to its growth and stability. As you have already heard, the heathen tribes of our wilderness are partaking of its fruits.

"The time, indeed, is not far distant, when every man who shall have engaged in this godlike enterprise will esteem it as the happiest period of his existence, the highest honor ever conferred upon him, when he embarked in the cause of missions. The loiterers, those who have looked on with cold indifference, and with envious eye have waited the doubtful result, will stand abashed, filled with confusion at their own supineness; and will, if their zeal for God be not quite extinguished, petition the privilege to redeem their lost time, by being permitted, at last, to participate in the grand work of conquering the world by the power of truth." The work of God was generally prosperous throughout the bounds of the several annual conferences, notwithstanding a spirit of disaffection was manifesting itself in some places among a few restless spirits. Through the agency of camp meetings in some parts of South Carolina much good was done, and a new circuit which was formed in the neighborhood of Bush river was blessed with an encouraging revival, under the labors of R. L. Edwards. An effort was also made to carry the gospel into a new field in the southwest, in what was called Jackson's Purchase, which embraced portions of the states of Kentucky and Tennessee, and Lewis Garrett and Hezekiah Holland were appointed to this service. That they were successful in their labors is evident from the fact, that there were returned on the Minutes for 1822 one hundred and forty-two whites and thirteen colored. In the Nashville district also, through the agency of camp meetings, there were extensive revivals of religion throughout nearly all the circuits within the district, so much so that the net increase, after deducting expulsions, deaths, and removals, was one thousand three hundred and five members. The writer of this account, the Rev. Thomas L. Douglass, thus concludes his remarks: --

"The character of this revival is the least mixed with what are called irregularities or extravagances of any that I ever saw. We have had nothing of what is called the jerks, or dance, among us. The work of conviction in the hearts of sinners has been regular, powerful, and deep; their conversion, or deliverance from sin and guilt, clear and bright; and their rejoicings Scriptural and rational. I think fully half of those who have been the subjects of the work are young men, and heads of families; many of them among the most respectable in the country, men of education, men of talents. We anticipate help and usefulness from some of them in the Lord's vineyard. Upon the whole, it is the greatest work, the most blessed revival, I ever saw. The whole country, in some places, seems like bowing to our Immanuel; religion meets with very little that can be called opposition; and many who neither profess nor appear to have any desire to get religion themselves, manifest an uncommon degree of solicitude that others should obtain it, and express a high satisfaction at seeing the work prosper. May the Lord continue to pour out his Spirit, and may the hallowed fire spread, until all the inhabitants of the earth shall rejoice in his salvation! To God be all the glory! Pray for us, dear brethren, that this year may be as the past, and much more abundantly. We look for it and expect it. The district is well supplied with preachers, men of talents, men of zeal, and in the spirit of the work. May the Lord bless their labors!" In Carter's Valley circuit, Holston conference, there were added, during a revival that year, not less than three hundred to the Church. In Pittsburgh, Pa., the work of reformation had been going forward without interruption for about eighteen months, during which time not less than five hundred had been added to the Church, of whom about two hundred and sixty had been received in the course of six months. The writer of this account of the work of God in Pittsburgh, the Rev. Samuel Davis, who was at that time stationed there, closes his narrative in following words: --

"To those who have been conversant with the history of Methodism in this place from its rise, and who, with lively interest, have marked its progress down to the present, the retrospect must afford matter for the liveliest feelings of gratitude to God. Yea, when they look back but a few years, and compare what they then were with what they are now, their souls, in pleasing astonishment, must cry out, 'What hath the Lord wrought!' When they consider that, about ten or twelve years ago, an apartment in a private house was sufficient to contain the society, and all who chose to assemble with them to hear the word preached; and that now that little society has swelled to a church of near seven hundred members, possessing two meeting-houses, (one of which is large,) which are well filled, on sabbath evenings especially, with serious and attentive hearers -- a review of these circumstances constrains them to acknowledge that it is indeed 'the Lord's doings, and marvelous in their eyes,' -- 'that they who were not a people should become the people of the Lord.' 'The Lord reigneth! Let the earth rejoice.'" In some portions of North Carolina the camp meetings were rendered a great blessing to the people. In the town of Hillsborough, where the Methodists had been but little known, having only two Church members in the place, there was a society of forty raised up as the fruit of one of these meetings, and they immediately adopted measures for erecting a house of worship, much to the gratification of the people of Hillsborough. Other places shared largely in the blessed effects of these revivals, and upward of three hundred were added to the several societies in that region of country, besides a number who connected themselves with other denominations. In the more northern conferences also the work of God was prosperous. In the New Hampshire district, in New Haven, Conn., Providence, R. I., New London district, Wellfleet, New Windsor, and Rhinebeck circuits, the Lord poured out his Spirit, and blessed the labor of his servants in the conversion of many sinners and the sanctification of believers. In 1819 Alabama was admitted as a state into the American confederacy. It had been filling up, like the other territories in the west and southwest, with inhabitants from Europe and the older states in the Union, most of whom were destitute of the ordinances of Christianity. Into this country the Methodist itinerants had penetrated, and succeeded in forming circuits and establishing societies among the scattered population. This year, as the following account will show, there were encouraging revivals of religion in many places in that part of the country. The presiding elder, the Rev. Thomas Griffin, writes as follows: --

"At a camp meeting held on the 6th of July last, on Pearl river, a few miles from Monticello, the congregation was large and attentive, many were awakened to a sense of their need of Christ, and five or six gave evidence of a change of heart.

"On the 20th we held another meeting on the river Chickasawhay, about fifty miles from the town of Mobile, where we have a large, flourishing society. There were two traveling and four local preachers, and one Presbyterian minister at this meeting. On Friday and Saturday the Lord favored us with a solemn sense of his presence. Sinners were struck with awe, and stood with respectful silence, while believers rejoiced in God their Saviour. On sabbath we administered the Lord's supper. All were solemn as night. The word of God was heard with great attention, and I believe much good was done. About ten professed justifying grace.

"On the 27th of July we held another meeting, about thirty miles from St. Stephen's, near the Tombeckbee and Alabama rivers. Though the principal part of the people were irreligious, yet they behaved with great order and decorum, and five or six professed to be converted.

"On the 2d of August we commenced a camp meeting on the banks of the Alabama river, thirty miles below the town of Cahawba the seat of government for this state. From the paucity of the inhabitants, and the affliction many were suffering from a prevailing fever, there were not many that attended this meeting. Some disorder was witnessed; but He that commanded the boisterous winds to be still appeared in our behalf, and before the exercises closed some were brought, as we have reason to believe, to the knowledge of the truth.

"August 10th another meeting began, thirty miles above Cahawba, on the bank of the above-mentioned river. A numerous concourse of people attended, and much good was done. On Tuesday morning I requested all who had obtained an evidence of their conversion to God to come forward to the altar, when thirty-seven presented themselves. The last two meetings were held in a forest, and the Indians were fishing in the river while we were preaching and praying; the bears were ravaging the cornfields, and the wolf and tiger were howling and screaming in the very woods in the neighborhood of our meeting.

"These accounts may seem unimportant to those who are accustomed to more numerous congregations, and who have the privilege of assembling in convenient houses; but to us, who are struggling with many difficulties in this newly settled country, it is highly gratifying, and fills us with a pleasing hope of yet seeing the desert blossom as the rose."

Fifty preachers were located this year, twenty-two returned supernumerary, fifty-five superannuated, and five expelled. Three, Daniel Ireland, William M. Stillwell, and William Barton, had withdrawn, the last of whom joined the Protestant Episcopal Church. Six, namely, Samuel Parker, Charles Dickinson, Archibald Robinson, John Robertson, Richard Emory, and Apheus Davis, had finished their course in peace.

Samuel Parker was eminently useful in his day and generation. He was a native of New Jersey, born in 1774, of poor parents. At the age of fourteen he was brought from darkness to light, and became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1805 he entered the traveling ministry, and was appointed to labor in the western country. It soon appeared that God was with him. By his deep devotion to the work of God, and his eminent talents as a preacher of righteousness, he acquired the confidence of his brethren, and commanded the respect of the community generally. In 1815 he was appointed the presiding elder of the Miami district, and from thence, in the next year, was transferred to the Kentucky district, in which he continued four years. In this station he was greatly blessed in his labors, during which time he was married to Miss Oletha Tilton. Being called by the bishop to fill an important post in the bounds of the Mississippi conference, though his health was evidently declining, he consented to be transferred to that more distant field of labor. He soon, however, sunk under the influence of disease, and on the 20th of December, 1819, he died in peace. The Rev. Samuel Parker was a man of deep experience, of fervent piety, of stern integrity, and possessed talents of the most useful character as a minister of Jesus Christ. His method of preaching was well calculated to soothe the mind of the believer by the sweet and rich promises of the gospel, as well as to inspire hope and faith in the broken-hearted, penitent sinner. And his general deportment as a Christian minister, among his brethren and the people of his charge, inspired such confidence in his wisdom and the purity of his motives as gave him a powerful influence over others, and he exerted it at all times for their present and future welfare. Had he lived to "threescore years and ten," no doubt he would have ranked among the first

ministers in the Methodist Episcopal Church; but that God who "seeth the end from the beginning" saw fit to call him in the prime of life from the militant to the church triumphant, where he rests from his labors, and his works do follow him. Of the others whose death is recorded, it is said that they also filled up the measure of their days in usefulness, and ended their lives in the full hope of the gospel.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 239,087; Last Year: 219,332; Increase: 19,755 -- Colored This Year: 42,059; Last Year: 40,558; Increase: 1,501 -- Total This Year: 281,146; Last Year: 259,890 -- Increase: 21,256 -- Preachers This Year: 977; Last Year: 896; Increase: 81.

1822 This year two more Indian missions were commenced, one among the Mohawks in Upper Canada, and the other among the Creeks, called the Asbury mission. As the latter, after much expense and labor, failed in the accomplishment of its objects, perhaps it may be as well to give the history of its commencement, progress, and termination, once for all, in this place. As before stated, the charge of this mission was confided, by Bishop McKendree, to the Rev. William Capers, of the South Carolina conference. After traveling extensively through the state of Georgia, endeavoring to awaken the missionary spirit, and collect funds to defray the expense for an outfit of the mission, in the month of August of this year, in company with Colonel Richard Blount, a pious and intelligent member of our Church, he arrived at the Creek agency, on Flint river. After witnessing some debasing scenes of amusement among the females, and one of those Indian plays which was conducted with a rude display of Indian dexterity, and daring feats of ferocious gallantry, he obtained an introduction to General McIntosh, the principal man of the nation. As an instance of the lordly bearing of this chief, who prided himself for having fought the battles of his country, as a general in the ranks of the Indian allies, under the command of the hero of New Orleans,4 may be mentioned his refusing to converse with Mr. Capers, though he perfectly understood the English language, only through the medium of an interpreter, assuming, in the mean time, all the etiquette of a stately prince in the reception of an ambassador. The interview resulted in an agreement between the parties for the establishment of a mission, with liberty to use so much land only as should be found necessary to raise provision for the mission family, and for building the needful houses; and the Rev. Isaac Hill, an old, tried, experienced minister was appointed in charge of the mission. But notwithstanding the favorable beginning of this laudable attempt to convey the blessings of the gospel to these heathen, so long neglected by the Christian church, difficulties of a formidable character soon made their appearance. Some of the chiefs, who were not present at the council when the above agreement was ratified, raised objections against the enterprise, and thus created so many jarring sentiments in the nation, that for a time it was doubted, among the friends of the cause, whether it was best to continue the effort. It was, however, continued. A school was opened for the instruction of the children, but the missionary was forbidden, through the influence of the opposing chiefs, to preach the gospel to the adult Indians. It was also strongly suspected that the United States agent lent the weight of his influence against the prosecution of the mission, though an investigation of his conduct resulted in his justification by the government of the United States. And the following extract from the letter of instructions which was sent to the Indian agent will show that the officers of the government took a lively interest in the objects of this mission. The secretary of war, the Honorable John C. Calhoun, after expressing his regret that any difficulties should have arisen between the missionaries and Colonel Crowell, the Indian agent, expresses himself in the following language: --

"The president takes a deep interest in the success of every effort, the object of which is to improve the condition of the Indians, and desires that every aid be furnished by the Indian agents in advancing so important an object; and he trusts that your conduct will be such as to avoid the possibility of complaint on the part of those who are engaged in this benevolent work.

"You will give a decided countenance and support to the Methodist mission, as well as to any other society that may choose to direct its efforts to improve the condition of the Creek Indians. It is not conceived that they can have any just cause of apprehension against the privilege of preaching the gospel among them; and you will use a decided influence with them to reconcile them to its exercise on the part of the mission. The department feels confident that, by proper efforts on your part, you may secure to the mission the right of preaching among the Indians, which is deemed to be so essentially connected with the objects of the society."

Notwithstanding this favorable regard toward the mission by the government of the United States, and the persevering efforts of the missionaries themselves, the mission was destined to undergo a sad declension in its affairs, and, after lingering for a while, was finally abandoned in despair. In addition to the barriers thrown in the way of the missionaries by the hostile chiefs and their partisans, were the troubles arising out of the treaty made by McIntosh and his party, by which the lands included in the chartered limits of Georgia were ceded to the United States, for the benefit of the state of Georgia, for the consideration of the sum of four hundred thousand dollars. This gave great offense to the majority of the nation, who affirmed that McIntosh and those who acted with him executed this treaty contrary to a law which had been promulgated in the public square, and they arose against him with violence, and massacred him and some others under circumstances of great barbarity. This threw the nation into great confusion, and exerted a most deleterious influence upon the interests of the mission. The school, however, was continued under all these discouragements, and by the judicious manner in which it was conducted, and the manifest improvement of the children, both in letters and religion, it acquired the confidence and respect of all who made it an object of inquiry. And the restraints against preaching the gospel being removed in 1826, owing, in a great measure, to the interference in behalf of the mission by the United States government, the mission presented a more flattering prospect, so that in 1829 there were reported seventy-one Church members at the Asbury station, namely, two whites, twenty-four Indians, and forty-five colored; and the school consisted of fifty scholars. Under this state of things the friends of the cause fondly anticipated a final triumph over infidelity and heathen superstition among this nation of Indians. But, alas! how often are all human expectations blasted!

Such were the difficulties thrown in the way of this mission, that in 1830 it was entirely abandoned. Their confirmed habits of intemperance, their predilection for savage life, the persevering opposition of most of the chiefs to the self-denying doctrines of the gospel, together with their proximity to dissipated whites, whose interest was promoted by furnishing the Indians with means of intoxication, combined, with the troubles arising out of the murder of McIntosh and others, to paralyze the efforts of the missionaries and their friends, and they were reluctantly compelled to abandon the enterprise in despair. The labor, however, was not lost; lasting impressions were made upon some minds; and some who were removed to the west have been gathered into the fold of Christ, and others, who have been since that time converted to the Christian faith, have traced their first impressions to the instructions of "father Hill" and his pious associates.

Another aboriginal mission was commenced this year. This was among the Mohawks of Upper Canada. They had been partially civilized, and imperfectly instructed in the Christian religion; and yet their moral and religious state was very far from being improved.

They were settled principally on an Indian reservation of land, sixty miles in length and twelve in breadth, on each side of the Grand river. At the head of this tribe was the celebrated Mohawk chief, Colonel Brant, whose name carried such terror into our frontier settlements during the revolutionary war. Soon after the termination of this severe struggle, chiefly through his solicitation, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge adopted measures to furnish these people with Christian instruction. A missionary was sent to preach to them, and the Gospel of St. Mark and the Prayer Book were translated into the Mohawk language, the former by Colonel Brant himself. But little permanent good, however, resulted from these efforts. Instead of producing any radical change in the heart and life of the people, they were merely initiated into an observance of the external rites and ceremonies of the church, while, like all other tribes who had mingled with the unconverted whites, they had become addicted to intemperance and its kindred vices. In this state they were when visited by a Methodist missionary this year. It is true, that from the time the Methodist itinerants first visited that country, they were in the habit of preaching occasionally to these people, but with little apparent effect. As early as the year 1801 an Indian youth was baptized at a quarterly meeting held at the house of Mr. Jones, the father of Peter Jones, whose conversion and labors will be hereafter noticed; and it is remembered well that when Mr. Joseph Sawyer, the administrator of the ordinance, concluded the ceremony by prayer, he prayed most fervently that this youth might be the first-fruits of a harvest of souls from among these natives. The wife of Mr. Jones also, who was a Mohawk princess, was baptized about the same time, and received into the Church with her husband. These were all the aboriginal conversions known to the writer before the reformation of which we now speak commenced. The mission was begun under the patronage of the Genesee conference, to which Upper Canada was then attached, and Alvin Torry was appointed to its charge. The following extracts of letters received from brother Case will fully explain the manner in which this good work began and was carried forward: --

"When I visited and preached to these Indians last June, I found several under awakenings; for they had heard occasionally a sermon from brothers Whitehead, Storey, and Matthews; and had for some time been in the habit of coming together at the house of T. D. to hear prayers in the Mohawk. Several manifested much concern, and appeared very desirous of the prayers and advice of the pious. These, with two youths who had lately received religious impressions at the Ancaster camp meeting, I formed into a society, giving charge of the society to brother S. Crawford. His account of the progress of the revival during my absence to conference I here insert, from his letter to me. We must beg some indulgence for being particular, considering that the subjects of this work are the first-fruits unto Christ, and that this revival may be seen in the native simplicity of these artless Indians. Brother C.'s account is as follows: --

" 'During your absence to the conference I have continued to meet with our red brethren every week, giving them public discourses, as well as answering their anxious inquiries concerning the things of God. The Lord has indeed been gracious to this people, pouring out his Holy Spirit on our assemblies, and thereby giving the spirit of penitence, of prayer, and of praise. About the first who appeared deeply concerned for their souls were two women. One of them had, about fourteen years ago, known the way of the Lord, and had belonged to our society in the Allegheny. Having

been a long time without the means of grace, she had lost her comforts and her zeal for God; but now, being again stirred up to return to the Lord, she became useful to others of her sex who were inquiring for the way of life. The other was a woman of moral deportment, and of respectable standing among her nation, but of great and painful afflictions: by a series of family trials she had been borne down with overwhelming sorrows. To this daughter of affliction the other woman gave religious counsel, urging that if she would give her heart to the Lord he would give comfort to her mind, as well as direct and support her in her worldly troubles. She listened to these things with much concern, and as she went to the spring for water she turned aside several times to pray. At length, under a sense of her unworthiness and sinfulness, she sunk to the earth, and was helpless for some time. When she recovered strength she came into her house, and calling her children around her, they all kneeled down to pray. While at prayer a weight of power came on them -- the daughter of fifteen cried aloud for mercy, and the mother again sunk to the floor. The daughter soon found peace, and praised the Lord. While the mother was yet mourning and praying, the youngest daughter, not yet four years of age, first kneeled by her mother, praying: then coming to her sister, she says, "Onetye ragh a gwogh nos ha ragh ge hea steage? Onetye ragh a gwogh nos ha ragh ge hea steage?" that is, "Why don’t you send for the minister? why don’t you send for the minister?" showing thereby a religious concern and intelligence remarkable for one of her age. The mother soon after obtained peace. She with her children are now a happy family, walking in the enjoyment of the Holy Comforter. Thus did the Lord bring these sincere inquirers to the knowledge of himself, while they were alone, calling on his name.

" ’Another instance of extraordinary blessing among this people was on sabbath, the 27th of July last, when one of our brethren came to hold meeting with them. During singing and prayer there was such melting of heart and fervency throughout the assembly; -- some trembled and wept, others sunk to the floor, and there was a great cry for mercy through the congregation. Some cried in Messessaugah, "Chemenito! Kitta maugesse, chemuche nene," &c.; that is, "Great good Spirit! I am poor and evil," &c. Others in Mohawk prayed, "O Sayaner, souahhaah sadoeyn Roewaye Jesus Christ, Tandakweanderhek;" that is, "O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us!" Others were encouraging the penitents to cast their burdens on the Lord. Others again were rejoicing over their converted neighbors. In this manner the meeting continued throughout the day. While these exercises were going on a little girl ran home to call her mother, who came directly over to the meeting. On entering the room where the people were praying she was smitten with conviction, and fell down crying for mercy. While in this distress her husband was troubled lest his wife should die, but was happily disappointed when, a few hours after, her sorrows were turned into joy, and she arose praising the Lord. From this time the husband set out to serve the Lord, and the next day he also found peace to his soul, as I will hereafter relate. During the day several found the Saviour’s love, and retired with great peace and comfort; while others, with heavy hearts, wept and prayed as they returned comfortless to their habitations. The next day I visited them, when they welcomed me with much affection, declaring what peace and happiness they felt since their late conversion. A number soon came together, among whom was the Indian who, the day before, was so concerned for his wife. His convictions for sin appeared deep, and his mind was in much distress. We joined in prayer for him; when I had closed, an Indian woman prayed in Mohawk. While she was with great earnestness presenting to the Lord the case of this broken-hearted sinner, the Lord set his soul at liberty. Himself and family have since appeared much devoted to the service of the Lord. The next morning, assisted by an interpreter, I

again preached to the Indians. After the meeting, observing a man leaning over the fence weeping, I invited him to a neighboring thicket, where I sung and prayed with him. I then called on him to pray; he began, but cried aloud for mercy with much contrition of spirit; but his tone was soon changed from prayer to praise. The work is spreading into a number of families. Sometimes the parents, sometimes the children, are first brought under concern. Without delay they fly to God by prayer, and generally they do not long mourn before their souls are set at liberty. The change which has taken place among this people appears very great, and, I doubt not, will do honor to the cause of religion, and thereby glorify God, who has promised to give the Gentiles for the inheritance of his Son.'

"On my return from conference I called and preached to the Mohawks, and have it on my plan to continue to attend to them in my regular route. After having explained the rules of society to them, twenty were admitted as members of society. It was a season of refreshing to us all. On the 28th of September I again preached to them. The crowd was now such that they could not all get into the house. Their usual attention and fervor were apparent, and near the conclusion of the discourse the hearts of many were affected, and they praised the Lord for his power and goodness. In meeting them in class they appeared to be progressing finely, advancing in the knowledge and love of God. Several who had been under awakening, having now returned from their hunting, requested to be received, and were admitted into the society. The society now consists of twenty-nine members, three of whom are white persons. We have also a sabbath school of Indian children, consisting of about twenty, who are learning to read. Some young men have kindly offered their services to instruct them. This good work is about fifty miles from the mouth of the Grand river, about six miles from the Mohawk village, and four miles north of the great road leading from Ancaster to Longpoint. About twelve miles from the mouth of the Grand river another gracious work is commenced, among both Indians and whites.5 About twelve have found peace to their souls, among whom are four of the Delaware tribe. This awakening first took place in the mind of a white man -- a notorious sinner. It was in time of preaching that the power of God arrested him. He wept and trembled like Belteshazzar. After meeting he came to me, saying, 'I don't know what is the matter with me. I never felt so before: I believe I am a great sinner, but I wish to do better: what shall I do to be saved?' I told him the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, to convince him of sin, and he must repent and turn to God. There is evidently a great change in this man, who we hope may be an honor to the cause of religion in this wicked part of the reservation. The awakening is prevailing in several families. We have twelve in society here. In the townships of Rainham and Walpole there are still good appearances. Indeed, at most of my appointments we have the presence and blessing of the Lord; so that our missionary friends will have no occasion to repent the prayers they have offered, the money they have expended, and the tears they have shed in behalf of the once miserable and forsaken sinners, but now happy and blessed converts, on the Grand river. Much labor is now necessary, and I would gladly have assistance; but my health is good, and I would not increase expenses. In weariness my mind is comforted, and my soul is delighted in feeding these hungry natives with the provisions of the gospel. O, I could endure hunger, or sit down thankfully to their humble fare, or lie down in Indian wigwams all my life, to be employed in such a work as this, and especially if favored with such consolations as at times I have enjoyed since I commenced my labors in this mission. I hope for ever to be grateful for His mercy in thus blessing his word for the conversion of these poor perishing sinners. Dear sir, a letter of instruction and counsel would be thankfully received. I hope I have an interest in the

prayers of my brethren. Farewell. Very affectionately yours in the gospel of Christ."

"Letter from the Rev. William Case, dated Niagara, U. C.,

October 7, 1823

"In my letter of the 27th of August I mentioned that an awakening had taken place among the Indians on the Grand river, and promised a more particular account of this work after my next visit among them. But as brother Torry has sent you a pretty full account, a few remarks will suffice. On the 24th of September, in company with a religious friend, we passed into the woods, and arrived at the Indian dwellings about nine o'clock in the morning, a time at which they generally hold their morning devotions. We were received with cordial kindness, and the shell was blown as a call to assemble for religious service. Soon the people, parents and children, were seen in all directions repairing to the house of prayer. When they arrived they took their seats with great solemnity, observing a profound silence till the service commenced. Having understood that they were in the habit of singing in the Mohawk, I requested them to sing in their usual manner, which they did melodiously. The following verse is taken from the hymn, and the translation into English is annexed: --

'O sa ya' ner Tak gwogh sni ye nough Ne na yonk high sweagh se, Ne o ni a yak hi sea ny, Sa ya' ner tea hegh sm 'yeh.'

'Enlighten our dark souls, till they Thy sacred love embrace: Assist our minds (by nature frail) With thy celestial grace.'

"After the sermon several addressed the assembly in the Mohawk, and the meeting was concluded by prayer from one of the Indians in his native tongue. The use of ardent spirits appears to be entirely laid aside, while the duties of religion are punctually and daily observed. The hour of prayer is sounded by the blowing of the shell, when they attend for their morning meetings with the regularity of their morning meals. The Indians here are very desirous of obtaining education for their children, and they are making such efforts as their low circumstances will allow: for this purpose a schoolhouse is commenced: a sabbath school is now in operation, where about twenty children are taught the rudiments of reading, and we are not without hope of seeing a day school established for the ensuing winter. Certainly this mission has been attended with the divine blessing beyond every expectation. It was not at first commenced with the professed design of converting the natives, (though they were had in view,) but for the benefit of the white inhabitants scattered over the Indian lands. The merciful Lord, however, has been pleased to endow the mission with abundant grace, and the friends of missions may now renew their songs of gratitude and joy over thirty more converted natives of the forest, together with an equal number of converts among the white population." The Cherokee mission was also commenced this year. The Cherokee Indians inhabited a tract of country included in the states of Georgia and North Carolina on the east, Alabama on the west, and that part of Tennessee lying south of Hiwassee and Tennessee rivers, comprising not less than ten millions of acres. These natives had been partially civilized; some of them had become wealthy, possessing domestic cattle in abundance, and were thriving agriculturists. White people had settled among them, intermarriages had taken place, so that there were many half-breeds of respectable standing and character, who could speak both the English and Cherokee languages, and many of the children were well educated. And had they

been left undisturbed in their possessions, they doubtless would have risen into a wealthy, intelligent, religious, and respectable community. The American Board of Missions commenced a mission among these people as early as 1817, which has been much assisted in its funds by the government of the United States, and has, no doubt, exerted a salutary influence on the Indian character.

It was in the spring of this year, at the request of a native Cherokee, by the name of Richard Riley, that the Rev. Richard Neeley, of the Tennessee conference, visited the nation, and preached in the house of Mr. Riley. In the course of the summer, being assisted by the Rev. Robert Boyd, Mr. Neeley formed a society of thirty-three members, and Richard Riley was appointed a class-leader. At a quarterly meeting which was held there a short time after, by the Rev. William McMahon, presiding elder of Huntsville district, the power of God was displayed in a most signal manner, during which several of the natives found peace with God through faith in the Lord Jesus, and became members of the Church. In December following the Rev. Andrew J. Crawford, who had been appointed to the charge of this mission, arrived there, and met a council composed of the principal men of the nation, who approved of the mission, and, with their consent, a school was commenced on the 30th of that month. This was the beginning of the good work which terminated in the conversion of many of the Cherokees to the faith of Christianity. In reporting the state of this mission to the Tennessee conference, in 1822, the committee use the following language: --

"Your committee look upon these openings of Divine Providence as special and loud calls to our conference, our superintendents, our ministers, and members in general, to unite their zeal and exertions, to afford this destitute people the means of salvation. O, brethren! come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. What has God already wrought, and how plain and simple the means by which he has performed the mighty work! Only consider, but two years ago a Methodist preacher had never preached in this part of the Cherokee nation. Our worthy and pious friend, Mr. Riley, as has been stated, invited brothers Neeley and Boyd to cross the Tennessee river and preach at his house, and these zealous and pious young men, who had just been called, like Elisha, from the plow to the pulpit, embraced the invitation, and flew upon the wings of love to plant the gospel among the Indians, believing that a Methodist preacher is never out of his way when he is searching for the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and bringing sinners home to God. Robert Boyd is no more! he is gone to his reward; but he lives in the hearts of these pious Indians, and never, no, never, while their memory is left them, will they cease to remember Robert Boyd.

"We now have one hundred and eight regular members of society in this part of the nation, and a number of the children can read the word of God, and some of them can write a tolerably good hand; and the whole amount of moneys expended does not exceed two hundred dollars. Indeed, your committee are of opinion, that a great parade about missionary establishments, and the expenditure of many thousands of dollars to give the heathen science and occupation, without religion, is of but little advantage to them. For, after all their acquirements, they are still savages, unless their hearts be changed by the grace of God and the power of the gospel; but this blessed gospel, which is the power of God to the salvation of all that believe, whenever and wherever its divine influences are implanted in the heart by the efficient operations of the Holy Ghost, makes man a new creature, and fits him for his place in society." The success which attended these efforts among the aborigines of our country acted as a divine charm upon the members of the Church generally, and contributed not a little to diffuse the spirit of revival, and to excite a

generous liberality throughout our entire borders. It tended also to silence the objections of those who had doubted the expediency of forming the society, or of the feasibility of reclaiming the wandering savages of our wildernesses from their heathenish superstitions and vicious habits.

Besides these Indian missions, others were undertaken for the benefit of the destitute parts of the white settlements. Last year the Rev. Fitch Reed, of the Genesee conference, was appointed to York, (now Toronto,) in Upper Canada, with Rev. Kenneth M. K. Smith as his helper. Their mission extended into the settlements in the neighborhood of Toronto, which, at that time, were new, poor, and destitute of the gospel. Some idea may be formed of the difficulties with which they had to contend in traveling through particular parts of the country, from the fact that brother Smith, who devoted himself chiefly to the back settlements, was in the habit of carrying an ax with him, so that when he came to a stream of water that he could not ford, (which was frequently the case,) he felled a tree across it, on which he passed over. In some instances, it is stated, where the trees stood opposite to each other on the banks of the creek, and formed a junction at the top, he would climb one tree and descend another, and thus pass on to his appointments among this scattered population. Their labors were blessed, and a foundation was laid for the establishment of societies which have subsequently much prospered. When they first went among the people they found them engrossed in the cares of the world, desecrating the sabbath for purposes of amusement, idle recreation, or secular labor; and some who had once professed religion had cast off the fear of God, and were immersed in the pleasures of sin. It was not long, however, before the word took such effect that the houses were crowded with attentive hearers. The sabbath especially, instead of being devoted to profane revelry, was spent in religious devotion, and many were inquiring what they should do to be saved. The result was, that this year, 1822, there were returned on the Minutes in this mission one hundred and four; thirty-four in York, and seventy in the new settlements. To aid the missionaries in their work, the American Bible Society made a generous donation of Bibles and testaments for gratuitous distribution among the poor in that district of country.

Many parts of our general work were blessed with revivals of the work of God. Among others, the following may be mentioned: -- Brooklyn, Long Island, was powerfully visited with the refreshing influences of the Spirit, under the labors of the Rev. Lewis Pease. This work commenced at a camp meeting held at Musquito Cove, Long Island, and was productive of the conversion and addition to the Church in that place of not less than one hundred souls. Several towns on the Amenia circuit were visited by powerful revivals, which terminated in the conversion of about two hundred souls, one hundred and seventy of whom joined our Church, and the rest were divided between the Presbyterians and Baptists. Among these converts, several, at a place called Oblong, had been Universalists. Being convinced of the excellence of the power of religion, they cast away their dependence upon a mere speculative belief in Christianity, and yielded to be saved now, by "grace, through faith." A work of God also prevailed on the Tolland circuit, New England conference, which eventuated in the conversion of about two hundred and fifty, of almost all ages, and of both sexes. At a camp meeting held at East Hartford, which was numerously attended, there were manifest displays of the power and grace of God in the awakening and conversion of souls. The fruits of this revival were divided among the Methodists, Congregationalists, and Baptists, about one hundred being added to the Methodist Church.6 The Upper Canada district, then under the charge of the Rev. William Case, is thus described by him: --

"Blessed be the Lord, we are prospering finely in this country. Our congregations, sabbath schools, missionary collections, a church-building spirit, as well as conversions, and order and harmony in the societies, all demonstrate the rising strength of Zion in these parts. There are now finishing or commencing twenty churches in this upper half of the province. We have more than forty sabbath schools, and one thousand scholars. These nurseries of virtue and religious information promise much to the prosperity of the rising generation, both in a civil and religious point of view. A great and happy improvement is visible since the close of the late war, which, in many places, by the confusion and calamities it introduced, had broken down the barriers of vice. Churches are crowded with listening hearers. Youth and children, instead of wandering in the fields, or loitering in the streets, are in many places thronging to the schools, with their books in their hands, and learning to read the book of God. One man, who has a large family of children, a few days since observed to me that, 'since sabbath schools began, he had had no trouble in the government of his family.' " On the Smyrna circuit, Delaware, there was an outpouring of the Spirit, which resulted in the conversion of many souls; one hundred and twenty were connected with our Church, forty of whom were colored people. Heretofore this revival the colored members of the Church had been much divided in spirit, by the efforts of the Allenites to form a party; but this good work had the happy effect of uniting them more closely together, and of cementing their union with the Church which had nursed them from their infancy. In Surry county, in Virginia, through the agency of camp meetings and other means of grace, about three hundred souls were brought to the knowledge of God by faith in Jesus Christ, and the general impression made on the public mind was most favorable to the cause of truth and love. In Lynchburg also, in this state, there were added to the Church upward of one hundred members, as the result of a revival in that place. At a camp meeting held in the Scioto district, Ohio, the work of God prevailed powerfully, and from thence spread in different directions through the country. This meeting, which was under the superintendence of the Rev. G. R. Jones, was attended by about sixty of the converted Indians of the Wyandots, among whom were several of the chiefs who had embraced Christianity. These spoke in a most feeling manner of the work of God in their own hearts, and among the people of their nation, while tears of grateful joy bespoke the interest which the congregation felt in their spiritual and eternal welfare. On the Northumberland district, under the charge of the Rev. H. Smith, by means of various camp meetings which were held in the several circuits, not less than two hundred souls were brought to God, while a conviction of the necessity of being reconciled to him through faith in his Son spread extensively among the people in that region of country. The Hudson river district, New York conference, through a similar agency, shared largely in the good work this year. The New Rochelle circuit, New York, was blessed with a great revival of religion, under the labors of the Rev. Elijah Woolsey and his colleagues. White Plains, Rye, Sawpit, and New Rochelle all shared in the benefits of this glorious work: and so earnest were many to attend the meetings, with a view to seek the salvation of their souls, that some came from ten to twelve miles, and many such returned rejoicing in God their Saviour. In consequence of this work, the net increase in this circuit among the whites was one hundred and nine.7 In Washington city, D. C., God poured out his Spirit in a remarkable manner, in answer to the prayers of his people. During this work, in little more than two months, one hundred and fifty-eight were received into the Church as probationers.

There was also a good work in the city of New York, about three hundred being added to the Church. This was encouraging to those who had mourned over the departure of so many two

years before.

I have before remarked, that during this period of our history we were called upon to sustain a new warfare to defend ourselves against the assaults of our opponents. Whether it was from jealousy of our rising prosperity, or from a real belief that our doctrines were dangerous to the souls of men, other denominations, more particularly the Calvinists, seemed to rally to the charge against our ministry, the economy of our Church, and our modes of carrying on the work of God. Hence a spirit of controversy was infused into the sermons which were delivered by our preachers, much more than formerly, the necessity for which was urged from witnessing new modes of attack. Indeed, a new system of divinity was rising into notice, differing in some respects from the Calvinism of former days, in which a universal atonement was recognized in connection with the doctrine of eternal and universal decrees, the force of which, however, it was attempted to avoid by inculcating the doctrine of a "natural ability and a moral inability." By the use of this subtle distinction, and the doctrine of universal atonement, keeping out of view the old doctrine of universal decrees, some were induced to believe that the difference between this new divinity and Methodism was but slight, and therefore they might, so far as these doctrines were concerned, embrace one as well as the other. Our preachers felt it to be their duty to unravel the sophistry of these arguments, by showing that, so long as that doctrine of universal decrees, which involved the notion of unconditional election and reprobation, was held fast, the two Systems were at variance, and could never be made to harmonize.

We were also frequently denounced as Arminians. And Arminians were represented as denying the doctrine of human depravity, of regeneration by the efficient grace of God, and the necessity of divine aid in working out and securing our eternal salvation. As this was a most unjust imputation, we felt called upon to make a full and fair statement of our doctrinal views, and to defend ourselves against such manifest perversions of our real, published, and acknowledged sentiments. In doing this, though there may have been occasional exhibitions of heat on both sides, and a controversial spirit indulged, in some instances, to too great an extent, yet truth was elicited, and our doctrines and usages became better understood, and more highly and generally appreciated by the community. With a view to secure a more commodious and permanent location for the Wesleyan seminary in the city of New York, a site was this year procured in Crosby Street, by leasing three lots of ground, on which the trustees erected a brick building, sixty-five feet in length and forty in breadth, the upper part of which was occupied as a place of worship. Here a male and female academy was kept until the premises were purchased by the agents of the Book Concern, in the year 1824, when another building was procured in Mott Street. The academy at the White Plains grew out of the one first commenced in the city of New York; and when the property of the latter was disposed of; after discharging the debts of the institution, the balance was given to the White Plains academy, which has continued to the present time.

Though the Wesleyan seminary did not fully answer the benevolent designs of its original founders, it is believed that its establishment gave an impulse to the cause of education which has gone on increasing in power and influence to the present day.

Thirty-seven preachers were this year located, twenty-four returned supernumerary, and seventy-one superannuated, and four had died, namely, Hamilton Jefferson, Edward Orem, William Early, and John Pitts, each of whom died in the full assurance of faith.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 252,645; Last Year: 239,087; Increase: 13,558 -- Colored This Year: 44,377; Last Year: 42,059; Increase: 2,318 -- Total This Year: 297,022; Last Year: 281,146 -- Increase: 15,8768 -- Preachers This Year: 1,106; Last Year: 977; Increase: 129.

It will be perceived that there was a more than usual increase to the number of traveling preachers, owing to a diminution in the number of locations, and a proportionate increase to the list of superannuated preachers. This was probably owing to the better provision which began to be made, in consequence of the regulations of the General Conference of 1816, for the support of the families of preachers, and the furnishing parsonages for their accommodation. This last remedy, however, was but partially provided as yet, though the work was happily begun, and has been gradually going forward to the present time.

1823 The work of God this year was steadily advancing within the bounds of the several annual conferences. Some of the circuits in the older parts of the work, in consequence of the increase of members and societies, were much contracted, and the number of stations was necessarily multiplied. In this manner the work was becoming more and more compact, pastoral labor more easily and punctually performed, and the local interests of each society more minutely attended to. Still, new circuits were formed in the frontier settlements, new missions opened, and some villages and neighborhoods not before occupied by our ministry, through the aid of the Missionary Society, were supplied with the word and ordinances of God. These I shall endeavor to notice, so far as authentic documents and other sources of information will enable me to do it correctly. The Missionary Society, having been recognized by the General Conference, was now considered as an integral part of the general plan of carrying on the work of God, and was becoming more and more identified with the other institutions of the Church. Its blessed results, also, which were seen and felt, more especially among the wandering savages of our country, entwined it around the affections of our people, and called forth their liberality for its support. The cause of missions was also much aided about this time by the eloquent appeals of the Rev. John Summerfield, a young minister who came over from Ireland and joined the New York conference in 1821. He had attracted much attention since his arrival among us by the sweet and melting strains of his pulpit oratory, and as he entered into the spirit of our Missionary Society with great zeal and energy, he contributed much to the diffusion of its benevolent principles among the people at large. While stationed in the city of New York, in 1822, where he drew vast multitudes to listen to the accents of redeeming love, which fell from his lips in the purest strains of gospel eloquence, he adopted the practice of delivering lectures to the children at stated times, at which he made collections to aid the Missionary Society. And the hearty and efficient manner in which he espoused this noble enterprise of the Young Men’s Missionary Society of New York to elect him as their president. His zeal in the cause of God, and the popularity of his talents for addressing public assemblies on anniversary occasions, induced so many applications from the benevolent and charitable societies for his services, to which he yielded with perhaps too great a readiness for his strength, that he found himself wearing out by the intensity of his labors. This induced him, by the advice of his physicians and friends, to make a voyage to France for the benefit of his health. While there he sent the following address to the society of which he was the president, and which, as a sample of the writer’s manner of communicating his thoughts, and an evidence of the ardor with which he entered into, this subject, I think worthy of preservation. It is as follows: -- "Marseilles, February 20, 1823

"My Dear Brethren: -- You are too well acquainted with the circumstances which prevent my filling the chair upon this pleasurable occasion, to require that I should dwell upon them; indeed, it would be irrelevant to those important objects which have assembled you together: not private sympathies, but the public good, will be your present theme; and in this I realize my full share of joy with you, for although in a far distant land, and that a land of strangers, my affections point to those 'whom I love in the truth,' and with whom I glory to be in any wise associated in carrying on the cause of our common Lord.

"Upon the occasion of an anniversary like yours, exhortation to renewed zeal might be deemed impertinent; the pulse of every heart beats too high on such an occasion to anticipate any decay in your future exertions. This is rather a of congratulation and rejoicing; and in commencing another year of labor and reward, I devoutly implore for you a continuance of that grace which has enabled you to remain 'steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.'

"In common with all who love the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, I rejoice at witnessing that increase of missionary zeal and missionary means which the past year lays open, not only in your auxiliary and its parent society, but among other denominations of the Christian church; in this 'you also joy and rejoice with me,' for 'whether Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, all are ours;' -- so that in whatever part of the vineyard the work is wrought, we view it not as the work of man, but as it is in truth, the work of God;' for 'neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth: it is God that giveth the increase.' We may collect from different funds, but we bring to the same exchequer; and have no greater joy than in the accumulation of the revenue of that relative glory of the divine character which redounds from the salvation of men, 'through Christ Jesus, unto the glory and praise of God the Father.'

"But, abstracted from general views of the mighty work of missions, I regard the branch to which you are attached with peculiar pleasure on this occasion. You know that, from the beginning of our existence in the religious world, Methodism has always been a 'history of missions;' its venerable founder, considering that this was the first character of the Christian church, and believing it would be the last, even at that day when 'many shall run to and fro, and knowledge be increased,' wisely instituted a ministry which should be a standing monument of what God could do by this means. 'And what has God wrought? Some there are, whom the frost of many winters has not chilled to death, to whom our father's words may still be spoken, 'Saw ye not the cloud arise? Little as a human hand'

"Its present state we ourselves have lived to see:

'Now it spreads along the skies -- Hangs o'er all the thirsty land! When he first the work begun, Small and feeble was his day; Now the word doth swiftly run, Now it wins its widening way! More and more it spreads and grows; Ever mighty to prevail, Sin's strong holds it now o'erthrows, Shakes the trembling gates of hell!'

"Indeed, there are seasons wherein the overwhelming influence of these reflections so rests upon the mind, that unless we heard the warning voice, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?' we should stand at the base of this mighty structure, and wholly spend our time for naught, in admiring the symmetry and proportion of all its parts, beholding 'what manner of stones and buildings are here!' But, thus warned, we too 'arise and build.' Thus 'instead of the fathers are the children, and the

children’s children shall yet add thereto, till the topstone be raised, shouting, Grace, grace unto it!’

"My dear brethren, if there is a scene within the universe of God calculated to lift our minds to heaven; if there is a scene calculated to bring down the heavenly host to earth, it is that which portrays in anticipation the final triumph of the ’gospel of the grace of God.’ Yes, the gospel must ultimately and universally triumph! Well may we exclaim, What an object is this! It is the fairest scene that the pencil of heaven, dipped in the colors of its own rainbow, can delineate; and even the great voice issuing from the eternal throne can utter nothing more exhilarating and sublime than the consummation of this event, ’Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men!’ Yes, my brethren, ’Jesus shall reign where’er the sun Does his successive courses run.’

"The glow which pervaded the apostle’s mighty mind did not cause his pen to aberrate; the spirit of inspiration sat upon him when he declared that Jesus ’must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.’ That day will come! Do we expect to swell the number who shall grace his triumph? Do we burn with seraphic ardor to be among his train ’when he shall be revealed from heaven with power and great glory?’ Then ’gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ!’ Wherefore ’comfort one another with these words,’ for truly ’it is with the same comfort wherewith I myself am comforted of God.’

"You, my dear brethren of this auxiliary, who are the managers of its concerns, I hail. I am also one of you. ’I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you.’ Early separated from the world, and ardently employed in seeking the interests of ’a better country, that is, a heavenly, God is not ashamed to be called your God, for he has prepared for you a city.’ ’Walk therefore by the same rule, mind the same thing.’ ’Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.’ ’Set your affections on things above, and not on things upon the earth.’ Soon you shall hear it sounded, ’Because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee’ ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!’

"The friends and subscribers of this auxiliary are entitled to your thanks; they have merited them will; by means of the numerous little streams which have been directed to our reservoir by the friends of missions, our ’water-pots,’ if not always full, have never become dry. On this occasion, however, you look to have them ’filled even to the brim;’ and may He who can convert our base material to subserve his glorious purpose of saving men, ’draw forth’ therefrom that ’wine of the kingdom which cheers the heart of God and man.’

"I remain, my dear brethren, your fellow-laborer and servant, J. SUMMERFIELD." A mission was commenced this year among the Pottawatamy Indians, a small tribe settled in the neighborhood of Fort Clark, on the Fox river, in the state of Illinois, and the Rev. Jesse Walker was appointed to prosecute its objects. But though he succeeded, after much toil and expense, in establishing a school and conciliating the friendship of some of the adult Indians, yet the missionary was compelled, after seven years of hard labor, to abandon the enterprise as hopeless. Their strong attachments to savage life, and incurable suspicions of white men, together with their final determination to remove west, frustrated the benevolent attempts to introduce the gospel and the arts of civilized life among them. A fragment of the Wyandot tribe of Indians was settled in Upper Canada, on the banks of the river Carnard. These were first visited by Mr. Finley, and were afterward transferred to the care of Mr. Case, to whom the superintendence of all the aboriginal

missions in that province was committed. About twenty of these Indians embraced the Christian faith, and became members of our Church. In the bounds of the Tennessee conference there was a missionary district formed, embracing that part of Jackson's Purchase that lies in the states of Tennessee and Kentucky, which was committed to the charge of the Rev. Lewis Garrett. This was a new country, rapidly filling up with inhabitants, and there were no less than nine preachers appointed to supply them with the means of salvation. As before remarked, Mr. Garrett was first appointed a missionary to this region of country, which contained not less than ten thousand square miles, in 1820, and he succeeded in forming a four weeks' circuit, in which he was assisted, by the appointment of the presiding elder, by Andrew J. Crawford. And so successful had they been in 1821, that in 1822 there were returned on the Minutes of the conference one hundred and fifty-five members, thirteen of whom were colored people. The inhabitants generally received the messengers of the gospel with joyful hearts, opening their doors and making them welcome, and also contributing, according to their scanty means, for their support, for as yet the Missionary Society was able to appropriate but little for the furtherance of domestic missions.

These men of God, though they had to contend with poverty, bad roads, and to preach in log huts, or under the foliage of the native trees, penetrated into every part of the country where settlements had been formed, and succeeded in establishing several circuits, in which they returned for the Minutes of 1823 one thousand one hundred and twenty-six members, one hundred and one of whom were colored, chiefly slaves. This year the gospel was more extensively introduced into the territory of Michigan, which was erected into an independent state and received into the Union in the year 1836. This country was originally settled by the French, who sent Catholic missionaries there as early as 1648, and the city of Detroit was founded in 1670, by a few French families. Its growth was slow, but the people gradually enlarged their borders on each side of the Detroit river, a strait about twenty-four miles in length, which connects Lakes St. Clair and Erie. In 1763 this country, together with Upper Canada, passed, by the right of conquest, from the French into the hands of the British, and so remained until the war of the revolution separated it from the British empire and connected it with the United States. After this, emigrants from different parts of the Union began to mingle with the original settlers. When this country was first visited by a Methodist missionary, in 1804, it was in a deplorable state as to religion and morals.9 In Detroit there was no preaching except by the French Catholics, and their influence in favor of the pure morality of the gospel was extremely feeble. The few Protestant emigrants who had settled in Detroit and some of the adjoining places were entirely destitute of a ministry of their own order, and were fast assimilating into the customs and habits of those with whom they associated. And though repeated efforts had been made, from time to time, to establish Methodism in Detroit, they must have been attended with but little success, for we find no members returned on the Minutes of conference for that place until the year 1822, and then the number was only twenty. This year, 1823, the Rev. Alfred Brunson was stationed on the Detroit circuit, which stretched through the country for four hundred miles. This he and his colleague, the Rev. Samuel Baker, surrounded each once in four weeks, giving the people a sermon every two weeks; and their labors were so far blessed, that in 1824 the number of Church members had increased to one hundred and sixty-one. This year a small society was formed at St. Mary's. This was a military post belonging to the United States, situated on the strait by that name, about eighty miles in length, and which connects Lakes Superior and Huron, and is about four hundred miles in a northerly direction from Detroit. The most of this distance, at that time, was a wilderness, infested with beasts of prey, and

dotted with here and there an Indian village. It was at this place that a few pious soldiers, who had been converted at Sackett's Harbor, were removed, and, being almost destitute of every religions privilege, formed themselves into a class, chose a leader, and met together for mutual edification and comfort, holding their meetings in the woods until the barracks were erected, when they were allowed the use of the hospital. They were much assisted by the good countenance of Lieutenant Becker, a pious member of the Presbyterian Church, to whom they were attracted by a congeniality of feeling, and they were mutually refreshed and strengthened in their social meetings. In the course of the winter their number increased to about fourteen, which much encouraged them to persevere in their work of faith and labor of love. This state of things in that part of the country induced Mr. Brunson to call loudly for help, and this led to the establishment of St. Mary's mission a short time after. The territory of Florida had recently been ceded to the United States, as an indemnity for the spoliations committed upon our commerce by Spanish cruisers; and as it is the policy of the Methodist Episcopal Church to enter every open door for the spread of the gospel, a missionary, the Rev. Joshua N. Glenn, was sent this year to St. Augustine, the oldest town in North America, and capital of East Florida. Most of the inhabitants of this place and the surrounding country are of Spanish descent, and members of the Roman Catholic Church. There were, however, a few Anglo-Americans settled among the Creoles, to whom our missionary addressed himself in the name of the Lord, and he succeeded in raising a society of fifty-two members, forty of whom were people of color. This, however, has been a barren place for the growth of Methodism; for even now, 1840,) after continued efforts of seventeen years, St. Augustine is scarcely represented among our stations. This, however, is owing to other causes than the want of a disposition on the part of the people to receive the gospel. The late Indian warfare has exerted a most destructive influence upon the religious state of the population through all that region of country, and more particularly upon the citizens of St. Augustine, the chief rendezvous of hostile armies.

Chatahoochee, in the bounds of the Florida territory, was also selected as missionary ground, and its cultivation was committed to Messrs. John J. Triggs and John Slade. They entered upon their work with zeal and perseverance; and notwithstanding the newness of the country, and the scattered state of the population, there were returned on the Minutes for 1824, as the fruit of their labor, three hundred and fifty-six members, sixty-four of whom were colored people. The Rev. Alexander Talley was appointed a missionary this year to Pensacola, Mobile, and Blakely. Though no immediate fruit of his labor in these places was seen, yet he opened the way for the introduction of the gospel into that region of country, which has since flourished under the labors of those who succeeded him in his work.

St. Mary's, situated near the mouth of St. Mary's river, in the state of Georgia, near the frontier of Florida, was visited this year with a revival of the work of God, under the ministry of the Rev. Elijah Sinclair. Though there had been in this place once a flourishing society, it had become scattered abroad, so that when Mr. Sinclair arrived there, in 1822, he could scarcely find a "place for the sole of his foot;" but he soon obtained favor in the eyes of the people, and God so blessed his faithful labors, that in 1823 there were returned forty-one members of the Church; and the good work has gradually increased from that time to this.

Cumberland mission, in Kentucky, was commenced this year by the Rev. William Chambers. He so far succeeded in his efforts as to return two hundred and sixty-one members, two hundred and

fifty-one whites and ten colored, in 1824. In 1821 Methodism was introduced into the town of St. Louis, by the Rev. Jesse Walker, who went there as a missionary under the direction of the Missouri conference. St. Louis is the largest town on the west bank of the Mississippi river, and second to New Orleans in importance as a place for commercial pursuits. Its original settlers were French Roman Catholics, this being another in the range of settlements which they established along the course of the waters from Quebec to New Orleans. It had been, for some time before this, rising in importance, and increasing in its population by emigrations from different parts of the United States and from the old world, and was considered the center of commerce in that part of the country. In this mixed population the missionary had some prejudices to encounter, and the more so on account of the indiscreet conduct of some who had represented the citizens of that place to the eastern churches as being but little removed from barbarians. Mr. Walker, however, was kindly received by a few, and he gradually gained the confidence of the community, raised a society of about one hundred members, and succeeded in building a house of worship thirty-five feet in length and twenty-five in width. The Rev. Alexander McAlister, in giving an account of this work, adverts to the Missionary Society in the following words: --

"It is yet in its infancy, but its growing importance portends greater good to mankind than any institution of the kind hitherto known. I am induced to believe that there will be both numerous and liberal contributions to support the institution, since the money so raised is to be deposited in the hands of men who will, no doubt, distribute it with an economical hand for the support of those missionaries whose zeal is not a transient blaze, but a constant flame, consuming vice and iniquity before it, and with a gentle hand leading the penitent sons and daughters of men up to the throne of grace, where they may obtain the mercy and salvation of God."

Mr. Walker was reappointed to St. Louis in 1822, at the end of which year there were returned, including the station and circuit, one hundred and sixty-six white and forty colored members of the Church. He was succeeded this year by the Rev. William Beauchamp, whose labors were acceptable and useful, and the cause has gradually gone forward from that time to this. The aboriginal missions, which had been begun under such favorable auspices, and which promised so much good to the wandering tribes of our wildernesses, continued to prosper this year more than ever. These, together with the exertions which were made in their behalf, tended powerfully to awaken a deep and lively interest through the ranks of our Israel in favor of prosecuting the cause with increasing zeal and energy. The Wyandot mission, which had been committed to the care of Mr. Finley, was this year visited by Bishop McKendree, who entered most heartily into the cause of missions, contributing to its support, and giving, by his example, an impetus to the work in every direction. And as his testimony is that of an eye-witness, capable of estimating the nature and importance of the reformation which had been effected among these people, the reader will be pleased to read it in the bishop’s own words. It is as follows:

"On Saturday, the 21st of June, about ten o’clock in the morning, we arrived safe, and found the mission family and the school all in good health; but was much fatigued myself, through affliction and warm weather, which was quite oppressive to me in crossing over the celebrated Sandusky Plains, through which the road lies.

"In the afternoon we commenced visiting the schools, and repeated our visits frequently during the five days which we stayed with them. These visits were highly gratifying to us, and they afforded

us an opportunity of observing the behavior of the children, both in and out of school, their improvement in learning, and the whole order and management of the school; together with the proficiency of the boys in agriculture, and of the girls in the various domestic arts. They are sewing and spinning handsomely, and would be weaving if they had looms. The children are cleanly, chaste in their manners, kind to each other, peaceable and friendly to all. They promptly obey orders, and do their work cheerfully, without any objection or murmur. They are regular in their attendance on family devotion and the public worship of God, and sing delightfully. Their proficiency in learning was gratifying to us, and is well spoken of by visitors. If they do not sufficiently understand what they read it is for the want of suitable books, especially a translation of English words, lessons, hymns, &c., into their own tongue.

"But the change which has been wrought among the adult Indians is wonderful! This people, 'that walked in darkness, have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.' And they have been 'called from darkness into the marvelous light' of the gospel. To estimate correctly the conversion of these Indians from heathenish darkness, it should be remembered that the Friends (or Quakers) were the first to prepare them in some degree for the introduction of the gospel, by patiently continuing to counsel them, and to afford them pecuniary aid.

"The first successful missionary that appeared among them was Mr. Steward, a colored man, and a member of our Church. The state of these Indians is thus described by him, in a letter to a friend, dated in June last:"

" 'The situation of the Wyandot nation of Indians when I first arrived among them, near six years ago, may be judged of from their manner of living. Some of their houses were made of small poles, and covered with bark; others of bark altogether. Their farms contained from about two acres to less than half an acre. The women did nearly all the work that was done. They had as many as two plows in the nation, but these were seldom used. In a word, they were really in a savage state.'

"But now they are building hewed log houses, with brick chimneys, cultivating their lands, and successfully adopting the various agricultural arts. They now manifest a relish for, and begin to enjoy the benefits of civilization; and it is probable that some of them will this year raise an ample support for their families, from the produce of their farms.

"There are more than two hundred of them who have renounced heathenism and embraced the Christian religion, giving unequivocal evidence of their sincerity, of the reality of a divine change. Our missionaries have taken them under their pastoral care as probationers for membership in our Church, and are engaged in instructing them in the doctrine and duties of our holy religion, though the various duties of the missionaries prevent them from devoting sufficient time for the instruction of these inquirers after truth. But the Lord hath mercifully provided helpers, in the conversion of several of The interpreters and a majority of the chiefs of the nation. The interpreters, feeling themselves the force of divine truth, and entering more readily into the plan of the gospel, are much more efficient organs for communicating instruction to the Indians. Some of these chiefs are men of sound judgment, and strong, penetrating minds; and having been more particularly instructed, have made great proficiency in the knowledge of God and of divine truths; and being very zealous, they render important assistance in the good work. The regularity of conduct, the solemnity and devotion of this people, in time of divine service, of which I witnessed a pleasing

example, is rarely exceeded in our own worshipping assemblies.

"To the labors and influence of these great men, the chiefs, may also in some degree be attributed the good conduct of the children in school. Three of the chiefs officiate in the school as a committee to preserve good order and obedience among the children. I am told that Between-the-logs, the principal speaker, has lectured the school children in a very able and impressive manner, on the design and benefit of the school, attention to their studies, and obedience to their teachers. This excellent man is also a very zealous and a useful preacher of righteousness. He has, in conjunction with others of the tribe, lately visited a neighboring nation, and met with encouragement.

"On the third day after our arrival we dined with Between-the-logs and about twenty of their principal men, six of whom were chiefs and three interpreters, and were very agreeably and comfortably entertained. After dinner we were all comfortably seated, a few of us on benches, the rest on the grass, under a pleasant grove of shady oaks, and spent about two hours in council. I requested them to give us their views of the state of the school; to inform us, without reserve, of any objections they might have to the order and management thereof, and to suggest any alteration they might wish. I also desired to know how their nation liked our religion, and how those who had embraced it were prospering.

"Their reply was appropriate, impressive, and dignified, embracing distinctly every particular inquiry, and in the order they were proposed to them. The substance of their reply was, that they thought the school was in a good state and very prosperous; were perfectly satisfied with its order and management, pleased with the superintendent and teachers, and gratified with the improvement of the children. It was their anxious wish for its permanence and success. They gave a pleasing account of those who had embraced religion, as to their moral conduct and inoffensive behavior, and attention to their religious duties. They heartily approved of the religion they had embraced, and were highly pleased with the great and effectual reformation which had taken place among them.

"In the close they expressed the high obligations they were under to all their kind friends and benefactors, and in a very respectful and feeling manner thanked their visitors, and the superintendent and teachers, for their kind attention to themselves and to their children; and concluded with a devout wish for the prosperity and eternal happiness of them and all their kind friends. It was an affecting scene, and tears bespoke their sincerity.

"To this school there are Indian children sent from Canada. Others which were lately sent were detained and taken into another school, at the rapids of Maumee, under the direction of the Presbyterians. An apology was written by the superintendent thereof to ours, stating that the detention was made on the presumption that our school was full, &c.

"When we reflect upon the state of the Wyandots, compared with their former savage condition, we may surely exclaim, 'What hath God wrought!' 'The parched ground hath become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; the wilderness and the solitary place is made glad, and the desert blossoms as the rose.' The marks of a genuine work of grace among these sons of the forest accord so perfectly with the history of the great revivals of religion in all ages of the Church, that no doubt remains of its being the work of God.

"That a great and effectual door is opened on our frontier for the preaching of the gospel to the Indian nations which border thereon, and that we are providentially called to the work, I have no doubt. The only question is, Are we prepared to obey the call? The success of our missionary labors does not depend on the interference of miraculous power, as in the case of the apostles, but on the ordinary operations and influences of the Holy Spirit, through the instrumentality of a gospel ministry, supported by the liberality of a generous people.

"We have lately received an invitation from a distinguished officer of the government to extend our missionary labors to a distant nation of Indians. A gentleman of this state who has visited New Orleans has taken a deep interest in its favor; and from the great increase of population from other states, and the great probability of doing good at least among them, he urges another attempt. And from his influence, his ability, and disposition to minister to its support, we entertain a hope of success.

"From a general view of our missions, and of what the Lord is doing by us, we certainly have abundant cause to 'thank God and take courage,' and to persevere faithfully and diligently in the great work, looking to the great Head of the Church, that he may bless our labors and crown them with success.

"Yours in the bonds of the gospel of peace." Nor is the following account less interesting and illustrative of the power of gospel truth. It is from the pen of the Rev. G. R. Jones, who was present and witnessed the ceremony which he describes in the following words: --

"At our late Ohio annual conference, held in Urbana, there were several of the red, and one or two of the colored brethren present, from the Wyandot mission at Upper San dusky. Several interviews took place between our general superintendents and them, during the sitting of the conference, at Bishop McKendree's room, at one of which I was present part of the time.

"A few friends were invited to be present at this interview. As breaking bread together has been a token of hospitality and friendship among most nations, a cup of tea was prepared by the family, and at a suitable time they were waited on with it. Bishop McKendree, without any previous arrangement or design, appears to have been made a kind of master of ceremonies -- he was waited on first. The sagacity of the red brethren was quite observable; they kept their eye on him, and conformed in every particular. Jonathan, a man of color, (who has served the mission from the beginning as an interpreter, and who, while engaged in this work, became convinced of sin, and happily converted to God,) was one of the company; he modestly declined partaking with them, but, being pressingly solicited by Bishop McKendree, yielded. After the repast was over, the red brethren joined in singing several hymns in their own tongue, during which a number in the house within hearing crowded into the room, until there might have been as many as forty present; Mononcue (a chief) rose, and, approaching Bishop McKendree respectfully, held out the hand of friendship, which was cordially received, and a warm embrace took place; this appears to have taken off all restraint. Between-the-logs (another chief) followed his example, and they proceeded round to all in the room, while sighs and tears witnessed the feelings of most who were present; but they were sighs of gratitude and astonishment, and tears of joy. The spirit of hostile foes in the field of battle was lost in the spirit of harmony and Christian love, which appeared to fill the room. I have witnessed few scenes which carried stronger conviction to my heart of the truth and excellence of the religion of the meek and humble Jesus. I was ready to cry out and say, 'What

hath the Lord wrought!'

"A worthy gentleman, high in office and respectability, had received an invitation, and was present at the interview. It seems he had imbibed an opinion, which is perhaps prevalent among politicians, that it is impracticable to Christianize the aborigines of our country. He was placed in a part of the room farthest from the door. When the chiefs approached him all his unbelief appears to have, given way, his arms were open to give the friendly embrace, while the flowing tear bore witness to a reciprocity of feeling. He was heard to exclaim, a day or two afterward, 'I am fully converted!' At the close of the singing by the red brethren Bishop Roberts made a few appropriate remarks, and we all joined him in singing, at the close of which, from the fulness of his heart, he offered up a fervent prayer. We again joined in singing, and one of the chiefs, (Between-the-logs,) being called on, prayed in a very feeling manner, while every heart appeared to respond the hearty amen! The meeting was then drawn to a close." The mission now contained one hundred and fifty four members of the Church and sixty scholars, who were taught letters and the duties of domestic life. This year Mr. Finley, in company with some of the converted chiefs and an interpreter, set off on a visit to the Chippeways, on the Saganaw river, with a view, if practicable, to establish a mission among them. They at length arrived at the Wyandot reservation, on the Huron river, where they were cordially received and entertained by a white man called Honnes, who had lived with the Indians for many years, having been taken a prisoner when quite a lad. He was now supposed to be not less than one hundred years of age, could remember nothing of his parentage, nor of his days previous to his captivity, only that he was called Honnes. He was now much crippled and nearly blind, but was very intelligent and communicative. He sat upon a deer-skin, and, through an interpreter -- for he had lost all knowledge of his vernacular language -- he addressed our missionaries in the following manner "My children, you are welcome to my cabin; and I now thank the Great Spirit that he has provided a way for us to meet together in this world. I thank him for all his mercies to me. He has fed me all my life. He has saved me in the field of blood, and has lifted up my head when I have been sick, and, like a kind father, has protected and provided for me." These affecting remarks from this patriarch of the woods were listened to with great attention and respect, being interrupted now and then, by those Indians who were present, by the expression, "tough," which signifies, all true, and then the pipe of peace was lighted, passed around the company, and returned to the aged sire. This ceremony being ended, Mr. Finley informed him that, having often heard of him, he had come some distance out of his way to see him, and then proceeded to explain to him the gospel of Jesus Christ. The tears which coursed down his withered cheeks, while he listened with solemn attention to the words of truth, bespoke the deep feeling of his heart, and the lively interest which he took in the subject. The discourse being closed, he took Mr. Finley by the hand, and, calling for blessings on him and his associates, said, "I have been praying for many years that God might send some light to this nation."

After hearing, the next day, some historical anecdotes of the Wyandots from this aged man, who had been for so many years shut out from civilized life and immured in the dungeon of heathenism, Mr. Finley bade him an affectionate adieu, and continued his journey in search of other lost sheep of the house of Israel. These men of the woods, however, were not forgotten by the Christian missionaries, but were sought out and provided with the means of salvation, the benefits of which some of them received. Of the destiny of Honnes, whose simple story is so affecting, I have not been informed, but trust the God of all the families of the earth did not forget

him in his lonely retreat, nor refuse his prayers for more light to the nation. who had adopted him as a brother. He seemed, indeed, like the Nestor of his tribe, and to be preserved to this good old age to welcome the harbingers of peace and good-will to the borders of his land and nation. For that abandoned class of females who have been seduced from the paths of virtue by the wiles of the other sex, many efforts had been made by the pious and benevolent in the city of New York, as well as in other places where this destructive vice had become so predominant, but without any permanent effect. It seems, indeed, that among all the vices which infect mankind, this, when its corrupting sway has been once permitted to gain an ascendency, is the most inveterate, and of course the most difficult to eradicate. Not, however, entirely despairing of success in attempting to effect a reformation even among these unhappy subjects of seduction, a mission was undertaken this year for their special benefit, and the Rev. Samuel D. Ferguson was appointed to its charge. Though he labored indefatigably, in conjunction with some local preachers and exhorters who volunteered their services to aid him, and some good impressions were made upon a few, yet they were soon effaced, and they were compelled, after using every exertion to accomplish their object, to abandon their enterprise in despair; and though subsequent efforts have been more successful in a few instances in which reformations have been effected, it would seem that more powerful means must be resorted to before this soul-destroying vice can be banished from the community. In consequence of this failure in the primary object of the mission, the missionary, in the latter part of the year, turned his attention to some destitute portions in the west sections of Long Island, where he was more successful. Here he formed a regular circuit, and raised two classes of fifty-two members, which have continued to flourish, less or more, to the present time. As it was one object of our missionary societies to supply destitute places in the older settlements where the people were either unwilling or unable to support the institutions of religion, some such were either partially assisted from their funds or wholly supported for a season, as the case might be. Among others may be mentioned, as showing the good effects of this policy, the town of New Brunswick, in the state of New Jersey. This, though an old settled place, had been a barren soil for Methodism. Our preachers had long preached there occasionally to a feeble few, but under great discouragements. In 1821 the Rev. Charles Pittman was sent there as a missionary, under the patronage of the Philadelphia Conference Missionary Society, and again in 1822. He met with much opposition, owing to the deep-rooted prejudices cherished against the peculiarities of Methodism. His congregation was small, not amounting to more than thirty for some weeks during the first year of his ministry. He and the little flock, however, persevered in the strength of faith and prayer until a revival of religion commenced, which terminated in the conversion of quite number of souls, so that in the month of February of this year they numbered about one hundred communicants. From that time the work has steadily advanced, and we have now a flourishing society and a commodious house of worship in that place. In many other places, too numerous to mention, the work of God prevailed in the older circuits and stations. On the New Bedford circuit, Mass., where a good work had been progressing for some time, in the month of August of this year it had extended for twenty miles, so that an entire new circuit had been formed, large enough to employ three preachers. The camp meetings continued to be held with profit to the souls of the people. At one held in the Ogeechee district, in the state of Georgia, not less than one hundred white and upward of forty colored people were made partakers of the grace of life. At one held in the same place last year a work of God commenced among the students of Tabernacle Academy, a literary institution under our care, and the reformation was advancing among the students this

year most encouragingly. At five camp meetings held in the Baltimore district for this year the Lord poured out his Spirit, and about one hundred and twenty, white and colored, professed to find the pearl of great price, among whom were two females, one eighty and the other sixty years of age. The latter was a Quakeress, whose charming simplicity of manners and conversation, after her conversion, reminded one of the primitive days of Christianity. Such evidences of the power of grace were not unlike the Pentecostal showers of divine mercy, and they tended mightily to strengthen the faith of God's people, and to baffle the speculations of an infidel philosophy.

We have already seen that the cause of education began to engage the attention of some of the annual conferences, and that two academies had been put in operation. This year I find on the Minutes of the Kentucky conference that John P. Finley was appointed to the charge of Augusta College, though I believe the college edifice was not erected until 1825. Our brethren, therefore, west of the mountains have the honor of founding the first college in the United States under the patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and I am happy to say that this institution has gone on prospering, though sometimes depressed from pecuniary embarrassments, shedding on that region of country the blessings of science and religion, greatly to the joy of its friends and patrons.

Forty-four preachers were located, forty-seven returned supernumerary, and fifty-nine superannuated, and nine had died during the past year. These were, Philip Kennerly, Walter Griffith, John Dix, Samuel Davis, William Wright, William Ross, Alonson Gord, James Griggs Peal, and William Penn Chandler. A strong testimony is given in favor of these devoted men of God, that in their last days they maintained their integrity, triumphing in the hour of dissolution, and died in hope of the glory of God.

Dr. Chandler10 was appointed the presiding elder on the Delaware district in 1801, about the time the camp meetings were introduced into that part of the country, and his talents were peculiarly adapted to promote their objects. His zeal in the cause of Christ was ardent, and his talents as a preacher were more than ordinary, and often the most astonishing effects were produced under his powerful appeals to the consciences of his hearers. In consequence of his devotion to the cause, and the character of his talents, he exerted a commanding influence upon his district, winning the affections and inspiring the confidence of the people committed to his charge. The ardency of his zeal and intensity of his labors so exhausted his physical strength that in 1808 he was returned superannuated. In 1813 he received a location; but his warm attachments to his brethren in the traveling ministry led him back to the Philadelphia conference in May, 1822, where he remained in the relation of a superannuated preacher until his death.

While preaching the gospel of the Son of God in the Ebenezer church, in the city of Philadelphia, on the first sabbath of May, 1820, he was suddenly prostrated by a paralytic stroke in his left side. Though he partially recovered from this, yet while at the island of St. Eustatia, whither he had gone for the benefit of his health, a second stroke deprived him of the use of his right side also, which took from him and his friends all hope of his recovery. He returned home, however, and lingered for about twelve weeks, when he exchanged a world of labor and suffering for a world of rest and reward. His expressions upon his death-bed were no less consolatory to his friends than they were satisfactory to himself. On being told by a friend that it was Sunday, he replied, "Go then to the meeting, and tell them that I am dying, shouting the praises of God!" Then, turning to his wife, he said, "My dear Mary, open the window, and let me proclaim to the people in the streets the

goodness of God!" The following testimony is from an affectionate brother, a physician, who attended him much in his last sickness:

"I visited Dr. Chandler daily during his last illness, which was of long continuance. His disease was an almost universal paralysis. The attack had at first been confined to one side, and after a partial recovery only of that side, the other became affected in like manner with the first. His mind as well as his body felt the effects of the disease, which at times caused a considerable derangement of intellect: but notwithstanding the confusion that was apparent in his mental operations, his constant theme was his God and the salvation of his soul; and on these subjects it was truly surprising to hear him converse. Although Dr. Chandler seemed incapable of rational reflection on other subjects, yet on that of religion, at intervals; he never conversed with more fluency, correctness, and feeling at any period of his life. He appeared to be exceedingly jealous of himself; and occasionally laboring under fear lest he might have deceived himself; and that he should finally become a cast-away; but of these apprehensions he was generally relieved whenever we approached a throne of grace, which we were in the habit of doing on almost every visit. In this state he remained until within a few days of his death, when the Lord was graciously pleased, in a most extraordinary manner, to pour out his Spirit upon his servant; and although his body was fast sinking, his mind, for two days, was restored to perfect vigor and correctness. During this time he seemed to be in the borders of the heavenly inheritance. He spoke of the glories, the joys, and the inhabitants of heaven as though he had been in the midst of them. He remarked to me, at the time, that he felt that his soul had begun to dissolve its connection with the body; and that there was a freedom, a clearness, and ease in its views and operations that was entirely new to him, and that he had never before formed a conception of -- ' in fact,' said he, 'I know not whether I am in the body or out of it.' Soon after this he sunk into a stupor, in which he remained to the last. On the sabbath following his funeral sermon was preached, by the author of these lines, to a large and deeply affected congregation, from these fine words of the apostle: 'But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, Concerning them that are asleep, and that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope.' " The account of his death concludes in the following words: --

"As a Christian, and as a Christian minister, W. P. Chandler was a man of no ordinary grade. In his deportment, dignity and humility, fervor and gentleness, plainness and brotherly kindness, with uniform piety, were strikingly exemplified. In the pulpit his soul was in his eloquence, his Saviour was his theme, and the divine unction that rested upon him, and the evangelical energy of his sermons, gave a success to his labors that has been exceeded by few. He studied to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth: and how good a proficient be was in this study, thousands who were blessed under his ministry can heartily testify, many of whom are living witnesses of the happy effects of his labors, while he is now reaping his eternal reward."

Among others who departed to another world this year was John Steward, who first carried the gospel to the Wyandot Indians. Of his early life we have seen something in our account of the Wyandot mission. He seems to have been peculiarly fitted for his work. Sincere, simple-hearted, much devoted to the cause in which he had engaged, he adapted himself with a ready and willing mind to the condition and circumstances of those people, won their confidence and affection by his honest simplicity, and, by the blessing of God on his exertions, conducted them away from the absurdities of heathenism by the charms of gospel truth and love. His entire devotion to the

interests of the mission, his intense application to meet its spiritual wants, and the privations to which he was subjected in his early residence among them, so wore upon his constitution, that in the course of this year it became manifest that his health was fast declining, and that the days of his pilgrimage were near their end. When so exhausted in his physical powers as to be unable to labor for his support, his temporal wants were provided for by his friends, about fifty acres of land, on which was built a cabin for his accommodation, being secured to him in fee-simple. Here he lived the remainder of his days, and on his demise the property was inherited by his brother. In this place, loved and honored by those who had been benefited by his evangelical labors, he lingered along the shores of mortality until December the 17th, 1823, when he fell asleep in Jesus, in the thirty-seventh year of his age, and the seventh of his labors in the missionary field. On his death-bed he gave the most consoling evidence of his faith in Christ and hope of immortality, exhorting his affectionate wife to faithfulness to her Lord and Master, and testifying with his latest breath to the goodness of God. In the contemplation of such a man, we cannot but admire the wisdom of God in the selection of means to accomplish his designs of mercy toward the outcasts of men. Born in humble life, destitute of the advantages of education, unauthorized and unprotected by any body of Christians when he first entered upon his enterprise, influenced solely by the impulses of his own mind, produced, as he believed, and as the event proved, by the dictates of the Holy Spirit, Steward sets off on an errand of mercy to the meandering savages of the wilderness. Here he arrives, a stranger among a strange people; and opens his mission by a simple narration of the experience of divine grace upon his heart, and of the motives which prompted him to forsake home and kindred, and devote himself to their spiritual interests, Having gained their attention, he explains to them, in the simplest language of truth, the fundamental doctrines of Jesus Christ, contrasting them with the absurdities of heathenism and the inummeries of a corrupted form of Christianity.11 No sooner does the word take effect, than a violent opposition arises against this humble and unpretending servant of Jesus Christ, which he meets with Christian courage, and bears with the fortitude of a well-trained soldier of the cross. By the strength of God resting upon him, he manfully buffets the storms of persecution which raged around him, and calmly guides his little bark over the threatening billows until it is conducted into a harbor of peace and safety. Seeking for the wisdom that cometh from above, he is enabled to unravel the sophistry of error, to refute the calumnies of falsehood, to silence the cavilings of captious witlings, and to establish firmly the truth as it is in Jesus. Did not God "choose the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty?" Who does not look on with a trembling anxiety for the result, while the umpire was deliberating upon his fate, at that memorable time when he submitted his Bible and Hymn Book to the inspection of Mr. Walker, that he might determine whether or not they were genuine! And who can forbear participating in the general shout of exultation when the momentous question was decided in his favor! During these anxious moments the heart of Steward must have beat high amidst hopes and fears, while the fate of his mission apparently hung poised upon the decision of a question which involved the dearest interests of the nation for whose welfare he had risked his all! But the God whom he served pleaded his cause, silenced the clamor of his enemies, disappointed the machinations of the wicked, and gave a signal triumph to the virtues of honesty, simplicity, and godly sincerity.12 In this triumph was fulfilled the inspired and inspiring declaration, "One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight." In all the subsequent conduct of Steward we behold a combination of those excellences which the Spirit of God alone can engraft and nourish in the

human heart. "The excellency of the power," therefore, which was conspicuous in the life and conduct of Steward, reflected the rays of Him who had most evidently made him "a chosen vessel to bear his name unto the Gentiles" in the American wilds. Humble and unpretending as he was, his name will ever be associated with those men of God who had the high honor of first carrying the light of divine truth to the darkened tribes of our forests. And this record is made as a just tribute of respect to the memory of one whom God delighted to honor as the evangelical pioneer to the Methodist Episcopal Church in her career of usefulness among the long neglected children of our own wide domain.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 267,618; Last Year: 252,645; Increase: 14,973 -- Colored This Year: 44,922; Last Year: 44,377; Increase: 545 -- Total This Year: 312,540; Last Year: 297,022 -- Increase: 15,51813 -- Preachers This Year: 1,226; Last Year: 1,106; Increase: 120.

ENDNOTES

1 May we not perceive in this system of aboriginal theology a semblance of the Scriptural account of a good and evil spirit, of holy and unholy angels? And have they not received it by tradition, obscured from one generation to another, until it has degenerated into these absurd notions of supreme and subordinate deities, who preside over their destinies?

2 Here is another relic of the highpriesthood among the Jews, and of the fire of the sacred altar. Has this been handed down by tradition from their fathers?

3 There is an error in the total number in the printed Minutes of 385, the whole number there stated being 260,275.

4 McIntosh accompanied General Jackson in his campaign against the Seminole Indians. In a more private interview with Kennard, another Indian warrior, the latter related the manner in which the army was arranged at the time the descent was made. While he adverted to his command in one wing of the army, his eye sparkled with conscious pride at the recollection of the honor which had been conferred upon him. "In the middle," said he, was General Jackson on the right, McIntosh; on the left, me." This man was sick at the time the talk was had with McIntosh, which, however, was held near the bed on which he reposed. As Mr. Capers offered a dime to one of his children, he asked, "Is that little girl big enough to go to school'?" On being informed she was, he eagerly replied, "I have seven of them; and when you come back and begin your school I will send four." What a pity that a love of heathenism should have defeated the benevolent project of teaching these young immortals letters and the Christian religion! And much more that white men, born and educated in a Christian land, should have contributed to its defeat!

5 A small settlement of white people on the Indian lands here borders on a settlement of the Delaware Indians.

6 The Rev. Daniel Dorchester, who was the presiding elder of the district, in giving an account of this work, relates the following affecting and mournful incident: -- A young man, about eighteen years of age, who attended the meeting, was earnestly solicited by some of his young associates, who had recently embraced the Saviour, to seek the salvation of God. He constantly resisted their importunities, though they were seconded by preachers and other friends, by saying, "I will wait till

I get home." On his way home he suddenly sprung from the wagon, and exclaimed, "Mother, I am dying! I am dying! I shall not live an hour! O that I had sought religion at the camp meeting!" Though a physician was procured, it was in vain. His flesh soon assumed a purple hue, and the next day, at about eight o'clock, P. M., he breathed his last.

7 The exact number of conversions was not reported.

8 There is an error in the printed Minutes for this year, there being 700 less in the increase than what appears in the Minutes.

9 When the writer of this history visited Detroit, in 1804, he obtained an old building called the "Council House" to preach in. On his second visit, while preaching in the evening there arose a tremendous storm, accompanied with the most vivid lightning and awful peals of thunder. He continued his sermon, however, reminding his hearers that this war in the elements was but a faint resemblance of that day when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent beat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." He was afterward informed that some of "the baser sort" of the young men; after the candles were lighted, deposited some powder in them at such a distance from the haze that they supposed it would take fire and explode during the sermon. They were disappointed. The exercises closed without any explosion, because the candles had not burned down to the powder. These wags, after all was over, informed their associates of what they had done, and remarked, that while the peals of thunder were bursting over the house, they were fearful that the Almighty was about to hurl a bolt at their heads, as a punishment for their wickedness, and hence they sat trembling for their fate during the greater part of the sermon.

10 He was educated for a physician.

11 The Wyandots had been taught, to some extent, the religion of the Roman Catholics.

12 That the reader may understand the force of this allusion, the following incident is related. As Steward fearlessly denounced the absurdities of the Romish Church, and appealed to the Bible in support of his affirmations, those uninformed natives who had been instructed by Roman priests concluded that there must be a discrepancy between his Bible and the one used by the priests. To decide this question it was mutually agreed by the parties to submit it to Mr. Walker, the sub-agent. On a day appointed for the examination, Steward and the adverse chiefs appeared before the chosen arbiter. A profound silence reigned among the numerous spectators who had assembled to witness the scene. Mr. Walker carefully compared the two Bibles, and examined the hymns, each party looking on with intense anxiety for the result. At length the examination closed, and Mr. Walker declared to the assembly that the Bible used by Steward was genuine, and that the hymns breathed the spirit of true religion. During the whole transaction Steward sat with great tranquillity, eyeing the assembly with an affectionate solicitude, conscious that innocence and truth would gain the victory -- and when it was declared, the countenances of the Christian party beamed with joy, and their souls exulted in God their Saviour -- while their opposers stood rebuked and confounded.

Though the assembly before whom Steward appeared in Upper Sandusky was less august and imposing than the one before whom Luther appeared, at the Diet of Worms, yet the question to be decided at the former was no less momentous to the interests of Steward and his party than the one which hung suspended during the admirable address of Luther was to him and his party.

While, therefore, we may contrast in our minds the two personages who had submitted their cause to the decisions of others, we may not unprofitably compare them as being analogous in their consequences to their respective nations. Luther, towering above his fellows in learning, in eloquence, in piety, and in evangelical knowledge, was pleading the cause of truth before one of the most august assemblies ever convened to decide the fate of an individual. Steward, unlettered, rude in speech, limited in knowledge, though humble and devout, was silently looking on while his fate hung suspended upon the decision of a single man. How striking the contrast! And yet how analogous the cause and its results Luther, surrounded by princes, nobles, judges, bishops, and priests, awed by the presence of the emperor of all Germany and Spain combined, in one of the most magnificent cathedrals in the kingdom, stood firm in the strength of his God, and fearlessly advocated his cause in the face of that imposing array of civil and ecclesiastical authority which was leagued against him. Steward, on the contrary, accompanied by a few converted Indians, stood in the presence of the chiefs of the nation, most of whom had declared themselves adverse to his doctrines and measures, surrounded by an assemblage of rude barbarians in the rough cabin of an American Indian! Those Germans, however, who had embraced the principles of the Reformation were not more interested in the fate of Luther, than the trembling Indians who had embraced Christianity were for the result of the deliberations of Mr. Walker. But while Luther and his doctrines were condemned by a decree of the Diet of Worms, Steward was acquitted by the decision of the umpire to whom the question had been submitted. Luther, therefore, had to act in opposition to the highest authority of the empire, with the fulminating sentence of the pope ringing in his ears, while Steward went forth under the protection of the chief council of the nation, patronized by the Church of his choice, preaching Jesus and him crucified. Was not God’s hand alike visible in each case? Nor was Steward more contemptible in the eyes of the pagan chieftains than Luther was in the estimation of the pope and his obsequious cardinals and bishops. And perhaps the time may come when the name of John Steward, as humble as were his claims in his lifetime, shall beheld in as high estimation by the descendants of the converted Indians, as is that of Martin Luther by the church which bears his name. They both had faults, because they were both human beings; but let their faults be buried beneath the same turf which hides their moldering bodies from human view, while their spirits, alike indebted to the blood of the Lamb for their deliverance from the slavery of sin, shall shine amidst the heavens for ever and ever.

13 There is an error in the printed Minutes of not less than 610, there being that number more in the real increase than is given in the Minutes.

03.05B.07. Vol 3, Book 5B, Chapter 07

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume III -- Book V Volume III, Published in 1841 (From The Year 1816 To The Year 1828)

CHAPTER 7 General Conference of 1824

1824 This conference assembled, on the first day of May, in the city of Baltimore. Bishops McKendree, George, and Roberts were present, and the former opened the conference by reading a portion of the Holy Scriptures, singing, and prayer. The following delegates presented the certificates of their election by the several annual conferences:

New York Conference: Nathan Bangs, Laban Clark, Freeborn Garrettson, Samuel Luckey, Stephen Martindale, Samuel Merwin, Daniel Ostrander, Phineas Rice, Marvin Richardson, William Ross, Peter P. Sandford, Arnold Scholefield, Eben Smith, Henry Stead, John B. Stratten, Ebenezer Washburn.

New England Conference: Ebenezer Blake, Wilbur Fisk, John W. Hardy, Elijah Hedding, Benjamin Hoyt, Edward Hyde, David Kilbourn, John Lindsey, Joseph A. Merrill, Timothy Merritt, Enoch Mudge, George Pickering, Elisha Streeter, Eleazar Wells.

Genesee Conference: John P. Alverson, Joseph Baker, Israel Chamberlain, Wyatt Chamberlain, George W. Densmoor, Loring Grant, James Hall, Gideon Lanning, Benjamin Paddock, George Peck, Fitch Reed, Isaac B. Smith.

Ohio Conference: Russel Bigelow, Charles Elliott, James B. Finley, Greenbury R. Jones, James Quinn, Martin Ruter, John Sale, John Strange, Charles Waddel, John Waterman, John F. Wright, David Young, Jacob Young.

Kentucky Conference: John Brown, Peter Cartwright, Richard Corwine, Charles Holliday, Marcus Lindsay, George McNelly, Thomas A. Morris, Jonathan Stamper.

Missouri Conference: William Beauchamp, John Scripps, David Sharp, Samuel H. Thompson, Jesse Walker.

Tennessee Conference: Hartwell H. Brown, Thomas L. Douglass, George Ekin, Joshua W. Kilpatrick, Thomas Madden, William McMahon, Robert Paine, Thomas Stringfield, John Tevis.

Mississippi Conference: Daniel De Vinne, Alexander Sale, William Winans.

South Carolina Conference: James O. Andrew, Henry Bass, William Capers, Samuel Dunwody, Samuel K. Hodges, William Kennedy, Lewis Myers, James Norton, Lovick Pierce, Nicholas Talley, Joseph Travis.

Virginia Conference: John C. Ballew, William Compton, Benjamin Devaney, Ethelbert Drake, Henry Holmes, John Lattimore, Caleb Leach, Hezekiah G. Leigh, Lewis Skidmore.

Baltimore Conference: John Bear, Robert Burch, Christopher Frye, Joseph Frye, Andrew Hemphill, Daniel Hitt, James McCann, Nelson Reed, Stephen G. Roszel, Henry Smith, Joshua Soule, John Thomas, Richard Tydings.

Philadelphia Conference: Ezekiel Cooper, Manning Force, Lawrence Lawrenson, Lawrence McCombs, Jacob Moore, Thomas Neal, Charles Pittman, John Potts, Joseph Rusling, James Smith, John Smith, Thomas Ware Alvard White. From the time that Dr. Coke had last visited us, in 1804, no personal intercourse had been kept up between the European and American connections, though friendly epistolary salutations had been exchanged. In 1820, as we have before seen, a delegate, Dr. Emory, had been sent to the Wesleyan conference in England, and had borne with him a request that a personal intercourse might be established, at such times as should be mutually agreeable. In conformity to this request our British brethren sent the Rev. Richard Reece as a representative to this General Conference, accompanied by the Rev. John Hannah and his ministerial companion. As these respected brethren had arrived in the city of New York in the month of March, they had spent the intervening time in visiting Boston, Lynn, New Haven, Philadelphia, and other places, where they had endeared themselves to the people by their Christian and ministerial deportment, as well as by their evangelical labors in the pulpit, and on the platform at several of our anniversaries. On the second day of the conference they were introduced by Bishop McKendree, when Mr. Reece presented the following address from the Wesleyan Methodist conference, which was read by the secretary, Dr. Emory: --

"To the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church assembled at Baltimore, in the United States of America

"Dear Brethren: -- The time has arrived which calls us, in pursuance of a resolution unanimously passed in the conference of 1820, held in Liverpool, to commission a deputation from our body, to attend your ensuing General Conference, to convey to you the sentiments of our fraternal regard and affectionate attachment, and to reciprocate that kind and friendly office which, on your part, was performed by the visit of one of your esteemed ministers, the Rev. John Emory.

"The increased interest in your spiritual welfare which the establishment of this mode of direct and official communication between the two great bodies of Methodists has naturally excited in us, and reciprocally, we believe, in you, is to us the first proof of its beneficial tendency, and a cheering indication of its future advantages. For why should the ocean entirely sever the branches of the same family, or distance of place, and distant scenes of labor, wholly prevent that interchange of the sympathies of a special spiritual relationship which cannot but be felt by those who, under God, owe their origin to the labors of the same apostolic man, bear testimony to the same great truths before the world, and whose efforts to spread the savor of the knowledge of Christ, on our part, through the British empire, and on yours through the population of those rising states which have derived their language, their science, and their Protestantism from the same common source, Almighty God has deigned so abundantly to bless?

"We received with heart-felt joy the messenger of your churches, the Rev. John Emory, bearing the grateful news of the progress of the work of God in your societies, and were refreshed by the expressions of your charity. We now commit the same charge to the faithful and beloved brethren whom we have appointed to salute you in the Lord, that nothing may be wanting on our part to strengthen the bond of brotherly love, and to call forth mutual and united prayers for each other's

welfare, by a mutual knowledge of each other's state.

We are on the point of closing the sittings of the present conference; in which the perfect harmony of the brethren assembled has afforded matter for the most devout and grateful acknowledgments to God, both as it is the indication and the result of that entire affection and unity which exist among our Societies throughout the united kingdom. Through the mercy of God, we have rest on every side; the discipline we received from our venerable founder is still enforced with unabated zeal, and, under a conviction of its agreement with the word of God, cheerfully observed; the value of those apostolic doctrines which distinguish us in the old and new world was never, we believe, more powerfully felt among us, and never were they with greater fidelity exhibited in out public ministry; and, as a crowning blessing, numbers are yearly added to us and to the Lord, and the light and influence of the gospel are yearly extending, by the divine blessing upon the labors of the brethren, into the still dark and uncultivated parts of our beloved country. 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake.'

"You will also, dear brethren, partake of our joy in the success with which it has pleased God to attend the labors of our brethren in our different foreign missions.

"The leading particulars of their state and prospects you will have learned from our Magazine and annual reports, and it will therefore suffice to state, that, in this department of the work of God committed to our charge, upward of one hundred and fifty of our preachers are employed; and that the zeal and liberality with which our people and the friends of religion generally co-operate with us in this hallowed work, answer to every call, and seem only roused to greater activity and enlargement as the sad condition of the pagan world is by new developments displayed before them. In the formation of regular missionary societies in your Church, to promote the universal establishment of the kingdom of our adorable Saviour, and 'to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God,' we have greatly rejoiced; and in those encouraging dawnings of large success among the aboriginal tribes of your native continent, which have cheered the early efforts of those devoted men whom you have ordained to this blessed service. In addition to the doctrines in which we have been instructed, God has in his mercy given to us, as Methodists, a discipline adapted in a very special manner to missionary operations, to build up and establish infant religious societies among heathen, and to call forth in every place a supply of laborers for extending the work, and enlarging the cultivated field into the untilled and neglected wilderness. In the spirit of our great founder under God, who regarded he whole world as his parish, let the Methodists of Great Britain and America regard the whole world as the field of their evangelical labors; and, mindful of this our high vocation, let us enter in at every open door, trusting in God to dispose the hearts of our people to provide the means necessary to carry our sacred enterprises into effect; striving together in our prayers, that from us the word of the Lord may 'sound forth to nations and kingdoms of men, of all colors and climates, now involved in the ignorance and misery of pagan idolatry, and sitting in darkness and the shadow of death.'

"More fully to declare unto you our state, and to be witnesses of 'the grace of God in you,' we have appointed, and hereby do accredit as our representative to your approaching General Conference, the Rev. Richard Reece, late president of our conference, and have requested the Rev. John Hannah, one of our respected junior preachers, to accompany him on this service. 'Beloved in the

Lord and approved in Christ,' we commit them to the grace of God and to your brotherly affection. We earnestly pray that your approaching assembly may be under the special guidance and benediction of our common Head, and that all your deliberations may issue in the lasting union and prosperity of your numerous and widely extended societies; that you may increase in faith and love; and that your labors may, year after year, continue to enlarge and establish in the western world the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 'to whom be glory in the church throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.'

"Signed in behalf of the conference, "H. Moore, President. "Sheffield, August 11, 1823."

After the reading of the address, Mr. Reece delivered the following: --

"Mr. President: -- The paper which has just been read is an expression of the sentiments avowed by the British conference, and in which I heartily concur; -- sentiments of affectionate concern for the prosperity and advantage of our brethren on this side of the Atlantic. It afforded us much satisfaction to receive from you, by your excellent deputy, the Rev. John Emory, an overture to more frequent intercourse and closer fellowship of brotherly love. Wesleyan Methodism is one everywhere, one in its doctrines, its discipline, its usages. We believe it to be the purest, simplest, most efficient form of Christianity that the world has known since the primitive days. Doubtless it is that which has had the sanction of Almighty God, in its rapid and extended success, beyond any other in modern times. It commenced, nearly a century ago, in the mother country, in one of her universities, with a few young men, 'chosen vessels, meet for the Master's use.' Then it was the 'cloud little as a human hand;' now it has sp read widely, and is still spreading, over both hemispheres, while its fertilizing showers are descending upon Europe, America, Africa, and Asia, producing fruit wherever they fall -- the fruit of knowledge and holiness. Methodism is our common property. We are alike interested in its preservation and diffusion. It is a sacred trust committed to us. It is a heavenly treasure which we have to dispense for the benefit of man. Its spirit is not sectarian, but catholic, and embraces Christians of every denomination who hold the essential truths of the gospel, and 'love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.' Your brethren in England were never more concerned to preach its distinguishing doctrines of justification by faith, the direct witness of the Spirit in the hearts of believers, and salvation from all sin in this life, with simplicity, fidelity, and zeal, than at present; -- never more concerned to enforce its discipline with firmness and love, and to 'train up' a people in the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord;' -- never more careful that it do not deteriorate in their hands, but that it be transmitted, pure and entire, to 'faithful men' who shall succeed to their labors: .for which purpose they are anxious in their instruction and strict in their examination of the rising race of preachers, that these may be sound in the faith and lovers of our discipline. Many of them are all we can hope, young men whose 'profiting' has 'appeared unto all,' and to whom we can commit the deposit without anxiety; believing that they will 'obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful.'

"The result of this care and pains to preserve a pure and effective ministry has been and is seen in the blessing of God upon our labors, in an extension of his work through every part of our country, where 'great and effectual doors' are opening into new places, and the Lord is 'adding to his church daily such as are saved.' The members of our society are also improving in personal holiness and zeal for good works. They are more ready to concur with us in spreading the gospel abroad among heathen nations, as well as in tightening the 'cords' of our discipline at home. On

the whole, our prospects were never more bright, nor had we ever more reason to be encouraged.

"My opportunities of intercourse with you since my arrival in this country, together with the satisfaction I have had in attending two of your annual conferences, where I met with many of my American brethren, render this one of the most interesting periods of my life. I have witnessed the disinterested and laborious zeal which distinguishes your character and conduct. I have seen the fruit of your labors in the excellent societies in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Winchester, and this city. The doctrines and discipline of Methodism, when rightly applied, do, under the blessing of God, produce a Scriptural conversion, and form the genuine Christian character everywhere; and either at home or abroad, I find that a Methodist, who lives according to his profession, is a 'fellow-heir' of the same ' grace of life.' My prayer is, in accordance with the prayers of the body whom I represent, that you may go on and prosper, until, as the honored instruments of God, you have diffused gospel light and life through e very part of this vast continent, and every class of its interesting population, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be everywhere glorified in his disciples. Amen."

After the delivery of these addresses, and adopting rules for the government of the deliberations of the conference, the following communication was received from the bishops, and referred to appropriate committees "To the delegates of the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in General Conference assembled.

"Dear Brethren: -- We have thought it advisable, at the opening of this General Conference, to communicate to you our? views in relation to some of the subjects which will properly come before you. Assembled as you are from various parts of the continent, and having been associated with societies of people not entirely the same in manners and customs, it cannot rationally be expected that your views On every subject should be uniformly the same. But, after candidly considering and discussing such points of interest to the Church as may require your attention and decision, we trust you will be able to unite in such measures as shall best serve for the prosperity of our Zion and the glory of God.

"During the last four years we have not been favored with extraordinary revivals of religion, yet the work of God has gradually advanced, and we have had constant accessions to the Church, both of ministers and members, as well as an increase of circuits and districts. On the whole, we are happy to say, that amidst all our difficulties and obstructions, our prospects are encouraging, and we are permitted to hope that the great Head of the church will prosper our way and crown our labors with abundant success.

"Your superintendents have endeavored to do what was in their power toward supplying the annual conferences with their official services, and have in most instances succeeded; but, owing to a failure of health in some of them, and to other uncontrollable circumstances, two cases have occurred in which the conferences were under the necessity of providing for themselves. And as the present health of your superintendents is more likely to decline than increase, while their labor will become every year more extensive, the subjects of administration, and the propriety of increasing the number of superintendents, will claim your early attention.

"In the progress of this work new doors have been opened for the spread of the gospel, the borders of our Zion have been enlarged, and the number of circuits and districts so increased as to

render it necessary that there should be some altercations in the form of the annual conferences. The way seems to be prepared for dividing some in order to form new ones, and for making some changes in the boundaries of others, so as to render them more convenient.

"On the subject of Church government some of our friends have entered into various speculations, and it seems probable that memorials will be laid before you both from local preachers and private members. In order to give full satisfaction, as far as possible, on this point, it may be expedient to appoint a committee of address, to prepare circulars in answer to such memorials as may be presented.

"In fixing the boundary lines of the annual conferences, it must not be forgotten that a part of our charge lies in Canada, beyond the limits of the United States. The situation of our brethren in that remote part of the country seems to present to view a subject distinct in itself; and the most judicious measures to secure their prosperity and welfare will claim the exercise of your united counsel and wisdom.

"The Book Concern, considered in a moral and pecuniary point of view, is an important establishment in our Church, and will be, if proper exertions should be made in the circulation of books, not only a source of relief and support to our itinerant ministry, but a most effectual medium of conveying light and knowledge to the thousands among whom we labor, and perhaps to multitudes who do not attend our preaching. If any improvement can be made in its present plan of operation, so as to render it more extensively useful than it now is, it is desirable that it should be done.

"In the course of your deliberations, the local district conference, the financing system, and the proper instruction and education of children, may require some attention, as well as several other subjects not necessary now to mention.

"The importance of supporting the plan of an itinerant ministry, and of maintaining union among ourselves, cannot have escaped your recollection. They are subjects involving the vital interests of the Church, and our prayer is, that the wisdom of the Most High may guide us in such a course as shall be favorable both to the one and to the other."

Among other things which engaged the attention of this conference, was the subject of a lay delegation. This came up for consideration by the presentation of a number of memorials and petitions from local preachers and lay members, praying for the General Conference to grant them "the right," as they termed it, of a voice in the legislative department of the Church. The committee to whom these documents were referred presented the following report, which, after an able and full discussion, was adopted by the conference: "Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences in General Conference assembled, 1. That it is inexpedient to recommend a lay delegation.

2. Resolved, &c. That the following circular be sent in reply to the petitioners, memorialists, &c.,

"Beloved Brethren: -- Several memorials have been brought up to the General Conference, proposing to change the present order of our Church government. By one or more of these it is proposed ’to admit into the annual conferences a lay delegate from each circuit and station, and into the General Conference an equal delegation of ministers and lay members:’ or, ’to admit a

representation of local preachers and lay members into the General Conference, to be so apportioned with the itinerant ministry as to secure an equilibrium of influence in that body:' or, 'that the General Conference call a convention, to consist of representatives from each annual conference and an equal number of representatives chosen by the members of each circuit or station, to form a constitution which shall be binding upon each member of our Church:' or, 'that a representation of the local preachers and the membership be introduced into the General Conference,' either by electing delegates separately, or that the membership be represented by the local ministry, they being elected by the united suffrage of the local preachers and lay members.

"To these memorials, as well as to others praying the continuance of our government in its present form, we have given an attentive hearing in full conference, and, after much reflection, we reply: --

"We are glad to be assured that there exists but one opinion among all our brethren respecting the importance of our itinerant ministry, and that they who desire a change, whether of the form of the General Conference alone, or of the annual conferences also, are moved to solicit it rather by their zeal to support the itinerancy than for want of attachment to it. They would relieve the preachers of the delicacy of fixing the amount of their own salaries; and as in this matter they could act more independently, so they would also provide more liberally.

"We respectfully acknowledge the candor of brethren, who, although they intimate that it is unseemly for the preachers to determine their own salaries, yet do not pretend that their allowance is excessive, or that they claim a right to demand it. It is true that the deficiency of quarterage is so general, in such large proportions, that the conference collections and the dividends from the Book Concern and chartered fund have never been sufficient to supply it; and, indeed, the conference stewards usually settle with the preachers at a discount of from thirty to sixty per cent.

"But we presume that these facts have been generally known; so that whatever injury may be sustained from the scantiness of our support is attributable, not to the improvidence of the rule which limits the amount, but to some other cause; and whatever that cause may be, we at least have no information that the people refuse to contribute because they are not represented. Indeed, it would grieve us to know this: for even though they should refuse to acknowledge us as their representatives in the General Conference, they cannot do less for the love of Christ than they would oblige themselves to do out of love for authority.

"We rejoice to know that the proposed change is not contemplated as a remedy for evils which now exist in some infraction of the rights and privileges of the people, as defined to them by the form of Discipline; but that it is offered, either in anticipation of the possible existence of such evils, or else on a supposition of abstract rights, which, in the opinion of some, should form the basis of our government.

"The rights and privileges of our brethren, as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we hold most sacred. We are unconscious of having infringed them in any instance, nor would we do so. The limitations and restrictions which describe the extent of our authority in General Conference, and beyond which we have never acted, vindicate our sincerity in this assertion. By those 'restrictions' it is put out of the power of the General Conference 'to revoke, alter, or change our articles of religion;' or to revoke or change the general rules, or 'to do away the privileges of

our members of trial before the society or by a committee, and of an appeal.' The general rules and the articles of religion form, to every member of our Church distinctively, a constitution, by which, as Methodists and as Christians, ye do well to be governed; and we, assembled together to make rules and regulations for the Church, most cheerfully acknowledge that the restrictions above mentioned are as solemnly binding upon us as the general rules are upon both us and you individually.

"These restrictions are to you the guarantee of your 'rights and privileges;' and while we shall be governed by these, as such, we will also regard them as the pledge of your confidence in us.

"But if by 'rights and privileges' it is intended to signify something foreign from the institutions of the Church, as we received them from our fathers, pardon us if we know no such rights -- if we do not comprehend such privileges. With our brethren everywhere we rejoice, that the institutions of our happy country are admirably calculated to secure the best ends of civil government. With their rights, as citizens of these United States, the Church disclaims all interference; but, that it should be inferred from these what are your rights as Methodists, seems to us no less surprising than if your Methodism should be made the criterion of your rights as citizens.

We believe the proposed change to be inexpedient:

1. Because it would create a distinction of interests between the itinerancy and the membership of the Church.

2. Because it presupposes that either the authority of the General Conference 'to make rules and regulations' for the Church, or the manner in which this authority has been exercised, is displeasing to the Church, the reverse of which we believe to be true.

3. Because it would involve a tedious procedure, inconvenient in itself, and calculated to agitate the Church to her injury.

4. Because it would give to those districts which Ire conveniently situated, and could therefore secure the attendance of their delegates, an undue influence in the government of the Church.

"With respect to lesser matters mentioned in the memorials, we respectfully refer you to the revised copy of the Discipline, forthwith to be published." The subject of education came before this conference with increased weight, and its importance was duly appreciated. The views of the conference in relation to this subject may be seen by the following extract from the report of the committee to whom it had been referred, and which met with the hearty concurrence of the conference: --

"In considering this subject, your committee have been happy in believing that no arguments were necessary to impress this conference with a sense of its importance. The cultivation of the human mind, with a view to prepare it for the full exercise of its powers, and thereby to render it capable of answering the noble purposes of Its creation, may be reckoned among the first and greatest objects of a civilized community. The nature of this work is such that it requires an early commencement, and hence, in every enlightened nation, the education of children has been deemed necessary to the well-being of societies as well as individuals, and Christian people have held it among their most sacred duties. In the early establishment of Methodism, in the very beginning of our religious institutions as a Christian denomination, it was recommended to our

people, made the duty of our ministers, and the fruit of it already realized sufficiently shows its utility.

"Your committee, nevertheless, are fully impressed with the unpleasant fact, that this subject, so intimately connected with the vital interests of our Church, and with the salvation of so many thousands of souls, has been, and is at this moment, much neglected. While we are happy in believing that in many duties and labors we have done much more than several other denominations, we think it must be admitted that in the instruction of children some of them have exceeded us. And unless effectual measures can be adopted for securing proper attention to the rising generation under our care, we may anticipate unhappy consequences. The children of our hearers, and especially those of our Church members who have received baptism at our hands, may be considered as standing in a relation to us different from that of children in general, and fully entitled to all the attention from us which their age and situation require. If properly taught and educated, they will be prepared to become valuable members of our societies, and heirs of salvation; but, if neglected, we may expect them to become vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction.

"On the subject of schools and seminaries of learning, your committee have obtained all the information their limited time and means would allow, and are of opinion that in this also we are deficient. In 1820 a resolution passed the General Conference, recommending that each annual conference should establish a classical seminary within its own boundaries and under its own regulations. Three or four seminaries have been established in conformity to this resolution, some of which are in successful operation, and it is, in the opinion of your committee, desirable that such an institution should flourish under the patronage of each annual conference in the Union.

"Our Church contains multitudes of young men, not called to the ministry, who are qualified to teach, and many of whom would be more useful in such employment than they can be in any other. If these, as well as some of our local preachers, were made sensible of the good they might do our Church, even as teachers of schools, it is believed there would be no difficulty in supplying numerous schools of our country with teachers who would be in favor of the doctrine and discipline of our Church.

"In closing these remarks, your committee beg leave to offer, for the consideration of this conference, the following resolutions, namely

1. That, as far as practicable, it shall be the duty of every preacher of a circuit or station to obtain the names of the children belonging to his congregations, to form them into classes, for the purpose of giving them religious instruction, to instruct them regularly himself, as much as his other duties will allow, to appoint a suitable leader for each class, who shall instruct them in his absence, and to leave his successor a correct account of each class thus formed, with the name of its leader.

2. That we approve of the resolution, passed in the General Conference of 1820, on the subject of seminaries of learning, and hereby recommend that each annual conference not having a seminary of learning use its utmost exertions to effect such an establishment.

3. That it shall be the duty of every traveling preacher in our Church to keep in mind the importance of having suitable teachers employed in the instruction of the youth of our country, and to use his influence to introduce teachers into schools whose learning, piety, and religious tenets

are such as we could recommend." As it was the constitutional duty of the managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church to report the doings of the society for the four preceding years, and the state of the funds, a report was presented by the treasurer, in which it appeared that the whole amount collected for missionary purposes, from the commencement of the society to that time, was $14,716 24«, and expended during the same period $11,011 40«, leaving a balance of $3,704 83_. This shows the feeble manner in which the society commenced its operations, and how long it was, notwithstanding the favorable manner in which it had been received by the annual conferences, before the people generally came fully into this great and good work. The managers conclude their report to the conference in the following words: --

"In thus submitting to the General Conference a concise view of the transactions of the society, the managers cannot but express their gratitude to God for permitting them to be the humble instruments of aiding, in the management of the concerns of this society, in any measure, to extend the empire of truth and righteousness in our world; at the same time pledging themselves that, while the conference shall continue its operations for the noble purpose of evangelizing mankind, and of bringing them under the yoke of Jesus Christ, they will use their best endeavors to promote the same blessed object, by a faithful discharge of their duties as managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"New York, April 23, 1824." This report, together with the entire subject relating to missions, was referred to a committee, whose report, which was concurred in by the conference, was as follows: --

"The committee view with pleasure the success attending our missionary exertions for the last four years; and think that we are loudly called upon to make our acknowledgments to the God of missions, for the special manner in which it has pleased him to own our efforts.

"We began feeble, but God has strengthened us. We began fearful, but God has encouraged and assured us. So limited was our knowledge, and so numerous the claims upon our benevolence, that we scarcely knew to what particular point to direct our first attention. God, however, we humbly trust, has given a direction to our labors which has been highly important and beneficial, not only on account of immediate effects, but because a great and effectual door has been opened for the further prosecution of our missionary plans.

"By avoiding that prodigality of expenditure so evidently seen in some, and that partiality of appropriation so manifest in others, and by observing economy and prudence in the management of our missionary affairs, we cannot fail, under the continued blessing of God, to succeed in the great work of evangelizing even the barbarous nations around us.

"While an eye to economy is had in the appropriation of the funds of the institution, your committee are of opinion that the missions among our Indians ought to be prosecuted with increased vigor, laying a proper foundation for facilitating their future conversion in the education of their children; and that, for every missionary station, men should be selected as missionaries of hardy constitutions, of enterprising spirit, able and willing to labor, to sacrifice all for God and his cause.

"But, in the midst of all these labors abroad, we should not forget that much remains to be done within the bounds of our respective conferences. While Zion is lengthening her cords and enlarging her borders, she ought also to strengthen her stakes, otherwise her enlargements will be

her weakness. Let all the intervening sections of our country not inclosed in our fields of labor be examined, and, if Providence open the way, be occupied. Let missionaries be appointed, whose duty it shall be, not to wander over a whole conference, nor to preach generally, if at all, in old societies made ready to their hands, except in places where societies are very small; but to fix upon certain places still in the enemy's hands, and where there is rational ground of success, and then, by siege or assault, as the case may require, carry, in the name of the Lord, the strong holds of prejudice and sin. When this is done, let it be taken into a regular circuit, and the missionary be at liberty to pursue a similar course in other places. In this way, if we are steady and faithful to our purpose, we shall be enabled, by the divine blessing, ultimately to establish ourselves in all the sections of our country, until the power of our doctrines and the purity of our discipline shall renovate every part.

"Your committee take the liberty further to state, that, in their opinion, an open and candid statement of the condition of the missions will be profitable, not only as it will convince the public that we mean to act in good faith, but because the information so communicated, from time to time, will gladden the hearts of thousands who have contributed, or may by this means be induced to contribute, to this benevolent object." The American Colonization Society presented certain documents to the conference, which were referred to a committee to consider and report thereon, and the following was concurred in by the conference: --

"That the General Conference are not in possession of sufficient information relative to said society to render it proper for them, in their official capacity, to adopt any measures on the subject, farther than to recommend it" (that is, the colony at Liberia) "to the notice of the proper authorities of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as a suitable field for sowing the good seed of the kingdom of God. Under this view of the subject, the committee recommend the adoption of the following resolution, viz.: --

"That it is expedient, whenever the funds of the Missionary Society will justify the measure, for the episcopal to select and send a missionary or missionaries to the colony in Africa now establishing under the auspices of the American Colonization Society."

It would appear from the above report that the American Colonization Society had not yet sufficiently developed its character and objects to enable the conference to act intelligibly and safely in furtherance of its views, or fully to endorse its measures. Its subsequent history, however, has removed the cause of those doubts which excited this hesitancy, and the conference has since, by sundry resolutions, entered heartily into the measure of endeavoring to plant a colony of American freemen of color, with their own consent, on the western coast of Africa. These things belong more appropriately to another period of our history, and will therefore be noticed in their proper place.

Various enactments had been passed, from one General Conference to another, with a view to regulate the practice of slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church, an evil this which it seemed impossible to control, much less to eradicate from the ranks of our Israel. From the organization of the Church, in 1784, slavery had been pronounced an evil, and, as before remarked, a variety of expedients had been resorted to for the purpose of lessening its deleterious tendencies where it seemed unavoidably to exist, to meliorate the condition of the slave where his civil bondage could not be removed, and entirely to prevent our preachers and people from holding slaves at all in

those states and territories which permitted emancipation. Finding, however, that the evil was beyond the control of ecclesiastical law, as to its eradication from the Church, and wishing to render the condition of the slave as comfortable as possible, by holding his master immediately responsible to the proper tribunals of the Church for the manner in which he treated his slave, as well as to extend to the colored members of our Church all the privileges compatible with their civil and ecclesiastical relations, this General Conference so modified the section in the Discipline on slavery as to read as follows: -- Question What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery? "

Answer.

1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery: therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.

2. When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives.

3. All our preachers shall prudently enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching their slaves to read the word of God, and to allow them time to attend upon the public worship of God on our regular days of divine service.

4. Our colored preachers and official members shall have all the privileges which are usual to others in the district and quarterly conferences, where the usages of the country do not forbid it. And the presiding elder may hold for them a separate district conference, where the number of colored local preachers will justify it.

5. The annual conferences may employ colored preachers to travel and preach where their services are judged necessary, provided that no one shall be so employed without having been recommended according to the form of Discipline." So it remains, unaltered, to the present time. The following are the resolutions of the committee on the episcopacy, which were adopted by the conference: --

1. That we approve generally of the conduct of the superintendents in the administration of the government for the last four years; and that their zeal and exertions to promote the cause of God and the interests of the Church, under the circumstances in which they have been placed, merit the grateful acknowledgments of the General Conference and of the whole Church.

2. That Bishop McKendree be, and hereby is, respectfully requested to continue to afford what aid he can to the episcopacy, consistently with his age and infirmities, when and where it may best suit his own convenience; and that the provisions of the last General Conference for meeting his contingent expenses be continued.

3. That the episcopacy be strengthened by the election and ordination of two additional bishops at the present session of the General Conference.

4. That it is highly expedient for the general superintendents, at every session of the General Conference, and as far as to them may appear practicable in the intervals of the sessions,

annually to meet in council, to form their plan of traveling through their charge, whether in a circuit after each other, or dividing the connection into several episcopal departments, as to them may appear proper, and most conducive to the general good, and the better to enable them fully to perform the great work of their administration in the general superintendency, and to exchange and unite their views upon all affairs connected with the general interests of the Church.

5. That the book agents and book committee in New York shall be a committee to estimate the amount necessary to meet the family expenses of the bishops, which shall be annually paid by the book agents out of the funds of the Book Concern, and that the above resolution be incorporated in the Discipline." In accordance with the third resolution in the above report, the conference proceeded, on the twenty-sixth day of its session, to ballot for two additional bishops. There were one hundred and twenty-eight voters present, and on counting the votes for the first time it appeared that no one had a majority. On the second balloting the Rev. Joshua Soule had sixty-five, and on the third the Rev. Elijah Hedding sixty-six, out of one hundred and twenty-eight votes. They were accordingly declared duly elected, and having signified their acceptance of the office, they were, after an ordination sermon by Bishop McKendree, at 12 o’clock on the 27th, consecrated by prayer and imposition of hands, Bishop McKendree acting as the officiating minister. The conference passed a resolution authorizing the bishops to appoint a delegate to visit the Wesleyan Methodist conference at its session in July of 1826. This, however, was not carried into execution, in consequence of which we had no representative from England at our conference in 1828. The affairs of Canada once more engaged the attention of the conference, but without coming to any conclusion satisfactory to the Canada brethren. A petition was presented from a portion of the preachers in the upper province, to be set off as an independent conference, with the privilege of electing a bishop to reside among them and superintend their affairs. The following resolutions contain the result of the deliberations upon this subject: -- 1. That there shall be a Canada conference under our superintendency, bounded by the boundary lines of Upper Canada.

2. That a circular shall be addressed to our preachers and members included within the bounds of the Canada conference, expressive of our zeal for their prosperity, and urging the importance of their maintaining union among themselves.

3. That a respectful representation be made to the British conference of those points in the late agreement between the two connections which have not, on the part of their missionaries, been fulfilled." As before said, these measures were by no means satisfactory to those in Upper Canada who were desirous of having a separate and independent church organization in that province. Accordingly, on the return of the delegates who had attended the General Conference, a spirit of dissatisfaction was widely diffused,1 the local preachers were convened, a conference organized, and a declaration of their grievances, rights, and future mode of operations published and circulated. All this took place before the Canada annual conference assembled. On the assembling of the conference, however, in Hallowell, Bishops George and Hedding being present, mutual explanations made, and pledges given by the bishops to sanction measures for a separate organization in Canada hereafter, peace was measurably restored, and all things went on as heretofore. The constitutional term of the Rev. Thomas Mason, as assistant book agent, having expired, the Rev. John Emory, D. D., was elected to fill the vacancy, and Nathan Bangs was reelected as the principal.

It was manifest to all that the increased duties of the preachers, in consequence of the introduction of sabbath schools, the organization of the Missionary and Tract Societies, and the increase of members in the larger towns and villages, rendered it expedient, that every part of the work might be duly and seasonably performed, that the circuits should be shortened, and that each thriving village should be privileged with preaching every sabbath, otherwise it was impossible to establish a permanent congregation, more especially in those places where other denominations had established congregations and a resident ministry. It had been long evident to many of our ministers and people, that, for the want of having a preacher stationed in all important places, we had lost much of the fruits of our labor, and must, unless an adequate remedy were provided, continue feeble, if not retrograde from the standing we had already attained. This subject, it seems, presented itself before the committee on the itinerancy, together with others which relate to the duties of the pastoral office; and the following resolutions, concurred in by the conference, will show the views which were entertained in reference to these matters: --

1. That the superintending preachers be instructed so to lay out their work that there may be sufficient time allowed each preacher for the faithful and extensive discharge of all his pastoral duties, in promoting family religion and instructing the children.

2. That all our preachers observe that order of public worship pointed out in the twenty-third section of our form of Discipline; and that in the administration of the ordinances, and in the service for the burial of the dead, they invariably use the form in the Discipline; and in dismissing the congregation, the apostolic benediction; that they also attend uniformly to the order prescribed in chapter i, section 24, in regard to singing the praises of God in our congregations.

3. That the Lord’s prayer be used upon all occasions of public worship, at the close of the first prayer, and that it be strongly recommended to all our people to introduce it into their private and family devotions.

4. That the preachers be particularly examined on these several subjects at each annual conference."

There were no less than five new conferences created this year, making seventeen in all.

Before the conference adjourned, which it did on Friday, May 29th, to meet in the city of Pittsburgh, May 1, 1828, the following address to the Wesleyan Methodist conference was adopted

"Dear Fathers and Brethren: -- In reciprocating the kind and affectionate sentiments contained in your communication to us, sent by the hands of those whom you had chosen to be the messengers of the churches, we feel an indescribable pleasure. Many are the associations that press upon us, and the emotions that affect us, in this pleasant interchange of affectionate regards. We look to England as the. birthplace of that man, who, under the guidance of Heaven, was the founder of a great and flourishing church. It was there that the infant societies were nourished, and it was thence that the word of God was sent forth, even unto us. After we had flourished for some time under your fostering care, a mysterious chain of providences led to a separation of our societies in this country from the mother Church. But the scion that was planted here has been watered and blessed of God; and though probably still inferior in solidity and strength, yet in the number and extent of its branches, and the abundance of its fruits, it vies with

the parent stock. In this we rejoice, and are grateful to the great Head of the church, to whom alone the praise belongs. But it greatly increase our joy to know that our British brethren rejoice with us, and that the parent Church, with which we hope ever to be identified by the same holy doctrines and the same salutary discipline, is still flourishing, increasing, and abounding in every good work.

"For this our increase of consolation we have been greatly indebted to our justly esteemed brother and father in the Church the Rev. Richard Reece, and to his associated companion, the Rev. John Hannah, whom you have sent to declare your state unto us, and the interest you feel in our prosperity. We received them as your messengers, and as brethren beloved. Their presence with us has drawn the cords of brotherly love still closer, has seemed to introduce you more immediately before us; and in all our intercourse with them, both social and public, we have been made to feel, more sensibly than ever, that in doctrine and discipline, in experience and practice, and in the great object of evangelizing the world, the British and American Methodists are ONE. And we devoutly pray that they may ever so remain.

"We are, with you, dear brethren, endeavoring to maintain the purity of our doctrines, and are not conscious that we have suffered them in any instance to be changed or adulterated in our hands. As they are the doctrines which have proved to so many, both in Europe and America, the power of God unto salvation, we deem them to be the gospel of God our Saviour; and while he owns them we have never give them up. With you, too, we prize and practically vindicate the general rules of our Church, and the pristine institutions and usages of Methodism. We are also following you, though at an humble distance, in your missionary exertions. But such is the extent, and increasing extent, of our work here, that we cannot find means or men for foreign missions. The increase of our population is perhaps unparalleled, and it is widely scattered over an extensive continent. To keep pace with it, under such circumstances, requires much labor and much privation. In addition to this, the Lord, as you have heard, has opened for us a great and effectual door among the aborigines of our country. These we dare not neglect. They are our neighbors, and we must minister unto them; they have been injured, and we must make them reparation; they are savages, and must be civilized; heathen, and must be converted. All this shall be done if God permit. We have the work much at heart, and hope and pray for success. In addition to this, we have entailed upon us, in several of our states, a degraded and enslaved population, whose situation is making, if possible, a still stronger claim upon our Christian philanthropy. And, finally, the way seems to be opening for missionary exertions in Mexico and South America.

"With these fields of labor in the midst of us and round about us, you cannot expect us to join you in the great and good work in which you are engaged in the East. Still we hope the tune is not far distant when we shall join hands on the Asiatic shores of the Pacific Ocean. We are constantly advancing in our labors toward the West, and you are extending in the East, not only on the continent, but over the islands of the sea. Is it chimerical then to suppose, that at some future day we shall have encompassed this earth, and girded it round with glorious bands of gospel truth? O no; faith says it shall be done. And this faith is not without works; certainly not on your part, for we hear from you that you are laboring assiduously in this great cause, imitating the illustrious example of enterprise and diligence which so eminently marked the great founder of Methodism. You aim at great things, and you accomplish them, We admire the exertions of your ministers, and the liberality of your people. In our labors as ministers we hope we are not far behind you; but, as a

people, we do not yet equal you in active Christian benevolence. In this respect, however, we are improving. Our people are becoming more alive to the importance of greater and more systematic exertions in the cause of the Church. And while we are enlarging our work, and multiplying our numbers, we trust we have not forgotten that the great design of Methodism, the ultimate end of all its institutions, is to raise up and preserve, in the midst of a sinful world, a holy people. Without this, numbers and influence are nothing. We deprecate more than any thing else that ecclesiastical pride which builds itself up upon the numbers and popularity of the church, while that church is sinking in the spirit and tone of its divine life. From such a state of things, we on both sides of the water are doubtless united in saying, Lord, preserve us; make us holy, and make us instrumental in spreading holiness throughout the earth.

"We congratulate you, dear fathers and brethren, on the general prosperity that attends you, both in your labors at home and in your missions abroad; but especially on account of the perfect harmony which you inform us prevails among you; and we pray that it may ever continue. Of ourselves, though we are not able to say quite as much, yet in our present General Conference, which is now nearly closing, amidst some differences of opinion concerning the modes of administration, we find that we harmonize in the essential principles of Methodism. From this we are encouraged to hope, as intimated in his parting advice to us by your esteemed messenger, the Rev. Mr. Reece, that our minor differences of opinion on other subjects will soon be swallowed up in our attachment to the common cause. You too, in former days, have had your difficulties; but those days have passed by, and peace and union now cheer you with their benignant rays. And we are hoping that, before we shall have arrived at your age and maturity as a church, we shall overcome any little difficulties that may now attend us.

"Brethren, pray for us. And may the God of peace dwell with us, and dwell with you. Finally, may this great army of the faithful, who in two grand divisions are now carrying on the warfare in both hemispheres, so acquit themselves in the church militant below, as ultimately to unite with the church triumphant on high, where no ocean shall roll between, and no reciprocal messengers of love shall be needed to recount their victories and triumphs.

"We are, dear fathers and brethren, yours in the bonds of ministerial labor and Christian love.

"Signed in behalf of the conference, "Enoch George, President. "Baltimore, May, 1824."

"NOTE. -- In the address sent to England a few verbal alterations were made, which should have been inserted in this, but were inadvertently omitted. This, however, is substantially the same with the one sent."

N. B. The above address was written by the Rev. Wilbur Fisk.

ENDNOTE

1 It is probably due to the interests of truth, as well as to the characters of the living and the dead, to say, that the chief agent of this movement was the Rev. Henry Ryan, who afterward withdrew from the Church, and attempted to establish a separate party.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume III -- Book V Volume III, Published in 1841 (From The Year 1816 To The Year 1828)

CHAPTER 8 From the Close of the General Conference of 1824 to the Commencement of that of 1828

1824

Having, in the preceding chapter, detailed the doings of the General Conference at its last session, we will now proceed to notice the movements of the Church in her various departments of labor for the year 1824. This year the Rev. Charles Elliot was appointed as an assistant to Mr. Finley on the Wyandot mission. Through their united labors the work of God spread both among the adults and the children of the school. The mission was visited this year by Bishops McKendree and Soule, who made a thorough examination of the premises, the state of the Mission-church, and school; and the report of their interview with the converted chiefs gave a most gratifying view of the general aspect of things.

Through the influence of these labors, and that of the missionaries who had the immediate charge of the establishment, the number of Church members had increased this year to one hundred and sixty, and the school, now under the care of William Walker, the subagent, a man fully competent to his work, was in a prosperous condition. The farm also was improving, and yielding a partial supply for the consumption of the mission family. And what contributed mightily to the prosperity and stability of the work, while it gave irrefutable evidence of its depth and genuineness, spirituous liquors were, by a solemn decree, banished from the nation. Benevolent individuals, excited by reading the good news of this great work, as well as auxiliary missionary societies, poured forth their stores to aid the cause of Indian missions. The mission among the Mohawks, in Upper Canada, was equally prosperous. The particulars, however, relating to this and other missions in that province, will come more properly under subsequent dates.

Since the commencement of the Missionary Society, most of the new ground which was brought under cultivation was through the medium of missionaries, as well in the older parts of the country as in the new settlements in the west and southwest, though in most instances but a partial support was received from the society. This year the Rev. George Pickering was sent to form a new circuit in Newburyport and Gloucester, in Massachusetts, a region of country hitherto inaccessible to Methodist preachers, except flow and then to a transient visitor. His labors were accompanied with an outpouring of the divine Spirit, and about one hundred souls were brought to Christ in the course of the year; and thus a foundation was laid for continued preaching, the people soon contributing to their own support. The Rev. John Lindsey was appointed as a missionary to South Hadley and Sunderland, Massachusetts, where he labored with such success that the following year the mission was taken into the regular work.

Piscataquis, in Maine, was occupied as missionary ground by the Rev. Oliver Beale, and at the end of the second year it was included in the regular work, with a membership of eighty souls as the fruit of his labors. The work of God in the various domestic missions mentioned under date of last year was in delightful progress, and was extending in various directions among the new and destitute settlements. Nor were the older parts of our work without the reviving influences of the Spirit of God. In various parts of Delaware state, in New Jersey, the Susquehannah and Ontario districts, in the bounds of the Genesee conference, the New Haven and Rhinebeck districts, New York conference, there were encouraging revivals of the work of God, begun generally through the agency of camp meetings, and then carried forward by a faithful attention to the means of grace in the circuits and stations. In Telfair county, in the state of Georgia, where religion had been at a low ebb for several years, the work of God commenced at a camp meeting held near the fork of the Oconee and Oakmulgee rivers, and thence spread in various directions through the adjacent neighborhoods. The presiding elder, the Rev. John J. Triggs, relates the following anecdote respecting a Baptist preacher who attended the meeting and participated in its exercises: -- "In the midst of the work he arose on the stand, and declared to the congregation that he had no doubt but this was the work of God; and warned the people, especially professors of other denominations, of the dangerous consequences of opposing God’s work and of fighting against him. He then told them that he felt as solemn as death, and, lifting up his eyes and hands toward heaven, prayed God to send holy fire among the people. An awful solemnity rested on the assembly, and the power of the Highest overshadowed them. Some fell to the ground, and others cried aloud for mercy." The meeting resulted in the conversion of thirty-four, and a number returned to their homes under deep conviction for sin, resolved on a reformation of heart and life. The cause of education was daily advancing from one annual conference to another, and exerting an enlightening influence both on the young and the old. This year an academy was established in Cazenovia, in the bounds of the Genesee conference, a portion of our country fast increasing in population, wealth, and civil and religious enterprise. It was incorporated by the state legislature, and opened its doors for the education of youth of both sexes; and such has been its prosperity, that it has continued, enlarging its dimensions and extending the sphere of its influence, from that day to this, much to the credit of its founders and patrons, and greatly to the advantage of the rising generation. This, as well as the others which have been named, was brought strictly under a religious influence, so that the principles of Christianity might be embodied in the heart, as far as practicable, simultaneously with the growth of literature and science. And the pious objects of its patrons have been in a good degree realized in the conversion, from time to time, of quite a number of the students. In proportion to the increase of preachers the number of locations was diminished, there being this year only forty-eight; whereas, as might be expected, the number of supernumeraries and superannuated was gradually increasing in nearly all the annual conferences, there being this year of the former forty-three, and of the latter sixty-seven. Three had been expelled and nine had died during the past year. These last were, Charles Trescott, David Gray, John Wallace, Joseph Kinkaid, Peyton Anderson, Enoch Johnson, Richard McAllister, Mordecai Barry, Louis R. Fetchtig, and James Akins. It is no slight evidence of the truth and excellence of the gospel, that it enables its advocates to die in the full possession of its promised blessings. Of the above-mentioned brethren it is recorded that, having discharged their Christian and ministerial duties with fidelity, they all made a peaceful and triumphant exit from time to eternity, thus sealing the truths they had preached to others with their own lips in that most trying

hour. Of Peyton Anderson, particularly, excellent things are said. He was born February 9th, 1795, in Chesterfield county, Virginia. Favored with the advantages of a good education in his youth, and being brought under the influence of gospel truth, at an early age he was made a partaker of pardoning mercy by faith in Jesus Christ. In his nineteenth year he commenced the work of an itinerant minister, and gave early indications of those talents as a preacher, and of that zeal in the cause of God, which afterward distinguished him in his short career of usefulness. In his public exercises, as well as in his private intercourse, he was remarkable for the seriousness of his manner, arising, no doubt, from the sincerity of his heart, and his deep devotion to the cause of God.

He had a discriminating mind, and could therefore easily distinguish between truth and error, and nicely balance the relative claims of the several objects which were lawful for mankind to pursue. And his deep solemnity in the pulpit, his ready command of appropriate language, the fervor of his spirit, and evident sincerity of purpose, gave an impressiveness to all his discourses, which fastened the truths he uttered upon the hearts of his hearers. Though comparatively young in Christian experience and in the ministry of the word, yet he had learned much in the school of Christ, having passed through some severe struggles of mind, and wrestled in the strength of mighty faith and prayer against the violence of temptation, in which he was "more than a conqueror through Him who had loved him." He was therefore able to administer spiritual consolation to those who were in trouble, and to admonish such of their danger who were "wrestling against principalities and powers," as well as to point them to the only source whence their help was to be derived.

Having drunk deeply at the fountain of divine love, his heart expanded with benevolent feelings toward mankind generally, for whose salvation he longed and labored with all diligence. Hence the Missionary Society found in him a warm friend and zealous advocate, and he was instrumental in promoting its noble objects by the formation of branch societies, and by stirring up a spirit of liberality among the people of his charge. And what rendered his precepts more weighty and influential, they were constantly enforced by his own example, both as respects the piety of his heart, the uniformity of his life, and the burning charity with which he exemplified the living principle of his faith. In his last sickness and death the graces of Christianity shone out with luster, and eclipsed in his view all the fading glories of this world. While his friends were standing around his dying bed, and watching with anxious hearts the issue of his conflict, and beheld the fitful ebbings and flowings of animal life, he said to them, in the language of faith and hope, "Farewell, brethren. When we meet again it will be in heaven." He thus ended his mortal career August 27, 1823, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, and tenth of his public ministry.

Thus a bright light in the church militant became extinguished ere it had attained its meridian splendor. Mysterious are the ways of Providence! Had our brother Anderson lived to the common age of man, and gone on improving as he had begun, under the smiles of his heavenly Father, he doubtless would have risen to eminence in the church of God, and been a great blessing to his fellow-men. But He who "sees the end from the beginning," and whose "thoughts are not as our thoughts," in thus fulfilling the original decree denounced upon fallen man, in calling his servant to his eternal reward in early life, manifested his sovereign right over the work of his hands, and challenged the pious submission of his people to the wisdom and goodness of his dispensations.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 280,427; Last Year: 267,618; Increase: 12,809 -- Colored This Year: 48,096; Last Year: 44,922; Increase: 3,174 -- Total This Year: 328,523; Last Year: 312,540 -- Increase: 15,983 -- Preachers This Year: 1,272; Last Year: 1,226; Increase: 46.

1825 A work of grace commenced this year among the Mississauga Indians in Upper Canada. These were among the most degraded of all the Indian tribes in that country. From their habits of intercourse among the depraved whites, they had bartered away their land for intoxicating liquor, had debased themselves by intemperance, and were consequently lazy, idle, poor, and filthy to a most disgusting degree. They seemed, indeed, to be abandoned to a most cruel fate.

Among others who had embraced the Lord Jesus during the work among the Mohawks was Peter Jones, a half-breed, his mother being a Mississauga and his father an Englishman. Mr. Jones, Peter's father, had been the king's surveyor, and his occupation leading him much among the Indians, during the days of his vanity he formed an intimacy with two Indian women, the one a Mohawk princess and the other a Mississauga woman. About the year 1801, Mr. Jones, under the Methodist ministry, was awakened and converted to God. He then felt it his duty to repudiate one of his women, and he separated himself from the mother of Peter, the Mississauga, and married the other, who also embraced religion, and became a pious member of the Church. Peter followed his mother into the woods, and remained with his tribe until he was about twelve years of age, when his father brought him from the wilderness and sent him to an English school. While here, through the preaching of the gospel, he also was brought from darkness to light; and, understanding both languages, he was at first employed as an interpreter, and finally became eminently useful as a minister of the Lord Jesus.

Feeling, after his conversion, for the salvation of his wretched tribe, he hasted away to them, and told them what great things God had done for his soul. This had a powerful effect upon their minds, and led them to attend the meetings on the Grand river. A relative of Peter Jones, one of their chiefs, while attending these meetings, was led to the Lord Jesus for salvation, and his family soon followed his steps. Others followed their example, and, through the pious exertions of this converted chief and Peter Jones, a reformation was effected this year among these degraded Mississaugas, of such a character, so thorough and genuine, that all who beheld it were astonished, and could not but acknowledge the hand of God. They abandoned the use of intoxicating liquor, forsook their heathenish and immoral practices, were baptized and received into the communion of the Church, and demonstrated, by their subsequent conduct, that the work was indeed the work of God. A white man, who had made his house the resort for drunken whites and Indians, seeing the visible change in the temper and conduct of these Indians, could but acknowledge the finger of God, was struck under conviction, became a sincere convert, banished from his house his drunken companions, became sober and industrious, and devoted both himself and his house to the service of God. The whole number converted at this time was fifty-four, seven of whom were whites.

About the same time that this good work was going on so gloriously among the Mississaugas, a similar work commenced among a branch of the Delawares and Chippeways, who were settled at Muncytown, on the river Thames. This work began through the instrumentality of a Mohawk by the name of Jacob, who had raised himself to respectability among them by his sober and industrious habits. Until he heard the truths of the gospel he thought himself a very good and happy man, and

was so considered by his brethren; but when the light of divine truth shone upon his mind he saw himself a sinner against God, his fancied goodness and happiness fled, and he rested not until he found peace with God through faith in the Lord Jesus. No sooner did this great change take place in Jacob's heart than he went among his brethren, who were wallowing in the mire of iniquity and heathenish practices, addressing them from one cabin to another, warning them, in the most affectionate manner, of the danger to which they were exposed, and beseeching them to be reconciled to God. "The Great Spirit," said he, in imperfect English, "is angry. You must die. Now consider where the wicked man must go. We must be born new men. Our heart new. His Spirit make us new heart. Then, O! much peace, much joy."

Another among the first converts was an Indian of a very different character, and therefore the change was the more apparent and convincing. He was so given up to intoxication that he would barter any thing he had for vile whisky. At one time he offered his bullock for whisky, and, because his neighbors would not purchase it, in a violent rage he attempted to destroy the creature. At another time, having sold his clothes from his back for whisky, he stole from his wife the seed corn she had carefully preserved for planting, and offered it for the "fire waters," but was prevented from thus robbing his wife of the means of future subsistence by one of our friends, who purchased it and returned it to the squaw, upon whose labor in the field the family chiefly depended for bread. But even this man, vile as he was, who, in his drunken fits, was one of the most quarrelsome wretches that could haunt a human habitation, became reformed by the power of the gospel. That his reformation was thorough, was evidenced by the soberness, piety, and industriousness of his subsequent life. The conversion of two such men had a most powerful effect upon the whole tribe. Many of them embraced the gospel, and a school was soon established for the education of their children and youth. The labors of Peter Jones were highly useful in conducting these missions. He interpreted for the missionaries, and often addressed his Indian brethren, from the fulness of his own heart, with great effect. Many were the objections which the pagan Indians raised against the gospel, some of them founded in truth, and some from false representations circulated among them by the enemies of Christianity. These objections were obviated by distinguishing between real and nominal Christians, and by showing that the latter disgraced themselves by abusing the holy doctrines and high privileges to which they were called, and in which they professed to believe. It was, indeed, painful to be obliged to concede the fact, that hitherto the Indians had been imposed upon by the cupidity of white men, under the garb of Christianity; but this conduct was disclaimed and condemned by the missionaries, and the example of those who now came among them, and of the new converts, was presented as an ample refutation of all the slanderous representations of their adversaries. This silenced the clamor, and gave confidence to the friends of the cause.

Several attempts had been made, but with little success hitherto, to establish Methodism in the city of New Orleans, a place which needed the reforming influence of the gospel as much, perhaps, as any on the continent. This city, which is now equal in importance, in a commercial point of view, to any in the United States, was first settled by the French, toward the close of the seventeenth Century, and the Roman Catholic religion was incorporated with its civil regulations. The progress of the settlement, like all the others in that region of country, for a number of years was extremely slow, owing to a variety of causes, but chiefly to the wars between France and Spain, to the unhealthiness of the climate, and the want of industry and enterprise among the original settlers. In

1763, that part of Louisiana west of the Mississippi and Pearl rivers, of which New Orleans was the capital, was ceded to Spain, and so remained until 1801, when it passed into the hands of the French republic, from whom it was transferred, in 1804, by purchase, to the United States. At this time the population, chiefly French Roman Catholics, numbered about twelve thousand; but from that period the increase of its citizens was much more rapid, by emigrants from various parts of the Union, so that, at the time of which we now speak, there were probably not less than forty thousand. These Anglo-Americans, mingling with the Creoles of the country, gradually introduced their habits and modes of living, as well as their religious tenets. But though New Orleans was thus early settled, and possessed so many local advantages for commerce, as before said, its progress was slow, and the population were encumbered with all those embarrassments arising out of the peculiarities of the Roman Catholic religion. In 1815, three years after the memorable victory of the American army under General Jackson, the City contained about thirty-six thousand inhabitants, most of whom were descendants of the French and Spaniards. And until about the year 1820, when a Presbyterian church was erected, there was no place of worship besides the two Roman Catholic churches. It is said, indeed, that the sabbath was generally desecrated by profane sports and plays, the principles of morality exceedingly relaxed, pure religion little understood, and its precepts less exemplified in practical life.

Among others who were lured to New Orleans for the purposes of traffic from the other states were some members of our Church, who spent the winter months in the city, but, on account of the insalubrity of the climate, retreated to their former places of abode during the heat of summer. These, however, beholding the degraded state of society, and feeling the deleterious influence of such a general inattention to religion, called upon the authorities of the Church for help. Accordingly, in the year 1819, the Rev. Mark Moore was sent to New Orleans, and he preached, under many discouraging circumstances, to a few in a room which was hired for that purpose, and some ineffectual efforts were made to build a church. In 1820 the Rev. John Manifee was sent as a missionary to New Orleans, and in the same year the place was visited by the Rev. Ebenezer Brown, who, being disappointed in his attempts to gain access to the French population in Louisiana, assisted Mr. Manifee in preaching to an English congregation in t he city. From this time until 1824 New Orleans seems to have been forsaken by the Methodist preachers thinking probably that it was useless to spend their strength to so little purpose, for I find no returns of any members of the Church until the year 1825. In 1824 the Rev. Daniel Hall stands as a missionary for New Orleans, but the prospect was yet but gloomy. This year, 1825, the Mississippi district was placed in charge of the Rev. William Winans, whose eminent talents as a preacher, and indefatigable labors as a presiding elder in that part of the country, gave a more vigorous impulse to the work of God; and New Orleans was blessed with the labors of the Rev. Benjamin Drake, who was instrumental in reviving the hopes of the few pious souls who prayed and sighed for the salvation of Israel in that place; for we find that in 1826 there were returned on the Minutes of conference eighty-three members, twenty-three whites and sixty colored. But still the work of God went on slowly, the preachers having to contend with a host of opposition from without and feebleness within the Church, with the unhealthiness of the climate, and the want of suitable accommodations for holding their meetings. The next year, however, the society had increased to one hundred in all. From this time the work has steadily advanced, and they have finally succeeded, by struggling bard with difficulties of various sorts, in erecting a large and elegant house of worship, so that in 1835 they numbered six hundred and twenty-five members, five

hundred and seventy of whom were Colored, chiefly, I believe, slaves.

Mobile and Pensacola, about fifty miles apart, the former in Alabama and the latter in Florida, were supplied last year and this with the preaching of the gospel. Under the patronage of the Missionary Society, the Rev. Henry P. Cook was sent to these places. His deep piety and faithful exertions in the cause of Christ soon gave him a commanding and salutary influence among the people of his charge.

Since Mobile has been connected with the United States, by the cession of Louisiana, it has filled up rapidly with inhabitants, has become an incorporated City, a port of entry, and a place of considerable trade; but, like most of the towns included in that tract of country, the people generally were quite neglectful of their spiritual and eternal interests until visited by the Methodist itinerants. Mr. Cook, however, was cordially received by a few, and he succeeded in raising a flourishing society, adopted measures for building a house of worship, which was finally completed, and the society has continued to flourish to the present time. Nor will the name of Henry P. Cook be soon forgotten by the inhabitants of Mobile. He fell a martyr to his work in that place this year, leaving behind him the savor of a good name, and numerous evidences of his deep devotion to his work, and of his love to the souls of men.

Pensacola was also becoming a town of considerable importance in that part of Florida, and Mr. Cook was instrumental in raising a small society in that place, which, however, has fluctuated from time to time, struggling with various difficulties, until, in the year 1828, they succeeded in building a meeting-house, in which they assembled for the worship of God.

While attending to these two places, as the principal scene of his labors, in passing from one to the other, Mr. Cook preached to some scattered inhabitants along the Escambia river, in West Florida, which was afterward occupied as a separate mission field.

Tallahassee, in another part of Florida, was also provided with the means of grace this year. The Rev. John Slade was sent to this region of country as a missionary, and he succeeded in forming a society of seventy-three members, sixty whites and thirteen colored. The Early mission, in a neighboring region of country, was so successfully cultivated by the Rev. Morgan C. Turrentine, who was sent to form the circuit, that he returned no less than one hundred and thirty-six members, eighteen of whom were people of color. This year was the commencement of a work which has continued to spread in that part of Florida until several circuits have been formed, on which are large and flourishing societies. Such were the blessed results of the missionary spirit pervading our ranks at that time, and which has continued to rise and diffuse its hallowing influences in every direction among the people. In addition to those missions which included the more remote settlements in the exterior parts of our work, it was found, on examination, that there were many places in the older countries which had been overlooked by all denominations, being too remote from the center of population for the people to attend the stated places of worship. Such were the Highland and Hampshire missions, in the bounds of the New York conference; the former embracing a destitute population in the midst of the Highlands, a mountainous and rather poor region of country, about sixty miles north of the city of New York; the latter a district of country in the northwestern part of Massachusetts. The Rev. John J. Matthias was this year appointed to labor in the Highlands, and such was the success of his zealous efforts, that at the end of the first year he returned one hundred and thirty-four Church members, and at the termination of the

second the people manifested a willingness and an ability to support themselves. It has accordingly since been included among the regular circuits. The Rev. Parmele Chamberlin was sent to the Hampshire mission. This was found a more difficult place to plant the tree of Methodism. Success, however, finally crowned the persevering efforts of God’s servant, so that, at the end of four years, this was also taken into the regular work.

While the work was thus extending itself in new places, and causing "the wilderness and solitary places to be glad for" the coming of these heralds of salvation, the older circuits and stations were blessed with the reviving influences of God’s Spirit. Indeed, it was the vigorous action in the heart of the body which gave such a lively pulsation to the extremities. And what contributed not a little to diffuse this healthy action throughout the entire body was the publication of the Methodist Magazine, now arrived to the eighth volume, and which conveyed in its monthly numbers the news of what God was doing for the various tribes of men. Many testimonies to the salutary influence of this periodical on the interests of religion might be adduced from those preachers and others who were the most actively engaged in building up the walls of Zion. From the pages of the volume for this year, it appears evident that God was pouring out his Spirit on various parts of his vineyard, watering and reviving the souls of his people, and converting sinners from the error of their ways. A glorious work of God commenced in the latter part of last year in Chillicothe, Ohio, which resulted in an addition to the Church in that place, by the month of February of this year, of two hundred and twenty-eight members. From the time of the revival in this town in 1818 and 1819, there had been a diminution in their number, owing chiefly to removals still farther west; but this gracious work not only made up their loss, but also added new strength to the society, and increased their numbers very considerably.

Through the means of camp and quarterly meetings there was a great work of God on the Ontario district, then under the charge of the Rev. George Lane. This good work spread through all that region of country, so that the increase of members on that district for this year was upward of one thousand. The Genesee district was also visited with showers of divine grace, and most of the circuits shared in their refreshing influences. In Bridgetown, New Jersey, where religion had been languishing for some time, a gracious work of God commenced, which resulted in the conversion of about one hundred souls, most of whom became members of the Church. In Newark, New Jersey also, there was a manifest display of the grace of God in the awakening and conversion of souls, under the labors of the Rev. William Thacher. It began by urging upon believers the necessity of "going on unto perfection," or the seeking after holiness of heart and life; and no sooner did they feel the enlivening influences of the Holy Spirit in their own souls, than the work spread among the unawakened part of the community, and very soon fifty souls were added to the Church, and great seriousness rested on the congregation generally. On Coeyman’s circuit, New York state, there was a general revival of the work of God. This also commenced among the professors of religion, who were induced to seek after "perfect love" as the privilege of believers in this life. Having their own souls baptized from on high, they were fired with a loving zeal for the salvation of their neighbors; and the consequence was, that one hundred and seventy were brought to the knowledge of the truth and added to the Church. In the city of Albany, where Methodism had struggled with many difficulties for a long time, God poured out his Spirit, and about fifty souls were brought into the fellowship of the Church. On the Champlain district, then under the charge of the Rev. Buel Goodsell, the work of God prevailed very generally among the

circuits, and the hopes of God’s people were greatly revived and their hearts strengthened. This good work was the result of a number of camp meetings which were held in different parts of the district. These were the means of the conversion of many sinners, and a general quickening among the professors of religion.

New Haven district also, under the superintendence. of the Rev. Samuel Luckey, was favored with some revivals, and the state of religion was generally flourishing through the district. In this part of the country, as well as in some others, it had been found that we had labored to little purpose in the cities and principal villages, for want of convenient houses of worship, and because we had not a preacher constantly among the people. From these defects in our plans of procedure, our societies in New Haven, Middletown, and Hartford, and many other places, had been but feeble, and often the prospects were discouraging. About this time a remedy had been pro provided in some places, and was providing in others, by erecting churches, and stationing preachers in those cities and villages where the people were able to support them. The blessed effects of these movements were soon felt and seen, though in some instances, in building churches, the people felt themselves compelled, as they thought, to depart from our general usage, by selling or renting the slips, as they could not otherwise either build the houses, or induce the people to attend the preaching -- parents pleading that they wished to seat their children and members of their household with them in places of public worship.

Whatever may be said against this policy in other parts of our work, it is certain that its adoption in many portions of the country in the eastern and northern states has had a beneficial influence upon the interests of our Church. By this means the people have been able to meet the expense of sustaining the worship of God, and also to secure permanent congregations; and the preachers could more fully and effectually discharge all the duties of pastors, in overseeing the temporal and spiritual affairs of the Church, such as visiting from house to house, attending upon the sick, burying the dead, meeting the classes, and regulating sabbath school, tract, and missionary societies. And who will say that these things are not as important to the well-being of the Church, or the prosperity of true religion, as it is "to preach so many sermons?" A great and glorious work this year prevailed in the Susquehannah district, in the bounds of the Genesee conference, under the presidency of the Rev. George Peck. Camp meetings were chiefly instrumental in kindling the sacred flame which spread among the circuits and stations of this region of country, and many sinners were happily converted to God, while the holy impulse was felt through the churches generally. The Rev. Dan Barnes, in giving an account of the Black river district, in the same conference, speaks of a great work which commenced at a camp meeting and thence spread in various directions. In the city of Baltimore the Rev. Samuel Merwin, who had charge of the church in that place this year, writes, that mighty works were wrought in the name of the Lord Jesus. He says that from fifty to one hundred and fifty were crying to God for mercy in the same meeting, and he presumed that from five hundred to six hundred were made partakers of pardoning mercy during the progress of the work.

About this time a lively feeling was awakened in the Christian community in behalf of seamen, a class of men hitherto almost entirely neglected by the church. Indeed, as early as 1816, a few benevolent individuals in the city of New York had directed their attention to the condition of this useful class of men, and they succeeded in forming a society for promoting the gospel among seamen in the port of New York, consisting of nearly all evangelical denominations, and its

operations are conducted on the most catholic principles. Its affairs are managed by a board of directors, holding a corporate seal by an act of the legislature. Being patronized by the Christian public, they succeeded, in 1819, in purchasing ground and erecting a house of worship in Roosevelt Street, near the quays on the East river, quite convenient for the sailors to attend. At the dedication of this house, in accordance with the catholic principles on which it was built, the three sermons were preached by a Protestant Episcopalian, a Dutch Reformed, and a Methodist Episcopal minister. To insure the stated ministry of the word, the Rev. Ward Stafford, a Presbyterian minister, was first engaged to take charge of the congregation, who was occasionally assisted by ministers of other denominations.

After he left, the directors obtained a gratuitous supply by inviting ministers of various denominations, so as to keep up, as far as possible, the anti-sectarian character of the enterprise, that all might feel an interest in its promotion. It was soon found, however, that a congregation could not be collected and retained without the labors of a stated minister. Accordingly, in 1821, they employed the Rev. Henry Chase, at that time a local preacher, and an assistant teacher in the Wesleyan seminary in the city of New York, to take charge of a weekly prayer meeting in the church, to distribute tracts among seamen, to visit their families, and to perform such pastoral duties as might not interfere with his engagements with the seminary. Being quite successful in these efforts, at the request of the directors, and in accordance with the advice of his brethren in the ministry in the city of New York, Mr. Chase resigned his place as teacher in the Wesleyan seminary, and on the first of January, 1823, devoted himself entirely to the service of seamen. In 1825 brother Chase was admitted on trial in the New York conference, and, at the request of the directors of the seamen's society, was stationed in the Mariner's church, where, with the exception of eighteen months, when they had a minister of another denomination, he has continued ever since. In 1825, perceiving that great good resulted to seamen from his labors, and of those similarly employed in other places, and feeling the inconvenience of those changes which ordinarily take place in our Church, the General Conference made an exception in favor of those preachers who were laboring for the spiritual good of seamen, allowing the bishop to continue them in the same station for any length of time. Mr. Chase has accordingly been continued in the Mariner's church to the present time, as a member and elder in the New York conference, and his ministrations have been greatly blessed. Hundreds of seamen have been soundly converted to God, and the church is generally filled with orderly and attentive hearers every sabbath, and regular prayer meetings are held every week. There is, indeed, a great improvement in the condition and general conduct of this useful and suffering class of men. As the Mariner's church is supported by the several denominations of Christians, no church organization has taken place there, but those who were brought to the knowledge of the truth were at liberty to unite with whatever church they pleased; but I believe most of them have united with the Methodist Episcopal Church; and their numbers have become so considerable, that they have recently organized themselves into a church, under the name of the Methodist Episcopal Seamen's Church in the city of New York, have elected trustees, and are now (1840) making preparations to erect a house of worship for their accommodation and that of their seafaring brethren.

Similar efforts have been made in other places, and with equal success, which will be noticed under their appropriate dates. On the whole, it would appear, notwithstanding some portions of our Church were agitated with discussions on the different modes of church government, that

prosperity generally attended the labors of God's servants, and that the spirit of revival pervaded the ranks of our Israel. Some other churches also caught the flame in many places, and were therefore making delightful progress in the advancement of true religion.

Fifty-eight preachers were located this year, fifty-five returned supernumerary, and eighty-three superannuated; fourteen had died, and three had been expelled.

Among the dead was William Beauchamp, whose eminent talents fitted him for great usefulness in the church of God. And while the civil historian enriches his pages with memoirs of statesmen, poets, orators, philosophers, and men of military renown who have benefited their country, we may be allowed to preserve a record of those eminent ministers of the sanctuary who, by the depth and ardor of their piety, their genius, and their eloquence in the pulpit, have contributed to advance the best interests of their fellow-men. The characters of such men are a precious legacy which they have bequeathed to the Church, more valuable, indeed, than silver and gold.

William Beauchamp was born in Kent county, Delaware state, on the 26th day of April, 1772. He was a descendant of a pious Methodist preacher, who, about the year 1785, removed to the west and settled on the Monongahela river, and from thence, in about eight years, on the Little Kenhawa river, Wood county, Va. Here, in conjunction with Mr. Rees Wolf; another Methodist preacher, he was instrumental in establishing some Methodist societies. William was a subject of religious impressions when quite a youth, and at about sixteen years of age he was made a partaker of justifying faith, and became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1794 he joined the traveling ministry, and after discharging the duties of an itinerant preacher with great acceptance and usefulness west of the Allegheny mountains for three years, he was stationed, in 1797, in the city of New York, and a few of the people here still remember the able manner in which he fulfilled the duties of his station. In 1799 he was stationed in Provincetown, in Massachusetts, and from thence he was removed, in 1800, to the island of Nantucket. In this place Methodism was scarcely known at that time. A local preacher by the name of Cannon had preached there with some success, and hence the conference was requested to send them a regular preacher, and Mr. Beauchamp was accordingly sent. Here his piety and talents soon gained him the confidence of the people, and he was instrumental in raising a society of eighty members, and before he left the place a large and commodious house of worship was erected. This laid the foundation of Methodism in the island of Nantucket, which has continued to enlarge its dimensions from time to time, so much so that the New England conference has held two of its sessions in that place, the first in 1820, and the second in 1836.

Unhappily for the Church, whose interests he served, in 1801 Mr. Beauchamp located. In the same year he was united in matrimony to Mrs. Frances Russell, the widow of Mr. A. Russell, who had been lost at sea.

Without stopping to notice the intervening periods of his life, it will be sufficient for the purposes of this short memoir to remark, that he remained in a located relation to the Church until 1822, when he re-entered the traveling connection, and continued therein until his death, which happened on the seventh day of October, 1824, in the fifty-third year of his age. His piety was unquestionable, and his talents as a minister of Jesus Christ, as a writer, and as a man of business, were of the first order; and, had he continued in the itinerant ministry, no doubt he would have arisen to the first distinction in the Church. During his located relation he removed to the west, and settled first

in his former place of residence, on the Little Kenhawa, and then, in 1816, in Chillicothe, and finally he took up his residence at Mount Carmel, Illinois. Of this latter place, he, in conjunction with his friend, Thomas S. Hinde, was the founder. In all the places where he resided he obtained the confidence, respect, and affection of the people, and was eminently useful as a minister of Jesus Christ, as well as a citizen among his neighbors. Indeed, such is said to have been the confidence of his neighbors in his wisdom and integrity, that often civil suits were withdrawn from courts of justice and submitted to his arbitrament. He also infused into the minds of the youth within the circle of his acquaintance a taste for literary acquirements, both by example and precept.

During this same period of his life he appeared before the public as a writer, and in 1811 he published an "Essay on the Truth of the Christian Religion," which is said, by those who are capable of judging of its character, to be a work of sterling merit. In 1816, while residing at Chillicothe, he became the editor of a monthly periodical, called "The Western Christian Monitor," for which he furnished some valuable pieces, written with spirit and much critical acumen. At this time we had no periodical publication; and feeling, in common with many others, the want of such a medium of instruction, he was led, aided by some of his literary friends in the west, to undertake this work. For the short time it existed its circulation was considerable, and its pages were enriched with articles, both original and selected, which did honor to the head and heart of its editor. Among others who contributed articles for the Western Christian Monitor was Thomas S. Hinde, better known under the signature of "Theophilus Arminius," whose sketches of western Methodism afterward enriched the pages of the Methodist Magazine, and who became the biographer of his deceased friend, the Rev. William Beauchamp. The work, however, continued in existence only one year, but it contained evidence of the piety, industry, and talent of its editor.

After the commencement of the Methodist Magazine Mr. Beauchamp became an occasional contributor to that work, and all his pieces bear the stamp of genius, of an original thinker, and an accurate writer.

Having returned to the ranks of the itinerancy, he again entered upon his work with all that ardor, and in the display of those ministerial qualifications, by which he had been before distinguished. In the second year he was appointed a presiding elder of the Indiana district. While traveling this district he was seized with a complaint with which he had before been visited, namely, an affection of the liver. He lingered under the influence of this corroding disease for about six weeks, during which time he exhibited the patience, faith, and love of the Christian, and died in the in hope of eternal life.

Mr. Beauchamp was a close, a diligence, and a successful student, though in his youth he was deprived of the customary advantages of education. While a lad his father removed to the Monongahela, where schools were not to be found. But as he had contracted a taste for books before his removal, he surmounted the difficulties of his situation, procured torch-lights as a substitute for candles or lamps, and when the labors of the day were finished, and the family retired to rest, young Beauchamp would prostrate himself upon the floor, and examine his books by the light of his torch. In this way he treasured up a stock of useful information, of which he availed himself in after life. He became thoroughly acquainted with the principles of his vernacular language, studied the Latin and Greek, and in his riper years mastered the Hebrew tongue. In addition to these acquirements, he cultivated an acquaintance with some of the sciences, through

the medium of the most accomplished authors. With this taste for literature and science, it seems strange that he should have neglected the study of history, as it is stated he did, this being of all others the most important to store the mind with useful knowledge, and especially for the minister of the gospel.

These qualifications, superadded to the depth and uniformity of his piety, his love of the Bible, and his acquaintance with its doctrines and precepts, fitted him in an eminent degree for usefulness in the Church; and had he devoted himself exclusively to the work of the gospel ministry, as before said, he might have risen to one of its highest offices: as it was, after his return to the itinerancy, at the General Conference of 1824, which he attended as a delegate from the Missouri conference, he was a candidate for the episcopacy, and lacked only two votes more to insure his election. His style of preaching was remarkable for its chastity, plainness, and nervousness. No redundancy of words encumbered his sentences -- no pomposity of style swelled his periods nor did there appear any effort to produce a momentary effect for the empty purpose of gaining the shout of applause. His attitude in the pulpit was solemn, his gestures easy and graceful, his arguments sound and conclusive, and his positions were all fortified by apposite appeals to the sacred Scripture. And though he made no artificial efforts at oratorical display, yet he exhibited the true eloquence of a gospel minister, by making his language reflect clearly the perceptions of his mind, by pouring the truths of Christianity upon his audience in the purest strains of a neat and energetic diction, and by enforcing the whole by the sincerity and earnestness of his manner. His delivery was deliberate, not loud and boisterous, but clear and distinct, leaving an impression upon the mind of the hearer that truth and duty were the object of his pursuit. His biographer relates the following incident in proof of the power and conclusiveness of his arguments, when engaged in establishing a controverted point. His antagonist, who was listening attentively to the discourse, finding the arguments too powerful for him to answer, rose, apparently with an intention to leave the house, but was so overcome by the force of truth, and his whole frame so agitated, that, finding himself staggering, he caught hold of the railing, reeled, and dropped upon his seat, and there remained, overwhelmed and confounded, until the sermon was ended; he then silently withdrew, and left Mr. Beauchamp master of the field. But he rests from his labors. And whatever of human infirmities he may have exhibited, they were lost sight of amid the many excellences which adorned his character, and may therefore be entombed beneath the same turf which hides his mortal remains in Paoli, until the last trumpet shall awake his sleeping dust to life and immortality. Acknowledging himself indebted to divine grace for present peace and future salvation, he hung upon the promises of the gospel for support and comfort, and finally resigned up his soul to God in the full hope of eternal life.

Another of the worthies who exchanged the itinerant race for the crown of reward was William Ross, of the New York conference. Though his race was comparatively short -- for he died in the thirty-third year of his age -- his course was steady, and his end glorious.

He was a native of Tyringham, Mass., and was born February 10,1792. In the seventeenth year of his age he was made a partaker of the justifying grace of God, became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, in his twentieth year, entered the ranks of the itinerancy. In the early periods of his ministry he labored chiefly in the state of Vermont, where, in consequence of the badness of the roads and coarseness of the fare, he sometimes suffered many privations, which gave him an opportunity of trying the strength of his resolutions, of his faith in Christ, his love to

God and the souls of men. The faithfulness with which he discharged his duties in this rugged field of labor gave him favor in the eyes of the people, and commended him to the approbation of his brethren in the ministry.

After traveling various circuits, in which he acquitted himself as an able minister of the New Testament, in 1821 he was stationed in the city of New York, where he labored two years with great acceptance. For the last two years of his ministry he was stationed in Brooklyn, Long Island, where he ended his life and labors in the full triumph of faith and hope. His last hours, indeed, were a brilliant comment upon the doctrines he had preached, and tended not a little to strengthen our faith in the divinity of their origin, and the efficacy of their application to the heart and conscience.

William Ross is not exhibited as a great man, nor yet as a learned man. He was neither the one nor the other, in the common acceptation of these terms. But he was a good man, a good preacher, and a good husband, father, and friend, and he was thus good because the grace of God in Christ Jesus had made him such. In one sense, indeed, he was great. He had a clear perception of the plan of redemption by Christ Jesus, well understood the sacred Scriptures, was indefatigable in his labors, was an eloquent and successful preacher of righteousness, and exemplified in his own life those pure precepts of Christianity which he recommended to others. The high estimation in which he was held by his brethren, and by the Christian community generally, may be inferred from his being frequently called, in the course of his ministrations in New York and Brooklyn, to plead the cause of Bible, missionary, Sunday school, and tract societies. Here, indeed, he sometimes spoke with a force and eloquence which astonished and delighted his friends, while it confounded the enemies of these benevolent exertions for the salvation of the world. In the pulpit there was a peculiar solemnity in his manner, and dignity of expression -- the grave, distinct, sonorous intonations of his voice giving force and impressiveness to the sentiments he uttered, and reminded the hearer that be was listening to a messenger who felt the weight and importance of his message. Being a decided friend to all our benevolent institutions, and particularly to the missionary and education causes, he often advocated them in public, and gave them the weight of his influence in his more private intercourse in the circles in which he moved. Some of his satirical thrusts -- for he sometimes used this dangerous weapon to put error and folly to the blush -- at ignorance and covetousness, cut with the keener edge because of the strength and appropriateness with which they were sent by his skillful hand. Nor was he deterred from exposing these common pests of human society merely because the wounds which he inflicted upon their votaries made them writhe and groan under the sensations of pain which they frequently suffered.

He was equally skillful and much more delighted in the pleasing task of portraying before his audience the glowing beauties of charity, the divine excellences of the other Christian graces, and the attractive charms with which Christianity invested him who clothed himself with its rich and lovely livery. When, therefore, William Ross "occupied that holy place, the pulpit," no one was disgusted with a repetition of cant and unmeaning -- unmeaning, I mean, to him who utters them -- phrases, but he listened to the solemn realities of eternity, which fell from the speaker’s lips in accents of deep feeling, in language at once chaste, plain, and intelligible, uttered in a tone of voice which bespoke a soul filled with the subject on which he was discoursing.

I have made this short record as due to one who, had he lived and prospered in his race as lie began and ended it, would doubtless have ranked among the first ministers of our Church. There was, indeed, an amiability of disposition and courteousness, of demeanor about the movements of William Ross which drew forth the love of those who knew him, and at the same time a dignity of deportment which commanded their respect.

There is one fact respecting him, which happened near the close of his life, that goes most forcibly to set off the beauty and strength of his character. When it was ascertained by the official members in the city of Brooklyn that he was to be stationed among them, some of them, perhaps the majority, remonstrated against the appointment, so strongly indeed that the bishop hesitated about insisting upon making it. Among others who may have been consulted, the writer's opinion was asked. The reply was, "Send him; for such is the weight of his character, the urbanity and meekness of his manners, as well as his talents as a preacher, that he will soon overcome all opposition, and prove himself worthy of the affection and confidence of the people;" and then added, "A people who will reject such a man as William Ross are unworthy of any preacher." This was said from an intimate acquaintance with the man, and likewise from a knowledge that the objections to him originated from a prejudice which had no foundation in truth and reality.

He was sent. It was not three months before every objection against him was removed, the work of God prospered, the church was filled with hearers, and never was a man more highly esteemed or affectionately loved than brother Ross was by the people of Brooklyn. So highly did they estimate his labors among them, that, immediately after his death, the society contributed about twelve hundred dollars for the support of his widow and orphan children. Of the other twelve who had ended their labors during the past year, honorable mention is made of their fidelity in the cause of God and of their peaceful death.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 298,658; Last Year: 280,427; Increase: 18,231 -- Colored This Year: 49,537; Last Year: 48,096; Increase: 1,441 -- Total This Year: 348,195; Last Year: 328,523 -- Increase: 19,672 -- Preachers This Year: 1,314; Last Year: 1,272; Increase: 42.

1826 The aboriginal missions which had been commenced and prosecuted under such favorable auspices continued to prosper, and to promise the most happy results. There was, however, no other aboriginal mission opened this year, and nothing worthy of special notice which happened among those which had been begun, except that their continued prosperity still attracted the attention of the Church, and led to those plans for the evangelization of other tribes which will be noticed hereafter. The great change which had been wrought among the Mississauga Indians, heretofore related, was followed by the most blessed results on other fragments of the same tribe. An additional number of twenty-two, who professed faith in Christ, were baptized this year and formed into a class in Bellville, in Upper Canada. They were placed under the care of two of their principal men, Captain William Beaver and John Sunday, who had before given evidence of a sound conversion, and who now acted as class leaders. Nothing could furnish a more convincing evidence of the thorough change which had been effected in the hearts of these people, than was evinced by their forsaking entirely their the heathenish habits, and banishing from among them the use of all intoxicating liquors, becoming thereby sober and industrious. Infidelity itself was constrained to bow before the majesty of truth, and to confess, however reluctantly, that nothing short of divine power could produce a reformation so thorough and permanent.

Some new missions were commenced this year, embracing parts of Florida and Alabama, called the Holme's Valley and Pea river missions, and were put under the charge of the presiding elder of the Tallahassee district, the Rev. George Evans. These countries were but thinly populated, the settlements sometimes being from twenty to forty miles distant from each other, separated by a wilderness. On this account it was difficult to collect congregations, or to pass from one settlement to another; but, notwithstanding these discouraging circumstances, the missionaries succeeded in their evangelical efforts in forming societies, so that, in 1827, there were returned on the Holme's Valley mission one hundred and two white and thirty-five colored members, and on Pea river one hundred and four white and twenty-one colored; and the good work thus begun has steadily gone forward from that time to this, so that Tallahassee has since become the seat of the Alabama conference. The Rev. S. Belton was sent to form a circuit in the newly settled townships between the Mississepa [sic] and Attawa rivers, in Upper Canada, places which had been seldom if ever visited by any minister of the gospel. The settlements had been formed chiefly by emigrants from Ireland, who were in very moderate circumstances, and therefore unable to do much for the support of religious institutions. They were, however, thankful for the care thus manifested for their spiritual welfare, generally listened with attention to the word of life, and did what they could to make the missionary comfortable. That the word took effect is manifest from the fact that the next year there were returned on the Minutes two hundred and seven members, and the work has continued to prosper, under the labors of God's servants, from that to the present time.

There were several refreshing revivals of religion this year in some of the older circuits, more particularly in the south and west, where the principal increase of members was found. These revivals were accompanied by the same evidence of divine power and grace which had attended those heretofore related, and gave to the friends of religion irrefutable arguments in their favor. At a camp meeting held on Hanover circuit, in Virginia, there were not less than one hundred and twenty souls who professed to find the pearl of great price, and the good work spread with such rapidity that upward of three hundred were brought to God on this circuit. On the Bottetourt circuit similar results followed two camp meetings which were held there this year. In Anne Arundel county, Maryland, there were mighty displays of the power of God. The work commenced at a camp meeting held at a place called Rattlesnake Springs. It was believed that not less than two hundred and fifty persons were brought from darkness to light, and several professed to be filled with "perfect love," while many departed from the place under deep conviction for sin, and groaning for redemption in the blood of the Lamb.

Though these and other instances of revival were witnessed during the year, yet the general increase of Church members was not so great as the year before. The New England conference had succeeded in establishing an academy within its bounds, for the education of youth of both sexes, in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, and the one at Newmarket was merged in this. It was this year put under the charge of the Rev. Wilbur Fisk, by whose pious and judicious management it greatly prospered, and was soon filled with students, and has been instrumental in shedding the lights of literature and religion on the rising generation. Here young gentlemen are taught all those branches of literature preparatory to an entrance into college, or upon the active business of life, at the same time that the principles of the gospel are faithfully inculcated; and the institution has been frequently favored with gracious outpourings of the Spirit, resulting in the conversion of many of the students. The Pittsburgh conference made an attempt to establish a collegiate institution within

its bounds, called Madison College, and the Rev. Henry B. Bascom was appointed its president. It was located in Uniontown, Fayette county, in the state of Pennsylvania. It went into operation under favorable auspices, and was incorporated, in 1827, by the legislature of the state. It did not, however, long continue. Its endowment was small, and the number of students was by no means adequate to its support. Hence, though blessed with an able faculty, its dissolution affords another evidence of the impracticability of sustaining collegiate institutions without ample endowments. How else can this be done? The price of tuition is necessarily so low, in the various literary institutions in our country, that an attempt to raise it sufficiently high to meet the expense of tuition and other incidental expenses would be to debar all students from an entrance into their inclosures; and it is equally impossible to sustain them from the ordinary prices of tuition and board; and hence the absolute necessity of ample endowments, either from the state, or from the benefactions of individuals, or by the more sure method of annual collections, in order to keep them in successful operation. Of this all must be sensible, and therefore all who feel an interest in the prosperity of these institutions must, if they would have them permanently established, contribute liberally for their support. In the month of September this year was commenced the publication of the Christian Advocate, a weekly periodical, devoted especially to the interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church and to general intelligence. Periodical literature had become more and more in demand since the recommencement of the Methodist Magazine, and weekly religious newspapers were springing into existence among almost all denominations of Christians; and two, one in Boston, Mass., and another in Charleston, S. C., were published under the patronage of their respective conferences, and the friends of the Church very generally seemed to call for one to be issued from the Book Room. This led to a consultation among the editors and book committee, together with some of the annual conferences; the proposition was finally submitted to the New York conference, at its session in May of this year, and it recommended that measures be adopted for the publication of such a periodical with all convenient speed.

It is true, some were opposed to the measure, particularly those who were interested in the success of the papers already in existence, which had now obtained an extensive circulation, particularly Zion’s Herald, the one issued in Boston. This opposition, however, was overruled, and the first number of the Christian Advocate was published on the 9th of September, 1826. The appearance of this weekly sheet, filled, as it was, with useful and interesting matter, gave great satisfaction to the members and friends of our Church, and the number of subscribers in a very short time amounted to about thirty thousand. That it has done much good, and was most opportunely commenced, has been abundantly demonstrated in every successive year of its circulation, and by the testimony of thousands of its readers. By this means intelligence is received from every part of the world, and conveyed, weekly, as from a common center of information, to its thousands of readers in every comer of the land. Thus old friends, who may be separated at a distance of thousands of miles, may hear from each other, interchange sentiments, and, in some sense, converse together of each other’s welfare; and what the Lord is doing in one part of his vineyard may be known in every other part. This is the advantage which a general possesses over a local paper. This was extensively felt and appreciated, and hence its circulation, in the course of one year from its commencement, by far exceeded every other paper, religious or secular, published in the United States.

Sixty-three preachers located this year, sixty-six were returned supernumerary, eighty-six superannuated, two withdrew, and six were expelled; twenty had died.

Among the deaths recorded this year was that of John Summerfield, whose eminent talents as a preacher gave him a commanding attitude before the community, and excited a general tone of regret when the news of his death was announced. For a full account of his life and labors I must refer the reader to his biography, which was published by his brother-in-law soon after his death. From this it appears that he was born in the town of Preston, in England, on the 31st of January, 1795. His father was a local preacher in the Wesleyan Methodist connection in England, and he educated his son John in those religious principles which governed his own heart and life. At a suitable age he was put under the tuition of the Moravian academy at Fairfield, near Manchester, where he gave early indications of that precocious genius for which he was afterward so eminently distinguished. In 1813 the family removed to Ireland, where, at the age of seventeen, young Summerfield was made a partaker of justifying grace through faith in Jesus Christ while attending a prayer meeting with some pious Methodist soldiers. He no sooner tasted that the Lord is gracious than he felt a desire that others should participate with him in the same inestimable blessing. He accordingly embraced every opportunity to invite his fellow-sinners to come to the fountain of salvation, that they might drink of its waters and live for ever. In this way he continued to exercise his gifts, greatly to the satisfaction of those who heard him, until 1819, when he was received on trial in the Methodist conference of Ireland. As it was a time of some trouble among the Methodist societies in Ireland in those days, and as the fervor of his spirit and powers of pulpit oratory gave him more than ordinary influence, young as he was, he was selected to travel extensively through the country, for the purpose of promoting the general interests of the societies. He continued to travel and preach in Ireland, making, in the mean time, an occasional visit to England, until 1821, when his father removed to America, and John accompanied him, and was received on trial in the New York conference in the spring of 1821.1 His first appearance in public after his arrival in New York was at the anniversary of the American Bible Society, and his speech on that occasion was received with great elation, and gave him a most favorable introduction to the American community. Nor were his labors in the pulpit unappreciated. The houses were thronged with hearers whenever he preached, and the auditors hung upon his lips with the most intense interest and delight. Persons of all professions and of all classes of society were attracted by the fame of his eloquence, and expressed their admiration of the power with which he enchained them to the words which dropped from his lips.

Many have inquired in what the secret of this power over the understandings and attention of the multitude consisted. In whatever else it might have consisted, it was not in empty declamations, in boisterous harangues, nor yet in any attempt to overpower and astonish you with sudden bursts of eloquence; nor was it, I apprehend, in the unusual depth. and profoundness of his researches.

Summerfield was young, was pious, honest, and simple-hearted, was naturally eloquent, deeply devoted to the cause of God, possessed a great command of language, and his style of preaching was chaste and classical, flowing from him with an easy and graceful elocution. This I believe to be the secret of his power. He had a sound understanding, a warm heart, and a vivid imagination -- had acquired a rich stock of the most useful knowledge and hence, whenever he spoke in the name of God, he poured forth from a heart overflowing with the kindliest feelings a stream of evangelical truth, which fell upon the audience "like dew upon the under herb, and like rain upon

the mown grass." A "godly sincerity" was evidently the pervading principle of his heart, and a tone of simplicity characterized his style of preaching. When you heard him you were charmed with the melody of his voice, with the rich flow of his language, with the pure and evangelical sentiments which he uttered, and with the deep spirit of piety running through his whole performance. No strained efforts to dazzle you with wit, or with high-sounding words, with pompous periods, with far-fetched metaphors, or with sentences swelled and encumbered with an accumulation of epithets, appeared in any of his discourses or speeches. On the contrary, you felt that you were listening to a messenger of God, honestly proclaiming what he believed to be the truth, in language chaste and elegant, flowing from a heart filled with his subject, breathing good-will to his audience, and intent only on doing them good. This was John Summerfield in the pulpit; and his popularity arose from an active zeal, exemplified in his spirit and words, to promote the best interests of all classes of men by the wisest possible means. Nor was his society in the more private circles less attractive and instructive. On his first appearance among us there was a modesty and diffidence, a meekness and humility, every way becoming a Christian and a young minister who felt a proper deference for his seniors. To say that he did not, in some measure at least, rise in self-confidence with the rising popularity of his character, would be saying what no one acquainted with human nature could well believe. But the elevation of his character, as a preacher of the gospel, gave him a commanding attitude before the community, which he constantly exerted to promote the highest interests of his fellow-men. He certainly bore his honors with becoming modesty, and availed himself of his great popularity to advance the honor of God and the salvation of men. Though the minister of a sect, and thoroughly imbued with its doctrine and spirit, he was far from being exclusive in his feelings and views, hut displayed that spirit of Catholicism which enabled him to exert a hallowing influence on all around him. And while he must have carried about him the common infirmities of our nature, they were but as occasional spots upon the sun they obscured his luster but, for a moment, and then his intellectual, moral, and religious excellences shone out with an increasing and a steady brilliancy:

He most certainly exerted a beneficial influence upon the interests of true religion. Nor was this influence confined to his own Church. Other denominations, and particularly the various charitable and religious associations, availed themselves of his talents to advocate their cause and to promote their respective objects. And as he was ever ready to comply with their wishes, as before said, his physical powers were not adequate to the task of such continued application. The fire which burned within became so intense that the material vessel was gradually weakened by its consuming flames. He was at first prostrated by a hemorrhage of the lungs, from which, however, he partially recovered, so as to be able to appear occasionally in public. But his appearance was extremely wan and feeble, while his soul still broke forth in those strains of gospel truth and persuasive eloquence which captivated his hearers and melted them into tenderness.

It was hoped by his friends that a voyage to Europe might tend to reinvigorate his enfeebled constitution. He accordingly made a voyage to France, and attended the anniversary of the Paris Bible Society as a representative of the American Bible Society, where he delivered one of those addresses for which he was so peculiarly qualified, as the zealous and able advocate of institutions of benevolence. This address, which was interpreted by Mr. Wilder, an American gentleman, and a benevolent Christian, then residing in Paris, was received with enthusiastic admiration by the audience, and responded to in terms of affectionate respect and congratulation,

expressive of the joy that was felt in the union of sentiment and effort which mutually pervaded and actuated the Paris and American Bible Societies. On his return from his foreign tour he entertained hopes, for a season, that his health might be restored; but these hopes were soon blasted by the return of his disease, accompanied by those symptoms which gave sure indications to his physicians and friends that his dissolution was nigh at hand. After lingering for a considerable time, frequently suffering exquisitely from the violence of his disorder, he at last glided sweetly and peacefully into eternity, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, and the eighth of his public ministry.

During his protracted illness he exhibited the virtues of meekness and patience in an eminent degree, bowing submissively to the divine mandate, and looking forward with a lively hope to immortality and eternal life. Though sometimes he complained of the want of spiritual consolation, and of a feeling of mental gloom which arose, no doubt, from the nature of his disease yet for most of the time he manifested an unshaken confidence in his God, and expressed a calm resignation to his will, mingled with a hope full of immortality. But he rests from his labors, and his works of faith and labors of love have followed him as evidences of his fidelity to the cause of God.

Another who fell in the harness this year was an old veteran of the cross of Christ, whose long services and deep devotion to the cause of God deserve commemoration.

Daniel Asbury had been in the ministry forty years, during which time he had given evidence of his warm attachment to the holy cause he had espoused, by the fidelity with which he had discharged his Christian and ministerial duties. He was not, indeed, a great preacher, but he was remarkably distinguished for the meekness of his disposition, for his patience in suffering, and for the simplicity of his manners. He therefore won the confidence of his brethren as a man of God, and a most devoted minister of Jesus Christ. His death was sudden and peaceful. Returning from a walk in the yard, he looked up toward heaven, with a smile on his countenance, and uttering a few words, he sunk into the arms of death, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

Daniel Hitt had also departed to another world in the full hope of eternal life. He was made a partaker of the grace of pardon in early life, and in 1790 entered the itinerant ministry. In the first years of his itinerancy he labored much in the new settlements in Virginia and in the western country, where he won for himself those laurels which adorn the brow of the faithful, self-denying minister of Jesus Christ. For several years he was the traveling companion of Bishop Asbury, who ever treated him as his confidential friend. During these travels over the continent he became extensively known to a large circle of friends, who esteemed him highly as a brother, and as an amiable Christian minister. In 1808 he was elected as an assistant book agent, in which office he served for four years, under the supervision of the Rev. John Wilson. At the end of this term he was elected the principal, in which office he continued to discharge its duties, according to the best of his ability, to the end of his constitutional term, in 1816. Though his literary attainments were limited, yet his strict integrity and great fidelity eminently fitted him for a faithful discharge of his duties in the high trust confided to him. And the affability of his manners, the sweetness of his disposition, and his courteous conduct in the social circle, endeared him to his friends, as a companion in whose society they delighted to mingle. In the pulpit he dwelt chiefly upon experimental and practical religion, seldom entering upon those controverted points which so often involve discussions among the several denominations of Christians. Here he was solemn and dignified, and strove to impress upon the minds of all the importance of a practical attention to the

truths which he uttered.

He died of the typhus fever. In his sickness his mind was kept in peace, and he died in the triumph of faith and love.

Another aged veteran, Joseph Toy, was taken from the walls of our Jerusalem to his resting place above. He was brought from darkness to light under the preaching of Captain Webb, who was one of the first Methodist preachers in America, and was at that time preaching in Burlington, New Jersey. This was in the year 1770, and Joseph was then in the twenty-second year of his age. After receiving license to preach, he labored as a local preacher until 1801, when he entered the itinerancy, in which he continued, faithfully discharging its duties, to the end of his life. In 1819, in consequence of debility, he was returned superannuated, and he settled in the city of Baltimore, where he preached occasionally, and was beloved and respected by all who knew him. Having filled up the measure of his days in obedience to the will of God, he died in great peace, on the 28th day of January, 1826, in the seventy-ninth year of his age.

One of the excellences of brother Toy was the punctuality with which he filled his engagements. At the age of seventy he was heard to say that for twenty years he had not disappointed a congregation -- a practice worthy of the imitation of all. Although, in the latter part of his life, his sight so failed him that it was difficult for him to walk the streets without help, yet he continued to preach almost every sabbath, and sometimes twice, and was finally conducted from the pulpit to his dying bed, on which he manifested a perfect submission to the divine will, expressing his firm reliance upon the promise of eternal life.

John P. Finley, professor of languages in the Augusta College, Kentucky, had entered into rest during the past year. Though he was young in the itinerant ministry, yet he was a man of distinguished worth, and possessed virtues which may be profitably held up or the imitation of others. The following account is from the pen of Dr. Bascom, whose intimate knowledge of the subject of his remarks enabled him to depict the character of brother Finley as it was, and especially to present those peculiarities by which he was distinguished: --

"John P. Finley was born in North Carolina, June 13th, 1783. From childhood he was marked as possessing no common share of intellect. He was early placed at school, and while in his abecedarian [beginning -- DVM] course he evinced an aptitude to learn that induced his father, a distinguished Presbyterian clergyman, (who is now, at the age of seventy, a Methodist traveling preacher,) to give him a classical education. Owing to his habits of industry and perseverance, he soon acquired a competent knowledge of the sciences, and a reputable acquaintance with the learned languages. Of the English language he was a perfect master, and taught its proper use with almost unrivaled success. From the age of twelve or fourteen years he was often deeply affected with a sense of sin, and the importance of repentance and faith; but his mind was so much perplexed with the doctrines of absolute personal predestination, of which his father was then a strenuous and able assertor, that he came to no decision on the subject of religious opinions until he reached the years of manhood. About the age of twenty-one he married, and soon after was brought to the knowledge of salvation by the remission of his sins. Early after his conversion he was convinced that a 'dispensation of the gospel' had been committed to him. He weighed well the impressions and convictions of his mind and heart in relation to the fearful and responsible business of a Christian minister; but, when finally and fully convinced of his duty, he

did not hesitate. There were, indeed, many reasons why he should confer with flesh and blood, but with his characteristic firmness he rejected them all, and took the pulpit, I think, in 1811. At the time of his conversion he resided in Highland county, Ohio. His ministerial career was commenced during a residence in Union, Greene county, Ohio, whither he had been called to take charge of a seminary. At the head of this institution he continued about six years, living and preaching the religion of Christ in its native simplicity and power.

"From Union he removed to Dayton, distant only about thirty miles, and conducted an academy in this place for two years. It was here our acquaintance and intimacy commenced, which ended only with his useful life. He left Dayton, beloved and regretted of all, and accepted a call to superintend a respectable seminary in Steubenville, Ohio. In this place he continued not quite two years. In his ministerial exertions he was 'instant in season and out of season,' and labored with more than ordinary success. His next remove was to Piqua, Ohio, where he continued as principal of an academy for four years. In all these places his pulpit efforts were highly acceptable; his social intercourse seasoned with dignity and piety, and his residence a blessing to all about him. From this place he made his last remove to Augusta, Kentucky. Here he taught a classical school for some time, and was afterward appointed principal of Augusta College, in which relation. he continued until the time of his death. In these several places his labors in the pulpit were considerable and extensively useful. All who knew him esteemed him as a man of talents and irreproachable Christian character. He was indeed, all in all, one of the most amiable, guileless men I ever knew: never did I know a man more perfectly under the influence of moral and religious principle. His uniform course was one of high and unbending rectitude. One error, as reported in the 'Minutes,' respecting his conversion, I must beg leave to correct. I do it upon his own authority (when living) and that of his brother, the Rev. James B. Finley, superintendent of the Wyandot mission . There is something rather remarkable in the manner in which these worthy ministers were first brought to reflect with more than ordinary concern upon their latter end. John and James were amusing themselves in the forest with their guns; and as John was sitting carelessly upon his horse, James's gun accidentally went off, and the contents came very near entering John's head. The brothers were mutually alarmed, humbled, and thankful; they were more than ever struck with the melancholy truth, that 'in the midst of life we are in death;' they reflected upon their unpreparedness to meet death and appear in judgment. Each promised the other he would reform; and the result was, they were both led to seek religion, as the only preparation for eternity. Both the brothers agree in stating that this circumstance was the means, in the hand of God, of their awakening and conversion, as neither of them was in the habit of attending the preaching of the gospel before the inquietude and alarm created by this occasion. I have been thus minute in detailing the immediate means of his conversion, at the request of a surviving brother, in whose estimation the apparent incompetency of the means magnifies the grace of God in this singular dispensation of blended mercy and providence.

"John P. Finley was in the ministry about fifteen years. He was ordained deacon by Bishop Asbury, on the 17th of September, 1815. He received ordination as elder at the hands of Bishop Roberts, July 2, 1820. At the time of his death he was a member of the Kentucky annual conference -- actively dividing his time and energies between the business of collegiate instruction and the labor of the pulpit.

"As a man, the subject of these recollections was engagingly amiable, ingenuous, and agreeable; equally removed from affectation and reserve, the circle in which he moved felt the presence of a friend and the influence of a Christian and minister.

"As a teacher his excellence was acknowledged by all who were competent to decide upon his claims; and though he gloried most in being found a pupil in the school of Christ, yet he was no stranger to the academy and lyceum.

"As a husband, there is one living whose tears have been his eulogy, and to whom, with his orphan children, friendship inscribes these lines. As a father, he was worthy of his children, and in pointing them to another and better world he was always careful to leave the way himself.

"As a friend, he was warm, ardent, and confiding, and not less generous than constant; his intimate friends, however, were few and well selected.

"As a minister, in the pulpit, he was able, impressive, and overwhelming. The cross of his redemption was his theme, and in life and death it became to him the 'emphasis of every joy.' In all these relations knew him well, and can therefore speak from the confidence of personal knowledge and accredited information.

"The last time I saw him I preached a sermon, at his request, on the 'Inspiration of the Scriptures.' When I had retired to my room, he called on me, in company with a friend, and in his usual frank manner embraced me, and observed, 'H____, I thank you for that sermon, and I expect to repeat my gratitude in heaven.' Little did I think, at this interview, I was gazing on my friend for the last time, and that in eighteen months his ripened virtues were to receive the rewards of the heavenly world! But so it was, and I, less fit to die, am spared another and another year.

"He died on the 8th of May, 1825, in the forty-second year of his age and sixteenth of his ministry; and at the same time that his bereaved family wept upon his grave, the sadness of the Church told that she had lost one of her brightest ornaments. Just before his triumphant spirit rose to sink and sigh no more, he was asked how he felt, and what were his prospects upon entering the dark valley and shadow of death. He replied, in language worthy of immortality, 'Not the shadow of a doubt; I have Christ within, the hope of glory -- that comprehends all;' and then, with the proto-martyr, he 'fell asleep.'

"Such is a very imperfect sketch of the life, character, and death of John P. Finley. God grant, reader, that you and I may share the glory that gilded the last hours of his toil." Of Nathan Walker, Martin Flint, William Young, Thomas Wright, John White, Henry P. Cook, Christopher Mooring, David Stevens, Sylvester G. Hill, Ezekiel Canfield, William S. Pease, Samuel G. Atkins, and Damon Young, who had departed this life during the past year, it is recorded that they all finished their course with joy.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 309,550; Last Year: 298,658; Increase: 10,892 -- Colored This Year: 51,334; Last Year: 49,537; Increase: 1,797 -- Total This Year: 360,884; Last Year: 348,195 -- Increase: 12,689 -- Preachers This Year: 1,406; Last Year: 1,314; Increase: 92.

1827 This year the "Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church" was formed in the city of New York. The reader, however, is not to infer from this that the Methodists now for the first time entered upon the work of Sunday school instruction. In the first volume of this History we

have seen that sabbath schools were commenced among the Methodists in this country as early as 1790, but were soon discontinued for want of sufficient encouragement. The origin of these schools in England is well known; and Mr. Wesley was among the first to patronize and recommend them to his people, and they soon became very general throughout his societies.

It was about the year 1816 that the several denominations of evangelical Christians in this country began to turn their attention to Sunday school instruction, and the plan of a union was formed for the purpose of harmonizing their views and concentrating their efforts, under an impression that by these means more good might be effected to the rising generation than by separate and denominational action. This resulted in the formation of the "American Sunday School Union," which was located in the city of Philadelphia, and extended itself, by means of auxiliaries, all over the United States, embracing all evangelical denominations, or so many of each as chose to unite with them. Into this union our people had in some places entered. By the parent society books were issued, agents employed to travel through the country to promote its objects, and a weekly periodical commenced, devoted especially to the interests of sabbath schools. With this general union, however, all were not satisfied. Most of the Protestant Episcopalians chose to conduct their schools independently of the American Union, and many of the Methodists were uneasy under this regulation; and, after much consultation, it was finally agreed to form a Sunday school society of our own, under such regulations as should be conformable to our doctrinal and other peculiarities. The reasons for this measure I cannot express better than in the following address, which was sent out by the managers immediately after the formation of the society. It fully unfolds the motives and objects by which its founders were actuated. It is as follows: --

"In approaching you on the subject to which your attention is now invited, the managers take the liberty of stating a few things which have dictated the propriety of forming the society designated by the above constitution. They can assure you that they have not been led hastily into this measure, but, according to their best ability, have Carefully weighed every circumstance connected with it, having deliberately consulted with each other, and with their most aged and experienced brethren, both preachers and private members of the Church.

"The Methodist Episcopal Church is now composed of nearly four hundred thousand members, upward of fourteen hundred traveling preachers, and perhaps more than double that number of local preachers. From the peculiar organization of this Church, all these are considered as one body, adopting the same doctrines, discipline, mode of church government, and, the managers would hope, actuated by the same spirit, under the same great Head of the church, striving to preserve the 'unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.' These, together with the regular attendants on the Methodist ministry, make a population, including children, of not less than two millions, which are dependent on the ministrations of our Church.

"Without even insinuating the want of soundness in the cardinal principles of Christianity, in the major part of other Christian denominations in our country, calling in question the purity of their motives or ardency of their zeal, the managers will not conceal the fact, that they give a decided preference to their own Church, firmly believing its doctrines and discipline, and have witnessed with unspeakable joy its surprising progress in so short a time, and its salutary influence on the hearts and lives of so many happy thousands. It is a truth as evident as the blaze of the sun at mid-day, that the first impetus which was given to the great work of reformation now going forward

in the world, God gave through the instrumentality of the Wesleys and their coadjutors in the 'ministry of reconciliation.' The introduction into this country of a spiritual and energetic itinerating ministry, first begun' by those men of God, has produced results at once astonishing and delightful. Others have caught the missionary Spirit, and have entered into the work with zeal and success. In spreading pure religion, the managers wish them all good speed.

"Among other effects of this great work, by which the present age is distinguished, sabbath school instruction is not the least. The primary object of the first promoters of this work was to afford elementary instruction to such poor children as were destitute of common day school education, and at the same time to give such religions instruction as is suited to the age and capacity of the children. The utility of this mode of imparting knowledge to the juvenile mind soon became apparent to all denominations of Christians, and in the large towns and cities especially they have less or more availed themselves of its advantages. In the progress of the work, in our country, efforts have been made to unite all sects and parties in one general society, called 'The American Sunday School Union Society;' and while many have come into this union, others, thinking it best to manage their own affairs in their own way, remain in all insulated state, or have arrayed themselves under the standard of their own denomination.

"Among others who have hitherto stood alone, there are many belonging to our Church. Not feeling inclined to connect themselves with the general union, and finding no center of union in their own Church, they have long felt the inconvenience of their insulated state. As the Methodist Book Concern is located in the city of New York, it was natural for them to look to this place for aid. Accordingly, frequent applications have been made to the agents of that establishment in reference to this subject. It was at once perceived that this establishment afforded facilities for printing and circulating books suitable for Sunday schools, as well as the receiving and sending out, through the medium of the periodical works printed there, all necessary information in relation to their institution which could not be obtained elsewhere; and the agents of that Concern have pledged themselves to the society that Sunday school books shall be furnished by them as cheap as they can be obtained at any other place.

"These circumstances led to the idea of forming a Sunday School Union for the Methodist Episcopal Church. But here, at the outset, many difficulties were to be encountered. Most of those in our Church engaged in Sunday schools in the city of New York were connected with the general union; and though some things had recently transpired of which they could not wholly approve, they were strongly attached to the union, having labored in this work with their brethren of other denominations with much harmony and Christian feeling; but, after deliberating with calmness on all the circumstances of the case, the managers are convinced that duty enjoins it on them, because more good may be ultimately accomplished, to form a union for the Church of which they are members, independent of the American Union. Experiment alone will test the correctness of this opinion.

"It has already been observed, that the primary object of Sunday schools was to impart elementary instruction, mixed with religious improvement, to those children who were destitute of the advantages derived from common schools. Though this original object ought never to be abandoned, yet the general diffusion of this sort of instruction in our country, through the medium of common schools, and public and private free schools, renders this object less essential. Hence

religious instruction is the grand and primary object of Sunday school instruction in our day and among our children. On this account, how, ever humiliating the fact, a general union of all parties becomes the more difficult. Whatever may be the intention, each teacher of religion will more or less inculcate his own peculiar views of Christianity, and thus insensibly create party feelings and interests. And this difficulty is increased by the practice recently adopted by the employment of missionaries who are to be supported from the funds of the general institution. The managers are of the opinion, that the most likely way for the several denominations to live and labor together in peace, is for each to conduct its own affairs, and still to hold out the hand of fellowship to its neighbor. They therefore disclaim all unfriendly feeling toward others who may be engaged in this good work. They wish them all success in diffusing moral and religious influence on the minds of youth, and hope always to be ready to reciprocate any at of kindness which may contribute to strengthen each other's hands in the work in which they are mutually engaged.

"Having thus explained the views of the society, the managers would now call on their brethren and friends to unite with them, by establishing, wherever it is practicable, Sunday school associations auxiliary to this society. To give a direction to this work, and to produce as much uniformity as local circumstances will allow, the form of a constitution suitable for auxiliary societies is herewith submitted.

"One principal reason for locating the parent society in New York, in preference to any other place, is the facilities afforded by our Book Concern for printing and circulating books. The agents of that growing establishment hold an extensive correspondence with every part of our country, and possess the readiest means of communicating information on every subject connected with Sunday school instruction, and can supply any auxiliary with books on the shortest notice and cheapest terms. And it will be perceived, by an article in the constitution, that by paying three dollars into the funds of the institution, sending a list of its officers, and a copy of its annual report, an auxiliary is entitled to purchase books at the reduced prices. A list of the books, with the prices annexed, will hereafter be furnished through the medium of the Advocate and Journal.

"That an itinerating ministry possesses advantages peculiar to itself, in promoting objects of benevolence, will not be, by any, disputed. This, as well as the manner in which our Book Concern is conducted, supersedes the necessity and the expense of employing separate agencies in order to carry on the work of Sunday school instruction. The funds, therefore, which may be raised, can be appropriated to the purchase of books.

"It will be perceived from the constitution, that it is the design of this society, by means of auxiliaries, to comprehend every part of our Church in this great and good cause. The senior bishop is constituted the president, and the other four bishops are vice presidents; and provision is made for each annual conference to elect a vice president from its own body; and he board of managers being located in New York, a center of union is formed for the whole community, and all being connected with our Book Concern, an easy channel of communication is opened, by which books may be printed and circulated, and remittances and information made and received.

"These being the views and objects of the society, the managers think that they may confidently call on their brethren and friends for their aid and cooperation. To the ministers of the Church, especially, do they look for an efficient effort in carrying the benevolent design into practical operation. Let them think on the numerous children unbosomed in the Church, which they are

appointed to nourish with the sincere milk of the word. These are the lambs of the flock, which, that they may become the sheep of God’s pasture, must be tenderly nursed. Let them, therefore, be gathered into the fold of sabbath schools, put under the care of faithful shepherds, who will watch over their welfare, instill into their minds moral and religious truth, and thus prepare them, under the influence of divine grace, to become faithful followers of the chief Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

"The managers conclude by commending their cause to God and to the prayers of their brethren, that they may be wisely directed in this arduous enterprise, and by saying that any suggestion, by which the system may be improved, so as to accomplish more perfectly the purposes of its organization, will be thankfully received and duly considered." The following article in the constitution of the society will show what were its objects: --

"The objects of this society shall be, to promote the formation and to concentrate the efforts of sabbath schools connected with the congregations of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and all others that may become auxiliary; to aid in the instruction of the rising generation, particularly in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and in the service and worship of God."

Provision was then made for the formation of auxiliary societies, and other matters usually connected with Sunday school operations, for furnishing books, funds, &c. The constitution was adopted and the society formed on the second day of April, 1827, and it commenced its operations under the most favorable auspices. The measure, indeed, was very generally approved., and hailed with grateful delight by our brethren and friends throughout the country. It received the sanction of the several annual conferences, who recommended to the people of their charge to form auxiliary societies in every circuit and station, and send to the general depository in New York for their books; and such were the zeal and unanimity with which they entered into this work, that a the first annual meeting of the society there were reported 251 auxiliary societies, 1,025 schools, 2,045 superintendents, 10,290 teachers, and 63,240 scholars, besides about 2,000 managers and visitors. Never, therefore, did an institution go into operation under more favorable circumstances, or was hailed with a more universal joy, than the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Our separation, however, from the general union, and the establishment of a distinct organization, provoked no little opposition from some quarters, and led the managers into an investigation of the origin of Sunday schools, both in Europe and America, and the facts elicited were spread before the community in their first annual report. By this it appeared, as before stated, that although Mr. Raikes might have been the first to organize regular sabbath schools in England, yet Mr. Wesley was among the first to patronize them, and the very first to furnish teachers who gave their services gratuitously; that even the British and Foreign Bible Society originated from the exertions of a Methodist preacher who had been laboring in the sabbath school cause in Wales; and that in America they had been taught among the Methodists, amidst storms of reproach and persecution, long before they were ever thought of by other denominations. These facts were amply ported by irrefutable testimony, and they therefore served to put the question at rest respecting the origin and permanent establishment of sabbath schools in England, and their subsequent progress in this country.2 That the formation of this society has had a most happy effect upon the interests of the rising generation, particularly those under the influence of our own denomination, there can be no doubt. As many of our people were not pleased with the movements of the American Union, and some who were connected with it felt dissatisfied in that

relation, they had not entered so heartily nor so generally as was desirable into the work of sabbath school instruction; but now, every objection arising from these sources being removed, a general and almost simultaneous action in favor of this important cause commenced throughout our ranks, and it has continued steadily increasing to the present time, exerting a hallowing influence upon all who come under its control and direction. And we rejoice to know that the American Union, as well as those existing separately among other denominations, has exerted, and is still exerting, a Similar in influence on all who come within the sphere of its and their operations. Let them be conducted in the fear of God, under the superintendence of men and women who enjoy and exemplify experimental and practical godliness, and they shall form an effectual barrier against the overflowings of infidelity and its kindred errors and vices, and continue as a lofty beacon to direct the youthful mind into the channel of gospel truth and holiness. The mere question of their origin, however honorable it may be to their originator, is lost amidst the blaze of glory which shall surround the churches by the conscientious labors of those who have conducted and shall continue to conduct them forward in the spirit of Him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God," and who "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hath perfected praise." The high approbation of God is to be prized above a thousand wreaths of mere human laurels. The latter will fade and die, while the former will cause the individual on whom it falls to bloom in immortal vigor around the throne above. Instead, therefore, of contending about the fact to whom the honor belongs of beginning this mighty machinery which is performing such wonders of mercy to the rising generation, let us bless God for raising up such a man as Raikes, for such a powerful patron as Wesley, and for inspiring so many of his servants to exert their strength to perpetuate this means of doing good from one generation to another. The Cherokee mission, within the bounds of the Tennessee conference, was extending its influence among that nation with encouraging success. Last year there were four missionaries appointed to labor here, who formed regular circuits, and divided the native converts, now consisting of about four hundred, into classes, and furnished them with the ordinances of the gospel. A native preacher, by the name of Turtle Fields, had been raised up, who became eminently useful to his brethren, as he could speak to them in their own language of the "wonderful works of God."

Though it was the practice of all our missionaries who were sent among the aboriginal tribes, first of all to preach to them the gospel of Christ, yet when they had embraced it, and became reformed in heart and life, they generally forsook their former mode of living, and entered upon the arts of civilized man. Indeed, this was the secret of our success. Every attempt which had been made to reform the savages of our wildernesses, by introducing the arts of civilization first, and by initiating them into the knowledge of letters before they were converted to Christianity, has failed of success. Instead of pursuing this round-about method to bring them to the knowledge of God and of his Son Jesus Christ, our missionaries have addressed themselves directly to their hearts, recited to them the simple narrative of the life, the sufferings, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and impressed upon their minds the grand truth, that all this was for them, and that, in believing it heartily, even they should be "saved from their sins." This method, and this only, has taken effect. A believing knowledge of the love of God in Christ Jesus has melted them into tenderness; and the light of divine truth, thus shining upon their hearts, has revealed to them their wretchedness as sinners, and brought them as humble penitents to the foot of the cross, where they have waited in humble supplication until Christ made them free. And then, after being thus

liberated from the bondage of sin, and brought into the liberties of the gospel, they have been conducted with the utmost ease to the practice of the domestic arts, and to all the usages of civilized life. This was the case with these converted Cherokees and others. "The traveler," says the report of the committee of the Tennessee conference for this year, "through their settlements, observing cottages erecting, regular towns building, farms cultivated, the sabbath regularly observed, and almost an entire change in the character and pursuits of the people, is ready to ask, with surprise, Whence this change? The answer is, The Lord Jesus, in answer to the prayers of thousands of his people, is receiving the accomplishment of the promise, I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance. Here is a nation at our door, our neighbors," (once) "remarkable for their ferocity and ignorance, now giving the most striking evidence of the utility of missionary exertions." Two houses of worship had been erected, one of which, having been consumed by fire, was rebuilt this year by the natives themselves, without any expense to the mission. For the benefit of the youth schools were established, and the children soon gave evidence of their capacity and willingness to learn, two of whom gave promise of usefulness as preachers of the gospel to their own nation. These were placed under the special care of the Rev. William McMahon, the superintendent of the mission. So evident was the change which had been wrought in the hearts and lives of these people, that even those who had no interest in the mission were constrained to acknowledge the hand of God. So rapidly, indeed, did the work spread, that in 1825 the number of converted natives had increased to eight hundred, and seven missionaries were employed in that interesting field of labor, including Turtle Fields, who was now eminently distinguished for his deep piety, and diligence in promoting the interests of the mission. The white missionaries were also greatly assisted by another converted Cherokee, a young man of promising talents and piety, who acted as an interpreter to the circuit preacher. A new mission was begun this year among another branch of the Mississaugas, who resided on Snake and Yellow Head Islands, in Lake Simcoe, Upper Canada. The whole body of Indians who resided here consisted of six hundred, the largest body of any who spoke the Chippeway language this side of Lake Huron. Some of these, hearing a discourse from one of our preachers, became deeply impressed with the leading truths of Christianity, and expressed an earnest desire to have a missionary sent to instruct them. Accordingly some benevolent members of our Church went and established a sabbath school among them. By this simple means more than forty were reclaimed from their pagan superstitions. Such was the success of this mission, after being supplied with a regular missionary, that in 1829 there were four hundred and twenty-nine under religious instruction, three hundred and fifty of whom were orderly members of the Church; one hundred of their children were taught in two separate schools, by a male and female teacher. A schoolhouse and parsonage were built on Snake Island, and a mission-house on Yellow Head Island, and the converts were gradually brought to attend to agricultural and domestic duties. The other aboriginal missions, heretofore mentioned, were still improving in religion and morals, as well as in the arts of civilized life, and great was the interest manifested by the Christian church in their behalf. This year, however, the Wyandot mission suffered a great loss in the death of Between-the-logs, one of their most eminent chiefs, and an eloquent and able advocate of Christianity. And as he was a chief man among then, and, after his conversion, had exerted a powerful influence in favor of the mission, it is presumed that the reader will be pleased with the following particulars of his life and death, which the author of the History of the Missions under the care of the Methodist Episcopal Church prepared for and published in that work.

"He was born, it is said, in the neighborhood of Lower Sandusky, about the year 1780.3 His father was of the Seneca, and his mother a Wyandot of the Bear tribe, from whom he derived his name, Between-the-logs, the name which they give to a bear, signifying to crouch between the logs, because this animal, under peculiar circumstances, lies down between logs; hence the name Between-the-logs, a literal translation of the Bear tribe, was a distinctive appellation of the tribe to which he belonged, and of which he became a chief.

"As he acted a conspicuous part in the nation, and finally became very eminently useful in the cause of Christianity, the following brief account of his life and death will doubtless be acceptable to the reader. When about nine years of age his father and mother separated, and Between-the-logs remained with his father until the death of the latter, when he returned to his mother among the Wyandots. Soon after this he joined the Indian warriors who were defeated by General Wayne. His prompt obedience to the chief, his enterprising disposition, and the faithful discharge of his duties, called him into public notice, and finally raised him to be a chief of the nation; and the soundness of his judgment, his good memory, and his great powers of eloquence, procured for him the office of chief speaker, and the confidential adviser of the head chief.

"When about twenty-five years of age, he was sent to ascertain the doctrines and pretensions of a reputed Seneca prophet, whose imposture he soon detected, and some years after he went on a similar errand to a noted Shawnee prophet, a brother of the famous Tecumseh, with whom he stayed nearly a year; and being fully convinced himself, he was enabled to convince others, that their pretensions to the spirit of prophecy were all a deception.

"At the commencement of hostilities between this country and Great Britain, in 1812, in company with the head chief of the nation, he attended a great council of the northern Indians, collected to deliberate on the question whether they should join the British against the Americans. Here, although powerfully opposed, and even threatened with death if he did not join them, Between-the-logs utterly refused to take up arms against his American brethren, and exerted all his powers to dissuade the Wyandots from involving themselves in this quarrel. Soon after, he and the majority of the warriors belonging to the Wyandots joined the American standard, and accompanied General Harrison in his invasion of Upper Canada. At the conclusion of the war he settled with his brother at Upper Sandusky, and, like most of the savages, indulged himself in intemperance. In one of his fits of intoxication he unfortunately murdered his wife; but, on coming to himself, the recollection of this horrid deed made such an impression on his mind, that he almost entirely abandoned the use of ardent spirits ever afterward.

"In 1817 Between-the logs had an opportunity of displaying his love of justice in behalf of his nation. The Wyandots being persuaded by intriguing men to sign a treaty for the sale of their lands, contrary to his earnest expostulations, he, in company with some others, undertook a journey to Washington on their own responsibility, without consulting any one. When introduced to the secretary of war, the secretary observed to them that he had received no notice of their coming from any of the government agents. To this Between-the logs replied, with noble freedom, 'We got up and came of ourselves -- we believed the great road was free to us.' He plead the cause of the Indians with such forcible eloquence before the heads of departments at Washington, that they obtained an enlargement of territory, and an increase of their annuities.

"Of his having embraced the gospel, and the aid he rendered to the missionaries to extend its influence among his people, an account has already been given. His understanding being enlightened by divine truth, and his heart moved with compassion for the salvation of his countrymen, he exerted all his powers to bring them to the knowledge of the truth; and such was the success of his efforts, that his brethren gave him license, first to exhort, and then to preach. Some of his speeches before the Ohio conference, which he attended several times, did honor equally to his head and heart, and powerfully enlisted the feelings of the conference in behalf of the mission.

"In the year 1826, he and Mononcue accompanied Mr. Finley on a visit from Sandusky to New York, where they attended several meetings, and among others the anniversary of the Female Missionary Society of New York. Here Between-the-logs spoke with great fire and animation, relating his own experience of divine things, and gave a brief narrative of the work of God among his people. Though he addressed the audience through an interpreter who spoke the English language but imperfectly, yet his speech had a powerful effect upon those who heard him. His voice was musical, his gestures graceful, significant, and dignified, and his whole demeanor bespoke a soul full of lofty ideas and full of God. On one occasion he remarked, that when at home he had been accustomed to be addressed by his brethren, but that since he had come here he had heard nothing that he understood, and added, 'I wonder if the people understand one another', for I see but little effect produced by what is said.' After a few words spoken in reply to this remark, by way of explanation and apology, he kneeled down and offered a most fervent prayer to Almighty God. In this journey, as they passed through the country, they visited Philadelphia, Baltimore, and several of the intervening villages, and held meetings, and took up collections for the benefit of the mission. This tended to excite a missionary spirit among the people, and everywhere Between-the-logs was hailed as a monument of divine mercy and grace, and as a powerful advocate for the cause of Christianity; and he, together with those who accompanied him, left a most favorable impression behind them of the good effects of the gospel on the savage mind and heart.

"It was very evident to all who beheld him that he could not long continue an inhabitant of this world. Already the consumption was making fearful inroads upon his constitution, and his continual labors in the gospel contributed to hasten its progress to its fatal termination. Very soon after his return to his nation he was confined to his bed. Being asked respecting the foundation of his hope, he replied, 'It is in the mercy of God in Christ.' 'I asked him,' says Mr. Gilruth, who was at this time the missionary, 'of his evidence;' he said, 'It is the comfort of the Spirit.' 'I asked him if he was afraid to die;' he said, 'I am not.' Are you resigned to go?' He cried, 'I have felt some desires of the world, but they are all gone, and I now feel willing to die or live, as God sees best.' The day before he died he was visited by Mr. Finley, to whom he expressed his unshaken confidence in God, and a firm hope, through Jesus Christ, of eternal life. He finally died in peace, leaving his nation to mourn the loss of a chief and a minister of Jesus Christ to whom they felt themselves much indebted for his many exertions both for their temporal and spiritual prosperity."

Some new settlements in Upper Canada, which had not hitherto been supplied with the word of life, were this year visited by the Rev. George Poole, as a missionary; these formed the Richmond mission; and Mr. Poole succeeded in procuring twelve preaching places, and two hundred Church members were returned on the Minutes for the next year. The work of God in the older circuits and

stations was this year very generally in a prosperous state. Among other places which had been visited with the reviving influences of God’s Spirit, the city of New York shared in a considerable degree. Last year a new church had been erected in Willett Street, which was dedicated to the service of Almighty God on May the 7th by Bishop McKendree, and was now well filled with attentive hearers. The congregation in this place had been raised chiefly by the labors of local preachers, assisted occasionally by the preachers stationed in New York, who held their meetings in a private room, then in a school-room, when in 1819 they occupied a mission-house in Broome Street, which had been built by the mission board of the Presbyterian Church, for the purpose of instructing profligate females; but this plan not succeeding according to the benevolent design of its patrons, the house was rented to our trustees, and the appointment was taken into the regular plan, and supplied by the stationed preachers.

God honored this place by giving sanction to the labors of his servants; and in 1823 a gracious work commenced, which had continued with more or less success until the time of which we now speak. Since the new house had been occupied the work of formation had much increased, so that about one hundred and twenty bad been added to the church from the month of June to February. Gracious seasons of refreshing were also blessing the other churches of the city during the year, so that about three hundred and sixty were added to the Church, including white and colored.

It seems that very considerable accessions had been made to the church in the city of New Haven during the years of 1826 and 1827, under the labors of the Rev. Heman Bangs; and as this is a very important position in the state of Connecticut, perhaps a short narrative of the work in this place may not be unacceptable to the reader. New Haven, indeed, may be considered the Athens of this part of New England, being delightfully situated at the head of a convenient harbor, on a sandy plain, just at the termination of those high bluffs called "East and West Rocks," which rise to the height of about four hundred feet, from the summit of which the admirer of natural scenery, beautified by the works of art, may have an extensive and charming view of the surrounding country, the city, the harbor, and the neighboring villages. Here, amidst artificial groves, which render New Haven one of the most rural and pleasant cities on the continent, Yale College rears its stately buildings, together with churches and other public as well as private edifices.

We have already seen that the Rev. Jesse Lee, as early as 1789, visited this place; but the first class was formed by the Rev. Daniel Ostrander, who entered the traveling ministry in 1793, and has continued from that time to this in the itinerant field. This was in the year 1795; and William Thacher and Pember Jocelyn were among the first who joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in New Haven; the former joined the traveling connection in 1797, and has continued a faithful laborer to this day; and the latter became a local preacher, and continued, amidst much opposition, in the early days of Methodism, faithful until death. The first heralds of the cross who visited New Haven found a resting-place in the house of Mr. Gilbert, who, thou dead, yet speaketh in his children and grandchildren, who are following the steps of their sire in the way to heaven, being members of the same Church of which he became an early member and supporter. But though Methodism had this early beginning in New Haven, the number of its disciples was few, and they remained in a feeble state until they were detached from the circuit and organized as a separate station in 1813, and even for some years after their increase was but small. In the succeeding year the Rev. Gad Smith, a young preacher of good talents, remarkable for the purity

of his mind, great simplicity of intention, and fidelity in his work, was stationed in New Haven, and he brought the members into gospel order, built them up in love, and laid a foundation for their future prosperity. Such a laborer, indeed, is rarely found so prudent, so entirely devoted to his work, and so indefatigable in his endeavors to do good to others. But, notwithstanding his pious labors and prudent conduct, the society did not rise into much strength until they succeeded, in 1821 and 1822, by the laudable exertions of the Rev. William Thacher, in building them a commodious house of worship, which was completed and dedicated to God in the spring of 1822, near the termination of Mr. Thacher's labors. During the three years, namely, from 1819 to 1822, the society had increased from thirty-six whites and thirty-five colored to two hundred whites and five colored;4 and they had steadily persevered, enlarging their borders and extending their influence, until this year they numbered two hundred and sixteen whites and two colored. They had been blessed with several powerful revivals, and a considerable accession of members, but the constant emigration to the west bad prevented a proportionate increase to their membership.

Revivals of religion were quite prevalent this year in various places; but as I have heretofore so fully narrated the progress of the work, particularly its commencement in any given place, it is judged inexpedient to enter into further details in this place. The results may be seen by a reference to the general increase. An academy had been commenced at Readfield, under the patronage of the Maine conference, with which manual labor was connected, embracing agricultural and mechanical arts. A benevolent individual consecrated a portion of his wealth, ten thousand dollars, toward the founding of this institution, and it received the sanction of the state by an act of incorporation, under the title of "The Maine Wesleyan Seminary." Here by means of manual labor, the physical as well as mental and moral powers of the student are trained to industry, and thus that sickly constitution, so often the effect of severe study in youth, is prevented, and the "piercing wit and active limb" become mutual aids to each other. In addition to a thorough English education, a regular classical course is pursued, by which the student is fitted to enter college, or upon the more active duties of life.

Sixty-three had located, seventy-seven returned supernumerary, eighty-seven superannuated, one had withdrawn, and six had been expelled. The following had died: -- Archibald McElroy, John Walker, James R. Keach, Arthur McClure, Ellison Taylor, Philip Bruce, James Smith, John Collins, John Creamer, Seth Crowell, John Shaw, and Freeborn Garrettson. In writing some of these names, we can hardly avoid the reflection, how fast, one after another, the aged veterans of Methodism, who saw it in its first glory, and had contributed so much, by their labors and sacrifices, to lay the foundation for its future prosperity, were removed from the earthly to the heavenly tabernacle. Had I the time, how I should delight to linger along their path, mark their progress, often amidst storms of persecution, tears of sorrow, mingled indeed with shouts of triumph, while they held up the banner of the cross to the listening multitudes who hung on their lips for instruction! Those, indeed, were the chivalrous days of Methodism, when Bruce and Garrettson, often side by side, and then again in separate and distant fields of action, were fighting the battles of their Lord, almost single-handed, and crying, with a loud and distinct voice, to sinners to repent and give glory to God. Such were the men, and such their work, that their names will be transmitted to posterity, surrounded with that halo of glory which can be won only by those who have devoted themselves to so noble a work with such a disinterested zeal as shall put to silence that caviling criticism which would transmute a human infirmity into a moral delinquency, and bury

real excellence beneath the rubbish of those imperfections which are inseparable from human beings. For such cavilings we have no fellowship. But for the stern and uncompromising virtues which adorned and fortified the souls of those devoted men of God, several of whose names, accompanied with sketches of their labors and characters, have already been recorded, who first stood on the walls of our Zion, a veneration is felt which it is difficult either to repress or express. Who does not feel the kindlings of gratitude to God for raising up such men, qualifying them for their work, directing and sustaining them in its performance, and then taking them to their final reward?

We trace Philip Bruce back to the persecuted Huguenots, whose ancestors fled to this country to avoid the fury of Louis XIV and his bigoted counselors, who drove those devoted men from the kingdom merely because they would not bow the knee to a wafer god, and acknowledge the pope as the infallible head of the church. His ancestors settled in North Carolina, where Philip was born,5 and in early life, by the assiduity of a pious mother, he was taught the fear of God, experienced a change of heart, and, with her, connected himself with the Methodist societies. In 1781, three years before the organization of our Church, he entered the itinerant field of gospel labor, in which he continued faithful until the day of his death. For forty-five years did he stand as a sentinel the walls of our Zion, giving a faithful warning, to all who came within the sound of his voice, of the dangers of a life of sin, and encouraging those who were attempting to "flee the wrath to come," to seek for shelter under the wing of God’s mercy. During the whole of this time, some periods of which were seasons of no little peril and suffering, Philip Bruce kept his eye fixed steadily upon the "mark of the prize of his high calling," nor deviated from the straightforward path, until he happily reached the goal for which he run. He traveled extensively on various circuits, presided over several districts, and was sometimes spoken of as a suitable person to fill the office of a superintendent; and wherever he traveled, or whatever station he filled, he won the confidence of his brethren by the honest purpose of his heart, the blamelessness of his life, and by the ability and zeal with which he discharged his high and holy duties.

He was not naturally fluent as a speaker. Considered, therefore, simply as a pulpit orator, he had many defects, often hesitating, as though he hardly knew how to give utterance to his thoughts. Yet the evident sincerity of his heart, manifested by the purity of his life, his knowledge of the sacred Scriptures his sound understanding, and prudence of conduct, gave weight to his words, and commanded attention and respect.

If I were to select any traits of character, by which to distinguish him among others, I should say they were meekness and diffidence. These seemed to shine through all his actions, to sit prominently on his countenance, and to dictate and guide him in all he said and did. He thus imbibed the sacred lesson taught by his Lord and Master, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." In his public addresses he was wont to interrupt the regular chain of discourse by putting up a fervent ejaculation to God for divine aid, and for a blessing upon his labors -- a practice which was very common among the older Methodist preachers, arising, no doubt, from a feeling sense of their dependence on God for help. The late Dr. William Phoebus, speaking of Philip Bruce, remarked, that once, while hearing him preach, he began to hesitate, as if at a loss what to say next, and then broke forth in prayer, and finally said to the people, "I beg of you to pray for me, for you know that I cannot preach unless assisted from above." This broke him loose from his embarrassment, and he went on with his discourse, to the astonishment of all present. At other

times there was an air of pleasantness -- not trifling -- arising, apparently, from the buoyancy of his spirits, which made him extremely agreeable to those intimately acquainted with him, but which sometimes presented him unfavorably to others. With him, however, all was sincerity, aiming constantly to benefit his fellow-men by the best means he could select. In 1817, with much reluctance, as though unwilling to acknowledge himself outdone by any, he took a superannuated relation, and removed soon after to Elk river, in the state of Tennessee, and spent the remainder of his days there with his aged mother and his brethren. Ascertaining that it was his intention to move to that part of the country, his brethren in the Virginia conference, many of whom had been raised under his fostering care, affectionately and earnestly requested him to remain among them, which, however, he respectfully declined. And nothing can more strikingly show the strength of their affection for him, and evince the high estimation in which he was held, than the fact, that not long before his death the Virginia conference sent him an invitation to pay them a friendly visit, that they might once more mingle their prayers and praise together. This also he declined in the following words: --

"Many affectionate ties bind me to the Virginia conference. Your expressions of good-will have awakened the tenderest friendships of my soul; but it is very probable that I shall never see you again; for though in my zeal I sometimes try to preach, my preaching is like old Priam's dart -- thrown by an arm enfeebled with age. Indeed, my work is well nigh done, and I am waiting in glorious expectation for my change to come; for I have not labored and suffered for naught, nor followed a cunningly devised fable." Not long after, his expectation, in regard to his departure to another world, was realized. On the 10th of May, 1826, at the house of his brother, Mr. Joel Bruce, who lived in the county of Giles, Tennessee, this tried veteran of Christ died in the triumph of faith, surrounded by his friends, sealing by his dying testimony the truth and power of that religion which he had recommended to others for forty-five years. The name of Freeborn Garrettson is familiar to most of my readers. Of the early days of his ministry, and of the sufferings he endured in the cause of his Divine Master, as well as his success in winning souls to Christ, an ample account has been given in the preceding volumes of this History; and those who wish to see these things in a more full and minute detain, are referred to his biography, which has been published and extensively circulated.

He may be said to have been one of the early pioneers of Methodism in this country, for he joined the itinerant connection in 1775, when only twenty-three years of age, and was employed for many years in forming new circuits and districts, in which he was eminently useful. At the time of his admission into the itinerant ranks, in 1775, the number of preachers was only 19, and members in the societies 3,145; and at the time of his death, in 1827, these had increased to 1,642 preachers, and Church members 421,105; and perhaps no individual preacher contributed more, if indeed as much, to promote this spread of the work, than the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson. Young, vigorous, unreservedly devoted to God, and exceedingly zealous for the salvation of souls, wherever he went he carried the flame of divine love with him, breathing it out in the most pointed and earnest appeals to the consciences of sinners, and in the soothing words of promise and encouragement to mourning penitents. Nor was he less earnest in pressing believers forward in the path of humble obedience, that they might attain the heights and depths of redeeming love. From his entrance upon this work until 1784 he traveled extensively through the states of North and South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland -- his native state -- Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey; and in all these

states he preached the word with peculiar success, thousands hanging upon his lips with eager attention, and hundreds also bearing witness to the truths he delivered by the reformation which was effected in their hearts and lives through his instrumentality. And though his enemies thought to confine him in the prisons to which they committed him "for the testimony of Jesus," they were disappointed in their expectation by the overruling providence of God, so that even their wrath "was made to praise him." In those places where he so labored and suffered, the name of Freeborn Garrettson was long remembered by many of the first generation of Methodists, associated with the grateful recollection that he was their spiritual father; and on his subsequent visits, when time had wrinkled his brows and they had grown old in the service of their Lord and Master, the fires of their first love were enkindled afresh, and they mingled their songs of thanksgiving together for the "former and the latter rains" of divine grace. How sweet were these recollections!

He was one of the little veteran band that so nobly withstood the innovators upon Wesleyan Methodism in 1778 and 1779, when it required all the united wisdom, prudence, forbearance, and cautious foresight of Asbury and his associates, who stood by him, to check the froward zeal of those who would run before they were sent, to lay on hands suddenly, and to administer the ordinances without proper authority. He stood firm to his purpose, and assisted in keeping the ship to her moorings, until the Christmas conference furnished her with suitable rigging, and set her afloat, properly manned and officered, with well-authenticated certificates of their character and authority to act as her commanders and conductors.

Garrettson was also among those memorable men to whom Dr. Coke first unfolded the plan devised by Wesley for the organization of the Methodist societies in America into a church. At the request of Asbury and Coke, he "went," says the latter, "like an arrow," to call the preachers together in the city of Baltimore on the 25th of December, 1754, where they matured those plans and adopted those measures which have proved such a lasting blessing to the Methodist community in this country. In the midst of this assembly, which, though few in numbers, was composed of some of the choicest spirits of the age, stood Garrettson, young, ardent, full of zeal for God, and giving his counsel in favor of the system of rules, orders, and ordinances submitted to them by Coke, under the sanction of Wesley. With Asbury, Dickens, Reed, Gill, Pedicord, Ware, Tunnell, Phoebus, and others, of precious memory, fathers in our Israel, he commingled his prayers and counsels, and thus contributed to lay, deep and wide, the foundation of that spiritual edifice which, by the blessing of God on their labors, even he lived to see neared in beauty and glory, and under whose roof many a wanderer has sought shelter and rest.

He was also the first Methodist preacher in this country who went on a foreign mission. Having received the order of an elder at the Christmas conference, and being solicited by Dr. Coke to embark on a mission to Nova Scotia, he cheerfully relinquished home and kindred, and went to that distant province of the British empire to carry the glad tidings of salvation to the lost. Here, amid summer’s heat and winter’s cold, and sometimes hunger and thirst, be continued about two years, traveling extensively, preaching the word with diligence, and rejoicing over penitent sinners who were returning to God; and such was their affection and respect for his character, that, had they won his consent, they would most gladly have retained him as their permanent superintendent, and that, too, under the sanction of both Wesley and Coke. But his Lord had other work for him to do. Not long after his return from Nova Scotia, namely, in 1755, Mr. Garrettson

penetrated through the country north of the city of New York, on both sides the Hudson river, where the voice of a Methodist preacher was never before heard. Here, in the character of a presiding elder, he gave direction to the labors of several young preachers, who spread themselves through the country, north and south, reaching even to Vermont, proclaiming, in all places where they went, the unsearchable riches of Christ. By these labors a foundation was laid for that work of God in those more northern states of the confederacy which has since spread so gloriously among the people. But we cannot follow him in all his useful movements, from one year to another, through the different parts of the country. Suffice it to say here, that he continued with unabated ardor and diligence in his Master's work until the year 1817, when, contrary to his wishes, for he seemed loath to believe himself unable to perform efficient service, he was returned a supernumerary. This, however, by no means abridged his labors. Though cut loose from the regular work, he still pursued the path of usefulness, making occasional excursions east and west, north and south, exhibiting the same fervor of spirit, the same breathing after immortality and eternal life, by which he had ever been characterized. In 1791 Mr. Garrettson saw fit to exchange the single for a married life, and his choice fell upon a woman, Miss Catharine Livingston, of Rhinebeck, N.Y., who was every way fitted, both from education and piety, to assist him in the grand work in which he had engaged. This also furnished him with means to preach the gospel without fee or reward, as well as to exhibit the hospitalities of a liberal mind, and thereby to fulfill the apostolic precept, "For a bishop" (or elder) "must be given to hospitality." From the time of his settlement at Rhinebeck, where he located his family, his house and heart were open to receive and welcome the messengers of God; and around his hospitable board have they often, from year to year, mingled their friendly souls in conversation, prayer, and praise; nor could these guests depart without carrying with them grateful recollections of the gospel simplicity, courtesy, and liberality with which they had been entertained. But the time at last arrived when this man of God, one of the patriarchs of American Methodism, must resign up his breath to God who gave it. In the seventy-sixth year of his age, and fifty-second of his ministry, he ended his days in peace, surrounded by his friends, and consoled by the hope of everlasting life. In contemplating the character of Mr. Garrettson, we may behold a cluster of those excellences which dignify and adorn the man and the minister, and which qualify him for usefulness in the world. But that which eminently distinguished him, both in public and private, was the simplicity, or singleness of heart, with which he deported himself on all occasions. This sterling virtue kept him at an equal distance from the corrodings of jealousy and the repinings of suspicion. A single desire to know the good and the right way, to walk in it himself, and induce others to follow his example, most evidently characterized his mind, and guided him in all his proceedings. This singleness of heart, which had its seat in pure love to God and man, first led him forth in search of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, sustained him under his labors and trials, kept him humble in the midst of his prosperity, and in seasons of popularity among the friends of the cause in which he was engaged. No one could be long in his company, nor often hear him preach, without perceiving this honest simplicity of intention shining out among the other graces of his mind, guiding and actuating the entire man in all his movements. And this arose from the purity of his heart and the sanctity of his life. For no man, I presume to say, ever gave more irrefutable evidence of the holiness of his heart and the blamelessness of his life, from the time of his entrance on his Christian course; about fifty-two years of which were spent as a public ambassador of Christ, than Freeborn Garrettson. What a living and speaking comment this upon the pure doctrines of Jesus Christ! His action in the pulpit

was not graceful, though it was solemn and impressive. His sermons were sometimes enlivened by anecdotes of a character calculated to illustrate the points he was aiming to establish. He was likewise deficient in systematic arrangement and logical precision. This deficiency, however, was more than made up by the pointedness of his appeals to the conscience, the aptness of his illustrations from Scripture, the manner in which he explained and enforced the depth of Christian experience, and the holy fervor of spirit with which he delivered himself on all occasions. Like most other extemporaneous speakers, his mind sometimes seemed barren, and he failed, apparently for want of words, to express that on which his understanding appeared to be laboring. At other times his heart appeared full, his mind luminous, and he would pour forth a stream of gospel truth which abundantly refreshed the souls of God’s people with the "living waters." And although his gesticulations were somewhat awkward, and his voice at times unmusical, especially when raised to a high key, there was that in his manner and matter which always rendered his preaching entertaining and useful; and seldom did the hearer tire under his administration of the word of life -- point, pathos, and variety generally characterizing all his discourses.

Mr. Garrettson was a great friend to all our institutions, literary and religious. To the American Bible Society, and to our missionary and tract societies, he was a liberal contributor and a firm advocate. Nor were the worn-out preachers, their widows and orphans, forgotten in his benefactions. When acting in the capacity of a presiding elder, I have known him receive, and then give away to some poor preacher, his wife, or some dependent widow, his share of the quarterly allowance, as well as make special efforts among our more wealthy members and friends to replenish the funds instituted for these needy and deserving objects. But he has gone to his reward; and this record is made as a small tribute of respect to one who is dear in the recollections of many, in whose friendship the writer had the honor and happiness of sharing, whose example he would remember to imitate and transmit to others, that they may profit by calling it to recollection when he who now writes shall mingle his ashes with all that remains earthly of Garrettson, and his spirit, redeemed and purified by the blood of the Lamb, shall mingle -- O, may it be so! -- with his around the throne of God for ever.

Two of the others who had taken their flight to another world deserve a passing notice.

James Smith, of the Baltimore conference, when he ended his race, was comparatively young in the ministry. At the age of forty-three or forty-our, after having discharged the duties of an itinerant minister for twenty-four years, he departed in great peace of mind, in the city of Baltimore, surrounded by his Christian friends and brethren.

He was a man of strong powers of mind, of a warm heart, and a cultivated intellect. His natural vivacity sometimes gave place to deep gloom, which almost unfitted him for the duties of his station, and made him a little burdensome to his friends. These temporary depressions of spirit, however, were but occasional spots which appeared to obscure the brilliancy of a mind well stored with useful knowledge, and to oppress a heart generally overflowing with the. kindliest feelings toward his brethren and friends. As a minister of Jesus Christ, he was a workman that needed not to be ashamed. He rose with the dignity of the subject which he attempted to explain, and sometimes spoke with an eloquence, energy, and pathos, which, while it delighted the hearer, filled him with adoring gratitude to that God who had given his servant the power thus to persuade sinners to be reconciled to God. He was therefore powerful in the pulpit, and strenuous in his

endeavors to advance the cause of Jesus Christ. In the midst of the discussions which arose on the appointment of presiding elders, and other collateral subjects, which either directly or indirectly grew out of that, our brother Smith took a deep interest, being an advocate of what was considered the popular side of that question. Being young, ardent, full of zeal for any cause he might espouse, he has been heard sometimes on the floor of the General Conference in such strains of impassioned eloquence, that one would think it hardly possible to resist the force of his arguments and the directness of his appeals. But there was a particular excellence which mingled itself with all these debates. With whatever fervor of spirit, warmth of zeal, or power of argument he might enter the arena of controversy on these subjects, he always concluded with an expression of his perfect fellowship for those who dissented from him, and of his unabated attachment to the rules and constitution of the Church of his choice. I remember to have heard him on one of these occasions, I think it was in the year 1816, when, after running through the field of argument and illustration, to sustain his positions, and to prostrate, if possible, his antagonists, he concluded with these words: -- "If any man consider me his enemy because I differ from him in opinion, I want not that man for my friend."

These words, delivered, apparently, with a heart overflowing with feelings of kindness toward all men, left an impression upon all minds, I should think, if I may judge others by myself, as favorable to the speaker's heart and affections, as did his arguments upon those who were most partial to his views. I remember well that Bishop McKendree, who was pointedly opposed to the theory of brother Smith, and who had heard some cutting remarks in the course of the speech, a few minutes only after this peroration was pronounced, took the orator in his arms in the most affectionate manner, as a token, I supposed, of his fellowship and kindly feelings.

It was thought, however, by some of his intimate friends, that these discussions, which were continued in various forms, from one year to another, until they terminated at the Conference of 1825, so wore upon the nervous system of Mr. Smith that it accelerated the disease of which he died. His sensitive mind and warmth of affection led him to espouse any cause in which he engaged with the enthusiasm of an able advocate, and his delicate nerves vibrated under the continual irritation produced by coming in constant collision with other minds equal to his own, and with other arguments with which he found it difficult to grapple with success. He therefore finally sunk under the pressure of those causes, which surrounded him, and was consumed by the fires which burned within him. But that same talent which qualified him for a powerful debater enabled him to shine in the pulpit, and to develop the truths of the gospel with clearness and precision. If there was any fault in the style of his pulpit eloquence, it consisted in an apparent effort at originality, and a labor after a diction somewhat pompous, instead of being entirely natural, plain, and pointed. This caused an occasional obscurity, painful to the hearer, and which prevented the full flow of truth from entering the understanding and the heart.

It could not be otherwise than that a man thus constituted should be amiable in his manners. Brother Smith, indeed, possessed the social qualities in a high degree, and was therefore a pleasant and edifying companion, and warm in his attachments. And nothing would tend so quickly and so effectually to relieve his soul from the burden of melancholy to which I have alluded as social intercourse, when some anecdote happily introduced would drive away the demon of gloom which occasionally hovered over his mind, and restore him to his wonted cheerfulness and colloquial vivacity.

There were also a candor and frankness in his disposition and communications which at once allayed all suspicions of his intentions, and threw him into your arms "as a brother beloved." No double-meaning phrases, no studied ambiguity, like the responses of the heathen oracles, which might be susceptible of an interpretation to suit the occasion, marked and debased the conversation or conduct of James Smith. When you heard his words you knew his heart. When you received his declaration you had a pledge of his sentiments in the sincerity and candor with which he spoke, and therefore always felt yourself safe in his society, and no less pleased than edified by his conversation.

It is indeed pleasant to linger along the path of such men, and call to our recollection those excellences which beautified their character, and made them so estimable in their day and generation. But we must check the current of our thoughts, and give place to some others equally entitled to notice, while we may be allowed to anticipate the day when, unencumbered by those infirmities "which flesh is heir to," kindred spirits shall mingle their songs together around the throne of God and the Lamb.

Seth Crowell was another who died in the meridian of life, and left behind him memorials of his fidelity in the cause of God. He entered the traveling ministry in 1801, and finished his course in the twenty-fifth year of his public labors. In the early days of his ministry he volunteered his services for Upper Canada, where he exhibited those talents for preaching, and that ardency of zeal, which much endeared him to the people in that province; and he left behind him many witnesses, converted under his preaching, of the power and skill with which he wielded "the sword of the Spirit." In 1806 and 1807 he was stationed in the city of New York, under the charge of the Rev. Aaron Hunt. Here a revival of religion commenced, such, I believe, as had never before been seen or felt in that city, and brother Crowell was one of the most active instruments by which it was promoted. It was during this powerful revival that the practice of inviting penitent sinners to come to the altar for prayers was first introduced. The honor of doing this, if I am rightly informed, belongs to brother A. Hunt, who resorted to it to prevent the confusion arising from praying for them in different parts of the church at the same time. In the midst of the shakings and tremblings among the congregations during this great work, Seth Crowell was eminently useful, preaching with the "Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God, and accompanying all his efforts with mighty prayer and faith. But his great exertions and his abstemious manner of living soon made inroads upon his physical constitution, and this produced often a depression of spirits which rendered him sometimes quite unhappy. In consequence of these things he was obliged at times to remit his regular preaching, and seek to recruit his exhausted strength in a more retired sphere of labor.

When, however, in the vigor of his strength, the warmth of his affections and his longing desires for the salvation of souls led him forth with great zeal, both in and out of the pulpit, and he sometimes preached with a power and eloquence which overwhelmed his congregations "with speechless awe and silent love." Nor was it mere declamation. His sermons were sometimes deeply argumentative, and his positions supported by Scripture texts so appositely, that it amounted to a moral demonstration of their truth; and not infrequently sinners would be constrained to cry aloud for mercy while he was making his searching appeals to their consciences. His preaching was frequently of a controversial character. Against the peculiarities of Calvinism and Unversalism he bore a strong and pointed testimony, delighting to exhibit the universal love of God to man on the

one hand, and the great danger of abusing it on the other, by obstinately refusing to comply with the conditions of the gospel And his sermons on these occasions were sometimes delivered with great point and power, and could not do otherwise than offend those who tenaciously held the sentiments which he opposed. That the indulgence of this spirit of controversy had an unfavorable bearing some times upon the tranquillity of his mind I think was evident; and hence he affords an example of the danger to be apprehended from carrying on a theological warfare on doctrinal points, lest it contract the heart, and degenerate into a querulous disposition respecting points of more minor importance than those which first awakened the Spirit of discussion.

This, together with the many bodily infirmities which brother Crowell suffered toward the close of his life, no doubt, at times, interrupted that sweet flow of brotherly affection which binds the hearts of brethren together in the bundle of life, and leads to that reciprocity of those kindlier feelings which render social intercourse so agreeable and edifying.

He has, however, gone to his rest. He lingered for several months under a slowly wasting disease, during which patience and resignation were exemplified in an eminent degree, and his soul was buoyed up with the blissful prospect of entering into life eternal. He left behind him many warm and admiring friends who had been profited by his ministry. If he had enemies he forgave them; nor could they suffer their disaffection to follow him beyond the tomb. The grace of God in Christ at last gave him a victory over the sting of death, and transmitted his soul to the regions of the just. And whatever infirmities may have occasionally eclipsed the glory of his character, human sympathy ceases to weep over them in view of the many excellences which beautified his mind, inspired as they were by that grace which carried him through the storms of life safely to the harbor of eternal rest. Nor will this record be misinterpreted by those who were acquainted with the intimate relation sometimes subsisting between the writer and his deceased friend; while to others it is enough to say, that death not only dissolved all earthly ties, but was also a period of cementing that union of spirit which, it is humbly hoped, will be more fully consummated in the kingdom of glory and of God.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 327,932; Last Year: 309,550; Increase: 18,382 -- Colored This Year: 54,065; Last Year: 51,334; Increase: 2,731 -- Total This Year: 381,997; Last Year: 360,884 -- Increase: 21,113 -- Preachers This Year: 1,576; Last Year: 1,406; Increase: 170.

Among the colored members above enumerated are included five hundred and twenty-three Indians, all in Upper Canada except one; but there were many more converted Indians than are here reported. It seems that at this time the conferences were not in the habit generally of returning the number of Indian converts separately in the Minutes; and as the reports of the Missionary Society were all consumed in the disastrous fire of the Book Concern in 1836, it is not now possible to ascertain their exact number at that time.

ENDNOTES

1 In the reception of Mr. Summerfield the New York conference recognized the principle, that the regulations of Methodism in one part of the world are to be respected in every other part. According to a rule of the English and Irish conferences, a preacher remains on trial four years before he is admitted into full connection; but in the United States his probation ends with two years, when he is eligible to be admitted and ordained a deacon. Mr. Summerfield had traveled

three years on trial in the Irish conference, and of course had but one year more to complete his probation; he was accordingly received by the New York conference as having but one year more to serve as a preacher on trial. Hence in 1822 he was admitted into full connection and ordained a deacon, according to the usages of our Church. And in 1824, having served two years as a deacon with fidelity and success, he was elected and ordained an elder.

2 See Methodist Magazine for 1828, p.349.

3 So it is stated in the published account of his life; but it is believed he must have been born somewhat earlier.

4 The reason of this decrease of colored members is, that that they had joined the secession which has been before noticed.

5 It is much regretted that the day and year of his birth, and his age at the time of his death, are not given in his memoir.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume III -- Book V Volume III, Published in 1841 (From The Year 1816 To The Year 1828)

CHAPTER 9 The General Conference of 1828 This conference convened in the city of Pittsburgh, May 1, 1828. Five bishops, namely, McKendree, George, Roberts, Soule, and Hedding, were present, and the conference was opened by Bishop McKendree, with reading the Scriptures, singing, and prayer, after which Dr. Ruter, book agent at Cincinnati, was elected secretary. The following is a list of the delegates who composed this conference: --

New York Conference:1 Heman Bangs, Nathan Bangs, Thomas Burch, Laban Clark, John Emory, Buel Goodsell, Samuel Luckey, Stephen Martindale, Daniel Ostrander, Lewis Pease, Phineas Rice, Marvin Richardson, Peter P. Sandford, Arnold Scholefield, Tobias Spicer, Henry Stead, John B. Stratten, James Youngs.

New England Conference: John Adams, Lewis Bates, Isaac Bonny, Daniel Dorchester, Daniel Fillmore, Wilbur Fisk, John Hardy, Benjamin Hoyt, Edward Hyde, John Lindsey, John Lord, Joseph Merrill, Timothy Merritt, George Pickering, Thomas Pierce, Jacob Sanborn, Joseph White.

Maine Conference: David Kilbourn, Stephen Lovell, Heman Nickerson, Elisha Streeter, Eleazar Wells, Ephraim Wiley.

Genesee Conference: Horace Agard, Israel Chamberlain, John Dempster, Isaac Grant, Loring Grant, James Hall, George Harmon, Jonathan Huestis, Josiah Keyes, Gideon Lanning, Ralph Lanning, Seth Mattison, Edmond O'Fling, Zechariah Paddock, Robert Parker, George Peck, Morgan Sherman, Manley Tooker.

Canada Conference: Samuel Belton, Wyatt Chamberlain, John Ryerson, William Ryerson, William Slater.

Pittsburgh Conference: Henry B. Bascom, Charles Elliott, Thornton Fleming, Henry Furlong, William Lambdin, Daniel Limerick, James Moore, David Sharp, Asa Shinn, William Stevens.

Ohio Conference: Russel Bigelow, John Brown, John Collins, Moses Crume, James B. Finley, Greenbury R. Jones, James Quinn, Leroy Swormstedt, John F. Wright, David Young, Jacob Young.

Missouri Conference: Jesse Haile, Andrew Monroe.

Illinois Conference: James Armstrong, Peter Cartwright, John Dew, Charles Holliday, John Strange, Samuel H. Thompson.

Kentucky Conference: William Adams, Peter Akers, Benjamin T. Crouch, George C. Light, Marcus Lindsey, Henry McDaniel, George W. McNelly, Thomas A. Morris, Jonathan Stamper, Richard Tidings, John Tivis.

Holston Conference: James Cumming, William S. Manson, Samuel Patton, William Patton, Elbert F. Sevier, Thomas Stringfield, Thomas Wilkerson.

Tennessee Conference: Joshua Butcher, James Gwin, John Holland, James McFerrin, William McMahon, Francis A. Owen, Robert Paine, Ashley B. Roszell, Finch P. Scruggs.

Mississippi Conference: John C. Burruss, Benjamin M. Drake, Thomas Griffin, Robert L. Kennon, Barnabas Pipkin, William Winans

South Carolina Conference: Robert Adams, James O. Andrew, William Arnold, Henry Bass, William Capers, Samuel Dunwody, Andrew Hamill, George Hill, Samuel K. Hodges, William M. Kennedy, Malcom McPherson, Lovick Pierce, Elijah Sinclair.

Virginia Conference: Moses Brock, Joseph Carson, Thomas Crowder, Peter Doub, John Early, Daniel Hall, Henry Holmes, Caleb Leach, Hezekiah G. Leigh, Lewis Skidmore.

Baltimore Conference: John Davis, Christopher Frye, Joseph Frye, Job Guest, James M. Hanson, Andrew Hemphill, Marmaduke Pierce, Nelson Reed, Stephen G. Roszel, Henry Smith, Beverly Waugh, Joshua Wells.

Philadelphia Conference: Walter Burrows, Ezekiel Cooper, David Daily, Manning Force, Solomon Higgins, William Leonard, Joseph Lybrand, Lawrence McCombs, Thomas Neal, Charles Pittman, John Potts, James Smith, John Smith, Lot Warfield, George Woolley.

After the organization of the conference the following address was received from the bishops, and referred to appropriate committees: --

"Dear Brethren: -- It is our bounden duty to join in devout and grateful acknowledgments to the Father of mercies, whose gracious providence has preserved us in all our ways, and especially through the toils and dangers which have attended our journey from different and distant parts of the United States to this place. And while we acknowledge with gratitude the past interpositions of divine agency, let us unite in humble and fervent prayer for the influence of the Holy Spirit to guide us in all our deliberations, and to preserve us and the whole Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bonds of peace.

"During the last four years it has pleased the great Head of the church to continue his heavenly benediction on our Zion. The work has been greatly extended; many new circuits and districts have been formed in different parts of our vast field of labor; but yet there is room, and pressing calls for much greater enlargement are constantly made.

"The great and extensive revivals of religion which we have experienced the last three years through almost every part of the work, furnish additional proof that God’s design in raising up the preachers called Methodists, in America, was to reform the continent, and ’spread Scripture holiness over these lands.’ These revivals have been the nurseries of the Church and of the ministry.

"Perhaps it deserves to be regarded as an extraordinary interposition of the divine mercy in behalf of the Church, that the year ending with this date has been peculiarly distinguished by the abundant outpourings of the Holy Spirit, and the increase both in the ministry and membership.

"While we are fully persuaded that, under God, our itinerant system has been the most effectual means of carrying on this great and blessed work, we recommend it to you to guard against whatever measures may have a tendency to weaken the energies of this system, or to locality in any department of the traveling ministry.

"Our missionary work has been greatly increased since the last session of the General Conference. Many parts of our extensive frontiers and newly acquired territories have received the gospel of salvation by the labors of missionaries. The importance and necessity of maintaining this efficient missionary system are sufficiently demonstrated by the blessed effects which it has produced. vast regions of country, almost entirely destitute of the gospel ministry, have by this means, and at a small expense from the missionary funds, been formed into circuits, and embraced in our regular work.

"Missions have been established in several Indian nations, most of which have succeeded beyond our highest expectations. And although, in some cases, we have had much to discourage us, and many difficulties to encounter and overcome in the prosecution of this work, we consider it of indispensable obligation to continue our efforts with increasing interest, for the salvation of this forlorn and afflicted people.

"Our attention has been called to South America, and to the American colony and surrounding nations in Africa. But hitherto we have not been able to send missionaries to either place.

"We invite the attention of the General Conference to this important subject. And while we cannot but regard the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church as a very efficient auxiliary to our itinerant system, and happily calculated to diffuse the blessings of the gospel among the poor and destitute, we recommend it as a subject of inquiry whether it be necessary to adopt any further measures to render this important institution more extensive and harmonious in its membership, and more abundant and permanent in its resources; and if any, what measures will be best calculated to promote these desirable ends.

"Since the last session of this body, the 'Sunday School Union and Tract Societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church have assumed an important and interesting character, and appear to promise great and lasting benefits to the community in general, and to the rising generation in particular. Your wisdom will dictate wherein it is necessary to give any additional direction and support to these benevolent and growing institutions.

"As the right of all the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church to trial and appeal, as prescribed in the form of Discipline, is sacredly secured by the acts of the General Conference of 1808, it may not be improper to institute an inquiry, at the present session, whether any rule in the Discipline may be construed or applied so as to militate against suck acts; and if so, remedy the evil.

"We invite your attention to a careful examination of the administration of the government, to see if it has been in accordance with the strictness and purity of our system.

"Through a combination of circumstances, we have failed to comply with the instructions of the last General Conference relative to the appointment of a delegate to the British conference. We deeply regret this failure. And it would be far more afflictive were we not assured that it has not been

occasioned, in the least degree, by any want of affection and respect for our British brethren, or any indisposition to continue that medium of intercourse with them. We therefore recommend it to you to supply our lack of service by appointing, in such a manner as you shall judge proper, a representative and messenger to visit the British conference at its next session.

"May the God of peace be with you, and with the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ committed to your care.

"Yours with affection and esteem in the bonds of the gospel."

There were several important matters which came up for adjudication before this conference, affecting both the doctrines and government of the Church, as well as the character of some individuals. The first -- that which affected the doctrines of the Church -- was presented in an appeal, by the Rev. Joshua Randell, from a decision of the New England conference, by which he had been expelled for holding and propagating doctrines inconsistent with our acknowledged standards

1. In denying that the transgressions of the law, to which we are personally responsible, have had any atonement made for them by Christ.

2. Maintaining that the infinite claims of justice upon the transgressor of the divine law may, upon the condition of the mere acts of the transgressor himself, be relinquished and given up, and the transgressor pardoned without an atonement." On these two specifications, both of which the defendant acknowledged that he held, the New England conference had first suspended him, and given him one year to reflect, and, if convinced of his error, to retract; and then, on finding that, at the end of the year, he persisted in his belief in these two propositions, and had endeavored to sustain them, both from the pulpit and the press, they had expelled him from the Church. From this solemn decision he had appealed to this General Conference, where he appeared in his own defense, and was allowed to vindicate his views to his entire satisfaction, it being stated in the journal of the General Conference that "he considered the case as having been fairly represented, and that he had nothing in particular to add." The respondent to Mr. Randell, on behalf of the New England conference, was the Rev. Wilbur Fisk, whose able argument carried a full conviction to the judgments of all, with one solitary exception, that the above propositions contained doctrines adverse to the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that the proceedings of the New England conference on the case had been legal and orderly. After a full, and, as was acknowledged by the defendant himself, an impartial examination and hearing of the case, the decree of the New England conference was affirmed by a vote of one hundred and sixty-four out of one hundred and sixty-five who were present and voted on the question, two members, at their own request, being excused from voting either way.

It appears that Bishop Hedding had been misrepresented in a paper published by the Reformers, called "Mutual Rights."2 This arose out of an address which he delivered to the Pittsburgh conference, in Washington, Pa., August 22d, 1826, on the duty of its members in reference to the discussions with which some portions of the Church were then much agitated on the subject of a church reform, then in contemplation by a number of individuals. This address, which gave offense to those who were in favor of the proposed measures of the "Reformers," so called, had been reported by one of the members of said conference, in the "Mutual Rights," and sentiments

imputed to Bishop Hedding which he disavowed, as injurious to his character. He had accordingly written to the "Mutual Rights," contradicting the slanderous misrepresentation, and demanding reparation. This not being satisfactorily done by the offending brother, the bishop felt it to be his duty to present the subject to this General Conference, and to request that it might be investigated; and hence the whole affair was referred to the committee on the episcopacy, before whom the bishop, the writer of the offensive article, and the delegates of the Pittsburgh conference appeared; and after a full examination of the entire subject, they came to the following conclusion: That, after an interview with the person who wrote the article in the "Mutual Rights," and the delegates of the Pittsburgh conference, in whose presence the bishop had delivered the address respecting which the offensive article had been written, and hearing all that could be said by the parties concerned, it was believed that the writer had injuriously misrepresented Bishop Hedding in what he had published. This the writer himself; after hearing the explanations of the bishop, frankly acknowledged, and acquiesced in the decision of the committee respecting its injustice, and the propriety of making reparation by publishing the report of the committee, which report concludes in these words: -- "That the address of Bishop Hedding, as recollected by himself and the delegates of the Pittsburgh annual conference, not only was not deserving of censure, but such as the circumstances of the case rendered it his official duty to deliver." As an act of justice to Bishop Hedding, the entire report, as adopted by the conference, was published in the Christian Advocate and Journal, and may be seen in that paper for May 30, 1828.

Another subject of a more general character, and of no little importance, came up for consideration before this conference. We have already seen that the Canada brethren had manifested much dissatisfaction on account of the relation which they sustained to us, and the desire they had manifested at times to become independent. This desire, however, did not arise out of any dissatisfaction with the conduct of the brethren in the United States toward them, but chiefly from the opposition evinced by statesmen in Upper Canada to their being subject to the control of a foreign ecclesiastical head, over which the civil authorities of Canada could exercise no jurisdiction; and as most of the preachers in Canada were formerly from the United States, and all of them subject to an ecclesiastical jurisdiction in another nation, it was contended by the Canadian authorities that they had no sufficient guarantee for their allegiance to the crown of Great Britain, and to the civil regulations of Canada; and hence the Methodist ministers in Canada had suffered civil disabilities, and had not been allowed to celebrate the rites of matrimony, not even for their own members.

These arguments, and others of a similar character, had induced the Canada conference, which assembled in Hallowell, in 1824, when Bishops George and Hedding were both with them, to memorialize the several annual conferences in the United States on the subject of establishing an independent church in Upper Canada, requesting them to recommend the measure to this General Conference. Accordingly, the subject came up at this time by a memorial from the Canada conference, which was presented by its delegates, and referred to a committee. The deliberations of the conference resulted in the adoption of the following preamble and report: --

"Whereas the Canada annual conference, situated in the province of Upper Canada, under a foreign government, have, in their memorial, presented to this conference the disabilities under which they labor, in consequence of their union with a foreign ecclesiastical government, and setting forth their desire to be set off as a separate church establishment: and whereas this

General Conference disclaim all right to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction under such circumstances, except by mutual agreement: --

1. Resolved, therefore, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, that the compact existing between the Canada annual conference and the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States be, and hereby is, dissolved by mutual consent.

2. That our superintendents or superintendent be, and hereby are, respectfully advised and requested to ordain such person as may be elected by the Canada conference a superintendent for the Canada connection.

3. That we do hereby recommend to our brethren in Canada to adopt the form of government of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, with such modifications as their particular relations shall render necessary.

4. That we do hereby express to our Canada brethren our sincere desire that the most friendly feeling may exist between them and the connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

5. That the claims of the Canada conference on our Book Concern and chartered fund, and any other claims they may suppose they justly have, shall be left open for the negotiation and adjustment between the two connections."

It was afterward resolved that the managers of our Missionary Society should he allowed to appropriate the sum of seven hundred dollars annually for the support of the Indian missions in Upper Canada.

There is an important principle involved in the above agreement to dissolve the connection which had so long subsisted between the Methodists in the United States and Upper Canada, which it seems expedient to explain. When the subject first came up for consideration it was contended, and the committee to whom it was first referred so reported, which report was approved of by a vote of the General Conference, that we had no constitutional right to set off the brethren in Upper Canada as an independent body, because the terms of the compact by which we existed as a General Conference made it obligatory on us, as a delegated body, to preserve the union entire, and not to break up the Church into separate fragments. Hence, to grant the prayer of the memorialists, by a solemn act of legislation, would be giving sanction to a principle, and setting a precedent for future General Conferences, of a dangerous character -- of such a character as might tend ultimately to the dissolution of the ecclesiastical body, which would be, in fact and form, contravening the very object for which we were constituted a delegated conference, this object being a preservation, and not a destruction or dissolution of the union. These arguments appeared so forcible to the first committee, and to the conference, that the idea of granting them a separate organization on the principle of abstract and independent legislation was abandoned as altogether indefensible, being contrary to the constitutional compact. But still feeling a desire to grant, in some way, that which the Canada brethren so earnestly requested, and for which they pleaded with much zeal, and even with most pathetic appeals to our sympathies, it was suggested by a very intelligent member of the General Conference, the late Bishop Emory, that the preachers who went to Canada from the United States went in the first instance as missionaries, and that ever afterward, whenever additional help was needed, Bishop Asbury and his successors asked for

volunteers, not claiming the right to send them, in the same authoritative manner in which they were sent to the different parts of the United States and territories; hence it followed that the compact between us and our brethren in Canada was altogether of a voluntary character -- we had offered them our services, and they had accepted them and therefore, as the time had arrived when they were no longer willing to receive or accept of our labors and superintendence, they had a perfect right to request us to withdraw our services, and we the same right to withhold them. This presented the subject in a new and very clear light, and it seemed perfectly compatible with our powers as a delegated conference, and their privileges as a part of the same body, thus connected by a voluntary and conditional compact, either expressed or implied, to dissolve the connection subsisting between us, without any dereliction of duty or forfeiture of privilege on either part. It was on this principle alone that the above agreement was based.

It will be perceived, therefore, that this mutual agreement to dissolve the connection heretofore subsisting between the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and the Canada conference cannot, with justice, be pleaded for setting off any one conference or any number of annual conferences in the United States, as their relations to each other and to the General Conference are quite dissimilar to that which bound the Canada conference to us. The conferences in the United States are all bound together by one sacred compact, and the severing any one from the main body would partake of the same suicidal character as to sever a sound limb from the body. The General Conference has no right, no authority, thus "to scatter, tear, and slay" the body which they are solemnly bound to keep together, to nourish, to protect, and to preserve in one harmonious whole. If an annual conference declare itself independent, out of the pale of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it is its own act exclusively, and therefore the responsibility rests upon itself alone, for which the General Conference cannot be held accountable, because it was not a participant in the separation. I do not say that the General Conference may not disown an annual conference, should it become corrupt in doctrine, in moral discipline, or in religious practice. Should, for instance, an annual conference, by an act of the majority of its members, abjure any of our essential doctrines, such as the atonement of Christ, or justification by faith, or should renounce the sacrament of baptism or the Lord’s supper, or strike from its moral code any of the precepts of morality recognized in our general rules, it might become the duty of the General Conference to interpose its high authority, and cut off; or at least to withdraw its fellowship from, the offending members. Yet such an act of excision, or of disnaturalization, if I may so call it, could be justified only as a dernier resort, when all other means had failed to reclaim the delinquents from their wanderings-just as the surgeon’s knife is to be withheld until mortification endangers the life of the patient, when death or amputation becomes the sole alternative. How else can the Church be preserved-supposing such a case of delinquency to exist -- from a general putrefaction? For if a majority of an annual conference become heterodox in doctrine, or morally corrupt in practice, the minority cannot control them, cannot call them to an account, condemn, and expel them. And in this case, must the majority of the annual conferences, and perhaps also a respectable minority of that very annual conference, be compelled to hold these apostates from truth and righteousness in the bosom of their fellowship, to treat them in all respects as brethren beloved, and publicly to recognize them as such in their public and authorized documents? This would be a hard case indeed! an alternative to which no ecclesiastical body should be compelled to submit.

These remarks are made to prevent any misconception respecting the principle on which the above connection was dissolved, and to show that it forms no precedent for a dissolution of the connection now subsisting between the annual and General Conferences in the United States. Analogical arguments, to he conclusive, must be drawn from analogous facts or circumstances, and not from contrast, or opposing facts or circumstances. And the relation subsisting between the annual conferences in the United States to each other, and between them and the General Conference, stands in contrast with the relation which did subsist between the Canada and the General Conference; and therefore no analogical argument can be drawn from the mutual agreement by which this relation was dissolved in favor of dissolving the connection now subsisting between the annual conferences in the United States, by a solemn act of legislation on the part of the General Conference, except for the reasons above assigned; and those reasons, let it be remembered, make the contrast still greater between the two acts, and justify the difference of the procedure; for the dissolution of the compact between us and the Canada brethren from the jurisdiction only, Christian fellowship still subsisting -- while the supposed act of excision would be a withdrawing of Christian fellowship from the offending members.

There were also other great principles of ecclesiastical economy involved in the above resolutions, which it may be well to develop and dwell upon for a moment.

It has been seen that the General Conference authorized our bishops, or any one of them, to ordain a bishop for Upper Canada. It was also provided that if such bishop should be so ordained his episcopal jurisdiction should be limited to Canada -- that he should not be allowed to exercise his functions in the United States. In favor of both of these positions, namely, the ordaining a bishop for Canada, and then restricting him in his episcopal functions to that country, or the not allowing him to exercise them in the United States, the following precedents were adduced

It was pleaded that the bishops of England ordained bishops for the United States exclusively: that when Wesley and others ordained Dr. Coke, it was only for the United States: and hence neither of these functionaries was allowed to exercise his episcopal powers in Great Britain. Here, then, were precedents, from our own and another church, both for consecrating men for other countries, and for restricting them, in the exercise of their official duties, to the countries for which they were designated in their certificates of ordination. It was furthermore stated -- and truly too -- that when it was contemplated to consecrate the late Rev. Freeborn Garrettson a bishop for Nova Scotia and the West Indies, it was proposed to withhold from him the privilege of being a bishop, by virtue of that election and consecration, in the United States. And as to ordaining men for foreign countries, on special occasions, church history was full of examples, all which might be adduced as sound precedents for the authority conferred upon our bishops in regard to ordaining a man on whom the choice of the Canada conference might fall for their superintendent.

There was one other subject disposed of at this conference, more important, in many respects, than either of those already mentioned, inasmuch as it involved principles and measures which must, had they been carried into effect, have produced a radical change in both the legislative and executive departments of our church government, and were therefore considered revolutionary in their character and tendency. That this subject may be placed in such a point of light as to be clearly understood, it is necessary to enter into some historical details.

We have already seen that there had been considerable uneasiness manifested in some portions of our Church on the subject of a lay representation in the General Conference. At first the discussions upon this subject were confined to private circles, though some of the traveling and more of the local preachers, as well as a few of the lay members, had been and were now of the opinion that such a representation ought to be granted. At length, however, those who were most zealous for this measure commenced a periodical publication, called the "Wesleyan Repository," in which they began, at first with apparent moderation, to discuss the principle of lay representation. The headquarters of this publication, which was commenced in 1820, were Trenton, in the state of New Jersey; and though its editor was known, the greater portion of its writers appeared under the mask of fictitious signatures, by which they eluded individual responsibility. The strictures upon our church government, which became uncommonly severe, were more calculated to irritate the passions than to convince the judgment, and they soon degenerated into personal attacks, in which some of our bishops and chief ministers were dragged before the public in a way to injure their character, and consequently to circumscribe their usefulness. And though we had a monthly periodical, it was thought, by the most judicious among our ministers and people, that its columns ought not to be occupied with such a thriftless controversy, much less as the writers in the Repository lay concealed beneath fictitious signatures; and moreover, instead of sober argument, they frequently resorted to biting sarcasm, to personal criminations, and to a caricature of some of those institutions which we, as a church, had long held sacred. Though it was believed that most of the writers in the Repository were local preachers and laymen, yet it was known that several of the traveling preachers themselves were favorable to the proposed innovation, and therefore lent the weight of their influence in its behalf by writing occasionally for its columns. With a view to concentrate their strength and harmonize their views as much as possible, the friends of the innovating measures formed a "Union Society" in the city of Baltimore, elected officers and a committee of correspondence, inviting all who were with them in sentiment to form auxiliary societies throughout the country, that there might be a general cooperation among the advocates of lay representation.

Things went on in this way until near the meeting of the General Conference in 1824, when the male members of the Church in the city of Baltimore, which had now become the center of operations for the "Reformers," with a view to allay, if possible, the heat of party spirit, were called together for the purpose of attempting to effect a compromise. This effort grew out of the fact that there were many conflicting opinions among those who were favorable to "reform," and a strong desire among the warm friends of the Church to avert the calamities of a separation, which they saw must inevitably result from this feverish excitement, unless some pacific measures could be adopted to cool it down. In this meeting it was proposed, as the basis of the compromise, to memorialize the General Conference on the subject of a lay delegation, provided the question of a right to such representation were waived, and the privilege should be asked on the ground of expediency alone. This was assented to by the leading men among the "Reformers," and a memorial was accordingly prepared in accordance with these views, the part relating to lay representation being expressed in the following words

"Under these views we have been led to turn our attention to the subject of a lay delegation to the General Conference. In presenting this subject to your consideration, we would waive all that might be urged on the natural or abstract right of the membership to this privilege. We are content

to admit that all governments, whether civil or ecclesiastical, ought to be founded, not on considerations growing out of abstract rights, but on expediency, that being always the right government which best secures the interests of the whole community. With regard to the expediency of the measure, then, we may urge that such a delegation would bring into the conference much information with regard to the temporal affairs of the Church which the ministry cannot well be supposed to possess. They would feel less delicacy in originating and proposing measures for the relief of the preachers' families than the preachers themselves, as they could not be subjected thereby to the imputation of interested motives, and they would, by being distributed everywhere among the membership, and, by their personal exertions and influence, the success of such measures. and awaken, more generally than has hitherto been done, the attention of the Methodist community to the great interests of the Church.

"We are aware of the constitutional objections to this change in our economy. We know that you are clearly prohibited, by the very first article of the constitution under which you act, from adding to the conference any delegation not provided for in that rule; but we believe that an Opinion expressed by the conference, and approved by the episcopacy, would induce the annual conferences to make the necessary alteration in the constitution: and we submit the consideration of the whole matter to the calm and deliberate attention which we are persuaded its importance demands, and which we do not doubt it will receive, determined cheerfully and cordially to submit to your decision."

During the session of the conference in May, 1824, some of the "Reformers," becoming dissatisfied with the principles of the compromise, formed a separate society, and claimed a representation in the General Conference as a natural and social right, deprecating its rejection by the General Conference as an evidence of a spiritual despotism utterly unworthy the character of the ministry of Jesus Christ. To effect their objects with the greater certainty, they immediately issued proposals for establishing a new periodical, called "Mutual Rights," its title being well calculated to impress the unwary reader with the erroneous idea, so much harped upon in those days of agitation, that the "Reformers" were the exclusive advocates of the "rights" of the lay members of our Church. The formation of these societies, and the publication of this periodical, in which most inflammatory declamations were poured forth against our ministry and established usages, were considered, by the more sober and thinking part of our community, as incorporating the very schism in the Church which they deprecated as one of the worst evils with which it could be afflicted, except, indeed, its inundation by immorality. The fate, however, of those measures, so far as the General Conference was concerned, has been seen in the account given of the doings of the General Conference in 1824. The prayer of the memorialists was rejected, and the ground of right to a lay representation denied.

It is not necessary to trace the history of this unpleasant affair, in all its minutiae and various ramifications over different parts of the country, from that time until the secession was fully consummated, and a separate community established. Suffice it therefore to say, that matters went on from bad to worse, until it became necessary, in the opinion of those who watched over the Church in Baltimore, to save it and its institutions from dissolution, to call the malcontents to an account for their conduct. At the Baltimore conference, in 1827, the Rev. D. B. Dorsey, who had connected himself with the "Reformers," was arraigned before his conference for recommending and circulating the "Mutual Rights;" and during the course of his trial he avowed such principles,

and made such declarations respecting his independent rights, as could not be approved of by the conference; and they therefore requested, as the mildest punishment they could inflict, the bishop to leave him without an’ appointment for one year. From this decision be took an appeal to the General Conference; but, instead of waiting patiently until this ultimate decision could he had, he loudly censured the acts of the Baltimore conference in reference to his case, through the columns of "Mutual Rights," thus appealing from the constituted authorities of the Church to the popular voice, invoking from this very equivocal tribunal a decision in his favor. All this had a tendency to widen the breach, and to make a reconciliation the more hopeless.

One of the leading champions of this "reform" was the Rev. Nicholas Snethen, who had been a very useful and influential traveling preacher for many years, but was now located, and lived in the neighborhood of Baltimore. He was recognized as the writer of several articles, under fictitious signatures, in the "Wesleyan Repository" and "Mutual Rights," in which severe strictures were made upon our economy; and now, since action had commenced against the malcontents in the Baltimore conference, by which it was foreseen that others, implicated in the same warfare against the authorities and usages of the Church, would be called to answer for their conduct, Mr. Snethen avowed himself the author of these pieces, vauntingly placed himself in front of the reforming ranks, shouting, "Onward! brethren; onward!" pledging himself to suffer or triumph with them-thus exhibiting a spirit of moral heroism worthy of a better cause, and more befitting other times than those which called only for a bloodless warfare. This conduct, however, brought forth a champion from the ranks of the local preachers, who, as he himself acknowledged, had been friendly to some slight changes in the structure of our church government, provided such changes should be thought expedient by the General Conference, and could be effected by pacific measures, without producing a convulsion in the body. He had long been an intimate and personal friend of Mr. Snethen, and therefore it was with some reluctance that he yielded to the paramount duty of sacrificing his personal friendship for the purpose of defending the "ancient landmarks," and of placing himself in opposition to the innovations in contemplation by the "Reformers." I allude to Doctor Thomas E. Bond, of Baltimore. In 1827 he published his "Appeal to the Methodists, in Opposition to the Changes proposed in their Church Government," which was prefaced by an epistolary dedication to the Rev. Nicholas Snethen. This appeared to take Mr. Snethen and his friends by surprise, as they seemed to expect least of all such an appeal from the source whence it came, while it acted as a charm upon the minds of those who loved the institutions and prayed for the perpetual union and prosperity of the Church. The able manner in which Dr. Bond treated the subject, and refuted the arguments and exposed the pretensions of the "Reformers," showed that he had thoroughly digested the questions at issue, had "counted the cost," and was prepared to abide the results of the contest. Having, therefore, balanced the weight of the arguments for and against the proposed innovation, and fully made up a judgment in favor of the Church and its institutions, he wrote from the fullness of his heart, and the following passage from his "Appeal" will show the confident manner in which he anticipated the result of this severe and long-protracted struggle. After giving the outlines of our church government, and the general system of itinerant operations, he introduces the following spirited remarks

"It is this system of church government, so simple in its structure and efficient in its operation, so tested by experience and justified by success, and, withal, so sanctified in the feelings and affections of our people by the endearing associations with which it stands connected, that we are

now called upon, not to modify, but radically to change; not to mend in some of its less important details, but to alter in its fundamental principles, and to substitute for it a speculative scheme of government, inapplicable to our circumstances, and therefore impossible to be effected; -- a scheme founded on abstract notions of natural rights, but which none of its advocates have attempted to exhibit in any visible or tangible shape or form, and therefore they have carefully avoided the discussion of the parts most important in any system, namely, its practicability and expediency. Happy for us, the scheme is not new. In Europe it has had its day of noise and strife, and has ceased to agitate the Church; and in this country Mr. O'Kelly started it more than thirty years ago, left the Church, and drew off several of the preachers with him. He lived to see the ruins of the visionary fabric he had labored to erect, and to mourn over the desolation which he had brought upon that part of the vineyard, where, as a Methodist preacher, he so faithfully and usefully labored, but which he had afterward turned out to be ravaged and destroyed by "republican Methodism." The formidable phalanx now arrayed against us may, it is feared, do us much harm, but we will take protection under that strong Arm which has heretofore defended us. Hitherto our history has shown that the great Head of the church had appointed us for a special work in his vineyard, and that he superintended and directed the labor, opening the way before our ministry, qualifying and sustaining them in their arduous labors, under circumstances which would have discouraged any but such as were assured of divine support, and who were prepared to believe in hope against hope. Great conflicts await us, but out of all the Lord will deliver us: while he is with us, the more we are oppressed, the more we shall multiply and grow. Let us be faithful to our calling -- let us watch unto prayer. The present revolutionary scheme of our disaffected members will share the fate of all the similar projects which have preceded it. Our children will read of it in history, but, ere they take our places in the Church, the troubled waters shall have heard the voice of Him who says to the winds and the waves, Be still, and they obey his voice." This strong appeal, written throughout with a spirit and a style of argument which did honor to the head and heart of its author, exerted a most salutary influence upon all who had not fully committed themselves to the principles and measures of the "Reformers." While it drew the lines more distinctly which divided the contending parties, it tended to cement closer together those who had so long cherished the institutions of Methodism, and to arm them with weapons of defense. Hitherto there had been some neutralists, who were looking on, not indeed with cold indifference, but with an anxious suspense, watching the result of the movements, and weighing the respective arguments, for the purpose of forming an intelligent decision. These acknowledged themselves much indebted to Dr. Bond for throwing additional light upon this subject, and thus saving them from lapsing into the sickly spirit of "reform:" and the Appeal doubtless had the greater weight for having been issued from the local instead of the traveling ministry, because it was supposed that the former had identified themselves more generally than the latter with the reforming party. In the mean time a pamphlet had been issued, as was erroneously supposed at the time under the sanction of the Union Society, by Rev. Alexander McCaine,3 in which he attempted to prove that surreptitious means had been used in the establishment of our Church; that our episcopacy was spurious, gotten lip against the wishes and without the knowledge of Mr. Wesley thus impugning the motives and impeaching the honesty of such men as Coke, Asbury, Whatcoat, and all those venerable men who composed the General Conference of 1784, and assisted in the organization of our Church. This appeared to be the climax of absurdities in the doings of the adverse party, and to reveal designs upon the integrity and the very existence of our episcopacy, and all those

regulations and usages which connected themselves with that feature of our Church economy, which could not be any longer tolerated with impunity. It was therefore thought, by the friends of order and the advocates of our Church authorities, that the time had fully come for action -- for such action as should test the solidity of our ecclesiastical structure, and the permanency of its foundation.

Indeed, these ungenerous attacks upon the best of men, most of whom were now dead, and therefore could not speak for themselves, aroused the spirits of those who had hitherto stood aloof from this controversy, and decided some who had been supposed to be friendly to the spirit of "reform" against the measure, inasmuch as they judged -- most conclusively, it is thought -- that a cause which could enlist in its behalf such unjustifiable means of attack and defense, could not be holy and good. This brought forth the late Bishop Emory, who was at that time an assistant book agent; and the Defense of our Fathers" proved his competency to defend those venerable men from the aspersions thrown upon them by the author of the "History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy." This masterly defense of the men who organized our Church, and of ’he organization itself, its principles, measures, and results, procured for its author that need of praise that is justly due to a faithful son of the Church, to an acute and able reasoner, and to one whose industry in collecting and arranging facts for the basis of his argumentation evinced the depth and accuracy of his research. This production was therefore hailed with delight by the friends of the Church, and tended, with some others of a similar character, published about the same time, to prove that the theory of the "Reformers" was a visionary scheme, indefensible by any arguments drawn from Scripture, from the ancient records of the Church, from the analogy of things, or from any improper means used in either the organization or naming of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This complete refutation of the groundless assumptions of Mr. McCaine’s book was read with great avidity, and procured for its author the thanks of all who wished well to our Zion. But while these things tended to calm the fears of the timid, to confirm the wavering in the truth, and to strengthen the hearts of all who had heretofore reposed in the wisdom and integrity of our fathers in the gospel, they by no means satisfied those who appeared bent on carrying their measures at all hazards. On the contrary, their leaders seemed to struggle hard under disappointment, and to redouble their efforts in rallying their forces, and preparing them for victory or defeat, whenever the warfare should terminate. They had heretofore most evidently calculated on carrying with them many who now took a decided stand against them. This was a source of severe disappointment.4 These showed, when the alternative was presented to their choice, that they loved Methodism better than its proposed substitute. The former they had tried, and found savory and healthful; the latter was an untried experiment, and judging from the fruit it had already produced, that it was not "good to make one wise, they declined the proffered boon as unworthy of their acceptance.

But, as before remarked, things had arrived at such a crisis in the city of Baltimore that it became necessary, in the opinion of those to whom the oversight of the Church was committed, to call some of the most prominent lenders in the work of "reform" to an account before the proper tribunals. Hence eleven local preachers and twenty-five lay members were regularly cited to appear before the preacher in charge of the Baltimore station, the Rev. James M. Hanson, to answer to the charge of "inveighing against our Discipline," "speaking evil of our ministers," and of violating the rule "which prohibits the members of the Church from doing harm, and requires them to avoid evil of every kind." This general charge was amply sustained by a reference to the

Constitution of the Union Society, by numerous quotations from "Mutual Rights," and from other sources. The delinquents were therefore found guilty, the local preachers were suspended, and the lay members expelled. While, however, these transactions were pending, before any decision was had, Dr. Bond once more threw himself in the gap, and endeavored to avert the suspended blow by acting the part of a mediator between the parties, and, if possible, thereby to prevent the storm from bursting on their heads. His efforts, however, were unavailing; the trials proceeded, and the penalty of the Discipline was finally inflicted, though with great reluctance, upon all those who had been summoned to trial, with the exception of two lay members.

One of the specifications which was adduced to sustain the general charge was their advising and requesting the publication of the "History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy;" but as it was found, on further examination, that its author alone was responsible for writing and publishing that work, this specification was withdrawn in reference to all the accused except Alexander McCaine; and he therefore was summoned before another committee of local preachers, tried separately, found guilty, and accordingly suspended. As the district conference of local preachers had been dissolved, the trial of those who had been suspended by the committee of inquiry was brought before the quarterly meeting conference of the Baltimore station. But before the trial proceeded to an issue, Dr. J. C. Green, of Virginia, volunteered his services as a mediator between the parties, and the trial was postponed for the purpose of giving ample time to test the result of the negotiation. It was, however, unavailing, and the trial proceeded, and terminated in finding guilty, and the consequent expulsion, of the accused local preachers; and as they did not appeal, as they might, to the annual conference, they were finally considered no longer members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. To the lay members who had been found guilty before the act of expulsion was consummated, and with a view, if possible, to save himself and those concerned from the sad alternative which awaited them, Mr. Hanson sent each of the persons the following letter:-- "Baltimore, Nov. 23,1827.

"Brother: You are hereby informed that the committee appointed to investigate the charges and specifications lately preferred against you as a member of the Union Society, have, by a unanimous decision, found you guilty of said charges, together with the first and second specifications.

"Most willingly, my brother, would I now dispense with the painful duty which devolves upon me, could I do so as an honest man, and without abandoning the interests of the Church. Or had I cause to believe that the course now about to be pursued would lead you to make suitable reparation to that Church whose ministers and discipline you have assailed and misrepresented, and to abstain from the like offenses against the peace and harmony of said Church in future, it would tend more than any other consideration to diminish the painfulness of the obligation which my present situation imposes upon me. For, be assured, whatever my own opinion may be in regard to the course you may have pursued, as a member of t Union society, I most devoutly wish and pray that you may be led by the good Spirit of God to take those steps which will leave you still in the possession of all the rights and privileges of church fellowship.

"You must be considered as the arbiter of your own destiny, my brother, in this matter. Your brethren of the committee, men who fear God, whose characters stand fair in the Church, and who have disclaimed all feeling of personal hostility against you, have pronounced you, as a member of

the Union society, guilty of endeavoring to sow dissensions in the society or Church of which you are a member, and of speaking evil of the ministers of said Church. To this conclusion they have been conducted by a careful and patient examination of the documents put into their hands as evidence in the case. You must, therefore, plainly perceive, that the only ground on which expulsion from the Church can be avoided is an abandonment of the Union Society, with assurances that you will give no aid in future to any publication or measure calculated to cast reproach upon our ministers, or occasion breach of union among our members.

"Be good enough then, my brother, to answer in writing the following plain and simple questions: --
1. Will you withdraw forthwith from the Union Society?

2. Will you in future withhold your aid from such publications and measures as are calculated to cast reproach upon our ministers, and produce breach of union among our members?

"Yours, &c. James M. Hanson.

"P.S. Your answer will be expected in the course of four or five days."

After allowing sufficient time for deliberation, and receiving no answer, nor discovering any symptoms of reconciliation from any quarter, Mr. Hanson was compelled to the act, so exceedingly painful to an administrator of discipline, of pronouncing them excommunicated from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Thus was the separation, so long and so painfully anticipated, notwithstanding all the means used to prevent it, finally consummated, and the Church left to bleed under the wounds afflicted upon her by those whom she had once delighted to honor. In the mean time similar proceedings were had in other places. We have already seen that the Union Society of Baltimore recommended that societies of the like character should be organized wherever a sufficient number ’of persons could be found friendly to the measures of the "Reformers." This recommendation had been complied with in a number of places; and wherever these societies existed, agitations and commotions, similar to those in Baltimore, had been the painful results. Hence, in the states of Tennessee and North Carolina, several members of these Union Societies had been tried and expelled from the Church for their refractory conduct, and for inveighing against the discipline and aspersing the character of the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And in addition to those eleven local preachers and twenty-two laymen who were expelled in Baltimore, about fifty females, friends of the excommunicated brethren, addressed a letter to the ruling preacher, Mr. Hanson, expressing their desire to withdraw from the Church, which they were permitted to do without further trial.

It may be necessary here to correct an erroneous opinion, which prevailed to some extent at the time, respecting the cause of complaint against the "Reformers," as they chose all along to call themselves.

Whoever will consult the writings of those days, in reference to this subject, will find complaints, on the part of the "Reformers," that an attempt was made, by the advocates for the present order of things, to suppress inquiry, to abridge the freedom of speech and of the press, and that these trials were instituted, in part at least, as a punishment for exercising this freedom on the subjects that were then litigated. This was a great mistake. It was for an abuse of this freedom, for indulging in personal criminations, injurious to individual character, that the delinquents were tried and finally condemned. This will appear manifest to every person who will impartially inspect the charges, the

specifications, and the testimony selected from the "Mutual Rights" to support the accusations, and also from the report of the General Conference on petitions and memorials. It was, indeed, expressly is avowed at the time by the prosecutors, and by all who had written on the subject, that they wished to suppress freedom of inquiry, either in writing or speaking, provided only that the debaters would confine their discussions to an investigation of facts and arguments, without impeaching the character and motives of those from whom they dissented.5 The expelled members in the city of Baltimore immediately formed themselves into a society, under the tide of "Associated Methodist Reformers;" and in the month of November, 1827 a convention assembled in that city, composed of ministers and lay delegates who had been elected by the state conventions and Union Societies. This convention prepared a memorial to the General Conference. The memorial was presented, read, and referred to a committee, and the following report, drawn up by the late Bishop Emory, and unanimously adopted by the conference, will show the result:

"The committee to whom were referred certain petitions and memorials, for and against a direct lay and local representation in the General Conference, submit the following report: --

"Of those which propose this revolution in our economy, that which has been received from a convention of certain local preachers and lay members, held in the city of Baltimore in November last, is presumed to embody the general views -- of those who desire this change, and the chief arguments on which they rely. In framing a reply, in the midst of the various and pressing business of a General Conference, it cannot be reasonably expected that we should enter into minute details. Our remarks, of necessity, must be confined to a few leading topics, in condensed, yet, we trust, an intelligible form.

"As to the claim of right to the representation contended for, if it be a right which the claimants are entitled to demand, it must be either a natural or an acquired right. If a natural right, then, being founded in nature, it must be common to men, as men. The foundation of rights in ecclesiastical bodies, in our opinion, rests on a different basis. If it be alleged to be an acquired right, then it must have been acquired either in consequence of becoming Christians or of becoming Methodists. if the former, it devolves on the claimants to prove that this right is conferred by the holy Scriptures, and that they impose on us the corresponding obligation to grant the claim. That it is not' forbidden' in the New Testament is not sufficient; for neither is the contrary 'forbidden.' Or if the latter be alleged, namely, that it has been acquired in consequence of becoming Methodists, then it must have been either by some conventional compact, or by some obligatory principle in the economy of Methodism, to which, as then organized, the claimants voluntarily attached themselves. Neither of these, we believe, either has been or can be shown. And until one at least of these be shown, the claim of right, as such, cannot, we think, have been sustained.

"But do the memorialists mean to say that they are entitled to their claim, as a matter of right, against the judgment and the voice of a confessedly very large majority of their brethren, both of the ministry traveling and local, and also f the lay members? or that in these circumstances, on any ground, the claim ought to be admitted?. We Could not have believed them capable of so Strange a position, had they not declared the opinion as prevailing among themselves, 'that the extension of the principle of representation to the members and the local preachers of the Church, by the General Conference, in compliance with a petition of this kind, at this conjuncture of time,

would do more toward conciliating good feeling, restoring lost confidence among brethren, and confirming wavering minds, on all sides, than any other measure which can be adopted.'

"Now we 'speak advisedly' when we say, that, in our judgment, such a measure, 'at this conjuncture of time,' would have a precisely contrary effect. The ministers assembled in General Conference, coming so recently from all parts of the great field of our missionary labors, and having had, throughout its whole extent, free and constant intercourse both with traveling and local preachers, and also with our lay members, are, certainly, at least as well prepared as the memorialists could have been to form L correct judgment on this point; and their calm and deliberate judgment is clearly and unhesitatingly as above-stated. This we believe, too, to be the true state of the question, after it has been so zealously discussed, on the side of the memorialists, for now nearly eight years'; during almost the whole of which time, until very recently, the discussion has been conducted almost exclusively by their own writers.

"We are aware that it has been assumed, by some at least of those writers, that this repugnance to the change proposed, on the part of so great a proportion both of our local preachers and lay members, to say nothing of the itinerant preachers, is the result of ignorance or want of intellect. This we conceive to be at least not a very modest assumption. Our opinion, on the contrary, is, while we freely admit that there are men of respectable information and intelligence who desire the change, that there are, nevertheless, very many more, of at least equally respectable information and intelligence, who are opposed to it, whether on the ground of right, of consistent practicability, or of utility.

"With regard to our local brethren particularly, it is our decided judgment that the privileges and advantages in which they have participated, in this country, have much rather exceeded than fallen short of what was contemplated in their institution, in the original economy of Methodism, as founded by the venerable Wesley, either in Europe or in America. We cannot but regret to perceive, that the addition of privilege to privilege seems only to have had the effect of exciting some of our brethren to claim still more and more; and now to begin to demand them as matters of positive and inherent right. We are happy to be able to say 'some' only of our local brethren; for of the great body, even of themselves, we believe better things, though we thus speak. If; indeed, our members generally are tired of our missionary and itinerant system, and wish a change, then we could not be surprised if they should desire to introduce into our councils local men, whose views, and feelings, and interests, in the very nature and necessity of things, could not fail to be more local than those of itinerant men. And if to so powerful a local influence should be added, as would be added, the tendencies and temptations to locality which, in despite of all our better convictions, too often exist among ourselves, from domestic and personal considerations of a pressing character, we are free to confess our fears of the dangers to our itinerant economy which, in our opinion, could not fail, in time, to be the result. Now the preservation of the great itinerant system, unimpaired, in all its vital energies, we do conscientiously believe to be essential to the accomplishment of the grand original design of the economy of Methodism, to spread Scriptural holiness over these and other lands.

"The memorialists, we know, disavow any intention or desire to impair those energies, or to injure this system. Be it so. They can, however, only speak for themselves. They know not what may be the views of those who may come after them. And, in any event, our argument is, that the change

proposed would, in its very nature, and from the inevitable connections of causes and effects, tend, gradually perhaps, yet not the less uncontrollably, to the results which we have mentioned.

"We know also that it has been insinuated that we adhere to the continuance of our present polity from motives of personal interest. For protection against such unkindness and injustice we rest on the good sense and candor of the community. It cannot but be well known that our present economy bears with a peculiar severity upon the personal and domestic comforts of the itinerant ministry. And even an enemy could scarcely fail to admit that, were we really ambitious of worldly interest, and of personal ease, and domestic comfort, we might have the discernment to perceive that the surest way to effect these objects would be to effect the changes proposed, and thus to prepare the way for the enjoyment of similar advantages, in these respects, to those now enjoyed by the settled ministry of other churches. And, indeed, were such a change effected, and should we even still continue itinerant, considering that, from the necessity of things, our wealthy and liberal friends would most generally be selected as delegates, we do not doubt that the change proposed might probably tend to increase our temporal comforts. We think this the more probable, because, if such a direct representation of the laity were admitted, their constituents might ultimately become obliged, by some positive provisions, fully to make up and pay whatever allowances might be made to the ministry; which allowances, in this event, might also more properly acquire the nature of a civil obligation. At present our economy knows no such thing. The great Head of the church himself has imposed on us the duty of preaching the gospel, of administering its ordinances, and of maintaining its moral discipline among those over whom the Holy Ghost, in these respects, has made us overseers. Of these also, namely, of gospel doctrines, ordinances, and moral discipline, we do believe that the divinely instituted ministry are the divinely authorized expounders; and that the duty of maintaining them in their purity, and of not permitting our ministrations, in these respects, to be authoritatively controlled by others, does rest upon us with the force of a moral obligation, in the due discharge of which our consciences are involved. It is on this ground that we resist the temptations of temporal advantage which the proposed changes hold out to us.

"On this point we beg, however, that no one may either misunderstand or misrepresent us. We neither claim nor seek to be 'lords over God's heritage.' In the sense of this passage, there is but one Lord and one Lawgiver. We arrogate no authority to enact any laws of our own, either of moral or of civil force. Our commission is to preach the gospel, and to enforce the moral discipline, established by the one Lawgiver, by those spiritual powers vested in us, as subordinate pastors, who watch over souls as they that must give account to the chief Shepherd. We claim no strictly legislative powers, although we grant that the terms 'legislature' and 'legislative' have been sometimes used even among ourselves. In a proper sense, however, they are not strictly applicable to our General Conference. A mistake on this point has probably been the source of much erroneous reasoning, and of some consequent dissatisfaction. Did we claim any authority to enact laws to affect either life or limb, to touch the persons or to tax the property of our members, they ought, unquestionably, to be directly represented among us. But they know we do not. We certainly, then, exercise no civil legislation. As to the moral code, we are subject, equally with themselves, to one only Lord. We have no power to add to, to take from, to alter, or to modify a single item of his statutes. Whether laymen or ministers be the authorized expounders and administrators of those laws, we can confidently rely on the good Christian sense of the great body

of our brethren to judge. These well know, also, that whatever expositions of them we apply to others, the same are applied equally to ourselves, and, in some instances, with peculiar strictness.

"No man is obliged to receive our doctrines merely because we believe and teach them, nor unless they have his own cordial assent. Neither is any man obliged to submit himself to what we believe to be the moral discipline of the gospel, and our duty to enforce, unless he believes it to be so also. In this view, at least, it cannot require any great share of either intelligence or candor to perceive some difference between our spiritual and pastoral oversight and the absolute sway of the ancient 'Druids,' and of the despots of 'Babylon and Egypt,' and of 'India and Tartary.' The subjects of their lawless power became so not by choice, but by birth. Neither had they the means, whatever might have been their desire, of escaping its grasp. Even in more modern days, and under governments comparatively free, the right of expatriation, without the consent of the government, has been denied. We do not subscribe to this doctrine, if applied to either church or state. The right of ecclesiastical expatriation, from any one branch of the Christian church to any other which may be preferred, for grave causes, we have never denied. Nor can we keep, nor are we desirous to keep, any man subject to our authority one moment longer than it is his own pleasure. We advert to this topic with great reluctance, but the memorialists compel us. If they will cease to compare us to despots, to whom we bear no analogy, we shall cease to exhibit the obvious distinction. Till then it is our duty to repel the imputation, so obstructive of our ministry. Expatriation, either civil or ecclesiastical, if we may continue this application of the term, may be painful, and attended with sacrifices. But we should certainly think it preferable to perpetual internal war. If our brethren can live in peace with us, in Christian bonds, we shall sincerely rejoice, and be cordially happy in their society and fellowship. But we entreat them not to keep us embroiled in perpetual strife. Our united energies are needed for higher and nobler purposes.

"We have been repeatedly told, in effect, that the doctrines, the moral discipline, and the peculiar Christian privileges of class meetings, love feasts, &c., in the Methodist Episcopal Church, are approved and esteemed, by the various memorialists themselves, above those of any other branch of the Christian church. Does it not then clearly follow, by their own admission, that, with all the faults of our government, this state of things has been preserved and maintained under the peculiar administrations of our itinerant system? And who will undertake to say that, under a gracious Providence, which has thus led us on, this has not, in a great measure at least, been the result of the distinctness of our polity from that of most other churches? And who will undertake to say that, were the changes proposed adopted, we should not gradually, though at first perhaps almost imperceptibly, begin to go the way of others? We speak to Methodists. They will judge what we say. The moral results of our past and present polity have been tried. Its fruits are before us, and confessed by the world. The experiment proposed, in connection with an essentially itinerant system, is untried. Its results, at best, must be problematical; and, in our opinion, there is no prospect of gain that can justify the hazard.

"With regard to our local brethren particularly, they have themselves explicitly said, that they 'ask for no distinct representation of the local preachers.' So far as this question is concerned, therefore, by their own consent, they can only be regarded as amalgamated with the laity: and our lay brethren, we apprehend, would not readily consent to its being considered in any other light.

"Were we disposed to retort the insinuation of sinister personal motives, how easy would it be for us to suggest that some of our local brethren who have deserted the itinerant field, (perhaps from its toils and privations,) and others who have never been pleased to leave domestic comforts and temporal pursuits to encounter its labors and sacrifices, may be so zealous in accomplishing the proposed change in order to cut up, or to bring down, the itinerant system to a nearer approximation to their temporal convenience. So that, in time, they might come, without the sacrifices at present necessary, to participate both in the pastoral charge, and, alas! in the envied pittance of those who now devote themselves wholly to the work, and are absolutely dependent for daily subsistence on the mere voluntary contributions of those whom they serve: (a check on their power indeed!) Such an imputation would be quite as kind and as true as many of those which are so liberally heaped on us. This course of argumentation, however, we deem unworthy of Christian brethren, and shall leave it for those who think their cause requires it. The man who can believe, or who can endeavor to persuade others, that we adhere to our present itinerant system for the sake of personal convenience, ease, or interest, or with the view of benefiting our posterity more than the posterity of our brethren, maybe pitied, but he places himself beyond the reach either of reasoning or of rebuke.

"The memorialists were sensible that 'a plan' of their proposed changes had been urgently called for, and seem to have been well aware that rational and conscientious men could not feel free to enter upon so great a revolution, in a system of such extent and of such connections, without a plan, clearly and frankly developed, and bearing the marks of having been carefully and judiciously devised. The memorialists indeed say, that, 'independently of other considerations,' they were 'disposed to avoid the attempt to form a plan, out of deference to the General Conference.' It would have been more satisfactory to us to have known what those 'other considerations' were. From some other circumstances, we cannot but apprehend that they probably had more influence in keeping back the expose of 'a plan' than the one mentioned here, of -- 'deference to the General Conference.' On our part, we frankly confess ourselves incompetent to form any satisfactory plan, on any principles which we believe to be equal and efficient, and consistent with the energies and greatest usefulness of our extended missionary system. We think it, therefore, unreasonable, at least, to ask of us to contrive a 'plan.'

"So far as we can judge from any experiment that has been made, in Europe or in America, we cannot perceive any great advantages which could be promised to the Church from the proposed change. Nor has the late convention in Baltimore afforded to our understanding any additional argument for its efficient practicability. Agreeably to the journal of that convention, one hundred persons were appointed to attend it, of whom fifty-seven only did attend, namely, from the state of New York, one; North Carolina, two Ohio, four; District of Columbia, four; Pennsylvania, seven; Virginia, ten; and Maryland, twenty-nine. Now that convention had been urgently called, by repeated public advertisements, and was expected to be held but a few days, to discuss subjects represented as of great importance and deep interest. Liberal invitations were given, and comfortable and free accommodations pledged. Yet, notwithstanding the novelty of the assembly, the pleasantness of the season, and other inviting circumstances, a very few more than one half of the whole number appointed attended. And had it required two-thirds of that number to constitute a quorum, as in our General Conference, after all their labor and expense, no business could have been done, for there would have been no quorum. Of the number that did attend, too, it will be

perceived that a majority of the whole were from the state of Maryland, within which the convention was held; and, including the neighboring District of Columbia, a decisive majority. This exhibits a practical proof that, were a lay delegation even admitted, the consequence would be, that the extremities of our Church would not be, in fact, represented at all, but would be subjected to the overwhelming control of those within the vicinity of the seat of the conference; a state of things which, we believe, is not desirable. This may serve also, perhaps, to account, in some measure, for the great zeal which some of our brethren have exhibited in this cause, particularly in the state of Maryland and the adjoining district, and in the city of Baltimore, where the General Conference has usually been held. Were it established that the General Conference should always be held in St. Louis or New Orleans, or any other remote part, we cannot but think that the zeal of some, in that case, would probably be very much abated. Even they would scarcely be willing to travel so great a distance, at so much expense and loss of time, to remain three or four weeks at a General Conference.

"In another document, issued by the convention above alluded to, they say, 'We have been laboring with great attention and perseverance to put the public in possession of our views as fast as we can.' They have also had in circulation for many years a monthly periodical publication, for the express purpose of diffusing their views and advocating their cause, besides the institution of what have been called Union Societies, and of late a convention. Yet, after all these exertions, the great body of our ministers, both traveling and local, as well as of our members, perhaps not much if any short of one hundred to one, still oppose their wishes. This, as before said, has been assumed to be from ignorance or want of intellect, or from some worse principle. But we believe it to be the result of a firm and deliberate attachment to our existing institutions and economy an attachment which we have the happiness of believing to be increased, rather than diminished, in proportion to the development of the details of any plans which the memorialists have yet seen fit to exhibit. We put it, then, to the good sense, to the Christian candor, and to the calmer and better feelings of our brethren, whether it be not time to cease to agitate and disturb the Church with this controversy? -- at least, if it must be continued, whether it be not time to divest it of that acrimony and virulence which, in too many instances, we fear, has furnished fit matter for the scoff of the infidel and the reproach of common enemies? If this state of things be continued, how can it be said, 'See how these Christians love one another!' It grieves us to think of it. We weep between the porch and the altar; and our cry is, 'Spare, O Lord! spare thy people, and give not thine heritage to this reproach.'

"We know that we have been charged with wishing to suppress free inquiry, and with denying to our ministers and members the liberty of speech and of the press. Our feelings, under such reiterated and widely circulated charges, would tempt us to repel them with strong expressions. If reviled, however, we are resolved not to revile again. But the charge we wholly disavow. Our ministers and members, of every class, are entitled to the full liberty of speech and of the press, equally with any other citizens of the United States, subject solely to the restrictions and responsibilities imposed by the laws of the land, by the obligations of Christianity, and by the existing regulations under which we are voluntarily associated, as Methodists and as Methodist ministers. The rule in our Discipline, 'sec. 7, p.91,' (new edition, p. 88,) of which some of the memorialists complain, never was intended (and we are not aware that it has at any time been officially so construed) to suppress such freedom of inquiry, or to deny such liberty of speech and

of the press; provided such inquiry be conducted, and such liberty be used, in a manner consistent with the above-mentioned obligations. The design of the rule was to guard the peace and union of the Church against any mischievous false brethren, who might be disposed to avail themselves of their place in the bosom of the Church to endeavors to sow dissensions, by inveighing against our doctrines or discipline, in the sense of unchristian railing and violence. Any other construction of it we have never sanctioned, nor will we. In this view of this rule, we cannot consent to its abolition. On the contrary, we regard it as a Christian and useful rule, and particularly necessary, at the present time, for the well-being of the Church. It is aimed against licentiousness, and not against liberty. In the state, as well as in the church, it is found necessary to subject both speech and the press to certain legal responsibilities, which undoubtedly operate as restraints, and tend to guard against licentiousness, by exposing offenders to penalties corresponding to the extent of their abuse of liberty. And we confess ourselves among the number of those who, with statesmen and jurists, as well as divines, maintain that even a despotic government is preferable to a state of unbridled anarchy.

"By insinuations of the above description, and by others of an analogous character, attempts have been made to excite against us the jealousy and suspicion of statesmen and politicians, and of the constituted authorities of the civil government. This low stratagem we have always regarded as peculiarly deserving the rebuke of every generous mind, even among our opponents: and we cannot believe otherwise than that it had its origin either in some distempered mind or some perverted heart. The memorialists wish the government of the Church to be assimilated to that of the state. We think, on the other hand, that as there neither is nor ought to be any connection between church and state, so neither is there any obligation or necessity to conform the government of the one to that of the other. That both their origin and their objects differ; and that to aim at conforming them to each other would be more likely, in the course of human events, to terminate in their amalgamation, than the course of denying such analogy, and maintaining the two jurisdictions on their peculiarly distinctive bases, under regulations adapted to the objects for which they were severally designed. In the instances of civil and religious despotism alluded to by the memorialists, as recorded in history, the powers of church and state were combined, and no means were left to the people of appealing or of escaping from the one or from the other. The first step toward producing such a state of things would be to bring ministers of religion and officers of state into a nearer alliance with each other, and thus gradually to effect an assimilation of views, and feelings, and interests. The way being thus prepared, politicians and statesmen might be introduced into our ecclesiastical councils, and, by a ’mutual’ combination, aid each other in the accumulation of power and influence. We do not affirm that any of the memorialists seriously meditate such designs. But we do say, that, according to our understanding of the natural tendency of things, the change proposed is just such a one as would be most likely to be adopted by men of policy for the accomplishment of such an object; and that, in the present state of the world, nothing would be more impolitic than the continuance of our present economy with any such ambitious schemes in view as some, we fear, and must say, have malevolently insinuated.

"With regard to what have been called ’Union Societies,’ we consider the organization of these distinct bodies within the bosom of the Church as the baneful source of the principal evils which of late have so painfully afflicted and distracted some portions of our charge. Such associations, within the pale of the Church, have arrayed and combined all the workings of the spirit of patty in

their most pernicious and destructive forms. They have drawn a line of separation between those who compose them and their brethren, as organized and systematic adversaries. They have separated chief friends; they have severed the most sacred and endearing ties; and have caused and fomented discord and strife in circles before distinguished for peace and love. And under whatever plausible pretexts they may have been instituted, the Church generally, we believe, has regarded them as calculated, if not designed, either to obstruct the due administration of discipline, by overawing the administration of it, or to prepare an organized secession, in case they should fail in modeling the Church according to their wishes. With these associations numbers, we have no doubt, unwarily became connected at first, from various views, who now feel a difficulty in disentangling themselves. If, however, the real object of their original institution was to secure an identity of views in the communications to be presented to this General Conference, that object having been now accomplished, we affectionately and respectfully submit it to the peacefully disposed among our brethren who may yet compose them, whether there can yet be any remaining obligation to continue in them; and whether, in fact, they ought not now to be dissolved. In our opinion, considering what have been their past operation and effects, the general peace of the Church can never be restored and settled on any firm and lasting basis till this shall be done.

"We might add much more, but the time fails us. We entreat our brethren to be at peace. It is our earnest and sincere desire. In order to it, on our part, we have advised, and do hereby advise and exhort all our brethren, and all our ecclesiastical officers, to cultivate on all occasions the meekness and gentleness of Christ; and to exercise all the lenity, moderation, and forbearance which may be consistent with the purity of our institutions, and the due and firm administration of necessary discipline, the sacrifice of which we could not but deem too costly, even for peace.

"In conclusion, we say to brethren, 'If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye our joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let the peace of God rule in our hearts, to the which also we are called in one body; and let us be thankful. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and any praise, let us think on these things. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from us, with all malice. And 'nay the God of love and peace be with us.' " The following resolutions were adopted also, nearly unanimously: --

"Whereas an unhappy excitement has existed in some parts of our work, in consequence of the organization of what have been called Union Societies, for purposes, and under regulations, believed to be inconsistent with the peace and harmony of the Church; and in relation to the character of much of the matter contained in a certain periodical publication, called 'Mutual Rights,' in regard to which certain expulsions from the Church have taken place: and whereas this General Conference indulges a hope that a mutual desire may exist for conciliation and peace, and is desirous of leaving open a way for the accomplishment of so desirable an object, on safe and equitable principles; therefore, Resolved, &c.,

"1. That in view of the premises, and in the earnest hope that this measure may tend to promote this object, this General Conference affectionately advises that no further proceedings may be had, in any part of our work, against any minister or member of the Methodist Episcopal Church,

on account of any past agency or concern in relation to the above-named periodical, or in relation to any Union Society as above mentioned.

"2. If any persons, expelled as aforesaid, feel free to concede that publications have appeared in said 'Mutual Rights,' the nature and character of which were unjustifiably inflammatory, and do not admit of vindication; and that others, though for want of proper information, or unintentionally, have yet, in fact, misrepresented individuals and facts, and that they regret these things: if it be voluntarily agreed, also, that the Union Societies above alluded to shall be abolished, and the periodical called 'Mutual Rights' be discontinued at the close of the Current volume, which shall be completed with due respect to the conciliatory and pacific design of this arrangement; then this General Conference does hereby give authority for the restoration to their ministry or membership respectively, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, of any person or persons so expelled, as aforesaid; provided this arrangement shall be mutually assented to by any individual or individuals so expelled, and also by the quarterly meeting conference, and the minister or preacher having the charge in any circuit or station within which any such expulsion may have taken place; and that no such minister or preacher shall be obliged, under this arrangement, to restore any such individual as leader of any class or classes, unless in his own discretion he shall judge it proper so to do; and provided also, that it be further mutually agreed that no other periodical publication, to be devoted to the same controversy, shall be established on either side; it being expressly understood, at the same time, that this, if agreed to, will be on the ground, not of any assumption of right to require this, but of mutual consent, for the restoration of peace; and that no individual will be hereby precluded from issuing any publication which he may judge proper, on his own responsibility. It is further understood, that any individual or individuals who may have withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, on account of any proceedings in relation to the premises, may also be restored, by mutual consent, under this arrangement, on the same principles as above stated." This decision, so far as the General Conference was concerned, set the question at rest, giving all concerned distinctly to understand that such a radical change in our government could not be allowed, and therefore all efforts directed to that end were and would be unavailing.

Some have expressed their surprise that the General Conference was so unwilling to yield to the voice of the people! The answer is, that the voice of the people was yielded to, so far as it could be heard and understood. It is believed that nine-tenths of our people throughout the United States, could they have been heard, were decidedly opposed to the innovations which were urged. They were not only contented with the present order of things, but they loved their institutions, venerated their ministers, and were astounded at the bold manner in which they were both assailed from the pulpit and the press. In resisting, therefore, the proposed changes, the conference believed it went with, and not against, the popular voice of the Church; and the result has proved that it was not in error; for it has been fully sustained in its course by the great body of preachers and people in all the annual conferences and throughout the entire Church; and it has, moreover, had the sanction of at least some of the "Reformers" themselves, who have become convinced that they calculated on a higher state of individual and social perfection than they have found attainable, and that it is much easier to shake and uproot established institutions than it is to raise up and render permanent a new order of things truth which should teach all revolutionists the necessity of caution and moderation in their measures.

It will be perceived that one of the resolutions in the above report proposed terms on which the expelled members might be restored to their former standing in the Church. It is not known, however, that any of them availed themselves of this privilege; but, on the contrary, a very considerable number, both in Baltimore and other places, withdrew from the Church, and put themselves under the wing of "reform;" while a few, who still proved refractory, in Cincinnati, Lynchburg, and some other places, were tried and expelled. The exact number lost to the Church I have not been able to ascertain; but by turning to the Minutes of our conferences, and comparing the numbers for 1828 with those for 1829, I find the increase of members to be 29,305,6 and of preachers 175; for 1830 the increase of members is 28,257, and of preachers 83. And as this is quite equal to the usual increase from one year to another, the secession could not have included a great number of either members or preachers. In the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati were found the greatest number of "Reformers."7 Here they organized churches and established congregations in conformity to their improved plan of procedure: but it is believed that in all these as their influence has been on the wane for some time, and that, while several have returned to the Church which they had left, others have become wear and vexed with "reform," being convinced that they calculated too highly on the perfection of human nature not to be disappointed in their expectations.

It seems right, therefore, that the reader may have an intelligent view of the whole matter, that he should be informed what their plans were, that he may perceive the improvements with which they designed to perfect the system adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the month of November of this year the "Associated Methodist Churches" held a convention in the city of Baltimore, at which a provisional government was formed until a constitution and book of discipline could be prepared at a future convention. This convention assembled in the city of Baltimore on the second day of November, 1830, and was composed of an equal number of lay and clerical delegates from several parts of the Union, representing thirteen annual conferences,8 and continued its sessions until the twenty-third of the same month. The convention proceeded to the adoption of a "constitution," the first article of which fixed the title of the new "Association" to be "The Methodist Protestant Church," and the whole community was divided into "districts," "circuits," and "stations;" -- the "districts," comprising the bounds of an annual conference, to be composed of an equal number of ordained itinerant ministers and delegates, elected either from the local preachers or lay members; -- the General Conference was to consist of an equal number of ministers and laymen, to be elected by the annual conferences, and must assemble every seventh year for the transaction of business. The offices of bishop and presiding elder were abolished, and both the annual and General Conferences were to elect their presidents by ballot to preside over their deliberations; and the presidents of annual conferences were also to travel through their districts, to visit all the circuits and stations, and, as far as practicable, to be present at quarterly and camp meetings; -- to ordain, assisted by two or more elders, such as might be duly recommended; to change preachers in the interval of conference, provided their consent be first obtained. The chief points, therefore, in which they differ from us are, that they have abolished episcopacy, and admit laymen to a participation of all the legislative and judicial departments of the government. Class, society, and quarterly meetings, annual and General Conferences, and an itinerant ministry, they have preserved. They also hold fast the fundamental doctrines of our Church and its moral discipline. The verbal alterations which they have introduced into some portions of the prayers, moral and prudential regulations, will not, it is believed, enhance their

worth in the estimation of any sober and enlightened mind. This, however, may be more a matter of taste than of sound verbal criticism, as it is hardly to be supposed that judicious men would alter "the form of sound words" merely for the sake of altering.

Though a separate community was thus established, it was a considerable time before the agitations ceased. It was but natural for those who had withdrawn from the Church to attempt a justification of themselves fore the public by assigning reasons for their proceedings, and by an effort to put their antagonists in the wrong. And as they had a periodical at their. command, writers were not wanting to volunteer their services in defense of their measures, and in opposition to what they considered the objectionable features of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This called for defense on the part of those more immediately implicated by the writers in "Mutual Rights." And as Baltimore had been the chief seat of the controversy from the beginning, and as it was thought not advisable to make the columns of the Christian Advocate and Journal a medium for conducting the controversy, the brethren in that city established a weekly paper, called "The Itinerant," which was devoted especially to the vindication of the government, ministers, and usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church, containing, in the mean time, animadversions upon the newly constituted government, and a replication to the arguments of its advocates in its defense. Many very able pieces appeared from time to time in "The Itinerant," in defense of the proceedings of the authorities of the Church in the city of Baltimore, of the General Conference, and those annual conferences which had acted in the premises. These contributed greatly to settle the questions at issue on a just and firm basis, and to show that these things were susceptible of a Scriptural and rational defense. But the spirit of contention, which had long been impatient of control, at length became wearied, and the combatants gradually retired from the field of controversy, the Itinerant was discontinued, and the Christian Advocate and Journal, which had, indeed, said but little on the subject, proposed a truce, which seemed to be gladly accepted by the dissentient brethren, and they were left to try the strength of their newly formed system without further molestation from their old brethren. On a review of these things, we find much to humble us, and yet much to excite our gratitude. In all struggles of this sort the spirits of men are apt to become less or more exasperated, brotherly love to be diminished, and a strife for the mastery too often usurps the place of a holy contention "for the faith once delivered to the saints." That the present discussion partook more or less of these common defects, on both sides, may be granted, without yielding one iota of the main principles for which we contend. Indeed, truth itself may sometimes have cause to blush for the imperfect and often rude manner in which its disciples attempt to vindicate its injured rights; while error may be defended by the wily arts of its advocates with an assumed meekness and forbearance which may smooth over its rough edges by their ingenious sophistry so effectually as to beguile the simple hearted, until the serpent clasps them in its deceitful and relentless coils. But extricate yourself from its painful grasp, expose its serpentine course, and denounce, in just terms of reprobation, its delusive schemes, and it will throw off its disguise, and pour forth, in blustering terms, its denunciations against you, with a view to blacken your character, and render you odious in the estimation of the wise and good. It will then complain of that very injustice which it attempted to inflict on you, and will repel all complaints of its own unfairness by a repetition of its offensive epithets. Truth, however, has no need to resort to finesse, to intrigue, to epithets of abuse, in its own defense. Though it can never falsify its own principles, nor yield to the demands of error, either in complaisance to its antagonists or to soften the tones of honesty and uprightness with which it utters its sentiments, yet it seeks not to fortify its positions by a resort to

the contemptible arts of sophistry, nor to silence its adversaries by a substitution of personal abuse for arguments. It expresses itself fearlessly and honestly, without disguise or apology, leaving the consequences to its sacred Author.

How far these remarks may apply to those who engaged in the present contest I pretend not to determine. But whatever may have been the defects in the spirit and manner in which the controversy was conducted, we rejoice that it has so far terminated, and that we may now calmly review the past, may apologize for mistakes, forgive injuries, whether real or imaginary, and exercise a mutual spirit of forbearance toward each other. For whatever imperfections of human nature may have been exhibited on either side, we have just cause of humiliation; and while they teach us the infinite value of the atoning blood to cover all such aberrations, they furnish lessons of mutual forbearance and forgiveness. But while this humbling view of the subject deprives us of all just cause of boasting, we may, it is thought, perceive much in the result which should excite our gratitude. To the intelligent friends of our Church organization, of our established and long continued usages and institutions, it gave an opportunity of examining their foundation, of testing their soundness and strength, and of defending them against their assailants. Having proved them susceptible of a Scriptural and rational vindication; we have reason to believe that they became not only better understood, but more highly appreciated and sincerely loved. Experience and practice having furnished us with those weapons of defense to which we might otherwise have remained strange, we have learned the lessons of wisdom from the things we have been called to suffer, and an increased veneration for our cherished institutions has been the beneficial consequence. Greater peace and harmony within our borders succeeded to the storms of agitation and division. Our own Church organization and plans of procedure have been made to appear more excellent from contrasting them with those substituted by the seceding party; and so far as success may be relied upon as a test of the goodness and beneficial tendency of any system of operations, we have no temptation to forsake "the old paths" for the purpose of following in the track of those who have opened the untrodden way of "reform," or to be shaken by the strong "protest" they have entered against our peculiar organization and manner of conducting our affairs. In narrating the facts in this perplexing case I have aimed at historical truth. In doing this I may have wounded the feelings of some who were the more immediate actors in the scenes which have passed before us. This, however, was very far from my intention. I have, indeed, labored most assiduously to present the facts in as inoffensive language as possible, consistently with the demands of impartial history, and therefore hope to escape the censure justly due to those who willfully pervert the truth or misinterpret its language. No will I claim for myself any other apology for unintentional errors than fallible humanity has a right to exact from candid criticism. And now that the struggle is over, may we all, pursuing our respective modes of doing good, "as far as possible, live peaceably with all men." The cause of missions, of education, and of the American Colonization Society, was duly considered, and highly recommended to the approbation and support of our people; and the reports and resolutions in reference to these several subjects no doubt tended much to advance their respective claims upon the public munificence. The constitutional term of Nathan Bangs, as editor and general book agent, having expired, he was elected editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, and John Emory was appointed to succeed him in the general editorship and agency, and Beverly Waugh was elected the assistant of Dr. Emory. The following provision was made respecting the appointment of trustees: -- When a new board of trustees is to be created, it shall be done (except in those states and territories where the

statutes provide differently) by the appointment of the preacher in charge, or by the presiding elder;" -- thus approving the election of trustees according to the laws of the respective states and territories, and at the same time providing for the manner in which they shall be appointed where no such laws exist. The Rev. William Capers was elected as a delegate to represent us to the Wesleyan Methodist conference in the succeeding month of July, and he bore with him the following address: --

ADDRESS Of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference.

"Beloved Fathers and Brethren: -- Having, by the mercy of our God, brought the present session of our General Conference near to a close, we avail ourselves of this opportunity to convey to you our Christian salutations. Our beloved brother, the Rev. William Capers, whom we have elected as our representative to your conference, will more fully explain to you the state of our affairs, the strong affection we bear to you as our elder brethren, and our fervent desire to preserve with you the bond of peace and the unity of the Spirit.

"Our present session, though laborious, and involving various and important points vitally connected with the interests of our Church, and of Christianity generally, has been marked with general harmony of feeling and mutual good-will; and we humbly trust it will tend to strengthen the bond of union among ourselves, more fully to combine our strength, to concentrate and harmonize our views and affections, and to give a new impulse to the great work in which we are engaged.

"To stimulate us to diligence in this most sacred of all causes, the bright example of your persevering efforts in the cause of God is placed before us. Deriving our doctrines from the same great fountain of truth, the Holy Scriptures, and admitting the same medium of interpretation, the venerated Wesley and his coadjutors, and, we humbly hope, pursuing the same great objects, the present and future salvation of souls, we desire ever to cultivate with you the closest bond of union and Christian fellowship. Under the influence of these views and feelings, we have rejoiced in your prosperity, and witnessed with unmingled pleasure the extension of your work, particularly in your missionary department.

"With you, also, we have our portion of afflictions. Through the disaffection of some, and the honest, though, as we think, mistaken zeal of others, in some parts of our extended work, the harmony of our people has been disturbed, and principles, to us novel in their character, and deleterious in their influence on the excellent system we have received from our fathers, have been industriously circulated. Though we may not flatter ourselves that these unhappy excitements are fully terminated, yet we presume to hope that the decided and almost unanimous expression of disapprobation to such proceedings by this General Conference, and among our preachers and people generally, will greatly weaken the disaffection, and tend to correct the errors of the wandering, as well as to confirm and strengthen the hands of all who desire to cleave to the Lord 'in one faith, one baptism, and one hope of our calling.'

"Since our last session, we have witnessed, with joy and gratitude, an unusual effusion of the Holy Spirit. Revivals of religion have been numerous and extensive in almost every part of our continent. Upward of sixty-nine thousand have been added to our Church during the past four years, and the work is still extending. Stretching our lines over so large a continent, many parts of

our work, particularly in the new settlements, require great personal sacrifices to carry to them the blessings of our ministry, and much diligence and patient perseverance to preserve our beloved people in the unity of the faith. For these great objects we are not sufficient -- 'our sufficiency is of God.' But having devoted ourselves exclusively to this work, and confiding in the strength and goodness of Him whose we are, and whom we profess to serve in the fellowship of the gospel, we hope not to faint in the day of trial, but to persevere in conveying the glad tidings of peace to the destitute inhabitants of our land, until every part of it shall break forth into singing, and hail with joy the coming of the Lord.

"Cheered with this prospect, we are endeavoring to strengthen each other in the Lord. And the happy results of our missionary labors, both among the frontier settlements of our white population and the Indian tribes, particularly the latter, are pleasing indications of the divine approbation. It does, indeed, seem as if the set time had come to favor these lost tribes of our wildernesses, and to bring them into the fold of Christ. These natives, hitherto 'peeled and scattered,' in the United States and territories, as well as in Upper Canada, are bowing to the yoke of Christ with astonishing alacrity, and thus giving evidence that his grace is sufficient to convert even the heart of a savage, and to transform him to the gentleness of Christ. On this subject, however, we need not enlarge, but refer you to our periodical works -- the extensive circulation of which among our people gives increased impulse to the work, carrying information, cheering and delightful, to many thousands, of the efficacy and triumph of redeeming mercy -- and to our beloved brother and representative, the bearer of this address, who will more particularly tell you, 'face to face,' how much we rejoice to be co-workers with you in the extensive field of labor, and to witness such evident tokens of the divine goodness to our fallen world.

"Recollecting the Christian deportment, the ministerial gravity and dignity, and, what is more endearing to us, the brotherly affection of your late delegate to our conference, the Rev. Richard Reece, and his amiable companion, the Rev. John Hannah, both of whom have left a sweet savor behind them, we take much pleasure in giving to you this renewed assurance of our unabated attachment to those doctrines, and that discipline, by which both you and we are distinguished; to set our seal to the maxim, that 'the Wesleyan Methodists are one throughout the world;' and also our desire that the intercourse between us, by the mutual exchange of delegates, may be kept up and continued; and that, as a means of our edification and comfort, we shall be happy to receive whomsoever you may appoint to visit us at our next session.

"With sentiments of unfeigned respect and Christian affection, we are, dear brethren, one with you in the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

"Signed in behalf of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held at Pittsburgh, (Pa.,) May, 1828.

"Enoch George, President. "Martin Ruter, Secretary."

Thus closed the labors of the General Conference of 1828, and here I close the third volume of this History, with an expression of gratitude to the Author of all good for sparing my life and health so far to complete my undertaking.

ENDNOTES 1 Freeborn Garrettson was elected from this conference, but deceased before the meeting of the General Conference.

2 This being the name by which those brethren chose to designate themselves, I have used it as a term of distinction, without allowing that they were in reality reformers, either in or of the Methodist Episcopal Church. To reform is to make over; and they seem to have become convinced themselves of the inappropriateness of the term, by dropping it, and substituting in Its place Protestant Methodists, implying, that though they could not reform us -- that is, make us better -- they could at least protest against our peculiarities.

3 The author would gladly draw a veil over this affair, were it consistent with historic truth; but Mr. McCaine has so linked himself with this controversy that it is not possible to narrate the facts in the case without an exposure of the absurdities of his pamphlet; and hence his name is given to the public in connection with a transaction and as a voucher for declarations which have been as discreditable and false as they were injurious to the reputation of some of the purest men the world ever saw.

4 In the second volume of this History I have given an account of the discussions upon the presiding elder question. There is reason to believe that the leading men among the "Reformers" calculated largely on the support of many, if not indeed most of those who favored the election of presiding elders; and it is probable that some of these would have gone with them had they kept within the bounds of moderation in their demands. Yet it ought to be remembered that the two questions had no necessary connection -- that the one did not involve the other -- and hence it is not surprising that some of the most firm, able, and successful opposers of this innovation were among those who bad favored the election of the presiding elders, and making them jointly responsible with the bishops for the appointments of the preachers.

5 All these matters were set in a just point of light soon after these trials were closed, in a pamphlet which was published in the early part of the year 1828, entitled "A Narrative and Defense," under the signatures of the prosecuting committee and the preacher in charge, the Rev. Mr. Hanson This "Narrative and Defense," being supported by ample documentary testimony, is entitled to credit; and hence it is from this able defense of the authorities of the Church, and their proceedings in the cases at issue, that I have drawn the principal facts contained in the above sketch of this affair. From the Discipline afterward adopted by the "Reformers" I have taken some facts respecting their secession and subsequent transactions.

6 This increase appears after deducting the members in the Canada conference, which were, in 1827, 8,595. Had these been included, the entire increase would have appeared, as it in reality was, 57,900, and of preachers 275. The reason why these were not included was, the Canada conference had become independent.

7 Though I have earnestly sought, from various sources, to ascertain the exact number who were expelled and who seceded from the Church, as well as the numbers now belonging to the "Methodist Protestant Church," I have not been able to obtain the information. If any one will furnish me with this very desirable information, from any authentic source, I will most gladly avail myself of it to perfect this account in a future edition. However, that the reader may perceive how far the Church was affected in the above-mentioned cities by the secession, I have prepared the following tabular view [not tabular in the electronic edition -- DVM] of the number of white members in each of them from 1827 to 1831, inclusive:

New York -- 1827: 3,219; 1828: 3,416; 1829: 3,473; 1830: 3,866; 1831: 4,889.

Philadelphia -- 1827: 3,633; 1828: 3,882; 1829: 4,440; 1830: 4,678; 1831: 4,859.

Baltimore -- 1827: 3,631; 1828: 3,886; 1829: 4,119; 1830: 4,295; 1831: 5,059.

Pittsburgh -- 1827: 737; 1828: 655; 1829: 676; 1830: 630; 1831: 700.

Cincinnati -- 1827: 901; 1828: 915; 1829: 929; 1830: 1,171; 1831: 1,495. As the colored members were not much affected either way by these agitations, I have left them out of the estimate; and it will be seen that there was a gradual increase in all the above cities from 1827 to 1831, the years in which the "Methodist Protestants" were maturing their organization, except Pittsburgh, and the decrease here was only eighty-two in 1828, and forty-six in 1830. The number, therefore, who left us, instead of being from twenty to thirty thousand, as was reported at the time, must have been very few, or the rivals and admittances very considerable; and either alternative shows on which side of the question at issue the public mind preponderated; and if revivals of religion and an increase of membership may be relied on as an evidence of the divine approbation, we have had ample testimony in favor of our proceedings and general system of operations: we may therefore, with thankfulness, adore the God of our salvation for his unmerited goodness toward us as a people, even in the midst of our manifold failures and infirmities.

It is a fact worthy of record, not, indeed, as matter of vain boasting but of humble gratitude to the Author of all good, that "no weapon" hitherto "formed against us has prospered" -- nor will it, so long as we cleave unto God with full purpose of heart; but "if we forsake him he will cast us off for ever," May we then take heed to our ways, that we sin not with our lips, nor charge God foolishly in any of our conduct!

8 Some of these conferences must have been very small, for in looking over the list of delegates I find them in the following proportions -- From Vermont, two; Massachusetts, two; New York and Canada, one; Genesee, eight; New York, two; Pennsylvania, twenty-eight; Maryland, twenty-eight; Virginia, twelve; North Carolina, six; Georgia, four; Alabama, two; Ohio, sixteen; Western Virginia, two; in all, one hundred and thirteen. But as there were thirty-one absentees, the convention was composed of eighty-two. From the above the reader may see in what portions of our country the "Reformers" were the most numerous. Among those who composed this convention there were, I believe, but two, the Rev. Messrs. Asa Shinn and George Brown, both of the Pittsburgh conference, who were traveling preachers at the time they withdrew from us and joined the "Reformers." The rest among the clerical delegates were all local preachers, some of whom had once been in the itinerant ministry, but had located, and two had been expelled. This shows how feeble an impression had been made on the traveling ministry in favor of "reform."

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[Transcriber Note: The Greek word spellings were accomplished using the Symbol font. Thus, when the Symbol font was changed into the ASCII font the phonetic spelling in English was not necessary preserved. However, all that is required to convert these ASCII font characters back into Greek characters is to highlight the letters of the word and select the Symbol font for them. Make sure, though, that you are applying this procedure to Greek words, and not Latin or French words. -- DVM]

CHAPTER 10 From the close of the General Conference of 1828 to the beginning of the General Conference of 1832 Our last volume closed with an account of the doings of the General Conference of 1828, including a brief history of the radical controversy, and its results. With a view to give a consecutive narrative of that affair, the chronological order of the history, in relation to that controversy, was anticipated for three or four years; and therefore no more need be said in reference to that subject than merely to remark, that great peace and harmony prevailed throughout the bounds of the Church, and the work of God was generally prosperous. The Oneida conference was formed at the General Conference of 1828, making in all nineteen annual conferences to be attended by five bishops. As, however, the health of Bishop McKendree was very feeble, the labor of the superintendency devolved chiefly on the other four bishops; and as Bishop George died early in 1828, the remaining three bishops had work enough on their hands for the three succeeding years. The manner, however, in which they fulfilled their high and weighty trusts gave general satisfaction to the Church, and tended powerfully to keep up its union, and to promote its peace and prosperity. The cause of education was now advancing with much more rapidity than heretofore. A very able report was adopted at the last General Conference in favor of education, tending to show the great importance of this subject to the welfare of the Church, and particularly to the rising generation. In addition to three academies heretofore noticed, it appears that at this time the Mississippi conference had established the "Elizabeth Female Academy," the name being given to it in honor of Mrs. Elizabeth Greenfield, who laid its foundation by the gift of a lot of land, and a building estimated to be worth three thousand dollars. Another had been commenced under hopeful prospects in Tuscaloosa, in the state of Alabama, and two others in Illinois, under the patronage of the Illinois conference, one in Green county, and the other in the county of St. Clair.

After some general statements on the number and character of the literary institutions then in existence under the patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the report, the production of the late Dr. Fisk, contains the following very just and timely remarks: --

"In review of the whole, we find the efforts and successful operations in different conferences to promote the cause of literature and science have increased very considerably since the last General Conference. There are now six or seven promising institutions in successful operation, two of them having college charters, namely, Madison College and Augusta College, which are

already prepared to take students through a regular course, and confer on them the ordinary degrees and literary honors of such institutions, and hold out encouragements and assurances that authorize us to recommend them to the patronage of our friends. Other institutions are advancing to the same standing, and several more are contemplated, and will probably soon be put into operation. And it is a matter that ought to be noticed as calling for special gratitude to God, that revivals of religion have been so frequent in our literary seminaries. And this, too, ought to stimulate our people to encourage and patronize these institutions. If God smiles on our undertakings, shall we not proceed? We have reason, indeed, to think that the minds of both ministers and people are more awake to this subject than heretofore. The importance of literary institutions is more generally felt than formerly, and a greater and more general disposition to aid in this work is manifested. But we are still too much asleep on this subject. We are in danger of not keeping up with the improvements of society. If we should fail of contributing our share in this work, we should not only fall short of our obligations to society in general, but to our own Church in particular. The subject of education ought to be considered of special importance and of special interest to Methodist preachers, both as it respects their own usefulness and the interests of their families. We do not, indeed, profess to educate young men and train them up specifically for the ministry. But it will be readily seen, that, as our ministers are raised up mostly from among ourselves, their literary character will vary according to the general character of the Church.

"We said this subject was of special interest to Methodist preachers' families. We wish this to be deeply impressed on the minds of all, and we could wish every conference would by some means make provision for the education of the children of itinerant ministers. The changeable and uncertain life of a traveling minister, the duties which call him so much from his family and domestic concerns, all show the almost imperious necessity for such a provision. Posterity will hardly suppose we have conferred a great favor upon the world, if, in our zeal to benefit others, we suffer our own children to grow up uneducated and unrestrained, a disgrace to the gospel we preach, and a reproach to their parents. If we would save the itinerant plan from falling into deserved disrepute, we must see to it that our children be not neglected in their moral culture and literary instruction."

There can be no doubt that this report gave a fresh stimulus to the cause of literature and science among us, and made many feel the obligations they were under to promote it, who had hitherto been indifferent to its success.

Such was the influence which the missionary cause was now exerting on the Church generally, that most of the new places which were occupied were entered under the patronage of the Missionary Society. This year the Red Hook mission, which embraced a territory lying on the east side of the Hudson River, the inhabitants of which were chiefly descendants of the Dutch, was undertaken in compliance with the earnest request of the late Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, whose widow contributed one hundred dollars a year toward its support. In Steuben country, in the western part of New York, there was a considerable number of Welch people settled, who could not understand the English language; and the Rev. David Cadwalder, who was able to preach in Welch, was sent as a missionary among them. His labors were so blessed that be formed a society of sixty members, and also erected a house of worship for their accommodation. In the western country new fields were constantly opening for gospel laborers. This year St. Marys mission was commenced. It embraced the new settlements in the northwestern counties of the

state of Ohio. The labors of the missionary were blessed to the awakening and conversion of souls, and the work has gradually prospered and enlarged the sphere of its influence from that day to this. Another, called St.. Clair mission, in Michigan, was also begun under favorable prospects, and it was the happy commencement of a gracious work in all that region of country. This year the "Publishing Fund" was established. This originated in a consultation with the book agents and the editor of the Christian Advocate and journal, the latter of whom had prepared a constitution for the contemplated Bible Society, at the suggestion of the late Bishop Emory, who was then the senior book agent. The object was to devise ways and means to enable the Book concern to publish Bibles and Testaments, Sunday school books and tracts, on the cheapest possible terms. When these societies were formed, the book agents had pledged themselves to furnish the books for the Sunday schools, and tracts for tract societies, as cheap as they could be purchased elsewhere; and as the American Bible, Sunday School, and Tract Societies, being largely patronized and aided by the public munificence, were able to supply the demand for their respective publications almost at cost, it was soon found that we could not compete with them in the market unless ways and means were devised to furnish the needful funds. Our Book Concern at that time was deeply in debt, and could not therefore, from its own resources, print and circulate the books for Sunday schools, and tracts, at as low prices as they were furnished by the American societies, without risking its own reputation, if not, indeed, its very existence. To remedy this defect, and to supply the deficiency in funds, at the consultation before alluded to, it was agreed to make an attempt to establish a "Publishing Fund," in connection with the Bible, Sunday School, and Tract Societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was accordingly done, and the constitution, together with the address of the managers, was published in the Christian Advocate and Journal on the 17th of October, 1828. The following extract from this address will more fully explain the principles and objects of this fund, and show that it was not intended to increase the actual resources of the Book Concern, or to add to its available funds, but simply to meet the extra expense incurred by furnishing publications on such terms as to enable our people to purchase books at their own establishment as cheap as they could be had elsewhere, without the hazard of being compelled to use books of which they could not approve. The following is the extract: --

"The managers of these societies, in conjunction with the agents of our General Book Concern, have resolved to make a joint effort for the efficient prosecution of our common objects. God has blessed us in all our borders, temporally and spiritually. A thousand times we have exclaimed, 'What hath be wrought.' And yet the fields are opening before us, and still whitening to the harvest. The vast extent and the immense improvements of our country; its rapid growth, both in population and resources; the great and steady increase of our own denomination as a body of Christians, and our consequent obligations as stewards of the manifold grace of Him whose we are and whom we serve, and who requires us to excel in good works; our own growing resources, which ought to be consecrated to the Author of our mercies; the wants of the millions, of every age and sex, who sit in darkness or in guilt, and who must increase with the rapidly and vastly increasing population, without increased efforts for their good; the zealous and highly liberal efforts of other denominations, and our own special call, as we have from the beginning believed to be the design of God in raising us up, to aid in spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands: -- in a word, the cause of God and of our country, of the rising generation and of posterity, demand of us, at this crisis, an exertion bearing at least some ratio of proportion to our obligations and to our means.

"The present is an era in our history of unparalleled interest. In the great spiritual and moral objects avowedly contemplated by the benevolent institutions and the Christian movements of the day, we have repeatedly declared our cordial and entire concurrence. With regard to the means of accomplishing them, we have differed. For various reasons, repeatedly assigned, we have considered it our duty to decline the proposed 'national' combinations, which, in our view, threatened for a while to swallow up, and absolutely to annihilate, every other plan of operation in our country. Such a result we still believe would have been pregnant with hazard. This sentiment does not by any means necessarily imply an impeachment of the Christian motives of those who may have differed from us in judgment. Our resistance to the consolidation of denominations, in effect, has had, we believe, a happy influence. But does it free us from our responsibilities as stewards of the mysteries and of the mercies of God? Does it release us from our obligations to contribute our full share toward the great work of civilizing, moralizing, and Christianizing the world? It does not. On the contrary, it increases both, since, from the stand we have taken, it is peculiarly incumbent on us now to see to it that the great and common cause shall, at least, sustain no loss by our course. If we desire, indeed, to be 'a peculiar people,' 'redeemed from all iniquity' by the precious blood of HIM who, for this purpose, 'gave himself for us,' let us not forget that we cannot sustain this high character without being at the same time, and in a correspondent degree, 'zealous of good works,' for which also Christ died.

"The great object of the Methodist Book Concern, from the beginning, has been to serve as an auxiliary in spreading Scriptural truth and holiness. With this view it has been the medium through which our Sunday school books and tracts have been issued, and it is intended also to be the medium for the publication of our Bibles and Testaments. The well-known character and the established credit of this institution, under the direction of the General Conference, and, in the intermediate years, of the New York conference, is an ample guaranty for the faithful application of funds. Hitherto almost the whole business of our general benevolent associations has been performed through the agency of this concern, with the aid of its agents abroad. And whatever expenses, or risks, or losses have been incurred, either in the general depository, or by supplying the auxiliary depositories, were so extensive a country, have been wholly borne by this establishment. If it were practicable, as in ordinary cases, to establish the prices of such publications so as to cover all such expenses, and risks, and occasional losses, and to provide for such additional service as may be required, this might, perhaps, still be done. But the terms on which Sunday school books, tracts, Bibles, and Testaments are now expected will not admit of this; nor, in the prospect of the vastly increased demand, will it be possible for us, in this way, to maintain any thing like a fair and honorable competition with other institutions, which were originally endowed with large funds, and are still largely assisted both by regular annual contributions and by occasional donations; whose treasuries, nevertheless, we are assured, are still usually exhausted, and their calls for further aid are frequent and earnest. The consequence to us must be, either that the Methodist Book Concern, if left single handed and unaided, must be run down, and its great and benevolent objects be defeated, or our own publications, of the description mentioned, must be 'forced out of circulation:' to prevent which, if we mean to prevent it, ways and means must be devised to aid this establishment. It only remains for us, therefore, to determine whether we will aid our own institutions, or contribute our funds elsewhere. For give we must, somewhere; and continue to give, as God shall continue to bless us, and as occasions and objects continue to rise before us. Without this we cannot, we ought not to maintain our name or standing

as a Christian people. Shall we, then, refuse to give at home, and suffer our own institutions to flag or fail; and, after all, from sheer shame, if from no better principle, be compelled to give elsewhere? We say, no.

"In view of the facts and premises above stated, the managers of the Bible, Sunday School, and Tract Societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church have resolved, jointly, to co-operate with the agents of the Book Concern, and their auxiliary agencies, to raise a fund to be vested in that concern, as a permanent and certain resource for the accomplishment of their common objects. And they have resolved to aim at a foundation broad and strong, in view not only of the wants immediately pressing on us, but also of those of which the vast prospect opens before us; and to erect a superstructure from which, with the divine favor, streams of blessing may flow to generations yet unborn. For the buildings requisite for depositories, agents' offices, printing office, bindery, and for the transaction of the general business of the three societies, and for stereotype plates, binders' and printers' presses, and all the requisite apparatus for printing and binding, on the scale contemplated, a sum not less than fifty thousand dollars will be requisite. For these objects a debt of nearly one fourth of that sum has already been incurred by the Book Concern, without any charge whatever for personal services And yet we can scarcely be said to have more than commenced in the operation of these Societies; and with regard to the Bible Society, hardly to have made a beginning, except in the preparation of a few sets of stereotype plates, in anticipation. To conduct our operations to the extent intended, and to which, with united exertion, we are amply adequate, much greater sums must yet be raised. It will doubtless be found necessary to introduce power presses, with other improvements, both to increase the rapidity of publishing, and to reduce the prices. In view of all which, after conferring together, in deliberate consultation, we are of opinion that it is not safe, for the purpose of enabling the three societies to make the necessary preparations, to name to our friends a less sum than that above mentioned. After these preparations shall have been made, it must be recollected, however, that considerable annual and current expenses still must necessarily be incurred, in the service necessary for preparing, packing, carting, and forwarding books and tracts, with the requisite clerkship, fuel, lights, insurance, ground rent, and postage, the latter item of which alone will probably increase to perhaps not less than from one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars per annum. All such expenses have heretofore been borne by the Book Concern, which, consequently, has been obliged to fix the prices of the publications so as, in a measure at least, to cover those expenses, or else to sustain heavy actual loss. With a view, therefore, still further to lessen the prices, by having respect, in fixing them, to the actual cost of paper, press-work, and binding only, on the most economical principles, it is judged indispensable that a fund be raised, and be vested in the Book Concern, the use or interest of which shall be permanently appropriated to cover the above or any other unavoidable items of current expense and in consideration of which investments, when made, the said concern has pledged itself to submit to the managers of the above societies respectively, in conjunction with the agents, the determination of the prices at which their respective publications shall be furnished, on the principles above stated. And on this plan only, in our opinion, can they be furnished at the very low rates at which they are called for, and must be supplied. The further sum necessary for these purposes, on the enlarged and extensive plan contemplated, cannot be safely estimated at less than fifty thousand dollars, the interest of which alone, namely, three thousand dollars per annum, it will be observed, is to be applied to cover the items of annual and contingent expenses above-mentioned, or which I may unavoidably occur in

the course of business. In all of which, however, it may be proper to mention, that it is not intended that an addition of one cent shall be made, out of any of these funds, to the support already allowed, agreeably to Discipline, to the regular agents of the Book Concern; and that they are intended solely to cover the extra expenses incurred by the extra business of these societies, whose publications are issued in connection with that concern. It was with a view to the extra labor caused by such publications, in part, that an additional agent was appointed at the last General Conference; and as our operations shall be extended, further help, in various ways, will undoubtedly be found indispensably requisite."

It will be perceived that this fund was to be vested in the Book Concern, and the interest alone used to meet the unavoidable expense of publishing the requisite books for the above-mentioned societies. And though it was in contemplation to raise one hundred thousand dollars, the fund, even now, (1841,) amounts to only about forty thousand. Comparatively small, however, as it is, it has done much good, and the Book Concern has been enabled to fulfill its obligations in supplying the books on as low terms as they could be purchased at other depositories. The dissolution of the Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by which the concern has been relieved from publishing Bibles and Testaments on those terms, will be noticed in its proper place.

Twelve deaths are recorded; fifty were located; seventy returned supernumerary; one hundred and one superannuated; and three had been expelled.

Among those who had died this year was Enoch George, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The following is taken from the Minutes of the Conferences for 1829: --

"He was born in the state of Virginia, Lancaster county, in the year 1767 or ’68. His mother died when he was young, and he was left in the care of an elder sister. During his minority his father removed to the state of North Carolina. At about the age of eighteen or nineteen he became, through the instrumentality of the Methodist ministry, deeply convinced of sin, and sought and obtained the pardoning mercy of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. He was soon called to the exercise of public prayer and exhortation; and after fruitless struggles to suppress the impression of duty which increasingly rested upon his mind, with great diffidence he entered the field of labor as a preacher. He traveled a short time with Philip Cox, and was then sent, by Bishop Asbury, to assist Daniel Asbury in forming a circuit on the head waters of the Catawba and Broad Rivers.

"In 1790 he was received into the itinerant connection on trial, and appointed to Pamlico circuit; and in 1791 to Caswell. In 1792 he was admitted into full connection, ordained deacon, and appointed to Guilford circuit; and in 1793 to Broad River. In 1794 he was ordained elder, and appointed to Great Pee Dee. The next year he was appointed to Edisto, with instructions to labor three months in Charleston, South Carolina; and the two years following he filled the office of presiding elder. In 1798, on account of ill health, be traveled to the north as far as New York. Having measurably recovered his health, in 1800 he resumed his labors, and was appointed presiding elder of Potomac district, in the Baltimore conference. His health failed a second time, and he located in 1801. In 1803 he again entered the itinerant field, and was appointed to Frederick circuit; in 1804 to Baltimore district; 1805, Alexandria district; 1807, Georgetown, D.C.; 1808, Frederick; 1809, Montgomery; 1810, Baltimore circuit; 1811, Potomac district; and in 1815 to Georgetown district.

"At the General Conference held in Baltimore, May, 1816, he was elected and ordained bishop. In the active discharge of the arduous duties of this highly responsible office he continued until his death. He died at Staunton, Va., August 23, 1828, in the peace and triumph of gospel faith, and with his latest breath giving 'glory to God.'

Bishop George was a man of deep piety, of great simplicity of manners, a very pathetic, powerful, and successful preacher, greatly beloved in life, and very extensively lamented in death." A more minute and extended memoir of this servant of God may be seen in the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review for 1830. That which distinguished Bishop George among his fellows was the warmth of his zeal, and the quickness of his movements. This no doubt arose from the depth of his piety. He seemed, indeed, to live and walk in God. This was evident from the uniformity of his devotions, as well as from his general deportment, both before the public and in his more private intercourse with his friends. He always lose early in the morning, and, if circumstances permitted, would spend the morning before breakfast in a solitary walk in the field, for meditation and private devotion; and in these lonely rambles he delighted in the contemplation of the Deity, as he is seen in his works and ways, and in holding communion with him in praise and prayer.

He was naturally eloquent, and his eloquence was all natural. He never sought to embellish his subjects with those artificial tinsels of pulpit oratory substituted by some for those overflowings of the heart which proceed from being filled and fired with the truth which the lips utter. Hence his "preaching was not with the enticing words of man's wisdom," but it was in "demonstration and power," and "with much assurance in the Holy Ghost." He was more distinguished, however, for affecting the heart and moving the passions, than for enlightening the understanding and informing the judgment. Whenever, therefore, you saw him begin to rub his eyes with his fingers, as if wiping thence the gushing tear, you might expect a pouring forth of those streams of gospel truth, generally of that declamatory or hortatory character, which were calculated to move the hearer to weep or shout, according to his predominant feeling. And he seldom concluded a sermon without greatly moving his audience in either of these ways, because he was first moved himself by those sacred and heavenly emotions which were evidently produced by the energetic workings of the Holy Spirit.

Viewing him, therefore, simply as an ambassador of God, sent peculiarly to awaken the conscience of the sinner, and to alarm or to strengthen the faith of the believer, and quicken him in the divine life, he was most eminently qualified for his great work. In addition to the holy pathos with which he breathed out the "words of truth and soberness," his voice was exceedingly musical, shrill, and clear, his action natural, and expressive of the feelings of his heart, and all calculated to impress the hearer with the solemn truths which fell from his lips. If, however, we were to judge him by other tests of a pulpit orator, we should detect some defects. In education he was quite deficient, and his general reading was very limited. For this lack of acquired knowledge he might be considered as furnishing more than a substitute in the pointedness of his appeals, and the manner in which he fortified all his positions by direct appeals to the sacred Scriptures. And if he dealt in detached sentences instead of following a consecutive order and arrangement of argumentation, he was abundantly compensated in the blessed effects which he saw produced in the hearts of those who heard him, and knew how to appreciate the value of a sermon more from its unction than its argument. His premises were found, where every minister of Christ should find them, in the Bible; and his conclusions were thence drawn without much regard to logical

arrangement, and certainly without any circumlocution, direct, and with a force it was hardly possible to resist. And from the earnestness of his manner, some have entirely mistaken his objects and motives. Beholding the emotions which were very generally produced in the pious part of his hearers, sometimes expressed in loud shouts of praise, those who were mere outward court worshipers, or uninterested hearers, have retired from the sanctuary under a conviction that Bishop George was acting the part of a mountebank, speaking for the purpose of gaining shouts of applause. A sad mistake this. He ascended the pulpit, not as a stage-player mounts the stage, but as an ambassador of Christ, commissioned to declare his counsel unto the people, and to negotiate a "Peace ’twixt earth and heaven." And in the fulfillment of this commission he did not trifle with the awful realities of time and eternity, but poured forth from a full heart the solemn truths of God, in a manner which penetrated the conscience and drew forth the confession, by sobs and shouts, that God was with him of a truth.

Such was Bishop George in the pulpit. In the chair of the conference he was less acceptable. Though he was always intent on accomplishing the greatest amount of good by the best possible means, he often defeated his purpose by the haste with which he endeavored to dispatch the business. His manner, also was sometimes abrupt and undignified, and of course did not always command that respect which every conscientious mind would wish to feel and pay to a superior. Nor were his decisions always made with that wisdom and deliberation needful to produce a conviction of their correctness in all cases. He appeared, therefore, to much greater advantage in the pulpit than its the chair of the conference; and had he lived and died simply as an itinerant Methodist preacher, he had commanded more respect than was felt for him as a general superintendent of the church. These defects, however, detract nothing from his moral worth, nor render him less worthy of affection as a Christian bishop, or as a man deeply and seriously devoted to the best interests of the human family; for who is perfect in every respect? But in whatever light we view him, he will long be remembered with affection, as one of our early pioneers in the ranks of the itinerancy, as an indefatigable laborer in his Lord’s vineyard, who won many sinners to Christ, and was always a son of consolation to God’s believing people. The warmth of his affections won him many friends, and the affability of his manners endeared him to them as a brother beloved, who might be approached at all times with a cheerful confidence. His death was sudden and unexpected. Its announcement, therefore, spread a temporary gloom over the Methodist community. But death did not find him unprepared. He met this "last enemy," not only with meek submission, but with a holy triumph, and a well-grounded hope of eternal life. As the words, "Glory to God!" had often fell from his lips in the pulpit, so in his last moments, in full view of the invisible world, he shouted forth the praises of God, and no doubt went to the abodes of bliss and immortality. The following statement of the numbers will show that the work was generally prosperous.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 359,533; Last Year: 327,932; Increase: 31,601 -- Colored This Year: 58,856; Last Year: 54,065; Increase: 4,791 -- Indians This Year 4,501; Last Year 4,209; Increase: 292 -- Total This Year: 418,927;1 Last Year: 382,520 -- Increase: 36,407 -- Preachers This Year: 1,642; Last Year: 1,576; Increase: 66.

1829

We have before alluded to a controversy which arose between us and some other denominations of Christians; and as it came to its height during this and the two following years, that the reader may have a clear and full understanding of its character and results, it is thought expedient to give a short account of it in this place. It has been before remarked, that for a long time after our establishment in this country, very little was done to enlighten the public mind from our press, except the republication of some of Wesley's and Fletcher's sermons, Checks, and tracts, and the biographies of a few eminent servants of God. But in 1818 the Methodist Magazine was resumed and in 1826 the Christian Advocate and Journal made its appearance. The extensive circulation of these two periodicals, and the publication of numerous tracts, of a doctrinal, experimental, and practical character, and the continual augmentation of books on a variety of subjects, together with the prosperous state of our missions in various parts of our country, seemed to awaken the attention of others, and to call forth strictures upon our doctrines and general economy, of such a character as called for defense on our part.

Another thing seemed to put us in somewhat of an awkward position before the public. The organization of a separate sabbath school for the Methodist Episcopal Church made it necessary to provide means to supply our schools with suitable books. This led to the preparation and publication of sabbath school books from our own press; but as Bibles and Testaments formed the principal basis of sabbath school instruction, and as the American Bible Society was an institution in which all denominations were supposed to have an equal interest, it was thought that we had a right to claim a share from that society, in Bibles and Testaments, for the use of our Sunday schools. We accordingly petitioned the "Young Men's Bible Society" of the city of New York, which had been constituted for the express purpose of supplying sabbath schools gratuitously with the Holy Scriptures, and to which the Methodists, as well as others, contributed, for a supply of Bibles and Testaments for the use of our sabbath schools but our petition was rejected, merely because, as was stated by the secretary of that society, we were sectarians, and therefore came not within the legitimate range of their charities. This rejection of our petition compelled us, either to suffer our schools to languish for want of suitable books, or to devise ways and means to supply them from our own resources; and hence a proposition for forming a separate Bible Society was submitted to the General Conference of 1828, and the conference recommended its organization in the city of New York. In conformity with this recommendation, the Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed, with the view of obtaining a supply of Bibles and Testaments for our sabbath schools, and for the poor members of our own congregations. This separate organization, together with the steps which led to it, provoked no little opposition from various quarters, particularly from writers in the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches, by whom our motives, being misunderstood, were misrepresented. These things tended to keep alive the spirit of controversy. And as religious newspapers were now very generally patronized by the several Christian denominations, and agents employed for the several societies now in operation were traveling extensively through the country, each one zealous for his own sect, many things were written and published in those periodicals, implicating our character, impugning our motives, denouncing our doctrines and usages, and calculated to bring our institutions into contempt. As Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary had obtained an extensive circulation, and Wesley's translation of the New Testament, accompanied with his notes, was also published and circulated by our Book Concern, an attempt was made by a writer in the west, and his efforts were seconded by several editors of the periodical press, to bring these two writers into disrepute, by endeavoring to prove

that they had altered, with a view to sustain their peculiar tenets, the sacred text, and thereby corrupted the word of God. As this was a heavy charge, and, if sustained, must impeach their moral character and Christian integrity, it was considered no more than a sacred duty we owed to their characters, and to the Church which delighted to honor them, to rescue their memories from this undeserved reproach.

Indeed, we had reason to suspect that there was a combination among certain sects, if possible, to destroy our influence. This we inferred from the fact, that the presses under the control of Calvinistic editors, in different parts of the country, almost simultaneously uttered the same language against Methodism, without at all mitigating the severity of their censures by an acknowledgment of the good we had been instrumental in accomplishing. The Christian Spectator, a Quarterly Review conducted by an association of gentlemen connected with Yale College, in a "Review on the Economy of Methodism," commenced a rude and unprovoked attack upon our doctrine, discipline, and general economy, which was copied into other papers, accompanied with remarks as hostile to our Church, as they were untrue and unkind. This systematical and simultaneous attack upon us as a church was conducted with unsparing severity, and led us to conclude that a war was commenced upon our economy, as unjustifiable as it might be injurious in its results. Indeed, it was by no means confined to argumentative assaults upon our doctrines and usages, but the character of our ministers was assailed, their motives impugned, and they were represented as even hostile to the civil institutions of the country, and also of exercising a lordly despotism over the consciences of our own people.

Let us, however, classify these objections, and notice the answers to them.

1. Dr. Adam Clarke was accused of introducing into his Commentary unauthorized criticisms upon the original text. To this it was answered, that he scrupulously followed, throughout, the present authorized version; and if at any time he dissented from it, he very modestly did it in his notes, assigning his reasons, and leaving every reader to judge for himself of the correctness of his opinions. But even allowing that he had altered the common English Version in some obscure places, with a view to render the text more intelligible, he did but follow the example of such men as Campbell, Houbigant, Macknight, and others, most of whom were Calvinistic commentators. This, therefore, was a groundless accusation, only calculated to raise the popular prejudice against Dr. Clarke, for the purpose of circumscribing his usefulness as a most able and pious commentator of the Holy Scriptures.

2. Wesley also was accused of mutilating the sacred text in such a glaring manner as to make "nonsense of some of the plainest texts in the Bible," and several instances were adduced to sustain this heavy charge. And as this controversy may be revived at some future time, or may be referred to in an unfavorable point of light, I think it proper to insert here the answer to these objections to Mr. Wesley’s translation of the New Testament. It is as follows: -- -

"The following texts are produced by the Religious Intelligencer, to show that Wesley ’has made nonsense of some of the plainest texts in the Bible:’

JOHN 6:64

COMMON VERSION: -- But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

WESLEY'S ALTERATION: -- But there are some of you who believe not. (For Jesus had known from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who would not betray him.)

ACTS 4:27, 28

COMMON VERSION: -- For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel. were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

WESLEY'S ALTERATION: -- For of a truth both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and people of Israel, were gathered together against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel before determined to be done.

JUDE 4

COMMON VERSION: -- For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and Our Lord Jesus Christ.

WESLEY'S ALTERATION: -- For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were of old described before, with regard to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

REV. 22:19

COMMON VERSION: -- And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

WESLEY'S ALTERATION: -- And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part of the tree of life, and the holy city, which are written in this book.

1 PET. 1:19, 20

COMMON VERSION: -- But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot; who Verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

WESLEY'S ALTERATION: -- But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreknown before the foundation of the world. but was made in the last times for you.

"Now whether Wesley's translation be more in accordance with the original or not, we believe it is at least equally plain, and easy to be understood.

"In respect to the first cited text, the chief difference is in the last clause, 'and who would not betray him,' though even this is very far from making 'nonsense.' Having never noticed this variation before we saw it produced in the Charleston Observer, we were not a little surprised that it should exist. To ascertain whether Mr. Wesley so translated the passage -- knowing that the original would not admit of it -- we searched the different editions of his Testament, with notes, and the

result is that it is a mere typographical error. In the English edition, printed in London in the year 1795, the negative particle (not) is not found. Neither is it found in the American edition, containing his notes, which was printed in the year 1812 -- three years before the Testament which contains the error was printed.

"In regard to the second and following passages, we wonder not that our Calvinistic friends are offended at the version made by Mr. Wesley, for some of them strike at the root of the peculiarities of their creed. To be satisfied whether Wesley can be justified in his translation, it is necessary to examine the original Greek text.

"In the first mentioned text, 'For of a truth both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and people of Israel, were gathered together against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel before determined to be done,' although the difference is very considerable, we think Mr. Wesley is fully sustained by the original text. The Greek verb "poiasai" is in the infinitive mood, and therefore may agree with either Herod, Pontius Pilate, &c., or with the singular, thy holy child Jesus. Allowing this to be correct, it does not follow that the inspired penman meant to say that those wicked people were gathered together to do what the hand and counsel of God before determined should be done; but that it was 'the holy child Jesus whom God had anointed to do' what he had before the foundation of the world determined he should do, for the redemption and salvation of mankind.

"The whole context requires this interpretation, we will not say to prevent its speaking 'nonsense,' but from speaking blasphemy. According to the present rendering and the Calvinistic interpretation of the text, it is brought to prove that Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the people of Israel who clamored for the life of Christ, in all their wicked and blasphemous conduct, did nothing more than fulfill the eternal and unalterable counsel and will of God! The reader may now see the reason why our Calvinistic friends are so exceedingly displeased with John Wesley, merely because he has so rendered this text that we need not necessarily infer that all this evil conduct of the persecutors and murderers of Jesus Christ was according to the predetermination of God -- although in doing so he has only followed the Greek text, by preserving the infinitive form of the verb "poiasai," to do; -- whereas had he done otherwise he might justly have been accused, as we shall presently see Beza may be, of corrupting the text. Although it does not appear from his comment on the passage that Wesley made the transposition from a conviction that it materially affected the sense, yet the zeal of his opposers seems to be kindled into a flame whenever such an interpretation is given, however fairly, which goes to question their favorite theory respecting God's having determined, and as now influencing, men to all their sinful actions.

" We said that the context requires that the text should be so construed as to attribute the works which God had before determined should be done, to Jesus Christ, and not to Herod and his wicked associates. Those who 'lifted up their voice' on this occasion said, quoting from the second Psalm, 'The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord.' Now if those infatuated people were acting against the Lord, how could they at the same time be fulfilling his counsel and will? Do people fulfill the counsel of the Lord in acting against him? And must they be consigned to eternal burnings for thus acting? This would be a hard case indeed.

"Look also at the 29th and 30th verses, -- 'And now, Lord, behold their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thy hand to

heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.' The true state of the case appears to be this: God had ordained that when Jesus Christ should be manifested in the flesh, in addition to his dying for the sins of the world, 'signs and wonders should be done' by him; that he should 'stretch forth his hand to heal' the sick, to restore sight to the blind, raise the dead, &c; for this purpose he had been anointed, that he might do the things thus before determined in the eternal counsel should be done; and hence the apostles, after stating that Herod and his wicked associates had gathered together to oppose the Lord's anointed, and to frustrate this gracious determination of God, pray that as their malevolent attempts had been so far defeated by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, that even now 'signs and wonders' may be done; that thus a full demonstration may be given to all that Jesus is the Christ, the true Messiah promised in the Old Testament.

"It is probably on account of the manifest absurdities involved in the contrary supposition, that led Episcopius and many other commentators to adopt a similar construction to that of Wesley's. And to show that Wesley is by no means singular in his translation, we may observe that the French version of the New Testament, 'printed from the London stereotype edition, and according to the edition of Paris for the year 1805, said to be 'reviewed and compared with the Hebrew and Greek texts,' and 'printed under the inspection of the New York Bible Society, renders this text precisely as Wesley has done. The following is the translation

"'Car en effet Herode et Ponce Pilate, avec les Gentils et le peuple d'Israel, se sont assembles contre ton saint Fils Jesus, que tu as oint, Pour faire toutes les choses que ta main et ton conseil avoient auparavant determine' devoir etre faites.' It will be perceived by those who understand the French, that the translators have transposed the sentences in the same manner that Wesley has done, preserved the infinitive form of the verb "poiasai," by rendering it 'pour faire,' to do, and connected it closely with the nonn, 'ton saint Fils Jesus,' "thy holy on Jesus," thereby allowing us to refer the works to be done to Jesus Christ, and not necessarily to his enemies who were gathered together against him.

"The Latin version of Montanus follows the common English version, and preserves the infinitive form of the verb, Facere quaecumque, "to do" whatsoever, &c.

"It is somewhat singular that Beza, to whom we referred in our former number as having been accused by the indefatigable Macknight of corrupting the sacred text to support his own contracted Calvinistic views, in the translation of the passage under consideration, has changed the form of the verb from the infinitive to the subjunctive plural, (facerent,) with a view to make it agree exclusively with Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the people of Israel!

"Beza also introduces a clause -- which, to be sure, is not of much consequence, either way -- into his version not found at all in the common Greek text, in hoc civitate, 'in this city.' The following is his translation of the two verses under consideration . --

" 'Coacti sunt enim in hac civitate vere adversus sanctum Filium tuum Jesum quem unxisti, Herodes et Pontius Pilatus cum Gentibus et populis Israelis, Ut facerent quaecumque manus tua et consilium tuum prius definierat ut fierent.' By thus rendering the verb in the plural number, making it to agree only with a plural nominative, Beza's translation amounts to a comment on the text, which, to those who understand no other language than the Latin, is a manifest deception.

We grant, indeed, that the grammatical construction of the sentence, as the infinitive mood of the verb may agree with either a singular or plural noun, does not necessarily require our interpretation or the contrary, but leaves the reader to adopt that which from the context appears most agreeable to the analogy of faith; and this consideration makes the conduct of Beza the more censurable; it is the same as if any one on the opposite side should render the passage thus -- Thy holy child Jesus, whom thou host anointed that he might do the things thy hand and counsel before determined should be done; -- and although we believe this is the genuine sense, we are far from thinking ourselves warranted in taking such liberties with the sacred text. However Calvinistically inclined our English translators may have been, they did not feel themselves authorized to follow Beza's translation, but have given a literal rendering of the verb "poiasai," to do.

"Now could Wesley be convicted of such rashness as Beza was guilty of, his enemies might well triumph. But Beza was a Calvinist. and therefore, in the estimation of his followers, who approve of his translation, he may be considered guiltless. Perhaps they may think that, being of the elect, God did not 'behold iniquity in' him; but poor John Wesley, being an Arminian reprobate, must have his name blotted from the book of life! For what, think you, gentle reader? For altering the sacred Scriptures? No, surely. This he never did; but for abjuring Calvinism -- for taking off the mask by which its modest friends had endeavored to conceal its haggard visage. This is his sin -- the offense for which he is now so severely castigated.

"But whatever corrections Mr. Wesley may have introduced in his version, we are persuaded that they do not affect, in the smallest degree, any fundamental doctrine of Christianity. To this sentiment we think all will subscribe except those who believe that the distinctive feature of Calvinism, namely, unconditional predestination, comprehending unconditional election and reprobation, is a fundamental doctrine.

"And although some have affirmed, in the heat of controversy, that unless we believe that doctrine according to the Calvinistic interpretation, we cannot be in a state of grace, yet we can scarcely persuade ourselves that any one, in his calm and sober moments, I say that all who demur at receiving this doctrine, thus explained, must inevitably be condemned at last. If any should assume such a position, we should despair of reasoning with him with any hope of success.

"When we speak of fundamental doctrines, we mean those by which the Christian system is eminently distinguished from all other systems of religion; but more especially the fall and depravity of man; the redemption of the world by the atoning merits of Jesus Christ; the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit; holiness of heart and life, and all those collateral truths which are connected with or necessarily accompany these doctrines. Now if any man will show us a single text in Wesley's translation which invalidates, or in the smallest degree weakens any one of these essential truths of Jesus Christ, or strikes at his real Godhead, or at the unity in trinity of the Deity, we will in that particular abandon him as our leader; we will believe in that instance he was under a mistake, and that he deserves the severe criticisms and censures of his adversaries.

"Believing that we shall not be called upon to controvert this point with our polemical friends, we proceed to notice the other texts which have been produced to prove that Wesley has made 'nonsense of some of the plainest texts of the Bible.' The first in order is,

Jude 4

COMMON VERSION -- For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

WESLEY'S TRANSLATION -- For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were of old described before, with regard to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

"Now we presume that the material words in Wesley's translation to which our opponents in this controversy object, are, 'of old described before,' which Wesley has substituted for 'of old ordained,' in the common version; which is much nearer the original than the other. The Greek text reads, "oi pulai progegrammenoi," the most literal translation of which would be, 'of old before written;' for the word "progegrammenoi" is derived from "pro," before, and "grapho," to write, or "gramma," a letter or character of writing; though some have supposed that it means here, before proscribed, believing that the apostle meant to say that the ungodly characters he was about describing assimilated in their character and conduct to those ungodly persons who had long since, in the sacred writings, been proscribed and condemned. Whichever of these meanings may be put on the word here, it cannot be made to mean foreordained, as the word justly so translated has an entirely different meaning, and comes from a totally different root. The word which the lexicons and our translators have rendered foreordained, comes from "proopizw," and this from "pro," before, and "opizw," to bound, limit, or decree, and hence the compound word signifies to limit, bound, or decree beforehand, or, as very properly translated in the sacred Scriptures, to foreordain, or before appoint.

"Macknight, whom we have before quoted, and who was a professed Calvinistic minister in the Church of Scotland, gives the following translation of this passage: 'Who long ago have been before written.' His comment upon the passage is thus: 'Jude means that those wicked people had their punishment before written, that is, foretold in what is written concerning the Sodomites and rebellions Israelites, whose crimes were the same as theirs, and whose punishment was not only a proof of God's resolution to punish sinners, but an example of the punishment which he will inflict on them. According to some, the words have an allusion to the ancient custom of writing laws on tables, which were hung up in public places, that the people might know the punishment annexed to breaking the laws.'

"To this rendering of Macknight the French version agrees: 'Dont la condemnation est escrite depuis longtems,' -- whose condemnation has been written a long time since.

"The Latin version of Montanus, which usually accompanies Leusden's Greek Testament, translates -- 'Olim praescripti in hoc judicium,' the literal English of which is, "of old before written, or described," which is a faithful translation of the Greek, and a justification of the version of Wesley.

"It is somewhat of a singular coincidence, that in this passage Wesley and Beza exactly agree in their translation; so that if Wesley has had his name blotted from the book of life for altering the sacred Scriptures in this place, he will be in the company of one of the leading champions of the Calvinistic forces. Beza translates, 'prius jam olim descripti ad hanc damnationem,' 'before of old

described to this damnation.’

"None of the versions, indeed, to which we have had access, except our English translation, have rendered the word in question ordained; and we may say with Dr. Adam Clarke, that it is as ridiculous as it is absurd to look into such words for a decree of eternal reprobation, &c., such a doctrine being as far from the apostle’s mind, as that of Him in whose name he wrote.’

"As to the text in Rev. xxii, 19, the only material deviation from the common version is, that Wesley translates, ’his part of the tree of life,’ and the common version, the ’book of life;’ and how this can affect the meaning at all we are at a loss to see, as the person who has not his part in the tree of life, will hardly have his name in the book of life. Wesley, however, is sustained by Griesbach, who gives the word "xulon," tree, as the true reading, referring to the margin for the word "biblon," as being according to the commonly received text. We trust, therefore, that neither justice nor candor requires Wesley to be condemned for this emendation, especially as it does not at all affect the sense, and is justified by so high an authority as Griesbach.

"The only remaining text to be examined is 1 Peter i, 20, where Wesley translates the word "proegnwsmenou," foreknown, instead of foreordained, as it is in the common version. On this we need not say much, as the merest tyro [beginner, novice] in the Greek language knows that this is the literal, grammatical meaning of the word; and that there is no more authority for rendering it foreordained, than there is for saying that because I know that this rendering of Mr. Wesley is accurate, I therefore decreed it; for the radix [origin] forr the above word, "ginwskw," signifies to know, and can never be made to mean to ordain, or decree. Is it not a little strange, that those Calvinists who contend that there is so slight a difference between foreknowledge and decree, that the one necessarily implies the other, should so vehemently reprimand Wesley for giving the literal translation of this word? If there be no difference between knowledge and decree, as they contend, how has Wesley altered the meaning of Scripture, even allowing that the original word here had been "proorizw", which it is not, by translating it foreknown?"

3. Not only were the characters of Wesley and Clarke thus ungenerously assailed, but the integrity of our ministry also was called in question. The Christian Spectator had said, "Nor can we here so much as begin to speak of the misrepresentations, and the many cunningly devised artifices, by which the doctrine and discipline of Methodism are so assiduously propagated.’’ This, indeed, was a grievous accusation. But how did they attempt its support? How! Why, by merely vague conjectures. It was wittingly surmised that we had immense funds at our command, by which our ministry was supported independently of the people; that even these funds were so dexterously managed that our own people themselves did not know; being kept in ignorance by our "cunningly devised artifices," either their extent or application. This unfounded and cruel charge was met, refuted, and fully put down, by an appeal to facts. It was demonstrated that the funds of the Church -- derived, as was alleged, from the Book Concern and Chartered Fund -- so far from being immense, did not yield over three dollars a year to each claimant; and that those supernumerary and superannuated preachers, widows, their children and orphans, who were the legal claimants upon these funds, did not receive, including what they derived from the voluntary contributions of the people, over 25, 50, or seventy-five percent of that which was allowed them by the Discipline, which was one hundred dollars for such preacher or widow, and not over twenty-four dollars a year for each dependent child; and that, so far from concealing from the

people either the amount of the revenues of the Church, or their application, the whole was annually published in the Minutes of our conferences. This complete refutation of such a groundless charge seemed to silence our inconsiderate opponents, and to make their friends ashamed of their temerity in bringing it against us in so public a manner.

4. Another complaint was brought against the manner in which our Church property was held. It was alleged that it was deeded to the General Conference, and that therefore the people had neither a right in nor control over it. To this it was replied, that the statement was false in point of fact. Church property, instead of being secured to the conference, and therefore the property of the preachers, was held by trustees appointed by the people -- where the laws of the states in which the property was located provided for that manner of their appointment, and in other places as the Discipline of the Church directs -- in trust for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in that place. This, it was justly contended, placed the legal right of the property where it should be, in the hands of the people, and not in the conference, as our accusers had asserted.

5. Our mode of Church government was represented, not only as unscriptural, but as being set up and vindicated in "contempt of Scripture authority." This led to a Scriptural defense of our Church government, of our itinerancy, and general method of conducting our affairs; and finally to a comparison between Methodist Episcopacy and Presbyterianism and Congregationalism, as well as a defense of our entire economy.2

6. Another subject of controversy arose out of the representations of the state of things in the valley of the Mississippi. We have before noticed the origin of the society for the education of pious young men for the gospel ministry. Out of this arose the "American Home Missionary Society," which was organized in 1826. This society was composed of members and friends of the Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and Congregational Churches, and as altogether a voluntary association; that is, it was not a church organization, not being recognized as the exclusive property of any particular denomination, nor under the control of its church judicatories. And as the missionaries who were in the employ of this society were taken from either or all of the above-mentioned denominations, they were instructed to form churches according to the principles of either the Presbyterian or Congregational plan of church government, as might best suit the people; and to give greater efficiency to their labors, and a wider range to their operations, a "Plan of Union" was formed between these two denominations, so as to admit commissioners into the General Assembly from those churches which might be established on Congregational principles.

Comprehending these three large denominations in this society, under the name of American Home Missionary Society, its patrons gave it the name of a national institution, as though in it were represented the Christianity of America. To this assumption of a national society, we of course, entered our protest because it was calculated to mislead the public mind, especially in foreign countries. To say nothing of the Baptists, who were more numerous than either of the above denominations, the Protestant Episcopalians, the Lutherans, and numerous other sects, all of whom were exerting less or more influence in favor of Christianity, the Methodists were more numerous than either. It seemed, therefore, unjust to select a single society, made up of those three denominations, which represented not one fourth of the Christians in the United States, and

call it a national society, thereby accounting all the others as nothing.

We had other objections. This society, by assuming a national character, was contrary to the genius of American institutions, which acknowledged no national religion. It seemed, therefore, like an effort to force public opinion to recognize the existence of a national church, in direct opposition to the declared intention of all our civil institutions. This assumption of a national society, together with the avowed intentions of some of the reports of the American Sabbath School Union, respecting the circulation of their books, and the influence which it might have upon our state and general elections, excited an alarm in some minds, lest comprehensive plans were forming to secure the patronage of the state for the support of those denominations which were committed for the support of this society. And though this might have been a groundless alarm. it tended to awaken attention to the subject, and led other denominations to look about them, and watch over the welfare of their own institutions. And it is somewhat remarkable, that the very measures which were taken by this society to combine so many discordant materials in the range of their operations, and to make an impression abroad of the nationality of its character, should have led eventually to the dissolution of the union of the Presbyterian Church; for there can be no doubt that the Plan of Union," by which that church permitted Congregational principles to become incorporated into their judicatories, was the entering wedge which finally split that church asunder; so that the means adopted to make themselves great, and to impress upon the minds of others that they represented the religion of the nation, were the very means of lessening their number and influence, and of creating one other instead of combining three into one sect. But the means used by those missionaries who were sent out by this society to enlist the sympathies of the church and the public mind in favor of their vast project gave great and very just offense. At the time of the organization of this society, a periodical was commenced, under its immediate patronage and control, called the "Home Missionary and Pastor’s Journal," in which the reports of these missionaries were, from time to time, published. These reporters very often gave such a description of the moral wastes and religious destitution of the countries where they traveled, as was truly alarming to the real friends of the country and of Christianity. On examination, it was found that many of those places which were thus represented as entirely destitute of the gospel, had been regularly supplied for years by our ministry, and that there existed in them large and flourishing societies. The fact was, that our ministers had penetrated every part of that country, had kept pace with the progress of the new settlements, had gone to the Indian tribes, hundreds of whom had been converted to the Christian faith, and had carried the glad tidings of salvation to the black population of the south and southwest, entering every open door, and preaching the gospel to all to whom they could have access. Yet these were represented as being totally destitute of the gospel and of Christian ordinances. These things were thought to be unjust and unchristian, as well as unwise and impolitic. We therefore considered it a duty which we owed to ourselves to expose them, and to enter our protest against them. This was done, principally, through the columns of the Christian Advocate and Journal, both by the editors, and those correspondents who were on the spot, and who therefore spoke from what they had seen and felt. And so palpable were the facts, that few undertook to justify the proceedings of these missionaries. Indeed, their own friends became convinced of the impolicy of such statements, and advised them to refrain; and hence, instead of saying that there were no ministers, they afterward reported that there were no Presbyterian ministers in such and such a place. To this manner of reporting there could be no objections. The following extract from the Christian Advocate and Journal for this year will show

how these objections were met and refuted: --

"Every year, from the time that Schemerhorn and Mills made their missionary tour to the west and south, and published their famous journal of observation, the thrilling note of complaint has been heard echoing from one end of the continent to another, about the paucity of 'educated ministers,' 'competent ministers,' &c., and the people have been called upon in no ordinary strains of mournful eloquence to exert themselves to replenish the funds of education societies, that the number of these ministers might be speedily increased; that the nation, to adopt the language of the Rev. Dr. Beecher, might 'arise and save itself by its own energies.' To keep up the stimulus thus excited, -- to continue the language of the last cited author, -- 'the trumpet must sound long and press must groan,' and utter in the ears of our countrymen the story of their miseries, or the 'nation is undone.' And from the time this note of alarm was sounded by Dr. Beecher, it has continued rolling through our country, until the doleful ditty of the 'moral desolations of the vast valley of the Mississippi' has reverberated from hill to valley, with a sickening repetition. Yes, this fertile numerous, valley, where, besides the Baptists, who are the Protestant Episcopalians, and other denominations, we have no less than seven annual conferences, composed, according to the Minutes for 1829, of 516 traveling preachers, and probably more than twice that number of local preachers, and 128,316 church members, has been, and is still, represented as being in such a fearful state, that unless mighty exertions are made to replenish the funds of the national societies, it is apprehended that such a swelling tide of immorality will flow back, and cross the Alleghenies, as to sweep away pure religion from the Atlantic states and every succeeding year, from that time to this, our ears are stunned with the deafening cry, 'The treasury is empty!' 'the committee are in advance' for so many hundreds or thousands of dollars. To add energy to this voice of distress, all other ministers are deposed as 'incompetent,' 'uneducated,' 'inefficient.' To say nothing respecting the truth or falsity of these statements, we would ask whether it is becoming in gentlemen who utter this doleful cry of distress, with a view to replenish their exhausted treasuries, while it would seem that their funds are already so great that some think that the people ought to be warned against lavishing any more into their hands, to accuse us of accumulating funds dangerous to the state?"

It is by no means intended to say that there was no call for additional laborers either here or elsewhere. No doubt there were many moral wastes, both in the west and in the east, in the populous cities, in the villages, and country places, which needed the reforming influence of the gospel, and more active laborers to effect it. We could therefore have no objection to an increase of zealous and holy ministers. Our objections were to the unwillingness manifested to acknowledge the gospel character and labors of others, and to recognize the good which had been most evidently effected by them, and particularly by the self-denying exertions of our ministry in the western country. Indeed, in many of these reports there seemed to be a desire manifested to depreciate those who had long since planted the gospel in those very places now represented as destitute, and where our preachers had labored with great success, amid hardships and privations to which few were willing to submit; and these things are here recorded, that those who shall come after us may know to whom they are indebted for the first promulgation of the gospel in our western wilds.

It is believed that this discussion did good. At any rate, it tended to enlighten the public mind on these subjects, to make our doctrines, usages, labors, and success, more generally known and

more justly appreciated, and thus strengthened the hands and cheered the hearts of the members and friends of our Church. It tended likewise to convince our opponents, that if they presumed to misrepresent or to slander us, we had the means of self-defense, and an ability and disposition to use them; and that when the facts were clearly stated, our doctrines and manner of propagating them fully explained, we should not be considered such dangerous heresiarchs as we had been represented to be. We are glad know, however, that these days of strife are past, and that a more friendly and amicable spirit prevails. We hope, therefore, that hereafter we may mutually strive only to provoke one another to love and good works."

Another subject was agitated about this time which gave no little uneasiness, and occasioned much discussion. I allude to the Temperance reformation. The American Temperance Society had commenced its powerful operations in 1826, and was now doing much good to the souls and bodies of men both in and out of' the churches. A proposition had been submitted to us to unite with that society, and on such terms as we did not think it expedient to accept. It was proposed to raise a permanent fund of twenty thousand dollars for the support of an agent or agents, who should be exclusively devoted to the temperance cause. To this it was objected, because it was thought that a permanent fund was unnecessary for the success of the enterprise, as the money needed to carry it forward might be better raised as it should be wanted. It was moreover urged that we had always been a temperance society, having made abstinence from intoxicating liquors as a beverage a term of church communion and therefore to come into the measures of the American Society would be a virtual acknowledgment that we, as a church, needed such a reformation. This occasioned no little discussion, and gave rise to some heart-burnings on both sides of the question. By some, whose zeal was not always tempered with knowledge, it was contended that, because we did not unite in the society, and co-operate with it in all its plans and movements, we were opposed to the cause of temperance itself, and therefore stood in the way of its success. To this it was replied, that being already the friends and advocates of temperance, having, as a church, recognized the practice of total abstinence from intoxicating liquors as a common drink, it was unjust to accuse us of a want of friendship for the men engaged in this enterprise of benevolence, or of zeal in promoting their objects. This was the true state of the controversy; but the manner in which it was conducted elicited facts and brought forth light which had been dormant, or had not been perceived for though it had been made it a term of church communion by one of our general rules, it was found, on a closer inspection, that the rule itself had been softened down, and that in many instances even this had been suffered to remain as a dead letter. In consequence of these things, it was clearly discovered that members of our own Church were in the daily habit using intoxicating liquors, and that the Discipline, at best, had been but partially enforced. This discovery led to important results. For though our opinion remained unchanged respecting the inexpediency of some of the measures of the American Temperance Society, particularly as regarded raising a permanent fund, yet the necessity of the reformation, even in our own Church, notwithstanding our prohibitory rule, became very apparent. Hence temperance societies were formed, and our preachers and people very generally fell in with the temperance measures, greatly to the edification and benefit of the Church, and to the cause of God generally. In noticing this subject, I am very desirous of correcting an error respecting the course taken by the official organ of the Church, the Christian Advocate and Journal, then under the editorial control of the writer of this History. It was alleged frequently, and is sometimes even repeated now, that the paper opposed the cause of temperance. This was and is a sad mistake. It

never, intentionally at least, opposed either the principles or practice of temperance. It did oppose some of the measures of the American Temperance Society, and advised our brethren and friends not to contribute their money to raise the contemplated fund; but its opposition was directed chiefly to the misrepresentations which were made of our real position, namely, that we were enemies to temperance, merely because we pleaded that our Church had favored the principles and practice of temperance from the beginning, and therefore had no motive to join the American Society. This is the ground we took. And though afterward convinced we were in error in supposing that the strict principles of temperance were generally exemplified in practice by all the members of our Church, and therefore lent our aid to exterminate the evil from among us, yet we remain unchanged in our views respecting the impolicy of some of the measures of the American Temperance Society, while we hail with delight the onward march of the temperance reformation. And if any of our sayings or measures were construed into opposition to this reformation at the time, through misapprehension or otherwise, we think sufficient has been said and done since to convince all candid and unbiased minds of the rectitude and consistency of our course; and I here record my most solemn conviction that the temperance cause should be ranked among the most benevolent and efficient means now in use for the benefit of mankind. And this is recorded with the more pleasure from the fact that John Wesley was the first in modern days to proclaim a war of extermination upon the use of all intoxicating liquors, "except in cases of extreme necessity." The Oneida mission was commenced this year. This tribe of Indians were settled on an Indian reservation in the western part of the state of New York. They had been partially civilized, and some of them were cultivators of the soil, and had adopted the habits of civilized life. Though the Protestant Episcopalians had had a mission among them for several years, they were in a deplorable state as to religion and morals. Like most of the semi-civilized barbarians who skirted our states and territories, they were deeply debased by habits of intoxication, and all those degrading vices, which connect themselves with a course of intemperance. By these means, instead of being in a thriving condition, they were diminishing in numbers, and deteriorating in property and morals. In this state they were when visited by a young man of the Mohawks, of Upper Canada. This man had been converted in the revival which had taken place among that tribe of Indians, and was now impelled by his thirst for the salvation of others to make known the way of peace and reconciliation to these people. Being able to speak to them of the things of God in their own language, and from his own experience, they received the tidings with penitent and believing hearts, and a work of reformation commenced among them, which eventuated in the conversion of upward of one hundred. A school was also established for the education of the children, and those adult Indians who were desirous of learning. This good work has steadily gone on to this day, and a number of the converted Indians have emigrated to Green Bay, who became the nucleus of a flourishing society in that place.

Through the example and teachings of these people, the Onondagas, a neighboring tribe, received the gospel, and twenty-four of them were converted to God and brought into church fellowship.

Several other missions were commenced this year in the new and destitute settlements in our western regions. St. Joseph’s mission embraced a tract of country on the St. Joseph’s river, which flows into Lake Michigan in Berrien county, Michigan. Among these new settlers the missionary found his way, and conveyed to them the glad tidings of salvation, and was instrumental in

establishing several societies, which have continued to increase and flourish to this day. In the frontier settlements of the states of Indiana and Illinois, on the waters of the Fox river, between that river and the lake Winnebago, the Rev. Jesse Walker, one of our old and experienced preachers, was sent as a missionary. Into this new and thinly settled country he penetrated, and succeeded in establishing several societies, and opening the way for the continued preaching of the gospel in that new country. The country on the head waters of the Wabash was fast filling up with inhabitants from the older states, and therefore greatly needed the gospel. Hence a mission was commenced this year for the benefit of these people; and the missionary, the Rev. S. R. Beggs, so far succeeded, that through his and the labors of his successors, in 1831 there were returned one hundred and forty-six Church members.

Galena mission was begun this year. This was in the state of Illinois, on the banks of Fever or Bean river, upward of four hundred miles above St. Louis. Though Galena has since become a considerable town and a seat of justice, in the midst of the rich lead mines in that region, yet, at the time of which we now speak, it was but thinly settled, and its resources were just beginning to be known and appreciated. Though the people were generally so taken up in their speculating concerns -- the mines presenting a fascinating temptation for obtaining wealth -- as to manifest much indifference for religious things, yet a few were brought to the knowledge of the truth, and the cause has continued to advance steadily from that day to this.

Another mission, called Providence, was opened this year in the new settlements on both banks of the Mississippi river, from Vicksburgh to Lake Washington, and the adjacent settlement along the bayous and little lakes. The nature of the country and the condition of the settlers were such as to require great labor and many privations to carry the gospel to them. The self-denying exertions of God’s servants, however, were owned and blessed, so that in 1832 there were returned on the Minutes one hundred and sixty-six members, sixty-seven of whom were colored, and the good work has prospered from that time onward.

We have already noticed the exertions that were making in behalf of seamen, and particularly the establishment of the Mariners’ Church in the city of New York. The example thus set excited benevolent Christians to adopt similar plans in other places for the melioration and salvation of this class of our fellow-citizens. Accordingly, about this time, the "Boston Port Society" was organized, and the Rev. Edward T. Taylor -- who, before his conversion to God, had followed the seas -- a member of the New England conference, was employed to preach to seamen, in the city of Boston. He commenced his labors this year, under the parsonage of this society, in the old Methodist meeting-house, the first built in Boston, and which was afterward purchased for the special use of seamen. Having been accustomed to the sea-faring life, and now thirsting for the salvation of seamen, Mr. Taylor was able to sympathize with them in a very peculiar manner, and to preach to them with energy and effect. And such has been the success of his labors, that a large and commodious house of worship has been erected, in which the word of God is preached to these sons of the ocean, a sailors’ boarding-house established, on both of which floats the Bethel flag; -- a clothing store and a school for the education of seamen’s daughters, have also been opened, as most useful appendages to this institution of benevolence. A ladies’ society has been organized for the purpose of aiding in this good work, by furnishing employment to the poorer class of females, wives and widows of seamen, and the garments thus made are deposited in the store, sold to those who are able to pay for them, or given away to such as are most indigent.

This, altogether, is a noble charity; and the wealthy merchants of Boston know how to appreciate its worth. The manifest improvement, through the agency of the gospel, in the lives and general deportment of the seamen who attend the Bethel meeting, convinces all of the beneficial influence of the institution, and has prompted some individuals to give largely of their wealth for its support. The spiritual interests of the congregation, and we may say its temporal interests too, are mainly intrusted to Mr. Taylor, and he has the satisfaction to see his house well filled, from sabbath to sabbath, with attentive hearers, who receive the word with joy; and the serious part of his hearers, as well as the sailors generally, look up to him with the utmost affection and confidence. In addition to administering to them the word and ordinances -- for the ordinances of the Church are regularly attended to -- Mr. Taylor is in the habit of visiting the ships in the harbor, and especially on their arrival, or on the eve of their departure on a voyage to a foreign port; of praying with them, and furnishing them with Bibles and tracts, and giving them words of admonition and encouragement. His congregation is indeed a floating one; and thus., while their pastor is stationary, they are the means of carrying the word of God to every port, and of exhibiting the blessed effects of experimental religion wherever their lot may be cast. The sailors' boarding-house connected with the establishment is of great use, as it is kept on strictly religious and temperance principles, and is designed as a refuge for them, while on land, from the temptations to those vicious indulgences so common to this class of men, as well as from the rapacious grasp of those who delight in cheating them out of their hard earnings when they come on shore. These "land sharks," as they have been not unaptly called, are ever ready to open their jaws whenever a ship arrives, that they may readily and remorselessly devour the earnings of the unsuspecting sailor, by presenting to him the intoxicating cup, and enticing him to haunts of gambling and licentiousness. That these exertions in favor of seamen have done and are still doing much good, is evident to all who are acquainted with the extent and influence of their operations. Instances of most powerful conversions, both on the land and on the water, have been recorded, and since the temperance reformation has been pushed forward with so much energy and success, many merchants have banished the use of inebriating liquors from their ships, greatly to their own advantage, and to that of those who manage their affairs. By these means the word of God and religious tracts have been substituted for the gambling table and the sailor's grog, and the voice of prayer and thanksgiving has been heard instead of the voice of profane mirth and revelry, on board many of our merchant ships. And in some sense many of our seamen have become missionaries, by carrying the glad tidings of the gospel into the ports they have visited, thus teaching foreign nations that our God and his Christ are acknowledged and worshipped even by the hardy sons of the ocean. These floating Bethels, have therefore become, to some extent, itinerant ministers to foreign countries; and if the good work shall spread, as it may and will if suitable means are used, our sailors will become the connecting links between the several missionary stations in the different parts of the globe.

About this time the general work was much aided by means of what were first called "four days' meetings," and have since been known as "protracted meetings," because they were appointed to be held at first for four days, and afterward for an indefinite length of time, to be determined by the probabilities of effecting good to the souls of the people. Such meetings, to be sure, were not new among us. We have before recorded several instances, in seasons of great revivals, when meetings of this character were held from three to sixteen days, while the camp meetings were always continued from four to eight days in succession. But at this time they were introduced in a

more formal manner, and instead of inviting people from abroad, they were held from one neighborhood to another, with a view to awaken a more general and individual attention to the concerns of eternity.

They were commenced by the Rev. John Lord, of the New England conference, in the month of September, in the year 1827; and such were their good effects, that they soon spread through the country, even among other denominations, particularly the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists. They are generally conducted in the following manner: -- Meetings are held morning, afternoon, and evening, opened with a sermon, and closed with a prayer meeting, during which penitent sinners are invited to come to the altar, to receive the benefit of prayer and exhortation; and they are continued from three to ten, and even twenty days, according to the nature and strength of religious excitement which may be produced; though generally, when they are lengthened out beyond four days, the exercises are confined chiefly to the afternoon and evening. These meetings, in some places, have nearly superseded camp meetings, and probably will, if continued, in many other places. That in some instances they have run into excesses, is no more than what might be expected, constituted as human nature is; but this is no more an argument against their continuance, than it would be to infer that any other good thing should be laid aside because of its abuse. As a means of awakening sinners to a sense of their sinfulness, and leading them to Jesus Christ for life and salvation, they have been abundantly blessed and owned of God, and should therefore be kept up so long as they are productive of these results.

Forty-two preachers received a location, sixty-seven were returned supernumerary, and one hundred and twenty superannuated; seventeen had died, three had withdrawn, and four had been expelled.

Among those who had died this year, all of whom departed in peace, we may notice particularly Samuel Doughty, of the Philadelphia conference, who died in the thirty-fifth year of his age and the fifth of his itinerant ministry. Though young in the work of the ministry, he had established a character which, had it pleased God to lengthen out his life, would doubtless have shone forth with a peculiar brightness before the Church and the world. The following testimony to his worth is taken from the account of his death in the Minutes for this year: --

"Brother Doughty, as a preacher, was popular and useful. His discourses were frequently truly eloquent; and had his voice been equal to his other qualifications as a speaker, he would have attained much greater eminence. His literary and theological acquirements were highly respectable, of which his sermons in the Methodist Magazine, particularly that entitled 'Instability in religion,' afford satisfactory evidence.

"His zeal for the glory of God and the welfare of men appeared in the interest which he took in the success of benevolent institutions. He was their eloquent advocate, and was particularly active in the promotion of Sunday schools, both before and after he became a minister of the gospel. Just previous to his death he was engaged, with others, in organizing and bringing into operation a Conference Sunday School Union, auxiliary to the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of which auxiliary he was corresponding secretary. In September, 1825, he was invited to assist in certain religious exercises at the enlargement of the church edifice in Wilmington, Delaware, and was there seized with the illness which terminated his life and labors on the seventeenth of that month, at the house of the Rev. Solomon Higgins. He died in great

peace, rejoicing that death, to him, 'had no terrors.' He was highly respected and beloved, and the tribute of affection paid to his memory by the numerous and weeping members of his charge, who followed him to his grave, was gratifying to his brethren and to his surviving relatives." To those who knew him it is not necessary to add any thing more. Yet, having had the pleasure of his acquaintance, I cannot forbear saying that there always appeared in him a meekness of spirit and gentleness of deportment highly becoming the Christian minister, and which commended him to the affection and confidence of his brethren and friends. Though he possessed more than ordinary endowments as a preacher, and could convey his thoughts with a most graceful and easy elocution, yet he seemed unconscious of any superiority over others, and always put himself in the attitude of an humble learner, looking up to his seniors with diffidence, and to God by faith and prayer. He was therefore much beloved by his brethren, and hailed by the Church as a messenger of good tidings, and a willing and useful pastor to the flock of Jesus Christ.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 382,679; Last Year: 359,533; Increase: 23,146 -- Colored This Year: 62,814; Last Year: 58,856; Increase: 3,958 -- Indians This Year: 2,250; Last Year: 538; Increase: 1,712 -- Total This Year: 447,743; Last Year: 418,927 -- Increase: 28,816 -- Preachers This Year: 1,817; Last Year: 1,642; Increase: 175.

1830 The reformation which had been effected among the aborigines of our country seemed to awaken a most lively interest in their behalf throughout every department of the Church, and no less so among those of the natives themselves who had been truly converted to the Christian faith. For these converts were not merely nominal believers in Christianity. They had felt its renovating and transforming power upon their hearts, and this had produced a correspondent change in their habits, civil, domestic, and religious. By this means they presented in their own lives a living, palpable, and irrefutable evidence to all who beheld them, that the gospel of Jesus Christ is even now the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. These, therefore, were living epistles, written, not with pen and ink, but by the finger of the living God, and sent unto the other tribes that they might read with their own eyes of the wonderful works of Almighty God, and be convinced that Christianity is "not a cunningly devised fable," but that it is still "the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Acting under the sacred impulse thus produced, an effort was made this year to introduce the gospel among the Shawnee and Kansas Indians, and the Rev. Thomas Johnson was sent to the former, and the Rev. William Johnson to the latter tribe. These Indians inhabited the western part of the state of Missouri, and the missions were therefore undertaken by the Missouri conference. The Shawnees, especially, were found to be of a docile and tractable disposition, had commenced the cultivation of the soil, and manifested a great desire to be taught in religion, in literature, and the arts of civil and domestic life. Though the missionaries met with much difficulty, at first, for want of a qualified interpreter, yet a school was soon established for the education of the children, and a house erected for the accommodation of the mission. The commencement was small, and the progress slow, but success has attended the labors of God's servants, and the mission has continued to flourish and enlarge its dimensions to this day. Many, indeed, have been raised up among these natives of the forests, who are now ornaments to their profession, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God. This year also several missions were commenced for the special benefit of the slave population in the states of South Carolina and Georgia. This class of people had been favored with the labors of the Methodist ministry from the beginning of its

labors in this country, and there were at this time 62,814 of the colored population in the several states and territories in our Church fellowship, most of whom were slaves. It was found, however, on a closer inspection into their condition, that there were many who could not be reached by the ordinary means, and therefore preachers were selected who might devote themselves exclusively to their service. A catechism was prepared for their use, in which they might be taught the leading doctrines and duties of Christianity, and many of these slaves have been brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. This year a mission was begun on the island of New York, called the Harlem mission. This embraced a population in the neighborhood of the city, many of whom were but transient residents, and generally destitute of the means of grace. It has been continued on the list of missions to the present time, always yielding, however, a partial support to the missionaries. In the bounds of the mission four houses of worship have been erected, and a good foundation is thus laid for the future salvation of the people who may inhabit that part of our city and its environs.

Some of the old towns on the eastern banks of the Connecticut river were as yet unvisited by our ministry, and this year a mission was undertaken for their benefit. It was so far blessed that it soon became adequate to its own support, and has since remained among our regular circuits. In the northwestern parts of the state of Missouri, on the several branches of the Sak river, Gasconade, and southern waters of the Osage river, there were extensive tracts of country, fast filling up with emigrants from the older states and territories. These people were "as sheep without a shepherd," and therefore needed the gospel to bring them into the fold of Jesus Christ. Accordingly there were three missions commenced this year, namely, the Salt River, the Gasconade, and the West Prairie, for the benefit of these people. Notwithstanding the hardships and privations the missionaries had to endure in traversing this new country, they succeeded in raising up several societies and establishing regular circuits, which have continued to flourish to the present time, and are now aiding to send the gospel to other and more destitute place. The Iroquois and Jonesborough missions, in the bounds of the Illinois conference, were likewise commenced this year. The former included the tribe of Kickapoo Indians, the condition of whom was somewhat singular. It seems that a prophet had risen up among them, who acknowledged the true God, and was zealously engaged in instructing his people in religious things. Whether he had acquired his knowledge of God by intercourse either directly or indirectly with the white people, or had been conducted along by the secret whispers of that "Spirit which giveth understanding to man," it appears that, though mixed with many errors and superstitions, he had made considerable progress in divine things, and was piously engaged in his exertions for the temporal and spiritual benefit of his people. He was not averse to hearing the truths of the gospel, though it was some time before he fully gave up his peculiar notions, and came heartily to embrace Christianity in its fulness and power The Jonesborough mission, which embraced a new country about one hundred and fifty miles from Vandalia, the capital of the state, was prosecuted with such success that it returned the next year two hundred and sixty-four Church members, and has since been numbered among the regular circuits.

Eleven preachers had died during the past year, and sixty-one had located; sixty-seven were returned supernumerary, and one hundred and twenty-two superannuated; four had been expelled, and four had withdrawn.

Among those who had taken their departure in peace was Henry Holmes, of the Virginia conference who died on the 27th of July, 1829, in the forty fourth year of his age, and the

eighteenth of his itinerant ministry. The record of his death awards to him an eminent standing among his brethren in the ministry, as a man of deep piety, of unquestionable integrity and with rare qualifications as a minister of the sanctuary. In 1823 he was appointed to the office of presiding elder, which office he continued to fill with becoming dignity and great usefulness until he finished his work. He has therefore left a name behind him which will be remembered in connection with the progress of Methodism in that part of Virginia with pious gratitude by the people who were blessed under his ministrations. Though his death was sudden, it did not find him unprepared, for he met it with pious resignation and a joyful hope of future blessedness.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 402,561; Last Year: 382,679; Increase: 19,882 -- Colored This Year: 69,383; Last Year: 62,814; Increase: 6,569 -- Indians This Year: 4,209; Last Year: 2,250; Increase: 1,959 -- Total This Year: 476,153; Last Year: 447,743 -- Increase: 28,410 -- Preachers This Year: 1900; Last Year: 1817; Increase: 83. In consequence of the action of the General Conference of 1828, by which it was mutually agreed, that if the Canada brethren saw fit, they might form an independent conference in Upper Canada, of which they had availed themselves, the members belonging to the Church in that province are not included in the above enumeration. Had these been added, the actual increase would have been 37,935. This shows that, notwithstanding the secessions of the "Reformers," so called, and the agitations which followed, the labors of our ministry were still sanctioned by the Head of the Church. Indeed, greater peace and harmony pervaded the ranks of our Israel than had been realized for many previous years, all being convinced that bold experimenters were not the most infallible leaders.

1831 From the movements already alluded to in Upper Canada, the Indian missions in that province, including no less than ten stations, and 1,850 adult Indians under religious instruction, most of whom were members of the Church, were taken from our superintendence and put under the care of the Wesleyan conference in England. These missions, which had become endeared to us by such associations as could not be easily dissolved, and for the benefit of which we had expended so much labor and money, still clung to our affections and could not therefore be surrendered, even in the amicable manner in which the arrangement for their future supply was made, without feelings of regret. Knowing, however, that they would be provided for by our brethren in England with the same assiduous care with which they had been from the beginning, we withdrew our pastoral oversight with the less sorrow, still praying almighty God to bless and prosper them.

Hitherto our Indian missions in the United States and territories had been attended with unparalleled success. About this time, however, the action of the general government of the United States on the Indian settlements began to exert an injurious influence upon some of these missions, and even to threaten them with destruction. In 1821 the Rev. Dr. Morse made an extensive tour of observation among the western tribes of Indians, under the patronage of the general government; and, in his published report, gave it as the result of his observations, that, could an amicable arrangement be made between the government and the aboriginal tribes, for their removal west of the Mississippi, where they could live under the protection of the United States, and be taught the arts of agriculture and domestic life, it would be mutually beneficial. This opinion, which seems to have been adopted by the government, and by the leading men of the nation, was manifestly founded on the presumption that the Indians, while they remain under their own laws and usages, cannot flourish in the vicinity of the white population, nor yet so amalgamate

with the whites as to become identified with them. And does not the painful history of these people fully justify this opinion? From the first settlement of the country until now, notwithstanding all the efforts which have been made by philanthropists and Christians to civilize and Christianize these people, they have gradually receded on the advance of civilized society, or melted away and become extinct. Why is this? Is it because they have refused to obey the original command given to man, that he must "dress the garden "and keep it," and "till the ground whence he was taken?" Whatever may have been the cause, such are the facts in relation to their history thus far; and whether the efforts recently put forth and now using to save them from barbarism and destruction shall prove ultimately successful, we must leave for other generations to testify. But whatever may be their future destiny, the general government have adopted the policy already suggested, of removing them from their present residences to the regions west of the Mississippi, with the promise of protection from future aggressions upon their rights, and the hope of bettering their condition. To effect this object, treaty stipulations were entered into with some of the tribes to purchase their lands, to indemnify them for their losses, and to aid in transferring them to their new habitation. As these treaties were often concluded in opposition to large minorities of the natives, they became difficult of execution, produced much irritation, and in some instances the hazard and even the loss of life. This policy operated most injuriously upon the Cherokees, who were settled principally in the state of Georgia. Over these people Georgia undertook to extend her laws, and thus force them either to sell their lands and remove west of the Mississippi, or be deprived of the privileges of living under their own laws, as members of a separate community. As the project was resisted by the most opulent part of the Cherokees, and a considerable portion of the nation, a division of sentiment was created among themselves in regard to their removal, which excited much irritation of feeling, and operated injuriously on the interests of the mission. At this time there were no less than seventeen missionaries, including interpreters, and eight hundred and fifty Church members, and the prospects of extensive good were brightening until they were overcast by these movements. This year, 1831, the troubles increased, and one of our missionaries, the Rev. Mr. Trott, for refusing to take the oath of allegiance required by the state of Georgia, was arrested, imprisoned, put in chains, and otherwise maltreated. On promising, however., to leave the territory, he was pardoned by the governor and set at liberty. These proceedings greatly harassed the Christian Indians who resided within the chartered limits of Georgia, while those without the state were in a more prosperous condition.

Similar results were produced by similar movements among the Choctaws. This mission had been remarkably owned of God, so much so that in 1830 there were reported not less than four thousand Church members, embracing all the principal men of the nation, their chief and captains, many of whom were eminently useful in instructing their brethren by exhortation and prayer. They were, however, less averse to being removed than the Cherokees, and finally, in a council which was held in March, 1830,3 they passed a resolution to sell their lands to the United States and emigrate to the west. This resolution, however, gave offense to a part of the nation, and furnished a pretext to the pagans to plot the destruction of the missionaries and Christian Indians. The treaty, however, was finally consummated, though with much difficulty, and the missionaries determined to accompany the Christian Indians to their new habitation. It should be recorded that the general government did all it could to mitigate their sufferings, by affording provision and protection to the emigrants, and securing to them their lands in the west.

Yet, with all the precautions which were used by the government and the missionaries, they suffered much in their religious enjoyments, became divided, some were disheartened, and not a few apostatized from Christianity. For these sad disasters there seemed to be no adequate remedy. The decree was passed, and remove they must; and the Rev. Alexander Talley, who had devoted his best days and energies to this mission, and that too with a rare success, accompanied them to their new residence; and in a letter dated Sept. 5, 1831, he states that about five hundred had arrived, most of whom were members of the Church. These, with others that occasionally arrived at their new home, attended regularly to their Christian duties, and they have prospered more or less to the present time. These movements may account for the diminution in the number of Christian Indians on these missionary stations. The Wyandott mission, which now included two hundred and twenty-three Church members, and had attached to it a flourishing school, was this year extended to the river Huron, where, through the labors of the missionaries and some native exhorters, there was a reformation effected among a few families of the Wyandotts and Shawnees, ten of whom became members of the Church. The western country was almost daily presenting claims upon the bounty and labor of the Church to supply its spiritual wants. This year a mission was undertaken in Jackson county, Illinois, with the encouraging prospects of success. Another, called Deplain, was commenced, and has since been prosecuted with diligence and success. The Lee mission, which embraced a tract of country in the counties of Lee and Marion, west of the Flint river, was commenced this year. This new country was now filling up rapidly with inhabitants and they were thus supplied with the word and ordinances of the gospel. The missionary formed a regular circuit, having no less than fifteen preaching places and in the course of the year received one hundred and twenty-five into the Church, besides erecting two houses of worship. The cause of education was advancing steadily among us since its late revival, so that during the present year no less than three collegiate institutions had been founded, and had made a promising commencement. One of these was in Middletown, in the state of Connecticut. The buildings, which were of stone, and the land connected with them, estimated at from thirty to forty thousand dollars, were presented gratuitously to the New York and New England conferences by the Literary and Scientific Society of Middletown, on condition that forty thousand dollars more should be raised for the purpose of establishing a literary institution to be under the control of the two conferences above named, and any others that might unite with them in the enterprise. These conditions being complied with, the premises were deeded to a board of trustees elected by said conferences, who have the sole management of the financial concerns of the institution; and it soon afterward received a charter from the legislature of the state of Connecticut, of a very liberal character. The Wesleyan University, for this is its name, is located in a most delightful place, on an eminence in the western section of the city, having a commanding view of the Connecticut river, and the adjacent country east, north, and south, and is surrounded by a population noted for their steady, industrious, and religious habits, all zealous for the promotion of education, and most of whom take a deep interest in the university. The late Wilbur Fisk, D. D., was selected as its president, and, being aided by an able faculty, the university went into operation under favorable auspices, and has continued to meet the public expectation. Here, under the able guidance of its estimable president and his colleagues, many a youth has received his diploma in a manner alike creditable to himself and his instructors and what has tended to endear the institution to the Methodist Episcopal Church, a spirit of piety has pervaded its inmates, many of whom were born unto God during their sojourn in this young and rising nursery of learning and religion. It may be

said in truth, that no place, in proportion to its numbers, has been more frequently or more generally blessed with revivals of religion than the Wesleyan University.

Another was established this year under the patronage of the Virginia and South Carolina conferences, in Boydston, Mecklenburgh county, Va., called the Randolph Macon College, under a charter from the state of Virginia. The Rev. Stephen Olin, favorably known to the public for his sound learning and deep piety, was elected its president, and he continued to discharge his duties with great satisfaction until his declining health obliged him to resign his station, for the purpose of making a voyage to Europe, in the hope of regaining his lost health. This institution is also favorably located, and it went into operation under circumstances highly promising to its patrons and friends, having about sixty thousand dollars pledged to begin with. It has continued to fulfill public expectation, and, like the Wesleyan University, has been blessed with frequent revivals of religion, and has sent out sons imbued with sound learning and solid piety.

La Grange formed the third college which had been recently established under Methodist patronage. This was commenced under the patronage of the Tennessee and Alabama conferences, and was located in La Grange, in North Alabama, in a beautiful and healthy part of the country. Though its commencement was small, the whole property being estimated at only about twenty thousand dollars, yet it has gone on increasing in strength and patronage, commanding the public confidence and giving a useful education to its students. The Rev. Robert Paine was its first president, and he has proved his competency for the office by the satisfactory manner in which he has discharged its duties to this day. God has also smiled upon this institution, by pouring out his Spirit from time to time upon the students, and bringing them to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. In addition to these collegiate institutions, the several academies heretofore mentioned were in successful operation, and were so many feeders to these higher and larger fountains of learning and science. It would seem, therefore, that the Methodist Episcopal Church was determined to redeem its character from the foul blot cast upon it, not without some reason, that it had been indifferent to the cause of literature and science. And the experiments which had been recently made had thus far succeeded so well, that many who had hesitated concerning the propriety and feasibility of the enterprise seemed to be convinced that the indications of divine Providence spoke so emphatically in its favor that they felt it their imperative duty to come up to its help. And all that is wanting to establish these institutions upon a permanent foundation, is more ample endowment from the wealthy and benevolent. If supported and conducted as they ought to be, and certainly may be, they will become the fruitful nurseries of learning and religion, and tend to add strength and beauty to that Church, under the patronize of which they have been founded and thus far sustained. The work of God this year was generally prosperous, as may be seen by a reference to the increase of membership.

Seventy preacher had located, two withdrawn. two had been expelled, seventy-six returned supernumerary, and one hundred and thirty-four superannuated.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 437,024; Last Year: 402,561; Increase: -- Colored This Year: 71,589; Last Year: 69,383; Increase: 2,206 -- Indians This Year: 4,501; Last Year: 4,209; Increase: 292 -- Total This Year: 513,114; Last Year: 476,153 -- Increase: 36,961 -- Preachers This Year: 2,010; Last Year: 1900; Increase: 110.

ENDNOTES

1 The total number in the printed Minutes is set down as being 421,156, which is, 2,229 more than it should be. See Methodist Magazine, and Minutes of Conferences for 1828.

2 Those who wish full information on this subject may consult the "Defense of our Fathers," "Reviewer Reviewed," and "Original Church of Christ."

3 The following letter from an eye-witness of these things will show how matters were conducted: --

"The Choctaw country is divided into three districts, called Lower towns, Six towns, and Upper towns. The Upper towns form the western district. Colonel Lefleur was formerly chief of the Upper towns, and Colonels Folsom and Garland were chiefs of the two eastern districts; until at a great council, held in March last, at which a majority of the warriors of the nation were present, Colonels Folsom and Garland [both Christians of the Presbyterian denominational resigned and Colonel Lefleur [a member of the Methodist Church] was chosen chief of the whole nation. This council, it will be recollected, also voted to offer their country for sale to the United States, on certain conditions, and to remove west of the Mississippi.

"The vote to sell the country excited so much dissatisfaction, that Mushulatubee, [the leader of the pagan party,] who formerly been chief of the Lower towns district, but had been deposed, availed himself of it to recover his fortunes. He placed himself at the head of his friends, and with the aid of Netockache, the leader of the Kunshas, a little pagan clan in the Six towns district succeeded in obtaining a temporary ascendency in the eastern part of the nation. The followers of Mushulatubee went through the form of appointing him chief of the Lower towns in the place of Folsom, and Netockache took the place of Garland as chief of the Six towns. They then combined their efforts tried all means in their power to put down religion, and becoming gradually more and more bold, at length threatened to drive out the missionaries out of the nation, and if they were compelled to emigrate west of the Mississippi, declared that not one should accompany them. They deposed the Christian captains throughout the two districts, and made use of threats, persuasions, and bribes, to induce those who had professed Christianity to cast off fear and live without God. It was now a time of great and almost constant alarm, and probably the only consideration which prevented the pagans from proceeding to extremities was the fear of Lefleur. At last, believing themselves sufficiently strong, they resolved ’to break him,’ but in this they were disappointed, as will be seen in the sequel.

"At the time of the distribution of the annuity for the two eastern districts at the factory, Mushulatubee and Netockache surrounded the building with their men, and resolved to prevent the Christian party from receiving any part of the goods. For this purpose they stationed guards along the road, and had collected a body of fifty or sixty armed men. But what was their surprise when Colonel Lefleur suddenly appeared before them, at the head of eight hundred armed warriors! The truth is, he left home with the determination of settling the controversy. He had, therefore, made ample preparation, and on his arrival near the factory he sent to the pagans ’a straight forward talk,’ and it was also a ’hard talk,’ -- ’Mushulatubee must resign,’ and must make his decision in fifteen minutes. At the end of this period, receiving no answer, Colonel Lefleur, at the head of his mounted men, proceeded toward Mushulatubee’s quarters. It was now expected that there would be bloody work, but Mushulatubee had secreted himself; and Netockache, coming forward, offered his hand for peace and was accepted. Colonel Lefleur and Colonel

Folsom, themselves unarmed, but at the head of their men, then pushed their way, in company with Netockache, through the guard, toward the body of the pagan party, who fled in all directions at their approach. Mushulatubee at length made his appearance, and, finding all resistance hopeless, consented to resign, and was told not to think of the office of chief for himself so long as Folsom or Lefleur lived.

"Every thing," says the letter, "has turned out well. Lefleur has raised himself in the esteem of thousands. He was very prudent, but determined. His cause was good. Mushulatubee and Netockache were usurpers and bitter persecutors, but Mushulatubee has sunk, and although Netockache is at present acknowledged as chief of the Kunshas, he is 'to walk straight.' or he will himself sink. Another chief will soon be selected in Folsoms district. The United States commissioners will probably visit the nation to treat before long. What the Choctaws will finally do, I know not, or what troubles are before them. One thing is pretty certain, that they are threatened with a famine on account of the drought. Many will have no corn at all, and others only part of a crop."

04.05C.11. Vol, 4, Book 5C, Chapter 11

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume IV -- Book V

CHAPTER 11 The General Conference of 1832 This conference assembled in the city of Philadelphia on the first of May, 1832, and was composed of the following delegates:

New York Conference: Nathan Bangs, John Clark, Laban Clark, James Covel, John Emory, Samuel D. Ferguson, Buel Goodsell, Noah Levings, Samuel Merwin, Daniel Ostrander, Fitch Reed, Phineas Rice, Marvin Richardson, Peter P. Sandford, Robert Seney, Tobias Spicer, John B. Stratten, Nicholas White.

New England Conference: Daniel Fillmore, Wilbur Fisk, Benjamin F. Lambord, John Lindsey, A. D. Merrill, Timothy Merritt, B. Otheman, George Pickering, Orange Scott, J. Steele, J. Stoddard, F. Upham, Daniel Webb, Shipley Wilson.

Maine Conference: C. Baker, Oliver Beale, S. Bray, P. Burgess, W. H. Norris, D. Hutchinson, B. Jones, John Lord, W. Marsh, E. Robinson, J. Spalding.

New Hampshire and Vermont Conference: John Adams, C. D. Calhoon, John W. Hardy, Benjamin R. Hoyt, Samuel Norris, Jared Perkins, George Storrs, Eleazer Wells,

Oneida Conference: Elias Bowen, Joseph Castle, John Dempster, George Harmon, Josiah Kies, Zachariab Paddock, Nathaniel Salisbury.

Genesee Conference: Asa Abell, Robert Burch, Israel Chamberlayne, Abner Chase, John Copeland, Edmund O. Fling.

Pittsburgh Conference: Alfred Brunson, Ira Eddy, Charles Elliott, Robert Hopkins, Daniel Limerick, Wilder B. Mack, Joshua Munroe, Billings O. Plympton, David Sharp, William Stevens, John Waterman.

Ohio Conference: Russell Bigelow, W. B. Christie, John Collins, Zachariab Connell, A. W. Elliot, James Finley, Curtis Goddard, Charles Holliday, Greenbury Jones, James Quinn, W. H. Raper, L. Swormstedt, J. F. Wright, David Young.

Illinois Cenference: James Armstrong, Thomas Hitt, G. Lock, Calvin W. Ruter, William Shanks, Samuel H. Thompson, Allen Wiley.

Holston Conference: John Bowman, W. G. Brownlow, J. K. Catlett, James Cumming, George Ekin, John Henninger, Samuel Patton, Thomas Springfield.

Kentucky Conference: William Adams, Peter Akers, Henry B. Bascom, Benjamin T. Crouch, H. H. Kavanaugh, Marcus Lindsay, George McNelly, Martin Ruter, Jonathan Stamper, G. W. Taylor, John Tevis, Joseph S. Tomlinson, Richard Tydings.

Missouri Conference: Joseph Edmundson, Jesse Green, Alexander McAllister.

Tennessee Conference: Thomas L. Douglass, Lewis Garrett, Alexander P. Green, G. W. D. Harris, Greensville T. Henderson, J. M. Holland, Wilson L. McAllister, James McFerrin, William McMahan, Lorenzo D. Overall Francis A. Owen, Robert Paine, Fountain E. Pitts.

Mississippi Conference: William M. Curtis, Thomas Griffin, Ebenezer Hearn, Joseph McDowell, Robert L. Walker, William Winans.

Georgia Conference: James O. Andrew, William Arnold, Ignatius A. Few, Andrew Hamil, Samuel K. Hodges, John Howard, William J. Parks, Benjanim Pope, Elijah Sinclair, Allen Turner.

South Carolina Conference: Charles Betts, William Capers, Samuel Dunwody, Bond English, William M. Kenneday, Malcom McPherson, Hartwell Spain, Nicholas Talley.

Virginia Conference: Bennet T. Blake, James Boyd, Moses Brock, Thomas Crowder, Benjamin Devany, Peter Doub, John Earley, William Hammett, Caleb Leach, Hezekiah G. Leigh, James Read, Lewis Skidmore, William A. Smith.

Baltimore Conference: John Bear, Robert Cadden, Charles A. Davis, John Davis, Henry Furlong, Alfred Griffith, William Hamilton, James M. Hanson, Andrew Hemphill, Gerard Morgan, S. G. Roszel, Henry Slicer, Henry Smith, David Steele, Charles B. Tippett, Norval Wilson.

Philadelphia Conference: George Banghart, Henry Boehm, Ezekiel Cooper, David Dailey, Manning Force, Solomon Higgins, John Kennaday, Joseph Lybrand, Lawrence McCombs, John Potts, William Torbert, Thomas Ware, Henry White.

Bishop McKendree, though in the city, not being able to attend the conference, and Bishop Roberts, the next in official seniority, not having arrived, the conference was opened by Bishop Soule, with reading the Holy Scriptures and prayer, Bishop Hedding being present.

Thomas L. Douglass was elected secretary, and Charles A. Davis assistant secretary. After the conference was thus organized, the bishops delivered the following address: -- "To the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, assembled in Philadelphia.

"Dear Brethren: -- We have abundant cause of thankfulness to the Father of all mercies, for that gracious providence which has preserved us to assemble on this interesting and important occasion. And it becomes us to look up to him in humble prayer for his direction through the arduous business which may come before us.

Since the last meeting of this body, it has pleased the great Head of the church to pour out his Spirit upon us in an extraordinary manner. Our borders have been greatly enlarged, and the field of labor is continually extending with the advance of population. The increase of the membership for the four years ending last July has been one hundred and thirty-one thousand, one hundred and seventeen.

"The troubles and dangers which threatened us at our last session have nearly passed away. The secession from the Church, although embracing some valuable members, has been far less extensive than was feared; and the results, with regard to the general interests of the Church, it is presumed, have been widely different from the calculations of the principal agents in the schism.

"The measures which have been pursued by those who have been called 'Reformers,' have elicited a more careful examination of the principles of the government and economy of the Church, among our preachers and people, and through the community in general.

"This examination has resulted in a clearer conviction of the excellence of our system, and especially the efficacy of our itinerant plan; and consequently peace, harmony, and reciprocal confidence have been greatly increased and confirmed.

"To preserve such a happy state of things through that vast body of ministers and people to whom we are related in the strongest bonds of interest and affection, and to devise measures for the more extensive and efficient operation of that system which has already been so remarkably successful, is the chief business of your present deliberations and counsels.

"Whatever may be the present apparent condition of the great Christian community, spread over this vast country, whatever success may appear to attend the measures adopted for the extension of the cause of truth, it is believed, that there has been no period in the history of Methodism in this country which involved greater interests, or called more loudly for a constant, clear, and zealous exhibition of those evangelical doctrines contained in our form of Discipline and standard works.

"It may be the policy of others to suppress their articles or confessions of faith; to alter or change them to suit the condition of society; or to envelop them in the mists of metaphysical disquisitions and refinements; but with us it is very different. To circulate our articles of faith in the most extensive manner, to put our doctrine and discipline into as many houses and hands as possible, and to preach those doctrines everywhere, in the most plain and simple manner, especially holiness of heart and life, is our best policy.

"Our Missionary, Sunday School, Tract, and Bible Societies have been found most valuable and efficient auxiliaries to the grand itinerant system, in carrying on the blessed work of spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands. Already much has been accomplished by the operation of these institutions, although they are but in their infancy. And it is believed that with the proper attention of the annual conferences, and the efficient agency of the preachers in the districts, circuits, and stations, all the objects for which these associations have been formed may be fully realized. It has, however, been thought by many, that the Sunday school system might be improved and made more simple, and that the organization of a school and mode of instruction might be so embodied and simplified, in a book, as to render the formation and discipline of the schools much less difficult. We recommend this subject to your attention.

"The number of the annual conferences has considerably increased in the last four years, and in consequence of the enlargement of the work, it is probable others must shortly be organized. And as one of the superintendents has been removed from his labors and his sufferings to his eternal rest, we recommend to your attention the propriety of strengthening the general superintendency.

"The Book Concern, under a judicious management, in the hands of able agents, has so increased as to afford, as the report of the agents will show, an increased dividend to the annual conferences. It is believed to be in a prosperous state. This institution, both in regard to pecuniary means, and the spread of doctrinal, experimental, and practical religion, has a high claim to the patronage of the community at large, and to your attention as the guardians of its prosperity.

"The last General Conference authorized the superintendents, by and with the advice and consent of the annual conferences, to form several new conferences, which has accordingly been done. But we beg leave to suggest that this method of dividing conferences, and forming new ones, involves a responsibility which we desire may not rest on us in future.

"We would invite an inquiry whether the rule, (page eighty-six, compared with page thirty-eight,) which authorizes a preacher to exclude a member of our Church from love feast without a regular form of trial: and the rule, (page eighty-five,) which requires a member to be put back on trial for an improper marriage, are consistent with the right of our members of a trial by a committee, as provided in the restrictive articles. (See page twenty-one.)

"Some of the annual conferences have had doubts relative to the course proper to be pursued when a preacher on trial is accused of crime. We recommend an examination of this subject, with a view to the adoption of a rule, should it be thought expedient, which shall effect an identity in the administration in such cases.

"The rule relative to members who fail in business, or contract debts which they are not able to pay, has been ought defective in two points. First, It appears to limit the inquiries of the examining committee to the 'accounts' of the delinquent; and secondly, It is doubtful whether the 'delinquent, if found guilty, is to be expelled on the decision of the first committee, or be tried before another committee in order to final expulsion. A difference of administration has resulted from this apparent defect in the rule. We recommend it to your deliberate consideration, together with the rule relative to cases where complaint is made for nonpayment of debts.

Most of the annual conferences have established literacy institutions. In some cases this has been done by a single conference, and in other cases by two or more conferences, united. Most of these institutions, though in an infant state, are flourishing and prosperous, and promise great usefulness to the community in general, and to the Methodist Church in particular. We cannot but retard this as a subject of vital interest to the connection at large. Your wisdom will determine whether any, and if any, what measures can be adopted by the General Conference at its present session for the support and advancement of this noble work.

"We have witnessed with deep regret the moral and religious condition of many of the children committed to our charge; children who have been consecrated to God, and brought into a special relation to his militant church by baptism. We would recommend a careful review of the section on the instruction of children, with a design to determine whether any thing can be added to those most excellent directions, which may tend to confirm and reserve such children in this relation to the church of God.

"Notwithstanding our earnest desire to establish a mission at Liberia, in conformity with the request of the General Conference at its last session, circumstances which seemed extremely difficult, if not impossible, to control, have hitherto prevented the accomplishment of this desirable object. But at present we have an encouraging prospect of being able to embrace the first safe time and opportunity to send one or two missionaries to the coasts of Africa.

Permit us, dear brethren, in conclusion, to commend you and ourselves to God, and to the word of his grace, praying earnestly that he would direct you by the light of his holy Spirit, and comfort and Support you by the word of his grace. And that the whole Church may be preserved in the unity of

the Spirit, and in the bond of peace.

"Yours, with much affection and esteem, "W. McKendree, "Joshua Soule, "Elijah Hedding.

"Philadelphia, May 1, l832." The following extracts from the several reports which were adopted by this General Conference will show its feelings and views in relation to the various subjects which came up for consideration. The report on missions, which was adopted by the conference, after an approval of the general plan of operations, recommends again the establishment a mission in Liberia, the sending one person or more on a tour of observation to South America and Mexico, "with a view to ascertain the practicability of establishing missions in those countries," and likewise the extension of the aboriginal missions on our western and northwestern frontiers, as well as the use of more energetic measures to fill up the waste places, whether in the older parts of our work or in the more recently settled territories. The constitution of the society was, also, so amended as to make it the duty of the managers to make an estimate for the support of those aboriginal and foreign missions not connected with any particular annual conference, and authorizing the superintendent of such missions to draw on the treasurer of the society for the amount appropriated, in quarterly or half yearly installments. The committee on education, after enumerating the several academical and collegiate institutions heretofore mentioned, and expressing their entire confidence in their character, and the manner in which they had been conducted, reported the following resolutions, which were concurred in by the conference.

"Resolved, That we have confidence in the above-named institutions, and that it be respectfully recommended to the annual conferences, and to our people and tends generally, to give their patronage and liberal support to these institutions as they may severally prefer.

"Resolved, That the above resolution is not to be so understood as to discourage the establishing of conference seminaries, as heretofore recommended by the General Conference, and that it is desirable that there should be, as far as possible, one first-rate institution of this class in each annual conference.

"Resolved, That self-supporting literary institutions re highly approved of by this conference, and the establishment of a department of industry in manual labor in our seminaries and colleges, where it is practicable, is --earnestly recommended.

"We deem it of great importance to the interests of our Church, that the colleges and academies which have been established under the direction of the annual conferences should be sustained and rendered permanent: and we invite our friends generally, as well as the members of our communion in particular, to bestow upon them a liberal patronage, and to assist in providing funds. To accomplish this it has been proposed to form societies for the purpose of raising moneys annually during a certain number of years, and the measure has been sanctioned by some of the annual conferences. The plan is evidently a judicious one, and we recommend it to our societies wherever it may be judged practicable, but particularly in those sections where it has been already introduced." The Bible, Sunday School, and Tract Societies were highly approved of; and recommended to the patronage and support of the members and friends of our Church, as may be seen in the pastoral and dress. The following extracts from this address will show the views which were entertained on the several subjects therein named: --

1. Holiness. -- "When we speak of holiness, we mean that state in which God is loved with all the heart, and served with all the power. This, as Methodists, we have said is the privilege of the Christian in this life; and, we have further said, that this privilege may be secured instantaneously, by an act of faith, as justification was. Why, then, have we so few living witnesses that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin?' Let us beware lest we satisfy ourselves with the correctness of our creed, while we neglect the momentous practical effects which that creed was intended to have upon us. Among primitive Methodists, the experience of this high attainment in religion may justly be said to have been common: now, a profession of it is rarely to be met with among us. Is it not time for us, in this matter at least, to return to first principles? Is it not time that we throw off the reproach of inconsistency with which we are charged in regard to this matter? Only let all who have been born of the Spirit, and have tasted of the good word of God, seek, with the same ardor, to be made perfect in love as they sought for the pardon of their sins, and soon will our class meetings and love feasts be cheered by the relation of experiences of this higher character, as they now are with those which tell of justification and the new birth. And, when this shall come to be the case, we may expect a corresponding increase in the amount of our Christian enjoyments, and in the force of the religious influence we shall exert over others."

2. Family religion. -- "Closely connected with personal holiness is family religion. Indeed, it may be considered as resulting from, and depending more or less upon it. He in whom the love of God is a paramount principle of action, will live in the bosom of his family as an instructing prophet, an interceding priest, and a leading example; and his influence will be felt. He will attend to the duties of family religion, not merely because they are prescribed, but because his heart is in them, and because he finds his greatest happiness in such attendance; and, wherever the heart prompts to a course of action that leads manifestly to happy consequences, the influence upon those who come within its range is great as well as certain."

3. Instruction of children. -- "The early instruction of our children in the knowledge of God, and of their duty to him, is a part of family religion which yields to none other in importance. Earliest impressions are usually the most lasting, and the most powerful in their influence upon the character of man. Hence it is, that so much emphasis is laid upon this duty in the sacred Scriptures. As a Church, we have admitted the high importance of an early religious education; but does our practice bear witness of the sincerity and practical influence of our convictions on this subject? Is it not a fact to be greatly deplored, that parents, religious, Methodist parents, too often act with no fixed plan in the education of their children? And where this is not the case, is not religion too often an object of; at most, secondary consequence in the arrangement of the plan adopted? Are we careful that not only our own instructions, but the books we place in the hands of our children, the company with which we encourage their association, the institutions in which we place them for education, and the instructors we provide for them, shall all, as far as possible, be such as shall contribute to the training of them up in the way in which they should go? Do we, when compelled to choose between them, prefer a course likely to make our children Christians, to one which will secure to them high standing in the world? If not, can we wonder if they shall choose the world rather than religion? We ourselves teach them that preference when we sacrifice their religious improvement to the acquisition of fashionable accomplishments. O, if parents would but consider how inconceivably important it is, that the minds of their children should be properly directed, they surely would shake off the indolence that prevents their own exertions for that

purpose; and they would be careful that the influence exerted by others should, as far as possible, not only be innocent, but conducive to their forming an early religious character. When, as parents, we shall feel our weighty and fearful responsibility in this matter; when we shall properly appreciate the importance of an early religious education to the character and interests of our children, and when we shall act accordingly, then may we expect to see them early disciples of Jesus, steadily walking in the way in which they should go, and joyful partakers with us of the consolations of the gospel. Then may we see wiped off the reproach of that too often pertinent interrogatory, 'In what are the children of Methodists better than those of others?' And who of us that has known the joy of God's salvation, that would not prefer that our children should be partakers in that joy, rather than that they should possess all that the world esteems good and great?"

4. Sabbath Schools. -- "Among the most efficient auxiliaries in the religions instruction of our children, we may rank sabbath schools. The good that has beers accomplished by these will never be fully known till that day arrives which shall reveal the secrets of all hearts, and the operation and tendency of the various influences which have acted upon the human character. Then it will be seen how many inexperienced feet have been prevented from wandering into the mazes of folly and sin how many thoughtless wanderers have been arrested in their course, and brought back to the ways of righteousness; and how many have been led to inquiry and to God by their instrumentality. Considering, then, the mighty and beneficial influence of sabbath Schools, allow us earnestly to recommend, that wherever it is possible, institutions of this kind shall be established, and zealously and perseveringly supported, by all who love the Lord Jesus, and care for the best interests of the rising generation. For reasons which we think must be obvious on the slightest observation, we prefer the establishment and support of sabbath schools in connection with, and supplied with books from, our own Sunday School Union. Doctrines which we esteem of vital importance are not to be expected in the books or instructions of schools under any other patronage. We shall instance in only two particulars -- the doctrine of Christian perfection, and that of the possibility of so falling from grace as to perish everlastingly. Now, believing these doctrines, and considering them as of immense practical importance, are we willing that our children should receive a course of religious instruction from which they are to be excluded? And yet in those schools which are under the patronage of the American Sunday School Union, these doctrines must not be taught because some of the parties to this Union do not receive them as doctrines of the gospel. There are other important discrepancies in the opinions of those who compose this Union and our Church; but these are mentioned, because they are familiar, and because no mode of reconciling them could be adopted.

Nearly allied to this recommendation of our own Sunday School Union and Sunday Schools, is that which we would now urge upon you in relation to our own Tract and Bible Societies -- the former for the reasons already assigned, and both, because, in giving the preference to books issued from our own Book Concern, we afford support to that Concern, which is, in all its bearings, a very important part of that system by which Methodism has purposed to spread vital holiness over these lands. We are not ignorant that we have been reproached with sectarian exclusiveness, in holding off from national religious charities; but we are little concerned at this. We are a sect of Christians, who honestly and conscientiously hold opinions, which we esteem of great importance, different from those which are held by most other Christian denominations; and we believe it to be our duty, not only not to disguise or to keep back these peculiar opinions, but to

urge them constantly and emphatically upon all those, and especially the young, who are under our instruction. For these reasons, we would wish the liberty to conduct our religious charities on our own account, and in our own way.

Besides these, there are other reasons which have induced us not to connect ourselves with national religious charities. We believe that, in the arrangement of Providence, it is wisely permitted that the various sects of Christians should act upon their several views, the more extensively to spread the substantial truths of the gospel through the world, in order to check any aberrations, whether in doctrine or practice, to to which human infirmity renders the best and wisest of all sects liable, and in order to excite each other to activity and diligence. We, moreover, believe that a union of the various denominations of Christians, for the operation of religious charities, while they continue to differ in regard to important religious doctrines, would lessen the amount of these charities, and lead in the end to dissensions and animosities not otherwise to be apprehended. For these and other reasons, especially that we consider national religious societies incompatible with the safety of our free institutions, both civil and religious, we have long been known as in opposition to them.

And, as this has long been known, it is, to say the least of it, not a little surprising that agents of those societies have been found, who have confidently reported the Methodist Church as their supporters. It would be ridiculous, if not wicked, for these agents to excuse themselves, by saying that a few individuals of the Methodist Church are such supporters, when they cannot but know that, as a body, we are avowedly opposed to any such connection. But, not even this apology can be made by those who have continued, on the ground of unauthorized appointments, to represent our bishops and other ministers as officers in these societies, after they have, in the most unequivocal manner, declined the acceptance of such offices."

5. General Exhortation. "And we earnestly recommend a strict observance of the requirements of our excellent form of Discipline, especially in what respects class meeting, conformity to the world, and the preservation of purity and peace in the members of a body associated for purposes of such mighty consequence, both to individual interest and the general good. If we would accomplish all the good contemplated in the formation of our society, we must strengthen and draw close the ties that hind us together; we most preserve the peculiar and distinctive features of our Christian character, and we must act with concentrated force.

"In conclusion, dear brethren, after earnestly entreating your prayers, that we may have hearts to labor for God, and that he may crown our labors with success, we commend you to him and to the word of his grace, praying that he may make all grace to abound to you, and that he may bring us together to his everlasting kingdom and glory, through Christ Jesus, to whom be glory, for ever. Amen."

We have before noticed the movements in the Christian world on the subject of temperance. It came up for consideration before this conference, and resulted in the adoption of the following report, from the pen of the Rev. Henry B. Bascom, secretary of the committee to whom the subject was referred: -- The delegates from the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in General Conference assembled, at Philadelphia, May, 1832, after due inquiry and deliberation, have deemed it necessary to submit to the consideration of the ministry and membership of the Church, throughout the United States, the following remarks and advice on the

subject of Temperance, the viewed as a question of intense and growing interest, now extensively occupying the attention of the religious public and the American people in general.

"The duty and necessity of strict and exemplary abstinence from indulgence in the use of ardent spirits and intoxicating liquors of every sort, will be found to have been a part of the moral discipline of our church from the earliest date of its existence and operations; and it is known to those who are at all familiar with our history, that we have accomplished much in preserving those immediately under our charge proverbially pure from the stain, and free from the curse of intemperance. Nevertheless, our success has not been entire, and much remains to be done before we can realize our wishes and the great object of our long-continued efforts in this very interesting department of Christian morals. And it is in order to effect this we now address you as the public servants of the Church, and officially intrusted with the administration of its discipline. We have too much confidence in the intelligence and piety of the persons addressed -- the great body of our charge -- to suppose for a moment that any apology is necessary for offering you the reflections and advice we propose, believing, as we do, that the intemperance we discourage, and would banish from the Church and the world, is alike unworthy and unbecoming all who bear the Christian name, or would be considered useful and reputable members of society in general. The vice of which we complain, and against indulgence in which we would urgently and affectionately remonstrate, is broadly and unsparingly condemned in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as directly inconsistent with Christian character, and fatally contravening in the hopes and claims of moral excellence. As Christians we how to the authority of inspiration; and its language is too explicit and solemn on this subject to be misunderstood, or waived, by any who are not utterly reckless both of the welfare of this life and the more weighty interests of immortality in another. In the language of the Bible on this subject there is nothing deficient or equivocal; and although we do not propose an enlarged discussion, yet we cannot refrain from asking your attention to its fearful and varied testimony against the sin of intemperance, the condemnation of which is uttered in every variety of form and phrase. 'Be not drunk with wine -- wine and new wine take away the heart -- wine is a mocker -- strong drink is raging -- he transgresseth by wine -- they have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way -- the priest and the people have erred through strong I drink -- woe to them that rise up early to follow strong drink and continue till wine inflame them: therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure -- woe to them that drink wine in bowls -- be not among wine-bibbers -- who hath woe, sorrow, contentions, and babbling? they that continue long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine -- woe to them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink -- he is a drunkard, and all the men of the city shall strike him with stones, that he die -- it is not for kings to drink wine, nor princes strong drink -- he who shall add drunkenness to thirst, the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven -- woe to the drunkards of Ephraim they shall be trodden under foot -- while they are drunken they shall be destroyed as stubble full dry -- blessed art thou, O land, when thy princes eat and drink for strength, and not for drunkenness -- woe to him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth the bottle to his mouth, and maketh him drunken .' A statute of perpetual obligation, throughout all generations of the priesthood, was, that they were not to 'drink wine or strong drink' while engaged in the service of the tabernacle; and in another connection the obligation is made equally binding: 'Neither shall the priests drink wine when they enter into the inner court.' The drunkenness of Noah, Lot, Nadab, Abihu, and Nabat, incurred the displeasure of heaven; while the vow of the humble Rechabites, 'We will drink no wine;' is commemorated by the

special and public approval of Jehovah; and to these we might add the examples of the wife of Manoah, Hannah, Samuel, and the Nazarites, as securing the sanction of divine commendation. We need scarcely add that these solemn and admonitory lessons of the Jewish Scriptures on the subject of intemperance are enforced in the language of persuasion, as well as the most fearful denunciation.

"And the language and warnings of the New Testament are equally decisive and uncompromising in the utter condemnation of the vice of intemperance in all its forms. 'Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' Drunkenness is ranked among 'the works of the flesh,' and is expressly said to exclude the delinquent from the kingdom of heaven. 'If any man be a drunkard, with such a one, no, not to eat.' Excess of wine is classed with the enormities of 'lasciviousness, revelings, and banquetings.' It is the offspring of darkness: 'They that are drunken are drunken in the night;' 'Take heed that your hearts be not overcharged with drunkenness;' 'Let us walk honestly, not in drunkenness -- be not drunk with wine -- the evil servant who drinks with the drunken shall be cut asunder, and have his portion with hypocrites and unbelievers.' The Pharisees thought the could not more effectually reproach our Lord than to style him 'a wine-bibber!' St. Paul ranks it among the virtues of Christian bishops and deacons, that they 'be not given to wine.' Look also at the example of John the Baptist and a greater than he. The stern and unyielding purity of the former in this as well as in other particulars is held up to the notice and imitation of all 'who name the name of Christ.' And when the intoxicating cup usually tempered to suffering malefactors, to procure insensibility to pain and lessen the agony of death, was by the courtesy of Jewish and Roman cruelty tendered our Lord, the lustrous sufferer disdained the unholy succor, and trod the winepress of the wrath of his Father without the dishonorable resort of accepting unworthy means to sustain him in the conflict. Would to God that we, that all Christians in affliction and trial, might do as he did, in the hope of overcoming with him! And allow us to add here, that such are the terminal and fatal effects of this species of intemperance, thus forcibly portrayed and denounced in the Bible, that wine, used as a generic term, denoting strong intoxicating drinks of every kind, and confining the remarks to its abuse, is made to symbolize the wrath of God and the misery of the damned in a future state of retribution! It follows, therefore, that no person of ordinary intelligence can consult the pages of inspiration without perceiving at once that the common use of alcoholic intoxicating liquors, of whatever kind, is strictly and unequivocally forbidden in the Scriptures, as plainly and fatally injurious to the best interests of man, in time and in eternity; and as in other instances, so in this, the beneficent Author of our being has unnaturally conformed the constitution and laws of our nature to the pre-existing purpose of his will in relation to the immutable principles of right and wrong, and accordingly all our physical aptitudes and moral instincts resist the allurements and motives to a course of intemperate indulgence, until a series of vicious experiment and training, offering rebellion to the best feelings of our nature, and grossly violative of every principle of duty and moral obligation, shall have prepared the victims of intemperance for all that is monstrous in folly or hateful in crime.

God, who is the Author of nature, no less than of revelation, has abundantly provided for the essential happiness and relative usefulness of mankind but the experience of all ages and nations has furnished the most indubitable proof that the use of ardent spirits is totally inconsistent with either, and thus opposed to His benevolent intentions of heaven and provisions of nature, must be considered as a transgression of the will of God.

"And this view of the subject becomes the more convincing and striking when we attend to the peculiar nature and properties of all intoxicating drinks. In all these alcohol is the principle of all intoxication, and it has been clearly demonstrated by the researches and experiments of ministry and pharmacy, in connection with the structure and pathology of the human frame, that alcohol is an essentially active poison, and that the constant use of it, in any shape, must necessarily injure health, and finally destroy life itself. The mischievous principle of inebriety, of which we now speak, cannot be made to nourish and invigorate the body. It is by the appointment of heaven and the constitution of our common nature rendered incapable of producing such a result. Its conversion into chyle, after being received into the stomach, and its subsequent appropriation by means of the blood vessels, for the purpose of renewing and invigorating the body, are known to be impossible. No alcoholic substance can be controlled, digested, or appropriated by the stomach. When received there it immediately diffuses itself throughout the whole system -- it penetrates the very substance of the body, the brain, the nerves, and the blood vessels. All become excited and inflamed; the functions of the entire system become deranged; its action is irregular, and the well-adjusted play of its parts and mechanism disturbed and disordered; often deranging not only the functions of the body, but even its organic structure; and in whatever assignable measure alcohol, found in all spirituous liquors, and in most of our wines and malt drinks, may be drunk, these effects must necessarily follow, in a proportionate degree. And hence the wisdom and kindness of our Creator, manifestly shown in the fact that the appetite for this popular but mischievous poison is unnatural, artificially acquired, and a perversion of the dictates and provisions of nature. And in our judgment this view of the subject furnishes us with a strong additional argument in favor of the utter rejection of alcoholic drinks, except as a medicine, when the want of proper skill, or other adequate means, may authorize, in rare instances, an exception to the general rule of total abstinence.

We are the more disposed to press the necessity of entire abstinence, because there seems to be no safe line of distinction between the moderate and immoderate use of intoxicating drinks, -- the transition from a temperate to an intemperate use of them is almost as certain as it is insensible; indeed, with us it is a question of great moral interest, whether a man can indulge in their use at all, and be considered temperate. We have seen that the natural, unperverted appetite of man does not ask for them, and the only motive that can possibly determine such an indulgence, is to obtain from them a vivid impression upon the nerves, more or less agreeable at the time, but utterly oblivious of better, because more salutary feelings. This result is unnatural, and of course it offers violence to the constitutional order and functionary uniformity of nature, and we respectfully submit, whether the means therefore must not be sinful.

"It has been already remarked, that the essential constituent in intoxicating liquors, producing inebriety, is alcohol, and that this is found, in large proportions, not only in the different kinds of distilled liquors, but also in most of the wines, and vinous, as well as malt preparations drunk in this country. Who is not alarmed, not to say confounded, when he reflects upon the amount of this bewitching poison which is found in all our fashionable drinks! How can a Christian account to his conscience and his God for swallowing daily an amount of carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen, of which alcohol is compounded, and which, if taken separately from other neutralizing ingredients, would deprive him of life perhaps in a few hours! In a bottle of brandy, for example, (we are guided in the estimate by Saussure and Brande,) there is more alcohol, by actual measurement, than

water; -- in our best wines, say Port and Madeira, as received and used in this country, nearly one half is alcohol; about six ounces of this poison will be found in a quart of strong cider, and little less than four in a bottle of porter or ale! In a brief address, however, we can only bring these facts into view in a summary way. We propose them for examination and reflection, and we implore the thousands under our charge to bestow upon the whole subject the attention it so obviously and pressingly deserves and demands.

"The great and increasing interest, the deep and lasting stake we must always have, as a Church, in preventing and curing the evils of intemperance, will furnish an obvious and commanding vindication of the course we have adopted, in making this appeal to the good sense and enlightened piety of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We consider all intemperance, whether in its incipient or more advanced stages, as an abuse of the physical force and vigor of man, and seriously deducting from the integrity of his mental powers and moral purposes; and we therefore invoke the aid of our people in an attempt to banish the evil from our Church altogether.

"We would remark here, also, that the immorality and curse of intemperance are most fearfully evinced, not only in its immediate and incipient, but in its final effects and relative bearings upon the confirmed intemperate, and others found in necessary connection or casual contact with them: impiety and worthlessness, disease and death, are its necessary attendants. God and nature have so disowned and frowned upon it, as to stamp it with the character of unmingled evil. The redeeming element or aspect about it. In it best and most imposing furnish it offers nothing but plague and pollution. God forbids it; it is the object of nature’s abhorrence, and its uniform effects demonstrate that to persist in its practice is to renounce the friendship of heaven and claim kindred, not with brutes, but infernals. All therefore, must look upon it as an evil unhallowed by any, the smallest good. We have seen that it invariably undermines health and leads to death, and, in most instances death untimely and disgraceful. However insidious in its progress, it is fatal in its issue. We need not ask you to look at the brutal, the polluted, and demoralizing victim himself, -- a curse and a nuisance, whatever his name, or wherever found. We need not quote his beggared family and heart broken connections. We need not cite you to the wretched thousands found as criminals in your penitentiaries, patients in your hospitals, lunatics in your asylums, and vagabonds in your streets! Few, perhaps, are aware of the extent, the secret and insidious spread of the evil we would arrest. Its destructive influence is felt in every department of business, duty, and society: in our legislative halls; at the bar of justice; upon the judicial bench, and even in the pulpit. A large portion, we fear, of the most important and responsible business of the nation is often transacted under the influence, in a greater or less degree, of alcoholic excitement; and can those be innocent who contribute to secure such a result, whether by the pestilential example of temperate drinking, as it is called, or the still more criminal means of furnishing the poisonous preparation by manufacture and traffic for the degradation and ruin of others? The man who drinks intemperately ruins himself, and is the cause of much discomfort an inquietude, and perhaps actual misery, in the social scene in which he moves; but the manufacturer, and those who are engaged in the traffic of ardent spirits and other intoxicating liquors, do the work of death by wholesale; they are devoted by misguided enterprise to the ruin of human kind, and become directly accessory, although not intended by them, to the present shame and final destruction of hundreds and thousands. And we gravely ask, with no common solicitude, Can God, who is just, as well as good, hold that church innocent which is found cherishing in her bosom so awful and

universal an evil? We have seen this evil broadly and unequivocally denounced in the Scriptures, as an utter curse, and big with ruin to the best hopes of man. Nature and Providence unite their testimony, and award to it the same condemnation. Our Church has long borne a similar testimony, and this is especially true of the father and founder of Methodism.

"He says of ardent spirits in general, 'First of all, sacredly abstain from all spirituous liquors; touch them not on any pretense whatever.' On their manufacture and sale he remarks, 'It is amazing that the preparation or selling of this poison should be permitted, I will not say in any Christian country, but in any civilized state!' He pronounces the gain of the trafficker in ardent spirits, 'the price of blood,' and adds, emphatically, 'Let not any lover of virtue and truth say one word in favor of this monster. Let no lover of mankind open his mouth to extenuate the guilt of it. Oppose it as you would oppose the devil, whose offspring and likeness it is.' Of grocers, in this traffic, he affirms, 'They murder mankind by wholesale, and drive them to hell like sheep.' He denounces both the manufacture and the sale of spirituous liquors, except for mechanical and medicinal purposes, as a gross immorality declaring, 'None can gain in this way by swallowing up his neighbors substance, without gaining the damnation of hell!' And hence one of the original rules of the Methodist societies, as drawn up by John and Charles Wesley, precluded 'drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, except in cases of extreme necessity.' And we cannot but fear that the alteration of this rule by the American Methodists, and the substitution of another less unequivocal in its character, since 1790, have been attended with but little good to any, and perhaps with direct injury to thousands. And now that the engrossing question of total abstinence is arresting the attention of most evangelical churches in the United States, and in many of them becoming a term of membership, we are fully convinced it would be criminal in us to remain silent, and not lend our aid and co-operation in purging the church and redeeming the nation from this insidious, yet alarming and desolating evil.

Finally, persuaded as we are that intemperance, in all its aspects and gradations, is a physical evil, unmitigated by any mixture of good, and also a moral offense against the laws of God, and the claims of Christian piety, unmodified by any indemnifying consideration whatever, we would at all times, but at this time especially, when such combined and powerful efforts are making to arrest the evil, cast in our dividend of social and moral aid, and do all in our power to accomplish an object as every way momentous as it is desirable. And we close by remarking, that we look upon all as implicated in the duty and the interest, and we shall cheerfully and promptly concur with all in an effort to expel the demon of intemperance, not only from our churches, but from the nation, whose welfare and fortunes must be always viewed in intimate connection with its morals." With a view to secure the hearty co-operation of ministers and people in the cause of missions, sabbath schools, and the distribution of Bibles and tracts, a clause was incorporated in the discipline making it the special duty of all those who have the charge of circuits and stations to attend to these things regularly and to aid them in this good work, it was also made the duty of presiding elders "to promote, by all proper means, the cause of missions and Sunday schools, and the publication, at our own press, of Bibles, tracts, and Sunday school books." The American Colonization Society was now gauling more and more on the affection and confidence of the American people. To aid in its benevolent enterprise, this General Conference passed a resolution authorizing the bishops to appoint agents in behalf of that society. The affairs of our brethren in Canada were once more brought before the conference. By a reference to the proceedings of the

General Conference of 1828, it will be perceived that a claim which they made upon a portion of the Book Concern was deferred for future adjustment. This claim was presented to this conference in a forcible appeal from their delegates, the Rev. Messrs. William Case and William Ryerson, who had been deputed by the Canada conference to urge it upon this General Conference. Though it was generally agreed by the members of the conference that the Canada brethren had a just claim upon a portion of the Book Concern, yet, after a full examination of the subject, the conclusion was drawn that the General Conference had no constitutional authority to make the apportionment without first obtaining the concurrence of the annual conferences. A resolution was therefore passed, referring the entire subject to the annual conferences, and authorizing the book agents at New York, whenever it should be certified to them by the secretaries of the annual conferences that "three-fourths of all the members of the several annual conferences, who shall be present and vote on the subject, shall to make a division of the stock of the Book Concern, in proportion to the number of traveling preachers, including those on trial and superannuated, in both connections. But as three-fourths of all the voters were never obtained, the settlement was not made, and therefore the whole subject was postponed for final adjustment to the General Conference of 1836.

As, however, the Canada conference had not yet fully organized itself according to its intention when it declared itself independent, in conformity to the stipulations between it and the General Conference of 1828, the following resolutions were passed by this conference: --

1. That if the conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the province of Upper Canada shall, previously to the next General Conference, elect a bishop for said Church, and request any one or more of the bishops, together with any two or more of the elders of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, to ordain him, such bishop or bishops shall be at liberty so to do, provided the expediency and propriety of a compliance with such request be in accordance with the judgment of such bishop or bishops: and, provided also, that nothing herein contained be contrary to, or inconsistent with any law or laws of said province.

2. That until a bishop shall have been elected and ordained for the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, any bishop or bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, on the request of the conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Upper Canada, shall be at liberty to ordain any elders or deacons for the said Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, subject to the provisions and limitations specified in the foregoing resolution." The following report of the committee on the episcopacy was concurred in by the conference: --

1. That they have examined the administration in the several annual conferences for the last four years, and find that it has been correct, and highly satisfactory, and therefore is entitled to the support and approbation of the General Conference.

2. In consequence of the lamented death of our beloved bishop George, the extension of the work under our care and oversight, and the increase of the annual conferences, it is recommended that we elect two additional bishops at the present conference.

3. As it is considered by the committee an evil of no small magnitude for the same preachers to be continued from year to year in town and city stations, the superintendents are respectfully requested to diversify appointments of this sort as much as possible among preachers deemed

suitable for such appointments.

4. As our charitable institutions, colleges, and seminaries of learning are continually increasing, and as the American Colonization Society is rising in its claims on the American community, it is considered proper for our bishops, whenever in their judgment, and in the judgment of an annual conference, it shall be found expedient, to appoint any preacher as an agent to promote the interest of either or all of these institutions.

5. In consequence of the age and increased infirmities of our venerable and beloved bishop McKendree, it is recommended that his present relation be continued, and that the sum of two hundred and fifty dollars be allowed him annually for extra expenses, and to defray the expenses of a traveling companion, and one hundred dollars for the allowance of said traveling companion, and that he be authorized to draw this amount from the Book Concern.

6. It is recommended that the rule to estimate the allowance of the bishops, for family expenses, be so altered as to make it the duty of the annual conference, within whose bounds the family or families of the bishop or bishops may reside, to estimate the amount necessary to meet such expenses.

7. Considering the great extent of the work throughout this vast continent, committed to the oversight of the episcopacy, the committee deem it inexpedient to require each of our bishops to travel throughout the whole of their extensive charge during the recess of the General Conference, and therefore recommend to the episcopacy to make such an apportionment of the work among themselves as shall best suit their own convenience, and in their judgment most effectually promote the general good."

Allusion is made in the above report to the enlargement of our work in connection with the death of Bishop George. The Illinois and New York conferences were divided, and three new ones were formed, namely, Troy, Indiana, and Alabama, making in all twenty-two. For these reasons, on the twenty-second day of the session, two additional bishops, namely, James Osgood Andrew, and John Emory, were elected, the former by a vote of one hundred and forty, out of two hundred and twenty-three, the whole number of voters, and the latter by a vote of one hundred and twenty-five. Both having a constitutional majority on the first balloting, they were declared duly elected, and on the 25th they were consecrated in the usual form, by prayer and imposition of the hands of Bishops McKendree, Roberts, Soule, and Hedding.

Another important regulation was made at this General Conference. When the delegated General Conference was created in 1808, the number of delegates was limited to not more than one to every five, nor less than one to every seven members, and according to the proviso, neither this nor any other restrictive regulation could be altered except "upon the joint recommendation of all the annual conferences," and then by "a vote of two-thirds of the General Conference succeeding." As, however, the number of delegates had so increased that the General Conference of 1824 felt it to be burdensome both to themselves and others for so many to assemble together every fourth year, a recommendation had been sent the rounds of the annual conferences, requesting them to empower the General Conference of 1828 to diminish the number of delegates. This recommendation passed all the annual conferences except the Philadelphia; and as it required all the conferences to concur before the alteration could be made by the General

Conference, the measure was defeated by the nonoccurrence of this single annual conference. It was thus that we all began to feel the pressure of the yoke which had been imposed upon us by the General Conference of 1808, by which we were compelled to submit to the burden until permitted to relieve ourselves by the concurrence of all the conferences in the Union. This unwise provision put it completely in the power of a very small minority to rule the whole body, on any question arising out of the restrictive rules. From such a grievous yoke, "which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear," the General Conference of 1828 made an effort to break loose by passing the following resolution: --

"Resolved, That this General Conference respectfully suggest to the several annual conferences the propriety of recommending to the next General Conference, so to alter and amend the rules of our Discipline by which the General Conference is restricted in its powers to make rules and regulations for the Church, commonly called the restrictive rules, as to make the proviso, at the close of the said restrictive rules, No. 6, read thus: --

"Provided, nevertheless, that upon the concurrent recommendation of three-fourths of all the annual conferences who shall be present and vote on such recommendation, then a majority of two-thirds of the General Conference succeeding shall suffice to alter any of such regulations, except the first. And, also,

"Whenever such alteration or alterations shall have first been recommended by two-thirds of the General Conference, so soon as three-fourths of the members of the annual conferences shall have concurred, as aforesaid, with such recommendation, such alteration or alterations shall take effect." This recommendation had been submitted to the several annual conferences, and had obtained a constitutional majority of all the voters. Accordingly it came legitimately before this General Conference to alter the proviso, and then to recommend to the several annual conferences to authorize the lessening the number of delegates, and both of these powers were exercised. Without going into a detail of all the circumstances which led to the result, it is sufficient to say, that the proviso, which had held us at bay for so long a time, was so altered on the recommendation of the General Conference of 1832, and the constitutional vote of the annual conferences, subsequently, as to read as follows: --

"Provided, nevertheless, that upon the concurrent recommendation of three-fourths of all the members of the several annual conferences, who shall be present and vote on such recommendation, then a majority of two-thirds of the General Conference succeeding shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions, excepting the first article and also, whenever such alteration or alterations shall have been first recommended by two-thirds of the General Conference, so soon as three-fourths of the members of all the annual conferences shall have concurred as aforesaid, such alteration or alterations shall take effect." And then the number of delegates was to be graduated as follows: --

"They shall not allow of more than one representative for every fourteen members of the annual conference, nor allow of a less number than one for every thirty: provided, nevertheless, that when there shall be in any annual conference a fraction of two-thirds the number which shall be fixed for the ratio of representation, such annual conference shall be entitled to an additional delegate for such fraction; and provided, also, that no conference shall be denied the privilege of two delegates."

It will be perceived that a motion may now be made by either the General Conference or the annual conferences, for an alteration in any of the restrictive regulations except the first, and that, as it requires to be seconded by the other, and concurred in by a majority of three-fourths of the voters in the annual conferences, or two-thirds of the General Conference, to make it obligatory, the rights of each are secured, and the voices of all are heard. And as this new regulation was made for the purpose of obviating the prohibitory character of the old proviso, which amounted in fact to almost a total and absolute withholding of all power from the General Conference ever to make any alteration, however imperative the necessity might appear, it seems preposterous to give such an interpretation to the language of the present proviso, as to involve us in the very same dilemma as that from which it was designed, and therefore made and adopted for the express purpose of delivering us! Such an interpretation involves the framers of this proviso in the most inexcusable of all blunders -- a fault from which their acknowledged abilities and known integrity must for ever exempt them. We had been laboring under the galling yoke of this severe restriction for eight years, struggling the whole time to free ourselves from its iron bondage, and then securing our freedom, as we were simple enough to believe, by a substitute, when lo and behold, when we come to test it by actual experiment, it proves to be the same galling yoke still! An absurdity this too glaring to be admitted.

Notwithstanding all that had been done for the relief and support of our worn-out preachers, widows, and orphans, they were still but poorly provided for, and hence the following additional regulation was made respecting the manner in which their just and pressing claims might be met: --

"It shall be the duty of each annual conference to take measures, from year to year, to raise moneys in every circuit and station within its bounds, for the relief of its necessitous, superannuated, supernumerary ministers, widows, and orphans. And the conference shall appoint a committee to estimate the several sums necessary to be allowed for the extra expenses of such necessitous claimants, who shall be paid in proportion to the estimate made and the moneys received." The following was also enacted in reference to those therein mentioned, who reside beyond the bounds of their respective conferences: --

"Every superannuated preacher who may reside without the bounds of the conference of which he is a member; shall annually forward to his conference a certificate of his character and ministerial conduct, together with an account of the number and circumstances of his family, signed by the presiding elder of his district, or the preacher in charge of his circuit or station, within whose bounds he may reside, without which the conference shall not be required to allow his claim."

Provision had already been made for the appointment of preachers as teachers, professors, or presidents of academies and colleges under our own control and patronage. This conference extended the authority to the bishops for other colleges, in the following language: --

"Resolved, That the superintendents be authorized, whenever requested by an annual conference to do it, to appoint a preacher to a college not under our direction, and to continue him in the same manner as at the institutions which we patronize.

It seems that a practice had prevailed to some extent, whenever a preacher wished to attend to some temporal business for his own convenience, to be left, at his own request, without any

regular appointment for a year, less or more. This had been found to be accompanied with so many difficulties, that the bishops felt it their duty to call the attention of the conference to the subject, and its consideration resulted in the adoption of the following: --

"Resolved, That it is inconsistent with the spirit and interest of the itinerancy system to leave effective men without appointments at their own request." The following was also passed, fixing the responsibility of those preachers who might be appointed traveling agents for any literary or other institution, as already authorized by existing regulations: --

"Resolved, That in all cases where agents are appointed, their names shall be attached to some district;and in case of any complaint, they shall be held responsible to the presiding elder of said district."

It appears that a difference of opinion prevailed among the bishops respecting the meaning of the last resolution in the report of the committee on the episcopacy, which said, that it was considered "inexpedient to require each of the bishop's to travel throughout the whole of their extensive charge, during the recess of the General Conference, and therefore recommend them to make such an apportionment of the work among themselves as shall best suit their own convenience, and in their judgment most effectually promote the general good." It appears that some of the bishops were in favor of districting the work for the four years, and this was also the opinion of some of the delegates, each one confining his labors to his particular charge until the next General Conference, and so understood the above item in the report, while others contended that this matter was left to be regulated as the bishops themselves might judge proper. To settle this question, the bishops submitted to the conference the following queries: --

"The bishops, being desirous of understanding with clearness and certainty the resolution passed by the General Conference at its present session, in relation to the episcopal visitations of the annual conferences, in the course of the ensuing four years, beg the favor of a vote of the conference, without debate, in answer to the following question, viz. -- Was it the intention of the General Conference, by the resolution above alluded to, simply to relieve the bishops from the influences of the resolution passed at the last General Conference on the same subject, and to leave them now at liberty, on their joint and several responsibility, to make such arrangements among themselves, for the entire administration, and for the visitations of the annual conferences, as they shall judge most conducive to the general good; and without designing to give direction or advice whether it be or be not expedient for each of the bishops in the course of the four years to visit each of the annual conferences, should they themselves find it convenient and practicable, and judge it for the general good so to do?" And it is added in the journal, "The conference voted an answer to the above question in the affirmative." The following resolution in relation to preachers admitted into an annual conference, and not ordained at the time, was passed, and should, therefore, I think, be considered as a standing rule, though it was not incorporated in the Discipline: --

"Provided always, that when a preacher shall have passed his examination, and been admitted into full connection, and elected to deacon's office, but fails of his ordination through the absence of the bishop, his eligibility to the office of an elder shall run from the time of his election to the office of a deacon."

Having completed their work, read and improved of their journal, the conference was adjourned with singing and prayer, and the apostolic benediction, late on Monday evening, May 28th, 1832, to meet again in Cincinnati, May 1, 1836.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume IV -- Book V

CHAPTER 12 From the close of the General Conference of 1832 to the beginning of the General Conference of 1836

We had now six bishops, and twenty-two annual conferences to be attended in the course of twelve months. But as the health of Bishop McKendree was fast declining, no dependence could be placed on him for effective service, and accordingly the General Conference, as we have seen, released him from that responsibility. The effective labor, therefore, devolved upon the remaining five bishops, who accordingly had each four conferences and a fraction to attend every year, besides the duty of ranging through their respective districts of labor -- as far and as frequently as practicable. The unanimity and energy with which the late General Conference entered into the missionary cause, gave it a new impulse, and inspired its friends with courage to persevere in their exertions to urge it forward.

Liberia had, for several years, been selected by the managers of our Missionary Society as a suitable place for missionary enterprise, and much had been said and written in favor of sending laborers into that distant and destitute field. Hitherto, however, the bishops had not been able to select such a man for the work as they considered suitable. Some had offered and been rejected, and those who were considered best qualified, were unwilling to go. At the late General Conference the subject was pressed upon its attention with renewed zeal, and the bishops were then, particularly by a committee from the Young Men’s Missionary Society of New York, who pledged money for its support., to use their influence to send one missionary or more to this inviting field of labor. That the reader may understand the high demands which this place had upon the exertions and benevolence of our Church, for a supply of its spiritual wants, the following particulars respecting the settlement, and present state and prospects of Liberia are given.

Slavery in the United States may be considered the remote, and Christian philanthropy the proximate, cause of establishing the colony in Africa, now known as Liberia, under the auspices of the American Colonization Society. This society was formed in 1816, by some benevolent individuals, with a view to transport to Africa such free people of color from the United States as might consent to emigrate, and establish them as a colony, with all the rights and privileges of freemen. Though at first the society was viewed with suspicion by some, fearing it was designed chiefly to rivet the chains of slavery yet tighter on the slave, by removing the free colored people out of the land; yet as its character was gradually developed, the public confidence was acquired, and its friends and supporters were daily increased. The first experiment, however, to establish a colony on the coast of Africa proved unpropitious. The society was unfortunate in the selection of the site for this important colony. This was at the mouth of the Sherbro river, which separates the country of Sierra Leone from the Grain coast, on the western shores of Africa, latitude seven north, in the province of Guiana. The country is generally flat, exposed to the most intense heat from October to March, when violent and almost uninterrupted rains descend until the month of June,

when the heat again commences and continues until July, and this is followed by rain until October. An atmosphere created by such physical causes must be extremely unhealthy to either Europeans or Americans, and so it proved in the present instance. In 1818, a number of emigrants sailed from the port of New York, in the ship Elizabeth, accompanied by that eminent philanthropist and Christian minister, the Rev. Mr. Bacon, whose commendable zeal in the cause of African colonization led him to embark in this hazardous undertaking, as the principal agent of the society. Many of these voluntary exiles from their country were truly pious, some of whom were members of our Church. The fate of this infant colony is well known. The place selected, as before said, for their residence proved insalubrious, and the poisonous malaria soon swept them from the face of the earth and among the dead was the pious and self sacrificing Bacon himself. This spread a temporary gloom over the prospects of this society, and furnished its enemies with renewed arguments against the enterprise. Opposition, however, awakened new energies in its behalf, and led to more vigorous measures to insure its success. New resources were called into existence, men and means were multiplied, and a more powerful pulsation was felt in the American community in favor of the sons and daughters of Africa. To avoid the results of the former experiment, another and a more salubrious site was selected for the colony in contemplation. In 1821 the society purchased of the native chiefs a district of country on the western coast of Africa, two hundred and eighty miles in length, and from twenty to thirty miles in breadth, on the Grain coast, in about six degrees north latitude, including the cape of Montserado. A site for a town was laid out between the Mesurado and St. Paul's rivers, both of which empty into the Montserado bay, which opens into the Atlantic Ocean. Here a settlement was commenced under favorable circumstances, and the town was called, in honor of the popular chief magistrate who then occupied the presidential chair, Monrovia. These emigrants were accompanied and headed by the pious and lamented Ashman, who finally fell a victim to his zeal in striving to build up a colony in this place. The prosperity which attended this second attempt at African colonization, strengthened and fortified the hearts of its friends and patrons, at the same time that it disarmed its opponents of many of their arguments against the enterprise. Hence it was patronized by some of the most benevolent spirits of the age, by most of the ecclesiastical bodies in the Union, and by many of the state legislatures, and therefore seemed to promise a most happy issue. The colonists were generally happy and contented, and invited their brethren in America to come over and join them. Hence many masters liberated their slaves on condition of their emigrating to Liberia, and others, already free, accompanied them to this home of their fathers. Nor were the churches inattentive to these movements. Even foreigners were attracted by the spirit of Christian philanthropy to this place, and several Swiss missionaries had already laid their bones in the soil of Liberia, while attempting to convey to the inhabitants the glad tidings of salvation. As before said, our Missionary Society had not been an indifferent spectator to the spiritual wants of these people. They had gone from our shores; many of them were members of our Church, some local preachers of reputable standing; and they all sent a cry to us for help. The subject had been before the General Conference from time to time, and the board of managers had passed resolutions at several different times in favor of establishing a mission in Liberia. At length our hopes were realized by the offering of the Rev. Melville B. Cox, at the late General Conference, as a missionary to Africa, and his services were accepted by the bishops. After making the needful preparation, on the 6th of October, 1832, Mr. Cox set sail in the ship Jupiter, from Norfolk, Va., and after a long and tedious voyage, in which he stopped at St. Jago, the Cape of Good hope, and at Sierra Leone, he arrived

in Liberia on the 8th of March, 1833, and was most cordially received by the acting governor, Mr. Williams, who was a member of our Church, and a local preacher of reputable character in the colony. The heart of brother Cox seemed to be set upon Liberia from the hour of his appointment, and he accordingly records his great joy at finding himself safely landed upon its shores, and was much delighted at the prospect before him. But alas! he scarcely had time to mature his plans for future usefulness, before the fatal malaria of the place infused its poison into his system, and he soon fell a victim to the ravages of the African fever. That he was eminently qualified for his station, so far as mental and spiritual attainments are concerned, is abundantly attested by his intimate friends, and by the monuments of his talents and piety which he has left behind. I say so far as mental and spiritual attainments are concerned, for his physical constitution had been much weakened by disease before he embarked on this mission, and he was, therefore, by no means able to withstand the shocks of an African climate. But though he thus fell a martyr to the work of introducing the gospel into that part of Africa, yet he laid the foundation for a missionary establishment in Liberia, on which his successors have reared a noble superstructure, to the glory of the God of missions. The letters which he transmitted to the managers, describing the state and prospects of the colony, were of such an encouraging character, that a new impulse was given to the holy cause in which he had embarked, and inspired its friends with renewed zeal to prosecute it with more vigorous exertions. And the inspiring language of Cox to a friend on the eve of his departure for Liberia, operated as a charm upon the hearts of all who were engaged in this work. Being asked what should be written upon his tombstone, should he die in Africa, he replied, 'Let thousands fall before Africa be given up!" This noble declaration when repeated to the congregation at time his funeral discourse was preached in the John Street church thrilled through every heart, and no doubt inspired others to enter the ranks which had been weakened by the death of Cox.

Though his death occurred in 1833, it may be as well to say all that is necessary of brother Cox in this place. On his arrival in Liberia, he set himself immediately at work, of preparing for preaching the gospel to the colonists, and establishing a church according to the regulations of the Methodist discipline. He was much aided and cheered in his work by the Rev. Mr. Pinney, a Presbyterian minister, who had preceded him in the service of the American Colonization Society, as the governor of the colony. Finding missionary premises at Monrovia, prepared by the Swiss missionaries before mentioned, but which were now vacated by their death, Mr. Cox made a purchase of them for five hundred dollars, which was afterward sanctioned by the board of managers. The house he occupied both for domestic purposes and for holding meetings.

It has been already remarked that there were in Liberia members of our Church, and others, who, though not of our communion, held to our doctrines, and dissented only on some points of Church polity. These were convened by Mr. Cox to when he presented his credentials, and he was nearly unanimously acknowledged in his proper character, and on the ninth day of April, 1833, the following articles of agreement were adopted as the basis of their future action: --

"Whereas the Methodist Church in Liberia, West Africa, is yet in its infancy, poor and in need of aid, inexperienced and in need of counsel; and whereas, by our direction a correspondence was opened with the Young Men's Missionary Society of New York, and a missionary desired to be sent over to our help from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, which we ever wish to acknowledge as our parent church; -- and whereas the said Methodist Episcopal

Church has kindly sent to our aid a man whom they have adjudged to be fitted for the work, therefore: --

Resolved,

1. That we resign the superintendency of all our churches in Liberia to the care of the said missionary, and that we will do all in our power to aid him in promoting the work of God among ourselves, and in extending the interests of his mission among those around us.

2. That we will adopt the "Articles of Religion," the "General Rules," and the moral discipline in general of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America; and that we will follow its ''spiritual" and "temporal economy," both to the letter and the spirit, as far as our changed circumstances will possibly allow us so to do.

3. That, though we regret exceedingly that the said missionary has not come out properly authorized to ordain and set apart others to the office of deacons and elders in the church of God, we will nevertheless patiently wait until Providence shall bring us this great blessing, and that hereafter none of us will administer the sacraments unless we have been, or until we shall have been properly authorized so to do by the regular episcopacy of the parent Church in America.

4. That we acknowledge the authority of the General Conference of the said Methodist Episcopal Church and that, considering our isolated situation, the wide distance between us and them, and the rapid accession that we confidently hope will attend the growth of our ministry here, we desire, as soon as may be, to be acknowledged by it as one of its annual conferences but that we will leave it entirely with the General Conference to say whether we shall be considered as a missionary station, as an annual conference, or as an independent Methodist Episcopal church in Africa.

5. That in view of the hazard of life which always must attend a change of our climate for another -- of the mortality which has attended most of the white missionaries who have nobly come to our aid, and of the fact that we have not in our church a single regularly ordained colored elder in the colony, we earnestly request any one of our bishops, and they are hereby requested, to ordain to the offices of deacon and elder our brother, A. D. Williams; a man whom we judge to be well qualified for said offices, and who has been duly elected to these offices by our conference, and who, moreover, has been well acclimated and a long resident in the colony.

6. That, in view of the great responsibility of the ministerial office, and of the loud and increasing calls for constant labor in the churches and among the pagans around us, we will, as soon and as fast as the wants of our families will justify it, leave the service of tables, and give ourselves wholly to the work of the ministry." The reasons for the third article. In the above agreement are, that some of the colored preachers in Liberia had taken upon themselves the right of administering the ordinances without having been regularly ordained for that work. Unwilling at first to relinquish the exercise of this right, and Mr. Cox refusing to acknowledge it, or to recognize them as regularly ordained ministers, there was danger at the interest of unhappy collision among the few who were desirous of worshipping God in the spirit, and of building up a pure church in Liberia. This breach, however, was thus prevented, as all, both preachers and people, set their names to the above articles of agreement. On beholding this happy result of their proceedings, Mr. Cox exclaimed, with pious gratitude, "The Lord has done it -- the Lord has done it -- Satan is disappointed, and the

church of God triumphs."

Having thus arranged matters to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned, Mr. Cox set himself to work in the most ardent manner for the enlargement of the field of labor in different parts of the colony. On the 9th of March, he held at Caldwell the first camp meeting ever attended on the continent of Africa; called the brethren together for mutual consultation and prayer; appointed days of fasting and thanksgiving, and planned several missions in other places contiguous to Monrovia and finally on the 6th of April he opened a sabbath school, consisting of seventy children.

These active labors, however, were destined soon to be interrupted, for on the 12th of April he was seized with the African fever, which raged to such a degree that he was soon so prostrated, that for twelve days he was confined to his bed. And, although he so far recovered from this severe attack as to be able to walk around his room, and to record in his journal his uninterrupted peace with God, and his firm hope of eternal life, yet he soon suffered a relapse, which, from the violence of its character, cut off all hopes of recovery. He lingered in great pain and weakness, sometimes reviving, and then again sinking, until the 21st of July, 1833, when he sunk into the arms of death, in the full hope of immortality, aged thirty-three years. This sketch of his proceedings fully shows the predominant disposition of his mind, and evinces the most ardent spirit of devotion to the best of all causes. From the moment he had consecrated himself to this mission, his whole soul seemed to be absorbed in the contemplation of Africa, and he bent all his energies to make his mission prosperous. Aided as he was by the managers if the Missionary Society, and cheered on by the prayers and benedictions of the Church, he threw himself into the arms of divine Providence, determining to hazard all upon the altar of his God, whether for life or death, if he could only be the honored instrument of planting the gospel in the soil of Africa. At a missionary meeting held in the city of New York, on the eve of his departure, he remarked, in substance, that having embarked in this enterprise, the thought of treading upon the shores of Africa, even though it might be at the sacrifice of his life, was the most sweet and delightful of any thing else he could possibly contemplate. In this self-sacrificing spirit, he went -- he fought -- he sickened -- he died. And in his death, so peaceful and triumphant, he reared a monument in Monrovia which has apprised all future travelers to that sacred spot, that the founder of the Methodist missions in Western Africa "counted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ," and for the rewards of a life devoted to so holy and glorious a cause. In Melville B. Cox were united a firmness of purpose, with a meekness of disposition and amiability of manners. which at once endeared him to his friends, and commanded the respect and confidence of all who knew him. Nor were his talents small. "The Sketches of Western Africa," which he wrote, show the pen of a ready writer, and a mind accustomed to close and accurate observation. These, united with genuine, deep piety, and a disposition naturally amiable, and rendered much more mild and meek by the refining influence of divine grace, qualified him to be eminently useful in that department of labor which he had chosen for himself, and which was evidently designated to him by the Head of the church.

While therefore his mortal remains repose upon the soil of Africa, his friends may comfort themselves with the reflection that his soul, purified by the fire of the Holy Spirit, is now reaping the ample reward of his labors and sacrifices in the paradise of God. And though he fell an early sacrifice to the cause of missions, his bones have but fattened the soil in which they were entombed, and animated many a weary missionary to diligence and perseverance in his work of

faith and labor of love.

Through the influence of the Rev. Mr. Spaulding, who succeeded brother Cox as a missionary to Africa, some generous individuals in Boston contributed a sum for the purpose of erecting a monument over his grave. This was transported to Monrovia, and there it stands, with the following inscription engraven on three sides, in the words prepared by Mr. Spaulding: -- To the Memory of the Rev. MELVILLE B. COX, the first Missionary from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States to Liberia, Western Africa. He arrived in Monrovia on the 9th of March, 1833, where, having organized a branch of the same Church, he died in the triumphs of the Christian faith on the 21st of July of the same year, aged 33 years. He was a truly amiable man, a devout Christian, and an able and successful minister of Jesus Christ.

Another important mission was established this year at Green Bay, about five hundred miles from the city of Detroit, in Brown county, in the state of Michigan. This spacious bay is on the west side of Lake Michigan, and the country was inhabited chiefly by Indians, though the United States had established here a military post, and an Indian agency. To this place a number of the converted Indians of the Oneida tribe had removed, and they were very desirous of having the gospel preached to them and to the neighboring tribes; the enterprise was also highly favored by the United States government, particularly by then agent, Mr. Schoolcraft, who resided there.

Good impressions had been already made upon the minds of some of the Indians through the labors of John Sunday, who had been raised up from Heathenism to a preacher of righteousness during the great revival of religion among the aborigines of Upper Canada. He, and some of his brethren, had traveled into the country bordering on Lake Huron, had visited Machinaw, and the neighboring villages, and preached to their native brethren with great power and success, and a considerable number of these degraded people had been brought to the knowledge of the truth. The good work thus begun, had attracted the attention of many of the Indians in that region of country, and as they were accustomed to wander about from place to place in their hunting excursions, those who embraced the gospel went from tribe to tribe, and told their brethren "what great things the Lord had done for them," and they also believed unto eternal life. In this way the work of reformation spread among the several tribes; and though the Indians in the territory around Green Bay were separated some distance from the immediate scene of John Sunday’s labors, yet, by the means already suggested, they had received the impressions of truth, and were in some measure prepared to welcome the missionary of the cross. The Rev. John Clark, of the New York conference, was appointed a missionary to this region of country. He was received with much affection and respect by Mr. Schoolcraft, by the inhabitants generally, and more especially by those converted natives who had removed from the Oneida mission in the western part of the state of New York. he therefore entered upon his work with a fair prospect of success, and laid his plans for establishing schools by erecting houses, and employing teachers, as well as fixing regular appointments for preaching. And though the mission has not resulted in the conversion of many of the natives, it is to be hoped that a foundation has been laid, which, by addressing gospel truth directly to the understanding and heart, may be productive of their salvation.

Several other missions were commenced this year in the bounds of the Illinois conference, in the new settlements which were filling up with great rapidity. Among these were Rock Island, in Adams county, South Bend, Chicago, Fort Clark, Macoopin, and Fort Wayne. A mission was also

established this year in the bounds of the Tennessee conference, in Madison and Limestone counties, for the special benefit of the people of color. All these new fields of labor were cultivated with success, however unpromising they might have been in the beginning.

Somerset and Port Carbon, in the bounds of the Philadelphia conference, embracing destitute settlements which could not be supplied in the ordinary way, were blessed with missionary labor, and supported by the Philadelphia C. M. Society. An effort was also made to establish preaching at West Point, where the military school is located, in the state of New York, and which is quite remote from any circuit, by means of missionary labor. It did not, however, prove successful. The work in general throughout the bound of the several annual conferences, both on the older circuits and stations, and on the mission, was in a prosperous state, and the spirit of revival, and of liberality in support of our various institutions, was evidently rising and prevailing more and more. For the last two years, through the instrumentality of protracted meetings, there had been a powerful revival in the city of New York. This work commenced in the Allen Street church, and spread more or less in the different congregations in the city; but its most powerful effects were felt and seen in the church in Allen Street, where the meetings were continued for upward of forty days, and in the evenings for nearly three months; so that the "revival in Allen Street" became notorious all over the country, and the increase during the two past years was not less than one thousand four hundred. This extension of the work created the necessity of having an additional number of churches, which eventuated, in the course of a few years, in the erection of seven, making in the whole twelve, in two of which the slips were rented, and three of the old ones were rebuilt. Our preachers and people more generally began to feel the necessity of building larger and more commodious houses of worship, and of providing parsonages for the married preachers, as well as of contributing more liberally for the support of our infant colleges, missions, and Sunday schools. Indeed, such had been the hallowed an happy influence of these institutions thus far, that opposition to them was mainly disarmed of its power, and success spoke loudly in their behalf.

Thirteen preachers had died during the last year, one hundred and forty-three were returned superannuated, and seventy-eight supernumerary; sixty-three had located, two had withdrawn, and three been expelled.

Among those whose death are recorded, are two among the oldest preachers in the traveling ministry, namely, Lemuel Green, of the Philadelphia, and William Phoebus, of the New York conference. The former, Lemuel Green, was born in Maryland, about fourteen miles from the city of Baltimore, in the year 1751. When about twenty-five years of age, in the year 1776, while war was raging in our country, he was made a partaker of justification by faith in Jesus Christ, and immediately attached himself to a Methodist society. At that time the Methodists were but few, numbering only four thousand nine hundred and twenty-one, and there were but twenty-four preachers. At what time he commenced preaching we have no means of ascertaining; but in 1783 we find his name on the Minutes of conference, and he was stationed on the Yadkin circuit, and in 1785 we find him in the Allegheny circuit, at that time a new region of country, but rapidly filling up with inhabitants. he was, therefore, among the pioneers of Methodism in that new country, and he continued his labors in various places, sometimes filling the office of presiding elder, until 1800, when he located, and settled in the city of Philadelphia, and entered into mercantile business, by which means he acquired considerable wealth. While in this relation he continued to preach occasionally, generally every Sabbath, and by his example to aid the cause of religion. His heart

and house were ever open to receive his brethren, and he always made them welcome to his hospitable table. In 1823 he was readmitted into the Philadelphia conference in the relation of a supernumerary, in which he continued until his death, which was peaceful and triumphant. His preaching is said to have been characterized by clearness and soundness, and attended with the energies of the holy Spirit. Had he continued exclusively devoted to the work of the ministry, instead of departing from it "to serve tables," he doubtless would have shone much brighter, and diffused his light much more extensively among his fellow-men. But having become the head of a family, and hence feeling the pressure so common to itinerant ministers in those days, arising from the scanty support afforded them, he thought it his duty to exchange a traveling for a located ministry; and though he acquired a competency for a season, yet, by adverse circumstances, he was, a few years before his death, reduced to poverty, so that his declining days were overcast with temporal affliction. But whether in prosperity or adversity, he maintained his integrity, and bowed submissively to the will of his heavenly Father, exemplifying the virtues of humility and patience in an eminent degree. This short record is made as a memento of that Christian friendship and fellowship which the writer enjoyed with his deceased brother, and in the hope of sharing with him in the blessedness of immortality and eternal life.

William Phoebus was also a native of Maryland, and was born in Somerset county, in the month of August, 1754. Though the exact time and means of his conversion are unknown to us, yet it appears from the record that he was brought to the knowledge of the truth in the early days of Methodism, became a member of its society and in 1783 he was admitted on trial in the traveling ministry. His first appointment was on Frederick circuit and in 1784 he attended the Christmas conference, when the Church was organized under the superintendence of Coke and Asbury, and the direction of Wesley.

After this he traveled in various places, sometimes contending with the hardships and difficulties of the new settlements in Green Briar, and other places no less rugged and destitute, where he accredited himself as a "good soldier of Jesus Christ," fighting the battles of the Lord, and conquering souls by the power of gospel truth. In this good work he continued until the year 1798, when he located, and entered upon the practice of physic, in the city of New York, preaching, in the mean time, generally every sabbath, in the pulpits, with good effect.

He continued in this local sphere of action until 1806, when he was readmitted into the New York conference, and was stationed in the city of Albany. Thence he was removed in 1808 to Charleston South Carolina, and in 1811 was returned to the city of New York. From that time he continued to fill various stations until the year 1821, when he was returned a supernumerary, and in 1824 a superannuated preacher, in which relation he continued until his death, which occurred at his residence, in the city of New York, November 9, 1831.

Though a man of great integrity of character, and strongly attached to the Church of his choice, and a lover of the itinerancy, he pleaded the necessity of the circumstances in which he was placed for his partial locations. Having entered into the marriage state about the year 1791, while traveling on Long Island, he soon found, as he thought, such difficulties besetting his path as an itinerant minister, as to justify him in restricting the sphere of his ministerial labors, that he might more effectually provide for himself and his own household." These difficulties arose out of a want of adequate means of support, the lack of parsonages to accommodate his family, and the being

dissatisfied, whether with or without reason, as he frequently affirmed with the office of presiding elder. Though it is believed that most of those who took this step did it unadvisedly, yet it is manifest that they had many arguments in its justification, arising out of the causes already enumerated; and the Church by this neglect toward her servants, incurred a fearful responsibility from which, however, she has been for some time endeavoring to relieve herself by a more liberal course in this respect.

Dr. Phoebus, for so he was called from his having been in the practice of physic, had acquired a large stock of useful information from his various studies and general intercourse with mankind. He lacked, however, that systematic arrangement of knowledge, which characterizes a mind that has been more early imbued with classical studies, and was therefore distinguished by certain eccentricities in his public administrations, conveying instruction more by detached sentences than by a chain of consecutive reasoning, or discoursing in a regular didactic manner. His style, however, was plain and perspicuous, his manner solemn and impressive, and he evinced on all occasions a mind familiar with the holy Scriptures, and deeply devoted to his work. He delighted much in the study of old authors, in examining the primitive records of the church, in analyzing the different modern systems of church order and government, and comparing them one with another, and with the primitive model. Having formed some acquaintance with the original languages in which the Scriptures of truth were written, he was extremely fond of deciphering the radical import of the sacred text, and thence sifting out the exact scope and design of the writer. His veneration for antiquity led him, we think, into the error of undervaluing the discoveries of modern days and of treating with too much neglect the improvements in the various departments of science and of theological knowledge. Hence a criticism by Clarke, or Benson, or even Wesley, whom he venerated as the greatest of modern divines, was not treated by Dr. Phoebus with half the deference as if it were made by some of the older divines, such as Poole, Henry, or Gill and the reasoning of a Reid or a Stewart would be rejected if contradicted by Locke. He never could pardon Dr. Adam Clarke for his ingenious speculations on the character of the serpent, or for his rejection of the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ and the antipathy he imbibed against this learned, pious, and useful commentator, seemed to unfit him for a due appreciation of his merits in other respects, as one of the most profound expositors of God’s sacred word. He, indeed, claimed the liberty of thinking for himself on all subjects, and perhaps in the exercise of this noble independence of mind, the birthright of every intelligent being, he sometimes manifested too little deference to others for his own benefit. Hence an air of dogmatism obtruded itself in the social circle which wounded the feelings of others, without exalting, in their estimation, the value of his own aphorisms and opinions.

He was a great admirer of Baxter. From his voluminous and pious writings he had treasured up many sayings, with which he endeavored to fortify his own positions, whenever assailed by an opponent; while Wesley and Fletcher furnished him with argument, in time of need, to defend experimental, practical, and polemical divinity. Being thus furnished with knowledge from various sources, and having a fund of anecdote at command, which he had treasured up from various reading and extensive intercourse with mankind, his conversation was always instructive and lively, and his judgment on topics of importance was listened to with becoming deference, by his friends in the ministry, as well as by others who sought his instructions. And those who were intimate with him were generally careful how they provoked a controversy on those subjects with

which he was familiar, lest they might be reduced to a mortifying defeat in entering the lists with one who well understood how to foil an adversary, or who could not easily brook a contradiction.

He held in suitable contempt those artificial decorations with which some young men were wont to adorn themselves, and all those tricks of oratory by which they attempted to gain a momentary and popular applause. Being asked by a friend "how it was that some preachers who seemed to have not much weight of character, and but a slender title to the merits ascribed to them by their fond admirers, gained so much attention," he replied with an air of contempt not easily forgotten or imitated, "Pugh! If I were to pull off my old boot, and throw it up into the air, and cry, hurrah hurrah! I should soon collect around me a more numerous crowd than any man in the city.''

He had a deep insight into the human character, and hence was not easily imposed upon by the artful and designing. This enabled him to manage difficulties which occurred between brethren in the Church to great advantage, and to bring them to an amicable adjustment. In regard to all such things he was "the wise man who keepeth the matter till afterward," never uttering his opinions to the disparagement of either party before the subject of dispute had been fully investigated.

It cannot be said that he was a popular preacher, in the common acceptation of that term, though he certainly commanded the respectful attention of the more weighty part of the community. A reason for his want of general popularity may be found rather in the dry and monotonous manner of his preaching than in the want of the depth and solidity of his matter. He often dealt, both in his private conversation and public addresses, in pointed apothegms [a terse saying or maxim] and short enigmas, not easily comprehended by the mass and often perplexing even those who were among the more thoughtful and deeply read. As an instance of his enigmatical manner of speaking, the following may be mentioned: -- At the conference of 1823, when addressing his brethren on the improbability of his being able to serve the Church much longer, he remarked, that the lease of his house had expired, and therefore he could not tell how soon he might be called to remove, as he was not certain that he could procure a renewal of his lease for any particular length of time; hence he could not pledge himself for any special service in the ministry." On hearing this, an aged minister, and one by no means deficient in mental sagacity, said to the writer of this, I thought the doctor owned the house in which he lives but it seems he was under a mistake, as he says that the time of his lease is run out." To this it was replied, "You do not understand him. He speaks in parables. He is now threescore years and ten, the common age God has allotted to man, and, therefore, cannot calculate on living much longer at most, and even that little time must be considered as an act of God’s grace, over and above what he usually grants to men." This, indeed, was his meaning from his own subsequent explanation.

These remarks apply to him more appropriately at an advanced stage of his ministry than in his younger days, as it is asserted by those who heard him at that period that he was ardent, vigorous and often very fluent in his addresses to the multitude, deep and searching in his appeals to the conscience. He was certainly successful in those days in enlarging the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He always manifested the deepest reverence whenever the name of the Supreme Being was introduced in conversation. At all times, when he had occasion to mention the name of the Saviour of the world, he would do it by a gentle inclination of the head, and if covered, by lifting the hat, and coupling with it the qualifying term, adorable thus, "the adorable" Saviour, or, "The adorable" Jesus

-- thereby acknowledging the divinity of his character, and his profound reverence for his supreme Godhead. Indeed, all his discourses were richly interlarded with the names, the offices, the atoning merits, and the interceding work of Jesus Christ making him, as he justly ought, the alpha and omega of all his sermons, and as the only foundation of man's hope, and medium of access and reconciliation to God. He thus very properly considered the "adorable" Jesus as " the light of the world," the divine "Sun" whose effulgence reflected light upon the types and shadows, the sacrifices and prophecies of the Old dispensation, and whose rays penetrated the gloom of moral darkness, and opened up to the sinner the only sure path to immortality and eternal life.

Though this certainly was not a peculiarity of Dr. Phoebus, as every true minister of the gospel must make "Jesus Christ and him crucified," the beginning and ending of his discourses, and the only medium of reconciliation to God, yet in the doctor it seemed ever to be his peculiar delight and his studied aim to hold up Christ most prominently before his hearers, in all the glories of his character, and in all the endearing relations he held to God and man as the REDEEMER OF THE WORLD. The position which he occupied sometimes exposed him to the shafts of enemies. His apparent eccentricities provoked the ridicule of some, while his good sense, varied knowledge, and equanimity of temper, enabled him to repel their assaults with good effect, and to bear the sneering scoffs of fools with exemplary patience. And though on some occasions he may have returned the repartee with an air of severity calculated to provoke the feeling of hostility, yet he knew well how to disarm an adversary by the gentler rebukes of love, and the blandishments of fraternal regards. In all these respects the fear and love of God were eminently exemplified, and the dignity of the Christian minister generally maintained.

Dr. Phoebus lived to a good old age. After having served the Church as a minister for about forty-eight years, eight of which as a located preacher, he fell asleep in Jesus, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, in the midst of his friends, and in the full hope of eternal life. He retained his mental faculties to the last, and on his dying bed discoursed in an edifying manner upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and the prospect he had, through him, of everlasting life. Patience in suffering, and submission to the divine will, were remarkably exemplified in the midst of his bodily pains, while he gradually and peacefully sunk into the arms of death. A short time before he died, he quoted the words of St. James, "Let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing," and commented upon them with much apparent pleasure, and with great clearness of apprehension, exhibiting, at the same time, a lively exposition of the meaning of those expressive words in his struggles with his last enemy.

Having thus filled up the measure of his days, "as a ripe shock of corn," he was gathered into the garner of God, to enjoy the rewards of his labors and sufferings in the world above.

After recording the death of those two aged veterans of the cross of Christ, we may be allowed to add that of a young minister of the sanctuary, who, though less distinguished for his long services in the church militant, was still more eminently characterized by the brilliancy of his talents, and his attainments in literature and science, and equally so in the depth of his piety. I allude to Nathaniel Porter, a member of the Philadelphia conference.

He was a native of Worcester, Mass., and was born in the year 1800. When about nineteen years of age he was made a partaker of justification by faith in Jesus Christ, and became a member of our Church. The Wesleyan Seminary had just been established in the city of New York, and as

one object of it was to give an education to pious young men whom we had reason to believe God had called to preach, brother Porter, soon after his conversion, entered as a student in this seminary, where he made rapid advancement in the knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, and in mathematics, giving evidence, in the mean time, of his deep piety, and exercising his gifts occasionally in the pulpit, after having received license as a local preacher. In the spring of 1823 he was received on trial in the New York conference, and he soon gave satisfactory evidence of his call to the work of the ministry, and of his qualification for the faithful and successful discharge of its duties. But as our brethren of the Genesee conference had resolved upon establishing an academy at Cazenovia, at the urgent request of the trustees of that infant institution, brother Porter was transferred to that conference, and appointed principal of the Cazenovia Academy. He entered upon his duties with great ardor and diligence, and succeeded to the satisfaction of all concerned, rising very high in the estimation of the people as an accomplished teacher, as an able minister of the New Testament, and as a deeply pious man. Such, however, was the character of the duties he had to perform, and the assiduous manner in which he applied himself to his vocation, that at the end of two years he found his health declining, and was obliged, with much reluctance to himself and the friends of the academy, to resign his office, and seek to reinvigorate his constitution by a cessation from labor, and a residence in a milder climate. He accordingly spent some time in the city of Baltimore, where he measurably regained his health, so that in 1828 he was transferred to the New York conference, and was stationed in Poultney, in the state of Vermont. There his labors were highly appreciated and greatly blessed. This cold climate, however, not agreeing with his feeble constitution, he was, in 1829, removed to the Philadelphia conference, and stationed in Morristown, New Jersey. In this place there had been a remarkable revival of religion for the past year, and brother Porter entered upon his labors with all that ardor of soul for which he was eminently distinguished, and with an ability which the times peculiarly called for in the defense of Methodist doctrine and usages. Here he felt himself compelled, by the force of circumstances, to buckle on the armor of a polemic, for the peculiarities of Methodism were assailed with much ingenuity and force of argument by the Presbyterian minister of the place, the Rev. Mr. Barnes, who had espoused the New School divinity, and arrayed himself in this new armor with a view, apparently, to put down the Methodism which had made, and which was still making, such powerful inroads into his parish. With a view to sustain himself in this spiritual warfare, and to defend the doctrines, discipline, and usages which he believed to be Scripture, brother Porter wrote and published a pamphlet, in which he showed himself to be "a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Through the influence of his labors, this revival, which had commenced under Methodist preaching, the Rev. Mr. Atwood being stationed there at the time, was kept up, and the cause amply defended against its assailants, and he had the happiness of rejoicing over the conversion of souls, and the building up of believers "in their most holy faith." The next year he was stationed in Newark, New Jersey, where he closed his labors and life in the peaceful triumph of faith, and the firm hope of an eternal inheritance. His death indeed had long been anticipated by his friend, as he had been gradually wasting away with lingering consumption, whose insidious attacks, though fatal in the estimation of all who saw him, flattered him with the deceptive hope of regaining his health. But when at length he was compelled to resign his hope as delusive, he calmly submitted to the mandate of his rightful Sovereign, and looked forward with a believing eye to the issue of his struggles, as an entrance, through the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, into the everlasting kingdom of God.

Thus lived and thus died, Nathaniel Porter, a young minister of eminent endowments, whose piety and talents gave promising indications, had he lived to a mature age, of future usefulness to the Church of his choice. But,

Nipt by the wind’s untimely blast, Parch’d by the sun’s directer ray, The momentary glories waste, The short-lived beauties die away."

So, indeed, died away the beauties, and faded the glories of our beloved brother ere he had attained that maturity of experience and usefulness in knowledge which might have exhibited him as a "master workman" in the "building of God." And in his death we are called upon to adore in solemn submission, the inscrutable ways of divine knowledge, in thus taking from his Church one of its most promising sons in his youthful days and in the midst of his usefulness, with high hopes of future eminence. But the wisdom of God shines not less conspicuously in its actings when the hopes of men are disappointed than it does in unfolding plans in conformity to their pious wishes and holy aspirations. Nor does the grace of God appear less powerful and energetic in ripening the early fruits of its creation, than in sustaining others for a series of years amid the toils, the sufferings, and useful pursuits of life.

Brother Porter was certainly a young man of more than ordinary talents and attainments. Though his early education was not thorough, yet his attainments in literature and general knowledge were rapid and constantly improving, and the more meritorious because they were chiefly the fruits of his own industry, after he was brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Feeling it to be his duty to devote himself to the work of the ministry, and trembling under an apprehension that he might enter upon this work without due preparation, he applied himself with all his might to the acquirement of useful knowledge, that he might be able to read, compare, and judge for himself in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And the short time he remained a student in the Wesleyan Seminary, under the tuition of the Rev. John M. Smith, by an assiduous attention to his studies, he laid the foundation for his future usefulness, as a sound scholar, and as an able minister of the New Testament. The manner, also, with which he afterward pursued his studies, in the midst of the active duties of his stations, as principal of the Cazenovia Academy, and then as an itinerant minister, evinced the unquenchable thirst of his soul for the acquisition of knowledge, and the practicability of attaining it even while discharging other indispensable duties. With a mind thus stored with various sorts of knowledge, and a heart deeply imbued with the Spirit of Christ, brother Porter went forth into the vineyard of his Lord, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Nor was he less distinguished for his meekness and humility than for his learning and science. This was manifest from the deference he had to his seniors in the ministry, from the trembling manner in which he arose to express his opinions and from the diffidence he manifested in the decision of his own mind yet he exemplified the perfect compatibility of uniting, in the same mind and heart, meekness and firmness, diffidence and decision; for no man was more determined in his purpose, or more persevering in his work, when convinced of truth and duty, than was Nathaniel Porter; nothing, indeed, could turn him aside from a straight forward course in the pursuit of good, when convinced of the right way and means to attain it. These commendable virtues shone out in his life, and exhibited him as a worthy by example for the imitation of those who may come after him. In conducting the controversy which his situation called him to manage, he exhibited at once great clearness of perception, acuteness of intellect, and comprehensiveness of argument, united with an ardent love of the truth, and a firmness of purpose in its defense. But

in all his actions, whether in the pulpit, the use of his pen, or in his more private intercourse in society, the love of God and man appeared to be the predominant principle of his heart, and he breathed it out in accents of charity toward his fellow-men. If at any time there appeared a tartness in his expression, it was because he thought the honor of truth was insulted in a manner which fully justified the severity to which he reluctantly yielded. And though he exhibited evidences that he belonged to human beings, of whom it must be often said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," yet he has left behind him no less convincing proofs of his unreserved devotion to the best of all causes, and of his preparedness to "enter into the joy of his Lord."

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 472,364; Last Year: 437,024; Increase: 35,340 -- Colored This Year: 73,817; Last Year: 71,589; Increase: 2,228 -- Indians This Year: 2,412; Last Year: 4,501; Decrease: 2,0891 -- Total This Year: 548,593; Last Year: 513,114 -- Increase: 35,479 -- Preachers This Year: 2,200; Last Year: 2,010; Increase: 190.

1833 The work of God this year was generally very prosperous. The agitations which resulted from the radical controversy had generally ceased, both institutions had been successfully defended against their rude assailants, and hence all went forward with alacrity and delight in the discharge of their respective duties. In addition to the ordinary means used for the promotion of the cause of Christ, the "protracted meetings" contributed much, for they were now very generally adopted throughout our bounds; and the circuits and stations, particularly in the older parts of our work, were brought into more compact order, so that pastoral duties could be more conveniently performed. But that which contributed still more to enlarge our borders, more especially in places before unoccupied by our ministry, and in the frontier settlements, was the energetic action of the Missionary Society. A new mission was opened this year in the bounds of the Pittsburgh conference, called Braddock’s Field, in consequence of its embracing a tract of country comprehending the place where Braddock suffered such a disastrous defeat from his own headstrong and imprudent valor, and the impetuous onset of his savage foes. A warfare of a different character was now commenced upon the people by the missionary of the cross, and so successfully was it prosecuted, that in 1834 not less than one hundred and fifty were returned as belonging to the Church, and the next year it was numbered with the regular circuits, supporting itself and contributing its quota for the support of others still more destitute.

Within the bounds of the Mississippi conference several new places were occupied as missionary ground, and they were generally cultivated with encouraging success. The La Fourche mission, in the neighborhood of New Orleans, was undertaken chiefly for the benefit of the slave population, though the whites shared in the labors of the missionary. In 1834 there were returned on this circuit sixty-two members, eleven whites, and fifty-one colored.

There was an extensive tract of country, thinly populated, among the bayous and swamps bordering upon the banks of the Mississippi river, for whose spiritual benefit a mission was this year established. Into this unhealthy climate, the missionary, desirous only to save as many souls as possible, entered in the name of the Lord, and succeeded in calling the attention of the people to the things of eternity, and in forming several flourishing classes. In the bounds of the Alabama conference the Taladega mission was commenced under favorable auspices, there being one hundred and fourteen members returned the first year, and the next two hundred and eighty-six. Noxabe, including a destitute population in the frontiers of Tuscaloosa district, was also brought

under spiritual culture this year, with some degree of success. In the state of Maine the Mattanawcook and Houlton mission, embracing a new and destitute population, was successfully established there being returned not less than seventy souls in Church membership in 1834. The constant and rapid emigration to the west, as well as to the southwest rendered it indispensable, that the people might be supplied with the ordinances of religion, to enlarge the boundaries of our work in proportion to the increasing extent of our settlements. And the chief points of attraction in the west at this time were the states of Illinois and Michigan. Hence to supply them with the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Peoria, Fort Edwards, Henderson, and Blue river missions were established this year and by an inspection of the Minutes for the subsequent years, it will be found that all these places have yielded a rich harvest of souls as the reward of our labors; that they have not only supported their own institutions, but have contributed to send the gospel still further into the more remote settlements of the far west. The Upper Wabash, Kalamazoo, and La Porte missions, included within the bounds of the Indiana conference, and embracing the frontier settlements in the state of Indiana, had been, as before mentioned, also recently established, and the labor of those men of God to whom the oversight was committed were accompanied by the Spirit of God, as was manifested in the awakening and conversion of sinners. These, like the others before mentioned, have prospered abundantly, and are ministering to their own and the wants of others, regular circuits having been established, and churches erected to the honor and for the worship of Almighty God. The encouraging success which had attended the labors of our preachers among the slave and free black population of the south, stimulated our brethren in the southwest to imitate their example by opening missions for the special benefit of this class of people. Hence, at the last session of the Tennessee conference, the African mission, embracing the colored population of Nashville and its vicinity, was commenced; a regular four weeks' circuit was formed, and the good work was prosecuted with such success, that in 1834 there were reported eight hundred and nineteen Church members.

It should be remarked that these domestic missions, as they have been called, to distinguish them from the aboriginal and foreign missions, differ in nothing from the ordinary new circuits, only in their receiving a support, whether in part or in whole, from the funds of the Missionary Society; for as soon as they become able to support themselves, they are struck from the list of missions, and supplied in the usual way. By this wise policy, we have been enabled continually and gradually to enlarge both our regular work and the number of missionary stations, with comparatively a small amount of money, considering the extent of our field of labor. And that this had a happy effect upon the missionary cause and religion generally, is manifest from the fact that this year the funds of the society had increased about seven thousand dollars over what they were last year, and that they have gone on increasing from that day to this. This year two other colleges were founded under the patronage of our Church, the one in Carlisle, and the other in Meadville, in the state of Pennsylvania. For want of patronage they had both gone down in the hands of those who had established them at first, and were conveyed gratuitously to our Church, on condition that an attempt should be made to resuscitate them and give them a permanent existence. The first, located in the town of Carlisle, Cumberland county, Pa., called Dickinson College, was founded by the Presbyterians, and was incorporated by the state in 1783. Its location is pleasant and healthy, and its property, at the time of its transfer to the present board of trustees, including the lot, buildings and apparatus, was estimated to be worth about $40,000. The Baltimore and Philadelphia conferences took it under their patronage, appointed agents to collect funds for its

endowment, and called the Rev. J P. Durbin, then editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, to its presidency. Having procured about $45,000 in donations and subscriptions, the college was opened for students in the summer of 1834 under favorable circumstances. It has thus far continued to answer the expectations of its founders and patrons, not only by imparting sound learning to its pupils, but also in blessing its youth with the principles, experience, and practice of Christianity. It has a law and preparatory school attached to it, and is daily acquiring more and more the confidence of the public. It has a charter from the state, and an annuity of $1,000. The Allegheny College is located in Meadville, Crawford county, a very thriving village on French Creek, three hundred and thirty-four miles northwest of Philadelphia. This institution received its first charter from the state in 1815, but for want of adequate support, it was suffered to languish and die in the hands of its former patrons and supporters. With a view to its resuscitation, the entire premises were given to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Pittsburgh and Erie conferences took it under their patronage. The Rev. Dr. Ruter, who had retired from the presidency of Augusta College in Kentucky, was appointed the first president of this institution, and it went into operation this year under his direction, with promising hopes of success. It has continued, though sometimes embarrassed for want of more ample funds, to bless the youth intrusted to its care with its wholesome instructions, and many of them have dated their conversion to God in this seat of learning and religion. It is said that i ts library is by far the largest and best of any in the western country, and its buildings were ample and in excellent order. Though Dr. Ruter retired from its presidency in 1836, it has gone on prosperously under his successor, the Rev. H. J. Clark.

Another academy had been established at Lima, Livingston county, N. Y., under the patronge of the Genesee conference, and Dr. Samuel Luckey was appointed the principal, and professor of moral science. It has prospered abundantly from that day to this, and exerted a most salutary influence upon the youth intrusted to its care, and upon the Methodists of the Church generally, in that region of the country.

Sixteen preachers had died in peace during the past year; seventy-two were located, eighty-nine returned supernumerary, one hundred and sixty-eight superarannuated, four expelled, and two had withdrawn.

Much might be said in favor of all those whose deaths are recorded, as men of God, who had devoted themselves to his service, and ended their labors and days in the full assurance of hope. But as there was nothing special to distinguish them from others of a similar grade and character, it is thought not expedient to fill these pages with a mere repetition of what may be said of every good and evangelical minister. Of one, however, I feel it a duty to make honorable mention, because he was a young man possessed of some peculiar excellences and traits of character, worthy of remembering and imitating.

John M. Smith was the son of an old member of the Church in the city of New York, long distinguished as one of the most devoted and active trustees, class leaders, and sabbath school superintendents, as well as an indefatigable laborer at our camp meetings. Those who live in the city of New York, or its vicinity, will readily recognize, in this allusion to the father of John M. Smith, Joseph Smith, recently gone to his rest in heaven, whose active labors for the good of the Church will long be remembered by his surviving brethren with gratitude and fraternal affection. His son

John was born in the town of Brooklyn, N.Y., October 10, 1795, and in his fifteenth year was brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, while a student in Columbia College. Notwithstanding he was surrounded with all the gayeties of the city, and the daily temptations to vain amusements by his connection with thoughtless young men in the college, he maintained the purity of his Christian character through his college course, and graduated with honor to himself, and to the satisfaction of his friends. On leaving college he entered upon the study of physic, intending to devote himself to the practice of the healing art. Being, however, soon impressed that it was his duty to call sinners to repentance, he relinquished that design, and entered upon the duties of a traveling preacher in 1817, and was stationed on Jamaica circuit, on Long Island, as a helper to Dr. William Phoebus, an old and intimate friend of his father. He continued in the work of an itinerant preacher, in which he gave evidence of deep piety, chastened zeal, and useful talents, until in the month of September, 1820, he was elected by the New York conference principal of the Wesleyan Seminary, in the city of New York, in which he continued until that institution was removed to White Plains, of which he also took the oversight. From this he was transferred, in May, 1832, to the Wesleyan University, as professor of languages. He entered upon the duties of his professorship with great ardor of mind, and promising hopes of distinguished usefulness; but alas! his days were soon cut off, for he died on the 27th day of the following December, aged thirty-seven years, two months, and seventeen days.

Mr. Smith was a diligent and successful student. In addition to the prescribed course of studies in the college, and this was by no means superficial, and the progress be made in the science of medicine, he acquired the knowledge of the Hebrew, French, and Spanish languages, was a proficient in botany, and other useful branches of polite literature. He appeared, indeed, to possess a peculiar aptitude of mind to acquire the knowledge of languages, both ancient and modern, of the dead and the living, for he studied them thoroughly, and could read and translate them with ease and accuracy. As a preacher he was sound and systematical, arranging all his discourses with great accuracy and in regular order, this being characteristic of his mind. Habituated from his youth to pursuing all his studies in consecutive order, nothing was done slovenly or negligently, but every thing had its appropriate place, and was made to suit the place it was designed to occupy. When you heard him preach, you could hardly avoid the impression, that his sermons partook of the character of scientific arrangement, and were the result of much thought and previous preparation, and they were delivered in language plain, elegant, and energetic, without any superfluous ornament, or the artificial graces of oratory. In this respect he seems to have taken Wesley for a model, an exemplar worthy the imitation of all who wish simply to do good to their fellow-men, by preaching the gospel of the Son of God. Instead, therefore, of aping the foppery of those who seek to gain a temporary applause by the sparklings of wit, or the mere flights of oratory, he seemed to "study to show himself approved of God," and to penetrate the heart by the plain truths of the gospel, expressed in language which the learned could not condemn, and which the illiterate common-sense hearer might understand, feel, and appreciate. For style and manner, therefore, brother Smith may be held up as an example for those who aim, as all should, to be useful, instead of affecting to be great. His mind was enlightened with various sorts of knowledge, and his heart "seasoned with grace;" meek, modest, and diffident, he appeared in the circle of his friends to "take the lowest seat," at the same time that others considered him as "worthy of double honor." Here the grace of humility shone out in all his word and actions, and set off the other qualities of his mind to the greatest advantage. But with all these

qualifications, he was not considered a great preacher. Many who were far inferior to him in learning and science, who understood no other language than their mother tongue, and who went out into the field of itinerancy from the common avocation of life, far outshone him as preachers of the gospel, and much exceeded him in winning souls to Christ. Though greatly beloved by all who knew him, for the urbanity of his manners, the meekness of his mind, the gentleness of his deportment, and highly esteemed by those who were acquainted with his attainments, with his worth of character as a man of learning and sound judgment, yet there were those, as before said, who could claim none of these literary advantages nor scientific attainments, who rose higher than he in popular favor, and were more eminently distinguished as able ministers of the New Testament. May not this be accounted for from the diversity of his studies and duties? While the others we have alluded to were men of one work, and hence gave their individual attention to their high and holy calling, Mr. Smith’s mind was occupied with a great variety of subjects, more especially after he commenced the duties of a teacher, and could not therefore give himself "wholly to these things." Hence, while some shine out brilliantly on one subject, or rise high above their fellows in the exhibition of some peculiar excellence, we behold the graces clustering around him in the sweetest harmony, balancing one another, and each lending to the other the benefit of its strength and beauty. Instead, therefore, of overwhelming you suddenly with the effulgence of light on a favorite topic, he gently enlightened your mind with the radiations of truth, which fell upon your understanding and heart like the orient beams from the morning sun, and softly insinuated themselves into your affections, drawing them almost imperceptibly toward Jesus Christ, as the source and center of all blessedness. These things gave a polish and a finish to his character, uniting those graces which eminently fitted him to act with becoming dignity and usefulness in the various walks of life in which he was called to move and to exercise his gifts.

He has left, therefore, a sweet odor behind him, which it is hoped will invite others to follow his track, and profit by the brightness of his example. By one of those providences which it is more easy to acknowledge and adore than it is to comprehend, his father was much reduced in the decline of life in his worldly circumstances, and the son was called to share in the father’s misfortunes. This compelled him to observe that rigid economy which induced some to suspect him of an unjustifiable penuriousness in his temporal matters, not duly considering that economy, in such a case, may become as much a duty as it is to be liberal in our gifts under more favorable circumstances. This affliction, however, he bore with Christian fortitude and submission and while it became a means of lessening his pecuniary resources, it no doubt tended to wean his affections from terrestrial, and to fix them more permanently on celestial objects.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 519,196; Last Year: 472,364; Increase: 46,832 -- Colored This Year: 78,293; Last Year: 73,817; Increase: 4,476 -- Indians This Year: 2,247; Last Year: 2,412; Decrease: 165 -- Total This Year: 599,736; Last Year: 548,593 -- Increase: 51,143 -- Preachers This Year: 2,400; Last Year: 2,200; Increase: 200.2 The reader will perceive that, while the aggregate increase this year is unusually large, the revivals having been very general and powerful during the past year, there was a decrease of one hundred and sixty five among the aboriginal converts. This was owing chiefly to the continual agitations and troubles arising out of their removal west of the Mississippi. For, though our missionaries did all in their power to keep them together, and to preserve them from backsliding from God, and even went with the immigrating parties to their new abodes, yet the distractions introduced into their councils, together

with the embarrassments and such things attendant upon their removal, created a most deleterious influence upon their religious character and enjoyments.

1834

We have heretofore noticed the improvements that were gradually making in building churches and parsonages in many parts of our work. The enlargement of our borders on every hand, and the increase of membership in the other circuits and stations, generally created an ability in our brethren and friends to supply the means to furnish accommodations for the people and their preachers and the necessity for these things, together with the urgent calls from the pulpit and the press, particularly in the columns of the Christian Advocate and Journal, excited them to activity in the discharge of these duties. Hence churches more commodious and central than heretofore were erected and erecting, parsonage homes built or rebuilt, and partially furnished; by which means the difficulties and expenses of removing were very much lessened, and the congregations became more numerous and permanent. It will be seen, therefore, that our increase this year and last was unusually large, and the missionary work went on most delightfully and prosperously, the whole being aided by protracted meetings, missionary anniversaries, and prayer meetings. These things, by diminishing the inducement to desist from traveling, lessened the number of locations.

We have already noticed the commencement of the Liberian mission, its incipient prospects, and its disastrous results upon the life of the missionary, the Rev. Melville B. Cox. but, though he had thus fallen a martyr to his work upon that distant and desolate shore, others were found to fill his place. At the call of brother Cox, and of the Missionary Society the Rev. Mssrs. Rufus Spaulding and Samuel O. Wright, with their wives, and Miss Sophronia Farrington, a female teacher, volunteered their services for this hazardous enterprise, and were accordingly appointed by the proper authorities of the society in 1833. While waiting for an opportunity to embark, the missionaries traveled as extensively as possible through different parts of the country, held missionary meetings, and thus contributed much to awaken and to diffuse the missionary spirit among the people. At length they set sail from Norfolk, Va., on the sixth day of November, 1833, and landed in Monrovia on the first day of January, 1834. They were received by the brethren with great cordiality, who hailed them welcome to their shores, bidding them "God speed" with all their hearts. They immediately entered upon their work with energy, and a most inviting prospect of success, the fields before them appearing already "ripe for the harvest." But alas! they, too, were destined soon to feel the corroding effects of an African climate; for amidst the plans of usefulness which they had in contemplation, and the active discharge of the arduous duties of their station, on the 9th of February brother Spaulding was seized violently with the fever, and the rest of the mission family were soon prostrated with the same disease, to some of whom it proved most fatal. On the first day of March, when so far recovered from his first attack as to be able to write, he says, "Sister Wright is dead! She left us on the morning of the fourth ultimo, and we have no doubt but that she is in heaven, while we are left to suffer yet longer on earth."

Brother Wright soon followed his beloved wife to the eternal world. He survived the first attack, and was so far restored as to be able to walk about, read, and write, and probably through premature exertion brought on a relapse, which soon terminated fatally, and his mortal remains sleep beside those of his wife on the shore of Africa; the bones of Cox having first sanctified the soil.

Nothing daunted, however, by these disasters with death thickening around them, and staring them in the face, the survivors persevered in their work believing that Africa would yet be redeemed. Miss Farrington especially, though much enfeebled by disease, manifested all the heroism of a martyr: having laid her soul upon the altar of her God, she seemed determined to brave every danger rather than relinquish the work in which she had engaged. But who can resist the course of events? Such were the corroding effects of the malarian fever, and so frequent and violent were its attacks, that brother Spaulding and his wife found themselves so much reduced, as to be unable to pursue their calling; and having but little prospect of regaining their health in Liberia, they resolved, as the only alternative left to their choice, to return to the United States. This they accordingly did, leaving, however, behind them evidences of their piety and zeal, and much to be hoped for as the result of future laborers. Under another date we shall endeavor to give a consecutive account of the progress of this mission, from the time it was committed to the oversight of brother Seys, the present superintendent of the mission.

Another very important mission was commenced about this time. This was the Flat Head, or Oregon mission. That our readers may understand the character of this mission, it is necessary that they should know something of the situation and state of the country in which it was established. The vast territory now known as the Oregon, in which the present mission is located, was but little known before it was visited by Lewis and Clarke in the year 1805, under a commission from the United States government. With immense labor and no little privation, they penetrated the wilderness west of the Missouri river, crossed the Rocky Mountains, and descended the Columbia river to its mouth, or where it discharges itself into the Pacific ocean, in about the forty-sixth degree of north latitude. It is true that the mouth of this noble river had been entered by Captain Gray, of Boston, Mass., in the ship Columbus. Having been the first modern navigator who entered the river, hitherto distinguished as the Oregon, or River of the West, Capt. Gray called it the Columbia, after the name of the ship in which he entered its mouth. This extensive territory lies west of the Rocky mountains a high ridge stretching through the western part of North America, from the frozen ocean to Mexico, where it is connected with the Cordilleras, or Andes, which continue their course from the isthmus of Panama to the straits of Magellan. From its eastern boundaries on the Rocky mountains, the Oregon territory extends to the Pacific ocean west, and from the Russian and British dominions on the north to the northern line of Mexico and California, in about the forty-first degree of north latitude. This entire country is claimed by the United States, though its exact limits have not yet been ascertained and settled by the respective governments who claim jurisdiction over these western regions. The Hudson Bay Company, incorporated in 1670 for the purpose of carrying on the fur trade at Hudson’s Bay, had extended their trading posts to the Columbia river, and had established a depot at Fort Vancouver, which is about one hundred miles from the mouth of the Columbia, a very fertile region of country. Here the governor of the company resides, the public store is located, and it is the center of trade in all that region of country. A large farm, belonging to the company, is under cultivation, and they have plenty of horses and cattle for domestic uses, and every thing is in a nourishing condition. This company is supposed to be extremely rich, having accumulated their property by the immense profits accruing from the fur trade which is carried on extensively with the Indians. The company, however, instead of improving the moral condition of the natives, have exerted an opposite influence, unless it may be indirectly, by opening the way for the introduction of the gospel, and the arts of civilized life. Many of the agents and clerks connected with this establishment have been in

the habit of marrying, some of them but temporarily, with the native females, and at the termination of their service of leaving them and their children to all the miseries of a semi-barbarous state, and to the poverty and wretchedness consequent upon their want of industry, and their great aversion to agricultural pursuits. Hence, the vices of licentiousness, of intemperance, and domestic feuds and quarrels, superadded to their heathenish practices, had made their condition even worse than it was in their state of entire barbarism; while most of the half-breeds grow up in a state of heathen ignorance, irreligion, and immorality. In 1811 John Jacob Astor, Esq., of the city of New York, commenced a trading establishment near the mouth of the Columbia river, and the fort which was erected was called, in honor of its founder, Astoria. But the war between Great Britain and the United States commencing soon after, through the timidity or unfaithfulness of the agents employed by Mr. Astor, the entire establishment was sold for a trifling consideration to the Hudson Bay Company, and the project of the North American Fur Company was abandoned. With the exception of a few white men introduced into the country by these trading establishments, the whole territory was in the occupancy of the native tribes, who roamed at large, living upon the fruits of hunting and fishing, and the trade they carried on with the Hudson Bay Company, and some few American traders, who casually visited these regions either for the sake of gain, or from a roving disposition. These consisted of a great number of small, insulated tribes, who, in addition to their sufferings from poverty and idleness, were almost perpetually annoying each other by war and bloodshedding. The whole number of the Indians inhabiting this dreary region has been variously estimated, from sixty to one hundred and fifty thousand; probably the latter is nearest the truth.

Those who live on the shore of the Pacific, and along the banks of the Columbia river know the great Falls, have become very much deteriorated in their physical and moral condition by their proximity to and intercourse with the trading establishment and other white people who have occasionally visited the country, more especially by the introduction of intoxicating liquors, and those evils growing out of a promiscuous intercourse of the sexes. These sad fruits of that state of civilization which is unaccompanied with the blessings of pure religion, fix a fearful responsibility upon the white population who have made inroads upon the Indian settlements, and they present one of the strongest barriers against the entrance of the gospel by the missionaries of Jesus Christ. We shall see, however, in the progress of this, as well as in the other aboriginal missions which have been conducted under the auspices of our Society, that this and other impediments have been overcome by the power of gospel truth, and even these heathen, debased and corrupted as they were, have been given to Christ for an inheritance. This seems, indeed to have been "the set time" for God to visit these outcasts of men with the renovating power his religion, by those means which, while they confound the wisdom of the wise, plainly show the wisdom of God, and the power of God. And although the consequences above mentioned followed the introduction of the trading establishments in Oregon, and the intermixture of white men among the natives, yet may we not trace the workings of benignant Providence in opening the way, that the voice of God’s messengers might be heard in this wilderness, "crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, that he Himself may enter among them and make them a people for his glory! The perilous journey of McKenzie, from Montreal, and the subsequent one of Lewis and Clarke, though undertaken under the patronage of their respective governments for political purposes, for enlarging the boundaries of geographical knowledge, and the benefits of trade, were no doubt rendered subservient to God’s designs of mercy toward these wandering sons of the

forest. Even the "axe and the saw," in the hands of men, may be so used as to answer the ends of divine wisdom and love toward the human race. The truth of these remarks we may see exemplified in the events connected with the Oregon mission. These we shall now more particularly endeavor to present to the reader. Among the various tribes inhabiting this territory, one was distinguished by the name of "Flat Heads," because they flattened their heads in the manner presented in the following likeness. [graphic not included with the electronic edition -- DVM] The circumstances which led to the establishment of the Oregon, first called the Flat Head, mission, were as follows: It seems that two of the Indians belonging to the Flat Head tribe had received an education at a school in the city of Montreal, then elder the charge of Roman Catholic priests. After the return of these youths to their tribe, they endeavored, according to the dim light they had, to instruct their heathen brethren in the truths of Christianity. This imperfect instruction, mixed, as it was, with the superstitious notions of the Roman Catholic Church, awakened a spirit of inquiry among the Indians, and a great desire to know something more respecting the God of the Christians. This desire was afterward much increased by the conversation of a white man who had penetrated into their country, and was present at one of those religious ceremonies which they scrupulously perform at stated times and in which they exhibit no little of their heathenish folly and ignorance of spiritual and divine things. This man, after attentively observing their manner of worship, told them that they were wrong in their notions of the Supreme Being and of their modes of conducting religious services, -- that there were a people who lived toward the "rising sun" who had the knowledge of the true God, which they received from a book he had given them. On receiving this information, they convened a council to deliberate upon the propriety of sending a deputation to the people of whom they had heard, for the purpose of obtaining a more accurate knowledge of these things. This consultation resulted in dispatching four of their principal men on a journey over the Rocky mountains, to make the needful inquiries. After traveling about three thousand miles, they arrived at St. Louis, and were introduced to General Clarke, the Indian agent, and the colleague of Lewis in his tour of observation over the Rocky mountains to the north Pacific. They immediately unfolded to him the object of their mission, and he gave them such information as he was able respecting the birth, works, character, doctrine, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, together with the objects he designed to accomplish by coming into the world, and other such Scriptural information as he thought might answer their inquiries. The general facts being communicated to the world through the Christian Advocate and Journal, in the number for March 1, 1833, accompanied with a facsimile of the head of a Flat Head Indian, a most lively sensation was produced in the Christian community, and a great interest excited in behalf of these wanderers of the desert, who had manifested such an eager desire to become acquainted with the God of the Christians as to travel through a wilderness of about three thousand miles for the sole purpose of realizing the object of their desire. And the interest became yet more intense when it was ascertained that two of these noble chiefs had fallen victims to death in St. Louis, in consequence, it was supposed, of the change of climate and mode of living to which they were subjected while they were upon the very threshold of obtaining the object of their pursuit.

Soon after the announcement of these facts to the public, the excitement was raised still higher by a most touching appeal, made through the columns of the Advocate, by the late Dr. Fisk, whose soul ever burned intensely in the cause of missions, and who exerted himself in every possible way to help it forward. In this spirited appeal he inquired whether there were any young ministers who were willing to devote themselves to this work -- to brave the dangers of the wilderness -- to

submit to the privations and sacrifices of a missionary among those Indians, and at the same time to reap the rewards of such an undertaking! This call was soon answered by two young men, brought up in Lower Canada, one of whom had been partially educated at the Wilbraham Academy, and they had both recently entered the traveling ministry. Having been inured to hardships from their youth, and now giving evidence of their piety and call to the Christian ministry, their services were accepted by the proper authorities of the Church, and Jason and Daniel Lee, uncle and nephew, were appointed missionaries for the Oregon territory, and they immediately set about preparing themselves for their journey across the Rocky mountains. As it was desirous to have a school teacher accompany them on the mission, Cyrus Shepard, a young man of deep piety and competent talents, volunteered his services, and was accepted by the board of managers. On the eve of the departure of Mr. Lee and his companions, it was ascertained that Captain Wythe, who had before visited that country on a trading expedition was about to return with a large company by the way of St. Louis, over land to the Columbia river. This seemed another providential indication in favor of the mission, and Mr. Lee, in conformity to the advice of the board of languages, embraced the earliest opportunity for an interview with Captain Wythe and it resulted in an arrangement to accompany him in his journey over the Rocky mountains; in the mean time sending his heavy baggage, consisting of some farming and domestic utensils, clothing, &c., by way of the Sandwich islands. [Hawaiian Islands -- DVM] The projection of this important mission had a most happy effect upon the missionary cause generally. As the entire funds of the society, up to this time, had not exceeded eighteen thousand dollars a year and as this mission must necessarily cost considerable, with a view to augment the pecuniary resources of the society, a loud and urgent call was made, through the columns of the Christian Advocate and Journal, on the friends of missions to "come up to the help of the Lord" in this emergency; and to assist in this benevolent work, the Messrs. Lees were instructed, while remaining in the civilized world, to travel as extensively as possible, hold missionary meetings, and take up collections; and the "Flat Head" mission, as it was then called, seemed to possess a charm, around which clustered the warm affections of all the friends of the missionary enterprise, and special donations for the "Flat Heads" were sent to the treasury with most cheering and delightful liberality and avidity. As an evidence of the beneficial result of these movements, the amount of available funds had risen, in 1834, from $17,097.05, the sum raised in 1833, to $35,700.15. So true is it that those who aim at great things, if they do not fully realize their hopes, will yet accomplish much. Being thus cheered on by their friends, buoyed up by the prayers of God people, and animated by the prospect of speedily planting the standard of the cross for the first time in that distant and desolate part of our continent, the company left St. Louis, Missouri, on the 10th of April, on horse back intending to make their first stopping place for recruiting their stores, and taking their final leave of civilized society at Liberty, about three hundred miles from St. Louis. Here they were joined by Capt. Wythe and his company, whence they started for the wilderness about the first of May, 1834. In their company were two Indian youths, one of the Flat Head tribe, about thirteen years of age, and the other of the Pierced Nose Indians, about twenty-one years of age, both of whom were brought, at their request, from beyond the Rocky mountains, by Captain Wythe, in a former journey through their country. They had expressed a wish to be conducted to the abodes of white people, with a view to become instructed in their language and modes of living. While here they had made considerable progress in learning, and were now taken back by Captain Wythe to assist him as interpreters in his intercourse with the Indians. The distance from St. Louis, by the most

direct route, was estimated to be about two thousand three hundred miles; but in consequence of the zig-zag course they were obliged to make, to shun steep mountains, and to cross livers, &c., it was not much short of three thousand miles, which, by traveling at the rate of twenty miles a day, would require one hundred and fifty days to reach the place of their destination. In this tedious journey, after exhausting the stock of provisions they were enabled to carry with them on packhorses, they were obliged to live chiefly on buffalo meat, which they procured by hunting the buffalo on the extensive prairies east of the Rocky mountains, in which fatiguing work the missionaries had to share equally with the rest of the company. They, however finally arrived in safety, and without any serious accident, though not without much suffering from hunger, and other incidents of traversing a wilderness infested with ferocious savages, beasts of prey, and in many places, particularly on the treeless plains, from the scorching beams of a summer sun, to the place of their destination. On arriving at the country of the Flat heads, about which so much had been said and written, they found them to be few in number, and these few of such a migratory character that they concluded it best to select some other place as the center of missionary operations. They therefore proceeded on to Fort Vancouver, the principal depot of the Hudson Bay Company, where they arrived in the month of September 1834. They were received and treated with great kindness and hospitality by Dr. McLaughlin, the company's agent, and governor of the colony. On sabbath, the 28th of September, brother Jason Lee preached the first sermon ever delivered in that part of the country, to a very attentive audience, composed of whites, half-breeds, and Indians, who listened with much apparent interest to the truths of the gospel. With a view to recruit their exhausted strength after such a toilsome journey, and to collect all the information they could respecting the state of the country, and particularly the most eligible situation for commencing the mission, they remained at Fort Vancouver and its vicinity for several weeks, and on the 14th of December brother Lee preached a second time, after which he baptized four adults and fifteen children. This was a solemn and deeply interesting season, being the first time this holy ordinance was ever administered in the Oregon territory, and therefore seemed like the opening of their commission as Christian missionaries in heathen lands.

It was a high gratification to Mr. Lee and his worthy companions, to find themselves so hospitably entertained and respectfully treated by Dr. McLaughlin and his associates. And after collecting all the information they could from them and others respecting the state of the country, and particularly the aboriginal tribes by whom it was inhabited, they finally concluded it to be most advisable to locate the missionary establishment on the Williamette river, about twenty-five miles from its junction with the Columbia, and sixty from where the latter empties its waters into the Pacific ocean. Here they found a small settlement of white people, composed of French voyagers, who had been in the service of the Hudson Bay Company, and some Americans from the United States, who had wandered into that distant region. Many of them had married native females, and their children were growing up in heathenish ignorance and immorality, while the parents themselves were fast assimilating to a state of barbarism. Being entirely dependent upon their own exertion for accommodations and a livelihood, the missionaries were compelled to go to work with their own hands, and fell the trees of the forest, and prepare the ground for cultivation, and they soon succeeded in erecting a log house thirty-two by eighteen feet, one story and a half in height. They then proceeded to the cultivation of a farm, plowing, and sowing grain and such vegetables as they could procure for culinary purposes. On examination they found that they and selected a healthy place, and fertile soil, which promised abundantly to reward the labor of their hands.

Having procured these temporary accommodations, they commenced a course of religious instructions among the people and as soon as practicable opened a school for the instruction of the youth, and all things seemed to promise a happy result. At the request of the head of department at Fort Vancouver, brother Shepard was left there in charge of a school which had been commenced two years before by a Mr. Ball, whose letters concerning the state of the country had been published and read with interest, but who had discontinued his services as a teacher of youth. The school consisted chiefly of half-breeds, collected from the vicinity of the fort, and the children of those belonging to the company. These, together with two Japanese youth to whom he imparted instruction in the evenings, soon made encouraging improvement in reading, writing, grammar and a few in geography and the first principles of mathematics. The labors of brother Shepard, therefore, were of the most useful character, and were highly appreciated by those concerned. The information contained in this sketch of the state of things in Oregon having been communicated to the Missionary Society, and the prospects arising from these incipient steps toward establishing the mission, and the crying wants of the many heathen in that wild region, induced the board of managers, and the bishops, to adopt measures to send, as speedily as possible, a reinforcement to the mission. Accordingly a physician and blacksmith, with their wives and children, a carpenter, a single man, and three female teachers, in all thirteen, including the children and domestics, were selected for the mission, and they sailed from Boston in the month of August, 1836, by the way of the Sandwich islands. With these was sent a quantity of household furniture, about twenty boxes of clothing of various sorts and sizes, valued at not less than two thousand dollars, and also agricultural, mechanical, and surgical instruments, as well as an ample supply of medicine. This family arrived in June at the Sandwich islands, where they were treated with great kindness and hospitality by the missionaries of the American Board, and after waiting some time for a passage, they set sail, and finally arrived at the mission house on the Williamette about the last of May, 1837, where they were hailed with great delight by those already on the spot. They had the unspeakable satisfaction of finding the two Lees in health, and pursuing their work with unexampled diligence, and great success. They had succeeded in procuring the confidence and affection of the natives, and the other settlers in the neighborhood; had a large farm under cultivation, and in addition to the log house before mentioned, erected a convenient home for preaching and for teaching the school, consisting of three rooms, well arranged, though but indifferently furnished. To the superintendence of this school, Mr. Shepard had been removed from Fort Vancouver, that he might more properly fulfill the object of his appointment as a missionary teacher among the heathen of Oregon. And before the arrival of the last-mentioned family, having no females attached to the mission, the brethren were compelled not only to raise their own provisions by cultivating the ground, but also to work for themselves, to make and mend their own clothes, and for the children committed to their care, as well as to be their own doctors and nurses. From a part of these onerous duties they were glad to be relieved by the arrival and timely services of the females attached to the last family, to one of whom, Miss Maria Ann Pittman, of the city of New York, a young lady of eminent piety and respectable attainments, Mr. Jason Lee was married soon after her arrival and she soon became no less useful to the mission generally than she was every way agreeable and happy in her conjugal relation, though she lived but a short time to adorn her profession, and to comfort her husband in his labors and sacrifices. Being convinced, from the representations made to the board by brother Lee, that more help was needed to carry on the mission with energy and success, measures were adopted to send two additional

missionaries, and accordingly, on the 24th of January, 1837, the Rev. David Leslie, wife and three children, and the Rev. H. K. W. Perkins, accompanied by a pious young lady as a teacher, sailed from Boston, in the brig Peru, for the Sandwich islands, whence they found a passage in a short time to the mouth of the Columbia, where they arrived in safety after a voyage of about ten months. They immediately entered upon their work, and soon found the blessing of God upon their efforts.

Before their arrival, however, brother Lee, with a view to furnish the farm with stock, had sent, in conjunction with others who had united in the enterprise, to California, and purchased about six hundred head of domestic cattle, oxen and cows, about five hundred of which they had driven through a wilderness of nearly six hundred miles, the rest having perished or strayed away on the journey. This, though attended with great labor and hardships, enabled them to stock the farm with milk cows for the use of the missionary family, and with oxen for plowing, carting, etc., and to provide for replenishing themselves with all necessary food hereafter, as well as to keep up such an ample stock of cattle as their means of sustaining them and their accumulating wants might warrant and require. But a more important achievement than even this had been effected. A project was formed by some individuals who had recently become domiciled in the settlement, to set up a distillery. Knowing that if this succeeded, all their efforts for the moral renovation and religious instruction of the people would be unavailing, Mr. Lee set himself to work to prevent the project from being carried into execution. He called the people together, and gave them an address on the evil effects of intemperance, and proposed the formation of a temperance society, under a pledge of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors as a beverage, which the people almost unanimously signed and as the gentlemen concerned had already expended some money in preparing for their contemplated establishment, the same people who had joined the temperance society subscribed more than a sufficient amount to remunerate him for their pecuniary loss, at the same time presenting an earnest, but respectful remonstrance against their project, urging the mischief it must, if carried into operation, bring upon the infant settlement. This had the desired effect. The distillery was abandoned; and, greatly to their honor its projectors politely declined the proffered remuneration, and heartily united with the others in the cause of temperance. By this means a foundation was laid for the future well-being and prosperity of this little colony, and very soon God bore testimony to the zealous efforts of his servants, by pouring out his Spirit upon the people. The work commenced among the children in the school, and extended to the adults in the settlement, including some of the different nations, French, English, Americans, half-breeds, and Indians, who were grouped together in the village, molding their hearts into the image of Christ, and filling them with love to God and one another. Upward of forty were the subjects of this glorious work. This was most cheering to the missionaries, and as an evidence of their gratitude to God, they formed themselves into a missionary society and three hundred and forty-eight dollars were subscribed toward the support of the cause. This was a glorious beginning, being the "first-fruits" of a more plenteous harvest which they hoped yet to reap from among the heathen of that land of darkness and desolation.

Several other new places were occupied this year, chiefly west of the Allegheny mountains, under the auspices of the Missionary Society. Smethport and Sinnamahoning, in the bounds of the Pittsburgh conference, were successfully cultivated; and King’s River, in the Missouri conference. In the northwestern section of the Indiana conference, the Tippecanoe and Eel River, the

Mississinewa and Maumee missions were commenced among the scattered settlements in that new and thriving country. Point Rock, in the bounds of the Tennessee conference, and Yalo Bush and Tallahatche missions, in the Mississippi conference, were commenced this year, and prosecuted with success. Several additional missions were also begun for the special benefit of the slaves in the neighborhood of New Orleans, and on the cotton plantations in the bounds of the Georgia and South Carolina conferences, which have proved highly beneficial to that class of our population. As the lands formerly occupied by the Cherokee Indians were filling up rapidly by white people, that they might not be allowed to grow into a community destitute of the gospel, four missions were established in this territory, and they returned the next year four hundred and seven members of the Church. Mattawoman mission, in the Baltimore conference, embraced a population not hitherto supplied in the regular way, and one hundred and fifty-four members were returned in 1835, one hundred and nine of whom were colored. The Philadelphia Conference Missionary Society, in addition to assisting largely in support of the aboriginal missions by the appropriation of its funds, exerted itself efficiently to supply destitute places within its own bounds, and Southwark, in the vicinity of Philadelphia, was added to those heretofore undertaken and supported by this society, and one hundred and fifty-eight members were returned the next year as the fruit of the labor bestowed upon it by the missionary. The successful manner in which these new fields of labor were cultivated, together with the prosperous state of the work generally, tended to enlarge the sphere of our usefulness, as well as to increase the number of preachers and members. It was evident, also, that the ministry was improving in learning and general knowledge, and consequently in usefulness and respectability, while the continuance of the revivals was sure indication that they were not retrograding in piety and zeal.

Another college was founded this year in Lebanon, Illinois, under the patronage of the Illinois conference. It has gone on prosperously from that day to this, being under the presidency of a graduate of the Wesleyan University, a son of one of the old preachers of the New England conference, the Rev. Joseph A. Merrill. This institution is exerting an improving and hallowing influence on the present generation of that new and growing country, by calling into action their intellectual resources, and it promises stability and usefulness under the superintendence and patronage of its zealous friends and supporters. The academies already established, now amounting to about twenty, were in successful operation, and becoming prolific feeders to the higher seminaries of learning. These all, no doubt, were exerting a most salutary influence upon our community, and tended to create among our people generally a more just appreciation of sanctified learning, and useful, scientific improvement. A controversy had arisen in the course of this year respecting the collections which had been ordered by the General Conference, and were therefore recognized by the Discipline of the Church, which were made for specific purposes: such as for the support of the ministry, for missionary objects, etc. It seems, that some boards of trustees claimed the right, by virtue of their corporate powers, to take possession of all the moneys which might be collected in the churches, whether in the classes or otherwise, whether for specific objects or in the ordinary way, and appropriate them as they pleased. It was at once seen, that if this claim were yielded to the trustees, our discipline, providing for a board of stewards and their duties, would be rendered entirely nugatory, and the collections made for missionary or any other specific object, might be diverted from their original purposes, and applied as the common revenues of the Church. In opposition to this claim, it was pleaded, --

1. That the constitution, both of the general and state governments, secured to religious denominations all their peculiar rights and privileges, both as it related to doctrine, rites, ceremonies, and practice, whether this practice relates to moral, religious, or pecuniary matters, provided only that they do not contravene any law of the state, or are not guilty of licentiousness. On this broad principle of constitutional right, it was contended that those peculiarities growing out of the Church economy were recognized by legal enactments, and we were therefore protected by the strong arm of law in the peaceable exercise of all our rights, privileges, and usages.

2. Hence it followed, that no board of trustees could be authorized, even were such a disposition manifested by any state legislature, to trample upon the discipline of their own Church, to nullify a regulation or usage peculiar to their own denomination, if for no other reason than because it would be empowering trustees to defeat the object of their appointment, which was not to annihilate, but to support the institutions of their Church.

3. Inasmuch, therefore, as our Discipline had provided for the appointment of stewards, to whom all Class money and quarterly collections were to be intrusted, as well as the alms of the Church for the benefit of the poor, the trustees had no right of control over such collections, because they were made for specific objects, pointed out and prescribed by the Discipline, namely, the support of the ministry and the poor.

4. And as to moneys raised for missionary purposes, as it was always notified when collections or subscriptions were taken, that they were designed for that specific object, and the people gave accordingly, no board of trustees, nor any other person or persons had a right to appropriate them for any other than the objects for which they were given.

5. The duties of trustees were specific and well defined, and they did not, in either the Discipline or the law of the state, include the receiving or appropriating the moneys so collected, but they related altogether to the temporalities of the Church, the taking care of the real and personal estate by means of money raised for that object alone, and so specified in the Discipline of their Church, and the law of the land.

These plain, common-sense views, however did not satisfy those individuals who had set up the claim contended for; and to put the matter at rest, the questions were submitted to two eminent lawyers in the city of New York. Their opinion, given entirely independent of each other, the one not knowing that the other had been consulted, was as follows, which put an end to the controversy. Lawyer Jay, a son of the late eminent Governor Jay, after stating the questions at issue, and assigning sundry reasons for his opinions, decided as follows: --

"The stewards, after paying the allowance to the preachers, send the surplus to the annual conference. Other collections and subscriptions are directed or authorized, but in all cases the money raised is subject to one or other of the conferences, and generally is to pass through the hands of the stewards.

"Now, the moneys thus collected are not the property of the corporation in this city. The money, before it was contributed, certainly did not belong to that corporation, nor has it been given it.

"The corporation are trustees only for the congregations who meet in their churches. The money has been given for the use of all the congregations under the jurisdiction of the conference.

"The stewards who have received it are not officers of the corporation, which can neither appoint nor remove them, nor call them to account. But the trustees or corporation may, if they please, solicit subscriptions or make collections for the purpose of defraying their debt or the interest due upon it.

"The money thus raised will be under their own exclusive management, and the clergy will have no control over it.

"The only question, then, which requires further consideration, is, whether the corporation can prohibit the collections directed by the book of Discipline from being made in their churches? I think they cannot.

"The act of 1784, under which the Methodist Episcopal Church in this city is incorporated, is its charter, which is not altered by the act of 1813. The eleventh section has been already explained. By the act of 1784, the trustees are authorized to take possession of all property already belonging to the society; to purchase and acquire other property; to lease and improve land; to erect meeting houses, parsonage houses, school houses, and other buildings for the use of the society; to make rules for managing the temporal concerns of the congregation; to have the sole ordering of payments of the moneys belonging to the congregation; to appoint a clerk, treasurer, and collector; to regulate the renting of pews, and the fees for burials, and all other matters touching the temporal concerns of the congregation.

"These temporal concerns relate only to the property vested in the corporation.

"The right of the incorporated trustees to forbid the collections (if they possess it) must be derived from the right of property. Being the owners of the meeting houses it may be thought that they are authorized to control the use of them, and either to prohibit the preachers from entering them, or to admit them under such conditions as the trustees shall see fit to prescribe. And is would be true if they held the meeting houses for their personal benefit but they hold them, as their name imports, as trustees. What, then, is the nature of the trust?

"In the first organization of the Methodist society by Mr. Wesley, he established it as a principle, that the preachers should be independent of the people; for that, as well as for other reasons, he permitted none of them to be stationary, or to derive their support from any contract made with particular congregations and he framed the system of collections to defray expenses. In this state Methodism was introduced into America, and at the time when the law of 1784 was passed, the ministers were appointed and paid as they are at present. The design of that act was, not to alter the doctrine, discipline, or worship of any denomination but, on the contrary, to sustain such doctrine, discipline, and worship, by enabling each congregation to manage its property through the agency of a corporation, instead of managing it as they had previously done, through the less convenient agency of private trustees.

"By the act of 1784, the incorporated trustees have certain powers granted to them -- and these powers cannot be exercised by the conferences. But the trustees themselves must exercise them so as not to defeat the very end and purpose of their incorporation.

"They cannot exclude from their meeting houses the preachers appointed in the manner prescribed by the constitution of their Church, nor impose upon them conditions inconsistent with

it.

"I do not mean to say that the conference have unlimited authority. But I am of opinion that, in directing their preachers to solicit from the liberality of their hearers the accustomed contributions, without which their system could not subsist, they have not exceeded their proper limits, and that the trustees ought not to resist them.

"My answers to the questions proposed to me are as follows: --

1. The religious societies incorporated under the law of 1784 are to be governed by that law, and not by the act of 1813.

"The eleventh section has been already explained.

2. The framers of the discipline of a church can make no rule contrary to the law of the land. Such a rule would be a dead letter. But I do not think that the rules in question concerning collections are of that nature.

3. With respect to the third question, I understand that previous to the year 1820 the trustees acted as stewards, and received and paid over the money raised by collections, in the manner prescribed in the book of Discipline, and that in 1820 they consented that other stewards might be appointed, which was done accordingly. This act of the trustees would not abridge the legal rights of their successors, and therefore has no influence on my opinion in relation to the other questions.

4. No law gives to the trustees the control of the collections made in the classes.

"Revenue is the produce of taxes, &c., or the rents and profits of real or personal estate. In a loose sense, it may denote income of any kind. But in no sense can the voluntary contributions of individuals for the general benefit of all the clergy and institutions of a church be considered as the revenue of any particular congregation or corporation." To the two following questions he says, "I answer in the negative, for reasons already sufficiently explained." These are the questions: --

1. Does the law make it obligatory on the trustees to take the voluntary contributions made in the congregations and classes which the Discipline assigns to the stewards for specific purposes?

2. Can the trustees, by virtue of their corporate powers, compel the stewards to relinquish the voluntary contributions made in the congregations and classes in opposition to their official duties, as defined in the Discipline?" The other attorney, no less eminent than Mr. Jay for his sound legal knowledge, David B. Ogden, returned the following answers: --

"My opinion has been requested by some of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this city upon the following questions: --

"First. Are religious societies incorporated under the law of 1784 to be governed by that law, or by the act subsequently passed in 1813? If by the former, what construction is to be put upon the eleventh section of that act?

"Second. Have the framers of a discipline of a church the right to ordain provisions which are contrary to the laws of incorporation; and is the discipline in such a case a dead letter?

"Third. Does the fact that the society submitted to the appointment of stewards to take charge of part of its funds in 1820, prevent the present board of trustees from assuming the duties enjoined upon them by statute?

"Fourth. The funds collected in classes are devoted to the use of the ministry. Will the fourth section of the act of 1813, giving to the trustees the control of the temporal concerns and revenues of the Church, include such collections in the classes?

"Fifth. Are voluntary contributions to be considered as revenues of a church? And have the trustees the power to prevent collections in churches under their charge by others, without their consent?

"Sixth. Does the law make it obligatory on the trustees to take the voluntary contributions made in the congregations and classes which the discipline assigns to the stewards for specific purposes?

"Seventh. Can the trustees, by virtue of their corporate powers, compel the stewards to relinquish the voluntary contributions made in the congregations in opposition to their official duties, as defined in the Discipline?

"I give the answers to them, which are according to the best of my judgment.

"First. As to the first question there can be no doubt. The powers of this religious society as a corporation being derived wholly under the act of 1784, the corporate powers are under that act, and to be looked for in it only.

"The object of the incorporation is to enable the society to held property, and to hold it down to their successors, to sue and be sued, and in effect to give it a personal power, or the power of holding property, of suing and being sued as if it was an individual. The law never intended further to interfere with the society, but to leave its doctrine, its discipline, and form of worship untouched. These are considered as matters with which the law has nothing to do. This is what the legislature intended to declare by the eleventh section of the act.

"Second. The framers of the discipline of a church certainly have no power to ordain provisions contrary to the law of the incorporation. They have no right to say that the property of the corporation shall not vest in the trustees under the law in whom the law has vested it, but shall vest in some other persons -- any such ordinance would be absolutely void.

"Third. I think the trustees are bound to take charge of all the temporalities of the church, and if they have omitted to do so heretofore, they are bound to do it now.

"Fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh questions -- "The answer to these questions must depend upon one and the same principle.

"The trustees are to possess and enjoy all the temporalities of the society, by which I understand all its real and personal property: I do not think money raised in the congregations for special and particular purposes as forming any part of the property of the Church or society. Suppose a collection made for the use of the Orphan Asylum, for instance; it seems to me that the money raised by such a contribution is the property of the Orphan Asylum, and not of the trustees of the religious society by which it is raised.

"What collections are to be made in the churches, and for what purposes they may be made, seem to me to be matters with which trustees have nothing to do, but belong to those who manage what is called in these questions "the discipline" of the society. If moneys are raised by contribution, or in any other way, as part of the general property of the society, the trustees take them, as a matter of course, for the use of the society. But moneys raised for special purposes must be held for the use of those purposes by those in whose hands the discipline of the church chooses to place them. I do not think the act of incorporation intended or can in any way affect those moneys. This matter must depend upon those who manage and control the discipline of the Church."

These decisions had a very happy influence upon the Church, as they tended to set the mooted question at rest, and to confine the litigating parties to their appropriate duties, without attempting any longer to interfere with each other.

Sixty-eight preachers had located the last year, seventy-five were returned supernumerary, one hundred and sixty-seven superannuated, and thirty-four had died.

Among those who exchanged the scenes of labor and employment in this world for the rest and pleasures of the next, were two of our eminent preachers, who had labored long with an unblemished reputation to build up the walls of our Zion.

Barnabas McHenry, of the Kentucky conference, entered the traveling ministry in 1787, only three years after the organization of our Church. He will be long remembered in the west, the scene of his youthful labors, as the pious and diligent servant of the people, to many of whom he was indeed a messenger of peace and good will. And though he was compelled, in consequence of debility brought on by excessive labors and sufferings, to intermit his itinerant ministry from 1796 to 1819, yet he again entered the work, to which he devoted himself as an effective preacher only two years, when he was returned superannuated.

It is said that he lived for several years in the enjoyment of "perfect love," giving evidence of it by the tempers of his mind, and the deportment of his life. To the doctrines and discipline of the Church of his choice he adhered with a firm and commendable tenacity, making them the subjects of his private meditation and public advocacy, and, withal, feeling their solemn and saving efficacy upon his mind and heart.

He finally ended his days in peace, and, we trust, rests from his labors."

Seely Bunn, of the Baltimore conference, was a native of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., and was born August 1, 1765. After the family settled in Henley county, Virginia, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, he was made a partaker of justifying grace, and in 1792 entered the field of itinerant preaching. In these early days of Methodism in this county, he partook of his quota of obloquy and privations, more especially when engaged in carrying the gospel into the new settlements, where accommodations were coarse and poor, and the work of a traveling preacher laborious and fatiguing. In traversing the wildernesses of the west, from one new settlement to another he was often exposed to savage cruelty, had frequently to sleep in the woods, exposed to the pelting storms, to hunger and cold, and all those privations incident to the state of the country, and to the life of a Methodist itinerant. But in the midst of all, his soul was borne up by the promises and presence of God, and by seeing the fruit of his labors in the awakening and conversion of sinners. In this good work he continued until 1814, when he was compelled, from debility, to take a

superannuated relation. He bore his afflictions with exemplary patience, and finally departed in peace and triumph in the full prospect of entering into life eternal.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 553.134; Last Year: 519,196; Increase: 33,938 -- Colored This Year: 83,156; Last Year: 78,293; Increase: 4,863 -- Indians This Year: 2,494; Last Year: 2,247; Increase: 247 -- Total This Year: 638,784; Last Year: 599,736 -- Increase: 39,048 -- Preachers This Year: 2,625; Last Year: 2,400; Increase: 225.

1835 The General Conference of 1832 recommended to the bishops and the managers of our Missionary Society South America as a proper field for missionary enterprise; and with a view to ascertain the state of things more accurately from personal observation, that some person should be sent to explore the accessible parts of the country, and report on the prospect and feasibility of establishing missions among the people in that populous region.

It is well known that from the time of the conquest of this country by the Portuguese and Spaniards, the Roman Catholic religion had been established by law, and had, therefore, incorporated itself into all the civil institutions and regulation of the country nor was it less intolerant toward Protestants than it was cruel toward the natives at the time of its conquest over their liberties and independence. After, however, the liberation of the provinces from the dominion of Spain and Portugal, a more tolerant spirit was gradually diffusing itself through the community, and it was hoped that the time had arrived when, by the use of suitable means, an impression might be made, at least upon some minds, favorable to the propagation of a purer form of Christianity.

South America, at this time, was divided into no less than nine distinct governments, the largest of which is the empire of Brazil, belonging to the Portuguese; while Guiana belonged to the English, Dutch, and French; and Patagotna is possessed by the aborigines; the remaining republics though wrested from the domination of the kingdom of Spain, were under Spanish rule and government. But though the several colonies had succeeded, after various struggles and sanguinary conflicts, to emancipate themselves from foreign dominion, they were yet in an unsettled state, and much harassed with intestine divisions and civil commotions, one party succeeding another often after bloody contests, in supreme power and influence. Since their disenthralment, however, from the potentates of Europe, many foreigners from Great Britain, Germany, France, and the United States, had settled in some of the principal cities, for the purposes of trade and commerce, and were supposed to be accessible to Protestant ministers; and being near neighbors to us, inhabiting a part of the American continent, and assimilating their civil institutions, as nearly as their circumstances would seem to allow to those of the United States, it was thought to be our duty to make an effort to establish our religious institutions in that country. To this were much encouraged soon after the adjournment of the last General Conference, by a letter received from a Christian gentleman, a member of our Church, who had resided for some time at Buenos Ayres, in which we were informed that he had succeeded in forming a small class, and that they were quite desirous of having a missionary of our denomination sent among them. His letter was submitted to the board of managers, and after due deliberation, it was most heartily recommended to the bishops to select some suitable person and send him on a missionary tour to South America, making Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Ayres the chief points of observation. Accordingly Bishop Andrew appointed the Rev. Fountain B. Pitts, of the Tennessee conference, for this important service, and after traveling through various parts of the country, holding missionary meetings and

taking up collections, he set sail in the month of July, 1835, for his place of destination. He visited Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Ayres, Monte Video, and several other places, and was generally received, more particularly by the English and American residents, with great affection and respect, and the object of his mission was highly appreciated. Brother Pitts wrote that he found a few pious persons both in Rio do Janeiro and Buenos Ayres, to whom he preached with lively satisfaction, and was much encouraged with the prospect of establishing missions in both these cities, and probably also in other places of less note. These encouraging representations led to other measures of a mole important and permanent character, which with be noticed hereafter. The unusual peace and harmony prevailing in our ranks for the five years past, and the zeal exemplified by ministers and people for the promotion of the cause of God by the ordinary means of the gospel; as well as by institutions of learning, sabbath schools, and the distribution of Bibles and tracts building churches and parsonages seemed to awaken new energies, and to call forth the resources of the Church in a much more liberal manner than heretofore for the extension of the work on every hand, but more particularly by means of missionary labors. We did not know, indeed, how much could be done until the trial was made. And the several institutions above alluded to, instead of weakening one another, acted reciprocally upon each other; the one tending to excite the other to more vigorous action, and all uniting to produce the most salutary and happy results. This was seen in every department of our extended work, and the truth of the inspired declaration was exemplified by every days experience, "He that deviseth liberal things, by liberal things shall he stand," and "he that watereth shall be watered again." In the same proportion that we enlarged the sphere of our operations for the conversion of the world, did the means accumulate for carrying on our work; and by inducing all to contribute something, none were oppressed, while each one felt that he had an interest in the general came he was aiding to support. By means of these appliances the field of missionary labor especially, both in the new countries and the hitherto unoccupied places in the older settlements, were constantly supplied with gospel ordinances, the vigorous action of the heart of the Church sending out, through these main arteries, the life-blood to every limb and member of the spiritual body, and they in return, by a lively exercise of their functions, sending it back to the center, thus keeping up that constant circulation which is essentially the health and growth of the entire system.

Hence, while a number of the places heretofore supported by the Missionary Society had so far prospered as to be taken among the regular circuits, new ones were this year established and prosecuted with vigor and success. Brazderville, High’s River, and Smithport, in the bounds of the Pittsburgh conference, and Ripley, Port Washington, Thenton, Calhoun, Cold Water, and Saganaw, under the patronage of the Ohio conference, were all established this year, and the men of God who were sent to these places had the happiness to rejoice over sinners converted to God. Highland, Litchfield, Mount Pleasant, Barbersville, Manchester, and Pikesville, with in the bounds of the Kentucky conference embraced new tracts of country, hitherto unsupplied with the gospel of Jesus Christ, and they amply repaid the labor bestowed upon them. But the mot extensive field was spread out within the bound of the Illinois conference, as the streams of emigrants were flowing into that state about this time with great rapidity in addition to the missions before mentioned undertaken by the Rev. John Clark, the Menominee was opened for the benefit of a tribe of Indians in the neighborhood of Green Bay the Milwaukee and Rock River, both of which extended far into the northwestern boundaries of that conference, besides various others, as Alton, Flat Branch, Pecan, Quincy, Knoxville, Iowa, Peoria, Bureau, and Ottowa; all of which

embraced newly settled territories, fast rising in strength and importance, and the most of them have so prospered, that they have been taken into the regular work, are supporting their own institutions, and contributing to aid others. But to carry the blessings of the gospel still further into the western regions, the Rev. Alfred Brunson was appointed to explore the country, and ascertain the feasibility of establishing missions among the Indian tribes on the upper waters of the Mississippi, and in the neighborhood of St. Peters, where the Sioux and Fox Indians have their habitations. Into these wild regions he penetrated, sometimes paddling his canoe over lakes and on the rivers, at other times wending his way through the trackless deserts or wide-spread prairies, on horseback, sleeping on the ground or in log cabins, with a view of conveying to these destitute people the blessings of salvation. He was generally received favorably by the few white people who had preceded him, by the agents of the government, and by the Indians, though he encountered some difficulties among the latter in consequence of wars which they were waging against each other. He finally settled at Prairie du Chien, at the confluence of the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers, making it the center of missionary operations in the various settlements just then forming in that new country, and among the Indian tribes in the neighborhood. Several missions were begun, and though they have not been attended with which immediate fruit, when compared with our other Indian missions, yet it is hoped that a foundation has been thus laid for the future salvation of these people, and that the ordinances of religion, and religion itself, shall grow up with the growth of the settlements. As a means of accomplishing this very desirable object, schools were opened for the instruction of youth, and the good will of several chiefs was conciliated, who manifested a disposition to cooperate with the missionaries in striving to improve the condition of their people. In the bounds of the Holston conference a missionary district was formed called Newton, in which there were no less than eight missions, employing nine preachers, including an Indian interpreter by the name of J. Fields, who had been converted to the Christian faith, and was now engaged in promoting the cause among his brethren, the Cherokees, of whom seven hundred and fifty-two were members of the Church. These several missions, though spread over a thinly settled country, were greatly blessed of God, as they returned the next year six hundred and sixty-five Church members. The Henpeth mission, for the benefit of the colored population, Mountain, Holly Fork, and Centreville missions, established by the Tennessee conference, were commenced this year, and prosecuted with vigor and success.

Several new missions were begun this year in the bounds of the Mississippi conference, mostly for the benefit of the colored people, and they have been a means of conferring invaluable blessings upon them. And in the new territories embraced in the Alabama conference, in addition to those heretofore mentioned, the Nanny Warrior, Canebrake, Clayton, Lime Creek, Uchee, and Will's Creek, were this year brought under spiritual culture by means of missionary labor, and they have yielded an abundant harvest as the reward of our exertions. The work was also enlarged in the same means, chiefly for the salvation of the slaves on the rice and cotton plantations, in the bounds of the Georgia and South Carolina conferences, much to the gratification of the masters, and to the joy of the slaves, who were brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Some others, in the older conferences, were undertaken, with various degrees of success and perhaps, in some instances, these domestic missions were increasing faster than our means would justify, though it as perfectly within the original scope and design of the Missionary Society to fill up, as far as practicable, every vacant place where the people were either too poor, or too indifferent to their spiritual interests, to provide for themselves. And that these exertions resulted highly favorable to

the cause of Christ, has been abundantly manifested from the pleasing fact, that whole districts, and even annual conferences, have been raised up by means of these labors; and in the old and populous town of Worcester Mass., in which we had no standing until it was occupied as mission ground in the year 1831, we have now a society of upward of four hundred members and Worcester is the seat of the New England conference for 1841. Such results speak volumes in favor of the policy pursued by the Missionary Society. Indeed, nearly every new circuit was now formed under its auspices, by which the preacher was relieved from suffering, and the people from pecuniary burdens. Thus the more wealthy and older societies were blessed with the privilege of helping the poorer, and all in their men were contributing something for the general good.

Thirty-four preachers had died during the past year, eighty-nine located, one hundred and nineteen were returned supernumerary, one hundred and fifty superannuated, six had been expelled and two had withdrawn. The Church was this year called to mourn over the death of two of her bishops, namely, William McKendree, the senior, and John Emory, the junior bishop, both of whom had filled their office with dignity and usefulness, the one for about twenty-seven years, and the other only about two years and six months. Of the former, Bishop McKendree, we have already spoken when giving an account of his election in 1808. Of his early history, therefore, and of his labors in the ministry up to the time he entered upon the duties of the episcopal office, it is needless to say any thing here and nothing more than a sketch of his character and of his subsequent labors will now be attempted, nor indeed could more be accomplished, as the public have not yet been gratified with any published account of his life and death, except what is contained in his funeral sermon by Bishop Soule. From the time of his entrance upon the arduous duties of his office until his death, he labored most assiduously to fulfill his high trust in such a manner as to preserve the unity, the purity, and integrity of the Church, and thereby to promote the cause of God among his fellow-men. In some of the first years of his labors as an itinerating superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he was in the habit of traveling from one end of the continent to the other on horseback, frequently exposed to the hardships and privations incident to the new countries, and to the fatigues of preaching every day, besides giving attention to the numerous calls arising out of his official relation to the Church. His perpetual labor so wore upon his constitution, which had indeed been severely tried by his great exertions in the western country previous to his election, that even at the end of four years, when he was deprived of the able counsel and services of Bishop Asbury, he was scarcely adequate to the duties of his station. He, however, so far recovered as to pursue his calling with his accustomed diligence and fervor until the General Conference of 1820, when he was released from the responsibility of discharging regularly the duties of a general superintendent; but only "so far as his health would prudently admit of it," he was affectionately requested to "exercise his episcopal functions and superintending care." In conformity with this request, he moved from one annual conference to another, as his strength would permit, presiding in the conferences occasionally, assisted in stationing the preachers, and gave his counsel on all matters pertaining to the welfare of the Church. Such, however, was the character of his complaints, a rheumatic affection, with frequent attacks of the asthma, attended with great prostration of strength, that he traveled often with great pain, passed sleepless nights and wearisome days; but be was borne up by a consciousness of the divine approbation, cheered by the affectionate greetings of his friends, and the prospect of that ample reward which awaited him in another world.

After the close of the General Conference of 1824, his constitution seemed to rally, and he went forward in the discharge of his duties with greater ease and cheerfulness, traveling extensively, preaching often at the conferences, attending camp and Quarterly meetings, and everywhere exhibiting an example of patience, diligence, and fortitude to all who beheld his perseverance in the work assigned him. To those unacquainted with the peculiar work of an itinerating superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it might seem strange that a man enfeebled by disease, oppressed by an accumulation of cares and labors, should, nevertheless, constantly move about from one part of the continent to another, cross and recross the Allegheny mountains, descend the valleys of the eastern rivers, preach to a few hearers in log cabins, to thousands under the foliage of the trees at camp meetings, and then visit the populous cities and villages, and make the pulpits sound with the voice of mercy and glad tidings. Yet such was the mode of life of Bishop McKendree. Habit had, indeed, rendered it necessary to life and comfort. So much so, that the very thought of being confined to one place was painful, and whenever such an event seemed inevitable, you might see the strugglings of a soul anxious to avert what he considered a calamity. At the General Conference of 1828, which was held in Pittsburgh, Pa., though unable to preside, he was present in some of its sittings, and assisted by his counsel in those difficult questions which were then agitated, and finally adjusted in the manner heretofore related. To a man ever active to the interests of the Church, and who had devoted more than forty years of his best energies to promote its welfare, sharing alike in its weal or woe, it must have been highly gratifying to behold the issue of that convulsive struggle which so long agitated our Zion, and which, at one time, threatened a dissolution of its union. Bishop McKendree lived to see the portentous storm, which had been gathering in the heavens for about eight years, pass off without material injury, and to beheld peace and harmony serenely pervade the horizon, illuminated as it was by the mild beams from the "Sun of righteousness" which now shone out with renewed splendor upon the spacious fields which were whitening for the harvest. From this time to the General Conference of 1832, which assembled that year in the city of Philadelphia, he continued his itinerary tours, often in the midst of such debility that he had to be assisted in and out of his carriage by his faithful traveling companion, through various parts of the continent, mostly in the south and west, enlivening the hearts of his friends by his cheerful submission to the divine will amidst the pains and afflictions of life, and receiving every favor showed him by the smile of gratitude and the embrace of paternal affection. At this conference he seemed to be tottering under the infirmities of age, and withering under the corroding influence of protracted disease, while his soul exerted its wonted energies in devising or approving of plans for the prosperity of the Church. Like a patriarch in the midst of his family, with his head silvered over by the frost of seventy-five winters and a countenance beaming with intelligence and good will, he delivered his valedictory remarks, which are remembered with lively emotions. Rising from his seat to take his departure from the conference the day before it adjourned he halted for a moment, leaning upon his staff; with faltering lips, but with eyes swimming in tears, he said, "My brethren and children, love one another. Let all things be done without strife or vainglory, and strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace." He then spread forth his trembling hands, and lifting his eyes toward the heavens, pronounced with faltering and affectionate accents the apostolic benediction. This was his last interview with the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, for a the next General Conference in 1836 his funeral sermon was preached by one of his surviving colleagues, Bishop Soule, who had attended him much for several of the last years of

his life. He gives the following account of the last hours of Bishop McKendree: --

"In the spring of 1834 he returned to Nashville, visited and preached in different places through the summer, and in the fall attended the Tennessee conference. He preached for the last time in the new church in Nashville, on Sabbath, the 23d of November, 1834. Here ended the pulpit labors of this venerable minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who had traveled and preached for almost half a century. Here that penetrating, yet pleasant voice, which had been heard with delight by listening thousands, in almost all the populous cities of these United States, and which had sounded forth the glad tidings of salvation in the cabins of the poor on the remote frontiers, or to numerous multitudes gathered together in the forests of the western territories, and which savage tribes had heard proclaiming to them the unsearchable riches of Christ, died away to be heard no more. Here he finished the ministration of the words of eternal life, and closed his public testimony for the truth of the revelation of God. In the latter part of December he removed from Nashville to his brother's, which was his last travel. From this time it was obvious that he was gradually sinking to the repose of the tomb. But he had one more conflict before the warfare was accomplished. From the time that Bishop McKendree became unable to perform the entire effective work of a general superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, his mind was frequently deeply exercised with the apprehension that he might become unprofitable in the vineyard of his Lord. And it would seem as if he sometimes thought nothing was done, unless he could compass the whole work, as he had been accustomed to do in the days of his strength and vigor. He had for many years moved with the foremost in activity and perseverance, and the idea of following in the rear, and being left behind, was painful to him, and frequently drew tears from his eyes. And this sentiment often led him to exertions and labors far beyond his strength. This fear that he should outlive his usefulness in the Church of God, and become unprofitable to his fellow-creatures, was the last afflicting exercise of mind through which he passed; and from this he was speedily and happily delivered by the prayer of faith. He sunk patiently and sweetly into all his heavenly Fathers will, and waited in lively hope and abiding peace for the hour of his departure. The inward conflict had ceased; his confidence in God was unshaken; faith, strong and unwavering stretched across the Jordan of death, and surveyed the heavenly country. With such sentiments, and in such a peaceful and happy frame of mind, the dying McKendree proclaimed in his last hours, 'All is Well.' In this emphatical sentence he comprehended what St. Paul expressed in view of his departure from the world and exaltation to an eternal inheritance: 'For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.' The last connected sentences which ever dropped from the lips of this aged and devoted servant of God, who for almost half a century had made Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever, the end of his conversation, were 'All is well for time, or for eternity. I live by faith in the Son of God. For me to live is Christ; to die is gain.

"Not a cloud doth arise to darken my skies, Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes." ' In this calm and triumphant state of mind he continued till he sweetly 'slept in Jesus,' at 5 o'clock, P. M., March 5th, 1835, in the seventy-eight year of his age."

Thus closed the life and labors of this man of God. And though his death had been anticipated by his friends for some time, yet it seemed to create a vacancy in the Church not easily to be filled. He had gone in and out among us as a general superintendent for about twenty-seven years, as

the immediate successor of the venerated Asbury, with whom he had labored as a colleague for about eight years, and from whose example of devotion and diligence he had learned the art of government, as well as the necessity of an active and vigilant oversight of the entire Church. A brief sketch of his character will close what we have to say respecting him. And,

1. Bishop McKendree gave unequivocal evidence of deep piety, and of a mind and heart thoroughly imbued with gospel truth. This evidence is found in his entire life, in his words and actions.

2. Having devoted the early days of his ministry chiefly to the new countries west of the Alleghenies, he had neither the time nor the means of acquiring much information from the study of books, though it was evident that he had stored his understanding with a variety of the most useful branches of knowledge for a minister of Jesus Christ. Had he been favored with the opportunity of a thorough education in his youth, and pursued the path of science in after years, he might have shone in the galaxy of literature and science; for he had an understanding sufficiently strong and acute to enable him to grapple with any subject within the range of the human intellect, and equal to the acquirement of any branch of human knowledge. This was evident to all who were intimate with him and could duly appreciate his worth His mind, indeed, was capable of the nicest distinctions, of the most critical researches, and of the widest expansion. How often did he, by a well-timed and pointed remark, unravel the sophistry of the sciolist and confound the pedantic pretender to wisdom and science! As if by a sudden inspiration of thought, he could make a ray of light flash upon a subject, and then render that clear and intelligible which before was obscure and perplexed. It was once remarked by a preacher of no mean attainments, who was on intimate terms with the bishop, that he had often felt himself mortified and chagrined, when, endeavoring to let him into the secret of something of importance, he found that the bishop was already in possession of the facts in the case, and could therefore give more information than the other could impart. His constant intercourse with all sorts of company in his various peregrinations through the country, enabled him to treasure up much useful knowledge from actual observation, and to suit himself, with an admirable adaptation, to the variety of classes and circumstances of the people with whom he came in contact. This also gave him a clear insight into the human character, and a comprehensive view of that character in all its variety of shades and distinctions. And though he did not "affect the gentleman" by an apish imitation of the fopperies of fashion, he was easy and polite in his manners, while he at all times maintained the dignity and gravity of the Christian minister. His perfect knowledge of the human character enabled him to wield with good effect the weapon of truth, and to apply it with admirable facility and exactness to the various cases which came up for consideration.

3. As a preacher of the gospel he was plain and pointed, and his sermons consisted chiefly in explaining and enforcing experimental and practical godliness. Though possessed of a mind extremely acute, which, had he been trained to metaphysical researches, would have been competent to the most abstruse subjects, yet he seldom entertained an audience with dry and monotonous disquisitions, but entered directly into the heart, laid open the secret springs of human action, and applied the truths of God’s word to the understanding and conscience with powerful effect.

There was, indeed, great variety in the character of his sermons. Though he seldom failed to "make out what he took in hand," yet he sometimes sunk rather below mediocrity, while at other times he soared, and expanded, and astonished you with irradiations of light, and with the power and eloquence with which he delivered the tremendous truths of God. On these occasions, assisted, as he most evidently was, by the Holy Spirit, he would carry you away with him on the eagle wings of truth, and then, having gently seated you on its firm foundation, melt you into the tenderest emotions by the sweet and gentle accents of affectionate entreaty, which poured from his ups in the most pathetic streams of gospel simplicity, truth, and love.

It was a sermon of this character which he preached before the General Conference in 1808, a few days previous to his election to the episcopal office, and which, no doubt, contributed much to his elevation to the station, more especially by securing the votes of those who were not personally acquainted with him. To give as fair a representation of this sermon and its effects as I am able, I will simply relate what passed in my own mind on that occasion.

It was the first General Conference I had ever attended, and the name of William McKendree was unknown to me, and I believe also to many other junior members of the conference. He was appointed to preach in the Light Street church on sabbath morning. The house was crowded with people in every part, above and below, eager to hear the stranger and among others most of the members of the General Conference were present, besides a number of colored people, who occupied a second gallery in the front end or the church. Bishop McKendree entered the pulpit at the hour for commencing the services, clothed in very coarse and homely garments, which he had worn in the woods of the west; and after singing, he kneeled in prayer. As was often the case with him when he commenced his prayer, he seemed to falter in his speech, clipping some of his words at the end, and hanging upon a syllable as if it were difficult for him to pronounce the word. I looked at him not without some feelings of distrust, thinking to myself, "I wonder what awkward backwoodsman they have put into the pulpit this morning, to disgrace us with his mawkish manners and uncouth phraseology." This feeling of distrust did not forsake me until some minutes after he had announced his text, which contained the following words: -- "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why, then, is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Jer. viii, 21, 22. His introduction appeared tame, his sentences broken and disjointed, and his elocution very defective. He at length introduced his main subject, which was to show the spiritual disease of the Jewish church, and of the human family generally; and then he entered upon his second proposition, which was to analyze the feelings which such a state of things awakened in the souls of God’s faithful ambassadors; but when he came to speak of the blessed effects, upon the heart, of the balm which God had provided for the "healing of the nations," he seemed to enter fully into the element in which his soul delighted to move and have its being, and he soon carried the whole congregation away with him into the regions of experimental religion.

Remarking upon the objections which some would make to the expression of the feeling realized by a person fully restored to health by an application of the "sovereign balm for every wound," he referred to the shouts of applause so often heard upon our national jubilee, in commemoration of our emancipation from political thraldom, and then said, "How much more cause has an immortal soul to rejoice and give glory to God for its spiritual deliverance from the bondage of sin!" This was spoken with such an emphasis, with a soul overflowing with the most hallowed and exalted

feelings, that it was like the sudden bursting of a cloud surcharged with water, and the congregation was instantly overwhelmed with a shower of divine grace from the upper world. At first sudden shrieks, as of persons in distress, were heard in different parts of the house; then shouts of praise, and in every direction sobs and groans, and eyes overflowing with tears, while many were prostrated upon the floor, or lay helpless upon the seats. A very large, athletic-looking preacher, who was sitting by my side, suddenly fell upon his seat as if pierced by a bullet; and I felt my heart melting under sensations which I could not well resist.

After this sudden shower the clouds were disparted, and the Sun of righteousness shone out most serenely and delightfully, producing upon all present a consciousness of the divine approbation; and when the preacher descended from the pulpit, all were filled with admiration of his talents, and were ready to "magnify the grace of God in him," as a chosen messenger of good tidings to the lost, saying in their hearts, "This is the man whom God delights to honor." "This sermon," Bishop Asbury was heard to exclaim, "will make him a bishop." This was a mighty effort, without any effort at all -- for all seemed artless, simple, plain, and energetic, without any attempt at display or studied design to produce effect. An attempt, therefore, to imitate it would be a greater failure than has been my essay to describe it, and it would unquestionably very much lower the man’s character who should hazard the attempt, unless when under the influence of corresponding feelings and circumstances.

It has been already remarked, that sometimes he fell below himself, when his mind appeared to be barren and unfruitful. Though this was the case, yet he always exhibited the powers of a "master workman," even when these powers seemed to be cramped apparently for want of some internal energy to put them in vigorous motion, and make them play with ease and effect. But what added much to the force of the truths which he uttered, was his commanding appearance, the gravity of his demeanor, the sprightliness of his manner, the fire which shot from an eye which bespoke kindness and intelligence, and the natural gracefulness of his action in the pulpit. His voice was clear and musical, and the words which dropped from his lips fell upon the ear with delight, producing a harmony between the outward voice and the inward sensation. His rhetoric was faulty. Either from an impediment in his speech, or from a habit induced from early usage, as before hinted, he would sometimes hang upon an unaccented syllable, as in the use of the word continually, on the penultima he would rest thus, al -- ly, as if unable to add the final syllable to the word. At other times he would clip a word in the middle or end, and leave it half enounced probably from some imperfection in the organs of speech. These however, are little things, like black specks in a diamond, which set off its beauties by contrast and were lost sight of whenever he so entered into his subject as he generally did, as to make you forget every thing but the truth he uttered, and the God he proclaimed.

There was also, at times, the appearance of affectation in his manner, and the modulation of his voice, which detracted, so far as it was apparent, from the reverence one wishes to feel for an ambassador of the Most High. Those, however, who may have observed this defect, -- and it is certainly a great defect wherever it is discovered, -- may have misjudged and taken that for art which arose mostly from the variety of emotions produced by the ebbings and flowings of a full heart, and the several aspects of the subjects occupying the speakers mind and tongue. But whatever defects the eye of candid criticism might detect in Bishop McKendree as a public speaker, or as a sermonizer, judging from the rules of strict propriety, take him all in all as a

preacher of righteousness, sent of God to instruct mankind in the pure and sublime doctrines of the gospel, he was a star of the first magnitude, and as such he diffused the hallowing and mellowing light of divine truth all around him wherever he went, and whenever he preached. In the west especially, whence he returned surrounded with a halo of glory which had been gathering around his character for several years, in the midst of the shakings and tremblings produced by the camp and other meetings, thousands could say that his preaching was not with the enticing words of man’s wisdom, "but in power, and in much assurance, and in the Holy Ghost." Nor were his labors in the pulpit unappreciated in the Atlantic states, after he passed through them in the character of a general superintendent, and had an opportunity to show himself to his brethren "as a workman that needed not to be ashamed." His zeal rose with the dignity of his subject, and his mind expanded as he ranged through the spacious and prolific field of theological truth, while he chained and charmed his hearers with the melody of his voice, and penetrated their hearts by the energy with which he spoke in the name of God, and the directness of his appeals to the understanding and conscience. Such was Bishop McKendree in the pulpit.

4. He was an ardent friend and active promoter of all the institutions of the Church. When the Missionary Society was formed, he entered immediately into its spirit and design, gave it his hearty support, and defended its objects both by word of mouth and by his pen, as well as by liberal contributions. And after our aboriginal missions were begun with so much success, he visited them personally, preached to the natives, and held interviews with the chiefs and counselors with a view to obviate difficulties, and promote their welfare in every way within his power.

5. Let us now view him as a ruler in the Church. As has been already seen, he constantly set an example to his brethren in the ministry of unreserved devotion to the cause in which he was engaged, and of indefatigable labor, so long as his strength would sustain him, in the pursuit of good. This enabled him to silence the clamors of such as might be tempted to believe that in the exercise of his executive powers as the president of a conference, he was guilty of laying burdens upon others which he was unwilling to bear himself; and the writer of this article had frequent opportunities, during the five years in which he held the office of presiding elder under Bishop McKendree’s administration, as well as at other times, to watch his proceedings, and though sometimes so placed as to have strong temptations to find just cause of censure, yet truth compels me to say, that I believe he was always actuated by the purest motives, and an enlightened desire to act impartially in all cases which came before him for decision. Whatever partialities he might feel for one in preference to another, arising out of personal friendship or otherwise, there is good reason to believe that he never willingly allowed these things to bias his judgment in the execution of his trust, or in the distribution of the preachers to their several stations and tasks. And who that understands any thing of the complicated machinery of Methodism but must know the extreme delicacy and perplexing difficulty of fixing so many men, some old and infirm, some young and inexperienced, others of mature age, judgment, knowledge, and influence, in their several stations, so as to meet, as nearly and justly as may be, the claims of all, and not disappoint the expectations of any, either among preachers or people! Such a man must be more than mortal. And hence the assiduity with which a conscientious bishop must needs apply himself to this difficult task, even to satisfy the dictates of his own judgment.

During some periods of his administration, Bishop McKendree had to encounter no small amount of prejudice, -- I trust honestly engendered -- in arising out of the presiding elder question, as he

was strongly opposed to any innovation in this respect. On this account it was thought by some that he was actuated by a love of power, and that he sought to sustain himself in his position under the promptings of unjustifiable ambition. There was created for a time some uneasiness in my own breast, and dissatisfaction in the breasts of those who opposed him, which subjected his administration to a severe test, more especially in some of the northern conferences. Time, however, and more mature reflection, have softened whatever of asperities may have arisen out of these conflicting opinions, no doubt honestly entertained on both sides, and removed whatever erroneous views may have been imbibed regarding either the motives or conduct of Bishop McKendree. Indeed, even in the midst of the lengthened and sometimes wire-drawn discussions on the subject in controversy, most of those who stood opposed to the bishop's theory, whenever they spoke or wrote of him, such a strong hold had he upon their affections and veneration, that they called him the beloved, or the venerated bishop, for indeed he was affectionately loved and truly venerated by all who knew him, and by those most who knew him best. And there is little reason now to question that the present order of things is best adapted to preserve inviolate the unity, usefulness, and energy of the system, however heavily it may press upon either the episcopacy or the itinerancy to sustain and keep it in harmonious action. As a general superintendent, therefore, Bishop McKendree was wise and discreet, pure and energetic, infusing into the general system of the itinerancy life and activity, and setting such an example to all, both preachers and people, as to acquire and maintain their affection and confidence.

6. Viewed as a man of God, he had many excellences and but few defects. He was naturally, as all men of genius are, of a warm temperament, his passions were easily moved, and he sometimes manifested a severity in his disposition and expressions which detracted from the general amiableness and dignity of his character, and sometimes wounded the feelings of his friends. Yet with these strong feelings to grapple with, self-knowledge was so deep, and grace predominated so powerfully, that he generally possessed his soul in patience, and even in the midst of conflicting sentiments and arguments, he had that perfect command of himself, or control over his feelings, that he seldom betrayed any thing inconsistent with the Christian bishop, evincing a philosophic gravity which indicated a soul calm and serene, while the storm might be raging around him. And with the exception of these slight aberrations from perfect equanimity of temperament, no one could exceed him in the kind and frank manner in which he treated his friends, "rendering to all their due," and making every one feel easy and at home in his presence. In the social circle he was free and accessible, often enlivening conversation with instructive anecdotes illustrative of the topics under consideration. In these seasons of relaxation from the severe duties of his station, he appeared indeed "gentle and easy to be entreated," manifesting a suitable deference to others, frequently drawing out their opinions by respectful inquiries, and modestly proposing his doubts, that they might be solved. And in all these movements he never forgot his obligations as a Christian bishop, often taking pains to distinguish between the respect paid to him because the Church had honored him with his high office, and what was due to him merely as a man, thus throwing upon others the honor which seemed to be given to himself. While religious conversations seasoned and sanctified these social interviews, they were generally concluded with a few words of advice suited to the occasion, and an invocation to God for his blessing upon all present.

7. When compared with Bishop Asbury, in the performance of his official duties in consecrating men to the work of the ministry, the contrast was obvious. Though equally fervent, and at times manifesting much more of the "unction of the Holy One," yet he fell much below his venerable predecessor in the dignity and solemnity of his manner, and in the authoritative manner in which he administered the holy ordinance. Equally impressed, however, with the imposing obligations of the sacred office, and of its weighty responsibilities, he neglected no convenient opportunity to impress both the one and the other upon all who took upon themselves the vows of their God. And sometimes, under the impulse of a sudden inspiration, he would offer up to God a fervent intercession for blessings to rest upon them and their labors, and conclude with a short and pithy admonition or exhortation suited to the occasion.

8. In presiding in the conferences, impartiality guided his decisions, and he introduced a more orderly manner of doing business than had heretofore characterized their proceedings. Bishop Asbury used to say, as an apology for the desultory manner in which he sometimes allowed the affairs of a conference to be conducted, "I was with you in weakness, and at first I had to be president secretary, and almost every thing; but now the days of your childhood are passed; you have a president who has grown up in the midst of you, and who therefore, understands your wants; let him, then, lead you forth as men of mature age, under the dictation of those rules of order you may mutually devise for youth regulation." In conformity with this patriarchal counsel, under the advisement of Bishop McKendree, a set of by-laws were introduced and adopted for the more orderly manner of conducting the business of an annual conference. This wise arrangement prevented the appearance of arbitrary power on the one hand, and the irregularities of independent action on the other. In the exercise of his prerogatives as president of the conferences, he was sometimes called upon to check the forwardness of some, to correct the wanderings of others, as well as to encourage all to a just and diligent performance of their respective duties. In administering admonition or rebuke, he sometimes did it with the keenness of a razor, and yet seemingly with the mildness of the dove. I remember, on a certain occasion, a young preacher of more confidence than prudence, who had left some small business to become an itinerant, was boasting of the great sacrifices he had made for the cause, when Bishop McKendree checked him by asking, in his peculiarly soft and mild manner, "Brother, have you made greater sacrifices than St. Paul resolved to do when he said, If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no more meat while the world standeth? Or than those which said, We have left all for thy sake?" I need not say, that a sense of shame sat on the countenance of this vain boaster. But however mild and yielding he might appear in his general administration, there were times in which he thought the circumstances called for it when he could show all the firmness of a despot without any of his haughty and domineering feelings A debate once arose in the New York conference respecting electing a man to elders orders, who had been a traveling deacon only one year, because he had traveled for several years in connection with the Wesleyan conference in England, and he was finally elected. In the course of the debate, one of the speakers averse to the proposed election pleaded, that if elected, the presiding bishop would be compelled to assume the character of a pope, and refuse to ordain him. After the question was decided, the bishop arose and informed the conference, in mild but firm tones, that with all his respect for the decision of conference, he must decline to ordain the brother; "But," said he, "in doing this I deny the imputation that I assume the character of the pope, for I act according to your laws, by which I am forbidden to consecrate a person to the office of an elder until he shall have traveled two years as

a deacon, unless in case of missionaries, and this brother does not appear in the character of a missionary. Were I, therefore to ordain him according to your vote, I might be impeached at the next General Conference for an unconstitutional act, for which I could offer no reasonable excuse. Hence it is not an assumption of unauthorized power in imitation of the pope of Rome, in defiance of law and order, by which I refuse to comply with your request, but it is a deference I feel for constitutional law, made and sanctioned by yourselves, and from the infraction of which I am bound by my office, alike to protect both you and myself. Repeal your law, and make a different regulation, and I will bow to it with all readiness; but while the law exists I and bound to obey it, and to see that it is obeyed by others." This sensible appeal induced the conference to reconsider its vote, and the motion to elect was withdrawn. Thus the good sense of the bishop, united with such a commendable firmness, saved both him and the conference from perpetrating an unconstitutional act.

9. He was extremely sensitive, and acutely felt the slightest insult, while he would bear it without resentment. His discriminating mind enabled him to detect the slightest impropriety in the words or conduct of others, whether manifested toward himself or another person; and nothing seemed to give him more pain of mind or severe mortification than the exhibition of those weaknesses of human nature growing out of an ignorance of the common civilities and proprieties of life. To these, in his intercourse with his fellow-men, he was strictly attentive, considering it as much his duty to treat every person according to the claims which age, station, or office might give him, as it was to exact similar treatment from others. He thus gave a practical comment upon the maxims, "Tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." And in the discharge of the relative duties of life, he set an example worthy the imitation of all, and rebuked especially those uninstructed and inexperienced youth, whose raw notions of independence led them to make no discrimination between the old and the young, the officer, the citizen, the minister and others.

10. I need hardly add, that all his actions were the result of a heart deeply experienced in the things of God. He lived, indeed, "as seeing him who is invisible," and he was most evidently moved forward in the discharge of his various duties, whether official or otherwise, under the dictation of that Spirit which "searcheth all things, even the deep things of God." This directed and sanctified his labors in the best of all causes, and gave a beauty and finish to his work in general. Having been thus "created anew unto good works," and persevering under the influence of those holy feelings which were enlivened and purified by the blood of the covenant, he halted not in the day of trial, nor ceased his work until his divine Master said, "It is enough: come up higher."

John Emory, the junior bishop, had also taken his departure to another world during the year; and his death produced the greater sensation on account of the sudden and unexpected manner in which it was brought about.

He was born in the state of Maryland, in the year 1788. He was destined by his parents for the profession of the law, and received an education accordingly. But God had other work for him to do. At the age of seventeen he was made a partaker of justification by faith in Jesus Christ, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and soon gave evidence of those talents by which he was afterward so eminently characterized. In the twenty-second year of his age, in the year 1810, he entered the traveling ministry in the Philadelphia conference, of which he became, in due course of

trial, a distinguished member, filling the stations assigned him with ability and usefulness Though but a junior member of the conference, in 1816 he was elected as a delegate of the General Conference of that year, and was an active and intelligent promoter of its measures and objects. When it was resolved, at the General Conference of 1820, to open a more direct intercourse with the Wesleyan Methodist conference in England, by a personal interchange of delegates, Mr. Emory was chosen as our representative to that elder branch of the Methodist family, and he accordingly visited England in that capacity. By his Christian and gentlemanly deportment, and the ability with which he conducted the mission, he won the affection and esteem of all with whom he had intercourse, and brought to an amicable adjustment the perplexing difficulties which had arisen in Upper Canada between the two connections. In 1824 he was elected assistant book agent, and in 1828 the principal. While in this station, though his physical strength would not allow him, during some portions of the time, to perform much active service, yet he was wise in counsel, judicious in his arrangements of plans for carrying on that extensive establishment with energy and system, and he applied himself with diligence and success to accomplish its benevolent objects. But as all these things will doubtless be presented to the public in his biography now in press, I need not enter into particulars. At the end of his term of service in this institution in 1832, he was, as has been intimated, elected a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He entered upon the labors of this station with an enlightened zeal, attending to its peculiar and onerous duties with diligence, with a sound judgment, and a discriminating mind; and had he lived to the common age of man, he might have infused into the system a spirit and energy highly beneficial to the present and future generations; for he was a warm friend and the advocate of all our institutions, those peculiarly Methodistic, as well as those relating to education, missionary, and Sunday school operations, likewise to the publication and circulation of books and general intelligence. But ere he had time fully to enter upon his high and holy duties, and to develop the energies of his mind upon these momentous subjects, he was suddenly called, by one of those mysterious providences not easily solved by human intellects, to give an account of his stewardship.

Early on the morning of Wednesday, December 16, 1835, he left home in a one horse carriage, for the purpose of visiting Baltimore on business connected with his episcopal office. His horse ran away with him, and he was violently thrown from the carriage, and received such a severe wound in the head, that he expired about seven o’clock of the same day. His death was the more melancholy to his friends because his fall, and the wound he received, deprived him of his senses, so that he was unable to converse with those who stood around his dying bed, though he was heard to respond an amen to one of the many prayers which were offered up in his behalf in this hour of trial and affliction. No one doubted, however, of his preparedness to meet his fate, and to enter into the joy of his Lord. He died in the forty-eighth year of his age.

Though the Church was thus deprived of the labors of him to whom she had awarded one of the highest offices in her gift, ere he had an opportunity of fully unfolding his capabilities to serve her interests in the capacity of a ruler, yet he had lived long enough to convince all with whom he had held intercourse, of the strength of his mind, the acuteness of his intellect, and of his ability to defend the doctrines and institutions of the Church of his choice. Hence the mournful tones of sorrow which were heard almost universally when the news of his sudden and unexpected death was announced, and the deep and heartfelt grief which was uttered by his surviving friends.

Bishop Emory possessed an acute and discriminating mind, a sound and comprehensive judgment. Having received a thorough education in his youth, and devoting some time of his more mature and vigorous days to the study of the law, his understanding had become accustomed to close thought and accurate research, and he could therefore quickly and easily distinguish between truth and error, between right and wrong, while his heart forsook the one and cleaved to the other.

During his connection with the Book Concern he was frequently called upon to exert his intellectual powers in defense of what he considered to be truth and duty. After he became the principal, in 1828, he conducted the editorial department of the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review, in doing which his abilities as a writer were fully tested, and the masterly manner in which he defended the doctrines, institutions, and usages of the Church against powerful, and, in some instances, malignant assailants, proved his competency to the task assigned him, as well as his love of the truth, as developed in the articles and General economy of the denomination to which he belonged. Though his writings are not numerous, yet they have reared for their author a lasting reputation for the accuracy of his researches, for his depth of thought, the soundness of his views, and for the conclusive manner in which he could wield an argument.

These same eminent qualities were equally displayed in the pulpit. Owing to physical debility, brought on perhaps by too much exertion in the early days of his ministry, at some periods of his public life he was compelled to remit the regular duties of an itinerant preacher; but whenever he did appear before the public as an ambassador of Christ, he always evinced a mind thoroughly imbued with his subject, familiar with the truth, and well trained to the exercise of its powers in weighing evidence and balancing the claims of the various subjects which might be presented for consideration. And the acuteness of his intellectual powers were in no instances more strikingly illustrated than in his capacity to distinguish the nicest shades of truth, to detect the smallest intrusions of error, and so to analyze a subject as to view it in all its parts, and then so to combine it as to grasp it in his mind as one undivided whole.

It is the easiest thing in the world to generalize, to dogmatize, and to denounce in strong terms of disapprobation any supposed error in theory and conduct; but it requires a well-informed and a well-balanced mind to enter into detail, to discriminate between one thing and another, to trace parallels, to mark contrasts or resemblances, and when a multitude of subjects come up for consideration, to select the best, the most fit, and then to follow out a thought by a regular induction of arguments from particular facts. Who may not say that truth is preferable to error? -- that the righteous shall be rewarded and the wicked punished? All this is easy. But it requires a mind accustomed to close thought to ascertain where the truth lies, to disentangle it from the knotty threads of error in which it often lies concealed, and to place it so plainly, and pointedly, and perspicuously before the reader or hearer that it may be seen and felt. Nor does it require less assiduity of mind and quickness of perception to trace out the windings of the human heart, to detect the characteristics of the sinner, to prove him guilty, and then to urge home upon him the tremendous consequences of his criminal conduct: yet Bishop Emory was fully equal to this task, and much more. He could, with all the ease imaginable, fix upon an antagonist the very point in which he erred, trace it in all its windings and shiftings, and then bring the whole weight of his powerful intellect to bear upon him with a force, collected by a regular course of argument, which he could not well resist. But though thus furnished with material for a sound judgment, he was very

far from possessing an overwhelming confidence in himself. He was in the habit of collecting information from every source within his reach, of consulting with his friends on all important occasions, and then following the best light afforded him. He did not, therefore, imitate those weak but self-confident persons who seem conscious that neither their productions nor opinions can bear the light of investigation, and therefore thrust that before thousands which they seem unwilling to submit to the inspection of a select few. Not so Bishop Emory. He generally strove either to strengthen his own opinions by the concurrence of others, or to have his errors corrected before they should be exposed to the multitude for indiscriminate condemnation. And such was his good sense, that he was always ready to hearken to all that could be said against as well as in favor of any of his positions, and it was by no means difficult to convince a man of his discernment of an error, should he have incidentally embraced one. His education, refined as it was by the fire of Christianity, taught him how to estimate the relative claims of his fellow-men, and to yield to each his due, whatever might be his station or character. Though he was extremely sensitive, and could quickly perceive the slightest aberrations from the rules of strict propriety, he knew equally well how to make due allowance for human frailties, and to apologize for these faults in others which seemed the unavoidable result of either ignorance or inattention. Nor could he retain a spirit of resentment toward any man after discovering the slightest emotion of repentance; and he was as ready to make atonement for an offense as he was to accept it. For many years he was the intimate friend, and for some time the traveling companion of Bishop McKendree, and I believe one of his most confidential advisers. It so happened, however, that in the midst of the controversy respecting the appointment and powers of the presiding elders, I think in the year 1822, brother Emory felt it his duty to call in question some of the positions of the bishop, which he had submitted to the annual conferences, and he did it in such a way as to wound the delicate feelings of friendship, and for some time thereafter an estrangement took the place of their former familiar intercourse. This, however, though painful to both, did not destroy mutual confidence and respect, a proof that a long intimacy had not detected in either any want of Christian integrity; and it is mentioned here merely for the purpose of illustrating that trait of character now under consideration; for the course of events restored mutual affection and confidence long before death introduced the spirits, first of the senior, and then, in about nine months, of the junior bishop, to each other in that world of glory where all these imperfections are remembered only to heighten the efficacy of that atoning blood which washes and fits the redeemed to "sing the song of Moses and the Lamb for ever and ever." The commanding talents of Bishop Emory, and his comprehensive judgment, gave him an influential position, more especially after his election to the episcopal office, which, had he lived in the faithful discharge of its duties, would have been extensively felt, and highly appreciated. But that God who "sees the end from the beginning," saw fit to call him home ere he had time to immature his plans for future usefulness, and he no doubt "rests from his labors," enjoying the rewards of his "work of faith and labor of love," in the everlasting kingdom of God.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 566,957; Last Year: 553,134; Increase: 13,823 -- Colored This Year: 83,135; Last Year: 83,156; Decrease: -- Indians This Year: 2,436; Last Year: 2,494; Decrease: 58 -- Total This Year: 652,528; Last Year: 638,784 -- Increase: 13,744 -- Preachers This Year: 2,758; Last Year: 2,625; Increase: 133.

ENDNOTES

1 It will be perceived that there was [in 1832, not in 1835 shown above -- DVM] a decrease among the Indians of 2,089. This was owing to the troubles, heretofore noticed, accompanying their removal west of the Mississippi.

2 There is an error of ten in the increase of preachers in the printed Minutes, occurring in the subtraction of the total number of superannuated preachers.

04.05C.13. Vol 4, Book 5C, Chapter 13

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume IV -- Book V

CHAPTER 13 The General Conference of 1836 This conference assembled in the city of Cincinnati, Ohio, on the first of May, 1836, and was composed of the following delegates: --

New York Conference: Nathan Bangs, Laban Clark, William Jewett, S. Martindale, Daniel Ostrander, Phinehas Rice, Marvin Richardson, Peter P. Sandford, John B. Stratten, Beverly Waugh.

New England Conference: Isaac Bonney, Phineas Crandall, Daniel Fillmore, Joseph A. Merrill, Orange Scott, Charles Virgin, Daniel Webb.

Maine Conference: Charles Baker, Moses Hill, John B. Husted, Heman Nickerson, William H. Norris, Ezekiel Robinson, George Webber.

New Hampshire Conference: John F. Adams, Charles D. Cahoon, Schuyler Chamberlain, Samuel Kelly, Samuel Norris, Jared Perkins, Elihu Scott, Elisha J. Scott, George Storrs.

Troy Conference: S. D. Ferguson, Buel Goodsell, Noah Levings, Sherman Minor, P. C. Oakley, Charles Sherman, Tobias Spicer.

Oneida Conference: Horace Agard, Elias Bowen, Silas Comfort, George Gary, George Lane, Zechariah Paddock, George Peck.

Genesee Conference: Asa Abel, Glezin Fillmore, Loring Grant, James Hemmingway, Wilbur Hoag, Samuel Luckey, Manley Tooker.

Pittsburgh Conference: Joshua S. Barris, Wesley Browning, Charles Elliott, Robert Hopkins, Thomas M. Hudson, Joshua Munroe, Martin Ruter.

Ohio Conference: William B. Christie, Augustus Eddy, John Ferree, James B. Finley, Thomas A. Morris, John F. Power, James Quinn, William H. Raper, Le Roy Swormstedt, John F. Wright, David Young, Jacob Young.

Missouri Conference: Jesse Green Thomas Johnson, George C. Light, Andrew Munroe.

Kentucky Conference: Henry B. Bascom, Benjamin T. Crouch, H. H. Kavanaugh, Jonathan Stamper, Edward Stevenson, G. W. Taylor.

Illinois Conference: Peter Cartwright, Hooper Crews, Simon Peter.

Mississippi Conference: Benjamin M. Drake John Lane, William Winans.

Indiana Conference: James Havens, C. W. Ruter, James L. Thompson, Allen Wiley.

Holston Conference: Thomas K. Catlett, David Flemming, Samuel Patton, William Patton.

Tennessee Conference: T. L. Douglass, Alexander L. P. Green, G. W. D. Harris, G. T. Henderson, John M. Holland, John B. McFerrin, Robert Paine.

Alabama Conference: F. H. Jones, Robert L. Kinnon, W. Murrah, W. Wier, Georgia Conference: Samuel K. Hodges, John Howard, Lovick Pearce, Elijah Sinclair,

South Carolina Conference: Charles Betts, William Capers, Samuel Dunwoody, William M. Kennedy, Malcolm M. McPherson, N. Tally.

Virginia Conference: Moses Brock, Thomas Crowder, John Early, H. G. Leigh, James McAden, Abram Penn, Lewis Skidmore, William A. Smith,

Baltimore Conference: John A. Collins, A. Griffith, D. Steele, N. Wilson, John Bear, Samnel Brison, Robert Cadden, John Davis, William Hamilton, William Prettyman, S. G. Roszel.

Philadelphia Conference: David Daily, Manning Force, Solomon Higgins, John Lybrand, R. W. Petherbridge, Charles Pitman, Levi Scott, James Smith, Jr. Matthew Sorin, Henry White, William A. Wiggins.

Bishops Roberts, Soule, Hedding, and Andrew were present, and the first named opened the conference by reading a portion of the Holy Scriptures, singing, and prayer. Thomas H. Douglass was appointed secretary, and Thomas F. Sargeant assistant secretary.

After the conference was organized, the president introduced the Rev. William Lord, as a representative from the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, and the Rev. William Case, as the representative from the Canada conference, when the former delivered the following address from the Wesleyan Methodist conference: -- "To the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Conferences of America.

"Very Dear Brethren, -- The preachers of our connection, assembled in conference, however earnestly engaged in numerous and diversified affairs, requiring diligence, vatolofulness, and prudence in council, cannot be so pre-occupied with their own most urgent interests as to forget that time approaches for the holding of your General Conference at we have a confidential agent in the western continent, in the person of of the beloved brother, the Rev. William Lord; and that an opportunity is thus presented for renewing the affectionate fraternal intercourse of the two great families of Wesleyan Methodism. On former occasions, the conferences of both connections have alike acknowledged the beauty and utility of that unity of faith and love which has happily hitherto subsisted between them, and the value of reciprocal intercourse by epistles and deputations, as a means of cultivating and perpetuating the existing union and brotherhood. By taking knowledge of the steady improvement and resistless growth of our kindred communities, and giving exercise to the brotherly feelings with which we rejoice in each other’s welfare and success, we are stimulated to love and to good works, and confirmed in the principles and affections essential to a catholic spirit. We also perceive in the co-existence, the independence, and the kind and intimate correspondence of the two great confraternities of the Methodist body, a mutual check to evil change in doctrine, discipline, or practice.

"We sincerely congratulate you on your continued prosperity. The increase of your members, -- the extension of your missions among the aborigines of the western continent, in regions where you have a whole and appropriate sphere of action,the establishment and progress of seminaries

for your junior preachers, and all the auspicious circumstances of your great work, are highly interesting to us as partakers of your joy.

"In reference to the condition and prospects of British Methodism, notwithstanding some partial agitations in our societies, we have great cause, on the whole, to thank God and take courage. Our numbers in Great Britain are nearly the same as at the last conference; but our missionary department continues to afford us great encouragement, both by actual increase of converts from sin to God, and by openings for more extended operations. The experiment, commenced shortly after our last conference of a theological institution for the improvement of preachers admitted on our list of reserve, is proceeding in a manner which promises to exceed our best hopes. In the direction of this, as of all our institutions, it is the anxious wish of our body, inspired with one unanimous sentiment of conscientious solicitude, to preserve and perpetuate sound doctrine, and pure, experimental, and practical religion.

It has already come to your knowledge, as a matter of public notoriety, that by the blessing of God on the efforts and influence of our connection, and on the combined endeavors of the religious public of our beloved country, a great measure for the emancipation of the slaves in all the territories of Great Britain was eventually conducted to a successful issue in the imperial legislature; and has since been carried into practical effect in all the colonies of the empire, with various degrees of completeness, but universally with safety and advantage, and with results which mightily encourage us to go forward in our earnest attempts to enlighten and evangelize the whole population to which favorable access is thus freely opened.

"Our American brethren will doubtless allow us the fraternal liberty to express our conviction that great Scriptural principles are opposed to the continuance of slavery in a Christian state; that the permission of it is one of those deviations from natural equity and evangelical purity which call for further deviations to abet and maintain them; that it is contrary to the precepts of Christianity, and violates and counteracts the principles and obligations by which the gospel urges those precepts. We trust that your connection, having already begun to resist and condemn this baneful system, will, in its own way, be freely and providentially led to such practical steps as shall produce a consentaneous opinion, feeling, and purpose among your own people; and will then have the glory of leading the public opinion of your great and increasing population to such decided views as will result in a unanimous rejection of slavery and its social mischiefs, on the ground of its repugnancy to the laws of Christ.

"We rejoice to learn, from various quarters, that in your country, as in ours, Wesleyan Methodism is steadily and powerfully diffusing Christian knowledge; and this we trust it will still abundantly effect by advocating right principles in its periodical publications, as well as by the living ministry of the gospel. It will, we trust, he the sacred and unalterable purpose and aim of the Methodist societies, on both sides of the Atlantic, to maintain uncorruptness of doctrine and life, and to offer a free, a full, a present, and an everlasting salvation to all people, and to the end of time.

"Brother Lord is instructed to present to you our warmest Christian salutations: he will be able to communicate freely with you concerning our affairs; and, we trust, will be brought to you ’in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace.’

"Of all that we have to express in our communications to you, the best is that he is graciously with us, to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth, and who is with his disciples always, even to the end of the world. We earnestly pray that his presence may go with you through the length and breadth of your States, and throughout your western wilderness, so that every class and race among your mingled tribes may specially know the truth as it is in Jesus. Signed, on behalf and order of the conference, "Richard Reece, President "Robert Newton, Secretary. "Sheffield, August l8th, 1835. To this address the conference returned the following answer, appointing the Rev. Dr. Fisk, who was then in Europe, our representative to the Wesleyan Methodist conference: --

"Honorable Fathers and Brethren, -- We have had the pleasure of receiving, by the hands of your worthy representative, the Rev. William Lord, your kind and fraternal salutations, as expressed in the epistle with which he was charged, and which has been read n' open conference. This, together with the friendly intercourse of brother Lord among us on the present interesting occasion, has brought to our recollection those hallowed associations by which we have been refreshed in former times, by similar tokens of brotherly love and Christian affection. Assembled as we are, in our General Conference, is the representatives of the twenty-two annual conferences, into which our work, for greater convenience and facility in carrying forward the sacred cause in which we he engaged, is divided, we embrace this opportunity of expressing our unfeigned gratitude to God for what he hath wrought on this vast continent by our instrumentality and of our firm and unwavering attachment to those doctrines and usages, and to that discipline, by which we have ever been distinguished, and which we have received in substance from the venerable founder of Methodism. But in the midst of these recollections, so holy and consolatory, we have the lament the loss by death, since we last assembled, of our senior superintendent, the Rev. William McKendree, the brightness of whose example, for the many years he went in and out among us shone with a steady and cheering light, and whose setting sun reflects upon those of us who survive his in the radiance of immortality; of our junior superintendent, the Rev. John Emory, whose commanding talents and fervent piety gave us reason to hope that he would be rendered a great blessing to the Church and the world, but whose sudden and unexpected death, while it has deprived us of his services, has doubtless transferred him to the brighter regions of eternal day; -- and the loss of our excellent book establishment by fire in the city of New York, by which disastrous event we have lost about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of stock, including printing and binding materials, building, etc. And to these losses, which we regard as the chastisements of our heavenly Father, we may add, a diminution in the number of our communicants, for the last year, of between two and three thousand. But while these things call for mourning, for 'searchings of heart,' for humiliation and prayer, we are by no means discouraged; for though thus chastened, we are not in despair, -- though cast down, not destroyed. We trust that the God of providence and grace will raise up others to fill the places of those who have gone to their reward; and furnish means to resume our wonted practice of diffusing abroad evangelical principles and holiness through the medium of the press; and also pour out his Spirit upon our heritage, and so prosper the labor of our hands, that we shall hereafter witness an increase of piety and of numbers to our Zion. But while our domestic work has thus suffered from these and other causes, not necessary now to mention, we rejoice to witness the growing prosperity of our missions, both in our own borders, among the aborigines of our wildernesses, in the rising Colony of Liberia in Western Africa, and in some of the cities of South America. In the contemplation of these opening prospects for missionary enterprise, we rejoice in being able to record the

encouraging fact, that our people are cheerfully and promptly pledging a portion of their substance to aid us in this great and good work. During the past year our missionary fund has been replenished by about twenty-two thousand dollars, over and above the amount collected in any one preceding year; and on our several missionary stations we have had an accession of upward of four thousand to the number of our church members. For these manifest tokens of divine approbation upon this department of our work, we desire to be thankful to him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, and to make them motives of renewed exertion and persevering efforts in the grand missionary cause.

"In common with sister denominations of Christians in our country, we have been less or more agitated with the perplexing question of Negro slavery. And, although we receive with respectful deference what you, as our elder brethren, have said to us in relation to this question, yet we are assured that, from the known prudence by which your body has ever been distinguished, had you been as well acquainted with this subject as we are -- could you have viewed it in all its aspects, as it presents itself to us who are in the midst of it, interwoven as it is in many of the state constitutions, and left to their disposal by the civil compact which binds us together as a nation, and thus put beyond the power of legislation by the general government, as well as the control of ecclesiastical bodies, -- could you have critically analyzed its various ramifications in our country, so as to have perceived all its delicate relations to the Church, to the several states, and to the government of the United States, -- we cannot doubt that, while expressing your decided disapprobation of the system of slavery itself, your tone of sympathy for us would have been deeper and more pathetic. While on this subject, it may be pertinent to remark, that of the colored population in the southern and southwestern states, there are not less than seventy thousand in our Church membership; and that, in addition to those who are mingled with our white congregations, we have several prosperous missions exclusively for their spiritual benefit, which have been, and are still, owned of God, to the conversion of many precious souls. On the plantations of the south and southwest our devoted missionaries are laboring for the salvation of the slaves, catechizing their children, and bringing all within their influence, as far as possible, to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; and we need hardly add, that we shall most gladly avail ourselves, as we have ever done, of all the means in our power to promote their best interests.

Having thus given a brief outline of our present state and future prospects, permit us, dear brethren, to congratulate you on the continued prosperity of your growing connection. We have witnessed with mingled emotions of pleasure and gratitude the extension of your work, both at home and abroad, particularly on your foreign missions. In this grand work we hope to imitate your pious zeal and, though it may be at a respectful distance, to follow your steps until we shall meet on some favored spot upon our globe, and salute each other face to face, as the servants of Him who claims the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.

"Although we have no institution, as, you seem to have supposed we have, of the character you mention, as existing among yourselves, for the education of those of your junior preachers who are not actively engaged in the field of labor, yet we are endeavoring, by such means as are at our command, to improve our young ministers in the various branches of knowledge which are deemed requisite for a successful discharge of the functions of their office and we rejoice in being able to state, that the cause of general education, in its various branches, from the sabbath and common schools up through the academic to the collegiate course, has been, and is now,

gradually demanding more and more of our attention; and hence we hope that our ministry, though none of them has been established for their exclusive benefit, will reap a proportionate share in the results of these institutions of learning.

"We have availed ourselves of this early period of our session to return to you our Christian salutations, and to bear testimony to the prudent and conciliatory manner in which your delegate has thus far discharged the trust committed to him, that we might not miss the favorable opportunity of employing the agency of our highly respected and beloved brother, the Rev. Dr. Fisk, who enjoys our confidence, to present to you in person these expressions of our affection and esteem. We have therefore requested him to convey to you an assurance of our undiminished attachment to the Wesleyan Methodist connection; and to ask that, at our next General Conference, we may be favored with a representative from your body, whose visit, should it take place, will, we doubt not, be reciprocated with the same feelings of brotherly affection by which this intercourse has heretofore been characterized.

"Earnestly praying that he 'whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting,' may guide, sanctify, and ever be with both you and us, we subscribe ourselves, in behalf of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, your brethren and servants in our common Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

" R. R. Roberts, [Bishop] "Joshua Soule, [Bishop] "Elijah Hedding, [Bishop] "James O. Andrew, [Bishop] "Thomas L. Douglass, Secretary Cincinnati, Ohio, May 5th, 16."

Friday the 6th was observed as a day of solemn fasting and prayer, and at eleven o'clock Bishops Roberts and Hedding addressed the conference very appropriately and feelingly on the general state of the work of God, and on the strict manner in which discipline should be administered in order to keep the Church pure from immoral members. There was one point especially on which Bishop Hedding insisted with emphasis, as devolving a high duty on those to whom the execution of discipline was intrusted. He remarked, in substance, that it was the practice of some preachers to wait for a formal complaint, containing charges and specifications, before they proceeded to the trial of a supposed delinquent member. This he considered a defective administration. As the minister was held responsible for the state and character of the Church, it became his imperative duty, whenever a report was in circulation against a member of the Church, to institute an inquiry respecting its truth, and if he found reason to believe there was just cause of complaint, he was bound to proceed to examine and try the case, as the discipline directs, without waiting for a formal accusation. Nor is it perceived how a minister can otherwise discharge his high trusts so as to give a joyful account to the Judge of all of his stewardship. On the assembling of the conference a vacancy was perceived, accompanied with very mournful sensations, on the bench of bishops, by the absence of Bishops McKendree and Emory, whose deaths are recorded in the preceding chapter. By a vote of the conference, Bishop Soule was requested to preach the funeral discourse of the former, and Bishop Roberts of the latter, which, at a proper time, was done, greatly to the satisfaction of all who heard them.

Among other things which came up for consideration before the is conference, was the propriety of dissolving our Bible Society. The existence of this separate and denominative organization, though it answered its purpose for a season, was found not to work advantageously either to ourselves or others, and the question of its continuance had been mooted both, in and out of the board of

managers for some time before the meeting of the conference.

As, however, the constitution of this society was adopted by the General Conference, and was therefore considered as a Church institution, the managers thought it inadvisable to cease such operations without the recommendation of the conference. The conference, after due deliberation, recommended to the society a dissolution of its existence, and it was, soon after the adjournment of the conference, dissolved accordingly, and our brethren and friends were advised to unite in carrying forward the objects of the American Bible Society. Since that period a harmonious co-operation has been effected and carried on between us and the other friend and supporters of that great national institution, mutually satisfactory to all concerned.

Several alterations and amendments were made in the Discipline, the chief of which we shall mention. The rule respecting "laying aside" persons for not meeting in class, which had been so interpreted as to allow the acting preachers to drop the delinquent without a trial, was so amended as to make it obligatory on the parties concerned to allow the accused to be heard in his defense before a committee, the same as in other cases of delinquency. The correspondence of the Missionary Society had been hitherto carried on by one or the other of the brethren connected with the Book Concern; but the increase of the business, both of that Concern and of the Missionary Society, made the duties of each so onerous, that it was found impracticable to unite the two offices any longer without injury to one or both. Hence, on the recommendation of the board of managers, an article was introduced into the constitution of the Missionary Society creating a resident corresponding secretary, who should be devoted exclusively to the interests of the society, under the direction of the managers. His election was with the General Conference. The Liberia mission was erected into an annual conference, "possessing all the rights, powers, and privileges of other and annual conferences, except that of sending delegates to the General Conference, and of drawing its annual dividend from the avails of the Book Concern and chartered fund." The following was added to the section on receiving preachers, and their duty: --

"Whenever a preacher on trial is selected by the bishop for a mission, he may, if elected by an annual conference, ordain him a deacon before his probation ends, and a missionary employed on a foreign mission may be admitted into full connection, if recommended by the superintendent of the mission where he labors, without being present at the annual conference for examination.

"At each annual conference, those who are received on trial, or are admitted into full connection, shall be asked whether they are willing to devote themselves to the missionary work; and a list of the names of all those who are willing to do so shall be taken and reported to the corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society; and all such shall be considered as ready and willing to be employed as missionaries whenever called for by either of the bishops.

"It shall be the duty of all our missionaries, except those who are appointed to labor for the benefit of the slaves, to form their circuits into auxiliary missionary societies, and to make regular quarterly and class collections wherever practicable, and report the amount collected every three months, either by indorsing it on their drafts, or by transmitting the money to the treasurer of the parent society.

"It shall be the duty of each annual conference to examine strictly into the state of the domestic missions within its bounds, and to allow none to remain on the list of its missions which, in the

judgment of the conference, is able to support itself."

Hoping that the time was not very distant when our missionaries, and those under the direction of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, by the continual enlargement of their respective fields of labor, would approximate and even meet each other in Africa, and also among the aborigines of America, where we both had missions established, and perhaps at no remote period in some portions of Europe and Asia, the following paragraph was added to the section on missions: --

"It shall be the duty of the bishops to instruct all our foreign missionaries that, whenever they come in contact with any of the missionaries belonging to the Wesleyan Methodist conference, they shall not interfere in their respective charges, any farther than to help them in their work when requested, but shall, on all occasions, cultivate a spirit of friendship and brotherly affection, as brethren engaged in the same common cause, namely, the salvation of the world by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." For the purpose of meeting the local wants of some sections of our country more perfectly by the introduction of periodical literature and general intelligence, two additional weekly papers were established, and the one which had been commenced at Cincinnati by the book agents, on the recommendation of several of the annual conferences, was sanctioned and continued, making in all four religious weekly papers, besides the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review, now authorized by the General Conference; namely, one at New York, one at Cincinnati, another at Charleston, S. C., and another at Nashville, Tennessee: besides these there were published four others, under the patronage of annual conferences, namely, Zion’s Herald, in Boston, Mass., Maine Wesleyan Journal, in Portland, Maine, Virginia Conference Journal, in Richmond, Virginia, and the Auburn Banner, issued in Auburn, N. Y., making altogether eight weekly papers devoted to the interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The claims of the brethren in Canada upon a portion of the capital of our Book Concern, which had remained hitherto unsettled, were now amicably adjusted in accordance with the principles embraced in the following articles of agreement: --

"Whereas, the Canada conference, now in connection with the Wesleyan Methodists of Great Britain, was formerly united to, and formed port of; the M.. E. Church; and whereas, the union which by mutual consent then subsisted, was dissolved at the earnest and repeated solicitations of the ministers and members of the Church in Canada, which was definitively determined upon by an act of the Canada conference, who thereupon and subsequently did form a union with, and become a part of the Wesleyan Methodist connection; and whereas, there has been a difference of opinion between the M. E. Church and the Canada conference in regard to the claim which has been urged by the Canada conference, of an interest in, and a portion of, the Methodist Book Concern; and whereas the decision of the several annual conferences, to whom the subject was referred by the General Conference of 1832, has been averse to the claim of the Canada conference, and has thereby precluded any further action of the General Conference on the ground of claim, as made by the Canada conference; but whereas this General Conference cherishes an affectionate remembrance of the Canada brethren, and is desirous to manifest its fraternal regard in every suitable way; and whereas, the Canada conference did, at its last session, appoint its president, the Rev. William Lord, and the Rev. Egerton Ryerson, delegates to this General Conference to negotiate its claims on the Book Concern, and the Rev. William Case having been duly appointed to take the place of Rev. E. Ryerson in the negotiation; and whereas, the said Rev. William Lord, president of the Canada conference, and the Rev. William Case, have

full powers to bring to an amicable termination the question pending between the two connections, therefore it is hereby declared to be mutually understood and agreed, that the following plan shall be considered as an arrangement for the full and final adjustment and settlement of the matter at issue between the Canada conference and the Methodist Episcopal Church; to wit, The agents of the Methodist Book Concern shall furnish to the book steward of the Canada conference any of the books which may be issued from its press at the following rates, subject to the conditions and provisions hereinafter named: --

1. The general alphabetical catalogue books, whether in sheets or bound, shall be sold at forty per cent discount from the retail prices, as long as the present discount of one-third shall be made to wholesale purchasers, but should the discount be hereafter changed to one-fourth, then, in that case, the books sold to the book steward of the Canada conference shall be charged at a discount of one-third from the retail prices which shall from time to time be affixed to them respectively. Provided, that this discount shall not apply to such books as may be reduced below the usual prices on account of rival publishers; and provided, also, that the Canada conference shall give satisfactory security in regard to the payment of any debt which may be contracted with the Methodist Book Concern, within one year from the time such debt my be created. And it is also expressly understood and agreed, that no interest shall be demanded or paid on any such debts, unless payment shall be delayed beyond the period of cred it before named, in which event interest shall be charged and paid, from and after the expiration of said credit term. It is also further provided, that all books which may be ordered by the book steward of the Canada conference shall be at the risk and expense of the said conference from the time they shall be forwarded from the Methodist Book Concern.

2. Sunday school books and tracts shall be furnished to the book steward of the Canada conference at a premium of eighteen percent, to be paid in general catalogue books at retail prices; and it is hereby declared to be understood and agreed, that the same provisions and conditions are to be adjudged applicable to Sunday school books and tracts as have been specified above in regard to books generally.

3. It is understood and agreed, that the privileges herein secured to the Canada conference shall be binding o the Methodist Book Concern until the first day of May, 1852, next ensuing the present date; provided, also, that the said Canada conference shall regularly and truly make annual settlements to the satisfaction of the agents of the Methodist Book Concern, and not otherwise.

4. Finally, it is hereby mutually understood and agreed, that the foregoing arrangement is considered as a full, and definite, and satisfactory adjustment of the question which has arisen between the Canada conference and the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of the Methodist Book Concern.

"In testimony whereof; the agents of the Methodist Book Concern, and the delegates of the Canada conference, have mutually affixed their respective signatures, this 18th day of May, 1836, in the city of Cincinnati, Ohio. (signed) "B. Waugh and T. Mason, Agents. "William Lord, and William Case, Delegates from Canada." A resolution was then adopted giving discretionary power to the book agents and book committee in the city of New York to settle with the Canada conference, on such terms as might be mutually satisfactory, all debts which were due to the Book Concern by said conference, for books sold and unsold; which was, soon after the adjournment of

conference, done accordingly. Thus was this long-pending question brought to an amicable termination, on such terms as to preserve and perpetuate the harmony and brotherly affection heretofore subsisting between the two connections. The episcopal committee, after adverting in affecting terms to the death of Bishops McKendree and Emory, reported in favor of electing three additional bishops, which, after some debate, was concurred in by the conference. Accordingly, on the 23d of May, Beverly Waugh was elected on the first balloting by the votes of eighty-five out of one hundred and fifty-three, the whole number of votes taken; and Wilbur Fisk by a vote of seventy-eight; and, after several ballotings, Thomas A. Morris, by a vote of eighty-six. On the 27th, Beverly Waugh and Thomas A. Morris were duly consecrated to their high and holy office. In the mean time, the bishops were requested to consecrate Dr. Wilbur Fisk, who was absent in Europe, as soon as practicable after his return, provided he should conclude to accept the appointment. He, however, soon after his return to the United States, declined the office, and before the next General Conference he was called to his reward in another world. The action of this General Conference in favor of missions, education, and all those institutions designed to aid in the spread of Scriptural truth and holiness, exerted a salutary influence upon their respective interests, and tended to diffuse them more extensively through the community. The reports upon these several subjects were spread before the public through the columns of the several papers published under the patronage of the Church; but as they recognized no new principle of action, it is considered not necessary to insert them here. They showed, however, that the conference was more and more earnest in its measures to promote sound learning and useful science among the rising generation, and to carry forward the work of God by means of missionary operations to the greatest possible extent. The report of the committee on boundaries, as it was adopted by the conference, divided the general work into twenty-eight annual conferences, besides the Mission conference in Liberia.

There was one alteration made in the Discipline at this conference, which went to affect the administration very materially, as it lodged in an annual conference a tremendous power over its members for good or evil, according to the manner in which it might be exercised. For several successive General Conferences, the question had been mooted, whether an annual conference had legitimate authority to locate one of its members without his consent, and the predominant opinion seemed to be that no such power existed. The question came up for consideration at this time, and a rule was finally passed, giving to an annual conference the power to locate one of its members who has rendered himself "unacceptable as a traveling preacher," in their judgment, allowing him, however, the privilege of an appeal to the next General Conference. This rule is founded on the presumption that whenever a member of an annual conference fails to fulfill the obligations of his trust, and which were the conditions on which he entered the fraternity, he forfeits his privileges and all the immunities of his official rank, and hence the conference has the right of dismissing him from their employment as an unfaithful servant. It is allowed, however, that this power ought to be exercised with great caution and moderation, lest it degenerate into tyranny and oppression. A rule was also inserted for the trial of an accused superannuated preacher living out of the bounds of the conference of which he is a member, by a committee and the presiding elder of the district in which the delinquent may reside, the ultimate decision of the case being reserved for the conference of which he is a member. But that which excited the deepest interest at thus General Conference was the subject of slavery and abolitionism. That this subject may be clearly understood, and the controversy to which it gave birth duly appreciated, we must be

allowed to enter into some historical details. That the Methodist Episcopal Church has always been opposed to slavery, and has accordingly adopted measures to do it away, and where this could not be done, to mitigate its evils, is a truth written upon all her institutions, and confirmed by various enactments of the General Conference; and she was going on in her steady career of doing good to the souls and bodies of both master and slave, to the white and colored population of our country, when she was suddenly arrested by a new species of measures to effect emancipation. The success which had crowned the efforts of British philanthropists in bringing about emancipation in the West Indies, though it was effected by a compromise between the government and the owners of the slaves, by which the latter received a supposed equivalent for their legalized property, awakened a spirit of inquiry in our country respecting the practicability of emancipating the slaves in our southern and southwestern states, without waiting for the slow and more safe process of a gradual preparation for such an event. This spirit was powerfully excited by agents sent out from England, for the express purpose of lecturing us on the evils of slavery, and enlightening us on the duty and feasibility of immediate and unconditional emancipation, not indeed in imitation of the plan adopted by the legislature of their own country, which was to remunerate, in part at least, the owners of the slaves for their property; but they insisted upon a full, and free, and immediate surrender of the slaves, as a political and religious duty, alike demanded by the laws of God and of nature. These heedless and enthusiastic lecturers, not understanding the peculiar structure of our complicated governments, including the state and general governments, and not caring to distinguish between slavery as it existed here, and slavery as it had existed in the West Indies, loudly proclaimed a war against it, with such a flippancy of misguided zeal, that they soon goaded the public mind almost to madness, and thus aroused a spirit of resistance to their proceedings and measures which it was not easy to control. This interference of foreigners with our domestic relations was considered by the more judicious portions of the community as highly reprehensible, and worthy of severe rebuke and remonstrance. Accordingly, the newspapers soon became rife with discussions upon this topic. Criminations and recriminations followed each other, until the public mind became so excited as to be incapable of calm and sober investigation on either side of the question, so that, in some instances, mob violence was substituted for argument; and "lynch law" for Scriptural and rational defense. These violent measures were alike condemned by the more sober portion of both parties. In this agitated state of things, it could hardly be expected that the Church should wholly escape the excitement or avoid participating in the discussions to which it gave rise. Accordingly, as our brethren in the eastern states entered more deeply into this subject than any others, and as they had a weekly paper under their control, its columns were opened to the discussion of slavery as it existed in the United States, and severe denunciations were uttered against all who held slaves, whether in or out of the Church. These denunciations were met and repelled with spirit by those more immediately implicated, as being incompatible with the spirit of brotherly love which ought to characterize all Christians, and more especially such as are members of the same communion.

These discussions had been conducted for two or three years previously to the session of this General Conference, and a weekly paper had been established in the city of New York for the vowed purpose of advocating immediate emancipation, irrespective of all consequences. As the arguments and measures set forth in this and other periodicals of a kindred character were not fellowshipped by a great majority of our preachers and people even in the middle and northern conferences, nor by the official organ of the Church, the Christian Advocate and Journal, these

were stigmatized by the immediate emancipationists as pro-slavery in their views and feelings, and, of course, as involved in the same guilt and condemnation with those who actually held their fellow-beings in bondage. These irritating charges were considered unjust, as the brethren implicated thought they could easily distinguish between arm approval of slavery as a system, and the apologizing for those who held slaves under certain peculiar circumstances. This clear distinction, however, was not admitted by the zealous advocates of immediate emancipation, and hence they poured forth their anathemas upon all indiscriminately who either held slaves or offered an apology for those that did, on account of their peculiar circumstances.

It was in this state of the public mind, and of the Church, that the General Conference came together in 1836. And though many of its oldest and most judicious members were very desirous of keeping the discussion of slavery from the deliberations of the conference, being convinced it could result in no good, yet several circumstances conduced to bring it in, and to make it the subject of much debate. In the first place, the allusion to the subject in the address of our Wesleyan brethren and in the address of their representative, the Rev. William Lord, made it necessary to advert to it in the answer of the General Conference, which, it will be perceived by those who will look at that answer, was done in a very brief and respectful manner. In the second place, not many days after the conference had assembled, it was ascertained that two of the abolition brethren from New England had attended and lectured at an abolition meeting in the city of Cincinnati; and as the agitation was very great upon that subject, it was feared by many that a popular excitement would be produced injurious to the character of the conference, and perhaps detrimental to the peace and harmony of the Church in Cincinnati. With a view to allay all such apprehension, the conference passed the following preamble and resolutions, by a vote of one hundred and twenty in favor and fourteen against them: --

"Whereas, great excitement has prevailed in this country on the subject of modern abolitionism, which is reported to have been increased in this city recently by the unjustifiable conduct of two members of the General Conference in lecturing upon and in favor of that agitating subject; and whereas, such a course on the part of any of its members is calculated to bring upon this body the suspicions and distrust of the community, and to misrepresent its sentiments in regard to the points at issue; and whereas, in this aspect of the case, a due regard for its own character, as well as a just concern for the interests of the Church confided to its care, demand a full, decided, and unequivocal expression of the ideas of the General Conference in the premises: -- Therefore,

1. Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That they disapprove, in the most unqualified sense, the conduct of two members of the General Conference, who are reported to have lectured in this city recently upon and in favor of modern abolitionism.

2. Resolved, That they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave as it exists in the slave-holding states in this Union.

3. Resolved, That the foregoing preamble and resolutions be published in our periodicals." The consideration of these resolutions brought the entire subject of slavery and abolitionism before the conference, and elicited a very spirited and protracted debate, which finally ended in their adoption, as before mentioned. Many very able speeches were delivered on both sides of the

question, and generally with good temper and much calmness of deliberation, though not without some appearance of asperity and warmth of feeling. The pith of the controversy, however, notwithstanding the whole field of argument and illustration was amply surveyed, may be comprehended in two of the speeches, both published at the time, that of the Rev. O. Scott in favor, and of the Rev. W. Winans against modern abolition. And even this argument itself may be brought into a very narrow compass. The course pursued by the Methodist Episcopal Church, from the beginning of her existence, in reference and in opposition to slavery, as it has all along existed in the United States, proves that she has always considered it an evil not to be tolerated except under given circumstances; and that such circumstances exist in some portions of our Union, where severe penal laws have been enacted against emancipation, as to justify her in holding in her communion those who hold slaves, provided they are otherwise pious. That this was her doctrine is provable from her whole course of proceeding from the time of her organization in 1784. At this time were passed the severest laws against slavery which we find upon record at any time of her existence; but even these aimed at a gradual, and did not insist on an immediate emancipation; yet finding upon experiment that these severe rules could not be carried into execution without producing a greater evil than that which they were designed to remove, about six months after they were passed they were suspended, and have never been revived, nor were they ever inserted in her book of Discipline; and at almost every subsequent General Conference some enactment has been made for the purpose of regulating slavery, of modifying or mitigating its character, with a view ultimately, if practicable, to do it away. This has been the doctrine, and these have been the measures of our Church in reference to this most difficult and perplexing subject. And they prove most incontestably that she does not, nor has at any time, considered slave holding, under all circumstances, of such a deadly character as to "exclude a man from the kingdom of grace and glory;" for it is manifest that the making rules for the regulation of a practice is, in some sense, to pronounce that the practice is not, in itself considered, independently of all concurring circumstances, a moral evil in the sight of God. To legislate for a thing is to sanction it, though the manner of holding the thing may be considered either unlawful or inexpedient. This statement of the doctrine of the Church will enable us to perceive the force and scope of the argument now wielded by Mr. Scott against slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church. In opposing the above resolutions, he laid down the following proposition: --

"That slavery is wrong in some circumstances, in no circumstance, or in all circumstances." In selecting from these positions the one which suited his views, he took this strong ground that slavery is wrong, morally wrong, under all possible circumstances; and in the course of his argument, contended that no circumstance whatever could alter or modify the sinful character of slavery; that it was wrong, or a sin not to be tolerated under any circumstance whatever, either in or out of the Church. By this comprehensive and sweeping proposition, all who held slaves, whatever might be the palliating circumstances, were, on that very account, sinners against God, and ought to be forthwith excommunicated from the communion of the Church, unless they repented, and "brought forth works meet for repentance," by an immediate and unconditional surrender of their slaves, without any regard to the consequences of such a measure. And yet, such was the light and force of truth upon this subject, that, almost in the next breath, Mr. Scott admitted that "God himself expressly permitted his people to enslave the Canaanites," thus upsetting at a stroke the whole array of argument which he had brought to prove that slavery was a sin under all circumstances; for here was a circumstance in which God either permitted his

people to commit sin, or which did away with the sinfulness of slavery: the first supposition is daringly impious; the second is fatal to the argument. Of this concession, a concession which sacred history had forced from him, Mr. Winans took advantage, and built upon it the following impregnable argument: -- That according to this admission, taken in connection with the main proposition that no circumstance could alter the character of an action, as it was once right for God to permit slavery, it was therefore always right; is right now; and no possible circumstance could make it wrong. This was the very gist of the argument. And the reader will observe, that in stating the argument thus, Mr. Winans did not attempt to prove that slavery, as it existed in the United States, is right, or not sinful; but simply to show, that on Mr. Scott's concession, his major proposition, that slavery is a sin under all circumstances, could not be true.

I need not trace this controversy any further. The views of the General Conference in reference to this subject, as well as others which came up for consideration, may be seen in the following Pastoral Address, which was adopted near the close of the conference: -- "To the Members and Friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church

"Beloved Brethren and Friends: -- The time has come, in the conclusion of the session of another General Conference, when it seems proper that we should address a few thoughts to you, for whom we labor, and for whose present and future happiness we desire to devote the remainder of our days. We think we can adopt, at least in some degree, the language of the great apostle to the Gentiles, ' ow we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.'

"In taking a review of our work, we rejoice in being able to say that we are more and more convinced of the truth of those doctrines, and of the healthful influence of that moral discipline, by which e as a people have ever been distinguished. These, therefore, we hope, will ever remain the same, and be handed down to posterity unimpaired, that the generations following may be led by them into the path of peace and holiness here, and finally be conducted to eternal life hereafter. The few alterations which have been introduced into our prudential regulations, into our plan of missionary operations, and into some portions of our temporal economy, are such only as the lights of experience, the enlargement of our work, and the occurrence of new circumstances, have dictated to be expedient and necessary for carrying forward, to the greatest possible extent, the cause of reformation and salvation in which we are engaged. These, so far from impairing those cardinal principles of revealed truth and precepts of morality, which have been incorporated into our excellent Discipline, by which we have been guided thus far in peace and prosperity, are designed merely as helps to develop and apply these principles and precepts to experimental and practical purposes. Though we have been called upon to mourn over the loss of our venerated senior bishop, Rev. William McKendree, and of our junior bishop, the Rev. John Emory, as well as the destruction of our noble and useful book establishment at New York, yet we are by no means discouraged; but regarding these chastisements of our heavenly Father, who has thus corrected us for our good, that we may learn obedience by the things that we are called upon to suffer, we would endeavor to renew our diligence in the important work assigned us.

"Though we have had a very considerable increase during the four last years, yet for the one year past a diminution in the number of Church members appears on the Minutes of the conferences. Whatever may be the cause or causes of this decrease, so unusual in our history, it becomes us to humble ourselves before God, to apply the means at our command for the enlargement of his

work, for the increase of holiness among our selves, as well as the conversion of sinners to God. Among the means to be used for this purpose, we may reckon, --

1. A recurrence to first principles; a firm adherence to, and a faithful development and application of those doctrines of the gospel by which we, as a Church, have ever been characterized; particularly the doctrine of holiness, a preached and enforced by him who, under God, laid the foundation of our spiritual edifice. His maxim was, 'When the work of sanctification goes on among believers, the work of God will prosper in all its branches.' It becomes, therefore, the imperious duty of all ministers of Jesus Christ, to explain and enforce the nature and necessity of this work in the hearts of all their hearers; and it is equally the duty of these to strive after it in the way of God's appointment, and to regulate their lives accordingly. We would, therefore, remind ourselves, as well as those whom we now address, of the great necessity of making this subject a cardinal point in all our ministrations, and in all our public and private duties.

2. The second thing which demands our most serious attention and constant vigilance, is the right enforcement of our Scriptural discipline. The history of the Church, from its commencement down to the present period, confirms the truth of the remark, that pure and undefiled religion has always prospered in promotion to the strictness with which discipline has been enforced. The pithy and wise caution of our founder in reference to this subject should ever be borne in mind, 'Be strict, but mild.' While it is our duty to use all Scriptural means to reclaim an offending brother, to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and, if possible, to restore such as may have been seduced by temptation into sin, in the spirit of meekness yet when these means have failed to effect the desired object, it is equally imperative for us to discharge the painful duty of severing from the body the corrupt member. Hence, we cannot guard with too scrupulous a care, nor watch with too much vigilance, that which hath been committed to our trust, with a view to the preservation of the Church in peace and purity, by an impartial administration of discipline. The accession of numbers to the list of Church members, unless accompanied with the witness and fruits of the Spirit, instead of adding strength to the Church, will tend only to introduce confusion and every evil work. We would, therefore, exhort all, both ministers and people, to a united exertion in all places, and at all times, to use every Scriptural and prudent means for the preservation of the members of the Church in purity, simplicity, and godly living. The several duties growing out of our relation to God, to each other, and to the world around us, are so very obvious, so clearly laid down in the sacred Scriptures, and so accurately defined in our general rules, as well as so often explained from the pulpit and the press, that we need not stop to enumerate them here, and will therefore only observe, that the faithful performance of these duties is the best evidence we can give to the world, and to each other, of the sincerity of our Christian profession, and of our devotedness to the cause of Jesus Christ.

3. The next thing to which we would call your attention, as connected with our prosperity, is the cause of education. We rejoice to witness the growing interest which has been felt and manifested in this branch of our work for a few years past. In the cause of education we include sabbath and common schools, academies and colleges. Experience and observation, if not, indeed, the common sense every individual, demonstrate, that unless we provide the means of education for our children and youth, they will be led from us to other communities, where these means are more abundant, and are put within the reach of every one. Should this unhappily be the case, the consequence is inevitable, that he children and youth of our community will depart from us, and we

shall he compelled to mourn over the melancholy fact, that they will have been brought under the influence of doctrines and usages which we honestly believe will be injurious to their present and future happiness. Such, indeed, is the eager desire for intellectual improvement, and the facilities for its attainment in other directions, that unless we furnish means to gratify this laudable desire, our children and youth will avail themselves of those thus offered them from other quarters, and be induced to throw the weight of their influence into an opposite scale. This consideration admonishes us of our duty in this respect, and, in a language which cannot be misunderstood, reminds us of our high obligations to enter more fully and unitedly into this field of labor.

"In many places we fear that sabbath schools are either entirely neglected, or but partially attended to; while in others these nurseries for juvenile improvement are suffered to languish for want of that attention to their interests which their importance demands. We would therefore urge upon all concerned a steady, active, and uniform attention to these appendages to the gospel ministry. Nor are we less solicitous that all our brethren and friends should be mindful of their duty in selecting such teachers for primary schools as shall secure to their children the double advantage of elementary instruction, and religious and moral improvement.

"But it is to the higher branches of education, such as are taught in academies and colleges, that we would especially call your attention. Of the former we have under our patronage upward of twenty-of the latter seven, and two others are in contemplation. Though the academics may be sustained without drawing largely upon the pecuniary resources of our people, and may therefore be safely multiplied to an indefinite extent, yet it is manifest that colleges, in order to answer the end of their institution, must be liberally endowed. And such is the condition of our country in respect to these institutions, that though some of the state legislatures have made small endowments for their support, we must depend chiefly upon our own resources for their continuance and prosperity. Hence, to increase their number without adequate funds in hand or in prospect for their support, is to weaken their influence, if not ultimately to endanger their existence.

"Such, however, is their importance to the interests of our community, so closely are they identified with our character as a Church, and so intimately connected with our other institutions which are deemed essential to our growth, and to that influence which we ought to exert over the public mind, that we cannot but regard it as a sacred duty to nourish and sustain them by all the means at our command. If, indeed, at this crisis of our history, when these literary institutions have just begun to put forth their energies, and to exert their improving influence upon our youth, and upon the Church generally, they should be allowed to languish for want of pecuniary means, the effect would be to throw us back for years in this branch of intellectual and moral culture. This is an event, however, which we cannot allow ourselves to anticipate without very painful emotions, but which can only be prevented by a united and simultaneous action in their favor, by our wealthy and benevolent friends. That there is ability in the Church adequate to sustain a suitable number of these nurseries of learning and fountains of knowledge, were proper means adopted to call it into active exercise, we cannot doubt; and we therefore affectionately exhort all the annual conferences, within whose bounds colleges are established, or who have pledged themselves to aid in their support, to exert themselves in this laudable work, to make haste to redeem their solemn pledges; and we would also invite the attention of all our brethren and friends to a hearty co-operation in whatever measures may be devised by the conferences to establish these institutions upon safe and permanent foundations, not only by contributing of their substance for

their support, but also by patronizing them as extensively as their means will allow, by sending their sons to be educated, as well as by offering their fervent prayers to God for his blessing to rest upon them.

4. The distribution of religious tracts is another mode of diffusing abroad a knowledge of the doctrines and duties of Christianity. In this department of our work we have reason to believe that there has been for some years past an unjustifiable neglect. Such is the cheapness of these silent messengers of truth, such the facilities for their circulation by an itinerant ministry, in co-operation with all those who are zealous for God, that no justifiable apology can be offered for the non-performance of this duty-for any one to say that he is not supplied with these means of spiritual improvement. We would therefore most affectionately invite all our brethren of the ministry, and of the laity, to use their diligence to form tract societies, and to engage as many as possible in the work of distribution in every place. Let there be no circuit or station unsupplied with these messengers of mercy, and no hand that can be called into action unemployed in aiding in this good work. Form your societies, collect your moneys, send to our depositories for tracts, and adopt, as far as practicable, a regular system of distribution, such a system as shall secure the co-operation of all concerned, both male and female, young and old. We need hardly say, that this method of circulating religious knowledge is adapted especially to the circumstances and wants of the poor, the illiterate, and the young, for whose present and eternal interest we are bound in a particular manner to labor.

"This branch of our duty is therefore submitted to your pious consideration, under a solemn conviction that, if attended to with zeal and discretion, it will aid us much in the work of saving souls.

5. The continual enlargement of our missionary field, and the increase of pecuniary means for its occupancy and cultivation, are matters of congratulation, and of unfeigned gratitude to God. On this subject we need only exhort you to go on as you have begun, and make the hearts of the heathen, and the poor of your own land, to rejoice by means of your liberality. We have adopted a revised constitution, recommended to us by the managers of our Missionary Society, which we hope will afford increased facilities for the progress of our missionary work, and enable us more effectually to cover the whole ground of this extensive and most interesting department of our labor.

"A field is spread open before us, sufficiently wide and extensive for the full display of all our liberality, and the exercise of all our energies.

"Such measures have been adopted at this conference in reference to this subject, as will tend, we humbly trust, to call forth and train up, more effectually, men for this important work. And surely there is a call -- a most imperious call -- for all the men and means, to enable us to fill up this extensive field with suitable laborers. In addition to those domestic missions which embrace the poorer settlements of our white population and the slaves of the south, we hear a voice from the distant tribes of our wilderness, all along our western and northwestern frontier, yea, even from the valley of the Columbia river, beyond the Rocky mountains, and on the very borders of the Pacific, which calls humbly for help. From South America, from the desolate shores of Africa, as well as from the vast interior of that mighty continent, a similar voice salutes our ears, and invites us, yea, commands us, in language which appears to be the echo of divine Providence to come over and

help them. And shall we be deaf to these calls? We must not. And we are exceedingly happy to have it in our power to say, that you do not turn a deaf ear to them. You, beloved brethren and friends, have come up nobly, spiritually, liberally, and prayerfully to this work. In the name of our common Christianity, and on behalf of those heathen who, but for this timely aid, must have perished for lack of knowledge, we heartily thank you; and from having witnessed your past liberality, we take courage, folly believing that this same benevolent spirit will be continued, and even augmented in a ratio with the increasing wants of our Missionary Society. The whole world is indeed before us. Thousands, yea, millions of immortal beings are, at this moment, enveloped in all the darkness of pagan superstition, or led astray by the delusions of Mohammedan imposture, or buried beneath the rubbish of Roman Catholic mummeries and deceitful workings. Shall we -- can we be either idle or indifferent while casting our eyes upon such a mass of moral corruption? No, indeed! Your full hearts respond, No, with an emphasis which shall be heard and felt throughout all the ranks of our Israel and the effects of which will yet be witnessed all along the line of our missionary operations, and even far beyond, at no distant period, the places where the footsteps of the missionary have marked the soil.

"Relying, therefore, upon your hearty co-operation in the grand enterprise of submitting the world to the obedience of Christ, we confidently submit this item in the list of our duties to your pious consideration and benevolent feeling, fully believing that he who hath begun this good work, will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ.

6. We now approach a subject of no little delicacy and difficulty, and which we cannot but think has contributed its full proportion to that religious declension over which we mourn. It is not unknown to you, dear brethren and friends, that, in common with other denominations in our land, as well as our citizens generally, we have been much agitated in some portions of our work with the very excitable subject of what is called abolitionism. This subject has been brought before us at our present session -- fully, and, we humbly trust, impartially discussed, and by almost a unanimous vote highly disapproved of; and while we would tenderly sympathize with those of our brethren who have, as we believe, been led astray by this agitating topic, we feel it our imperative duty to express our decided disapprobation of the measures they have pursued to accomplish their object. It cannot be unknown to you, that the question of slavery in these United States, by the constitutional compact which binds us together as a nation, is left to be regulated by the several state legislatures themselves; and thereby is put beyond the control of the general government, as well as that of all ecclesiastical bodies; it being manifest, that in the slave-holding states themselves the entire responsibility of its existence or non-existence rests with those state legislatures. And such is the aspect of affairs in reference to this question, that whatever else might tend to meliorate the condition of the slave, it is evident to us, from what we have witnessed of abolition movements, that these are the least likely to do him good. On the contrary, we have it in evidence before us, that the inflammatory speeches, writing and movements, have tended, in many instances, injuriously to affect his temporal and spiritual condition, by hedging up the way of the missionary who is sent to preach to him Jesus and the resurrection, and by making a more rigid supervision necessary on the part of his overseer, thereby abridging his civil and religious privileges.

"These facts, which are only mentioned here as a reason for the friendly admonition which we wish to give you, constrain us as your pastors, who are called to watch over your souls as they

who must give an account, to exhort you to abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications; and especially from those of that inflammatory character which denounce in unmeasured terms those of their brethren who take the liberty to dissent from them. Those of you who may have honest scruples as to the lawfulness of slavery, considered as an abstract principle of moral right and wrong, if you must speak your sentiments, would do much better to express yourselves in those terms of respect and affection, which evince a sincere sympathy for those of your brethren who are necessarily, and, in some instances, reluctantly associated with slavery in the states where it exists, than to indulge in harsh censures and denunciations, and in those fruitless efforts which, instead of lightening the burden of the slave, only tend to make his condition the more irksome and distressing.

"From every view of the subject which we have been able to take, and from the most calm and dispassionate survey of the whole ground, we have come to the solemn conviction, that the only safe, Scriptural, and prudent way for us, both as ministers and people, to take, is wholly to refrain from this agitating subject, which is now convulsing the country, and consequently the Church, from end to end, by calling forth inflammatory speeches, papers, and pamphlets. While we cheerfully accord to such all the sincerity they ask for their belief and motives, we cannot but disapprove of their measures, as alike destructive to the peace of the Church, and to the happiness of the slave himself. But while we thus express our disapprobation of these measures, we would, with equally strong and decided language, record our abhorrence of all unlawful and unscriptural means to check and to counteract them. All mobs, and violent movements of self-created tribunals, to inflict summary punishment upon those who may differ from them in opinion, are condemned alike by the laws of our land, and by every principle of Christianity. We should therefore be extremely pained and mortified to learn that any of you should have lent your influence to foment a spirit of insurrection, in any manner, or to have given sanction to such violent movements as have, in some instances and places, disturbed the peace of society, and forestalled the operation of the established tribunals of justice to protect the innocent and to punish the guilty. To be subject to the powers that be is a duty enjoined no less by Christianity, than it is a dictate of common prudence, necessary to be observed for the preservation of good order, and the support and perpetuation of those civil and religious institutions which we so highly and justly value as freemen, as Christians, and as Methodists. The exercise of mutual forbearance in matters of opinion, is essential in a community where freedom of speech is guarantied to the citizens by the constitution which binds them together, and which defines and secures the rights and liberties of all.

"Finally, brethren and friends, we exhort you to unity and brotherly love, and to the practice of those things which make for peace. Instead of indulging in those irritating recriminations which tend to disturb the harmony of the body, and to prevent the exercise of mutual good will and fraternal feeling, let us follow after that charity which edifieth, and the cultivation of that love which endureth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things.

7. Among other things which have tended not a little to check the progress of pure religion, may we not include that of political agitations? In a country where the constitution guaranties to every male citizen of full age the right of suffrage, where the freedom of speech and of the press is considered an inviolable right; where free discussion and debate on all civil as well as religious subjects are permitted unrestrainedly, there must be great danger of these high privileges being

abused by suffering calm and dispassionate discussion to degenerate into angry recrimination, until passion usurps a dominion over the judgment, and reason is dethroned to make way for the despotic reign of wild fanaticism.

"These remarks are not made with a view to abridge you of any of your civil or political privileges, nor yet to prevent the free exercise of your dearest rights as freemen and as citizens of this great republic, much less to bias your minds in favor of the one or the other of the political parties of our country. Into the party politics of the day we enter not. We leave every man -- every Methodist and friend to Methodism -- to act for himself in these respects. But what we wish is, as far as possible, to guard you against allowing yourselves to be drawn aside from paramount duties, to mix in that angry strife of political contests which tends to disturb the peace of society, to alienate the affections of brethren from each other, and to interrupt that harmony of feeling which is essential to our spiritual prosperity. While you cleave to the civil institutions of your country, by all due honor to magistrates, and freely exercise your rights in the choice of those who are to rule over you and protect you in the enjoyment of your privileges, we exhort you to peace, to harmony, to love as brethren, and not to allow the spirit of party to awaken animosity, nor zeal in the defense of political distinctions, to dampen your zeal in the cause of God. We wish that discussion of this sort may not be permitted to engender strife and envy, but that mutual good will may soften the asperities of political differences, and cement the hearts of Christian citizens together in love and brotherly kindness.

"And here we would bear our unequivocal testimony against that partisan warfare which leads to the detraction of individual character, and to slanderous representation of motive and conduct. Every man should be presumed to be innocent until proved guilty before some competent tribunal. That press, therefore, which drags before the community individual characters, dealing in personal abuse, and thus holding them up to public execration, on account merely of political differences, is to be condemned as a corrupter of public morals, and as tending to the prostration of our civil and religious liberties. Instead, therefore, of lending your influence to such a spirit of detraction, we would persuade you to raise your voice against it, and to let the law of truth and kindness at all times dwell upon your ups, and influence your conduct in civil as well as religious matters; and thus, as far as possible, to live in peace with all men.

8. While we wish to devote ourselves, and to beseech all our brethren in the ministry to devote themselves exclusively to our peculiar work, we beg leave to remind the membership of the Church of the necessity of providing a competent support for the ministry. On this subject, however, we need not enlarge, as you yourselves know perfectly, that he who ministereth at the altar must be partaker of the things of the altar, and he that ministereth to you in spiritual things must be partaker of your carnal things.

"In conclusion, we would say, that after a laborious session of twenty-six days, we separate for our respective fields of labor, and mingle again with our brethren, under a sense, in some degree at least, of our high responsibility to God and to his Church, and with a determination to devote ourselves, by his grace, to our vocation, with renewed diligence and perseverance; and by beseeching you, dear brethren and friends, to co-operate with us in the grand work of evangelizing the world. Under a consciousness of our continual dependence upon divine aid, we desire to look up to God for the assistance of his Spirit at all times; and to beg an interest in your prayers, that

both we ourselves, and all those with whom we are connected in Church fellowship, may be preserved blameless until the day of Jesus Christ; and that by applying ourselves with all diligence in the use of those means which the God of providence and grace hath put within our reach, for the furtherance of his holy cause, we may hereafter be instrumental in reviving his work, and spreading among our fellow men the 'savor of his name;' we remain as ever your servants for Christ's sake.

"Signed by order and in behalf of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Robert R. Roberts, "Joshua Soule, "Elijah Hedding, "James O. Andrew. "T. L. Douglass, Secretary. Cincinnati, Oh, May 26,1836." As it is not my wish to advert to abolitionism again, I will remark here, that it has continued to agitate the Church from that time to this, much disturbing its peace, and, in some of the annual conferences, distracting its councils, producing finally the secession of a few individuals. Indeed, it was feared, for a time, that its disastrous results would be extensively felt, particularly in some of the eastern and northern conferences; but it has so far passed off in a much more quiet manner than was anticipated, and it is to be hoped that but few, comparatively, will be seriously and lastingly injured by these injudicious measures. Perhaps, however, a future day may disclose facts of a different character, and that a future historian may be called to bear his testimony to a different result. Though it is somewhat difficult to reconcile the conduct of some few leaders in the ranks of abolitionism with a sincere regard to the interests of truth and righteousness, yet we are willing to award to most of those who engaged in the controversy an honest desire to meliorate the condition of the slave, and to purify the Church from what they considered a sinful pollution; although we cannot but think that their measures were ill-chosen, their arguments in the main defective, and their severe denunciations and personal criminations wholly unjustifiable. The following resolutions have an important bearing upon the itinerancy, and the necessity for them grew out of an increased disposition among some of our preachers to engage in agencies for societies with which we had no connection, and to some of which, as a Church, we were opposed: --

1. Resolved, That this conference deem it highly culpable for any member of an annual conference, especially for those sustaining supernumerary or effective relations, to engage in agencies not known or recognized in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

2. Resolved, That any presiding elder who consents for a preacher to leave the work assigned him to engage in agencies of any kind not recognized in the Methodist Episcopal Church, or to become an editor of a paper, is an aggressor in the sight of his brethren, and should be called to an account for his conduct.

3. Resolved, That there is no such relation provided for in our Discipline as that held by an individual who is left without an appointment at his own request, and that such relations are not promotive of the interests of Methodism.

4. Resolved, That it is highly improper for any member of an annual conference to engage in political strife, and to offer for a seat in the legislative councils, or Congress hall, or to engage in speculations of any kind that do not draw his earnest attention to the salvation of souls."

These resolutions were not incorporated in the Discipline, but were ordered to be recorded in the journal of each annual conference, for the regulation of all concerned; and the two first have been

of special use in restraining those who seemed much inclined to leave their appropriate work for the purpose of becoming itinerant lecturers in favor of abolitionism, which was then raging in some portions of our country, and which was threatening the peace and harmony of the Church and the nation. And it is believed that the measures of this General Conference, and the subsequent acts of the New York conference, founded upon the known and expressed will of the General Conference, tended very much to check the ebullition of that frenzy which had seized the minds of so many of our preachers and people.

Having finished its work, the conference adjourned late in the evening of May the 27th, to meet again in the city of Baltimore, Md., May 1, 1840.

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A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume IV -- Book V

CHAPTER 14 From the close of the General Conference of 1836 to the commencement of the General Conference of 1840 From the numbers taken at the several annual conferences, and published in Cincinnati, it was ascertained that there was a diminution in the aggregate number of Church members for this year, notwithstanding the zeal which had been displayed in some sections of the Church to purify it from the defilements of slavery. The disclosure of this fact, an event so unusual in our history, led to a serious inquiry into its causes, and various conjectures were put afloat, some of them chimerical enough, to account for it. Without attempting to decide dogmatically upon a question admitting of such a wide range of discussion, and which, after all, is not of so easy solution as some may imagine, the following are submitted as the most likely causes to tend to such a result.

1. The unusual excitement which had pervaded the country for a few past years, seemed to be followed by a sifting of the Church of many who, under that excitement, might have started in the Christian race without duly "counting the cost," and therefore in the "time of temptation fell away."

2. The revival of evangelical religion among other denominations might have contributed its full quota in lessening the number of accessions to our communion. Time was, in many places, when souls were truly awakened to a sense of their lost estate, that they came to our ministry as a matter of course, in order to get spiritual food suited to their wants, other denominations not insisting as they ought upon the evangelical doctrines of the Bible, such as the new birth, justification by faith, the witness and fruits of the Spirit. Now the times were greatly altered for the better in this respect. During the progress of the great revivals in our country, nearly all denominations were partakers "of the benefit," entered heartily into the work, and their ministers enforced upon the people the great truths of God our Saviour with powerful effect. The consequence was, many who otherwise would probably have come among us, connected themselves with other denominations.

3. In the western country especially, where the decrease was greatest, by neglecting to furnish convenient places of worship in the more populous villages, others came in and took possession of them, and thus drew the population around them before we were aware of it, and thus circumscribed the sphere of our influence in these particular places.

4. The agitations consequent upon the discussions respecting slavery and abolitionism, no doubt tended to distract the minds of many, and to prevent the growth of experimental and practical religion. But whatever may have been the causes of this diminution in numbers, the fact awakened a spirit of inquiry, highly beneficial in its results. It led to self-examination, to self-abasement, humiliation, and prayer, that God might again visit his heritage with the outpouring of his Spirit, and a revival of his work.

Notwithstanding this apparent declension in the general work, there was a gradual enlargement of the field of missionary labor, the particulars of which will be mentioned hereafter. The deaths of thirty-five preachers are recorded this year; one hundred and thirty-six had located, one hundred and sixteen were returned supernumerary, one hundred and sixty-five superannuated, four had withdrawn, and four were expelled.

Among those whose deaths are recorded this year, we find the name of Philip Gatch, who joined the traveling ministry in 1773, under the superintendence of Thomas Rankin, when there were but ten traveling preachers in America. He outlived all his contemporaries, and maintained an unblemished reputation to the last, though he desisted from the labors of an itinerant preacher from the year 1787 until toward the close of his life, when he was readmitted in the relation of a superannuated preacher. In this relation he died on Sabbath evening, the twenty-eighth day of December, 1835, in the eighty-fifth year of his age. On the day of his eighty-fourth year he preached his last sermon, and finally closed his life in great peace of mind, and no doubt rests from his labors. In the early days of his ministry he endured sometimes "a great fight of affliction," having to contend with the common prejudices of the day against Methodist preachers, and with the troubles originating from the war of the Revolution. He, however, kept "his soul in patience," and manfully buffeted the waves of persecution which sometimes raged around him, though he did not wholly escape their fury. At one time he fell into the hands of a mob, who, while endeavoring to cover him with tar, cruelly drew some of it across his naked eye-ball, which came near destroying the use of his eye; but he still persevered in his work, "as seeing Him who is invisible," and who upholds and rewards his faithful servants in the midst of their labors and sufferings. Want of health compelled him to desist from the work of a traveling preacher, and in 1798 he removed into the Northwestern territory, now state of Ohio, and settled on the Little Miami, a few miles from Cincinnati. The country was then new, Cincinnati being only an inconsiderable village, and Methodism scarcely known to its inhabitants. Here he became actively and usefully engaged as a local preacher, and was much respected as a citizen, contributing greatly, by his active exertions and example of piety and diligence, to advance the cause of religion and morals. Not willing that he should die in obscurity, unwept and forgotten, his brethren of the Ohio conference readmitted him into their fellowship as a worn-out veteran of the cross, and he ended his days in the sight of his brethren, beloved and respected as "an old disciple" of his Lord and Master.

Christopher Fry, of the Baltimore conference, was a minister of considerable age and standing, having joined the traveling connection in 1802.

Though not possessed of brilliant talents as a preacher, he was among the most useful, being deeply read in the Holy Scriptures, and always enforcing the truths which he uttered by the fervency of his piety, and the godliness of his example. Apt to teach, and wise to govern, he was selected to fill the office of presiding elder, and he much endeared himself to his brethren by the gentleness of his manners, by his diligence in his calling, and his strict regard to the discipline of his Church.

Though his death was sudden and unexpected to his friends, it did not find him unprepared. On the sabbath before his death, in an address which he delivered to the people, he dwelt, with great fervor of spirit and solemnity of manner, upon Christian experience, and then adverting to his own, he testified to the knowledge he had of the love of God in his heart, and the many years he had

enjoyed the witness of his acceptance in the sight of God. "For this faith," he remarked with emphasis, "I would be willing to burn at the stake." Two days after this, while attending to the operations of a threshing machine, it caught his leg, and ere he could be extricated from his perilous condition, his thigh bone was broken, his knee crushed, and nearly the entire limb severely injured. He survived these injuries only about three hours. In the midst of his exquisite sufferings he said, in answer to a question by his beloved and weeping wife, "My whole body is in tumult, but my soul is calm and stayed on God." After a short interval, in answer to a friend who inquired the state of his mind, he said, "My body is in an agony of pain, but my soul is happy, happy, happy!" With these words faltering upon his lips, he ceased to suffer and to breathe, and no doubt went to Abraham’s bosom. Of the others who had taken their departure, excellent things are said both of their life and death; and their reward is doubtless with their God.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 564,974; Last Year: 566,957; Decrease: 1,983 -- Colored This Year: 82,661; Last Year: 83,135; Decrease: 474 -- Indians This Year: 3,033; Last Year: 2,436; Increase: 597 -- Total This Year: 650,668; Last Year: 652,528 -- Decrease: 1,860 -- Preachers This Year: 2,929; Last Year: 2,758; Increase: 171.

1837 This decrease in the number of Church members has already been accounted for, and, as might be supposed, the fact led to "great searchings of heart" among those who felt as they ought for the prosperity of the Church, and to an application of those means which were necessary for a revival of the work of God.

Among the means used for the revival and spread of the work of God, was that of adding strength to the missionary work.

We have already seen that efforts had been made to establish missions in South America. On the 22d of March, 1836, the Rev. Justin Spaulding, of the New England conference, sailed from the port of New York for Rio de Janeiro, the capital of the Brazilian empire. This magnificent city contains many residents from different parts of Europe and the United States, and being a place of considerable trade, a number of English and American sailors are constantly in the port. By these foreigners brother Spaulding was affectionately received, and the letters received from him, after his arrival, gave us reason to hope for a favorable issue of his labors.

Since the change in the political affairs of the country, though the Roman Catholic religion is still the religion of the empire, and is supported by the law of the land, a much more liberal spirit prevails among the higher orders of society, and their confidence in the infallibility of the priesthood, and those superstitions by which that church is distinguished, is much weakened; it is, therefore, hoped that the time is not distant when the " blindness which has happened" to that branch of the Christian church shall be removed, and a way opened for a free and unrestrained promulgation of the pure gospel of Jesus Christ in the empire of Brazil. In the present state of things, however, brother Spaulding could have access only to the English and American portion of the population. To as many of these as would attend his meeting he preached in a private room, prepared for the purpose, and he had the happiness of finding a few who were willing to unite with him in his pious endeavors to spread Scriptural truth and holiness among the people. He was much aided in this good work by distributing among the people the holy Scriptures in the Portuguese language, with which he was generously furnished gratuitously by the American Bible Society. Indeed, he found the people, even the natives of the country, eager to read the word of

God in their own language, notwithstanding the prejudices which had been excited against it by their early education.

Such were the encouraging prospects before him, that on the recommendation of brother Spaulding, an additional missionary, the Rev. Daniel P. Kidder, of the Genesee conference, and a male and female teacher, were selected and sent to this field of labor. They sailed from the port of Boston on the 12th of November, 1837, and arrived in safety to their place of destination. They immediately entered upon their work with a fair prospect of success; but the school, though prosperous for a season, did not answer our expectations, and was therefore abandoned in despair. Brother Kidder, after mastering the Portuguese language, traveled extensively from one city and village to another, distributing Bibles and tracts, and was generally received with affection and treated with respect, though the civil regulations of the country would not allow him to preach to the natives in their own language. In Rio de Janeiro brother Spaulding had formed a small class, had established a sabbath school, and he occasionally preached to the sailors on board of the American vessels which were in the port. In this good work he was much encouraged by Commodore Nicholson, the United States naval officer, to whom he was favorably known as a minister of the gospel, and who gave countenance to his efforts. Yet with all these labors and hopeful prospects, Rio de Janeiro is a hard place for the gospel to operate upon, and has yielded but little fruit of our labor. The strong prejudices of the Catholic population, the indifference of most of those who call themselves Protestants, and the want of full toleration for the exercise of religious worship, present almost insuperable barriers in the way of planting the seeds of divine truth in that rugged soil. It is hoped, however, that a steady perseverance "in well doing" will eventually overcome opposition, and that we shall yet see South America delivered from the shackles of Romanism, and brought into the glorious "liberty of the sons of God." On the 14th of October, 1836, the Rev. J4,z Dempster, of the Oneida conference, sailed from New York, as a missionary for Buenos Ayres, the capital of the Argentine republic, in South America. In this delightful city, which takes its name (good air) from the salubrity of the climate, there were supposed to be about five thousand foreigners, English, Scotch, and Americans, to whom brother Dempster, on his arrival, made known the objects of his visit. He was cordially received, and he soon opened his mission under favorable auspices, by preaching to a large and attentive congregation assembled in a room which he had hired for that purpose. His preaching soon made a most favorable impression upon the minds of the people, and his congregation increased to that degree, that he found it necessary to enlarge his place of worship, and he was, the next year, authorized by the board of managers to purchase a lot of ground, and proceed to the erection of a house of worship, about fifteen hundred dollars being subscribed by the people in Buenos Ayres, and ten thousand dollars more appropriated by the managers, to meet the expenses.

These bright prospects were, however, soon eclipsed in some measure by a rigid blockade established by the government of France, so that all ingress and egress for foreign vessels, except ships of war belonging to neutral nations, were prevented. This measure of seeking national redress for supposed wrongs very soon brought much distress upon the people, cut off all intercourse by merchantmen, and drove many of the foreign residents to seek an asylum in Monte Video and other places, as might best suit their convenience. But though brother Dempster, in consequence of these things, was very reluctantly compelled to remit his endeavors to build a church, and though his congregation was somewhat diminished in numbers, yet he persevered in

his work, acquired more and more of the public confidence, and even succeeded in establishing a flourishing school. In this last work he was aided by the arrival of a teacher, Mr. Hiram A. Wilson, a graduate of the Wesleyan University, who was sent by the managers, in September of 1838. He soon commenced a school in Buenos Ayres, and it has so prospered, that in 1840 another male and a female teacher were sent to aid him in this good work. There is therefore every reason to believe that the issue of this mission will be prosperous.

Among the most important missions on our list is Liberia, an account of which, until the deaths of Cox and Wright, has already been given. In 1835 the Rev. John Seys of the Oneida conference, was appointed by Bishop Hedding the superintendent of this mission. He entered upon this hazardous enterprise with an enlightened zeal, and soon succeeded in establishing preaching, and forming societies in nearly all the settlements in Liberia. The next year he was joined by the Rev. J. B. Barton, of the Georgia conference, and they strengthened each other’s hands in the work of the Lord. Though a war commenced upon the colonists by one of the native chiefs, which spread death in the colony, and sickness had deprived brother Seys of a promising son, and prostrated himself wife, and brother Barton, for a season, yet he and they persevered in faith and hope, and they reported for the year 1836 three hundred and seventy-five members of the Church, and one hundred and twenty-eight children in the schools.

We have already seen that there were in Liberia several colored local preachers, most of whom had emigrated to that country for the purpose of enjoying the blessings of civil and religious liberty in their "fatherland." These were called into the active service of the ministry, and were eminently useful in building up the cause of God. One of them, brother Williams, formerly lieutenant-governor of the colony, volunteered his services to penetrate into the Congo country, for the purpose of ascertaining the probability of establishing a mission and school in king Boatswain’s dominions the king having manifested much friendship for the colonists and the mission. He was kindly received, and obtained from this friendly chief a promise of patronage and assistance. And though the good design was not carried into effect immediately, on account of a war which commenced about that time between the king and the Golah tribe yet the attempt led to important results; for soon after brother Seys was waited upon by a messenger from Boatswain, escorted by no less than two hundred men, among whom were some of his principal generals, requesting that a teacher might be speedily sent among them. After much prayer and consultation, a young colonist of good education and deep piety, by the name of Jacobs, was appointed for that station, at which the natives who had been sent on this errand of mercy expressed great satisfaction and joy. By means of these additional laborers, they enlarged the sphere of their operations, established a new mission at Bushrod island, commenced a new stone house for divine worship in Monrovia, and a manual labor school at Millsburgh, called the Whiteplains Manual Labor school, both of which have been since completed; the former is filled from one sabbath to another with attentive hearers, and the latter is in successful operation, imparting the blessings of education and religion to the rising generation. In the month of September, 1836, brother Seys, with a view to recruit his health, which had been much impaired by the corroding influence of the climate, and his excessive labors, visited the United States, and traveled extensively, holding missionary meetings, giving information to the people respecting the state of things in Africa, and taking up collections in behalf of the mission. This movement had a most happy effect in awakening a spirit of prayer, of liberality, and of active exertions in the cause of missions. In the following October he returned,

taking in company with him, as his colleagues in labor and suffering, the Rev. Squire Chase, of the Oneida conference, and the Rev. George Brown, a colored local preacher of piety and talents, who, upon his arrival in Liberia, entered the traveling ministry, and has been very useful. As the General Conference of 1836 had constituted the Liberia mission into a mission annual conference, brother Seys, as its superintendent, had called the preachers together, organized them into a conference, and nearly all the colored local preachers had become its members, and were therefore not considered in the character of traveling preachers. His gave a systematic energy to their operations, which added much to their strength and efficiency, and extended their influence more powerfully throughout the colony. As the members of the mission family, as well as the colonists, had suffered, and were still suffering much for want of a competent physician, the board adopted measures for furnishing them with one, and also with no more female teachers. Accordingly, in the month of June of this year, Dr. S. M. E. Goheen, a young physician of piety and talent, embarked in company with the teachers for Liberia. They arrived in safety, and entered upon their work with energy and success. Dr. Goheen has been eminently useful as a physician, having succeeded admirably in checking and controlling the disease of the country, which has proved fatal to so many white people, as well as to many of the colonists, more especially soon after their landing while undergoing their acclimation. The teachers also have so far filled their stations to general acceptance, and they still continue their work for the benefit of the children and youth of their own sex. The mission was greatly owned of God this year. In nearly all the stations, now employing no less than fifteen missionaries, white and colored, God poured out his Spirit, so that there were added to the Methodist Episcopal Church no less than one hundred and sixty members, twenty of whom were natives. In addition to the above-mentioned missionaries, and the physician, who aided the mission much by his active endeavors to promote the general cause, there were seven school teachers, having charge of two hundred and twenty-one pupils; and also three hundred children were taught in the sabbath schools. A temperance society was formed, with auxiliaries, on the pledge of total abstinence from intoxicating liquors as a beverage; and all things seemed to be going on prosperously. Brother Chase, however, soon fell sick of the African fever, and he was so prostrated as to abandon all hopes of recovery there; accordingly he returned to the United States, where he has since been restored to his usual health. From this prosperous state of things in Liberia, the board of managers determined, on the pressing representation of brother Seys, to establish a classical school. A teacher, the Rev. J. Burton, a local preacher, and a graduate of Allegheny College, was accordingly engaged, and funds appropriated for erecting a suitable building, and furnishing the needful books, apparatus, etc. A printer was also appointed, who was furnished with a press and materials for printing, and brother Seys was authorized to issue a semimonthly paper, to be called "Africa’s Luminary," of which he was appointed editor. In 1839 the academy went into operation; and the first number of Africa’s Luminary was issued on the fifteenth of March, 1839. Both its contents and mechanical execution reflect honor upon its editor and printer. An additional missionary was also sent out by the same expedition, the Rev. W. Stocker. He did not, however, long survive. Soon after his arrival, he was seized with the fever of the climate, and after lingering for a while, alternately reviving and sinking, he finally fell asleep in Jesus, in the hope of everlasting life. In the same year the mission was destined to suffer another loss by the death of one of its most devoted missionaries, the Rev. J. B. Barton. He had labored for the benefit of Africa nearly four years, with great zeal and usefulness, and, to all human appearance, had become so acclimated as to be able to resist the inroads of the

fever for many years. The year before his death he visited the land of his birth, married him a pious wife, and returned to Liberia with a view to devote the residue of his days to the salvation of Africa; but not long after his return, his young wife, with her infant child, was called to mourn over the sudden death of a pious and devoted husband, in a strange and foreign land. As, however, he lived to the Lord, so he died in the Lord, and is enjoying the reward of his sacrifices and labors in the world of glory.

It had been the earnest desire of the board of managers and of the bishops, that, in addition to supplying the colonists with the word and ordinances of the gospel, the native population should not be neglected. Accordingly, efforts had been made, hitherto with but little immediate success, to penetrate into the interior, and call the attention of the native Africans to the blessings of Christianity. Some few, who had occasionally mingled with the colonists, and attended our places of worship, had tasted "that the Lord is good," and twenty of these had become members of the Church. Still, however, but a feeble impression had been made upon the minds of the "heathen round about," and the efforts to reach them more effectually with gospel truth were renewed with great ardor in 1838. At length, a building was erected and a school opened in a place bordering on heathen territory, called, in honor of the bishop who had interested himself much in behalf of the Liberia mission, Heddington, for the special benefit of native children and youth, and the charge of it was given to brother George Brown. Here he commenced operations, uniting manual labor with mental training. God honored the enterprise. In a short time the house was filled, and the divine Spirit was poured out upon its inmates, and how between seventy and eighty have professed a "knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins."

There are now, 1840, employed in this interesting mission, fourteen missionaries, six teachers, and one physician. In the several stations there are seven hundred and twenty-eight Church members, and about four hundred pupils in the several schools. The mission is, indeed, exerting a hallowing influence upon almost the entire population of the colony, and gradually extending its influence among the native Africans themselves. If, therefore, no untoward circumstance shall supervene to interrupt its progress, but it shall go on in its career of usefulness as it has been begun, and thus far advanced, increasing in power and influence in a ratio already seen, who can calculate the benefits it shall confer upon the benighted sons and daughters of Africa! May God ever have it under his holy protection. In the western parts of our country, new fields for missionary enterprise were daily opening, for which the Missionary Society was affording supplies; but as they differ nothing materially from ordinary new circuits, it is considered inexpedient to swell this History in naming them more particularly than to say, that they were the means of giving to these new and destitute places increased facilities for securing gospel privileges, and the surest means of temporal and spiritual prosperity. The aboriginal missions, heretofore particularly noticed, were generally prosperous, though some of them were still suffering from the removal of the Indians to their new homes west of the Mississippi.

Thirty-two preachers had died during the past year; one hundred and thirty-five located, one hundred were returned supernumerary, and two hundred and fourteen superannuated; four had been expelled, and three had withdrawn. An effort had been made to ascertain the number of local preachers, and this year I find the number returned on the Minutes to be 4,954. As, however, all the conferences had not sent in their reports, the enumeration must have been incomplete.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 570,123; Last Year: 564,974; Increase: 5,149 -- Colored This Year: 76,657; Last Year: 82,296; Decrease: 5,639 -- Indians This Year: 2,695; Last Year: 2,833; Decrease: 138 -- Total This Year: 658,574;1 Last Year: 653,032 -- Increase: 5,542 -- Preachers This Year: 3,147; Last Year: 2,929; Increase: 218.

1838 The work of God in the conversion of souls, judging from accessions which were made to the Church, was much more prosperous than it had been for the two past years. Revivals were prevalent, and the spirit of missions and the cause of education were advancing more and more. In the northwestern part of the Illinois conference, efforts had been made to introduce the gospel among the Winnebago, Sioux, and Crow Indians, with some degree of success, and a few schools had been established for the education of their children. This year they were more regularly supplied with laborers, and with a better prospect of success, though the good work by no means prospered as it had done among the other tribes for whose salvation we had labored. But among the Potawattomies about one hundred were added to the Church. In the summer of l837 a spirited effort was made to establish missions in the republic of Texas. This extensive and fertile country, first visited by La Salle in 1685, lying south of the state of Arkansas and west of Louisiana, formed a part of the Mexican republic, and contains not less than 193,000 square miles. Its climate is remarkably mild and healthy, the soil rich and productive, bringing forth an abundance of cotton, sugar-cane, corn, and other staples common to the southern states and to Mexico. Into this fertile region many of the citizens of the United States had removed, being invited by the beauty and fertility of the country, and the favorable terms on which grants of land had been made to actual settlers by the Mexican government. Hence large settlements had been formed along the Rio Colorado and Rio Brasos, and some towns had become places of considerable trade, and were fast rising into importance. The eastern part of Texas, more especially, was settled principally by emigrants from the United States.

These, together with those Mexicans who took the liberty of thinking for themselves, became very restless under the oppressive government of Mexico, the intolerant spirit of which proscribed all religious sects except the Roman Catholic, and otherwise exacted obedience to laws which pressed heavily upon those who had been accustomed to breathe the free air, and to enjoy the immunities of citizens of the United States. Hence an insurrectionary movement commenced, which eventuated in the severance of the union of Texas with Mexico, and the establishment of an independent government. The battle of San Jacinto, in which the American arms triumphed over the prowess of Santa Anna, the Mexican general, decided the fate of Texas, and left the inhabitants at liberty to establish a government according to their own choice; and they proceeded to frame one after the model of the United States, in which civil and religious rights and privileges were secured alike to all sects and parties. This opened the way for the missionary of the cross to enter and proclaim salvation unto the people.

Among those who removed into Texas, there were several members of our own Church, some of whom were local preachers; and with a view to preserve their piety, they assembled together for mutual edification and comfort, sending, in the mean time, a loud and urgent call to their brethren in the United States for help. The Missionary Society responded to this call, and accepted of the services of the Rev. Dr. Ruter, a member of the Pittsburgh conference, and president of the Allegheny College, who resigned his presidency, and offered himself as a missionary for Texas. Accordingly, in the summer of 1837, accompanied by two young preachers, Dr. Ruter entered

upon his work in this young republic. They found the people ripe for the gospel. Though vice and ignorance of spiritual things prevailed to an alarming extent, yet the missionaries were received with great respect and affection, and they soon succeeded in forming circuits, and establishing preaching in different parts of the country. In St. Augustine, Nacogdoches, Houston, and Washington, they commenced building houses of worship, the people subscribing liberally toward the expense, besides contributing about $1000 toward the support of their preacher. This promising state of things induced the proper authorities of the Church to send the next year additional laborers into that fruitful field, and they have been gradually increased until, at the last General Conference, the Texas annual conference was organized, and they have now nineteen preachers, and about one thousand Church members, nearly as many as there were in the United States at the first conference in 1773.

Soon after the arrival of Dr. Ruter in Texas, he adopted measures, being encouraged by the liberal offers of the government and the people, for establishing a college. And though he did not live to realize the object of his wishes in this respect, being cut off in the midst of his usefulness, yet the enterprise has been prosecuted by his successors in the work, and the college has been erected and gone into operation tinder the most favorable circumstances. The government appropriated eight thousand eight hundred and eighty-three acres of land for its endowment, granted a liberal charter, and "Rutersville," the name of the township in which the college is located, commemorates the talents and zeal with which its founder prosecuted the noble enterprise, and the veneration which is felt for his memory by his survivors. It is pleasantly situated, in a healthy and delightful part of the country, and promises much usefulness to the rising population of that growing republic.

This, therefore, is a most promising field of missionary labor, giving sure indications of an ample harvest of souls to its enterprising cultivators. The constant influx of Germans into our country, especially into some of the cities and villages of the west, suggested the necessity of establishing missions for their special benefit. Accordingly, in 1836, a mission was commenced in Cincinnati, and it was given in charge of the Rev. William Nast, a young German preacher of sound education and deep piety, who could preach and write both in the German and English languages. He entered upon his work with an enlightened zeal, and was successful in making good and lasting impressions upon the minds and hearts of many of his countrymen. The work has gone on steadily from that day to this, spreading in various directions in the states of Ohio and Pennsylvania, in Wheeling, Pittsburgh, and a number of other places, so that there are now 1840) six German missionaries employed, and there are on the several circuits upward of four hundred members of the Church.

These missions have been much aided by the American Bible and Tract Societies, which have made liberal donations of German Bibles and tracts for gratuitous distribution among the people. In the city of New York a mission was commenced this year for the benefit of the French population who were resident here. A young Frenchman by the name of Williamson had recently been made a partaker of pardoning mercy, had become a member of our Church, and be felt a great concern of mind for the salvation of his countrymen, many of whom were "as sheep without a shepherd." There had, indeed, been a society of French people attached to our Church in the city of New York for a number of years, the germ of which was imported here from the island of Guernsey, where our British brethren had labored with success for a series of years.

Mr. Williamson hired a room for preaching, and has continued his labors with diligence to the present time; but such are the prejudices of the greater proportion of the French population, that his congregation has been but small, and the prospects of success are rather gloomy. A few, however, have been brought from darkness to light, who, it is hoped, may "be faithful until death."

These, together with the constant enlargement of our work in the new countries, and the more vigorous action generally throughout our borders, gave us an increase to our membership this year of upward of forty thousand. The Georgia conference, stimulated by the example of their brethren in other places, had made, and were now making, spirited and successful efforts in the cause of education. In 1835 they had commenced a classical and manual labor school in Covington, Ga., which was soon in successful operation, exerting an enlightening and hallowing influence upon the youth intrusted to its tuition and care. A literary institution was also established for the education of females, which bids fair to confer substantial blessings upon that class of the population. In 1836 the Emory College was founded, and it has since gone into operation under the presidency of the Rev. Ignatius A. Few, whose classical learning and deep piety eminently qualify him for his station. These institutions are gathering around them the youth of the country, of both sexes, and prove the' capabilities of our people to educate their own sons and daughters, provided suitable mean are used to call them into action.

Ninety-eight preachers were located this year, six expelled, two had withdrawn, one hundred and six returned supernumerary, two hundred and sixteen superannuated, and seventeen had died.

We have already seen that the Texas mission was placed under the superintendence of Dr. Martin Ruter. Here he ended his days. He commenced his itinerant career in the early days of Methodism in New England, when he was only sixteen years of age, and was admitted on trial in the New York conference in 1801. In 1804 he went as a missionary to Montreal, in Lower Canada, where he gave great satisfaction to the people by the diligence and ability with which he discharged his duties. Though young in the ministry, he evinced a thorough acquaintance with the truths of the gospel, having applied himself with great assiduity to study, and particularly to the study of the Bible.

After filling some of the most important stations in the bounds of the New England conference, after that conference was formed, when a branch of the Book Concern was established in Cincinnati, in 1820, brother Ruter was appointed by the General Conference to the charge of that institution. In this station he continued, by a re-election in 1824, eight years, discharging its duties with great fidelity.

Before the expiration of his term as book agent, he was elected president of the Augusta College, and entered upon its duties in 1828, where he continued for about four years, when, on resigning his office, he was transferred to the Pittsburgh conference. Soon after his transfer he was called to preside over the Allegheny College, an institution which he was chiefly instrumental in establishing and putting into successful operation. This office he filled for about three years, when he resigned his station for the purpose of embarking in the more laborious and hazardous enterprise of carrying the gospel and establishing Methodism in the republic of Texas. He entered upon his work in the month of October, 1837, and soon laid plans for systematizing the labor and enlarging the boundaries of that extensive vineyard of the Lord, so is to comprehend as much as practicable within the several circuits which were formed by him and his colleagues in the missionary work.

Not content with the simple routine of labor appertaining to a Methodist preacher, being encouraged by the leading men of the republic, he devised a plan for establishing a college and other seminaries of learning; for he was always an ardent friend of literature and science. In these various labors he was incessantly engaged from the time he entered Texas until sickness compelled him to desist. His sufferings were somewhat protracted and severe. He bore them, however, with patience and submission to the divine will, and finally ended his days upon earth in peace, and the hope of eternal life.

Dr. Ruter deserves great credit for his attainments in literature and science. Born in humble circumstances, receiving nothing more than a common school education, and then entering the itinerancy at the early age of sixteen -- an example not to be imitated if it can be consistently avoided-he was deprived of those literary advantages in his youth, which are generally considered essential to eminence it a more mature time of life. Yet he surmounted the difficulties of his situation, and astonished both himself and his friends by his literary and scientific attainments. To the study of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, as well as the French, he applied himself with successful diligence, and gave evidence of how much may be accomplished by a constant application of our powers, and an assiduous improvement of our time and opportunities, even in the midst of discouraging obstacles, and the want of the most appropriate means of instruction.

It is not, indeed, pretended that his mind was of the first order. For strength of intellectual powers, and for depth and variety of learning, many others stood far in advance of Dr. Ruter. But, possessed of a good understanding, and being impelled by an ardent thirst for knowledge, he "sowed beside all waters," and in due time reaped a plentiful harvest. It would, indeed, be a reflection upon the discernment of those who awarded to him the honors of a college twice, by conferring first the degree of A. M., and secondly of B. D., to suppose that his literary and theological attainments were not respectable, and his deportment irreproachable Equally strong in his favor is the fact of his having been elected to the presidency of the Augusta and Allegheny Colleges, and of their having prospered tinder his oversight though it may be admitted that in these stations he did not shine with a brilliancy equal to general expectation.

Divine grace had done much for him. Having been made a partaker of justification by faith in Jesus Christ in the days of his youth, and having entered upon the duties of an itinerant minister ere he had attained maturity of age and experience, he won for himself, by the blessing of God on his exertions, the character of a faithful servant of God, living and dying in the confidence and affection of his brethren. As a preacher of righteousness he was "in doctrine uncorrupt," "in labors abundant," and in success considerable. His forsaking the inviting fields of literature and science, in which he had moved with so much ease to himself and satisfaction to his friends, to encounter the hardships and privations of a missionary of the cross in the wilds of Texas, evinces at once the strength of his faith, and of his sincere devotion to the cause of Christ. He was now about fifty-two years of age, was surrounded with domestic comforts, lived in the midst of his friends, and might therefore have spent the remainder of his days in comparative ease and comfort; but the wants of the sons and daughters of Texas came up before him, accompanied with those impressive motives which, to a heart like his, were irresistible; and he obeyed the call and ran to the rescue of those who were ready to "perish for lack of knowledge." He went; and before he fell, he had established a reputation among the people of Texas as imperishable as the town of "Rutersville," which name was designed to perpetuate the memory of the man who sacrificed his life for their

salvation.

Others might be mentioned, no less eminent for their Christian virtues and ministerial usefulness, "whose praise is in all the Churches" where they were known and their worth duly appreciated. But their "record is on high," and their reward is with their God, in the midst of those who "turned many to righteousness. Such were John A. Waterman, of the Pittsburgh conference, and Robert L. Kennon, of the Alabama conference, who, by their early piety and great assiduity in their calling, rose to eminence among their brethren, and died equally honored and lamented. Andrew Hemphill also, of Irish extraction, gave evidence of that unreserved devotion to God which distinguished most of the early Methodist preachers, and who, for about thirty-five years, maintained the purity and dignity of the Christian ministry.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 615,212; Last Year: 575,077; Increase: 40,135 -- Colored This Year: 79,236; Last Year: 76,240; Increase: 2,996 -- Indians This Year: 2,101; Last Year: 2,695; Decrease: 594 -- Local Preachers This Year: 5,792; Last Year: 4,954; Increase: 838 -- Traveling Preachers This Year: 3,332; Last Year: 3,147; Increase: 185 -- Total This Year: 705,673; Last Year: 662,113 -- Increase: 43,560

1839 The general interests of the Church were this year promoted by the simultaneous and energetic action of the different branches of ecclesiastical regulations, all of which were brought to bear upon the understandings and hearts of the people under our influence. But the most important accession which was made to the work was the reinforcement sent to the Oregon mission. After the arrival of the last-mentioned family, and holding a general consultation, it was finally agreed that brother Jason Lee should return to the United States, with a view to strengthen the mission by procuring the aid of additional missionaries, farmers, mechanics, etc. Being remote from all civilized society, except the small settlement at Williamette, and the members of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Vancouver, it seemed essential to the prosperity of the mission, that it should be furnished with means to itself with food, buildings, and all necessary apparatus for carrying on farming, and the needful mechanic arts. Accordingly, arrangements were made for sending an additional family; and, on the 9th of October of this year, a company, consisting of fifty persons, including six missionaries, with their wives and children, a physician, wife and child, a missionary steward, wife and two children, two farmers, wives and children, two carpenters, a cabinet-maker, and a blacksmith, their wives and children, together with five female teachers, sailed from the port of New York for the Oregon territory, by way of the Sandwich islands. They all arrived in safety, after a voyage of about ten months.

But, what was most cheering to the friends of missions, before the arrival of this company a most glorious work of religion had commenced among the Indians of Oregon, which terminated in the conversion of not less than one thousand of these degraded natives to the Christian faith. A reformation so sudden, deep, and wide, among such a people, had not been known in modern days, and it tended mightily to revive the missionary spirit among us, which had, indeed, begun to languish in many places. A short account of the manner in which this marvelous work commenced and spread among the people will naturally be expected.

It had been adopted as a maxim from the beginning of our Indian missions, that Christianity must precede civilization. Hence our missionaries among the aborigines of our country were always instructed, first of all, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to them with all simplicity and plainness.

This was especially charged upon the missionaries who went to Oregon. And though the circumstances with which they found themselves surrounded compelled the Lees to attend so much to secular things as to engross most of their time for the first year, so that they could give but a very small portion of their attention to religious instruction, yet, on the arrival of additional laborers, they applied themselves to the work with great assiduity, and soon saw the fruit of their labors in the conversion and salvation of souls. The manner in which this work commenced evinces the truth of our remark, namely, that the Indians must be reformed in heart and life by the gospel of Jesus Christ, before we can hope to reclaim them from barbarism to the practice and blessings of civilized life. How could it be otherwise? Ministers of the gospel are not sent primarily to teach human science, or to train people in domestic and political economy. Their message is of a different character. It is to inform the understanding and reform the heart and life, by the application of divine truth to the conscience and to the judgment. When this reformation is effected, the rest follows as a consequence. Their minds become flexible, their hearts tender, and they nay then easily be led on to perceive and to appreciate the blessings of civil and domestic economy, and finally to attend to farming and mechanical pursuits. The experience of more than twenty years, among a variety of Indian tribes, has demonstrated the truth of these remarks. So it was in Oregon in the present revival. The missionaries became convinced that they must be more holy in order to be more useful. That they might become so they set apart seasons for prayer and mutual edification. First one Indian and then another, beholding the fervency and frequency of their devotions, requested to be instructed in the nature of these things. Their request was granted. Convictions followed in the same manner, attended with the same circumstances of spiritual distress, and earnest prayer for deliverance, as are seen among civilized people who are impressed with gospel truth. When one and then another were delivered, their joyful hearts led them to say to their heathen brethren, "Come and hear, and I will declare what God hath done for my soul." Their words, uttered from the fulness of their hearts, took effect: others were brought under conviction for sin, sought by faith and prayer, and found "redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." In this way the work begun, and in this way it went on and spread, and is still spreading, so that, as before said, not less than one thousand of these people have been "brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God." And by the use of the same means we have no doubt that it will continue its saving and hallowing influence until all the hills and valleys of Oregon shall echo with the songs of redeeming love. The other missions upon our western frontiers were this year prosecuted with vigor and perseverance, and with various degrees of success.

Another occurrence of this year exerted very general interest, and was attended with many blessings: -- I allude to the Centenary of Methodism. As the first Methodist society was formed in London in the month of November, 1739, so 1839 became properly the one hundredth year of Methodism. Accordingly, our brethren in Europe and America prepared to celebrate the event with all due solemnity and religious fervor. The 25th of November was fixed upon as the day for this religious celebration. That it might be made a season of spiritual improvement, and at the same time yield an increase of means for extending the work of God on every hand, it was determined to blend together, as far as might be, religious exercises and the making collections for missionary and educational purposes, and for the support of the worn-out preachers, and the widows, children and orphans of preachers. A very general pulsation was felt throughout the entire Methodist community in favor of the celebration, and the several annual conferences adopted measures for

its observance on the day appointed. As nearly as can be ascertained, the amount collected was divided as follows: About one half was to be devoted for the benefit of superannuated preachers, the widows, children, and orphans of preachers, two-tenths for the support of missions, and the remainder for the promotion of education. The manner in which the celebration was conducted had a hallowing influence upon the Church generally, and tended very much to increase the spirit of devotion, to give more enlarged views of the divine goodness in raising up such a man as John Wesley, and in blessing the world with such a system as Methodism. Sermons were preached, and addresses delivered in almost every society throughout the connection, both on the 25th of November, the day on which the foundation of Methodism was laid by forming the first class, and on previous days for the purpose of taking up collections for the objects specified. The exact amount subscribed I have not been able to ascertain, but it must have been in the neighborhood of $600,000, though it is not likely that the whole will be collected.

It was indeed a sublime spectacle to contemplate the assemblage of more than one million of people, joined by perhaps three times that number of friends, uniting to offer up thanksgiving to God for his boundless mercy to a lost world, manifested in the gift of his Son! And as one of the many rivulets which flow from that exhaustless fountain of eternal love ran through the channel opened by Wesley, it seemed right and proper for his numerous sons in the gospel to commemorate the day which gave the first impetus to this flowing stream of grace and mercy. Some, indeed, affected to call it a species of idolatry. But why is it any more an act of idolatry to praise God for raising up, and blessing the world with such men as John Wesley, than it is to praise him for any other blessings, whether temporal or spiritual? We praise God for the heavens and the earth, with all their much and varied productions. We praise him for the gospel, and all its attendant blessings. Why should we not also praise and adore him for those human instrumentalities by which the world has been enlightened and reformed? It is indeed marvelous that many of those whose tender consciences will not permit them to render honor to whom honor is due, do not scruple to defame the character of those men, who, like John Wesley, have rendered the most important services to mankind, merely because they have dissented from them in opinion on some unimportant points! Did we ascribe that glory to man which is due to God alone, and detract from the merits of Jesus Christ by ascribing the glory of our salvation to human wisdom and righteousness, we might well be accused of idolatry. But we do no such thing. We honor John Wesley because God honored him, and because he, by his preaching and his whole life, reflected the honor and glory of God on his fellow-men. By thus distinguishing between God and his servant, making the one dependent on the other, and yet so connecting them that the servant cannot act and move, nor bring any thing good to pass without the direction and aid of the Master, we secure the glory which is due to God alone, while we permit his servant to shine in those borrowed rays reflected upon him from the "Sun of righteousness." Nor do we fear any thing from the pride of sect. It is not sectarianism which mars the beauty of gospel holiness. A man may be as proud, as vainglorious, and as much sectarian in his feelings, while pleading against all sectarianism, as if he were the most bigoted sectarist in the universe. All these things are mere accidents of the Christian character. They may or may not exist injuriously. It depends altogether upon the state of the heart. If the heart be humbled and purified by grace, by the energetic working of the Holy Spirit, pride of all sorts is expelled, and love to universal man takes its place. This alone is destructive of that exceptionable sectarian spirit by which the religious bigot is actuated.

We humbly trust that this love was excited and diffused by this centennial celebration. It gave us an opportunity of reviewing first principles, of estimating anew the numberless blessings bestowed upon us as a people, of praising God for the past, and of clustering together motives for future trust and diligence. Nor is it doubted but that the thank offerings which were poured out upon the altar of God, from so many pure hearts, had a tendency to enkindle and increase the gratitude of thousands of devoted souls, as well as to nourish the spirit of pure benevolence and charity. With these views and feelings, the event was commemorated, and so long as they are cherished, so long shall we continue to bless God for giving to the world such a man as John Wesley. The Indiana conference had taken measures for the establishment of a literary institution within its bounds as early as 1837, by the appointment of agents to solicit funds for its endowment, and for erecting suitable buildings, etc. In 1838 it went into operation by the appointment of professors, and receiving students. This year, the Indiana Asbury University, as it was called, received its president and faculty, and has taken its place and rank among the rising stars of literature and science, which were appearing in our hemisphere, to enlighten the rising generation.

Two colleges had been commenced under the patronage of the Holston conference, and were now in successful operation. And St. Charles College was rising into being, under the patronage of the Missouri conference.

Besides the Emory College in the bounds of the Georgia conference, there were under its auspices the Georgia Female College, the Georgia Conference Manual Labor School, Collingwsorth Institute, and the Wesley Manual Labor School, all of which are exerting an enlightening influence upon those portions of the population for whose benefit they were especially established. The Cokesbury Manual Labor School was founded by the South Carolina conference, and was now beginning to shed its light upon the rising population of that region of country. The New Jersey conference also had succeeded in establishing two academies within its bounds, one for male, and the other for female students. They both promise usefulness. Two academics had been recently commenced in the bounds of the New Hampshire conference, called the Newbury Seminary, and South New Market Seminary. From these facts it would appear that the Methodist Episcopal Church was determined to redeem her character from the imputation thrown upon it from time to time, not without some show of reason, that she was indifferent to the cause of learning. If her liberality in collecting funds for the purpose of endowing and sustaining her literary institutions shall be in proportion to her zeal in founding and getting them into operation, she will deserve the thanks of the community, and will confer untold blessings upon her sons and daughters. Otherwise, however, these institutions will but linger out a sickly existence, and perhaps perish for want of that nursing care which she is abundantly able to afford them.

Ninety-eight preachers were this year returned on the Minutes supernumerary, -- two hundred and sixty-one superannuated, one hundred and ten located, thirty-two had died, eight withdrawn, and six had been expelled.

Death had this year thinned our ranks, by taking away some of our oldest and most useful ministers, without, at the same time, sparing some of the younger class.

Among the most aged, and by no means the least able who had gone to their reward, was Thomas Morrell, of the New Jersey conference. He was born in November, 1747, and during the revolutionary war served in the continental army in the capacity of a captain, under the command

of Washington. In this service his patriotism and courage were equally manifested, in encountering the difficulties and sharing the dangers of that protracted struggle for our national independence. In the battle on Long Island, which terminated so disastrously to the continental troops, Captain Morrell fell under a severe wound he received from the shot of the enemy, and was taken a prisoner. On being exchanged, and recovering from his wound, be resumed his place in the army, and continued to render important services to his country during the remainder of the war. At its termination, however, like most of his fellow-soldiers, through the poverty of his country, he was thrown upon his own resources for a livelihood, but he succeeded in procuring a competency for himself and family, and at his death bequeathed a valuable legacy to his widow and orphan children. In 1783, the year in which the war ended, and the independence of the United States was acknowledged, Mr. Morrell was brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, through the instrumentality of the Rev. John Haggerty, a Methodist preacher. In 1787 he was admitted into the traveling ministry, and he soon gave evidence of those eminent talents which distinguished him as an "able minister of the New Testament." On the death of Washington, in 1799, Mr. Morrell was one among the many who paid their respects to that illustrious chief by preaching a funeral discourse on the occasion. In this he gave vent to his own feelings of veneration for the general who had led the armies of America to victory, while he commemorated the virtues which adorned his character, and the valorous deeds by which he achieved the liberty and independence of his country.

After filling some of the most important stations, such as New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, where he acquitted himself alike honorably to himself and us fully to the people, in 1803, on account of physical debility, he was compelled to restrict his ministerial labors; he accordingly located, and settled in Elizabethtown, in the state of New Jersey, where he continued to reside, respected and beloved, until his death. Some years before his death, at the request of those brethren who loved and honored him as a fellow-laborer who had once "borne the heat and burden of the day," he was readmitted into the Philadelphia conference in the relation of a superannuated preacher, his income being amply sufficient for his support without drawing upon the funds of the conference.

It is no small evidence of his uniform piety, of his integrity, and of his talents as a preacher of righteousness, that the people of Elizabethtown always heard him with pleasure and profit, and looked up to him as a counselor in whose wisdom they reposed entire confidence. Here, therefore, he continued his ministrations with edifying delight, and his sermons were always characterized by accurate arrangement, by deep thought, and minute analysis, bearing equally upon the understanding and affections of his hearers. Equally removed from fanaticism on the one hand, and a cold, lifeless formality on the other, his sermons partook neither of passionate exclamations nor of dull metaphysical speculations, but of a happy mixture of sound argument and moving appeals, addressed alternately to the judgment and to the passions. Temperate in all things, and equally removed from idleness and excessive labor, he preserved the vigor of his constitution to a good old age, being, at the time of his death, ninety-one years old. Such was the strength of his intellectual and physical powers, that he continued to occupy the pulpit generally once every sabbath, until within about three years of his death, when the feebleness of age obliged him to desist. To this, however, he submitted with the same cheerful acquiescence which he had exemplified in the more active duties of life. During three years of passive submission to the divine

will, he bore the marks of the mature Christian, waiting patiently until his allotted time came, and finally glided peacefully into the ocean of eternity, where he no doubt drinks from its perennial waters with unceasing delight.

He was only partially known to the writer, and then mostly near the close of his life. But he appeared to unite in himself those graces, and those moral and intellectual qualities, which rendered him every way companionable, fitted him for usefulness in the sphere in which he moved, and enabled him to derive enjoyment from every lawful source, whether purely religious, or from those creatures of God which are sanctified by the word of God and prayer. His good common sense, sound understanding, fervent piety, and a zeal characterized and guided by discretion, enabled him to meet in a becoming manner the various exigencies of human life, and to dispose of the subjects which came up for consideration in an intelligent and satisfactory manner. In the latter years of his life he delighted in reviewing past events, in recounting incidents which had come under his own knowledge, and in magnifying the grace of God in Christ Jesus as exemplified in his own personal experience. In these social interviews there was "cheerfulness without sadness," and a due mixture of the gravity of the Christian minister with the vivacity and buoyancy of a mind cheerful and happy in a consciousness of its own innocence. These things, together with that spirit of hospitality which was displayed under his roof rendered him an agreeable and edifying companion in those social interviews which he enjoyed with his friends. Indeed, it might he said of him that he was a cheerful old man, cheerful without levity, and grave without sadness, giving a practical illustration of the ministerial, social, and domestic virtues, worthy the imitation of all. And joining a prudent economy with industry, neatness, and plainness, he exhibited altogether the picture of an upright and perfect man in his day and generation, equally distant from ostentatious show on the one hand, and a vulgar meanness on the other. Whatever infirmities, therefore, may have oppressed him, grace enabled him to bear them with becoming patience, and the natural wanderings of an imperfect judgment were corrected by "the wisdom which cometh from above," while his involuntary transgressions were atoned for by the same blood through which he was at "first accepted in the Beloved."

Samuel Merwin, of the New York conference, had also exchanged labor for rest during the past year. He was a descendant of one of the New England pilgrims, and was born in Durham, Connecticut, September 13, 1777. While quite young his father and family removed and settled in New Durham, in the state of New York, then a wilderness country. Like young Timothy, he was taught, by his pious father and mother, the Holy Scriptures and to fear the Lord from his youth, the good effects of which appeared in his after life. His father’s house being the resort of Methodist preachers, who, in those days, were penetrating every nook and comer in "search of the lost sheep of the house of Israel," when but a lad he became, through their instrumentality, a subject of awakening and justifying grace, and was received into the Church. The ardor of his love and fervency of his zeal soon led him forth in prayer and exhortation, more especially in beseeching the youth of his acquaintance "to be reconciled to God." Giving satisfactory evidence of his capacity and zeal in the cause of God, when about twenty years of age he was, by the presiding elder, employed on a circuit. In the year 1800 he was admitted on trial in the New York conference as an itinerant preacher; and it is greatly to his credit to he able to say in truth, that from that day to his death he never halted or turned aside from his vocation as a traveling preacher in the Methodist connection.

Soon after he entered upon his itinerant career, namely, in the year 1803, he was sent as a missionary to Lower Canada, and took his first station in Quebec, a place almost wholly given to the idolatry of Roman Catholicism, and where Protestantism had little more than a "name to live." Such were the discouraging circumstances attending this first effort to plant Methodism in that strong-hold of iniquity, that brother Merwin continued his ministrations only about six weeks, when he left for Montreal. During this short stay, however, he made a favorable impression on some hearts, which opened the way for future efforts with greater promise of success. In Montreal he continued to preach, with great acceptance and some success, the remainder of the year; when he was removed to the city of New York, where he rendered himself respected and beloved for his devotion to the came of Jesus Christ.

It is not compatible with this brief memoir to follow our beloved brother through the various stations he filled from year to year, and from place to place. His talents as a preacher, and his skill as a ruler, made it expedient to give him some of the most commanding stations in the bounds of the New England, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore conferences, to which he was alternately removed, and stationed in Boston, Providence, New York, Albany, Troy, Brooklyn, the Rhinebeck and New York districts, and in the cities of Philadelphia and Baltimore. In all these places he so acquitted himself as to leave the savor of a good name behind him. For several years before his death he was much oppressed with bodily infirmities. These were of such a character as often to threaten him with a premature death, and hence deprived the Church, at times, of his valuable services. A burning fever at one time, a paralysis at another, and constant soreness in one or the other, and sometimes both of his legs, so severe as almost to deprive him of their use, constituted a complication of diseases which called forth the exercise of much patience to enable him to bear them without murmuring. Yet such was his flaming zeal in the cause of God, that even in the midst of these infirmities he persevered in his work with his accustomed diligence, without any other abatement than what stern necessity imposed upon him from actual prostration of physical strength. Ann perhaps he may be included among the most punctual of our preachers -- not only in attending to every thing at the time, but also in scrupulously observing every part of his duty as a preacher, both as a presiding and ruling elder in the Church of God. But the time at length came when he must resign up his stewardship to Him from whom he had received it. It was no doubt a source of severe affliction to him, as it was of grief to his friends, that, after having filled so many important stations with so much distinction and success, a remonstrance was made against his being stationed among them from a people who had formerly profited by his labors; but it is a consolation to know that it originated from a supposition that his bodily infirmities only disqualified him from discharging his duties with success; and also that the people to whom he was sent received him with open arms, and treated him with the tenderness and respect which were due to his character. His last station was Rhinebeck, N. Y., the residence of the late venerated Garrettson, and the scene of much of his active labors. Here, during the second year of his labors, he sickened and died. The last time he entered the pulpit he was assisted to the church, being too feeble to sustain himself, when he delivered his last, solemn message to the people of his charge.

After this he gradually sunk away into the arms of death, leaving behind him a consoling testimony of his faith in Jesus Christ, and of his preparedness, through the atoning merits, to meet his Judge and Redeemer. He left a widow, with two daughters and four sons, to mourn their loss, one of whom is in the itinerant ministry, and, it is hoped, may yet fill the vacuum occasioned by the death

of his lamented father.

There were many excellences which clustered around the character of our beloved brother Merwin; and the high estimation in which he was held by the Church may be inferred from the important stations which he filled, as before enumerated. In the sacred Scriptures he was deeply read, and familiarly acquainted with their contents. At an early period of his ministry he adopted the method of consulting these records of our salvation in consecutive order, and continued the practice so long as he was able, reading two chapters, one in the Old and one in the New Testament, every morning before breakfast. By this commendable practice the words of the Holy Ghost were ever fresh in his memory, and hence his judgment was constantly tinder the clear light of those luminous pages, and his sermons interlarded with quotations in Scripture language. He did not, therefore, imitate the injudicious practice of those who substitute "profane babblings," or the aphorisms of heathenism, for the words of inspiration, nor the dry metaphysics of the schools of human philosophy for the lofty and energetic language of inspired prophets and apostles. As a preacher he was sometimes highly eloquent. His personal appearance was commanding, his voice clear and musical, his enunciation full and distinct, and with these qualifications; when fully inspired with his subject, he commanded profound attention, while he poured forth, in accents strong and persuasive, the streams of gospel truth with great power and effect. We cannot say that his sermons were characterized by that systematic arrangement and minute analysis, nor that profoundness of thought by which some others have been distinguished; but there as generally a glow of warmth which indicated a heart filled with the fire of divine love, and they were then delivered with a pathos and fluency with which none but Samuel Merwin could have delivered them under the same circumstances.

Sometimes, indeed, he failed. In this, however, he was by no means singular. For who that has had any experience in public speaking, especially in extemporaneous addresses, has not felt his mind at times barren, his utterance almost choked, as if it were next to impossible to make either the understanding, heart, or tongue play and perform its part? Whenever, however, he felt these embarrassments, he generally had a method of helping himself out of his difficulty by some innocent sally of wit, or by adverting incidentally to a topic somewhat foreign to the one under immediate consideration. At these times his ready wit betrayed him into eccentricities which seemed to detract a little from the dignity of the pulpit, while it relieved himself and his audience from an ennui [boredom -- DVM] which they mutually felt coming over them. An instance of this sort occurred once while he was preaching a missionary sermon in the Allen Street church, in the city of New York. Feeling somewhat embarrassed in his mind, and perceiving that his congregation were inclining to a listlessness of spirit, he suddenly paused, and, calling to a preacher who was sitting in a slip in the body of the church, he said, "Brother B_____, you must come up here and help me, for I cannot get along with this great subject." The preacher replied, with the same freedom with which he had been addressed, "It is in good hands -- therefore go on and you will conquer." This innocent artifice brought him out of the whirling eddies into which he had been carried, and, unfurling his sails, he gently glided off upon the sea of gospel truth, much to the satisfaction of all present. To those who heard him often there appeared a sameness in some parts of his discourses, and more especially in his addresses, as if he had treasured up in his memory a set of phrases which he considered peculiarly adapted to the subject, and might therefore be often repeated, not only without weariness, but with good effect. The lively and

energetic manner, however, in which he generally delivered himself, intermixed with sudden thoughts of inspiration, and all poured forth from a full heart in strains of gospel truth and persuasive eloquence, made ample amends for any defects arising from a repetition of the same thoughts, and sent the hearer home pleased with the speaker, and in love with his theme. I remember well that, when stationed in the city of New York, in 1830, he was called upon to preach a sermon in the Forsyth Street church, on the 4th of July, and a proposition to take up a collection in favor of the American Colonization Society had been declined by the trustees; -- on this occasion brother Merwin, warming with his subject, rising with the importance and grandeur of his theme, now soared away into the regions of bold thought and vivid imagination, and then melting into the tenderest strains of pathetic and impassioned eloquence, his hearers were alternately raised with expanded and elevated views of truth and duty, and overwhelmed with deep and softened emotions of joy, love, and gratitude. Such, indeed, was the power which he exerted over his audience, that he had them under complete command, and taking advantage of this state of feeling, he suddenly turned from his subject, and asked, "Shall we take a collection for the American Colonization Society?" The appeal was irresistible. "Yes! yes!" responded from every part of the house, and the trustees were compelled to reverse their own decision, and present the plates to receive the free-will offerings of the people, whose hearts had been made generous by the powerful appeals of the orator of the day. An acquaintance of mine, not a member of the Church, who was present, came to me and asked me to lend him a dollar; as he had no money with him, that he might put it in the plate. All were filled with rapture, and the more pleased for having an opportunity to let their alms accompany their prayers and praises. The amount of the collection told the rest.

Brother Merwin was a great friend and powerful advocate of all our institutions, such as missionary, Sunday school, and other charitable societies; and, while filling the office of a presiding elder on the New York district, exerted an effective influence in their favor by attending their respective boards of management, and otherwise promoting their benevolent objects. At their anniversaries he was often called to speak in their behalf, and he pleaded their cause with most powerful effect, and was always successful; by the playful manner in which he did it, in drawing money from the pockets of the people in their support.

I remember on one occasion, at an anniversary of the Missionary Society within the bounds of the Philadelphia conference, held in the city of Philadelphia during the session of the General Conference of 1832, he delivered an address, after two or three others had spoken, which electrified the congregation by one of those sudden bursts of eloquence for which he was famous, accompanied with a humorous allusion to the collection which was about to be made, and which might have been more highly appreciated had it been a little more grave. These sallies of wit, however, suited him better than they would others of a different turn of mind, because they seemed to come unsought, as the spontaneous effusions of a heart overflowing with feelings of kindness and brotherly affection. The manner in which he deported himself toward some of his younger and less-informed brethren sometimes gave them offense. It had the appearance, as they thought, of a cold and haughty reserve, as if he thought them beneath his notice. A nearer approach, however, and a more intimate acquaintance, removed the unfavorable impression, and let him into your heart as a brother beloved. And to those who shared his confidence and won his affection, he unfolded himself with the utmost freedom and familiarity, making himself agreeable

and edifying by humorous anecdotes and edifying incidents, which he delighted to detail. Of these he possessed a fund, and could easily make them contribute to the entertainment of a company by the lively manner in which he recited them. Such, indeed, were his imitative powers, that he could assume the voice and gestures, and mimic the tone and accent of any person with whom he had been conversant; be grave or comical to suit the nonce, or to give a true representation of the facts and incidents he wished to rehearse. And though he might have indulged his natural propensity too freely for his own and the good of others, yet he succeeded to admiration in rendering vice odious, in making folly appear ridiculous, and in exposing absurdity to its merited contempt; while at other times he clothed the excellences of the Christian character in those attractive charms which were calculated to with the affection of all who beheld them with a believing and impartial mind.

He has left a large circle of friends and acquaintances behind in the various places where he was stationed, who will no doubt readily recognize these traits in the character of Samuel Merwin; the mention of whose name revives those recollections of past days which the writer of this sketch enjoyed in common with many others, in the society of the friend of his youth, the companion of his riper years, and with whom he has often wept and rejoiced during the vicissitudes of an acquaintance in the ministry of nearly forty years. And this record is made with the more pleasure, because during that time nothing worth naming ever occurred to interrupt or mar for an hour a friendship begun in and cemented by Christian love, and kept up by mutual exchanges of fraternal regard and ministerial labors and sympathies. May this friendship be matured and perpetuated in heaven! So he it, O Lord, for Christ’s sake!

"Death loves a shining mark." This is poetry; and it may be true in its application to many individuals, and the more true in the imagination of those who mourn under the bereavement of near and valued friends; but we have a more infallible authority for saying that "the wicked shall not live out half their days." The fact is, that death makes no distinction in its victims in respect to age, rank, sex, merit or demerit. All -- all are alike exposed to his ravages, and must, therefore, sooner or later, yield, however reluctantly, to his despotic sway. But whatever may be the truth in this respect, death had hit a shining mark during the past year by shooting his deadly weapon into the heart of Wilbur Fisk, president of the Wesleyan University, and bishop elect of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

He was born in Brattleboro, in the state of Vermont, August 31, 1792. His juvenile days, after arriving at a suitable age, were spent at school, and he soon evinced an aptitude of mind to learn, by the progress he made in his elementary lessons of instruction. Though at the early age of twelve he gave evidence of a pious heart, yet while at the preparatory school, in which he was fitting for college, he gradually lost his serious impressions, and mingled with other thoughtless youth in the gayeties and amusements of the world. At the proper time he entered as a student in Burlington College, Vermont; but that institution being closed for a season while the late war was raging between this country and Great Britain, he was sent to Brown University, in Providence, Rhode Island, where he graduated, with equal honor to himself and satisfaction to his friends. He then commenced the study of law, under the instruction of a distinguished attorney; but the next year, 1816, he went to the city of Baltimore, and was employed as a private tutor in the family of a gentleman in that city, continuing, in the mean time, the study of the law. He was soon interrupted in these pursuits by a violent attack of a pulmonary disease, which so prostrated his physical

powers that, under medical advice, he relinquished, for the time, all thought of any profession which would require any unusual exercise of his lungs. Not being able to pursue his studies, nor to attend the duties of his vocation as tutor, as soon as his slowly returning health would permit he left Baltimore, and returned to the scenes of his early studies in Burlington, Vermont. But here he relapsed into his former disease, which for a while threatened his life. This sickness, however, by the mercy of God, was made subservient to his spiritual salvation, by reviving in his mind those religious impressions which had been effaced; and during a powerful awakening then spreading in Lyndon, Vermont, he was made a partaker of justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. This great change opened, not only new sources of enjoyment, but also new and enlarged subjects of contemplation, and finally led him into a field of labor for which he seemed designated by the divine Head of the Church. It was not long, therefore, before he began to exercise his gifts as a minister of Jesus Christ, and to give that evidence of his call to and qualification for the work, that led, in 1818, to his admission on trial in the New England conference. He commenced his itinerant labors among his own native hills in Vermont, inhaling the pure atmosphere, drinking the wholesome water, and enjoying the society of his Christian friends of his native state; in doing which, though often preaching, he measurably regained his health, and manifested great vigor of intellect and decision of character. From this place he was removed to Charlestown, Massachusetts.

Suffering a partial relapse into his former complaint, as might have been anticipated from his being confined in the station of Charlestown, at the close of his work in that place, in 1820, he was compelled to take a supernumerary relation. In 1823, however, he had so far recovered as to be able to resume his itinerant career, in the office of presiding elder over the Vermont district. Here, amidst the scenes of an itinerant life, traversing the hills and valleys of his native state again, deriving benefits from traveling constantly from place to place, and exercising his lungs in preaching as his strength would permit, he gradually regained his health, and was finally able to discharge the duties of his station with efficiency and success, to the great satisfaction of both preachers and people. On the establishment of the Wilbraham Academy he was elected its principal, and was therefore compelled to remit the more healthy exercise of a traveling preacher; for the labor of superintending a school for the education and training of youth, preparatory to their entrance either upon the active duties of life; or as students into the higher seminaries of learning. Here he began more especially to unfold those moral and intellectual powers for which he was distinguished, and which he applied so usefully to his fellow-men the remaining days of his life. In this employment he continued, attending, in, the mean time, as a delegate, the General Conference of 1824 and 1828, until he was transferred to the presidency of the Wesleyan University, in 1831. Upon the duties of this station he entered with great ardor and intelligence, and succeeded in gaining for it a character which commanded the public confidence and affection.

Partly for the benefit of his health, and partly for the benefit of the university, in 1835 and 1836 he made the tour of Europe, an account of which he afterward published in a large octavo volume. Its merits may be estimated from the fact that it has run through several editions, has been read with great avidity by all classes of people, and is highly appreciated by the most intelligent portion of the community. While in Europe he was appointed, by the General Conference of 1836, its delegate to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference; which office he filled with. Honor to himself, and greatly to the satisfaction of his brethren on both sides of the Atlantic. At the same conference he

was also elected a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church; but on his return to the United States he declined accepting the appointment, believing, in accordance with the views of many of his brethren, that the interests of the university had a more imperative claim upon his services, and that he could, therefore, more effectually promote the cause of God here than in the other high office to which he had been elected.

Very soon, however, the hopes of all were disappointed, in respect to his further usefulness to the Church militant, by his sickness and death. The pulmonary disease with which he had been afflicted, with less or more severity, now for about nineteen years, began to make rapid inroads upon his constitution, and he was compelled, in the winter of 1838, to remit his active duties and take to his bed, which proved, alas! his dying bed. His bodily sufferings were very severe and protracted. He bore them, however, with patience and fortitude, making them subservient to his more perfect ripeness for heavenly glory. His countenance, his words, and all his actions, on the bed of death, bespoke a soul full of glory and of God; and he left the most consoling evidence behind him of having finished his course with joy, and of having entered at last into the everlasting kingdom of his God.

Thus ended the days of Wilbur Fisk, D. D., and president of the Wesleyan University. His name will long be held in grateful and affectionate remembrance by those who had the happiness of his personal acquaintance, and by those who were benefited by his ministry and instructions. The following sketch of the character of Dr. Fisk is taken from a funeral discourse which was delivered by the present writer, on the occasion of his death, and which was published at the request of those who heard it. After giving a short account of his life and death, the remarks which follow were added: --

1. His learning, though, perhaps, not so deep and thorough as that of some others, was nevertheless sound, various, and of the most useful character. He graduated with honor to himself in the Brown University, and was highly respected by his fellow-students and the faculty under whom he studied. And such was his love of letters in subsequent life that he held a distinguished rank among the literati of his country, and filled with high reputation the stations he occupied at the head of literary institutions.

2. His religious experience was deep and genuine. This was fully evinced by the uniformity of his piety, the humility of his mind, and his ardent devotion to the cause of his divine Master. It was this also which created that inextinguishable thirst for the salvation f a lost world, which led him forth as a preacher of the gospel of Christ, as a powerful and fearless advocate of the cause of missions, temperance, and all those institutions of benevolence which aim at human melioration, or look to the universal spread of the gospel of the Son of God.

Though at an early period of his ministry he was called to preside over Institutions of learning, which officially confined him to a more limited sphere of action than that which was marked out by an itinerant ministry, yet he by no means circumscribed his labors to these narrow limits, but as opportunities presented, extended the sphere of his labors, in the pulpit and on the platform, wherever and whenever, so far as his time and strength would allow, calls were made for his services. And in these labors he was eminently useful, and his service were highly appreciated by all lovers of human improvement. He was therefore never "straitened in his own bowels," but stretched the line of his labors in every direction, making his voice to be heard in favor of the cause

of Christ, in all those diversities of operations by which the present age is distinguished for the diffusion of gospel light and love. In this work that fountain of divine grace which can be opened in the human heart only by a deep and genuine experience of the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, gushed out in the purest streams of the most charming eloquence, distilling "as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." His efforts to do good were limited only by his means. On a certain occasion he was heard to say, "As I have no children of my own to provide for,2 I feel it my duty to do all I can for the benefit of others." Acting on this principle, he devoted all his energies of soul and body to the best interests of his fellow-men.

3. Though deeply interested in the cause of education, yet he considered it only so far important as it was made subservient to the spiritual and eternal welfare of men. Having suffered much in his religious enjoyments while at the preparatory school and at college, on account of the irreligion which prevailed at these institutions at the time he was there, he was, when he came to feel the responsibility of his station, exceedingly solicitous to see seminaries of learning established and conducted strictly according to the principles of the gospel. Hence, when placed at the head of the university, as well as while principal of the Wilbraham Academy, he exerted all his powers to banish immorality and irreligion from their precincts, and bring the influence of Christianity, in its experimental and practical parts, to bear upon the students, and upon all concerned. And in this he succeeded even beyond what might have been expected. The holy influence which was collected around the Wesleyan University, by the power of his precept and example, seconded as he was by his associates and the official board, was extensively felt on the surrounding population, and gave it a commanding character in the community, exempting it from these exceptions which have frequently been made, with too much truth, against literary institutions. The frequent revivals of religion, which were witnessed among the students, furnished an evidence to its friends that a college may be so conducted as to insure the blessings of God on its labors, and tended powerfully to impress upon the minds of all, the spiritual as well as literary benefit to be derived from placing their sons under the wing of the Wesleyan University. I may say indeed, with confidence, that on no department of God’s vineyard has his Spirit been poured out more copiously, and the number of genuine converts been more numerous, in proportion to the population, than in this nursery of learning and religion.

How much the labors and example of its venerated president contributed to this happy result, those can testify who have borne witness to his assiduous attention to these things. The wisdom and fidelity with which he inculcated the truths of the gospel upon the minds of the students, and the fatherly manner in which he led the inquiring soul to Jesus Christ for pardon and salvation, and likewise rejoiced over the happy believer, attest the interest which he took in the spiritual as well as literary welfare of those intrusted to his care. His invariable maxim was, that sanctified learning only can be useful to mankind. And acting on this maxim, he diffused through every circle in which he moved the hallowing influences of Christianity, exhibiting in his own temper and spirit the superior excellence and claim it has upon the hearts and homage of mankind.

4. His talents as a preacher of the gospel were of a high order. He entered deeply and systematically into theological truth, and was thoroughly Wesleyan in his views of the gospel, and the methods of diffusing its blessings among mankind. Though never boisterous in his manner, but calm and collected, he was energetic, plain, and pointed, and evinced that he spoke from the fullness of his heart -- a heart thoroughly imbued with the spirit of his divine Master.

He was an original thinker. Though the field of theological truth has been so frequently surveyed, that little seems to be left for us to do but to follow on in the beaten track, yet it was evident that when Wilbur Fisk "occupied that holy place, the pulpit," he thought and arranged for himself, and clothed his thoughts in language of his own selection, which, by its appropriateness, expressed what he wished to communicate in words plain, chaste, and classical. In him there was no ostentatious show of learning, though it was evident to all who heard him, with attention, that he was no stranger to literature and science. His sermons were generally of a didactic character, and on this account might have appeared to those who did not fully enter into his views, and follow his chain of reasoning, somewhat dry and dull. His discourses, however, were far from being dull and monotonous. Though much accustomed to consecutive reasoning, to sustaining his propositions by logical deductions, yet his intimate appeal was to the Holy Scriptures; and often his addresses to the conscience were of that pungent character, and delivered with that flow of eloquence which made the sinner tremble, while he saw swept away all "his refuges of lies." On one of these occasions, I remember to have heard him in this city, in the Forsyth Street church, when, after I laving substantiated the truth of his doctrine by apposite texts of Scripture, and a close chain of reasoning, he suddenly turned upon his audience, and commenced one of those eloquent and pathetic appeals, which poured upon them like a resistless torrent, and bore them away upon the stream of truth almost whether they would or not. A minister, sitting within the railing of the altar, found himself unconsciously extending his arms to snatch the sinner from his impending ruin, and to carry him to the Lord Jesus for salvation. His manner in the pulpit was solemn, graceful, and dignified; his enunciation clear and impressive; and all his gesticulations corresponded to the purity and importance of the cause in which he was engaged. Perhaps, when unembarrassed, he came as near to the perfection of a Christian pulpit orator, as any that can be found among the ministers of the sanctuary. He never demeaned himself nor degraded the dignity of the place and the subject, by descending to quirks and witty sayings to tickle the fancy of the facetious, nor spoke with a view to produce a momentary effect, or to elicit the shout of applause. To this disgraceful finesse, so unbecoming the time, the place, the subject, and the end of preaching, Dr. Fisk never stooped; but his air was solemn, his attitude grave, his words sober, his arguments sound, and his entire object seemed to be to bring sinners to God, and to build believers up in all holy living.

5. Dr. Fisk wielded a powerful pen. The few printed sermons he has left behind him bespeak for him the sound divine, the able advocate of revealed truth, and the fearless defender of experimental and practical religion. In his controversial writings and who can avoid controversy -- while he manfully combated error and defended what he considered the truth in a style of independence becoming the ambassador of Jesus Christ, he was respectful and courteous toward his antagonists.

Though it may he admitted that in some instances he was careless in stating his arguments, and not sufficiently guarded against the insidious attacks of some with whom he was called to contend, yet the acuteness of his intellect and the force of his genius were never more eminently displayed than in his Calvinistic Controversy, and in his Address to the Members of the New England Conference. He wrote, indeed, as one who believed what he put to paper, breathing into his sentences the inspiration of truth and sincerity, and pouring forth the streams of argument and illustration with that earnestness and logical precision which cannot but enlighten and convince the

judgment.

Toward the close of his life he was engaged in a very delicate controversy, in conducting which he sometimes suffered no little reproach. Though Dr. Fisk was the last man who should have provoked reproachful language, yet he bore it with that meekness and submission which become the Christian minister, and finally testified on his dying bed, that, though he may have erred in some of his expressions, he was fully confirmed in the truth of his doctrines, as it was principle, not victory, for which he had contended.

We may therefore safely commend him as a writer for an example to others, and his writings as worthy of being read and had in remembrance.

6. Instead of towering above his fellows by an exhibition of any one talent of superior strength and brilliancy, in him were concentrated that cluster of excellences which constituted a nicely balanced mind, admirably adapted to the variety of calls which were made upon his time and abilities. This concentration of excellences created that symmetry of character which so beautifully displayed itself on all occasions, and so eminently fitted him to move in the various circles of usefulness in which he was called to exercise his gifts.

Though he may not have been so thoroughly versed as some others, who had devoted themselves more exclusively to any one department of literature, in metaphysics, in a knowledge of the languages, or in mathematical science yet he was sufficiently acquainted with these branches of knowledge to enable him to unravel the sophistry of error, to detect the fallacies of subtle antagonists, and to state and defend the truth with clearness and precision. With this well-balanced and well-disciplined mind, was combined that moral worth of character which at all times commanded respect and inspired confidence, and that fitted him for the various fields of usefulness in which he was called to labor. And in the exercise of these gifts, it was evident that he studied to be useful rather than great, though it is equally manifest that his greatness of character resulted from the usefulness of his life and labors.

7. But that which characterized Dr. Fisk among his fellows, and rendered him so eminently useful, was the deep vein of evangelical piety which ran through all his performances, and exerted a hallowing influence over his own mind and the minds of others. This, as I have before remarked, blended itself in his private studies, mingled in his social intercourse, graced and sanctified all his public administrations, whether in the pulpit, on the platform, or in the discharge of his duties as president of the university. And though no stranger to the weapon of satire, which he wielded sometimes with tremendous effect, yet it was manifest that the same hallowed end was had in view in the use of this sharp and dangerous weapon, as when he dealt in the more sober and dignified accents of direct truth and argument.

8. In his social intercourse he sweetly blended the meekness of the Christian and the gravity of the minister with the urbanity of the gentleman and the graces of the scholar. Though too conscientious and independent to compromise the truth from deference to the opinions of others, yet he always treated their judgment with becoming respect, and uttered his dissent with that modesty and diffidence which indicated a sense of his fallibility and sincere desire to know the right. To the common courtesies of life he was never inattentive, well knowing that Christianity distinguishes her children no less by the "gentleness" of their manners, and the delicate attentions

to the niceties of relative duties, than she does by the sternness of her requirements in favor of purity of motive and conduct. He was therefore equally removed from that vulgar rudeness which marks the clown, and that disgusting familiarity which obtrudes itself, unasked and undesired, into the privacies of others. In him were united the delicacies of refined life, with the strong and unyielding principles of Christian integrity and ministerial gravity.

9. Though inspired with that spirit of Catholicism which embraces all denominations as constituting one Christian brotherhood, he was, nevertheless, cordially attached from principle to the doctrine, discipline, and usages of the Church to which he belonged, and of which he was such a distinguished ornament. Wesley he venerated as the first man of his age, as the greatest of modern reformers, as a sound divine, and as one of the most evangelical, laborious, and successful ministers of Jesus Christ. He fully believed that the doctrine and discipline of the Church Wesley was instrumental in founding in America were orthodox and Scriptural, and therefore admirably calculated to spread holiness and happiness through the land. Hence he labored indefatigably to promulgate its doctrine, to establish its government, and to extend its influence.

He loved the itinerant ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. No more conclusive proof could he have given of this than he did, by adhering to it "through good and evil report," so long as the Church called him to labor in that field; and when called by his brethren to a more restricted sphere of action, his official duties by no means deprived him of the privilege he prized so highly, of going forth as an itinerant minister in quest of the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." He who might have commanded thousands of dollars, had he chosen to attach himself to another ministry, "chose rather to suffer affliction" with these comparatively poor "people of God," "esteeming the reproach of Christ," as borne by a Methodist itinerant, "greater riches than the treasures" he might have secured to himself in another department of ministerial labor. And though, after he accepted of the presidency of the Wesleyan University, he had a most luring offer, so far as pecuniary consideration was concerned, to take charge of another literary institution, yet he declined the honor because he loved that which bore the name of Wesley, from a hope that he could there more effectually build up Wesleyan Methodism, by training its sons in the principles and practice of that apostolic man, and because he had already pledged his best endeavors to promote its literary and religious interests. While therefore he gave the right hand of fellowship to ail, of every name, who "loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," he manifested his preference for the ministry and doctrines of his own Church, by cleaving to them to the end of his life.

10. It remains only that we look at him as the head of the Wesleyan University. Here he seemed to be the center of attraction to all connected with the institution, whether as professors, directors, or as students. His counsel was respected, his precepts observed, and his example considered worthy of the imitation of all. He ruled more from the love and respect which were felt and entertained for his character, than from a fear of his frown, though the latter was dreaded in exact proportion to the esteem felt for his exalted worth. His inaugural address developed the principles on which the government of the university would be conducted; and the paternal manner in which these principles were practically in illustrated gave a character to the institution which secured the affection and commanded the respect of all interested in its prosperity; and perhaps no student ever left his Alma Mater without being impressed with a deep sense of his obligations to its president for the fatherly solicitude he had manifested in his literary, intellectual, and religious

welfare.

Placed thus at the head of an institution which must tell for good or in on the destinies of so many immortal beings, he felt the responsibility of his station, and acted in view of that day when he must render an "account of his stewardship." And such was the success with which he presided over the literary and religious interests of those committed to his oversight, and discharged the duties of the high trusts confided to him, that he inspired the respect and confidence, not only of those immediately connected with the university, but of the public at large, as well as those who held a kindred relation to similar institutions.

Hence his death is considered a loss to the entire community. The impression he was making upon the public mind generally was of the most favorable character; and the lamentations made on hearing the news of his death, and the tones of sympathy expressed by others than those connected with him in church fellowship, show that the community generally felt a lively interest in his welfare, and therefore sorrowed "most of all that they should see his face no more."

Finally, we may say, that "whatsoever things were lovely, pure, and of good report," in religion and morals, in learning and science, in spirit and conduct, were, in an eminent degree, concentrated in him, and, sweetly and harmoniously blending their united influence in his heart and life, gave a symmetry, a finish and polish to his character, worthy of love and admiration; and although as a human being he must have felt and exhibited the common infirmities of our nature, yet, having been disciplined by education, refined by grace, and improved by reading and extensive observation, he may be safely held up as an exemplar for the imitation of the Christian, and the minister of Jesus Christ, as well as those to whom are committed the interests of the youth of our land.

There are two other names I wish to mention before I close this volume; one because he was among the older class of Methodist preachers, and the other because he ranked among the younger; and also because they were both worthy of remembrance.

Smith Arnold was born in Middlebury, Conn., March 31, 1766, the year in which Methodism commenced its leavening influence in the city of New York, under the preaching of Embury, and the prayers of the few who accompanied him to this country. After his marriage and subsequent settlement in Herkimer county, N. Y., he was made a partaker of the grace of life, and commenced his itinerant career by joining the New York conference in the year 1800. The first year of his ministry he spent in the western part of New York state, then a new country, but rapidly filling with inhabitants. Here he had the happiness of seeing the blessed fruit of his labors in the awakening and conversion of souls. For twenty-one years he continued his efficient services in the itinerant field, often exposed to privations and hardships in the new and poorer settlements of western New York, and as often cheered by the manifestations of the power and goodness of God on his sincere endeavors to advance the cause of Christ. At the end of this term he found himself so worn down by excessive labor, that he was obliged to take a supernumerary relation, and then a superannuated, in which he continued until his death, which happened on the 16th of March, 1839. His end was peace and assurance for ever.

Brother Arnold was a man of great simplicity of manners, a Methodist preacher of the old stamp, plain and pointed in his appeals to the conscience, though sometimes eccentric in some of his

movements and phrases. His talents as a preacher were respectable, and he generally commanded the confidence and affection of the people among whom he labored; and when his death was announced, none doubted but that he had exchanged this for a better world. Who is exempt from the ravages of death? Among those who had been taken from the walls of our Zion to the "Jerusalem which is above," was John D. Bangs, son of the Rev. John Bangs, of the New York conference. Young, vigorous, pious, and amiable, he promised great usefulness to the Church, and much satisfaction to his numerous friends, had God seen fit to spare his life, and bless his endeavors.

He was born in the town of Kortwright, Delaware county, N. Y., May 7, 1813, and at the early age of fourteen was converted to God, and became a member of the Church. Growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and exhibiting a talent for preaching, he was duly authorized, according to the usages of the Church, and went on a circuit in 1835. His first labors were in a part of the country where his father and uncles were born, in the state of Connecticut, and he soon gave evidence of that devotion to the cause of God, and capacity to instruct others in the way of salvation, which won for him the confidence and the affection of his seniors in the ministry, and the people among whom he labored. Accordingly, in the spring of 1836 he was admitted on trial in the New York conference, and graduated in regular course to elder’s orders. But his race was short, and his death sudden and unexpected. On the 15th of July, 1838, his wife, with whom he had been united only about one year, but whose amiable virtues fitted her for a useful companion in adversity or prosperity, sickened and died. While attending at her grave, greatly exhausted with watching and anxiety, he was seized with the same disease, the scarlet fever, which had so recently deprived him of a beloved wife. Six days only after her death he was called to resign up his breath to God who gave it, and in whose praise it was employed while at his command. Thus, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, this young minister of Jesus Christ bid adieu to all earthly enjoyments, in sure and certain hope of everlasting life; and while his dust reposes by the side of his wife’s, in the town of Yonkers, their spirits are doubtless rejoicing together before the throne of God in heaven.

John D. Bangs was characterized by deep humility, genuine piety, and amiability of manners, as well as thirst for the salvation of souls, which greatly endeared him to his friends and acquaintances, and made the pang of separation the more severe in some respects, and the more joyful in others, to his bereaved parents and circle of relatives.

Numbers in the Church: Whites This Year: 650,357; Last Year: 615,212; Increase: 35,145 -- Colored This Year: 89,197; Last Year: 79,236; Increase: 7,961 -- Indians This Year: 2,249; Last Year: 2,101; Increase: 148 -- Local Preachers This Year: 5,856; Last Year: 5,792; Increase: 64 -- Traveling Preachers This Year: 3,557; Last Year: 3,332; Increase: 235 -- Total This Year: 749,216; Last Year: 705,673 -- Increase: 43,553.

ENDNOTES

1 This result, which is taken from the Minutes, is produced by adding the number of traveling and local preachers to the private and official members, a practice not hitherto pursued, but followed hereafter.

2 Dr. Fisk, though married, died without issue.

04.05C.15. Vol 4, Book 5C, Chapter 15

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume IV -- Book V

CHAPTER 15 The General Conference of 1840 This conference assembled in the city of Baltimore May 1, and was opened by Bishop Roberts by reading a portion of the Holy Scriptures and prayer. John A. Collins, of the Baltimore conference, was appointed secretary, and James B. Houghtaling, of the Troy, and Thomas B. Sargent, of the Baltimore conferences, assistant secretaries. The following is a list of the delegates who were present: --

New York Conference: Nathan Bangs, C. W. Carpenter, Joshua Holdich Samuel Luckey, Daniel Ostrander, Fitch Reed, Phineas Rice, Marvin Richardson, Peter P. Sandford, Nicholas White.

New England Conference: Phineas Crandall, Jotham Horton, A. D. Merrill, Joshua A. Merrill, Orange Scott, E. W. Stickney, Fred Upham.

Main Conference: Moses Hill, B. Jones, W. C. Larrabee, D. B. Randall, Ezekiel Robinson.

New Hampshire Conference: John F. Adams, Charles D. Cahoon, Schuyler Chamberlain, Jared Perkins, Elihu Scott, James Templeton.

Troy Conference: J. B. Houghtaling, Noah Levings, Sherman Minor, Truman Seymour, Charles Sherman, Tobias Spicer.

Pittsburgh Conference: C. Cook, George S. Holmes, Robert Hopkins, Thomas M. Hudson, J. G. Sansom.

Erie Conference: John C. Ayers, John Chandler, H. Kingsley, B. O. Plimpton, David Preston.

Black River Conference: G. Baker, S. Chase, John Dempster, George Gary.

Oneida Conference: Elias Bowen, George Harman Zechariah Paddock, George Peck, D. A. Shephard.

Michigan Conference: Henry Colclazer, E. H. Pilcher, A. Poe, John H. Power.

Genesee Conference: Asa Abel, Jonas Dodge, A. N. Filmore, Glezin Filmore, J. Parker, Manley Tooker.

Ohio Conference: William B. Christie, S. Hamilton, L. L. Hamline, William H. Raper, R. O. Spencer, John F. Wright, Jacob Young.

Missouri Conference: Andrew Munroe, Thomas Johnson.

Illinois Conference: P. Aker, Peter Cartwright, John Clarke, Hooper Crews, J. T. Mitchell, S. H. Thompson.

Kentucky Conference: Henry B. Bascom, Thomas N. Ralston, Jonathan Stamper, George W. Taylor, J. S. Tomlinson.

Indiana Conference: E. R. Ames, A. Eddy, C. W. Ruter, Allen Wiley, A. Wood.

Holson Conference: Samuel Patton.

Tennessee Conference: A. T. Driskill, John B. McFerrin, S. S. Moody, Robert Paine, F. E. Pitts.

Arkansas Conference: John Harrell, John C. Parker.

Mississippi Conference: Benjamin M. Drake, William Winans.

Alabama Conference: E. Callaway, E. V. Ivert, William Murrah.

Georgia Conference: Ignatius A. Few, Samuel K. Hodges, William J. Parks, Lovick Pearce.

South Carolina Conference: Charles Betts, Bond English, Hugh A. C. Walker, William M. Wightman.

North Carolina Conference: Moses Brock, J. Jameson.

Virginia Conference: Thomas Crowder, John Early, William A. Smith.

Baltimore Conference: Samuel Brison, John A. Collins, J. A. Gere, John Miller, S. G. Roszel, H. Slicer, N. Wilson.

Philadelphia Conference: Solomon Higgins, Joshua Lybrand, Levi Scott, Matthew Sorin, Henry White.

New Jersey Conference: Manning Force, R. W. Petherbridge, C. Pitman, John S. Porter, Isaac Wilmer. This conference was favored with the presence of the Rev. Robert Newton, as a representative from the Wesleyan Methodist conference, and the brethren Joseph Stinson, president of the Canada conference, John and Egerton Ryerson, members of said conference, John Harvard, chairman of the Lower Canada district, and Matthew Richie, principal of the Upper Canada Conference Academy.

These were severally introduced to the conference, and were recognized as brethren beloved, and worthy representatives of Wesleyan Methodism, both in Europe and British America.

Owing to the indisposition of Bishop Soule, who, in consequence thereof, was not present until some days after the conference opened, the address of the bishops was not presented until about a week after the conference commenced its sessions. Though long, yet as it presents the particular views of the episcopacy on several important points, the reader will, no doubt, be pleased to have it preserved in this permanent form. It is as follows: -- "Address of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the General Conference, held in Baltimore, May, 1840

"Dear Brethren, -- The meeting of this solemn and constitutional body, just at the opening of the second century of Wesleyan Methodism, is a peculiarly appropriate occasion for reviewing the rise and progress of that great and blessed revival of pure Christianity, which, commencing with the labors of that eminent man of God, the Rev. John Wesley, has, during the last centennial period, spread over large portions of our globe, conveying the blessings of the gospel salvation to millions

of the human race. It is highly proper for us, at such a period, and under such circumstances, to direct our careful attention to the measures and means which, under God, have been accompanied with such auspicious results. It will appear, it is presumed, upon such an examination, that human policy has had less to do in the origin, progress, and final accomplishment of this great work, than in any other important and extensive enterprise since the days of the apostles. The rise, and progress, and ultimate success of Methodism are marked with the special openings and interpositions of the providence of Almighty God. And although we are a hundred years removed from that era of precious memory when this great light first shone forth from Oxford, we look back through every successive period of its advancement, deeply impressed with this sentiment, 'Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us, but unto thy name give glory!' We have stood still to see the salvation of God, or moved forward as his providence opened the way.

"In the progress of this great work on both sides of the Atlantic many instruments have been successfully employed, who would never have been engaged in the enterprise had their selection depended merely on the wisdom of men.

"In England, while a Wesley and Fletcher, with a few kindred spirits, were wielding the mighty artillery of gospel truth, with all the panoply of various and profound science and literature, made mighty by the arm of God to the pulling down of the strongholds of error and infidelity, a considerable number of unlettered men, taken from ordinary occupations, and with no pretensions to any extraordinary human qualifications, with such weapons as the Holy Spirit had supplied, were marching through the kingdom, attacking the citadel of the heart, and bringing thousands into a happy allegiance to the Captain of their salvation. The same order of things is observable from the commencement till the present time. It has pleased God, from time to time, to raise up men, in different parts of these States, who were endued with extraordinary intellectual powers, and those powers disciplined to sound argument by a thorough education. In these men the Church has found able defenders of her doctrines and order; and although some of them have fallen asleep, they still speak -- while others, in the order of Providence, have been raised up in their stead. Thus we have a host of the venerable dead, united with a succession of living witnesses, and all set for the defense of the gospel of Christ.

"But had only such distinguished instruments been employed in preaching the gospel on this continent since the first Wesleyan missionaries crossed the Atlantic, and commenced their labors in the colonies, what, in all human probability, would have been the state of the church in these lands at the present day?

"How many thousands and tens of thousands have been converted to God by the instrumentality of the preaching of men who have never explored the regions of science and literature-and who, having ' fought their way through,' are now resting in Abraham's bosom! And what living multitudes bear witness to the efficiency of the same means, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, in bringing them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God! Indeed, if we carefully examine the history of the church, from the days of the apostles to the present time, at what period of her progress shell we find her amply supplied with ministers combining in themselves a profound knowledge of science and literature, and genuine piety, and giving proof, by the sanctity of their lives, and the fruits of their labors, that they were truly called of God to the work of the ministry?

"The probability is, that one chief cause of the great deficiency of evangelical ministers in the Church of Christ is the neglect of that solemn command, 'Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth more laborers.'

"Our venerable Wesley was fully convinced that the supreme authority to constitute and perpetuate the gospel ministry belonged only to the Author of salvation; and that those who gave the Scriptural evidence of being moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the work of the ministry were not to be rejected on account of a supposed deficiency in human acquirements.

"This truly evangelical sentiment, so strikingly illustrated in the history of the last century, should deeply impress us on the present occasion; and we should continue to adhere to it as one of the first principles in that system which is destined to evangelize the world. Our blessed Redeemer, after he had settled the constitution of his kingdom among men, -- after he had accomplished the work of human redemption, -- after he had risen from the dead in confirmation of his divine commission and authority, -- and in his last interview with his disciples, just before his ascension into heaven-said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and teach all nations.' All the attending circumstances conspire to render this one of the most solemn and important declarations ever made to the world. It asserts the exclusive authority of Jesus Christ to select, and commission, and send forth the ministers of his gospel; an authority which, by right of office and government, he carried with him to the right hand of the Father, to be possessed and exercised till the final issue of his mediatorial kingdom. In strict conformity with this declaration of their divine Master, the apostolic college claimed no right to constitute ministers in succession; but sought, with earnest prayer and diligent examination of spiritual gifts, connected with holiness of life and usefulness in labor, whom God had called to this sacred employment; and in this is involved, as we believe, the true doctrine of apostolic succession.

"Keeping steadily in view this fundamental principle in the constitution and perpetuity of the Christian ministry, and in connection with it the unity of the church of Christ, we, as your general superintendents, have thought it proper to invite your deliberate attention to several subjects which, in our opinion, have a special claim to your consideration-earnestly praying that all things may be done, whether in word or deed, as in the immediate presence of God, and with an eye single to his glory.

"To preserve and strengthen the unity and peace of that great and increasing body of Christians and Christian ministers which you represent in this General Conference, and to devise and adopt measures for the more extensive and efficient promotion of the work of God in these lands and in foreign countries, ale the primary and very important objects of the institution of this body; and in these objects your counsel, your acts, and your prayers should concentrate. The connection of Wesleyan Methodists in all parts of the world should remain one united household, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. One in doctrine, and in all the essential points of discipline, they should remain undivided in affection; and no minor considerations, growing out of difference of country, civil government, or other circumstances, should ever separate us, or interrupt our Christian fellowship. Laborers together with our brethren in Europe, and in the provinces, in the same vineyard of our common Lord, we should avail ourselves of every favorable opportunity, and especially of the occasion of the meeting of this body, to convey to them our Christian salutations, and the expressions of our undiminished affection and esteem.

"Although it may be safely admitted that every system, except that which has a just claim to inspiration, is capable of improvement, it is a wise and prudent maxim, as well in ecclesiastical as in civil jurisprudence, that principles and measures which have been long established and generally successful in their operations, should be changed or modified with the utmost caution. The history of communities sufficiently proves that innovations upon such a settled order of things are very liable to result in consequences unfavorable to the peace and well-being of society. This being the case, no ordinary considerations should induce us to 'remove the ancient land-marks which our fathers have set up.'

"In a body so numerous as the Methodist connection, embracing twenty-eight annual conferences, extended over these United States and territories, and connected with different civil and domestic institutions, it is hardly expected that all should see 'eye to eye' relative to the meaning and administration of the discipline of the Church, or the fitness and expediency of measures which may be adopted in conformity to such a state of things.

"It has been the constant aim and united endeavor of your general superintendents to preserve uniformity and harmony in these respects; and, as far as practicable, prevent conflicting action in all the official bodies in the Church. But, although we record, with unfeigned gratitude to the God of all grace and consolation, the general peace, and harmony, and prosperity of the body, since your last session, it becomes our painful duty to lay before you some exceptions to this happy and prosperous condition.

"At the last session of the General Conference the subject of slavery and its abolition was extensively discussed, and vigorous exertions made to effect new legislation upon it. But, after a careful examination of the whole ground, aided by the light of past experience, it was the solemn conviction of the conference that the interests of religion would not be advanced by any additional enactments in regard to it.

"In your pastoral address to the ministers and people, at your last session, with great unanimity, and, as we believe, in the true spirit of the ministers of the peaceful gospel of Christ, you solemnly advised the whole body to abstain from all abolition movements, and from agitating the exciting subject in the Church. This advice was in perfect agreement with the individual as well as associated views of your superintendents. But had we differed from you in opinion, in consideration of the age, wisdom, experience, and official authority of the General Conference, we should have felt ourselves under a solemn obligation to be governed by your counsel. We have endeavored, both in our official administration, and in our private intercourse with the preachers and members, to inculcate the sound policy and Christian spirit of your pastoral address. And it affords us great pleasure to be able to assure you, that our efforts in this respect have been very generally approved, and your advice cordially received and practically observed in a very large majority of the annual conferences, as will more fully appear to you on the careful examination of the journals of those bodies for the last four years. But we regret that we are compelled to say, that in some of the northern and eastern conferences, in contravention of your Christian and pastoral counsel, and of your best efforts to carry it into effect, the subject has been agitated in such forms, and in such a spirit, as to disturb the peace of the Church. This unhappy agitation has not been confined to the annual conferences, but has been introduced into quarterly conferences, and made the absorbing business of self-created bodies in the bosom of our beloved Zion. The

professed object of all these operations is to free the Methodist Episcopal Church from the "great moral evil of slavery," and to secure to the enslaved the rights and privileges of free citizens of these United States. How far the measures adopted, and the manner of applying those measures, are calculated to accomplish such an issue, even if it could be effected by any action of ecclesiastical bodies, your united wisdom will enable you to judge.

"We cannot, however, but regard it as of unhappy tendency, that either individual members, or official bodies in the Church, should employ terms and pass resolutions of censure and condemnation on their brethren, and on public officers and official bodies over whose actions they have no legitimate jurisdiction. It requires un very extensive knowledge of human nature to be convinced that if we would convert our fellow-men from the error of their ways, we must address them, not in terms of crimination and reproach, but in the milder language of respect, persuasion, and kindness.

"It is justly due to a number of the annual conferences in which a majority, or a very respectable minority of the members are professedly abolitionists, to say, that they occupy a very different ground and pursue a very different course from those of their brethren who have adopted ultra principles and measures in this unfortunate, and, we think unprofitable controversy. The result of action had in such conferences on the resolution of the New England conference, recommending a very important change in our general rule on slavery, is satisfactory proof of this fact, and affords us strong and increasing confidence that the unity and peace of the Church are not to be materially affected by this exciting subject. Many of the preachers who were favorably disposed to the cause of abolition, when they saw the extent to which it was designed to carry these measures, and the inevitable consequences of their prosecution, came to a pause, reflected, and declined their cooperation. They clearly perceived that the success of the measures would result in the division of the Church; and for such an event they were not prepared. They have no disposition to criminate their brethren in the south, who are unavoidably connected with the institution of slavery, or to separate from them on that account. It is believed that men of ardent temperament, whose zeal may have been somewhat in advance of their knowledge and discretion, have made such advances in the abolition enterprise as to produce a reaction. A few preachers and members, disappointed in their expectations, and despairing of the success of their cause in the Methodist Church, have withdrawn from our fellowship, and connected themselves with associations more congenial with their views and feelings; and others, in similar circumstances, may probably follow their example. But we rejoice in believing that these secessions will be very limited, and that the great body of Methodists in these states will continue, as they have been, one and inseparable. The uniformity and st ability of our course should be such, as to let all candid and thinking men see that the cause of secessions from us is not a change of our doctrine or moral discipline -- no imposition of new terms of communion -- no violation of covenant engagements on the part of the Church. It is a matter worthy of particular notice, that these who have departed from us do hot pre tend that any material change in our system, with respect either to doctrine, discipline, or government, has taken place since they voluntarily united themselves with us. And it is ardently to be desired that no such innovation may be effected, as to furnish any just ground for such a pretension.

"The experience of more than half a century, since the organization of our ecclesiastical body, will afford us many important lights and landmarks, pointing out what is the safest and most prudent

policy to be pursued in our onward course as regards African slavery in these States; and especially in our own religious community. This very interesting period of our history is distinguished by several characteristic features having a special claim to our consideration at the present time, particularly in view of the unusual excitement which now prevails on the subject, not only in the different Christian churches, but also in the civil body. And, first, our general rule on slavery, which forms a part of the constitution of the Church, has stood from the beginning unchanged, as testamentary of our sentiments on the principle of slavery and the slave trade. And in this we differ in no respect from the sentiments of our venerable founder, or from those of the wisest and most distinguished statesmen and civilians of our own, and other enlightened and Christian countries. Secondly, In all the enactments of the Church relating to slavery, a due and respectful regard has been had to the laws of the states, never requiring emancipation in contravention of the civil authority, or where the laws of the states would not allow the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom. Thirdly, The simply holding or owning slaves, without regard to circumstances, has at no period of the existence of the Church subjected the master to excommunication. Fourthly, Rules have been made from time to time, regulating the sale and purchase and holding of slaves, with reference to the different laws of the states where slavery is tolerated; which, upon the experience of the great difficulties of administering them, and the unhappy consequences both to masters and servants, have been as often changed or repealed. These important facts, which form prominent features of our past history as a Church, may very properly lead us to inquire for that course of action in future which may be best calculated to preserve the peace and unity of the whole body, promote the greatest happiness of the slave population, and advance generally, in the slave-holding community of our country, the humane and hallowing influence of our holy religion. We cannot withhold from you, at this eventful period, the solemn conviction of our minds, that no new ecclesiastical legislation on the subject of slavery at this time will have a tendency to accomplish these most desirable objects. And we are fully persuaded, that, as a body of Christian ministers, we shall accomplish the greatest good by directing our individual and united efforts, in the spirit of the first teachers of Christianity, to bring both master and servant under the sanctifying influence of the principles of that gospel which teaches the duties of every relation, and enforces the faithful discharge of them by the strongest conceivable motives. Do we aim at the amelioration of the condition of the slave? How can we so effectually accomplish this, in our calling as ministers of the gospel of Christ, as by employing our whole influence to bring both him and his master to a saving knowledge of the grace of God, and to a practical observance of those relative duties so clearly prescribed in the writings of the inspired apostles? Permit us to add, that, although we enter not into the political contentions of the day, neither interfere with civil legislation, nor with the administration of the laws, we cannot but feel a deep interest in whatever affects the peace, prosperity, and happiness of our beloved country. The union of these States, the perpetuity of the bonds of our national confederation, the reciprocal confidence of the different members of the great civil compact; in a word, the well-being of the community of which we are members, should never cease to he near our hearts, and for which we should offer up our sincere and most ardent prayers to the almighty Ruler of the universe. But can we, as ministers of the gospel, and servants of a Master 'whose kingdom is not of this world,' promote these important objects in any way so truly and permanently as by pursuing the course just pointed out? Can we, at this eventful crisis, render a better service to our country than by laying aside all interference with relations authorized and established by the civil laws, and

applying ourselves wholly and faithfully to what specially appertains to our 'high and holy calling;' to teach and enforce the moral obligations of the gospel, in application to all the duties growing out of the different relations in society? By a diligent devotion to this evangelical employment, with an humble and steadfast reliance upon the aid of divine influence, the number of 'believing masters' and servants may be constantly increased, the kindest sentiments and affections cultivated, domestic burdens lightened, mutual confidence cherished, and the peace and happiness of society be promoted. While on the other hand, if past history affords us any correct rules of judgment, there is much cause to fear that the influence of our sacred office, if employed in interfering with the relation itself, and consequently with the civil institutions of the country, will rather tend to prevent than to accomplish these desirable ends.

"But while we sincerely and most affectionately, and, we humbly trust, in the spirit of the gospel of Christ, recommend to you, and to all the ministers and members you represent in the body, to pursue such a course in regard to this deeply exciting subject, we think it proper to invite your attention in particular to one point, intimately connected with it, and, as we conceive, of primary importance. It is in regard to the true import and application of the general rule on slavery. The different constructions to which it has been subjected, and the variety of opinions entertained upon it, together with the conflicting acts of some of the annual conferences of the north and south, seem to require that a body, having legitimate jurisdiction, should express a clear and definite opinion, as a uniform guide to those to whom the administration of the discipline is committed.

Another subject of vital importance, as we apprehend, to the unity and peace of the Church, and not unconnected with the foregoing, is the constitutional powers of the general superintendents, in such relations to the annual conferences, and in their general executive administration of the government; and the rights of annual and quarterly conferences, in their official capacities. In the prosecution of our superintending agency, we have been compelled to differ in opinion from many of our brethren composing these official bodies; and this difference of opinion, connected with a conviction of our high responsibility, has, in a few cases, resulted in action which has been judged, by those specially concerned, to be high-handed, unconstitutional, tyrannical, and oppressive. In all such cases, we have given the most unequivocal assurances that we should, with unfeigned satisfaction and the kindest feelings, submit the whole matter in controversy, with all our official acts in the premises, to the enlightened deliberation and final judgment of this constitutional tribunal. And we cannot but indulge the hope that those who have differed from us will cordially abide the decision of such a judicatory, should it not accord with their views. We have no disposition to enter into an extensive examination of the merits of the case, which, we regret to say, has been a matter of prolonged discussion in self-created conventions, and in some of the religious periodicals of the day. But our object is to lay before you the simple points involved, and leave the issue to be settled as your united wisdom shall determine, requesting liberty, at the proper time, if occasion should require, to correct erroneous statements, and remove improper impressions, having reference to both course of action. In presenting this subject to your consideration, it is due to a very large majority of all the annual conferences, and to the members composing them, individually, to say that the utmost harmony, and confidence, and affection exist between them and the general superintendents. The geographical bounds of the controversy are very limited. The whole subject may be presented to you in the following simple questions: When any business comes up for action in our annual or quarterly conferences, involving a difficulty on a

question of law, so as to produce the inquiry, What is the law in the case? does the constitutional power to decide the question belong to the president, or the conference? Have the annual conferences a constitutional right to do any other business than what is specifically prescribed, or, by fair construction, provided for in the form of Discipline? Has the president of an annual conference, by virtue of his office, a right to decline putting a motion or resolution to vote, on business other than that thus prescribed or provided for?

"These questions are proposed with exclusive reference to the principle of constitutional right. The principles of courtesy and expediency are very different things.

"As far as we have been able to ascertain the views of those who entertain opinions opposite to our own on these points, they may be summed up as follows: --

"They maintain that all questions of law arising out of the business of our annual or quarterly conferences are to be, of right, settled by the decision of those bodies, either primarily by resolution, or finally by an appeal from the decision of the president: 'that it is the prerogative of an annual conference to decide what business they will do, and when they will do it:' that they have a constitutional right 'to discuss, in their official capacity, all moral subjects:' to investigate the official acts of other annual conferences -- of the General Conference, and of the general superintendents, so far as to pass resolutions of disapprobation or approval on those acts. They maintain that the president of an annual conference is to be regarded in the same relation to the conference that a chairman or speaker sustains to a civil legislative assembly: that it is his duty to preserve order in the conference, to determine questions of order, subject to appeal, and put to vote all motions and resolutions, when called for according to the rules of the body: that these are the settled landmarks of his official prerogatives, as president of the conference, beyond which he has no right to go: that although it belongs to his office, as general superintendent, to appoint the time for holding the several annual conferences, he has no discretionary authority to adjourn them, whatever length of time they may have continued their session, or whatever business they may think proper to transact. From these doctrines we have felt it our solemn duty to dissent. And we will not withhold from you our deliberate and abiding conviction, that if they should be sustained by the General Conference, the uniform and efficient administration of the government would be rendered impracticable.

"The government of the Methodist Episcopal Church is peculiarly constructed. It is widely different from our civil organization. The General Conference is the only legislative body recognized in our ecclesiastical system, and from it originates the authority of the entire executive administration. The exclusive power to create annual conferences, and to increase or diminish their number, rests with this body. No annual conference has authority or right to make any rule of discipline for the Church, either within its own bounds or elsewhere. No one has the power to elect its own president, except in a special case, pointed out, and provided for, by the General Conference. Whatever may be the number of the annual conferences, they are all organized on the same plan, are all governed by the same laws, and all have identically the same rights, powers, and privileges. These powers, and rights, and privileges are not derived from themselves, but from the body which originated them. And the book of Discipline, containing the rules of the General Conference, is the only charter of their rights, and directory of their duties, as official bodies. The general superintendents are elected by the General Conference, and responsible to it for the

discharge of the duties of their office. They are constituted, by virtue of their office, president of the annual conferences, with authority to appoint the time of holding them; with a prudential provision that they shall allow each conference to sit at least one week, that the important business prescribed in the form of Discipline may not be hurried through in such a manner as to affect injuriously the interests of the Church. The primary objects of their official department in the Church were, as we believe, to preserve, in the mot effectual manner, an itinerant ministry; to maintain a uniformity in the administration of the government and discipline in every department, and that the unity of the whole body might be preserved. But how, we would ask, can these important ends be accomplished, if each annual conference possesses the rights mid powers set forth in the foregoing summary? Is it to be supposed, that twenty-eight constitutional judges of ecclesiastical law, and these, too, not individuals of age and experience, who have had time and means to thoroughly investigate, and analyze, and collate the system; but official bodies, many members of which are young and inexperienced, and without the opportunity or necessary helps for such researches, and without consultation with each other on the points to be decided, will settle different questions of law with such agreement as to have no material conflict between their legal decisions. Is it not greatly to be feared, that, with such a system of ecclesiastical jurisprudence, what might be law in Georgia might be no law in New England? that what might be orthodoxy in one conference might be heresy in another? Where, then, would be the identity of the law, the uniformity of its administration, or the unity and peace of the Church?

"A well-digested system of collegiate education, under the direction and control of the General Conference, is, in our opinion, loudly called for by the present state of the Church, and by our widely extended and extending influence, as a religious denomination. Such a system is of such vast importance, in connection with the general principles and designs of Methodism, as to render the policy of submitting its direction and superintendence to sectional control, to say the least, very doubtful. For many years, the state of the Church was such in these States as to render it impracticable to accomplish much in the cause of education, any further than as we were associated with other bodies, or were connected with the institutions of the country. And it is not to be denied that there existed among us, to a considerable extent, even down to a recent date, strong opposition to commencing this important enterprise among ourselves. But during the last twenty years, the spirit of inquiry has been wakened up, and a very general interest excited on this subject; and the energies and means of our preachers and people have been employed to a very considerable extent in the promotion of such a worthy and noble object. What appears to be especially necessary at the present crisis is a well-organized system which shall give the best direction to those energies and means. It will not be at all surprising to men who have made themselves acquainted with the former and present condition of the Methodist Church, relative to the promotion of literature, that there should be at the present time a spirit of zeal and enterprise in operation, which, if not guided by the soundest principles of wisdom and policy, and concentrated in a general and harmonious system, may fail to accomplish the desirable and important object, and ultimately result in injurious reaction. This can hardly fail to be the case, if colleges, or other high institutions of learning, which must depend upon other means of support than the revenues arising from tuiition, are multiplied beyond the available means necessary for their adequate and permanent endowment. And it is to be feared that in this respect we are not entirely free from error and danger. We scarcely need to say to this enlightened and experienced body of ministers, many of whom are familiar with the polity and fiscal concerns of literary institutions, that such of them as

we have just named cannot be considered in a safe and sound condition in regard to their efficiency and perpetuity, until they realize a revenue from permanent endowment entirely sufficient to support their faculties, leaving the fund arising from tuition to meet contingent expenses. If this is a correct rule of calculation in regard to the safety of collegiate institutions, it is very doubtful whether any of our colleges or universities can be considered permanently secure. It appears to us that the time has arrived for the General Conference to take this subject into their deliberate consideration, and adopt such measures as, in their wisdom, may the most effectually secure our colleges already in operation from liability to failure, and guard against the erection of others till sufficient available means are secured to place them on a firm foundation. The circumstance that there are members of the faculties or boards of trustees of nearly, if not quite all our colleges, present as representatives in this body, is, in our opinion, peculiarly favorable to such a design. We cannot too deeply impress upon your minds the importance of preserving in our own power the direction and control of the system of collegiate and theological education in the Church. Perhaps a more favorable opportunity than your present session will seldom, if ever, occur, for devising and adopting a judicious and uniform course of literary and moral discipline in all the collegiate institutions under our superintendence. And we will not withhold our solemn conviction, that any course of study in a Methodist college or university would be essentially defective if it did not embrace the Bible -- the most ancient, the most learned, and the most important book in the world. As a Christian community, all our institutions of learning should be sanctuaries of theological science. Do we send our sons to explore the regions of science and literature, merely, as did idolatrous Greece and Rome, to prepare them for the senate, the forum, or the field? Do we not rather desire that they may be qualified by mental and moral improvement, to diffuse, in every circle of society in which they may move, the influence of the enlightening, peaceful, and benevolent principles of our holy religion? Do we intend them for professional life? In what profession can they be employed in a Christian country in which the Bible is not a most important text book? Are not the civil governments of Christendom based upon it? Is it not the fountain of law, and the charter of rights? When do you see the statesman, the judge, or the advocate, more clear, convincing, authoritative, or sublime, than when he appeals to its doctrines, morals, or sanctions? Do we desire our sons to practice the healing art? Would we send them forth to mingle in scenes of wretchedness and suffering without the knowledge of those divine truths taught by Him who went about doing good, and healing all manner of diseases? In a word, we cannot but believe that the doctrines, history, evidences, and morals of revelation, should be regarded as forming one of the most important departments in our system of collegiate education. We are aware that such a feature in the course of study in our colleges would subject them to the too common objection of being theological seminaries. This objection would certainly come with more grace from the lips of infidels than from the tongues or pens of professed believers in the divine authenticity of the Christian revelation. While, in our opinion, the science of the word of God should be a paramount branch of instruction in our literary institutions, we desire not to be understood as recommending the establishment of 'Theological Seminaries,' in the common acceptation of the term; that is, for the special purpose of educating men for the work of the gospel ministry. We feel, with many enlightened Christians and able ministers, both in our own and other religious denominations, the importance of an able and efficient ministry. Nor are we unapprised of the great advantages of a thorough education to those whose business it is to preach 'Christ and him crucified.' But we are free to acknowledge that the policy of establishing schools of divinity for the

exclusive purpose of preparing young men for the sacred office, as for a profession, is, in our opinion, to say the least, of doubtful authority and expedience. The history of such institutions, from their earliest establishment, admonishes us, that the speculators of human science have but too frequently obscured and adulterated the doctrines of the revelation of God; and that, in many cases, where they have been commenced on evangelical ground, in their onward course they have wandered into the wilderness of metaphysical disquisitions, or been lost in the still darker regions of 'rational Christianity.' When the history, doctrines, evidences, and duties of the revelation of God shall form a distinct and primary department of study in our institutions of learning our children be dedicated to God, and trained up in his knowledge and fear, and the whole Church united in devout and fervent prayer that God would raise up, and send forth into his vineyard, men of his own selection, and Scriptural proofs be required of those who profess to be called to preach the gospel, it is believed that human agency will have reached its legitimate bounds in the premises, and that this great concern will be perfectly secure with the supreme Head of the church, to whom alone belongs the authority to perpetuate the ministry of his gospel to the end of the world. But should this body differ from us with regard to the expediency of establishing institutions for theological education separate from our literary establishments, and for the exclusive purpose of preparing the students for the work of the ministry, we cannot too strongly recommend to you the propriety and importance of having the whole subject under the direction and control of the General Conference. We are well persuaded that your wisdom and experience will lead you to apprehend the great impropriety of sectional institutions in the Church for such a purpose. To intrust a matter of such vast moment to a self-organized association, or to an annual conference, or

"A regular and uniform course of study for the under graduates in the ministry has, in our judgment, a special claim to your attention at your present session. At a former session it was made the duty of the general superintendents to point out a course of study for the candidates, preparatory to their admission into full connection, with discretionary privilege of appointing a committee for that purpose. By this rule, no provision is made for a course of study for preachers, for the two years previous to their induction to the office of elders. This has been thought to be a defect in the system, and at the request of many of the annual conferences, an advisory course has been prepared, embracing these two years. The result, as far as we have knowledge, has been very advantageous in the improvement of the ministry. And we recommend to the General Conference to extend the course so as to embrace the whole period from the time of admission on trial, until the full powers of the ministry are conferred. The situation of the superintendents is such, in visiting all parts of the work, extending over all the states and territories, as to render it extremely difficult, and for the most part impracticable, without great labor and expense, to meet for consultation with each other on this, or any other, important interest of the church; and their duties are so various and weighty as to incline them to the opinion, that the great object contemplated in this provision would be better accomplished by a uniform course of study prepared by this body, and published in our form of Discipline. The local ministry is to be regarded as forming an important department in our system. They are truly helpers in the work of the Lord. As such we should always esteem them. And nothing should be neglected which has a tendency to preserve and strengthen the bonds of affection and confidence between them and the itinerant connection. Many of this useful class of ministers have deeply felt the necessity of a regular system of study, adapted, as far as practicable, to the condition and circumstances of local

preachers, embracing studies preparatory to their receiving license, and extending to the time of their graduating to the office of elders. Many and great advantages might doubtless be derived from such a course, judiciously formed in adaptation to the circumstances of our local brethren, whose time must necessarily be employed, to a greater or less extent, in secular avocations. We recommend the subject to your deliberate consideration.

"We invite your particular attention to a review of the process prescribed in the Discipline in the provision for locating a preacher without his consent. The course directed in case of the trial of a superannuated preacher, residing without the bounds of the annual conference of which he is a member, is found to be attended with great inconvenience, and is liable to result in injustice to the accused, or injury to the church. A considerable number of superannuated preachers (and the number is constantly increasing) have their residence many hundred miles from the bounds of the conferences where they hold their membership. The consequence is, that it repeatedly occurs, that the communications which the Discipline requires them to make to their own conference fail to be received, in which cases the passage of their characters may be involved, and they are liable to be deprived of their regular allowance, even when they sustain the fairest reputation, and when they are in real need of the amount to which they have a lawful claim. But these points are far from being the most important, though they are certainly entitled to consideration. The subject embraces deeper interests, both to the individuals and to the church. In case of the trial of a superannuated preacher, within the bounds of a conference remote from his own, as provided for in the Discipline, there are several difficulties which experiment can hardly fail to make obvious. It is provided that the presiding elder, in whose district the accused may reside, shall bring him to trial, and in case of suspension, shall forward to the annual conference of which the accused is a member, exact minutes of the charges, testimony, and decision of the committee in the ease, and on the testimony thus furnished, the conference must decide. The great difficulty of deciding important cases equitably, from minutes of testimony thus taken, is well known. This difficulty is increased in proportion to the complexity of the ease, and the conflicting character of the testimony. Add to this, that it will rarely be practicable in such cases for the accuser and accused to be brought face to face, or for either to be present to plead in the premises. Distance of place, length of time required, and the labor and expense involved, would, in most eases, form an insurmountable obstacle to the parties being heard before the tribunal where judgment must finally be given. And, further, in cases of this kind it must frequently happen that the testimony will be voluminous, and the difficulty and expense of its transmission very considerable. And finally, documents forwarded a great distance are very liable to fail of reaching their place of destination, in which case the administration of justice might be delayed, if not finally defeated, and the church suffer reproach. Besides, the present provision in our Discipline is, in our opinion, too liable to abuse. Should any one of the annual conferences think it proper to enter upon any favorite enterprise, for the success of which they might conceive it necessary to have agents operating without their own bounds, it would be no difficult matter to place such brethren as would very well serve their case in a superannuated relation. And if the object to be accomplished was of very deep interest, the liability of their agents to trial and suspension by a committee would hardly form an obstacle, especially as the final decision of the case would be in their own power. In view of all the difficulties to which the present provision is liable, we are inclined to the opinion that a different course might be devised, by which the ends of justice might be obtained more readily, and with greater certainty, and in perfect accordance with our system of government. As the trial and

expulsion of a preacher is not to be regarded simply as a process affecting only his relation to the conference where he belongs, but is to all intents and purposes an expulsion from the itinerant connection, and from the Church; and as the same rules for the trial of preachers must govern the action of all the annual conferences, and the same rights and privileges are secured to all by the constitution and Discipline of the Church, we are not apprised of any valid objection to the trial of traveling preachers by the annual conferences in which they may reside at the time of the occurrence of the offense of which they are accused. Indeed, it would seem that the principle of constitutionality in such a course is fully recognized by the General Conference in the present provision: -- For if a presiding elder may have jurisdiction over a superannuated preacher, residing within his district, and out of the bounds of his own conference, so as to suspend him from all official acts and privileges, which is the utmost extent of his authority in regard to the preachers stationed in his district, it will be difficult, it is presumed, to raise valid constitutional objections to the jurisdiction of an annual conference to prosecute such cases to a final issue. And it can hardly be doubted that these two great advantages would be secured by such a process -- it would secure a more ready and easy access to testimony, especially such as might be presumptive and circumstantial, on which, it is well known, the final issue may materially depend, and afford the accuser and accused the opportunity of appearing face to face, to plead their own cause. And we respectfully suggest whether a provision, in some respects similar, might not be made for the trial of local preachers in the circuits where they are charged with committing offenses. With these views we submit the subject to your consideration. Since the General Conference provided for the appointment of preachers to the charge of seminaries of learning, many institutions for the education of youth of both sexes have sprung up, preferring their claims to such appointments. Most of these schools have been originated by individuals, or associations of individuals, having no other connection with an annual conference than such as consists in the courtesy of patronage, connected with the annual visits of a committee appointed for the purpose of attending their examinations, and reporting the results.

"In discharging the important and responsible duties of their office, your superintendents have not been so happy as to avoid difficulty from this department; and in some eases their convictions of the limits of their authority, in connection with their judgment of expediency, have compelled them, though with the most friendly reciprocal feelings, to differ from the views, and decline to meet the express wishes of annual conferences. And it is with the most sincere satisfaction that they refer their opinions and acts to this body, that if in error, as they are certainly liable to be, they may be corrected, and the whole body harmonized on all material points. There are two distinct cases in which the superintendents are authorized to appoint preachers to institutions of learning. The one respects such institutions as are or may be under our superintendence, and the other, such as are not. Out of these cases several important questions have originated, which have been the ground of the difference of opinion of which we have just spoken. These questions may be stated as follows: 1. What is necessary to constitute a seminary of learning so far under our superintendence as to bring it fairly within the rule of the General Conference authorizing the appointment of a preacher to it? 2. What classes of literary institutions was it the intention of the General Conference to embrace in this provision? 3. In providing for the appointment of preachers to 'seminaries of learning' not under our superintendence, was it the intention of the General Conference to include all classes of literary institutions, if the appointment was requested by an annual conference, or to limit the appointment to seminaries of collegiate literature? 4, Is an

appointment under this provision discretionary with the superintendent, or does the request of an annual conference create an obligation as a matter of duty, as in the case of appointments in the districts and circuits? There are principles and interests, in our opinion, involved in these questions which have a special claim to the deliberate consideration of this body. From the numerous applications which are made for the appointment of preachers, to be school teachers and agents for various institutions, it is to be feared that unless the subject be clearly defined, and carefully guarded by suitable limitations and restrictions, our grand itinerant system may be impaired by a virtual location of many valuable ministers, and the Church suffer in spiritual interests from the loss of useful labors. There are at this time about seventy of the effective traveling preachers employed as presidents, professors, principals, and teachers in literary institutions, and as agents devoted to their interests. These ministers are selected from the several annual conferences with reference to their qualifications for the duties of their station. They are men of talent, science, and learning, and many of them ministers of age and experience. And the calls for such appointments are constantly multiplying on our hands. While we readily and thankfully acknowledge the usefulness of brethren employed in this important department of our great work, we must be permitted to doubt whether the cause of God might not be more effectually and extensively promoted, if, to say the least, a very large proportion of these able ministers of Christ were exclusively devoted to the work of the gospel ministry. And we respectfully suggest the inquiry, whether pious and learned men may not be obtained from the local ministry, or from the official or private membership, well qualified as teachers to advance the cause of education, and by this means bring into the regular field of itinerant labor a great weight of talent and influence now almost confined to the precincts of academies and colleges.

"At the last session of this body the publication of three religious periodicals was provided for, in addition to those previously established. They have now, it is presumed, been before the religious community a sufficient time to enable you to form an opinion of their intrinsic merits as official papers, going forth to an enlightened and reading people, under the authority and patronage of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of their usefulness in promoting the great enterprise in which we are engaged, by spreading abroad the light of gospel truth, advancing the interests of our important institutions, and strengthening the bonds of peace and harmony in the Church. The influence of the periodical press, either for weal or woe, is too well ascertained to render it necessary for this body to be reminded of the importance of throwing around it, so far as it is under their direction and patronage, those safeguards which shall preserve its unity, and render it subservient to the promotion of intellectual, moral, and religious improvement. We have no doubt but you will agree with us in sentiment, that our religious papers should take no part in the political warfare of the day -- that they should never interfere with the civil institutions of the country that they should promote, as far as practicable, quietness, peace; and love, among all Christian people, and especially in the Church by whose authority and patronage they exist, and whose interests they are particularly designed to serve. Whatever might have been the views of the General Conference at the time of the establishment of these papers, it did not occur to the superintendents that they were to be mediums of mercantile or professional advertisements; and we respectfully submit it to your enlightened judgment, whether it is consistent with the character of the Church, and the grand designs of her religious institutions, among which the periodical press is one of the most efficient, to make them such. We are not apprised whether recourse has been had to this measure from courtesy to friends in secular occupations, or for the purpose of

realizing funds sufficient to meet the expenses of publication. But with due deference, we must be permitted to doubt whether the credit or the general interests of the Methodist Church will be promoted by the publication of a paper under the official sanction of the General Conference, which cannot obtain a patronage sufficient to meet its expenses without devoting its columns to business advertisements. Your timely and judicious advice to the annual conferences, not to establish any more conference papers, has been respectfully regarded, so that no new paper has been published by any conference for the last four years, except one, which has since been discontinued, and it is believed there is an increasing conviction in the conferences generally, that it is inexpedient to publish such papers. Several papers, however, are published, assuming to be in the interests of the Methodist Church, and edited by Methodist preachers, and which are patronized to a considerable extent by many members of several annual conferences. We are already admonished by the history of the past, how easy it is, under the popular pretext of the right of free discussion, to disturb the harmony and peace of the Church, stir up strife and contention, alienate the affection of brethren from each other, and finally injure the cause of Christ.

"Applications from members and ministers of other churches, with whom we are in Christian fellowship, are becoming more frequent, and a variety of opinions being entertained by preachers of age and experience, with regard to the manner of receiving them among us, the Discipline making no special provision in the case, we have thought it advisable to bring the subject before you, with a view to the adopting a course which may harmonize the views and official action of all concerned, and manifest that spirit of Christian charity which should always abound in the church of Christ. It is only necessary for us to lay before you the different opinions entertained on the subject, which, from the character and number of those who hold them, are certainly entitled to respectful attention. With regard to private members of other churches who make application for membership with us, it has been maintained on the one hand, that they should be admitted and remain on trial for six months, as the Discipline provides, before they are received into the Church; and on the other, that the circumstance of their being regular and approved members of other churches, with which we are in Christian fellowship, virtually answers the essential ends of the provision for a probationer, and consequently that they should be received into the Church without requiring such trial. The views which are entertained with respect to receiving ministers from other churches are not capable of so simple a definition. But they may be summed up as follows: -- Many are of the opinion, that, in common with all other persons, they should be admitted on trial, and pass a probation of six months, before they are received as members of the Church. That, being received as such, they should obtain recommendation and license and graduate in the ministry, in strict conformity to the letter of the Discipline, without regard to their ordination by the constitutional authorities of the churches from which they came. Others are of the opinion that, coming to us with accredited testimonials of their Christian piety and official standing, and giving satisfaction, on examination as the Discipline directs, with respect to their belief in our doctrine, and approval of our discipline, they should be immediately received and accredited as ministers among us. And that on answering the questions, and taking upon them, the solemn obligations of our ordination service, they should receive credentials of authority to administer the holy sacraments without the imposition of hands repeated by us, unless they themselves should incline to it. These conflicting opinions, in connection with the fact that a number of ministers have been received among us in conformity to the latter view, seem to require that the General Conference take such order upon it as in their wisdom may be best calculated to produce unanimity of

sentiment and action, and promote Christian confidence and affection between ourselves and other religious denominations, without impairing any fundamental principle of our order and government

"Of your general superintendents, six in number, three are enfeebled by labor, age, and infirmity. We are of one heart and one mind, acknowledging our obligation according to our ability, and to the utmost extent of it, to serve the Church of God in that highly responsible office which you have committed to us; but, in view of our own weakness and the arduous work intrusted to us, with fear and much trembling, we have cause to exclaim, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' There are now twenty-eight annual conferences represented in this body, and in all probability the number will be considerably increased during your present session. These embrace a country extending from New Brunswick to Texas on the Atlantic coast and Gulf of Mexico, and from the sea-board to the vast northern lakes, and to the territories on the upper Mississippi and Missouri. The general superintendents sustain the same relation to all these conferences; and our system requires that we should be annually visited. Between three and four thousand traveling preachers are to be appointed every year to their fields of ministerial labor. These appointments must be made with due regard to the qualifications, age, infirmities, and domestic circumstances of this vast body of ministers, and with the same regard to the condition and wants of the millions of people to whom they are sent. To minds capable of grasping this vast machinery of our itinerant system, it will readily appear that an effective itinerant superintendency is indispensably necessary to keep it in regular, energetic, and successful operation. It must be effective, not imbecile; general, not sectional; itinerant, not local. Destitute of either of these prerequisites, the probable result would be a disorganization of the system, and weakness and inefficiency in all its parts. In the relation we sustain to you as the highest judicatory of the Church, and to the whole itinerant connection, it becomes us to be cautious and unassuming in presenting you with our sentiments on a subject like this, in which it may be supposed we have a special individual interest. We will only suggest two points for your consideration, which we are confident will appear to you in the same light in which we view them. 'The first is to preserve a sufficient number of effective superintendents to secure to the conferences their regular annual visits, taking into view the number of conferences, and their relative locations. And, second, that there be no greater number than is strictly necessary to accomplish this work, carefully guarding against the increase of the numbers of laborers beyond the proportionate increase of the work, bearing in mind that, if we would have laboring preachers, we must have laboring superintendents. As the number of annual conferences increases, and the work extends in the states and territories, it becomes necessary to strengthen the general superintendency in due proportion. But, as you will doubtless have an able committee to examine and report on this important subject, we forbear any further remarks in relation to it.

"Our missionary operations among the Indians, and in foreign countries, especially on the continent of Africa, are recommended to your special attention. The condition of the Indian tribes located on the western boundary line of Arkansas and Missouri, and the territories on the upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers, calls aloud for united and vigorous efforts to disperse among them the light of the gospel, and the blessings of civilization. We are encouraged to such effort by the circumstance that there is an increasing disposition among most of the tribes to encourage the labors of our missionaries, and improve their condition by the establishment of schools for the instruction of their children in the knowledge of our language, and in agriculture and mechanical

arts.

"Since your last session, a plan has been devised, with the approbation of the officers and board of managers of the Parent Missionary Society, to establish a central Indian manual labor school, with the design of collecting and teaching the native children of the several adjacent tribes. The plan has been submitted to the executive department of the national government having the superintendence of Indian affairs, and has met with a favorable and encouraging consideration; and we are much indebted to officers and agents of the civil government in, and adjacent to, the Indian country, for the extensive aid they have given in the establishment of the institution, both by employing their influence in recommending it to the Indians, and advising in its structure and organization. This school is already, to a considerable extent, in successful operation. Native children, from five different tribes, are collected; and men from these tribes have visited the institution, and have very generally been satisfied with its government and objects. We cannot but regard this establishment as full of promise of lasting benefits to the Indian race. But as a detailed report of its organization, designs, and prospects, will come before you, we will only add our earnest recommendation of the plan to your deliberate consideration, with regard to the present condition and wants of the Indians, and its adaptation to the great objects it is designed to accomplish -- the conversion of the Indians to the Christian faith, and their improvement in all the arts and habits of civilized life. And we would further recommend an inquiry into the expediency of establishing one or more institutions, at suitable locations in the Indian country, on the same plan, and for the same purposes. To Africa we look with the deepest solicitude. Our sympathies, prayers, and efforts mingle on her coasts. In our missionary enterprise commenced at Liberia, we aim at the conversion of a continent to God. The handful of precious seed which has been sown in that infant colony, and watered by the tears and prayers of the missionaries and the Church, shall spring up and ripen to be sown again with a hundred-fold increase, till Africa shall become one fruitful field, cultivated in righteousness. Although a number of faithful and devoted missionaries have fallen in that field of labors we should by no means be discouraged in the prosecution of so great a work. They have fallen asleep, but they sleep in the Lord. And being dead they still speak; and the voice from their tombs is a call to the church of Christ on the American continent to emulate their holy zeal, and fill up the ranks from which they have been removed. We have no doubt but you will be disposed to take some efficient measures for the constitutional organization of the Liberia annual conference, and to provide for the ordination of ministers in their own country, that the infant African church may be duly and regularly supplied, not only with the ministry of the word, but also with the holy sacraments.

"The character which the Oregon mission has recently assumed, is well calculated to invite your particular attention to that extensive and important field of missionary enterprise. We can have little doubt that, with the blessing of God attending our efforts, the time will arrive, when the interests of the missionary colony, and the success of the work among the aboriginal tribes, will call for the organization of an annual conference in that vast territory. And our grand object should be to preserve one harmonious compact, in the unity of the Spirit, and the bonds of peace, and that Methodism may be one on either side of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, and on all the islands of the sea;

'And mountains rise and oceans roll To sever us in vain.'

"It was doubtless a wise and safe provision, that copies of the records of the proceedings of the annual conferences should be forwarded to the General Conference for examination. By this means the General Conference may obtain the knowledge of the official acts of those bodies, from evidence which cannot be disputed or contravened, and consequently they may correct errors in their proceedings, if found to exist, on the simple authority of official records. We regret to say that, in our opinion, this judicious provision has not been sufficiently regarded, either on the part of the annual conferences, in forwarding copies of these records, or on the part of the General Conference in a careful inspection of them. As these records contain, not only the official transactions of the conferences, having an important connection with the government and general interests of the Church, but also frequently embrace the opinions of the superintendents on questions of law, and the administration of discipline; and as it is the constitutional prerogative of this body to correct what is erroneous in these transactions and opinions, with an earnest desire that all things may be done in every official department of the Church in strict conformity to her constitution and Discipline, we recommend a careful examination of these records at your present session.

"Finally, brethren, we commend you and ourselves, and the ministers and people connected with us in the bonds of the gospel of Christ, to the guidance and protection of the great Head of the church, whose we are and whom we serve; sincerely and ardently praying that your deliberations, with all their results, may be under the influence of that wisdom which is from above; which is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated; full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality or hypocrisy.

"We are, dear brethren, sincerely and affectionately yours, in the unity and fellowship of the gospel of Christ,

"R. R. Roberts, "Joshua Soule, "Elijah Hedding, "James O. Andrew, "B. Waugh, "Thomas A. Morris, "Baltimore, May 4,1840." The several subjects adverted to in this very able address were referred to appropriate committees; and so far as their reports were adopted by the conference, they will be noticed in the proper places. After the address of the bishops was received and disposed of, Mr. Newton presented the following address from the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, which was read by the seminary, and referred to a committee of three to consider and report thereon:

"Address of the British Conference to the Bishops and Members of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America

"Very Dear Brethren, -- We gratefully avail ourselves of this opportunity to renew the tokens of our fraternal intercourse with you; and, while we unfeignedly rejoice in all the blessings with which it has pleased Almighty God to accompany your cares and labors, we devoutly pray that 'mercy unto you, and peace, and love' may be yet more abundantly 'multiplied, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.'

"It has afforded us great satisfaction to hear from different quarters of your continued prosperity, and especially to receive the personal communications which have been made to us at this conference by the Rev. Dr. Olin. We are thankful that, notwithstanding the languor of indisposition, this esteemed minister in your Church, and our beloved brother, has been able to attend several of

the sittings of the conference, and to address us, at considerable length, on topics which are more than usually gratifying to our best affections. Most sincerely do we hope that God will, in his goodness, more fully restore his health, and prepare him, by an increase of vigor, and of every spiritual gift, long to occupy the important station which, to speak according to the views and feelings of frail mortality, has been so prematurely left vacant by the decease of the excellent and lamented Dr. Fisk. From a wish to perpetuate a free and familiar interchange of kindly offices with you, in the way which we doubt not is most agreeable to you as well as to ourselves, we have requested our dear friend and brother, the Rev. Robert Newton, to visit you at your next General Conference. To enlarge on the high regard which we entertain for our honored messenger -- a regard which he has justly merited by his unweariable and faithful services in every province of our work, and by the exemplary manner in which he has, at two different times, sustained the most momentous office in our body -- would be a welcome task to us; for it is pleasant to speak of those whom we love but it is, on the present occasion, perfectly unnecessary. You are not unacquainted with the character which he bears in this country; and yon will receive him as a chosen representative of the British Conference, and as one in whose views and principles we repose entire confidence. The subject which has this year engrossed no small portion of our attention, cannot fail to awaken the deepest interest in every part of the Wesleyan community throughout the globe. You will anticipate our reference to the close of the first century of our existence as an organized religious society. On a review of the hundred years which have now reached their termination, we humbly acknowledge and adore the mercy of God, who marvelously raised up our ever-revered fathers as the instruments, in his hands, of so extensive a revival of primitive Christianity; who has preserved us, as a connection, in the midst of many conflicts and changes; and who has granted us, at this time, so cordial a sense of attachment, which we trust that nothing shall ever be permitted to abate, to the doctrines, spirit; and usages of those venerated men who now rest in eternal peace. May the Lord God of our fore-elders, and of all who fear his most holy name, bestow upon us a larger measure of his Spirit’s grace, and grant that the second century of the Wesleyan Society may be marked by still more illustrious displays of his power and love in the church universal, and in the world!

"But while we freely indulge in sentiments such as these, we cannot forget that on one subject especially -- the subject of American slavery -- you, our beloved brethren, are placed in circumstances of painful trial and perplexity. We enter, with brotherly sympathy, into the peculiar situation which you are now called to occupy. But, on this question, we beg to refer you to what occurs in our address to you from the conference of 1836, a proper copy of which will be handed to you by our representative as also to the contents of our preceding letter of 1835. To the principles which we have affectionately but honestly declared in these two documents we still adhere, with a full conviction of their Christian truth and justice.

"The time which has elapsed, and the events which have taken place, since the preparation of the above-mentioned papers, serve only to confirm us yet more in our views of the moral evil of slavery. Far be it from us to advocate violent and ill-considered measures. We are, however, strongly and unequivocally of opinion that it is, at this time, the paramount Christian duty of the ministers of our most merciful Lord in your country to maintain the principle of opposition to slavery with earnest zeal, and unflinching firmness. May we not also be allowed, with the heart-felt solicitude of fraternal love, to entreat that you will not omit or qualify the noble testimony which we

have extracted, in a note to our address, from your Book of Discipline, but that you will continue to insert it there in its primitive and unimpaired integrity. And now, very dear brethren, we commend you to the protection and mercies of the ’only wise God, our Saviour,’ with united prayers that you, and all who labor with you in the word and doctrine, with the multitudes who are happily brought to share in your Christian fellowship, may enjoy a richer effusion of the Holy Spirit’s promised unction, and may at last be ’presented faultless before the presence of our common Saviour’s glory.’ To Him be ’glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.’

Signed, by order of the conference, "Theophilus Lessey, President. "Liverpool August 16, 1839." The following is the answer which the conference returned to the above address of the Wesleyan Conference: --

"Answer of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church -- To the Reverend the President and Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in Great Britain

"Honored and Very Dear Brethren, -- We acknowledge with grateful emotions the reception of your letters at the hand of your excellent representative, our honored and esteemed brother, the Rev. Robert Newton, whose visit, as your messenger, we esteem the best and kindest proof you could have given of your love for us, and desire to promote our blessed unity. His bright example of love and courtesy, simplicity and dignity in conference, and of pure essential Methodism, full of faith and charity, abounding in hope, rejoicing only in Christ Jesus, and knowing no respite from labor, in his public ministry, has been alike edifying and refreshing to us; while also, we have felt our hearts warmed thereby, and drawn closely to you in affection, partakers of the same spirit with you, walking by the same rule, minding the same thing, one people, and our name one in the Lord Jesus.

"And it will not be unwelcome to you that we add, further, an expression of the gratification it has afforded us to be favored with the presence of our beloved and endeared brother Mr. Harvard, and our friend Mr. Richie, of the district of Lower Canada, and of Mr. President Stinson, and the excellent brethren, John and Edgerton Ryerson, representatives of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper Canada. May the God of our common fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, that from you the word of the Lord may sound out unto all people as unto us at the beginning, and the fruits of your labors be multiplied in all the earth, to the glory of God, by the power of the holy Ghost, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"We fully unite with you, dear brethren, in the expression you give of your cordial and even jealous attachment to the principles, doctrines, and usages of Methodism, as established under the heaven-directed ministry of our venerated fathers. Those principles, doctrines, and usages we have especially felt that we were called to review, (and reviewing them, have taken, we trust, still closer to our hearts,) on the great occasion of our first centennial jubilee. This has been a joyful time with us, even as with you, our whole communion joining in extraordinary acts of devotion and offerings to the Lord, giving grateful evidence of our common character the world over, and covenanting to keep Methodism still unworldly and spiritual, abounding in charity, a work of righteousness and peace, rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.

"We greatly rejoice, and give thanks unto the Lord for all your prosperity, brethren, and especially for your peaceful state, and the success of your missions. Missionary zeal, founded in love, is the vital pulse of Methodism, the purity and fruitfulness of which, in its home department, depend on the active sympathy there with the work abroad. Methodism, indeed, might not so much as exist in a narrower parish than the world, nor act on any other than her own gospel principle of equal duty to all tongues and kindreds. Actuated by this principle, we have labored to carry the gospel into every part of our great country; and now into Texas, the territory of Oregon, South America, and Africa at the entrance of Liberia on the western coast. But, alas, how feeble and insufficient are our efforts to accomplish, to any considerable degree, the great work of evangelizing mankind! We long for the salvation of God to become universal.

"The unusual and unwelcome fact of a decrease in our numbers the year previous to our last General Conference, and to which you so kindly and piously allude in your letter of August following, induced much searching of heart, both among our preachers and people; and through God's abounding grace, we have not been afflicted since on a like account. At that time our numbers were -- of traveling preachers, 2,781, and of members, 650,678. And in September last they were, of traveling preachers 3,296, and members 740,459; showing an increase of 515 traveling preachers, and 89,781 members since our last General Conference. We record it with thanksgiving, though we reckon not our strength by numbers.

"We have considered, with affectionate respect and confidence, your brotherly suggestions concerning slavery, and most cheerfully return an unreserved answer to them. And we do so the rather, brethren, because of the numerous prejudicial statements which have been put forth in certain quarters to the wounding of the Church. We assure you then, brethren, that we have adopted no new principle or rule of discipline respecting slavery since the time of our apostolic Asbury; neither do we mean to adopt any. In our General Rules, (called the 'General Rules of the United Societies,' and which are of constitutional authority in our Church,) 'the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them,' is expressly prohibited; and in the same words, substantially, which have been used for the rule since 1792. And the extract of part ii, section 10, of our Book of Discipline, which you quote with approbation, and denominate 'a noble testimony,' is still of force to the same extent that it has been for many years; nor do we entertain any purpose to omit or qualify this section, or any part thereof. For while we should regard it a sore evil to divert Methodism from her proper work of 'spreading Scripture holiness over these lands,' to questions of temporal import, involving the rights of Caesar, yet are we not the less minded on that account to promote and set forward all humane and generous actions, or to prevent, to the utmost of our power, such as are evil and unchristian. It is our first desire, after piety toward God, to be merciful after our power; as we have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible to all men, 'to their bodies,' but especially, and above all, 'to their souls.'

"Of these United States, (to the government and laws of which, 'according to the division of power made to them by the constitution of the Union, and the constitutions of the several states,' we owe, and delight to render, a sincere and patriotic loyalty,) there are several which do not allow of slavery. There are others in which it is allowed, and there are slaves; but the tendency of the laws, and the minds of the majority of the people, are in favor of emancipation. But there are others in which slavery exists so universally, and is so closely interwoven with their civil institutions, that both do the laws disallow of emancipation, and the great body of the people (the source of laws

with us) hold it to be treasonable to set forth any thing, by word or deed, tending that way. Each one of all these states is independent of the rest and sovereign, with respect to its internal government, (as much so as if there existed no confederation among them for ends of common interest,) and therefore it is impossible to frame a rule on slavery proper for our people in all the states alike. But our march is extended through all the states, and as it would be wrong and unscriptural to enact a rule of discipline in opposition to the constitution and laws of the state on this subject, so also would it not be equitable or Scriptural to confound the positions of our ministers and people (so different as they are in different states) with respect to the moral question which slavery involves.

"Under the administration of the venerated Dr. Coke, this plain distinction was once overlooked, and it was attempted to urge emancipation in all the states; but the attempt proved almost ruinous, and was soon abandoned by the doctor himself. While, therefore, the Church has encouraged emancipation in those states where the laws permit it, and allowed the freed-man to enjoy freedom, we have refrained, for conscience' sake, from all intermeddling with the subject in those other states where the laws make it criminal. And such a course we think agreeable to the Scriptures, and indicated by St. Paul's inspired instruction to servants in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. vii, ver. 20,21. For if servants were not to care for their servitude when they might not be free, though if they might be free they should use it rather; so, neither should masters be condemned for not setting them free when they might not do so, though if they might they should do so rather. The question of the evil of slavery, abstractedly considered, you will readily perceive, brethren, is a very different matter from a principle or rule of Church discipline to be executed contrary to, and in defiance of, the law of the land. Methodism has always been (except perhaps in the single instance above) eminently loyal and promotive of good order; and so we desire it may ever continue to be, both in Europe and America. With this sentiment we confide the subject, adding only the corroborating language of your noble Missionary Society, by the revered and lamented Watson, in their instructions to missionaries, published in the report of 1833, as follows: --

" 'As in the colonies in which you are called to labor a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the committee most strongly call to your remembrance what was so fully stated to you when yon were accepted as a missionary to the West Indies, that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition.'

"We have judged it necessary, for the preservation of the children of our people from irreligious or unMethodistical principles while pursuing their education at a distance from home, and for the maintenance of a due proportion of influence in this great country, to encourage the establishment of schools and colleges under the control of our annual conferences, at which a liberal education should be afforded in intimate and graceful connection with Christian training. Accordingly we have now twelve collegiate and twenty-one academic institutions thus established, which, though not as amply endowed as they require to be, are doing well, and we hope will continue to do well.

Permit us, reverend and dear brethren, to refer you to our most honored and beloved brother, Mr. Newton, for any further information you may desire on the above subject, or the present state of our affairs in general. And again we thank you for having sent him to us, whose name had long

been known as that of one whose noble efforts in the cause of Christ had placed him with our Bensons, Watsons, Clarkes, and Buntings, men who have lived for the whole world, and for Methodism in all the world. And we pray for his safe return to you, and that it may please God our heavenly Father to make him more and more useful among you, even to old age. If it shall please God that our venerated and beloved Bishop Some shall be in health to do so, and the work can possibly allow it, we expect him to make it convenient to visit your conference two years hence; and we have appointed one of our body to accompany him to you, or if the bishop cannot go, to represent us fully at that time. And we solicit, brethren, a continuation of this so pleasant and profitable interchange, at our next General Conference.

"Finally, brethren, we commend you to God’s most gracious blessing, praying for you in the love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (as you also do for us,) that you may be enriched with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and abound in good works, to the glory of God, among all people, and for evermore.

"Signed in behalf of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Baltimore, Md., May, 1840.

"R. R. Roberts, "Joshua Soule, "Elijah Hedding, "James O. Andrew, "Beverly Waugh, "Thomas A. Morris "John A. Collins, Secretary." An address was also received from the Canada Conference, full of tender expressions of fraternal regard, and of a determination to maintain with us an indissoluble union in doctrine, moral discipline, and brotherly affection. This was referred to the same committee, and an answer was returned reciprocating the same sentiments and feelings, and pledging the conference to the inviolate preservation of the doctrines and usages of Methodism. The managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church presented the following, expressive of their feelings and views in relation to the great cause in which they were engaged.

"Address of the Managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the General Conference, to be held in Baltimore, May 1, 1840

"Dear Fathers and Brethren, -- We gladly embrace the present opportunity to present for your consideration and adoption, if you shall concur with us in their propriety, some amendments to the constitution of our society, which have been suggested by the experience and practice of another four years. The most important of these relate to the appointment of n assistant corresponding secretary; the enabling the managers to provide for those superannuated missionaries, their wives, widows, and children, who, being on foreign missions, are not provided for by the ordinary funds of the annual conferences; and that which was recommended by the last General Conference, to empower the society to make any alterations in the constitution in future which may be recommended by the General Conference. Should therefore your experience of the practical workings of the system enable you to detect any defect in the provisions of the constitution, or perceive the necessity of any amendment by which its objects may be more readily accomplished, by pointing them out they will be considered, it is hoped, with that calmness and respectful deference which is due to the collected wisdom and long experience of Your venerable body. As to the other amendments which are proposed, they appear to us so obviously necessary for the more perfect and equitable operation of the principles of the society as to need no special arguments to enforce them. Leaving them therefore to be explained by those of our brethren who compose a

part of your body, and who fully comprehend our views, and the reasons on which they are founded, we will only say that we shall cheerfully acquiesce in whatever disposition you may be pleased to make of them, believing, as we do, that the General Conference is equally interested with us in preserving the integrity and promoting the prosperity of the society.

There is another subject connected with the interests of this society which we beg permission to present to your consideration. We have been much gratified to find that all the annual conferences, in making provision for a suitable celebration of the centenary of Methodism, have devoted a portion of the money which shall be realized on that occasion to the cause of missions, most of whom, we believe, leaving the final disposition of it to the General Conference. That this celebration has had a most happy effect upon the cause of Methodism, we have abundant reason to believe not only in raising money for the various objects specified, but also and more especially in reviving true religion among us.

"For some time past we have felt the need, for the prosecution of our great and benevolent objects, of having mission premises procured, and suitable buildings erected, for the accommodation of our local offices, and the meetings of the managers, &c. An estimate of the expense is herewith presented. Should your venerable body concur with us on the propriety of securing such premises, it would not only accommodate the society, and be a saving of expense, but would stand as a lasting monument of the liberality of the donors, and tell to posterity what was done on the one hundredth year of Methodism in behalf of missions. We therefore confidently rely on the approbation of the General Conference of this measure, and the more so as it was fully understood at the time the division of the avails of the centenary collections was made that this object was in contemplation by the managers of the Missionary Society.

"The following statement will exhibit, at one view, the amount received and expended during the past four years; for the particulars of which we refer to the treasurer’s account, as published in the annual reports, herewith presented: -- 1837: Received $62,749.01; Expended 66,536.85 1838: Received $90,105.36; Expended $95,110.75 1839: Received $135,521.94; Expended $103,664.58 1840: Received $116,941.90; Expended $146,498.58. From this it will be seen that there has been a rapid increase to the resources of the society from one year to another, thereby enabling us to meet the enlarged demands upon our treasury created by the extension of the fields of missionary labors. We only add, that, relying upon the good providence of God for direction and aid in urging the important trusts committed to our charge, and upon the wisdom and integrity of the General Conference for devising the most efficient means for carrying into practical effect the general and benevolent objects of the society, we once more pledge ourselves to the faithful performance of our duties, according to the light and ability which God may be graciously pleased to vouchsafe unto us." The following was also read and referred: --

"Report of the Committee on the Journal of the Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church

"The committee to whom was referred the subject of the office of the corresponding secretary, his journal, &c., respectfully report:

"That it appears by the records submitted to their examination, that the duties of the corresponding secretary have been extensive and arduous both at home and abroad, demonstrating the

necessity of having such an officer, as represented by the board to the last General Conference. In addition to the preparation of the annual reports and other documentary manuscripts, the correspondence of the society exhibits more than five hundred official letters to missionaries, &c.; and during the last four years, we learn from the journal kept by the present officer, that besides the duties of corresponding secretary in the office at home, and the preparation of multiplied reports for publication in the Advocate, he has traveled in the service of the society more than eleven thousand miles, in visiting ten annual conferences, some of them twice and thrice, and in holding missionary meetings in ten different states in the Union. "It also appears that he has delivered one hundred and thirty-four missionary sermons and addresses, in various parts of the country, and been directly instrumental in this way of bringing into the treasury the amount of $13,427. How far his labors and writings have been further tributary to the increase of our funds, we have no data upon which to make the estimate. We invite attention, however, to the increased contributions to our treasury since his appointment, as affording evidence that the cause is improving annually under the present system of operations. During the first year of his appointment, the receipts were $62,749 -- the second, $90,105.36 -- the third, $135,521.94 -- and this, too, notwithstanding the unprecedented prostration of the times. The amount of the fourth and last year is not yet ascertained, but will be found comparatively large, though less than the previous year, because of the special efforts made for the centenary fund, a portion of which is destined to our treasury.

"From a review of the whole subject, your committee respectfully submit the following resolutions to be communicated to the next General Conference: --

"Resolved, That the experience of the last four years has amply confirmed the propriety of the appointment of a corresponding secretary devoted to the interests of this society, as prayed for at the last General Conference.

"Resolved, That this board bear their united testimony to the diligent, faithful, and successful performance of the duties of the office by the present incumbent; and in view of his long experience in the service of the board, we shall rejoice at his reappointment by the next General Conference." A number of petitions and memorials were received on a variety of subjects, particularly in reference to slavery and abolitionism, all of which were referred to appropriate committees. It seems that among these, some of the petitioners were not content with asking simply for the abolition of slavery instantly and unconditionally, but they also coupled with it a desire for an alteration in some important features of our Church organization. This latter subject was referred to the committee on the itinerancy, who presented the following report, which was concurred in by the conference:

"The committee to whom were referred the petitions and memorials on the subjects of a moderate episcopacy, the election of presiding elders by the annual conferences, and a lay delegation in the General Conference, have bestowed upon the matters submitted to them the attention which they were conceived to merit, and submit the following report:

"It appears the petitions and memorials on these subjects have been obtained by a concerted operation, under the direction of some single intellect, inasmuch as nearly every petition on any one of these subjects is not only substantially, but literally the same -- most of them being printed slips, cut from some newspaper, and where they are written, literal copies of such as are printed.

This fact induced a conviction in the minds of the committee that these petitions and memorials are the result of agitation, and not of original dissatisfaction on the part of most of the persons signing those petitions and memorials; and, therefore, by no means deserving the same consideration as if they were the spontaneous expression of the dissatisfaction of the petitioners and memorialists. But if it were otherwise, the number of petitioners is so very small in proportion to the entire membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that, in the opinion of the committee, these memorials and petitions, regarding not individual grievances, but general interests, are entitled to no other consideration than that to which they are entitled as mere arguments in favor of the courses indicated. And as the committee have not seen reason to attach much importance to them in this light, they are not prepared to recommend the measures which are called for by these petitions and memorials.

"Moreover, the committee, having witnessed the operation of the present system of Methodist Episcopal Church government, and being persuaded that its operation has been eminently useful, would require the most cogent reasons to induce them to recommend changes so important and so fundamental; especially as two, at least, of these changes have been, after long, grave, and deliberate consideration, recently declined by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The committee refer to the proceedings of the General Conference of 1828, for the light in which the election of presiding elders by the annual conferences, and a lay delegation in the General Conference, was then viewed; and the decision which was made by the Church on these subjects.

"With the views above presented, the committee can do no other than present the following resolution, viz.: --

"Resolved, That it is not expedient to change the form of our Church government in any of the matters suggested in the petitions and memorials which have been under the consideration of the committee."

While this report was under consideration, the following conversation took place between some members of the conference and the Rev. Mr. Newton, the respected representative from England.

Having expressed his willingness to answer any questions which might be put to him in reference to the subjects then under discussion, he was asked, "Whether there was any authority among them equal in extent of power to our superintendency?

"Rev. Mr. Newton. -- We have the thing without the name. The president of our conference exercises more authority than your venerable bishops. He can, at any time, arrest debate by his decision; and, although Mr. Wesley did not assume the title, he claimed and exercised the prerogatives of a Christian bishop. Our chairmen of districts are, in their sphere, also representatives of the president.

"Rev. Mr. Horton asked, whether the presidents were not elected annually?

"Rev. Mr. Newton. -- Unquestionably they are; but the president never dies.

"Is not the chairman of the district also elected annually? asked Rev. Mr. Horton.

"Unquestionably he is, but he never dies, replied Rev. Mr. Newton.

"The chair also inquired of Rev. Mr. Newton, whether the president of the British Conference did not decide many questions which we decide by the vote of the conference; to which he received an affirmative response.

"Rev. Mr. Horton also asked, how long the chairman of the district might retain his office? to which he received the reply, that it depended on circumstances. He always deferred to seniority in case of the presence of a more aged minister. This was generally, if not invariably and universally done."

It is due, perhaps, to the interests of truth, as well as to the character of our people, to say, that the dissatisfaction evinced by these memorials restricted to comparatively few, the great majority of our preachers and people being entirely satisfied with our general economy, and in love with our peculiar doctrines and features of Church government, and were therefore heartily sickened with the perpetual complainings of a few restless individuals respecting tyranny and oppression. On the subject of education the committee reported as follows on those parts of the bishops' address which referred to an increase in the number of literary institutions a general course of instruction, and to Biblical knowledge and ecclesiastical history, the episcopal power of stationing preachers in seminaries of learning, and the zealous of their support: --

"Your committee believe that the advantages of education are most widely diffused and certainly secured, by multiplying institutions of learning within proper limits, but it is obvious enough that if their number is too great to admit of their being competently endowed, the ends of their creation must be defeated; it is certainly wise policy, therefore, for the different annual conferences to secure the permanence of those already established, before they attempt to found others.

"In regard to the course of studies to be pursued in our literary institutions, to which the attention of the committee has been called in the address of the bishops, and by a resolution of the Baltimore conference, they believe that it would be inexpedient to lay down a course which should be pursued in all cases. The board of trustees and faculties will desire to exercise some control in this matter, and it seems to your committee proper that they should. There is a wide and allowable difference of opinion upon the subject, and an attempt to produce uniformity would be most likely to cause dissatisfaction, without accomplishing the object; but your committee do not hesitate to recommend that the commonly received English version of the Bible should be introduced into every school and college, and that it should be studied according to some system which may be adopted by the different boards of instruction in their several institutions, and in those institutions which embrace the ancient languages, they recommend that the Old and New Testaments be studied in the originals critically; they also recommend that the 'Evidences of Christianity,' and 'Ecclesiastical history,' constitute a part of the regular course in all our colleges and universities. When it is remembered that heathen mythology, Roman and Grecian archeology, and profane history, enter into the regular course of most literary institutions, and are believed to be essential to the education of an accomplished scholar, it can need but little argument to prove that knowledge, so much more important, should be imparted to the student.

"Your committee recommend that in all the universities and colleges under the control of the Church, the instruction given in every department of science and literature, in their broadest sense, be full and thorough. Some arguments may be urged in favor of a limited education, none can have weight in favor of a superficial one; a limited education is better than none, and one who

cannot take a full course may be greatly profited by a partial one, provided it is thorough; but those who are superficially taught, have lost their time and money, and at the close of their collegiate education are helpless in themselves, and useless to the community. It is a happy omen to the world, that the Church generally is awaking to the sense of its responsibility in providing for, sustaining, and directing public education. It must not shrink from this responsibility; it cannot without hazarding the most fatal consequences. Mind, energized by its own exertions, and furnished from the armories of science, unless controlled by the restraints, and guided by the counsels of religion, becomes the most powerful auxiliary which infidelity and vice ever won over to their cause; while on the other hand, the intellect, 'brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,' august in the integrity of its object, and the directness of its means, vigorous from the concentration of power to one end, and invigorated by the special blessing of God, given to those who seek to honor him, when supplied with the argument which the learning of this age furnishes, becomes a champion for Christianity, before whom infidelity, superstition, and bigotry must cower and fall. It is readily conceded that principles of morality should be taught as soon as they can be understood. It inevitably follows that religion, which furnishes the only incontrovertible arguments to prove the obligations of morality, and the only sanction which can enforce its precepts, should be taught still earlier; and that all knowledge which is afterward imparted should be harmonized with it. The neglect of this obvious duty has caused the strange result that education fostered infidelity. It first grew out of the efforts made to improve the gross absurdities and foul deformities of a godless and miscalled Christianity upon the mind; and, unhappily, has been suffered to continue after the cause ceased to exist. It should be so no longer. Science, in its conventional sense, is a knowledge of the works of God, the laws which govern them, their relations to each other, and their combination into one harmonious whole. Its discoveries demonstrate the existence of a God; and learning, in its widest sense, arranging and concentrating the facts, proves, by a circumstantiality of evidence and a directness of inference which are irresistible, that this God is the God of the Bible, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and the time has come when, if the Church is true to her trust, learning will be the great agent in promoting religion, by every one of her ten thousand instrumentalities, and over all the face of this earth. In view of the premises, your committee believe that no jealousy should be felt in relation to the calls which our schools and colleges are making upon the ministry for teachers and professors. The number required will be necessarily small in proportion to the whole number of ministers, and when they are otherwise properly qualified, they are undoubtedly the most suitable persons to be employed in the business of education. No fear need be entertained lest their labor should be too light, or that they should become effeminate and self-indulgent; a little experience would soon remove such apprehensions. Your committee can see no good reason why preachers on trial should not be appointed to schools and colleges.

"Your committee do not believe that the conference should make any regulation controlling or limiting the episcopal power of stationing the preachers, and in answer, therefore, to the question asked by the superintendents in their address, whether an appointment to seminaries of learning, when an annual conference requests such a one to be made, renders it obligatory upon the bishop to comply with the request? would recommend that it be answered in the negative.

"In conclusion, your committee, in view of the vast importance of this great trust committed to the Church, for the purpose of making a permanent provision for sustaining our literary institutions,

recommend the adoption of the following resolution, viz.: --

"Resolved, That any annual conference may direct public collections to be taken up by the preachers in charge of circuits and stations, in each society, once in each year, for the purpose of sustaining the literary institutions ’under its control or patronage, if it should judge it expedient so to do, or may adopt such other measure for that end, as may seem to the members thereof most advisable." As this report was very unanimously adopted by the conference, we may consider the present policy in respect to establishing colleges and academies as settled, and that it is highly proper that Biblical instruction should be adopted in all our seminaries of learning.

Questions of administration had been mooted in some of the annual conferences, on which the bishops and many members of these conferences had disagreed respecting the power of the episcopacy to decide points of law, to refuse putting certain questions to vote which the presiding officer might consider unconstitutional. To settle these questions, the subject had been submitted to the conference, and the following was the result of its deliberations in reference to it:

1. That it is the province of the bishop "to decide all questions of law in an annual conference, subject to an appeal to the General Conference; but in all cases the application of law is with the conference."

2. That it belongs to the president of a quarterly meeting "to decide all questions of law in the quarterly meeting conference, subject to an appeal to the president of the next annual conference; but in all cases the application of the law shall be with the conference."

These words, "application of the law," appeared involved in obscurity to some. The meaning is, I apprehend, that the conference, after the law has been explained, is to judge of its applicability to the particular case under consideration. Suppose a man is accused of an act of immorality; the president of a conference explains the law, its nature and penalty in reference to the particular act of immorality of which the person is accused; the members of the conference then, as the judges or jurors in the case, examine into the facts, hear witnesses, decide upon the guilt or innocence of the accused; and then apply the law to that particular case, and if found guilty, bring in their verdict accordingly, while the presiding judge passes the sentence of condemnation. Here the law is applied to, or brought to bear on that particular person, according to its legitimate intent and meaning, the presiding officer being responsible for the interpretation, and the conference for the application of the law to the case in hand. The conference also decided that the president of an annual or a quarterly meeting conference had a right to decline putting a motion or resolution to vote, if he considered it foreign to the proper business of a conference, or inconsistent with constitutional provisions; and also to adjourn a conference without a formal vote. In respect to slavery and abolitionism, though these subjects were much discussed, referred to a committee, and reported on, there was no final action of the conference on either of them, but all things remain as they were, both in the Discipline and the resolutions of the conference.

There was one other subject which excited a deep interest. An appeal had come up from a member of the Missouri conference, appealing from a decision of said conference condemning him for admitting colored testimony against a white person. The appeal was sustained, and the decision of the Missouri conference reversed. As this reversal was considered as sanctioning the practice of admitting colored testimony against the character of a white person, the following

resolution, offered by Dr. Few, of the Georgia conference, after a strong and protracted debate, was adopted: --

"That it is inexpedient and unjustifiable for any preacher to permit colored persons to give testimony against white persons, in any state where they are denied that privilege in trials of law."

"The passage of this resolution gave great dissatisfaction to many members of the conference; and after a variety of expedients had been resorted to, in vain, to obviate the difficulties which seemed to grow out of it, Bishop Soule offered the following resolutions, which were adopted by a great majority, ninety-seven voting in the affirmative and twenty-seven in the negative: --

1. Resolved, That in the decision of this conference in the case of the appeal of Rev. Silas Comfort, it is not intended to express or imply that the testimony of colored persons against white persons, in Church trials, is either expedient or justifiable in any of the slave-holding states or territories where the civil laws prohibit such testimony in trials at law.

2. Resolved, That it is not the intention of this conference, in the adoption of the resolution of Rev. Ignatius A. Few, of Georgia, in regard to the admission of the testimony of colored people, to prohibit such testimony in Church trials in any of the states or territories where it is the established usage of the Church to admit, and when, in the judgment of the constitutional judicatories of the Church, such testimony may be admitted with safety to the peace of society, and the best interests of all concerned.

3. Resolved, That it is not the intention of this conference, in either of the above cases, or in any action had by this body, to express or imply any distrust, or want of confidence in the Christian piety and integrity of the numerous body of colored members under our pastoral care, to whom we are bound by the bonds of the gospel of Christ, and for whose spiritual and eternal interests, together with all our fellow-men of every color, and in every relation and condition in life, we will never cease to labor." The subject of temperance was again discussed, at great length and with lively interest; and although a memorial had been sent the rounds of the several annual conferences, praying for the substitution of Mr. Wesley’s rule in the place of the one now in the Discipline; and although, out of the two thousand and eighty who were present and voted on the resolutions praying for and authorizing the General Conference to make the alteration, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four voted in the affirmative, and only three hundred and six in the negative; yet the committee to whom the subject had been submitted reported against the change, because they thought that the "true grammatical construction of the language of the Discipline implies that there must be three-fourths of the members of every annual conference in favor of the contemplated measure, in order that it may be lawfully carried into effect." This novel interpretation of the law, though I believe it was not by any means sanctioned by a majority of the conference, tended much to defeat the measure so earnestly recommended and desired by such a large majority of both preachers and people; for when the vote was taken there were seventy-five for and thirty-eight against it, and these not being a majority of two-thirds of the whole number of delegates, the motion was declared lost.

I have already expressed my opinion freely upon the inconclusiveness of the reasoning of this report. In addition to what is there said, it may be remarked, that the doctrine would put it into the power of one single annual conference, and that too the smallest in the Union, to defeat the

wishes of all the rest, though these wishes should be unanimously expressed. And surely it was never the intention of the General and annual conferences who proposed and adopted the proviso in the Discipline thus to authorize so small a minority to rule the whole Church, for this was the very thing they designed to defeat or to prevent. Several attempts had been made at preceding conferences to adopt some uniform method by which ministers of other denominations might be received into the Church and recognized in their proper character. At this General Conference the following regulations were adopted: --

Question 1. In what manner shall we receive those ministers who may come to us from the Wesleyan connection in Europe or Canada?

Answer If they come to us properly accredited from either the British, Irish, or Canada Conference, they may be received according to such credentials, provided they give satisfaction to an annual conference of their willingness to conform to our Church government and usages.

Question 2. How shall we receive those ministers who may offer to unite with us from other Christian churches?

Answer Those ministers of other evangelical churches who may desire to unite with our Church, whether as local or itinerant, may be received according to our usages, on condition of their taking upon them our ordination vows, without the reimposition of hands, giving satisfaction to an annual conference of their being in orders, and of their agreement with us in doctrine, discipline, government, and usages; provided the conference is also satisfied with their gifts, grace, and usefulness. Whenever any such minister is received, he shall be furnished with a certificate, signed by one of our bishops, in the following words, viz.: -- This is to certify, that _____ has been admitted into conference as a traveling preacher, [or has been admitted as a local preacher on _____ circuit,] he having been ordained to the office of a deacon, (or an elder, as the case may be,) according to the usages of the _____ church, of which he has been a member and minister; and he is hereby authorized to exercise the functions pertaining to his office in the Methodist Episcopal Church, so long as his life and conversation are such as become the gospel of Christ.

"Given under my hand and seal, at _____ this _____ day of _____ in the year of our Lord, _____.

Question 3. How shall we receive preachers of other denominations who are not in orders?

Answer They may be received as licentiates, provided they give satisfaction to a quarterly, or an annual conference, that they are suitable persons to exercise the office, and of their agreement with the doctrines, discipline, government, and usages of our Church." The custom of receiving person on trial for six months before they are admitted into full membership had been made to apply, by the generality of our preachers, to those who came to us recommended from other churches, while some had admitted them without this intermediate process. To settle this question, and to produce uniformity in this branch of the administration, the rule in relation to receiving members was so altered as to read as follows: --

"Let none be received into the Church, until they are recommended by a leader with whom they have met at least six months on trial, and have been baptized; and shall, on examination by the minister in charge, before the Church, give satisfactory assurances both of the correctness of their faith, and their willingness to observe and keep the rules of the Church. Nevertheless, if a member

in good standing in any other orthodox church shall desire to unite with us, such applicant may, by giving satisfactory answers to the usual inquiries, be received at once into full fellowship." The Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church had become defunct. This had originated partly in an injudicious attempt to amalgamate the Bible, Tract, and Sunday School Societies together, by which the business of these several societies might be transacted by one board of management, and partly from the little control which the parent society exercised over its auxiliaries and branches, and, I may add also, from the peculiar manner of our organization in respect to the duty of furnishing books for sabbath schools. While the boards of other denominations were responsible for the entire management of all the affairs of the societies under their supervision, ours had nothing to do with raising money to meet the expense of publishing books, this, as well as selecting and printing them, being in the hands of the agency of the Book Concern. In consequence of this wise arrangement, the managers of the Sunday School Union incurred but few responsibilities, and had but little to do, while the mingling of many things together rendered that little perplexing and inefficient.

It must not be supposed, however, that the sabbath school cause had been suffered to languish. The various societies continued their existence, were in efficient operation, and the children were regularly taught in nearly all our congregations, particularly in our large cities and villages; but they acted independently of each other, and were therefore not connected together by any general head, or bond of union, except so far as the agency of the Book Concern exerted its influence in furnishing the books on the cheapest terms, according to the provisions of the Publishing Fund.

There were supposed to be defects, however, in this system, which ought to he remedied. To do this, a memorial was presented to this General Conference, by a number of brethren in the city of New York, praying for the reorganization of a Sunday School Society according to the principles of a new constitution which was submitted to the conference. The deliberations resulted in the adoption of the constitution, and of the following section in the Discipline: -- Question What shall we do for the rising generation?

Answer

1. Let Sunday schools be formed in all our Congregations where ten children can be collected for that purpose. And it shall be the special duty of preachers having charge of circuits and stations, with the aid of the other preachers, to see that this he done; to engage the co-operation of as many of our members as they can; to visit the schools as often as practicable; to preach on the subject of Sunday schools and religious instruction in each congregation at least once in six months; to lay before the quarterly conference at each quarterly meeting, to be entered on its journal, a written statement of the number and state of the Sunday schools within their respective circuits and stations, and to make a report of the same to their several annual conferences. Each quarterly conference shall be deemed a board of managers, having supervision of all the Sunday schools and Sunday school societies within its limits, and shall be auxiliary to the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and each annual conference shall report to said union the number of auxiliaries within its bounds, together with other facts presented in the annual reports of the preachers as above directed.

2. It is recommended that each annual conference, where the general state of the work will allow, request the appointment of a special agent, to travel throughout its bounds, for the purpose of

promoting the interests of Sunday schools; and his expenses shall be paid out of collections which he shall be directed to make, or otherwise, as shall be ordered by the conference.

3. Let our catechisms be used as extensively as possible, both in our Sunday schools and families; and let the preachers faithfully enforce upon parents and Sunday school teachers the great importance of instructing children in the doctrines and duties of our holy religion.

4. It shall be the special duty of the preachers to form Bible classes wherever they can, for the instruction of larger children and youth; and where they cannot superintend them personally, to appoint suitable leaders for that purpose.

5. It shall be the duty of every preacher of a circuit or station to obtain the names of the children belonging to his congregations, and leave a list of such names for his successor; and in his pastoral visits he shall pay special attention to the children, speak to them personally, and kindly, on experimental and practical godliness, according to their capacity, pray earnestly for them, and diligently instruct and exhort all parents to dedicate their children to the Lord in baptism as early as convenient; and let all baptized children be faithfully instructed in the nature, design, privileges, and obligations of their baptism. Those of them who are well disposed may be admitted to our class meetings and love feasts, and such as are truly serious, and manifest a desire to flee the wrath to come, shall be advised to join society as probationers."

Whether this society will he able to perform the duties and to accomplish the objects which the other failed to do, remains to be seen. If, however, the members and managers heartily co-operate with the book agency in the selection and publication of books, and otherwise carry into practical effect the spirit and objects of their organization, they will no doubt render important service to the sabbath school cause. A very able report was adopted near the conclusion of the conference on the subject of ordaining ministers in slave-holding states who own slaves, and will not liberate them from their bondage. This arose out of the practice of the Baltimore conference in refusing to ordain some local preachers, who lived in the state of Virginia, where they pleaded that the laws would not permit emancipation. As this subject had never before been so fully investigated, and as the report, dawn up by Dr. Bascom, very clearly unfolds the principles by which the Church has ever been governed upon this grave and important question, I think the reader will be pleased to have the entire report before him. It is as follows: --

"The committee, to whom was referred the memorial and appeal of some fifteen official members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Westmoreland circuit, Baltimore conference, on the subject of alleged withholdment of right from a portion of the local ministry within the limits of that conference, and to when was likewise referred the report of the judiciary committee upon a similar remonstrance from the same division of the Baltimore conference, signed by about thirty official members of the Church, and addressed to the General Conference in 1836, after giving to the subject the attention its obvious importance demands, beg leave to report the following as the result of their deliberations: --

"The particular portion, or rather general section of country in which these remonstrances have their origin, although belonging to the Baltimore conference, is found within the limits of the state of Virginia; and the memorialists represent in strong but respectful terms, that local preachers within the jurisdiction of the Baltimore conference, but residing in the commonwealth of Virginia, have, in

considerable numbers, and for a succession of years, been rejected as applicants for deacon's and elders orders in the ministry, solely on the ground of their being slave-holders, or the owners of slaves. In the memorials referred to it is distinctly stated, that election and ordination have been withheld from the applicants in question on no other ground or pretense than that of their being the owners of slave property; and it is further argued that the Baltimore conference avows this to be the only reason of the course they pursue, and which is complained of by the petitioners. The appellants allege further, that the laws of Virginia relating to slavery forbid emancipation, except under restrictions, and subject to contingencies amounting, to all intents and purposes, to a prohibition; and that the Discipline of the Church having provided for the ordination of ministers thus circumstanced, the course pursued by the Baltimore conference operates as an abridgment of right, and therefore furnishes just ground of complaint. The memorialists regard themselves as clearly entitled to the protection of the well-known provisional exception to the general rule on this subject found in the Discipline; and assume with confidence, and argue with firmness and ability, that no other objection being found to the character of candidates for ordination, it is a departure from the plain intendment of the law in the case, and a violation of not less express compact than of social justice, to withhold ordination for reasons which the provisions of the law plainly declare are not to be considered as a forfeiture of right. It is set forth in the argument of the appellants, that, attaching themselves to the Church as citizens of Virginia, where, in the obvious sense of the Discipline, emancipation is impracticable, the holding of slaves, or failure to emancipate them, cannot be plead in bar to the right of ordination, as is the ease in states where emancipation, as defined and qualified by the rule in the case, is found to be practicable. In the latter ease the question is within the jurisdiction of the Church, inasmuch as the holding or not holding of property of this kind depends not upon the constitution and regulation of civil property, but upon the will and purpose of individuals. Under such circumstances the conduct in question is voluntary, and in every final sense the result of choice. In the former, however, where emancipation is resisted by the prohibition of law, it may be otherwise and in many instances is known to be resulting entirely from the involuntary relations and circumstances of individuals connected with the very structure of civil polity, and the force and array of public opinion and popular interest. The memorialists advert to the fact, that we have in the Discipline two distinct classes of legislative provision in relation to slavery -- the one applying to owners of slaves where emancipation is practicable, consistently with the interests of master and slaves, and the other where it is impracticable without endangering such safety, and these interests on the part of both. With the former, known as the general rule on this subject, the petitioners do not interfere in any way, and are content simply to place themselves under the protection of the latter as contracting parties with the Church; and the ground of complaint is that the Church has failed to redeem the pledge of its own laws, by refusing or failing to promote to office ministers, in whose case no disability attaches on the ground of slavery, because the disability attaching in other cases is here removed by special provision of law, and so far leaves the right to ordination clear and undoubted, and hence the complaint against the Baltimore conference. In further prosecution of the duty assigned them, your committee have carefully examined the law, and inquired into the system of slavery as it exists in Virginia, and find the representation of the memorialists essentially correct. The conditions with which emancipation is burdened in that commonwealth preclude the practicability of giving freedom to slaves as contemplated in the Discipline, except in extremely rare instances say one in a thousand, and possibly not more than one in five thousand. The exception in the Discipline is

therefore strictly applicable to all the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church holding slaves in Virginia, and they appear clearly entitled to the benefit of the rule made and provided in such cases.

"As emancipation under such circumstances is not a requirement of Discipline, it cannot be made a condition of eligibility to office. An appeal to the policy and practice of the Church for fifty years past will show incontestably, that, whatever may have been the convictions of the Church with regard to this great evil, the nature and tendency of the system of slavery, it has never insisted upon emancipation in contravention of civil authority; and it therefore appears to be a well-settled and long-established principle in the polity of the Church that no ecclesiastical disabilities are intended to ensue either to the ministers or members of the Church in those states where the civil authority forbids emancipation. The general rule therefore distinctly and invariably requiring emancipation as the ground of right, and the condition of claim to ordination where the laws of the several states admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, and which, in the judgment of your committee, should always be carried into effect with unyielding firmness, does not apply to your memorialists, and cannot by any fair construction of law affect their rights.

"On the other hand, your committee have given the most careful consideration to the position of the Baltimore conference complained of by the appellants. The journals of the several sessions of the Baltimore conference, for a series of years, have been carefully examined, and found to be silent on the subject of the rejections in question, except the single statement that A, B, and C, from time to time, applied for admission or orders, and were rejected. We find no rule or reason of action, no evidence of preconception, no grounds or reasons of rejection, stated in any form, directly or indirectly. Nothing of this kind is avowed in, or found upon the face of the journals of that body. The charge of particular motives, it occurs to your committee, cannot be sustained in the instance of a deliberative body, say the Baltimore conference, unless it appears in evidence that the motives have been avowed by a majority of the conference; and it is not in proof that the conference has ever had an action to this effect, whatever may have been the declaration of individuals sustaining the charge of the appellants. The fact charged without reference to motives, that there has been a long list of rejections, both as it regards admission into the traveling connection and ordination, until the exception seems to be made a general rule, is undoubtedly true, and is not denied by the defendants. The evidence, however, in relation to specific reasons and motives is defective, and does not appear to sustain the charge of a contravention of right by any direct accredited action of the Baltimore conference had in the premises.

"That this view of the subject presents a serious difficulty is felt by your committee, and must be so by all. The rule applicable in this case allows an annual conference to act under the circumstances; but does not, and from the very nature and ubiquity of the case, cannot require it. Among the unquestioned constitutional rights of our annual conferences is that of acting freely, without any compulsory direction, in the exercise of individual franchise. Election here is plainly an assertion of personal right on the part of the different members composing the body, with regard to which the claim to question or challenge motives does not belong even to the General Conference, unless the result has turned upon avowed considerations unknown to the law and rule in the case. The journal of the conference is the only part of its history of which this body has cognizance, and to extend such cognizance to the reasons and motives of individual members of conferences not declared to be the ground of action by a majority, would be to establish a rule at once subversive

of the rights and independence of annual conferences. In the very nature of the case an annual conference must possess the right of free and uncontrolled determination, not only in the choice of its members, but in all its elections, and keeping within the limits and restrictions of its charter as found in the Discipline, can only be controlled in the exercise of such right by moral and relative considerations, connected with the intelligence and interests of the body.

"The memorialists prayed the last General Conference, and they again ask this to interfere authoritatively by change or construction of rule so as to afford relief; and in failure to do so in the memorial of 1836, they ask to be set off to the Virginia conference, as the only remaining remedy. In their present petition they are silent on the subject of a transfer to Virginia. Under all the circumstances of the case, and taking into the account the probabilities of future action in the premises, your committee cannot but regard this as the only conclusive remedy. But how far this may be considered as relatively practicable, or whether advisable in view of all the interests involved, the committee have no means of determining, and therefore leave it to the judgment of those who have. That the petitioners, in accordance with the provisions of the Discipline, whether said provisions be right or wrong, are entitled to remedy, your committee cannot for a moment doubt, inasmuch as they are laboring, and have been for years, under practical disabilities actually provided against by the Discipline of the Church. The alleged grievance is by the petitioners themselves regarded as one of administration, not of law. No change of legislation is asked for, unless this body prefer it; and it does not appear to your committee to he called for by any view of the subject they have been able to take.

"Your committee are unwilling to close the brief view of this subject, without anxiously suggesting that, as it is one of the utmost importance, and intense delicacy in its application and bearings throughout our entire country, involving in greater or less degree the hopes and fears, the anxieties and interests of millions, it must be expected that great variety of opinions and diversity of conviction and feeling will be found to exist in relation to it, and most urgently call for the exercise of mutual forbearance and reciprocal good will on the part of all concerned. May not the principles and causes, giving birth and perpetuity to great moral and political systems or institutions be regarded as evil, even essentially evil in every primary aspect of the subject, without the implication of moral obliquity on the part of those involuntarily connected with such systems and institutions, and providentially involved in their operation and consequences? May not a system of this kind be jealously regarded as in itself more or less inconsistent with natural right, and moral rectitude, without the imputation of guilt and derelict motive, in the instance of those who, without any choice or purpose of their own, are necessarily subjected to its influence and sway?

"Can it be considered as just or reasonable to hold individuals responsible for the destiny of circumstances over which they have no control?, Thus conditioned in the organic arrangements and distributions of society, is there any necessary connection between the moral character of the individual and that of the system? In this way the modifying influence of unavoidable agencies or circumstances in the formation of character is a well-known principle, and one of universal recognition in law, morals, and religion, and upon which all administration of law, not unjust and oppressive, must proceed. And your committee know of no reason why the rule is inapplicable, or should not obtain, in relation to the subject of this report. In conclusion, the committee would express the deliberate opinion that, while the general rule on the subject of slavery, relating to

those states only whose laws admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, should be firmly and constantly enforced, the exception to the general rule applying to those states where emancipation, as defined above, is not practicable, should be recognized and protected with equal firmness and impartiality. The committee respectfully suggest to the conference the propriety of adopting the following resolution: --

"Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That, under the provisional exception of the general rule of the Church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in states or territories here the laws do not admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and cannot, therefore, be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination."

It will be seen by a reference to the address of the managers of our Missionary Society, that they prayed for certain alterations in its constitution. After considerable debate, provision was made for the election of two additional secretaries, and likewise empowering the managers to provide for the widows and orphan children of such missionaries as have fallen in foreign missionary work where an annual conference has hen or may he found, inasmuch as they had no claim upon the ordinary funds of the annual conferences. And the general report of the conference regarding missions gave an encouraging view of the great and growing missionary field of labor, and invited preachers and people to a united and vigorous prosecution of this holy and benevolent enterprise. A memorial was presented to the conference by the secretary of the American Colonization Society, which was referred to a committee, and the following report was adopted almost unanimously: --

"That, after mature deliberation, we are convinced that the American Colonization Society is deserving the patronage and support of the entire Christian community as exerting a most beneficial influence upon the colored population of our own country, and more especially upon the inhabitants of Africa, particularly the colonists of Liberia, and the neighboring native tribes. It is chiefly however, as Christians, and as Christian ministers, that we view this enterprise favorably, on account of the facilities which it affords to the Christian missionary to extend the blessings of the gospel to that benighted portion of our globe. The success which has already attended our missions in that country is, to us, a sure indication that Providence designs to make Liberia a means of enlightening Africa with the light of salvation, as well as a place of refuge for the distressed. With these views the committee respectfully recommend to the conference the adoption of the following: --

1. Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences in General Conference assembled, That we view with favor the efforts which are now making by the American Colonization Society to build up a colony on the coast of Liberia with free people of color by their own consent.

2. Resolved, That the success which has hitherto attended this noble and philanthropic enterprise is a sure pledge that, if still prosecuted with wisdom and energy, it will be rendered a great blessing, not only to the colonies themselves, but also to the vast population of Africa, now enveloped in heathenish darkness.

3. Resolved, That we recommend this society to the attention and patronage of our brethren and friends; and that the several annual conferences which may feel themselves free to aid this enterprise of benevolence to the souls and bodies of people of color, both in our own country and in Africa be, and hereby are affectionately advised and requested to adopt such measures as they may think suitable to promote its objects, by taking up collections on or about the fourth of July in each year."

Much inconvenience had been experienced in some of the conferences in consequence of supernumerary preachers leaving their stations with a view to become agents for societies not in connection with our Church, and which, in some instances, even operated against the peace and harmony of the body. To prevent evils of this character, the following clause was inserted in the Discipline: --

"A supernumerary preacher who refuses to attend to the work assigned him, unless in case of sickness or other unavoidable cause or causes, shall not be allowed to exercise the functions of his office, nor even to preach among us; nevertheless, the final determination of the case shall be with the annual conference of which he is a member, who shall have power to acquit, suspend, locate, or expel him, as the case may be." The rule incorporated in the Discipline at the last General Conference respecting the trial of superannuated preachers who reside out of the bounds of their respective conferences, was found inadequate to its object, as it was impossible to arrest the progress of a disorderly person who might choose to evade the rule, if justified in his course by the conference to which he belonged. This conference, therefore, so amended the rule as to make it read as follows: --

"If the accused be a superannuated preacher, living out of the bounds of the conference of which he is a member, he shall be held responsible to the annual conference within whose bounds he may reside, who shall have power to try, acquit, suspend, locate, or expel him, in the same manner as if he were a member of said conference."

These comprehend all the important acts of the conference. There were, to be sure, several verbal alterations in some portions of the Discipline, which, however, do not materially alter the sense, or any principle of the government. The motion for a complete revision of the Discipline, so as to harmonize its several parts, to make a more systematical arrangement of its sections, and to correct the phraseology, which had become, in consequence of haste or negligence, somewhat unintelligible, notwithstanding its obvious necessity, was lost, chiefly because the object of the mover was misapprehended. It is hoped, however, that such a revision will yet be made, as it would add greatly to the perspicuity of the Discipline, and prevent much of that discordant administration which arises from the ambiguity of the law in certain cases.

Before the conference adjourned, Bishop Soule was appointed to attend as a representative to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in 1842, and he nominated Thomas B. Sargeant to accompany him, and the nomination was confirmed by the conference. Bishop Hedding was requested to attend the Canada Conference, or, in the event of his being unable to go, the bishops were authorized to select a person for that service. The following is the pastoral address: --

"Dearly Beloved Brethren, -- As the representatives of the several annual conferences in General Conference assembled, we assume the pleasing duty of addressing to you our Christian

salutations: ’Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ,’ both now and for ever.

"In reviewing the history of the past four years, while we see some occasions for humiliation before God, we see much in the dealings of our heavenly Father with us which calls aloud for gratitude and praise. The unwelcome and startling fact of a diminution of the numbers in society had awakened in our minds great solicitude. Fearing lest we had so far departed from our original purity of character as to be cursed with barrenness, and to give place to others whom God would constitute more appropriate instruments in achieving the moral renovation of the world, we sent up our cry to heaven,’ Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.’ At this point in our history we very justly concluded that instead of indulging in fruitless speculations upon the causes which had brought about this state of things, it became us to gird ourselves for new exertions, and to look up to the great head of the Church for a renewed and signal manifestation of his power and grace, to raise the fainting spirits and cheer the trembling hearts of the armies of our Israel. And how wonderfully have our efforts been succeeded! Truly may we say, ’In a little wrath he hid his face from us, for a moment, but with everlasting kindness’ has he had ’mercy upon us.’

"Within the last year the state of the American Methodist Church has assumed a most interesting and cheering aspect. The spirit of grace and supplication has been poured out upon her, and her converts have been greatly multiplied. Extensive and powerful revivals have been reported through our excellent periodicals, from almost every point of the wide field occupied by our regular itinerant ministry, or by our missionaries. Multitudes of fallen and miserable men have been happily renovated and brought within the pale of the Church. Many desolate and barren fields have become as the garden of the Lord; presenting to the gaze of the world the variegated tints of moral beauty, sending up to heaven the sweet odors of pure devotion, and yielding the precious fruits of righteousness, to the glory and honor of God.

"The first centenary of Methodism has brought with it a state of great enlargement and prosperity. The pious zeal which you exhibited in the appropriate celebration of this new era in our history, and the liberal offerings you presented to the Church, exhibit a praiseworthy regard for her institutions, and doubtless constitute a sacrifice with which God is well pleased. Though, on this interesting occasion, you did no more than was your duty to do, God blessed you in the deed, having brought your tithes into the storehouse of the Lord, and proved him therewith, he has poured you out a blessing that there is scarcely room to contain.

"It affords us great pleasure to witness the strong tendency which develops itself among the Methodists to adhere to the peculiar principles which have characterized them from the beginning, and to remain one and indissoluble. Though some have entered into ’doubtful disputations,’ and a few of our societies have been hurtfully agitated, yet to the honor of our enlightened membership, and to the glory of God, would we at this time express our solemn conviction that the great mass of our people have remained ’firm as a wall of brass’ ’midst the commotions of conflicting elements. There seems at this moment far less occasion to fear from the causes of dissension than there was at the last meeting of this conference. Indeed, brethren, we have no doubt but if we all continue to ’walk by the same rule, and to mind the same things,’ in which in the order of God we have been instructed, ’the gates of hell shall not prevail against us,’ and the enemy who would divide and scatter, in order to destroy us, will be dis appointed.

"Since the commencement of the present session of the General Conference, memorials have been presented principally from the northern and eastern divisions of the work, some praying for the action of the conference on the subject of slavery, and others asking for radical changes in the economy of the Church. The results of the deliberations of the committees to whom these memorials had a respectful reference, and the final action of the conference upon them, may be seen among the doings of this body, as reported and published. The issue in several instances is probably different from what the memorialists may have thought they had reason to expect. But it is to be hoped they will not suppose the General Conference has either denied them any legitimate right, or been wanting in a proper respect for their opinions. Such is the diversity of habits of thought, manners, customs, and domestic relations among the people of this vast republic, and such the diversity of the institutions of the sovereign states of the confederacy, that it is not to be supposed an easy task to suit all the incidental circumstances of our economy to the views and feelings of the vast mass of minds interested. We pray, therefore, that brethren whose views may have been crossed by the acts of this conference will at least give us the credit of having acted in good faith, and of not having regarded private ends or party interests, but the best good of the whole family of American Methodists.

"Radical changes in our economy are conceived to be fraught with danger. After having so long, and under such a variety of circumstances, proved the efficiency of our existing institutions, we conceive that it is now no time to go into untried experiments. The leading features of our excellent Book of Discipline, we have every reason to believe, commend themselves alike to the enlightened judgments and to the pious feelings of the great mass of our people. Upon this subject they hold the sentiment expressed in the language of our Lord: 'No man having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new, for he saith the old is better.' They desire to continue on in the same tried path, and preserve, in its simplicity and purity, Methodism as we received it from our fathers. With these convictions, we should prove recreant to the trust committed to us were we in the slightest degree to yield to the spirit of innovation.

"After this free expression of our views and feelings in relation to those great interests which naturally come under review in such a communication, will you, brethren, permit us, as your pastors and servants, for Jesus' sake, to 'stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance,' in relation to several important duties, which at the present time especially demand your utmost care and diligence?

1. In addition to the ordinary means of grace to which we are bound to attend as Christians, there are certain duties which are obligatory on us as Methodists; among these are our class meetings and love feasts. Numerous melancholy instances have proved that these means cannot be wantonly neglected by our people without the loss of their religious comfort, a total paralysis of their spiritual energies, and utter uselessness i the Church. As you then desire to be useful, to be happy, and to glorify God in this life and that which is to come, we beseech you, brethren, never for a moment to decline in your attention to these precious means of grace.

2. Exercise the utmost vigilance and care over the moral and religious training of the rising generation. In a very few days we shall be with our fathers: and it is for us now to say what influence our children shall exert upon the condition of society, and the destinies of the world, when we are no more. Give your infant offspring to God in holy baptism. When they are of

sufficient age, put them into the sabbath school, impart to them personal religious instruction, pray incessantly for their conversion and salvation, and by all means, if possible, give them the advantages of the excellent institutions of learning which have been reared by your benevolent and praiseworthy exertions.

3. We would also apprise you who are heads of families, of the vast importance of supplying those committed to your trust with such reading as will have a tendency to make them wiser and better. Preoccupy their attention with our excellent books and periodicals, and to the utmost of your power guard them against the dreadful tide of froth and corruption which is making such ravages upon the intellectual and moral character of the age, under the general title of novels. These publications, with very few exceptions, like the dreadful sirocco, blast, and wither, and destroy wherever they come. Superinducing a state of intellectual languor, and blunting the moral feelings, they prepare the young mind for the more open and decided demonstrations of error, in the various forms of infidelity, or make it an easy prey to the seductions of vice. Recollect that 'to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.' Take care, then, to supply the appropriate aliment of the mind in sufficient variety and abundance, that there may be left no opening for the entrance of these mischievous agents.

4. We furthermore exhort you, brethren, not to forget the high and holy object of our organization. We profess to be 'a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness; united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to help each other work out their salvation.' We are a voluntary association, organized, as we believe, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, for purposes of a purely spiritual nature. It was with reference to our mutual spiritual edification that we struck hands before God's altar, and gave to each other pledges of future fidelity. Let us then labor to the utmost to do each other good, praying for one another, 'bearing each others burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ,' 'forgiving one another if any have a quarrel against another.' Our obligations to these duties we took upon ourselves voluntarily, and under the most solemn circumstances. Can we then lightly cast them off, or claim them at the hands of others, when we will not discharge them ourselves' Nay, brethren, they are mutual, perpetual, inviolable.

5. We exhort and beseech you, brethren, by the tender mercies of our God, that you strive for the 'mind that was in Christ Jesus.' Be not content with mere childhood in religion; but, 'having the principles of the doctrines of Christ, go on unto perfection.' The doctrine of entire sanctification constitutes a leading feature of original Methodism. But let us not suppose it enough to have this doctrine in our standards: let us labor to have the experience and the power of it in our hearts. Be assured, brethren, that if our influence and usefulness as a religious community, depend upon one thing more than any other, it is upon our carrying out the great doctrine of sanctification in our life and conversation. When we fail to do this, then shall we lose our pre-eminence; and the halo of glory which surrounded the heads, and lit up the path of our sainted fathers, will have departed from their unworthy sons. O brethren, let your motto be, 'holiness to the Lord.' 'And may the God of peace sanctify you wholly, and we pray God, that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.'

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, what soever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.' And now, we 'commend you to God and the word of his grace, who is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified.' AMEN." On the evening of Wednesday, June 3, the conference adjourned to meet again in the city of New York, May 1, 1844. At an early period of the session of this conference a resolution prevailed to employ a reporter to take down the proceedings of the conference, that they might be published weekly in the Christian Advocate and Journal, and the other papers published under the direction of the General Conference. The following is the reporter's account of the closing of the conference: -- "A motion being made to adjourn sine die, Bishop Soule addressed the conference:

"Dear Brethren, -- Under any other circumstances than those in which we are now placed, I should esteem it a high privilege, as well as a solemn duty, to offer you an extended parting salutation. But the extreme lateness of the hour requires that we should close our session without further delay. Indulge me a few, and but a few, moments.

"It has afforded me much pleasure to witness so little improper excitement. I do not recollect that I ever attended a conference in which I saw less. While great difference of opinion has existed on various subjects, I rejoice to have seen exhibited, universally, so much brotherly kindness and affection. I am more especially rejoiced in the firm persuasion, the steadfast belief, that great and important principles have been investigated and established, destined to exert a most salutary influence on our future prospects, our peace, and our unity. In this I do rejoice, and I will rejoice.

"And now in separating, to carry out the measures here adopted -- to further the cause of God with renewed zeal and energy -- I entreat brethren to refrain rigidly from all unkind expressions in regard to each other; and to be careful how, as members of this body, they pass their animadversions, publicly or privately, upon its acts. It becomes us to speak, if we speak at all, with great respect and due deference for the opinions of those who have acted under responsibilities so vast and momentous.

"Let us keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

"And may the God of all grace continue to strengthen our union, until we shall see the accomplishment of the great design for which Methodism was raised up, viz.: to spread Scriptural holiness all over these lands.

"The bishop then read that admirable and appropriate hymn, commencing --

'And let our bodies part, To different climes repair; Inseparably joined in heart The friends of Jesus are.'

"The whole body, together with a considerable audience, joined solemnly in singing these sacred lines; after which the venerable bishop addressed the throne of grace, amidst the responses, the tears, and the sighs bursting from the heaving bosoms of the conference and the audience.

"The conference then, at ten minutes past one o'clock, Thursday morning, June 4, adjourned sine die.

"Thus closed the Centenary General Conference, after the most protracted, the most interesting, and, to human judgment, the most auspicious session ever held. May its deliberations redound to the glory of God and the good of the Church. The Church! Esto perpetua."

04.05C.16. Vol 4, Book 5C, Chapter 16

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH By Nathan Bangs Volume IV -- Book V

CHAPTER 16 Methodist Book Concern

I. Historical sketch of the Concern. -- In vol. i, where a short notice is given of the origin of the Book Concern, I promised to give a more detailed account of this useful establishment in a subsequent part of the History. I shall now attempt to redeem this pledge, although my space will not allow of a very particular and extended account. As is there stated, at a very early period of his ministry, Mr. Wesley established a printing office, and in 1778 commenced the publication of the Arminian Magazine, in which he vindicated the doctrines taught by that distinguished divine, James Arminius, so far as they coincided with what he believed the truth as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and likewise the doctrine and usages promulgated and adopted by himself and his brother, Charles Wesley. This publication, together with a variety of tracts and volumes on religious, philosophical, and scientific subjects, have done immense good to the community in Great Britain and other parts of the world; and the Wesleyan connection in England has produced some of the first writers of the age, such as Clarke, Benson, Watson, and many others of less note, but equally indefatigable in spreading light and truth by means of the press. The Magazine, filled with a vast variety of the most useful knowledge, has been continued, gradually enlarging its dimensions, and c hanging ifs name to the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, to the present time, making in all no less than sixty-three volumes, of from six hundred to upward of nine hundred pages each. In the early days of Methodism in this country, our people were furnished with books from England, and they were distributed among them by the itinerant preachers, the cost of the first purchase being transmitted to Mr. Wesley to assist in keeping up a constant supply. This method, however, of obtaining the needful books became very troublesome and expensive, and measures were adopted by Dr. Coke, on his arrival in America, to remedy the evil by procuring the republication of such small tracts and sermons, together with a hymn-book, as the growing wants of the people seemed to demand. The first account I find in the Minutes of the conferences of a book steward is in the year 1789, and John Dickens, then stationed in Philadelphia, where the Book Concern was begun, was the first editor and agent. It appears that when the business was commenced, being but small, and requiring but a portion of the time of the agent for that particular work, he was at the same time the stationed preacher in the city of Philadelphia, there then being but one in the city. By referring to the books of the agency; the first entry in the handwriting of John Dickens is under date of August 17, 1789, and it appears that the first book which printed was Mr. Wesley’s edition of "A Kempis," a little devotional work, written by a Roman Catholic, breathing the true spirit of piety, and containing the most pure and exalted sentiments of Christianity. In the same year was issued the first volume of the Arminian Magazine, being chiefly a reprint of pieces which had appeared in its prototype in England, but containing also some accounts of the work of God in America, and other miscellaneous matters of an edifying character. The Methodist Discipline, Saints’ Everlasting Rest, a hymn-book and Mr. Wesley’s Primitive Physic, were all published in the same year. This was a small beginning, but it was quite equal to the means then

at command; for it appears that there were no funds in hand to begin with, except a small amount, about six hundred dollars, which John Dickens lent to the Concern to enable it to begin its benevolent operations. In 1790, some portions of Fletcher's Checks, much needed at die time, and the second volume of the Arminian Magazine, made their appearance. In this small way the number of books was gradually increased tinder the skillful management of John Dickens, a man of inestimable worth as a Christian minister, and of great prudence, industry, and fidelity in this particular work. To assist him in his labor, and to guard, as far as possible, the purity of the press, a book committee was appointed in 1797, to whom all works were to be submitted before they were published, except such as were ordered by the General Conference; and the first committee consisted of Ezekiel Cooper, Thomas Ware, John McClasky, Christopher Spry, William McLennan, Charles Cavender, Richard Swain,. and Solomon Sharp. From that day to this a book committee, with similar powers, has been appointed from year to year, tinder the direction of the General Conference, which reports the state of the Concern every year to the annual conference in the bounds of which the Concern is located, and every four years to the General Conference.

John Dickens continued in the superintendence of the book business until 1798, when he died in peace and triumph, of the malignant fever which then raged with terrible destruction in the city of Philadelphia. His death was feelingly lamented by all who knew him, for he was a minister of Jesus Christ, of great power and usefulness, much beloved and respected by all who knew him, and had been very successful in printing and circulating books of the most useful character. In 1799, Ezekiel Cooper, who still lives, was appointed editor and general book steward. The Concern is greatly indebted to his skillful management for its increasing usefulness, as at the end of his term, in 1808, its capital stock had increased, from almost nothing in the beginning, to about forty-five thousand dollars. In 1804, the Concern was removed from Philadelphia to the city of New York, where Ezekiel Cooper continued its superintendence until 1808, being assisted by John Wilson for the last four years. At the General Conference of 1808 Mr. Cooper resigned his office, the conference giving him a vote of thanks for the faithful and successful manner in which he had discharged his duty, and was succeeded by John Wilson as principal, and Daniel Hitt as an assistant editor and book steward. At this General Conference, on the recommendation of Mr. Cooper, the term of service in the agency was limited to eight years, a regulation which was afterward found to be attended with many inconveniences, so much so that in 1836 the rule was abrogated.

Up to this time the agents received a station, the same as the other preachers, and were held responsible for the double duties of agents of the Book Concern and of stationed ministers, though they were relieved from much of their pastoral labors by their colleagues in the ministry. In 1808 they were entirely released from pastoral labors, only so far as they might be able to preach on Sabbaths, and occasionally on other days, that their time and attention might be more exclusively devoted to the interests of the Concern, in editing and publishing books; -- a wise regulation, as has been tested by many years of experience. On the 28th of January, 1810, John Wilson, who had been long afflicted with an obstinate asthma, died suddenly of that inveterate disease, in the full assurance of faith. He was indeed a most estimable man, a faithful minister, a skillful and diligent book agent, and was greatly beloved and sincerely respected by his brethren and friends. From the time of his lamented death until the General Conference of 1812, the business was carried on by Daniel Hitt alone, but by no means in so prosperous a way as it had been conducted

heretofore. In 1812, however, he was elected the principal, and Thomas Ware the assistant editor and book steward; and the General Conference ordered the resumption of the Magazine in monthly numbers; but neither this order was obeyed, nor were the hopes of the friends of the establishment at all realized by the increasing prosperity of the Concern from 1812 to 1816. This fault, however, is not attributable to the want of good intentions or fidelity in the agents, but chiefly, I believe, for the lack of skill and harmony in its general management. In 1816, Joshua Soule and Thomas Mason entered upon the duties of this agency. They found the Concern much embarrassed with debt, with but scanty means to liquidate it, the number and variety of publications small, and the general aspect of things was quite discouraging. They, however, applied themselves to their work with prudence and diligence, and succeeded in keeping it from sinking under its own weight, and of infusing new energy into some of its departments, by increasing the variety of its publications, and lessening the amount of its debts. In 1818, the order for resuming the publication of the Magazine, which had been made again by the General Conference of 1816, was carried into effect, agreeably to the desire, and to the joy of thousands. Indeed, the appearance of this periodical, filled as it was with useful matter, was generally hailed with delight by the members of our Church, as the harbinger of brighter days, especially in regard to the revival of literature and sound knowledge among us as a people though it must be confessed that there were some then, who would even sneer at this most laudable attempt to diffuse useful knowledge and Scriptural piety, by means of the press. I could relate many anecdotes in confirmation of this statement, as dishonorable to their authors as they were mortifying to the more enlightened friends of the Church. But, as the day is passed, let these "times of ignorance" be "winked at" and forgotten, from the joy that a more bright and vigorous state of things has so happily succeeded. In 1820, Nathan Hang’s succeeded Joshua Soule, and Thomas Mason was re-elected an assistant. He found the Concern still laboring under a heavy debt, and was often much embarrassed to meet the demands upon its resources. After looking at things as attentively and impartially as possible, he said to his colleague, "We must increase our debt, with a view to add to the number and variety of our publications, or we never shall succeed in answering public expectation, or of putting the Concern in a prosperous condition." They went to work accordingly, and commenced with Benson’s Commentary, Clarke’s Wesley Family, Lady Maxwell, and other works of smaller dimensions; and they likewise introduced into our catalogue, philosophical, historical, philological, and scientific works, by exchanging, and by taking parts of editions as publishers conjointly with other publishers; and with a view to rid the Concern of many old and unsaleable books on hand, the prices were lowered, by which means many books that had lain useless upon our shelves were put in circulation. Still, for the want of more experience, many blunders were committed, which were afterward either corrected or avoided. And though by these appliances the debt was augmented, resources to meet the pecuniary demands were created, and by maintaining our credit, we could always obtain money when it was needed. In 1823 the Youth’s Instructor, a monthly periodical designed for the special benefit of youth, was commenced, and for some years it had a very extensive circulation, and I believe did much to increase the taste for reading, and to raise the tone of an enlightened piety.

Very soon after the General Conference of 1820 measures were adopted, in conformity to its order, for the publication of a revised edition of the hymn-book, and also of a tune-book, containing tunes suited to the great variety of metres in which our most excellent hymns were composed. Hitherto, for the want, of such tunes, many of these hymns, the poetry and spirituality of which are

of unrivaled energy and beauty, were left unsung by most of our congregations, and therefore stood useless in the hymn-book. Nor was the hymn-book before in use much less defective. Some of the hymns had been marred in unskillful hands by alterations and mutilations, while others, which had edified thousands in Europe by their strong, deep, and spiritual sentiments and highly poetical character, had never been introduced into our worshipping assemblies. These defects were now in a great measure supplied by the publication of these editions of the hymn and tune books; and since then the art of singing, that most useful and animating part of divine worship, has been gradually improving among the members and friends of our Church.

Up to this time all our printing and binding had been done by the job, on such terms as could be agreed upon with the different printers and binders who did the work. In the year 1821 we were strongly urged to establish a bindery and printing office. After considering the subject for some time, it was finally concluded to make an experiment first with a bindery, and if this succeeded according to expectations, a printing office could be established at a future time. Accordingly the basement story of the Wesleyan Seminary in Crosby Street was rented, a competent binder employed, and the bindery went into operation in 1822. At the General Conference of 1824, the constitutional term of Thomas Meson having expired, John Emory was elected as an assistant to Nathan Bangs. Soon after, having tested the beneficial consequences of having a bindery under our own control, the principal, who had great confidence in the intelligence of his assistant, proposed the establishment of a printing office; and after maturely considering the subject, committing with the book committee and others, it was finally concluded to make the experiment; and in the month of September, 1824, the office was commenced in the second story of the same building in Crosby Street, and finally, during the same year, the entire premises were bought of the trustees of the Wesleyan Seminary for a printing office and bindery. In coming to this conclusion, however, there was great hesitation on the part of the book committee, arising out of a fear that the project would not succeed. So thoroughly convinced, however, was the writer of this sketch of the feasibility of the plan, and of its profitableness to the Concern, that, after obtaining the consent and co-operation of his assistant, they offered to purchase the premises and commence operations on their own personal responsibility; and if the next General Conference should not approve of the undertaking, they would take the entire establishment as their own, provided the Concern should pay them the interest on the purchase money, and the net profits of the printing, after deducting the usual prices paid for the work to other printers. This proposition, indicative of such perfect confidence in the successful issue of the project, silenced opposition, the purchase was made, and the printing office and bindery were very soon permanently established. The utility of the measure, in every point of view, though it added great additional labor and responsibility to the agents, became so manifest, that it was soon seen and appreciated by all concerned, and highly approved of by the next General Conference.

Measures were adopted for a gradual and constant increase to the number and variety of our books. Hitherto Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary had been published by other publishers, and was now in the hands of Abraham Paul, a very worthy member of our Church, and a printer of established reputation in the city of New York. He made an advantageous offer of the stereotype plates of the octavo edition, and of the numbers of the quarto edition which he had on hand, together with a list of his subscribers, with the privilege of publishing the remainder as it should come out. This offer was accepted by the agents, and hence this most valuable and deservedly

popular Commentary became the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as such a work, a copyright of which could not be legally secured in this country, -- could become its property, and has been ever since published by this Concern. The printing of books from stereotype plates had recently been introduced into this country, by which means standard works, for which a constant demand might be expected, were very much cheapened. The first work stereotyped in this establishment was the 24mo. edition of the Hymn-book, soon after the General Conference of 1820. Since that time stereotype plates have been gradually introduced, until nearly all the books now issued from this press are printed from these standing types, -- an improvement in the art of printing as great as the improvement in navigation by the use of steamboats, -- more especially since the power of steam has been so usefully applied to printing, by the introduction of presses moved by this powerful agent. Of these improvements in book-making this Concern has wisely availed itself, as its means and constantly increasing demands would seem to justify. But to return to the narrative. Beholding the beneficial results of periodical literature on the intellectual, moral, and religious state of the people, measures were adopted by the agents; with the advice and concurrence of the book committee and of the New York conference, for issuing a weekly paper, to be called the "Christian Advocate." Accordingly, on the 9th of September, 1826, the first number of this advocate of Christian doctrines, morals, and the institutions of Methodism, made its appearance, much to the gratification of all the members and friends of the Church. As a proof of this general gratification, in a very short time its number of subscribers far exceeded every other paper published in the United States, being about twenty-five thousand; and it soon increased to thirty thousand, and was probably read by more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons, young and old. Though Mr. Badger was the editor of this paper, yet the editorial matter was chiefly furnished by the senior editor of the establishment, even before he was appointed its editor in 1828. Mr. Badger, however, displayed a good taste and correct judgment in selecting and arranging matter for its columns, and was therefore an efficient instrument in giving it a popular character; but so far as the editorial articles were concerned, he received more credit than he was entitled to, as most of those articles were furnished by the person named above, and some very valuable ones by his worthy and able assistant; and its columns were also enriched, from time to time, by some able and pious correspondents. These, together with the religious, scientific, and secular intelligence it inculcated, did much to aid the cause of sound knowledge and solid piety; and it was particularly useful in defending our doctrines and primitive usages from reproach, as well as in making known to our people the character and labor of the entire establishment. Indeed, the "Christian Advocate and Journal" soon became to the Book Concern like a faithful herald to a government, proclaiming to all its will, and making known its plans. This continual enlargement of the establishment, while it infused energy into its operations, and mightily extended the sphere of its usefulness among the reading community, increased also its debt; but we knew that it also increased the means of its liquidation, and must ultimately both tend to its entire emancipation from its pecuniary embarrassment, and enlarge its sphere of usefulness, in respect to the number, variety, and character of its publications.

It should be noticed, also, that at the earnest request of our brethren west of the mountains, the General Conference of 1820 authorized the establishment of a branch of the Book Concern in Cincinnati, and Martin Ruter, of the New England conference, was appointed to its charge, to act under the direction of the agents in New York. One thing which led to this establishment was the depreciation, since the annihilation of the old bank of the United States, in 1810, of the currency in

the west. For a number of years the Concern had several thousand dollars lying useless in the banks of Cincinnati, merely because it was almost worthless in New York; and we had no other way to realize any thing from it, but by authorizing our agent there to invest it in cotton and tobacco, and ship them to our account to New York. The cotton was sent to Liverpool; but the tobacco, I believe, was chiefly a dead loss, in consequence of the wreck of the boat in which it was shipped. [Blessed Loss! Which, I suspect, may have been ordered of the Lord. -- DVM] This branch, however, has gone on from that day to this with less or more prosperity; has become a publishing office, and bids fair to do much in diffusing useful knowledge through all that region of country.

It has been already stated, that the debts of the Concern had very considerably increased; but they had been increased by the procurement of those means, such as an office for printing and binding, presses, stereotype plates, and all sorts of tools for each department, as must, if properly managed, finally lead to the liquidation of the debts, and thus place the Concern on a permanent foundation, beyond the reach of danger by the fluctuations of the times, so often occasioned by the frequent pressures of the money market. Its credit was good; its liabilities were always promptly met; its working hands paid; and all its parts were in vigorous operation.

It was found, however, that there was on hand a large stock of old unsaleable books, bound and unbound, both in the general depository in New York, and on the circuits and stations, as well as at Cincinnati, which had been accumulating for years. All these, through reported from year to year as capital stock, were entirely unproductive; and the manner in which the accounts were kept, and the books sold, had a tendency to increase this unproductive stock, and also the amount of debts due to the Concern. I allude to the credit system, and the discount of eighteen per centum which was allowed to preachers and others for whatever books they might sell, merely rendering an account of the books remaining on hand at the end of each year, which passed to their credit on the settlement of their accounts. By these means the number and quantity of books were constantly augmenting in the districts, while the Concern was increasing its liabilities by being obliged to pay the expense of those already on hand, and for furnishing a fresh supply, a part of which might help to swell the amount of those unsold; and the longer they remained on hand, the more unsaleable they became. The question now was, What means can be devised to rid the Concern of this mass of unproductive stock, and more speedily and certainly dispose of books which may be hereafter published? In answer to this question, it was suggested by the assistant agent, and promptly assented to by the principal, that the old stock on hand, scattered through the country in the several circuits, should be offered at wholesale prices, for cash or good security, at a discount of fifty percent, and that her after our books should he sold to wholesale purchasers, whether preachers or others, at a discount of thirty-three and one-third percent for cash, and twenty-five percent on good security, payable at the next annual conference after the purchase was made, and if not then paid, with lawful interest until the note was discharged. This system was accordingly recommended to the General Conference of 1828, and, after mature consideration, was adopted, and its provisions inserted in the Discipline. At this conference, the constitutional term of Nathan Bangs having ended, he was elected editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, John Emory the principal editor and book steward, and Beverly Waugh his assistant. With this broad foundation laid, and these wise plans devised and sanctioned, the new agents went to their work in good earnest, and soon succeeded in paying off the debts of the establishment, and in

widening the sphere of their operations greatly. Wesley's and Fletcher's Works were published, the Methodist Magazine was improved by commencing a new series under the denomination of the "Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review," the number of Sunday school books and tracts was multiplied, though these latter were under the charge of the editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal. The new method of selling the books worked admirably well, the old stock on hand was rapidly disposed of, and the orders for books became more numerous, and of course the and all profits proportionally augmented. This rapid increase in the business very soon led to the necessity of enlarging our buildings. Accordingly all the vacant ground in Crosby Street was occupied. But even these additions were found insufficient to accommodate the several departments of labor, so as to furnish the needful supply of books now in constantly increasing demand. To supply this deficiency five lots were purchased in Mulberry Street, between Broome and Spring streets, and one building erected in the rear for a printing office and bindery, intending to erect another of larger dimensions after the General Conference of 1832. Accordingly the plan of the new buildings was submitted to that conference, with an estimate of the probable expense, and of its utility in furthering the benevolent objects of the Concern. The plan was highly applauded, and the agents were instructed to carry it into execution. At this General Conference, Dr. Emory, whose wise counsels and literary labors had been of so much service to the Concern, and were therefore highly appreciated, was elected a bishop, and Beverly Waugh was appointed to fill his place, and T. Mason his assistant. Acting on the principles which had been laid down by their predecessors, they carried out the plans which had been suggested with great energy and effect. At the same conference, in consequence of the increased labors in the editorial department, Nathan Bangs was removed from the editorship of the Christian Advocate and Journal to the editorial charge of the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review and the general books, and John P. Durbin was elected editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal and Sunday school books and tracts, and Timothy Merritt his assistant. Mr. Durbin introduced one very important improvement into the Sunday school department, and that was the commencement of a Sunday School Library, which has now reached its two hundred and forty-fourth volume, made up of some of the choicest books to he found for the edification of youth. This division of labor had a most beneficial tendency, as it enabled the editors to devote themselves more exclusively to the improvement of the literary and scientific departments of their work.

What an alteration in this respect! In the infancy of the Concern the agent did all the work of editing, packing up the books, and keeping the accounts, besides doing the work of a stationed preacher. In 1804 he was allowed an assistant; but no clerk was employed until 1818, when, on resuming the publication of the Magazine, the agents, by the advice of the book committee, employed a young man to assist in packing the books and shipping them off. From 1820 to 1828 the writer of this history had the entire responsibility of the establishment on his shoulders, both of editing and publishing the Magazine and books, and overseeing its pecuniary and mercantile department. It is due, however, to his assistants to say, that they labored faithfully and indefatigably to promote the interests of the Concern, and the labor of keeping the books and attending to the pecuniary business devolved chiefly on them, under his advisement. In 1825 a clerk was first employed to keep the books; and after the Christian Advocate and Journal was commenced, and the Sunday school books and tracts began to multiply, it became necessary to employ several clerks to keep the accounts, and to pack up and send off the periodicals. In taking charge of the Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review, the editor found himself exceedingly

cramped, as he was not at liberty to offer any remuneration to contributors, but must take such as he could get, chiefly by selections from other books or furnishing matter from his own pen. In consequence of these embarrassments, he is free to confess that the character of that publication was far beneath what it should and might have been, had the editor been at liberty to follow his own convictions of duty and propriety in furnishing suitable materials for the work. This defect was as mortifying to him, as it was a disappointment to its readers and patrons; and he rejoices that his advice, long urged without effect, was at last adopted, and that hence a brighter day has dawned upon this department of our literature; for now, by employing able writers, the worthy editor is giving a character to that periodical which is likely to be equally honorable to himself and to the Church whose interests he is endeavoring to promote.

Immediately after the adjournment of the conference of 1832, the new agents went to work, and erected the front building in Mulberry Street; and, in the month of September, in 1833, the entire establishment was removed into the new buildings. Not being able to dispose of the property in Crosby Street, the old edifice was taken down, and four neat dwelling houses were erected in its place, the rent of which is worth to the Concern from twelve hundred to two thousand dollars a year. They are intended as residences for the editors and agents; and if they do not choose to occupy them, they are at liberty to rent them, and take the avails toward defraying the expense of other houses. Thus the premises which were at first procured as a site for the Wesleyan seminary, an institution designed for the religious as well as secular education of youth, has become the permanent property of the Methodist Book Concern, and is therefore still devoted to scientific, religious, and literary purposes. May it never be otherwise employed! In this new and commodious building, with diligent and efficient agents and editors at work, every thing seemed to be going on prosperously and harmoniously, when, lo and behold, the entire property was consumed by fire! In this disastrous conflagration, the Methodist Church lost not less than two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The buildings, all the printing and binding materials, a vast quantity of books, bound and in sheets, a valuable library, which the editor had been collecting for several years, were in a few hours consumed

It is impossible to describe the sensations which were produced by this calamitous and mournful event. It was on a very cold night in the month of February, 1836, but a short time after the great fire in the city of New York, which destroyed about twenty million dollars' worth of property. I was awakened about four o'clock, A. M., by a ringing at my door, and a voice which apprised me that the Book Room was on fire! I sprung from my bed, dressed, called my two sons who were at home, and repaired with all possible speed to the scene of conflagration. I hoped, at least, to save the library. But the smoke was already issuing from the windows of my office, and the flames from other parts of the house! Here I found the agents, who were on the spot before me. The hydrants were frozen, and the waters were thrown but feebly, though all exerted themselves to their utmost. We saw that all was gone. Suddenly, and with a tremendous crash, the roof fell in! The flames seemed to ascend in curling eddies to the heavens, carrying with them fragments of books and papers, which the winds swept over the city to the eastward, as if to carry the news of the sad disaster to our distant friends. Indeed, a leaf of a Bible was found about three miles from the place, on which the following verse was but just legible: -- "Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire; and all our pleasant things are laid waste," Isa. lxiv, 11.

While standing upon the smoking ruins, about ten o’clock in the morning, a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church informed me that this leaf had been picked up in the city of Brooklyn, and that it was in the possession of a gentleman in the lower part of the city, a bookseller, in Pearl Street. I requested a friend to call and ascertain the fact, and if possible to obtain the relic, which seemed precious in my estimation. He accordingly called, and found it was even so; but the gentleman, wishing to preserve it as a memento of this disastrous event, and as an evidence of the truth of his own statement, declined to surrender it to another. Our "beautiful house," and all our "pleasant things," our books and printing and binding apparatus -- were indeed "burned up with fire!" But the fire-proof vault had, by the skillful management of the firemen, preserved the account books, and most of the registry books for subscribers were saved by the timely exertions of the clerk of that department. The rest was gone, except about three hundred dollars’ worth of books, and some of the iron work, stone, and brick about the building.

"How did this fire originate?" This question has been asked a thousand times, but never satisfactorily answered, although an inquiry was immediately instituted, and diligent search made, with a view to ascertain the fact. It still lies buried in obscurity; but my own opinion is, that it took fire by accident in the interior of the building, in the second story, where the fire was first discovered by the man who came to open the office and make the fires for the day. The reasons for this opinion, though satisfactory to myself, I cannot here detail; and, as they do not involve any one connected with the establishment in blame, while it relieves us from entertaining the cruel suspicion that any one was wicked enough to set fire to the premises, it may pass for what it is worth, without injury to any individual concerned. In the deep affliction felt by the agents, and indeed all in any way connected with the establishment, it was no small consolation to be assured of the sincere and wide-spread sympathy which was both felt and expressed by our brethren and friends for us on account of this heavy loss. At a public meeting held a few days after in the city of New York, about twenty-five thousand dollars were subscribed toward relieving us in this distress, and as the news spread, similar meetings were held all over the country, and liberal donations and subscriptions were made, which mightily cheered the hearts of those more immediately interested in the Concern. The entire amount which has been received toward making up this heavy loss is $88,346.09. This, as it came in, enabled the agents to continue their business, and they recommenced building, even while the smoke gave signs that the fire was not entirely extinguished.

What made this fire the more disastrous was, that the much more destructive one which had preceded it only about two months in the city of New York, had prostrated most of the insurance offices, and rendered them unable to pay the demands against them, and made it impossible to get insured in New York with any safety for some time. Most of the policies held by the Concern had expired about this time by their own limitation and such were the fears entertained abroad for New York fires, that it was next to impossible to get insured elsewhere on any terms. Hence but a small portion was under insurance at the time of the fire, so that only about $25,000 were realized from these sources to make up the loss.

Happily, the Concern was not in debt. By hiring an office temporarily, and employing other printers, and accepting he kind offers of some who proffered their services, the agents soon resumed their business, the smaller works were put to press, and our herald of news, the Christian Advocate and Journal, soon took its flight again, though the first number after the fire had its wings much

shortened, through the symbolical heavens, carrying the tidings of our loss, and of the liberal and steady efforts which were making to reinvigorate the paralyzed Concern.

Things went on in this way till the assembling of the General Conference of 1836, when Beverly Waugh being elected a bishop, Thomas Mason was put in his place, and George Lane was elected his assistant. To this conference the plan of the new building was submitted, approved of; and the new agents entered upon their work with energy and perseverance. Samuel Luckey, D. D., was elected general editor, and John A. Collins his assistant. Of their labors I need say nothing, as they are before the public, and will be appreciated according to their worth. The new buildings went up with all convenient dispatch, in a much better style, more durable, better adapted to their use, and safer against fire than the former. A view of the front building may be seen in the engraving which accompanies this volume. [graphic not included with this electronic edition -- DVM] This is one hundred and twenty-one feet in length, and thirty in breadth, four stories high above the basement, with offices for the agents and editors, a book-store in the north end, and a committee-room in the first story above the basement in the south end, in which the managers of the Missionary Society meet, ad the corresponding secretary has his office, the other story being occupied for a printing office, drying and pressing the printed sheets. The building in the rear is sixty-five feet in length, and thirty in breadth, four stories high, and is used for stitching and binding, and storing away the printed and bound books.

There are now, 1841, employed in the printing office eight power-presses, moved by steam; and the cylinder press, on which the Christian Advocate and Journal is printed, throws off one thousand and eight hundred impressions in an hour. To keep all these in operation requires the labor of fifty-six hands, a much less number than before power-presses were used, besides the superintendent of the office, to whose skill and diligence the Concern is much indebted for its steady improvement and encouraging success. In the bindery there are employed eighty-seven hands, besides the worthy superintendent, whose activity and skill in his business have gained him the confidence of his employers. Of these thirty-six are male and fifty-one are female, the latter of whom are engaged in folding and stitching, and the former in pressing and binding the books.

Adding these to those employed in the printing office, they will make the whole number at present, including the editors, agents, and clerks, in the Book Room, one hundred and seventy-four workmen, the number varying either less or more, to meet the exigencies of the times.

I need only add here, that at the last General Conference the same agents were continued in office, George Peck was elected editor of the Methodist Quarterly Review and the general books and tracts, and Thomas E. Bond editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, and Sunday school books, and George Coles his assistant. In addition to this principal establishment, as I have already noticed in the general history, the branch establishment at Cincinnati has been so conducted that it has constantly increased in magnitude and importance, and is receiving more and more of the public patronage. A weekly paper, ably conducted, and with a circulation of upward of twelve thousand, now entered upon its seventh volume, is published there, besides a variety of books of the smaller class, together with a periodical in the German language, and another called the Ladies' Repository and Western Gatherer; and the agents keep on sale all the books which are published in New York. In addition to these, with a view to afford facilities for the

more general circulation of both books, tracts, and periodicals, depositories have been established in Boston, Philadelphia, Richmond, Va., Charleston, S. C., Pittsburgh, and Nashville, at each of which places a weekly religious paper is published, all under the patronage of the General Conference except those in Boston and Philadelphia, the former being under the patronage of the New England, Rhode Island, Maine, and New Hampshire conferences, and the latter being the property of individuals. Though these several papers may not add any thing directly to the pecuniary resources of the Concern, as some of them have not heretofore supported themselves, yet they no doubt increase and extend its moral power and influence, and indirectly promote its pecuniary interests by inculcating more generally religious and scientific information, advertising the books, and thus creating, improving, and more widely diffusing a taste for reading, by which means a demand for books is proportionally increased and perpetuated. This imperfect narrative will enable the reader to judge of the moral power which this Concern has exerted, and does still exert, on the reading community by means of its numerous publications.

II. Objects and Influence of the Concern -- Many have egregiously misapprehended the objects of this establishment. They have supposed that its chief object and primary design were to make money, and hence the virulence with which it has been at times assailed. But it has been affirmed over and over again, and also demonstrated by an appeal to facts, that this never was, and is not either the primary or secondary object and design of the Methodist Book Concern. It was commenced, and is now kept in operation for the purpose of diffusing abroad sound knowledge, moral and religious information, and general intelligence on all subjects connected with the best interests of mankind, which involve their present and future, their temporal and eternal well-being. These are its objects. But knowing that, if judiciously managed, it might yield something over and above its expenses, provision was made for the application of its surplus revenue for the best of all objects, namely, the spread of Scriptural truth and holiness through the land, by means of itinerant preaching. The objects, therefore, to be realized by its pecuniary means are identical with the preaching of the gospel, and fall in with the grand design for which the Saviour came into our world, and that is to redeem mankind "from all iniquity." And its annual avails are sacredly applied for the promotion of this most benevolent object. Our ministry differs, in respect to its means and amount of support, from all others. We are not, however, inquiring into the comparative merits or demerits of each, but simply in regard to facts. While most others are so amply provided for that they may lay up something for old age, and procure an inheritance for their children, our ministers are allowed what is considered barely sufficient to meet the necessary wants of themselves and those who are dependent on them for a support, and hence the appropriations are made in proportion to the age and number in a family, and to the expensiveness of living. But in many places not even this much is ever realized. Hence many come to conference every year more or less deficient, especially those who labor in the exterior parts of the work. Yet allowing that they were to get all that is allowed them, unless the have other means of accumulating property, they will "have nothing over."

Under these circumstances, it was thought to he a sacred duty which the Church owed to her servants, who have worn and are wearing themselves out in her service, to provide something for their support and comfort in old age, as well as to meet the annual necessities of those who are most emphatically preaching "the gospel to the poor." For this purpose a public collection, called "the conference or fifth collection," is made once a year in all our congregations, the amount of

which is sent to the annual conference, and equally divided among deficient preachers toward making up their disciplinary allowance; and to aid in this benevolent work the avail of the Book Concern are added.

We have also on our list not less than two hundred and sixty-one superannuated preachers, perhaps as many wives and widows, besides a large number of orphan children. These are some of the "treasures of the Church," as a certain primitive bishop said to his heathen persecutors, when, in answer to their demand for his church treasures, he brought out the poor of his flock, and replied, "These are my treasures;" but they are a sort of treasure which hung us in no other income than what is called forth by the commiseration which they excite in the hearts of the people. They are nevertheless a treasure of great worth.

Well, to meet the wants of these superannuated preachers, their wives, widows, and orphan children, the avails of the Methodist Book Concern are appropriated, and we rejoice that it has alway yielded a little for so noble and philanthropic an object. Hence this is made one of the many grounds on which the plea is founded, and a very strong one it is, even resistible to those who understand and duly appreciate it, for as extensive a circulation as possible of the books of this establishment. And then as the bishops have no legal claim upon any circuit or station, nor even an annual conference, for any thing more than their bare allowance as traveling preachers; that is, one hundred dollars a year for each bishop and one hundred dollars for his wife, and not over twenty-four dollars for each child under fourteen years of age, a portion of the annual dividends of the Book Concern is appropriated for their family and traveling expenses. These then are the objects which are incidentally provided for by this Concern, and it is thought that they are such as to commend themselves to the approbation of every just, generous, and benevolent mind.

I say incidentally -- for they were not the primary, nor the chief object for which the Concern was instituted. If they were, they would not be worthy of the labor and anxiety of conducting its complicated affairs, inasmuch as its pecuniary benefits might, if this did not exist, be realized with less trouble from other sources. But when we take into the account its immense moral, religious, and scientific object, to promote which was its primary design, no man need to grudge the labor he bestows upon it, the sacrifices he may make to build up and perpetuate its interests, and to make it wield as great and extensive a power as possible. To guard the purity of the press, to promulgate sound, Scriptural doctrine, to spread the most useful information, and to proclaim to all within the hearing of its voice, "the unsearchable riches of Christ," -- these were the high, and holy, and enlightened purposes for which this Concern was established, and for which we have labored, and do still labor to keep it in operation.

Those therefore who understand its character and objects, will be convinced that they who work in this Concern, editors, agents, printers, and binders, as well as the venders of the books, are subserving, in the most powerful and diffusive manner, the grand designs of redemption. Whatever may be the motive of any subordinate or principal agent in its concerns, let it be remembered that it was created, and has been carried forward, for the sole purpose of enlightening mankind by the principles of truth, whether of moral, philosophical, historical, or divine truth, and of saving sinners from the error of their ways, by pointing them to the "Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." But has it accomplished this work? It has. I remember at the public meeting held in the city of New York in its behalf, soon after the disastrous fire I have before

noticed, a gentleman present, a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, arose and remarked, in substance, "I have lived heretofore in the new countries; and I remember the time when the people who dwelt in their log cabins had no other books to read but such as they obtained from Methodist itinerants, who carried them around their circuits in their saddle-bags, and after preaching sold them to the people. In this humble way the poor people in the wilderness were supplied both with the living word from the ups of God's messengers, and with reading matter for their meditation by the fire-side when the living teacher had taken his departure. Therefore," he added, with a warmth of feeling which thrilled through the whole assembly and brought forth a spontaneous burst of applause, "put me down one thousand dollars to help rebuild the Methodist Book Room." This was all strictly true. Wherever the Methodist preachers went; -- and where did they not go? -- they not only carried the glad tidings of salvation upon their lips, but they also "published the acceptable year of the Lord" by means of the press, and by circulating the best of books in the cheapest possible form among the people, often giving them away, at their own personal expense, to those who were not the to pay for them.

What a mighty engine is the press! What an event was that when this engine was first set in motion Since then, what a revolution has been effected in the civilized world, in religion, in civil jurisprudence, in philosophy, and in every department of knowledge, human and divine! Mr. Wesley well knew the power of this instrument. he therefore availed himself of it to aid him in the great work of evangelizing the world. He made it speak, in clear and distinct tones, "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." His sons in the gospel have had wisdom and perseverance enough to follow in his track, aid make this speaking-trumpet continue its "certain sound," and it has been, not a "tinkling cymbal," but a high-sounding instrument of peculiar force, warning the unruly, instructing the ignorant, and rejoicing the hearts, by its thrilling accents, of tens of thousands of immortal minds.

Others have also imitated the example. Hence publishing establishments, among various sects and parties, have come into existence both in Europe and America, which are sending out their tracts, Sunday school books, Bibles, and various other publications, in every direction. Success to them all, so far as they are guided by the "wisdom coming from above," and are actuated by motives of benevolence to the souls and bodies of men! But the voice of this mighty instrument is now heard in almost every quarter of the globe. The men that have been raised up by the lever of Wesleyan Methodism have "gone out into all the world, and their words," which are uttered through the press, "unto the ends of the earth." On both sides of the Atlantic men have been raised up, and qualified to hold "the pen of ready writers;" and they have wielded, and are wielding it, with powerful effect among the different nations of the earth. Portions of the works of the Wesleys, and the doctrinal tracts and biographies of those and others of the same connection, have been translated into the French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, and Dutch languages, and even into some of the languages of the North American Indians, and, by means of the press, are "flying upon the wings of the morning to the utmost bounds of the earth." Even at our own press, Bibles and Testaments, of various sizes Commentaries, -- Wesley's, Clarke's, Benson's, Watson's, -- sermons, from a variety of authors, doctrinal, experimental, and practical; tracts, to the number of upward of three hundred, from four to sixty pages each; biographies of Christian ministers, and other eminent characters, male and female; histories; critical dissertations on a variety of subjects; various periodicals, loaded with the best of matter, of a miscellaneous

character, one of which, the Christian Advocate and Journal, is read probably by not less than one hundred thousand1 people; are now published, and sent abroad in various directions.

Now, who can calculate the immense moral power of this press? Besides the influence it exerts upon the readers of its publications, it tends to call forth the talents of writers who are benefiting themselves while they are striving to instruct others, thus increasing the moral and intellectual ability to do good, while the good itself is diffused throughout the whole community. For, indeed, these publications are carrying light and instruction, not only throughout our own continent, but to Africa, to South America, to the British provinces of North America, to the West Indies, and are now lifting up their voice in the Oregon territory, on the shores of the North Pacific. No wonder that its enemies have tried to cripple its energies, and to silence its voice. They had felt its power; they therefore feared its effects; but, by using it judiciously, it has made known our character and objects, vindicated our doctrines, institutions, and usages, and developed our plans of operations. Hence a comparative silence has succeeded to the clamorous opposition which was raised against it and us not many years since. And this demonstrates more forcibly still its vast utility. It has spoken so plainly, conclusively, energetically, and truly, that others now understand us better than formerly, and we humbly trust fellowship us more cordially.

It is hoped, therefore, that neither pride nor vain-glory on the one hand, nor fear and man-pleasing on the other, will ever lead to the abuse of this high and distinguished privilege, of speaking to the public through the press. And may it ever be guarded against all impurity in doctrine and morals, and he made to utter the sentiments of truth and love! so shall it be like a faithful sentinel, to guard the walls of our Zion, and to direct the wandering traveler, who has his "face thitherward," into the "narrow way" and the "strait gate," which may safely conduct him to everlasting life. But it is time to bring this History to a close. I have finished my work, at least in this department of labor. I have done what I could to present facts, with such comments as seemed needful to throw light upon them. If I have allowed some of these facts to pass without any note of approbation or disapprobation, the reader is not to infer that they are therefore either approved or disapproved, but simply that I chose to let every one draw his own inferences, without any predilection from the opinions of the historian.

One word, by way of apology, for the general arrangement and manner of the History. It is said that "history is philosophy teaching by example." This is true. But how does philosophy teach by example? I apprehend, by the facts it furnishes, and not by substituting philosophical disquisitions for the facts of history. Well-authenticated facts furnish the philosopher with his data, whence he draws his conclusions respecting causes and effects and their mutual dependence, as well as the influence they exert upon human affairs. The principal business of the historian, therefore, is to record facts as he finds them, without disguise or coloring, whether he can account for them or not. This I have endeavored to do; though not, as one has thoughtlessly said, by suppressing inquiry, on all proper occasions, into the causes which originated he facts, and of the effects which they produced on human society, and especially on the religious world. And could I conscientiously have taken the reins from the imagination, and suffered my reason to run mad, I might have conjured up a thousand fanciful theories to account for the success and influence of Methodism, without ascribing it to its true original cause, namely, the divine agency. This, however, I dare not do. But in the close of the first volume, and in various other places, I have endeavored, and I hope not without some success, to show the aptitude of the means which divine

wisdom saw fit to employ to produce the desired results, and the suitableness of the instruments, and their plans of operation, to the condition and tendencies of human society. So far, therefore, from keeping philosophy if you understand by that word the art of tracing effects to their causes, or of inferring causes from their effects, -- under abeyance, I have freely availed myself of its assistance in the course of my work, as every one must see who reads it with attention, and does not make up a judgment without consulting its pages.

I might, indeed, have omitted many of the reports and other documents of the General Conference, and extracts from writers on other subjects, and have simply stated the substance of them, in my own language, in few words. But this would not have answered my purpose. These documents I considered of great importance in settling doctrines, in establishing principles, and in confirming usages, and, therefore, would be often appealed to for or against us. Some of them had been published, and others given in a mutilated form, and commented upon by our opponents greatly to our disadvantage. Others were locked up in the General Conference trunk, and were of use to no one except to those who had an opportunity to consult them in manuscript. These are now made public in an authenticated form, are accessible to all who desire to read them, and will be of convenient reference in time of need.

I have endeavored thus to use the discretion which the General Conference so generously allowed me to exercise over its documents, according to the best of my judgment, for the edification of the reader, and for the good of the general cause; and if the absence of all complaint, on the part of those most interested, may be considered an evidence of satisfaction in the selections I have made, I have reason to infer that I have not abused my trust. Had these documents and extracts been omitted, my work, I confess, would have had more the appearance of a continued history, faithfully elaborated in a uniform style; but I chose, in this respect, to sacrifice the reputation which such a course might have secured to the greater utility, and, I should hope, satisfaction, of the reader, arising from variety in matter and style, by adopting the method I have.

I have, indeed, been much encouraged, from knowing that the former volumes have had an extensive circulation, that many have expressed themselves highly gratified in their perusal, and a hope that the History might be continued to the present time. And, as this is in conformity with my original intention, though it has lengthened on my hands much beyond my expectations when I commenced writing, I have accordingly brought it down to the year 1840. Here I close it, with an expression of gratitude to Almighty God for the good that he hath done by the humble instrumentality of the Methodist ministry, and for permitting me to record it to the glory of his name. Amen.

New York, March 26, 1841.

ENDNOTE

1 Since the establishment of the other papers before mentioned, there has been a falling off in the number of subscribers to this paper, while the aggregate number of readers has increased. Allowing twelve thousand to the Western Christian Advocate, and three thousand to each of the other five weekly papers, and twenty-six thousand to the one issued in New York, the whole number of subscribers will be forty-three thousand; and, allowing four readers to each subscriber,

which probably is the average number, it will give one hundred and seventy-two thousand readers of these weekly sheets. Though this may sound large, yet the number is not by any means in proportion to the number of Church members, not being more than about one fifth of the entire membership. Should not every Methodist family, consisting of probably not less than two hundred thousand, be blessed with the visits of one or more of these heralds of good tidings?

04.05C.17. Vol 4, Book 5C, Chapter 17

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH An Alphabetical List Of The M. E. Preachers

1762 --1840

Part 1 A - K Is The Name of One of Your Ancestors In This List? A B C D E F G H I J K Go To Part 2 (L - Z) The list below, taken from "A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," Volume IV, by Dr. Nathan Bangs, includes: "all the preachers who were received into full connection in the Methodist Episcopal Church to the year 1840, including those who came from Europe and returned, as well as those who remained in this country." While the Methodist Episcopal Church was not organized until 1784, some of the preachers on this list entered the Methodist ministry long before that. Especially is this true of those who came from England, one of whom was "received" in the year 1762. Thus, the range of years shown above is from the year 1762 to the year 1840.

Along with the names of those who were yet in the itinerant ministry in 1840, the year in with they were received is shown. With the name of each who was no longer in the itinerant ministry, the year is shown in which he was either located, died, withdrew, or was expelled. THE AUTHOR'S MULTIPLE ENTRIES OF IDENTICAL NAMES WITH IDENTICAL YEARS HAVE BEEN RETAINED. Perhaps most, if not all, such multiple entries of identical first names, last names and year-records may have resulted from the co-incidental fact that two, or even three, men with identical first and last names did actually serve concurrently in the M. E. ministry. -- Duane V. Maxey A

Back To The Top * Abbett, William -- Received 1837 * Abbington, William N. -- Received 1827, Died 1829 * Abbott, Benjamin -- Received 1789, Died 1796 * Abbott, David -- Received 1781, Located 1784 * Abbott, Ambrose -- Received 1835 * Abbott, Orin -- Received 1829, Located 1836 * Abel, Asa -- Received 1821 * Abel, Jeremiah -- Received 1787, Located 1791 * Abernethy, Thomas S. -- Received 1823, Located 1837 * Acuff, Francis -- Received 1793, Died 1795 * Adams, Aaron -- Received 1830 * Adams, Arnold -- Received 1831, Expelled 1839 * Adams, Charles -- Received 1833 * Adams, David -- Received 1818, Located 1835 * Adams, Elishia -- Received 1836 * Adams, Ezra -- Received 1817, Located 1824 * Adams, James -- Received 1834 * Adams, John -- Received 1812, Located 1834 * Adams, John T. -- Received 1812, Located 1815 * Adams, Joseph -- Received 1832, Located 1835 * Adams, Kinchem -- Received 1837 * Adams, Moses -- Received 1830 * Adams, Philip -- Received 1778, Died 1782 * Adams, Robert -- Received 1820, Located 1836 * Adams, Samuel -- Received 1818, Died 1832 * Adams, Thomas -- Received 1802, Located 1810 * Adams, William -- Received 1814, Died 1835 * Adams, Zenas -- Received 1814, Located 1829 * Addoms, John T. -- Received 1811, Located 1816 * Adgate, Chester V. -- Received 1819, Died 1833 * Adkins, Lorin L. -- Received 1836 * Agard, Horace -- Received 1819 * Ahair, John -- Received 1791, Died 1794 * Aikin, John E. -- Received 1832 * Aikins, James -- Received 1801, Died 1823 * Ailsworth, Reuben A. -- Received 1817, Located

1825 * Akers, Peter -- Received 1821 * Albea, William W. -- Received 1833 * Alderman, Merritt P. -- Received 1837 * Alderson, A. L. -- Received 1833, Located 1837 * Aldridge Fredus -- Received 1790, Located 1797 * Aldridge, Reuben -- Received 1836 * Alexander, Archibald -- Received 1804, Located 1809 * Alexander, Augustine M. -- Received 1835 * Alexander, Daniel F. -- Received 1830, Located 1836 * Alexander, G. W. -- Received 1836 * Alexander, John -- Received 1833 * Alexander, Robert -- Received 1830, Located 1834 * Alexander, William -- Received 1821, Located 1836 * Alfin, Reuben -- Received 1828, Located 1839 * Alford, James B. -- Received 1832, Located 1836 * Algood, William, -- Received 1799, Located 1824 * Alisom, James J. -- Received 1829, Located 1837 * Allen, Beverly -- Received 1781, Expelled 1792 * Allen, David I. -- Received 1829, Located 1836 * Allen, Edward E. -- Received 1827 * Allen, Edward -- Received 1836 * Allen, Elbert J. -- Received 1829, Located 1834 * Allen, Eli W. R. -- Received 1825 * Allen, James W. -- Received 1822, Located 1831 * Allen, James -- Received 1837 * Allen, John -- Received 1835 * Allen, John -- Received 1788, Withdrew 1793 * Allen, Joseph -- Received 1822, Expelled 1837 * Allen, Luke P. -- Received 1820, Located 1837 * Allen, Luman H. -- Received 1837 * Allen, Norman -- Received 1835 * Allen, Ralph W. -- Received 1833 * Allen, Samuel -- Received 1837 * Allen, Samuel N. -- Received 1833 * Allen, Stephen -- Received 1837 * Allen, Thomas D. -- Received 1829, Died 1835 * Allen, Thomas -- Received 1797, Located 1801 * Allen, William -- Received 1819 * Alley, Henry -- Received 1819, Located 1836 * Alley, John -- Received 1831 * Allison, William -- Received 1816 * Allston, Abel -- Received 1828 * Alverson, John B. -- Received 1817 * Amedon, Moses -- Received 1814, Died 1830 * Amer, William -- Received 1832 * Amerman, Oliver V. -- Received 1827 * Ames, Edward R. -- Received 1830 * Ames, Shadrach T. -- Received 1834, Located 1837 * Amiss, John L. -- Received 1826, Located 1832 * Amos, Abraham -- Received 1803, Located 1810 * Anderson, Augustine -- Received 1831 * Anderson, Daniel -- Received 1829, Located 1835 * Anderson, Daniel -- Received 1824 * Anderson, George M. -- Received 1818, Died 1833 * Anderson, John -- Received 1834 * Anderson, John -- Received 1808, Located 1815 * Anderson, Lewis -- Received 1837 * Anderson, Lewis -- Received 1808, Located 1813 * Anderson, Nathan -- Received 1807, Located 1811 * Anderson, Peyton -- Received 1814, Died 1823 * Anderson, Philip -- Received 1824, Located 1840 * Anderson, Robert -- Received 1833, Expelled 1838 * Anderson, Thomas -- Received 1808, Located 1812 * Anderson, Thomas P. -- Received 1808, Located 1812 * Anderson, Thomas -- Received 1783, Located 1793 * Anderson, William -- Received 1828 * Anderson, William R. -- Received 1836 * Andrew, Bromwell -- Received 1829 * Andrew, James O. -- Received 1812 * Andrew, John F. -- Received 1820, Located 1825 * Andrew, John -- Received 1789, Located 1792 * Andrew, Joseph B. -- Received 1827, Located 1832 * Andrew, Moses -- Received 1808, Located 1812 * Andrews, Abraham -- Received 1797, Died 1800 * Andrews, Elisha -- Received 1824 * Andrews, Lemuel -- Received 1787, Died 1791 * Andrews, Robert L. -- Received 1828 * Andrus, Luman -- Received 1801 * Angel, Richard -- Received 1835 * Ansley, Samuel -- Received 1791, Died 1837 * Anson, William -- Received 1800 * Anthony, Darius -- Received 1835 * Anthony, Jacob B. -- Received 1832 * Anthony, Samuel -- Received 1832 * Applewhite, Isaac -- Received 1830 * Applewhite, James -- Received 1830, Located 1839 * Archbold, Israel -- Received 1835 * Arendell, Bridges -- Received 1806, Located 1811 * Arendell, William -- Received 1805, Located 1807 * Armis, Jerome B. -- Received 1837 * Armitage, Henry K. -- Received 1836 * Armstrong, George -- Received 1800, Located 1808 * Armstrong, James -- Received 1821, Died 1834 * Armstrong, James -- Received 1827 * Armstrong, Richard -- Received 1819 * Armstrong, Samuel -- Received 1834 *

Arnold, Hezekiah -- Received 1790, Located 1797 * Arnold, Isaac M. -- Received 1837 * Arnold, John -- Received 1815 * Arnold, Joseph T. -- Received 1834, Located 1837 * Arnold, Robert -- Received 1809, Located 1814 * Arnold, Smith -- Received 1800, Died 1839 * Arnold, Wesley P. -- Received 1827 * Arnold, William -- Received 1806 * Arrington, Alfred W. -- Received 1829, Expelled 1834 * Arrington, Joel -- Received 1807, Died 1815 * Arrington, Joel -- Received 1833 * Arthur, James M. -- Received 1808, Located 1817 * Asbury, Daniel -- Received 1786, Died 1825 * Asbury, Francis -- Received 1767, Died 1816 * Asbury, Thomas -- Received 1806, Located 1825 * Ashbrook, Joseph -- Received 1830 * Ashby, Benjamin S. -- Received 1823 * Ashby, Thomas T. -- Received 1835 * Ashcraft, Nathan B. -- Received 1810, Located 1813 * Ashley, Edward -- Received 1816, Located 1827 * Ashton, Daniel -- Received 1809, Located 1816 * Ashworth, Moses, -- Received 1805, Located 1809 * Ashworth, Moses -- Received 1814, Located 1818 * Askew, Elisha -- Received 1823, Located 1827 * Askew, Josiah -- Received 1789, Located 1798 * Askins, George -- Received 1801, Died 1816 * Askins, William H. -- Received 1824, Died 1832 * Aspenwall, Joseph C. -- Received 1832 * Aspenwall, Nathaniel W. -- Received 1823 * Atchinson, Fuller -- Received 1833 * Atherton, William -- Received 1824 * Athey, Walter -- Received 1827 * Atkins , John W. -- Received 1828 * Atkins, Samuel G. -- Received 1822, Died 1826 * Atkinson, Charles -- Received 1837 * Atkinson, Irvin -- Received 1826, Located 1836 * Atterbury, Thomas -- Received 1821, Died 1828 * Atwell, James -- Received 1827 * Atwell, John -- Received 1811 * Atwood, Anthony -- Received 1825 * Atwood, Joseph -- Received 1837 * Atwood, Joseph -- Received 1822, Located 1836 * Atwood, William -- Received 1796, Located 1807 * Austin, James B. -- Received 1833 * Avant, James -- Received 1811, Located 1814 * Avant, William -- Received 1799, Located 1805 * Avery, Alexander -- Received 1836 * Avery, Ephraim K. -- Received 1822, Located 1837 * Avis, James -- Received 1820, Died 1824 * Axley, James -- Received 1804, Located 1822 * Ayars, James -- Received 1829 * Aydelot, Joseph -- Received 1802, Died 1824 * Ayer, John S. -- Received 1818, Located 1826 * Ayer, Rishworth J. -- Received 1826 * Ayre, Philip -- Received 1806, Located 1836 * Ayres, Braman -- Received 1835 * Ayres, James B. -- Received 1822 * Ayres, John C. -- Received 1827 * Ayres, John C. -- Received 1828 * Ayres, Joseph -- Received 1830, Located 1839 * Ayres, Robert Received 1785, Withdrew 1789 * Ayres, Samuel -- Received 1827, Located 1836

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04.05C.18. Vol 4, Book 5C, Chapter 18

A HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH An Alphabetical List Of The M. E. Preachers

1762 --1840

Part 2

(L - Z) Is The Name of One of Your Ancestors In This List?

L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z Go To Part 1 (A -K) The list below, taken from "A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," Volume IV, by Dr. Nathan Bangs, includes: "all the preachers who were received into full connection in the Methodist Episcopal Church to the year 1840, including those who came from Europe and returned, as well as those who remained in this country." While the Methodist Episcopal Church was not organized until 1784, some of the preachers on this list entered the Methodist ministry long before that. Especially is this true of those who came from England, one of whom was "received" in the year 1762. Thus, the range of years shown above is from the year 1762 to the year 1840.

Along with the names of those who were yet in the itinerant ministry in 1840, the year in with they were received is shown. With the name of each who was no longer in the itinerant ministry, the year is shown in which he was either located, died, withdrew, or was expelled. THE AUTHOR'S MULTIPLE ENTRIES OF IDENTICAL NAMES WITH IDENTICAL YEARS HAVE BEEN RETAINED. Perhaps most, if not all, such multiple entries of identical first names, last names and year-records may have resulted from the co-incidental fact that two, or even three, men with identical first and last names did actually serve concurrently in the M. E. ministry. -- Duane V. Maxey

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Chapter 44

1.00. Bangs-Necessity, Nature, Fruits, Santification

THE NECESSITY, NATURE, AND FRUITS, SANCTIFICATION; A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A FRIEND. BY NATHAN BANGS D. D. http://www.archive.org/details/necessitynature00banguoft This is the will of God, even your sanctification. 1 Thessalonians 4:3.

LANE & SCOTT, PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR,

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LETTER XXXI.

1.A 00. Preface

PREFACE. THE reasons which induce me to publish the following letters in this form are

1. That I wrote them under a deep sense of duty, being led on, as I then thought, and still think, by the spirit of truth and love; so much so, that my heart was continually warmed with the fire of Divine love, and expanded with an enlarged desire that others might participate with me in the same inestimable blessing. Under the same impression I have revised them, and now send them forth in this more permanent form.

2. The friend to whom they were addressed had, as is expressed in one of the following letters, frequently requested my views on the subject; and thinking that I might address her in such a manner as, at the same time, to edify others who were similarly situated, or who might be seeking after the blessing of entire sanctification, I concluded to address her thus publicly, for I had no secret understanding with her but what I was perfectly willing should be known and read of all men; nor had she seen a word of what I had written until it appeared in print. Neither am I conscious of having given utterance to a thought which is incompatible with the dictates of the purest Christian affection, and that holy fellowship which subsists among all the devoted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who prayed that his disciples might all be one, even as he was one with the Father. I have, indeed, no sympathy with those whose religion is of that cold, speculative character, that does not enter into the heart and move the affections, and who cannot therefore appreciate that intercommunion of spirits which is realized by those hearts that are linked together in the chain of friendship, forged in heaven and polished by the Holy Spirit. I thank God that I have many such, both male and female, with whom, as the Psalmist says, " is all my delight," and with whom, therefore, I may hold fellowship; and I joyfully anticipate the bright era, when I may spend an eternity with them around the holy throne in praising God and the Lamb forever; and among those, I frankly confess, is the one to whom the following letters are addressed.

Many have asked for whom M. stands. My uniform answer has been, that is a secret which I shall reveal to no one; nor has any a right to apply it to one person more than another without any authority from me, or any one else that I know of; and therefore all such applications are wholly gratuitous, and may pass for what they are worth. If any persons, however, think that they can,, from what is said in the letters, select the individual, I have only to say that that is a mark greatly in her favour; and permit me to add, that it fully justifies me in selecting one so worthy of my confidence, that those who know her fully recognize the traits of her character, from the identity of the living person with the hints given in the letters. The fact is, the letters were written for all whom they suit; for they were designed not merely for the benefit of an individual, but for all whom the Lord our God shall call to a holy life and conversation, being composed under a deep sense of high responsibility to Him, and with a view to assist all those who may be seeking an entire sanctification of soul and body to Him, or to confirm and strengthen those who have already attained that blessing.

Moreover, I had other reasons for adopting this method of writing. By adopting the epistolary style, I could the more easily familiarize myself with the heart, adapt myself to the views and feelings of each individual, and thus make every attentive reader feel as if he or she were himself or herself addressed. On this account I adopted, of set purpose, this more familial style of writing, hoping it might catch the attention of those who would turn away from a more formal, didactic mode of conveying instruction to the understanding; and I have reason to believe that this end has, in some measure at least, been accomplished.

3. My object in quoting so many verses of our most excellent Hymns, was, that I might bring those deeply spiritual compositions as impressively as possible to the reader's heart. For though the Hymn-book is used in all our worshipping assemblies, and it is to be hoped is found in all our families, it is feared, nevertheless, that many of the hymns are seldom, if ever, studied or sung, more especially those of particular metres; and these are the most poetical, deeply experimental, and spiritual, and speak most emphatically on the theme of perfect love, of any in the collection. And how any experimental Christian, who has a correct poetical taste, and at the same time relishes the doctrine contended for in these letters, can prefer Watts, Toplady, Montgomery, or any other Christian poet, to Charles Wesley, I am at a loss to conceive. I do not wish to undervalue, much less to speak slightingly of these poets, nor of any others of equal merit. To most of their hymns we may ascribe a high degree of excellence, and Watts, especially, is a smooth versifier, and a poet of more than common power and beauty, to whom the Christian Church is under a lasting debt of gratitude for furnishing her with so many excellent spiritual songs; but when compared to Charles Wesley, ho falls many degrees below him, and his light disappears like the stars before the mid -day sun, particularly when the latter dips his pen in the flowing fountain of perfect love, the refreshing streams of which so profusely water the garden of the Lord. On this subject Charles Wesley has no equal. Here he stands alone, unrivalled in the fertile field of sanctifying grace; and as he walks through it, he plucks the beautiful flowers of heavenly poesy, and scatters them, fresh and fair, profusely all around him, per fuming the air with their sweet odour, while the heart is filled with the most delightful melody when the tongue sings the praise of Immanuel in the poetical strains furnished by this bard of Methodism. The Methodist Church ought to praise God most heartily for raising up a poet who has furnished her with a set of psalmody so admirably adapted to every state and condition of the human heart. As to the contemptible ditties found in Camp- meeting Hymn-books, Zion's Songsters, and other kindred publications, though there may be now and then a hymn of decent character, I pity the man or woman that can prefer and use these compositions, most of which possess neither poetry, sense, nor piety, to those highly poetical, deeply experimental, and spiritual hymns, of Charles Wesley that can substitute the non sensical rhymings, with their almost endless repetition of the same words, for those characterized by chastened language and Scriptural sentiments found in the hymns of Charles Wesley, and especially which speak of those heights and depths of sanctifying love.

I said that I feared that these Divine Hymns are seldom studied or sung. Indeed, I scarcely ever hear any of them given out in the congregation, but only either a long, common, or short metre, which, though good enough in their place, have been repeated over and over again, until they have become almost stale like the dull prayer of the formalist, which dwells on the tongue without springing from the heart, and has been so often repeated, that the hearer knows beforehand what is to come next while such hymns as the following are entirely neglected :

O God of our forefathers, hear, And make thy faithful mercies known; To Thee, through Jesus, we draw near, Thy suffering, well-beloved Son, In whom thy smiling face we see, In whom thou art well pleased with me. With solemn faith we offer up, And spread before thy glorious eyes, That only ground of all our hope, That precious, bleeding sacrifice, Which brings thy grace on sinners down, And perfects all our souls in one.

Acceptance through his only name, Forgiveness in his blood we have; But more abundant life we claim, Through Him who died our souls to save; To sanctify us by thy blood, And fill with all the life of God.

Father, behold thy dying Son, And hear the blood that speaks above! On us let all thy grace be shown;

Peace, righteousness, and joy, and love! Thy kingdom come to every heart, And all thou hast, and all thou art.

I wished, therefore, and still most devoutly wish, to bring those hymns vividly before the reader's mind; to press their high importance and deep meaning upon his inmost soul, that he may appreciate their great excellence, taste their unrivalled beauty, and feel, in the depths of his heart, their holy influence. By familiarizing himself with their sound theological sentiments, and thus treasuring in his memory and heart these rich truths of Divine revelation, he will become thoroughly imbued with their spirit, and will be influenced by their holy teaching, provided only that he drink from the same fountain of redeeming and sanctifying love from which the poet drank. So long as these hymns are patronized by the Church, sung in the congregations, and rehearsed in the families, and the truths they teach are made subjects of experimental verity, so long will orthodox doctrine, a true poetical taste, a sound Christian experience, and a regular practice of piety, be preserved among us; while the hymns will continue to adorn, enrich, and bless both ministers and people.

4. I was well aware that many of our preachers and people had become lukewarm, to say no more of it, upon the subject of entire sanctification. For though it is a prominent doctrine of our Church, taught by all our standard writers, Wesley, Fletcher, Clarke, and others, yet, from my intercourse with them, I found many that appeared quite indifferent respecting it, while a few manifested a decided hostility to the doctrine of entire sanctification; and although I could not hope to add much new light to what had been shed upon it by those able divines, yet 1 thought I could revive the doctrine in their recollection, by first giving a synopsis of what Wesley had written; and then, secondly, I might stir up their minds, by way of remembrance, by the use of some arguments which had not been employed by others, obviate some new objections; and thus contribute my mite towards advancing the cause of Christian holiness, or bring one additional stone with which to complete the edifice, or at least to drive one more nail in a sure place. How far I succeeded, the reader must judge, but I must beg him to judge impartially as well as charitably; and, in the mean time, to pray earnestly for the writer, that he may experience largely of that sanctifying grace which he recommends to others.

5. I wish to leave behind me a faithful and decided testimony in favour of this grand doc trine of the gospel this provision of the Christian system, that it may speak for me when I am dead and gone. And as I cannot hope to continue much longer in this world, whatever I may say, or do, or write,

must be said, or done, or written soon, or not at all; and therefore I feel it an imperative duty to commit this work to the press with all practical speed, that this written testimony may be left behind me for the benefit of my children, and all others who may condescend to read what I have written. They will here find my most matured thoughts upon one of the most vital truths of Divine revelation. For upon a review and revision of these letters, I have left neither a sentence nor a word that I would wish either altered or erased. They all, indeed, express the thoughts of my heart, resulting from my most deliberate judgment, made up in the fear of God, from a calm consideration of the Holy Scriptures, the experience and testimonies of God's children, and in view of the judgment day! If I do not misinterpret the promptings of my own heart, I think I can say that in these letters I have expressed its genuine sentiments of affectionate attachment to all those who * love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and also love one another with a pure heart fervently" the whole springing from the " love of God spread abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost."

I know, indeed, that this profession will subject me to the severity of criticism; but I cannot well avoid it; for if I were to withhold this testimony in favour of the abundant grace of God in Christ, vouchsafed to a sinner like my self, " the stones," the stony hearts of sinners, " would cry out against me." I am, moreover, justified in thus proclaiming the goodness of God by most of the inspired writers, both under the Old and New dispensations, and by all the holy men of God in every age of the Church, who have all said in substance, " Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and we will declare what he hath done for our souls." I wish therefore to say, to the honour of God's grace in Christ Jesus, that I feel under an infinite debt of gratitude to him for what he has done, and still does for me, the chief of sinners, that thus I may contribute my mite towards erecting a monument to the glory of that God who has so " loved the world, as to give his only begotten Bon," that " all men, through him, might be saved " " with an endless life;" and that on this monument may be inscribed, inlegible characters, as the sincere breathings of my soul to God, the following words :

" Thy witness with my spirit bear, That God, my God, inhabits there; Thou, with the Father and the Soul, Eternal life's co-eval beam, De Christ in me, and I in him, Till perfect we are made in one."

6. Many who have read those of the letters published in the Christian Advocate and Journal, have expressed a wish to see them embodied in a book. While I do this, therefore, I both gratify the desires of all such, and satisfy the dictates of my own conscience. To the letters which have already appeared in the Advocate, I have added five others; the first, on the superior qualifications of the sanctified to get and to do good; the second, on their death; the third, on their resurrection; the fourth, on their different degrees of glory; the fifth, on their happiness in heaven pursuing the same plan and style of writing as in the previous letters.

I have nothing more to add, except my most fervent prayer to God, that He, in his infinite love, may send his choicest blessings upon this sincere effort to promote his glory in the complete salvation of immortal souls.

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1.A 01. LETTER I

LETTER I. LETTERS ON SANCTIFICATION. The object proposed in quoting from Wesley Time too precious to dispute about words What Mr. Wesley proposes Historical account of his experience Reads Bishop Taylor Kempis Law Studies the Bible His first sermon Quotations from his poetry" From a German divine Further quotations from his Hymns. MY DEAR M : That you may be more thoroughly established in the doctrine of sanctification, I will furnish you, in the first place, with Mr. Wesley’s views upon the subject, and likewise the means he used to promote holiness of heart and life. I do this the rather, because he is the best interpreter of his own doctrine, and, more especially, because there never was an uninspired writer who touched this subject with such clearness, explained it so perspicuously, scripturally, experimentally, and practically, and defended it more masterly, than did John Wesley. I quote from his works, Vol. VI, page 483, because this contains his last revision of his " Plain Account of Christian Perfection," and gives an historical sketch of the several steps by which he was led on in the pursuit of holiness. By thus giving the extracts which I shall make, thousands may read them who cannot, or will not, have access to his views as contained in his works, and will thereby be enabled to see, and duly to weigh, what that great man of God has said upon this all-important subject; and above all, I hope they will be induced to seek after it to seek after it in such a manner as to be able to test its truth and sweetness by their own heartfelt experience.

Let us not dispute about words. Time is too precious, the work itself is too important, too nearly related to our present and eternal interests, to waste our moments in idle disputes about mere speculative points of doctrine, only so far as they may have an experimental and practical bearing upon our hearts and lives. I think I never felt the vast importance of this view of the subject more, if, indeed, as much as I do at present, and I feel such an eagerness to press it, both upon myself and all my readers, that I can hardly refrain from crying aloud to all within the hearing of my voice, or rather to all who shall read what I may write, instantly to come to the living fountain, and drink of the flowing waters of life, wash them in the ocean of Divine love, praying, in the language of our own inimitable poet, "Wash me, but not my feet alone,

My hands, my head, my heart." So deeply does this subject press itself upon my heart, that I feel almost resolved to say that it shall be my only and I will venture to say, my jyrincijtal theme the remainder of my short but unprofitable life. But to Mr. Wesley’s views, from which I have kept you too long. In Vol. VI, p. 483, he gives a consecutive account of the manner in which he was led into this subject, as well as the times and way in which he treated it, in the following words :

1 . What I purpose in the following papers is, to give a plain and distinct account of the steps by which I was led, during a course of many years, to embrace the doctrine of Christian perfection. This I owe to the serious part of mankind, those who desire to know all " the truth as it is in Jesus." And these only are concerned in questions of this kind. To these I would nakedly declare the thing as it is, endeavouring all along to show, from one period to another, both what I thought, and why I thought so.

2. In the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop Taylor's " Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying." In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected; that part in particular which relates to purity of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God, all my thoughts, and words, and actions; being thoroughly convinced there was no medium; but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil. Can any serious person doubt of this, or find a medium between serving God and serving the devil?

3. In the year 1726, I met with Kempis's "Christian's Pattern." The nature and extent of inward religion, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw, that giving even all my life to God (supposing it possible to do this, and go no farther) would profit me nothing, unless I gave my heart, yea, all my heart to him.

I saw, that "simplicity of intention, and purity of affection," one design in all we speak or do, and one desire ruling all our tempers, are indeed "the wings of the soul," without which she can never ascend to the mount of God.

4. A year or two after. Mr. Law's "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call" were put into my hands. These convinced me, more than ever, of the absolute impossibility of being half a Christian; and I deter mined, through his grace, (the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible of,) to be all devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance. Will any considerate man say, that this is carrying matters too far? or that anything less is due to Him who has given himself for us, than to give him our selves, all we have, and all we are?

5. In the year 1729, 1 began not only to read, but to study, the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having "the mind which was in Christ," and of walking as Christ also walked;" even of having, not some part only, but all the mind which was in him; and of walking as he walked, not only in many or in most respects, but in all things. And this was the light, wherein at this time I generally considered religion, as a uniform following of Christ, an entire inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of anything more, than of bending this rule to the experience of myself, or of other men; of allowing myself in any the least disconformity to our grand Exemplar.

6. On January 1, 1733, I preached before the university, in St. Mary's Church, on " the Circumcision of the Heart; an account of which 1 gave in these words : " It is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies, the being cleansed from sin, from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit; and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus; the being so renewed in the image of our mind, as to be "perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect. " (Vol. 1, p. 148.) In the same sermon I observed, " Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment. It is not only the first and great command, but all the commandments in one. Whatsoever things are just, what soever tilings are pure, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, they are all comprised in this one word, love. In this is perfection, and glory, and happiness : the royal law of heaven and earth is this, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The one perfect good shall be your one ultimate end. One thing shall ye desire for its own sake, the fruition of Him who is all in all. One happiness shall ye propose to your souls,

even a union with him that made them, the having fellowship with the Father and the Son/ the being joined to the Lord in one spirit. One design ye are to pursue to the end of time, the enjoyment of God in time and in eternity. De sire other things, so far as they tend to this; love the creature, as it leads to the Creator. But in every step you take, be this the glorious point that terminates your view. Let every affection, and thought, and word, and action, be subordinate to this. Whatever ye desire or fear, whatever ye seek or shun, whatever ye think, speak, or do, be it in order to your happiness in God, the sole end, as well as source, of your being." (76. pp. 150, 151.) I concluded in these words : " Here is the sum of the perfect law, the circumcision of the heart. Let the spirit return to God that gave it, with the whole train of its affections. Other sacrifices from us he would not, but the living sacrifice of the heart hath he chosen. Let it be continually offered up to God through Christ, in flames of holy love. And let no creature be suffered to share with him : for he is a jealous God. His throne will he not divide with another; he will reign without a rival. Be no design, no desire admitted there, but what has him for its ultimate object. This is the way wherein those children of God once walked, who being dead still speak to us : Desire not to live but to praise his name; let all your thought^ words, and works, tend to his glory. Let your soul be filled with so entire a love to him, that you may love nothing but for his sake. Have a pure intention of heart, a steadfast regard to his glory in all your actions. For then, and not till then, is that mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus, when in every motion of our heart, in every word of our tongue, in every work of our hands, we pursue nothing but in relation to him, and in subordination to his plea sure; when we too neither think, nor speak, nor act, to fulfil our own will, but the will of Him that sent us; when, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we do it all : to the glory of God. " (fb,, p. 153.)

It may be observed, this sermon was composed the first of all my writings which have been published. This was the view of religion I then had, which even then 1 :>cruplcd not to term perfection. This is the view I have of it now, without any material addition or diminution. And what is there here, which any man of understanding, who believes the Bible, can object to? What can he deny, without flatly contradicting the Scriptures? what retrench, without taking from the word of God?

7. In the same sentiment did mv brother and I re main (with all those young gentlemen in derision termed Methodists) till we embarked for America, in the latter end of 1735. It was the next year, while I was at Sa- vMnimh. that I wrote the following lines : Is there a thing beneath the sun,

That strives with thee my heart to share?

Ah! tear it thence, and reign alone,

The Lord of every motion there! In the beginning of the year 1738, as I was returning from thence, the cry of my heart was,

O grant that nothing in my soul

May well, but thy pure love alone!

O may thy love possess me whole,

My joy, my treasure, and my crown!

Strange fires far from my heart remove;

My every act, word, thought, be love

I never heard that any one objected to this. And indeed who can object? Is not this the language, not only of every believer, but of every one that is truly awakened? But what have I wrote, to this day, which is either stronger or plainer?

8. In August following, I had a long conversation with Arvid Gradin, in Germany. After he had given me an account of his experience, I desired him to give me, in writing, a definition of " the full assurance of faith," which he did in the following words :

Requies in sanguine Christi; firma fiduria in Deum, et persuasio de gratia divind; tranquillitas mentis summa, atque screnitas et pax; cum absentia omnis desiderii carnal is t et cessatione peccatorum ctiam internorum.

"Repose in the blood of Christ; a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of his favour; the highest tranquillity, serenity, and peace of mind, with a deliverance from every fleshly desire, and a cessation of all, even inward sins." This was the first account I ever heard from any living man, of what I had before learned myself from the oracles of God, and had been praying for. (with the little company of my friends,) and expecting, for several years.

9. In 1739, my brother and I published a volume of " Hymns and Sacred Poems." In many of these we declared our sentiments strongly and explicitly. So page 24,

Turn the full stream of nature’s tide;

Let all our actions tend

To thee, their source; thy love the guide,

Thy glory be the end.

Earth then a scale to heaven shall be;

Sense shall point out the road;

The creatures all shall lead to thee,

And all we taste be God.

Again,

Lord, arm me with thy Spirit’s might,

Since I am call’d by thy great name;

In thee my wand’ring thoughts unite,

Of all my works be thou the aim :

Thy love attend me all my days,

And my sole business be thy praise, (p. 129.)

Again,

Eager for thee I ask and pant,

So strong the principle divine

Carries me out with sweet constraint,

Till all my hallow’d soul be thine;

Plunged in the Godhead’s deepest sea,

And lost in thine immensity! (p. 125.)

Once more,

Heavenly Adam, life divine,

Change my nature into thine;

Move and spread throughout my soul,

Actuate and fill the whole, (p. 153.)

It would be easy to cite many more passages to the same effect. But these are sufficient to show, beyond contradiction, what our sentiments then were.

You may expect, my dear M., some further extracts from Mr. Wesley, interspersed with such remarks as may be considered expedient to give a clear view of the subject, and to urge it home upon the conscience, so as, if any way practi cable, to make you feel and duly appreciate itb vast importance.

1.A 02. LETTER II

LETTER II.

Methods of promoting the work Many made partakers of the blessing of sanctification Reproach followed The work goes on Judicious counsel Enthusiasts withstood Queries humbly proposed His success Object not controversy, but to promote the work of holiness. MY DEAR M : I will now show some of the methods adopted by Mr. Wesley, in order to promote the work of holiness or sanctification among his people. In the first place, he constantly preached it, urging its indispensable necessity to fit them for an acceptable and efficient service of God here, and for the consummation of glory hereafter. In this work all the preachers in connexion with him, as well as several clergymen of the Establishment, heartily united, all speaking the same language, all exhorting the people to seek after the same inestimable blessing. To effect the work the more perfectly, Mr. Wesley was in the habit of examining those who professed to enjoy this blessing personally, and of carefully guarding them against any false or erroneous views respecting it.

After giving a consecutive account of the manner in which the doctrine had been discussed at various conferences, from 1742 to 1760, he says: In the year 1762, there was a great increase of the work of God in London. Many, who had hitherto cared for none of these things, were deeply convinced of their lost estate; many found redemption in the blood of Christ; not a few backsliders were healed; and a considerable number of persons believed that God had saved them from all sin. Easily foreseeing that Satan would bu endeavouring to sow tears among the wheat. I took much pains to apprize them of the danger, particularly with regard to pride and enthusiasm. And while I stayed in town, I had reason to hope they continued both humble and sober-minded. But almost as soon as I was gone, enthusiasm broke in. Two or three began to take their own imaginations for impressions from God, and thence to suppose that they should never die; and these, labouring to bring others into the same opinion, occasioned much noise and confusion. Soon after, the same persons, with a few more, ran into other extravagances; fancying they could not be tempted; that they should feel no more pain; and that they had the gift of prophecy, and of discerning of spirits. At my return to London, in autumn, some of them stood reproved; but others were got above instruction. Meantime, a flood of reproach came upon me almost from every quarter; from themselves, because I was checking them on all occasions; and from others, be cause, they said, 1 did not check them. However, the hand of the Lord was not stayed, but more and more sinners were convinced; while some were almost daily converted to God, and others enabled to love him with all their heart.

About this time, a friend at some distance from London wrote to me as follows :

" Be not over alarmed that Satan sows tares among the wheat of Christ. It ever has been so, especially on any remarkable outpouring of his Spirit; and ever will be so, till he is chained up for a thousand years. Till then he will always ape, and endeavour to counteract, the work of the Spirit of Christ.

" One melancholy effect of this has been, that a world which is always asleep in the arms of the evil one, has ridiculed every work of the Holy Spirit.

"But what can real Christians do? Why, if they would act worthy of themselves, they should. (1.) Pray that every deluded soul may be delivered; (2.) Endeavour to reclaim them in the spirit of meekness; and, lastly, take the utmost care, both by prayer and watch fulness, that the delusion of others may not lessen their zeal in seeking after that universal holiness of soul, body, and spirit, without which no man shall see the Lord.

"Indeed, this complete new creature is mere madness to a mad world. But it is, notwithstanding, the will and wisdom of God. May we all seek after it!

"But some who maintain this doctrine in its full ex tent are too often guilty of limiting the Almighty. He dispenses his gifts just as he pleases; therefore, it is neither wise nor modest to affirm that a person must be a believer for any length of time before he is capable of receiving a high degree of the Spirit of holiness.

"God’s usual method is one thing, but his sovereign pleasure is another. He has wise reasons both for hastening and retarding his work. Sometimes he comes suddenly, and unexpected : sometimes, not till we have long looked for him.

"Indeed, it has been my opinion for many years, that one great cause why men make so little improvement in die divine life is their own coldness, negligence, and unbelief. And yet I here speak of believers.

"May the Spirit of Christ give us a right judgment in all things, and fill us with all the fulness of God; that so we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. "

About the same time, five or six honest enthusiasts foretold that the world was to end on the 28th of February. I immediately withstood them, by every possible means, both in public and private. I preached expressly upon the subject, both at West-street and Spitalfields. I warned the society, again and again, and spoke severally to as many as I could; and I saw the fruit of my labour. They made exceeding few converts : I believe scarce thirty, in our whole society. Nevertheless they made abundance of noise, gave huge occasion of offence to those who took care to improve to the uttermost every occasion against me, and greatly increased both the number and courage of those who opposed Christian perfection.

Some questions now published by one of these, induced a plain man to write the following "Queries, humbly proposed to those who deny perfection to be attainable in this life.

" (1.) Has there not been a larger measure of the Holy Spirit given under the Gospel, than under the Jewish dispensation? If not, in what sense was the Spirit not given before Christ was glorified? John 7:39.

11 (2.) Was that glory which followed the sufferings of Christ, 1 Peter i, 11, an external glory, or an inter nal, namely, the glory of holim " (3.) lias God anywhere iu Scripiurc commanded us more thun he has promised to us / " (4.) Are the promises of God respecting holiness to be fulfilled in this life, or only in the next?

" (5.) Is a Christian under any other laws than those which God promises to write in our hearts? Jeremiah 31:31, &c.; Hebrews 8:10.

" (6.) In what sense is the righteousness of the law fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit V Romans 8:4.

" (7.) Is it impossible for any one in this life to love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength? And is the Christian under any law which is not ful filled in this love? u (8.) Does the soul's going out of the body effect its purification from indwelling sin?

" (9.) If so, is it not something else, not the blood of Christ, which cleanseth it from all sin?

" (10.) If his blood cleanseth us from all sin, while the soul and body are united, is it not in this life 1
" (11.) If when that union ceases, is it not in the next? And is not this too late?

" (12.) If in the article of death; what situation is the soul in, when it is neither in the body nor out of it?

" (13.) Has Christ anywhere taught us to pray for what he never designs to give?

(14.) Has he not taught us to pray, Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven? And is it not done perfectly in heaven?

" (15.) If so, has he not taught us to pray for perfection on earth? Does he not then design to give it?

"(16.) Did not St. Paul pray according to the will of God, when he prayed that the Thessalonians might be sanctified wholly, and preserved (in this world, not the next, unless he was praying for the dead) blameless in hotly, soul, and spirit, unto the coming of Jesus Christ?

"(17.) Do you sincerely desire to be freed from in dwelling sin in this life?

" (18.) If you do, did not God give you that desire?

" (19.) If so, did he not give it you to mock you, since it is impossible it should ever be fulfilled?

" (20.) If you have not sincerity enough even to desire it, arc you not disputing about matters too high for you?

" (21.) Do you ever pray God to cleanse the thoughts of your heart, that you may perfectly love him?

" (22.) If you neither desire what you ask, nor believe it attainable, pray you not as a fool prayeth?

" God help thee to consider these questions calmly and impartially!"

These extracts show that the soul of Mr. Wesley was absorbed in this subject, and that by his assiduity in labouring to promote it, guarding the doctrine against all extravagances on the one hand, and exciting all believers, on the other, to seek it with all diligence, he was abundantly successful many witnesses were raised up who were able to testify to its truth from their own heartfelt experience.

I shall endeavour to give some further ex tracts bearing upon this point in my next. In the mean time, permit me to premonish you, my dear M., that my object is not to provoke controversy, but, if possible, to incite you, and all who read what 1 write, to wrestle in earnest prayer, and in the exercise of strong faith, that you and they may be made partakers of this great and invaluable blessing the blessing of " perfect love."

1.A 03. LETTER III

LETTER III.

Both gradual and instantaneous When may a person conclude himself sanctified? Gradually dying, yet dies in an instant- How to wait for it May enjoy peace until we find it Justification and sanctification two separate blessings Proved from Scripture The justified soul set apart for God’s service Exhortation to search diligently. MY DEAR M : Some have expressed doubts respecting the possibility of attaining to this great blessing in a moment, and are strongly inclined to believe that it is entirely a gradual work; that from the time a sinner is justified freely by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, lie gradually dies unto sin and proportionately grows in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, until God takes him from earth to heaven. That this is not according to Mr. Wesley’s view of the subject is most evident, as the following extracts will show :

"Q. When may a person judge himself to have attained this?

"A. When, after having been fully convinced of in bred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction than that he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to rejoice evermore, to pray without coaling, and in everything to give thanks. Not that to feel all love and no sin is a sufficient proof. Several have experienced this for a time before their souls were fully renewed. None therefore ought to believe that the work is done, till there is added the testimony of the Spirit, witnessing his entire sanctification, as clearly as his justification.

"Q. But whence is it, that some imagine they are thus sanctified, when in reality they are not?

"A. It is hence; they do not judge by all the preceding marks, but either by part of them, or by others that are ambiguous. But I know no instance of a person at tending to them all, and yet deceived in this matter. I believe there can be none in the world. If a man be deeply and fully convinced, after justification, of inbred sin; if he then experience a gradual mortification of sin, and afterward an entire renewal in the image of God; if to this change, immensely greater than that wrought when he was justified, be added a clear, direct witness of the renewal; I judge it as impossible this man should be deceived herein, as that God should lie. And if one whom I know to be a man of veracity testify these things to me, I ought not, without some sufficient reason, to reject his testimony.

"Q. Is this death to sin, and renewal in love, gradual instantaneous

"A. A man may be dying for some time; yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the instant the soul is separated from the body : and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner h may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone, when the body dies, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then it is impossible to conceive; so the change wrought, when the soul dies to sin, is of a different kind,

and in finitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity.

" Q. How are we to wait for this change?

" A. Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it any other way, (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure,) he deceiveth his own soul. It is true, we receive it by simple faith : but God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which he hath ordained.

" This consideration may satisfy those who inquire, why so few have received the blessing. Inquire how many are seeking it in this way; and you have a sufficient answer.

"Prayer especially is wanting. Who continues instant therein? Who wrestles with God for this very thing? So, ye have not, because ye ask not; or because ye ask amiss, namely, that you may be renewed before you die. Before you die! Will that content you? Nay, but ask that it may be done now; to-day, while it is called to-day. Do not call this setting God a time. Certainly to-day is his time as well as to-morrow. Make haste, man, make haste! Let

Thy soul break out in strong desire

Thy perfect bliss to prove;

Thy longing heart be all on fire

To be dissolved in love!"

" Q. But may we not continue in peace and joy till we are perfected in love?

A. Certainly we may; for the kingdom of God is not divided against itself; therefore, let not believers be discouraged from rejoicing in the Lord always. And yet we may be sensibly pained at the sinful nature that still remains in us. It is good for us to have a piercing sense of this, and a vehement desire to be delivered from it. But this should only incite us the more zealously to fly every moment to our strong Helper, the more earnestly to press forward to the mark, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. And when the sense of our sin most abounds, the sense of his love should much more abound."

Equally erroneous are those who suppose that justification and sanctification are one and the same thing, so much so, that whoever is justified is, at the same time, sanctified, " throughout soul, body, and spirit." One text of Sacred Scripture, bearing directly on this point, is sufficient to settle this question: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1 John i, 9. Now, if the forgiveness of our sins, which is what is meant in being justified, be the same as to be " cleansed from all un righteousness," then the apostle has uttered a senseless tautology, for it would, in that case, amount to this and nothing more : " He is faithful and just to

forgive us our sins, and to forgive us our sins;" and surely such a repetition would be unworthy the lips of inspiration. The apostle, no doubt, meant to assert, that in confessing our sins, in the Scriptural acceptation of these words, including a forsaking them, prayer to God for deliverance, and faith in Jesus Christ as our atoning and interceding High-Priest, we should be forgiven or justified freely by His grace; and on our continuing to " walk in the light as he is in the light, we should have fellow ship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son would cleanse us from all sin," ver. 7; or, as it is expressed in verse 9, " from all unrighteousness," that is, to sanctify us wholly. Understanding the words thus, the sense is complete, the apostle is consistent with himself throughout, and he speaks the language of experience, as explained above by Mr. Wesley, otherwise he speaks an unintelligible jargon, utterly unworthy an inspired messenger of God. In one sense, I allow but not in the sense in which St. John spoke of the sanctification of believers in the above quoted passages a man is sanctified the moment he is justified, that is, he is then set apart for the service of his God, and if he persevere in his holy calling, walks in the light, discharges his duties with fidelity, God will sanctify him throughout, " soul, body, and spirit " in other words, He will " cleanse the thoughts of his heart by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that he may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name." But I would not call off the attention of the reader from the above extract from the pen of Mr. Wesley, whose sound Scriptural knowledge, and enlarged experience in the things of God, enabled him to dive deep into the ocean of God’s goodness, and to bring up the precious pearls of Divine truth, and then to spread them out before the reader in all their sparkling beauties. Look at them again and again, compare them with the word of God, with your own and the experience of God’s most devoted servants in every age of the Church; and if you find you come short in your own experience and practice, lay the axe of truth instantly at the root of the tree of iniquity, which still lives in the heart, and be determined never to rest until it is entirely eradicated.

1.A 04. LETTER IV

LETTER IV.

Mr. Wesley’s caution Conversed with those who professed the blessing of sanctification Met the classes We should follow his example His opinion respecting those who professed the blessing Some are deficient in the graces of the Spirit Admonishes such Danger of apostasy Great work of God. MY DEAR M : In the extracts I have given from the writings of Mr. Wesley, may be seen the extreme caution with which he guarded his people against all erroneous views and practices in reference to this subject. That he might acquaint himself as thoroughly as possible with their state, he mingled in their society, met the classes, and conversed familiarly with those who professed to enjoy the blessing of " perfect love." He did not, therefore, look on with cold indifference, and make his critical remarks as a mere theorist, but he entered heartily into their experience, invited them to speak freely of the dealings of God with their souls, that he might be enabled to form an intelligible and accurate judgment of their true state and character.

It was chiefly for the information of all such, that he wrote down the results of his observations, bringing everything, every doctrine, experience, and practice, to the test of Scripture and right reason. He did not, therefore, imitate the conduct of those who stand aloof from the scene of action, draw his conclusions from mere re ports, whether true or false, and indulge in a cold phlegmatic feeling, or for the gratification of a splenetic disposition, nor yet dispute about those nice points of speculation which may amuse the fancy and feed the vanity of a meta physical mind; but he entered deeply into the hearts, and won the affection of the dear people who looked up to him for direction, sympathized with them in all their afflictions, in their temptations, doubts, and fears, encouraging the timid believer, enlightening the ignorant, confirming those who appeared to have attained the perfection which he taught, and adapting his instructions to the conditions and circumstances of all classes of believers in Jesus Christ.

What a pastor was John Wesley! that we, who profess to be his followers, and more especially those of us who are in the ministry, may catch the like spirit, exemplify the like tenderness of heart, the like kindness of disposition, and the like diligence in watching over our respective flocks, and in striving to nourish them up to everlasting life! Were this faithfully and perseveringly done, there would be less bickering among ourselves, less disputing about comparative trifles, less lukewarmness and backsliding among our people, and more and more earnestness manifested after the inestimable blessing of "perfect love." I would, indeed, that we might all lay aside our controversies respecting little unessential points, and enter unitedly, heartily, prayerfully, and with steadfast FAITH into the work for the promotion of holiness of heart and life. We should then be closer imitators of Wesley, and be more and more instrumental in building up believers " in their most holy faith." The following extracts will fully evince the truth of the above observations :

" Q. What do you think of those in London, who seem to have been lately renewed in love ?"

"A. There is something very peculiar in the experience of the greater part of them. One would expect that a believer should first be filled with love, and thereby emptied of sin; whereas these were emptied of sin first, and then filled with love. Perhaps it pleased God to work in this manner, to make his work more plain and undeniable; and to distinguish it more clearly from that overflowing love, which is often felt even in a justified state.

" It seems likewise most agreeable to the great promise : From all your filthiness I will cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. Ezekiel 36:25-26.

" But I do not think of them all alike : there is a wide difference between some of them and others. I think most of them with whom I have spoken, have much faith, love, joy, and peace. Some of these I believe are renewed in love, and have the direct witness of it; and they manifest the fruit above described, in all their words and actions. Now, let any man call this what he will; it is what I call perfection. But some who have much love, peace, and joy, yet have not the direct witness; and others who think they have, are, nevertheless, manifestly wanting in the fruit. How many I will not say; perhaps one in ten; perhaps more or fewer. But some arc undeniably wanting in long-suffering, Christian resignation. They do not see the hand of God in whatever occurs, and cheerfully embrace it. They do not in everything give thanks, and rejoice evermore. They are not happy; at least, not always happy; for sometimes they complain. They say, this or that is hard!

" Some are wanting in gentleness. They resist evil, instead of turning the other cheek. They do not receive reproach with gentleness; no, nor even reproof. Nay, they are not able to bear contradiction, without the appearance, at least, of resentment If they arc re proved or contradicted, though mildly, they do not take it well; they behave with more distance and reserve than they did before. If they are reproved or contradicted harshly, they answer it with harshness; with a loud voice, or with an angry tone, or in a sharp and surly manner. They speak sharply or roughly, when they reprove others; and behave roughly to their inferiors.

Some are wanting in goodness. They are not kind, mild, sweet, amiable, soft, and loving at all times, in their spirit, in their words, in their look and air, in the whole tenor of their behaviour : and that to all, high and low, rich and poor, without loptct to persons; particularly to them that, are out of the way, to opposers, and to those of their own household. They do not long, study, endeavour, by every means, to make all about them happy. They can see them uneasy, and not be concerned; perhaps they make them so: and then wipe their mouth, and say, Why, they deserve it; it is their own fault.

Some are wanting in fidelity, a nice regard to truth, simplicity, and godly sincerity. Their love is hardly without dissimulation; something like guile is found in their mouth. To avoid roughness, they lean to the other extreme. They are smooth to an excess, so as scarce to avoid a degree of fawning, or of seeming to mean what they do not.

" Some are wanting in meekness, quietness of spirit, composure, evenness of temper. They are up and down, sometimes high, sometimes low; their mind is not well balanced. Their affections are either not in due pro portion; they have too much of one, too little of another; or they are not duly mixed and tempered together, so as to counterpoise each other. Hence there is often a jar. Their soul is out of tune, and cannot make the true harmony.

" Some are wanting in temperance. They do not steadily use that kind and degree of food, which they know, or might know, would most conduce to the health, strength, and vigour of the body : or they are not temperate in sleep; they do not rigorously adhere to what is best both for body and mind; otherwise they would constantly go to bed and rise early, and at a fixed hour : or they sup late, which is neither good for body nor soul: or they use neither fasting nor abstinence : or they prefer (which are so many sorts of in temperance) that preaching, reading, or conversation. which gives them transient joy and comfort, before that which brings godly sorrow, or instruction in righteousness. Such joy is not sanctified; it doth not tend to, and terminate in, the crucifixion of the heart. Such faith doth not centre in God, but rather in itself.

" So far all is plain. I believe you have faith, and love, and joy, and peace. Yet you who arc particularly concerned know, each for yourself, that you are wanting in the respects above mentioned. You are wanting either in long-suffering, gentleness, or goodness; either in fidelity, meekness, or temperance. Let us not, then, on either hand, fight about words. In the thing we clearly agree.

" You have not what I call perfection; if others will call it so, they may. However, hold fast what you have, and earnestly pray for what you have not.

Q. Can those who arc perfect grow in grace?

" A. Undoubtedly they can; and that not only while they are in the body, but to all eternity.

" Q. Can they fall from it?

"A. I am well assured they can; matter of fact puts this beyond dispute. Formerly we thought, one saved from sin could not full; now we know the contrary. We are surrounded with instances of those who lately experienced all that I mean by perfection. They had both the fruit of the Spirit, and the witness; but they have now lost both. Neither docs any one stand by virtue of anything that is implied in the nature of the- state. There is no such height or strength of holiness as it is impossible to fall from. If there be any that cannot fall, this wholly depends on the promise of God.

" Q. Can those who fall from this state recover it?

" Why not? We have many instances of this also. Nay, it is an exceeding common tiling for persons to lose it more than once, before they are established therein.

" It is therefore to guard them who are saved from sin. from every occasion of stumbling, that I give the following advices. But first I shall speak plainly concerning the work itself.

" I esteem this late work to be of God; probably the greatest now upon earth. Yet, like all others, this also is mixed with much human frailty. But these weak nesses are far less than might have been expected; and ought to have been joyfully borne by all that loved and followed after righteousness. That there have been a few weak, warm-headed men, is no reproach to the work itself, no just ground for accusing a multitude of sober- minded men, who are patterns of strict holiness. Yet (just the contrary to what ought to have been) the op position is great; the helps few. Hereby many are hindered from seeking faith and holiness by the false zeal of others; and some who at first began to run well are turned out of the way." In my next I shall endeavour to give his advice to those who made the profession of perfect love in his day.

1.A 05. LETTER V

LETTER V.

Definition of the word perfection Anything is perfect which answers its end The sanctified Christian answers the end for which he was made and redeemed In what sense he is not perfectly what sense he is perfect In love Does not commit sin Tims Christ saves his people Proved from Scripture. MY DEAR M : A few words in explanation of the word perfection, may serve to obviate some objections to the doctrine we are considering. This is a word with which many are offended, more especially its use in Christian theology. But an accurate definition of the term will, I think, tend to remove all just cause of offence, and present the subject in such a point of light, as to induce sincere Christians to embrace the doctrine the word represents.

Anything is perfect which answers the cud for which it is made.

Thus a watch is a perfect watch which keeps the time exactly; otherwise it is imperfect, and its maker is pronounced unfit for his work. Hence, everything which God has made is perfect, not only because it answers its end, but because it was the production of an infinitely wise, powerful, and good Being. Man, in his present depraved state, is imperfect, because he does not answer the end of his creation. His blinded judgment, his corrupted passions, and his perverted will, lead him astray from the path of uprightness, and plunge him into numerous errors and sins, and finally, if not rescued by Divine grace, into perdition. This very fact, namely, that he does not answer the end of his creation, proves that he is not now in the state in which God created him, otherwise his Creator was an imperfect workman, which supposition is blasphemous in itself. To rescue man from this state of thraldom, this manifest imperfection, and to restore him to that state in which he might answer the end for which he was brought into being, Jesus Christ came into our world, suffered, died, rose again, and ascended to the right hand of the Father, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us. The very design for which he did and does all this is, that he " might save his people from their sins," to "perfect them in love," and thereby fit them to answer the end for which he redeemed them here, and then to take them to glory hereafter.

All this preparation, this redemption, this conviction, justification, sanctification, this preservation in holiness, is God’s work, and Moses says, " All his works are perfect." If, therefore, it be, as it unquestionably is, God’s work to convict the sinner of his sinfulness, to justify the penitent believer, to sanctify the persevering Christian, and to keep him in holiness and righteousness all the days of his life, he is perfectly convicted, perfectly justified, perfectly sanctified, perfectly kept in the path of obedience to His commands, for " all God’s works are perfect." To say otherwise is to say, either that the sinner convicts himself of sin, that the penitent justifies himself, that the persevering believer sanctifies himself, and keeps himself in the path of obedience, or that God does his work imperfectly; both of which suppositions reflect injuriously upon the character of God and the plan of redemption and salvation, and therefore must be rejected as impious, if, indeed, not blasphemous. When a man is restored by justification and sanctification to the favour and image of God, he is thereby fitted to answer the end for which he was made, and for which he was redeemed by the

death of Christ, and for which the risen, ascended Lord Jesus ever liveth to make inter cession for him; he is now, therefore, a perfect Christian a living, active believer in Jesus Christ exemplifying, in the inward tempers of his mind, as well as in his external conduct, the purity of inward religion, and the regularity and holiness of the commandments. That the reader may see what is meant by this perfection, I give the following quotations from Mr. Wesley :

" (1.) In what sense they are not. They are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake. We are no more to expect any living man to be infallible, than to be omniscient. They are not free from infirmities, such as weakness or slowness of understanding, irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination. Such in another kind are impropriety of language, ungracefulness of pronunciation; to which one might add, a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behaviour. From such infirmities as these none are perfectly freed till their spirits return to God; neither can we expect till then to be wholly freed from temptation; for the servant is not above his master. But neither in this sense is there any absolute perfection on earth. There is no perfection of degrees, none which docs not admit of a continual increase.

"(2.) In what sense then arc they perfect? Observe, we are not now speaking of babes in Christ, but adult Christians. But even babes in Christ are so far perfect as not to commit sin. This St. John affirms expressly; and it cannot be disproved by the examples of the Old Testament. For what if the holiest of the ancient Jews did sometimes commit sin? We cannot infer from hence, that all Christians do and must commit sin as long as they live.

" A Christian is so far perfect, as not to commit sin.

" This is the glorious privilege of every Christian, yea, though he be but a babe in Christ. But it is only of grown Christians it can Ixj affirmed they arc in such a sense perfect, us, Secondly, to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers. First, from evil or sinful thoughts. Indeed, whence should they spring! Out of the heart of man, if at all, proceed evil thoughts. If, therefore, the heart be no longer evil, then evil thoughts no longer proceed out of it : for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.

"And as they are freed from evil thoughts, so like wise from evil tempers. Every one of these can say, with St. Paul, I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; words that manifestly describe a deliverance from inward as well as from outward sin. This is expressed both negatively, I live not, my evil nature, the body of sin is destroyed; and positively, Christ liveth in me, and therefore all that is holy, and just, and good. Indeed, both these, Christ liveth in me, and, I live not, are inseparably connected. For what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial?

" He, therefore, who liveth in these Christians hath purified their hearts by faith; insomuch that every one that has Christ in him, the hope of glory, purifieth himself, even as he is pure. He is purified from pride; for Christ was lowly in heart : he is pure from desire and self-will; for Christ desired only to do the will of his Father; and he is pure from anger in the common sense of the word; for Christ was meek and gentle. I say, in the common sense of the word; for he is angry at sin, while he is grieved for the sinner. He feels a dig- plaecncy at every offence against God, but only tender compassion to the offender.

" Thus doth Jesus save his people from their sins; not only from outward sins, but from the sins of their hearts. True, say some. but not till death, not in this world. Nay, St. John says, Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because, as he is, so are we in this world. The Apostle here, beyond all contradiction, speaks of himself and other living Christians, of whom he flatly affirms, that, not only at or after death, but in this world, they are as their Master.

" Exactly agreeable to this are his words in the first chapter : God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. And again : If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Now, it is evident, the Apostle here speaks of a deliverance wrought in this world : for he saith not, The blood of Christ will cleanse, (at the hour of death, or in the day of judgment,) but it cleanseth, at the time present, us living Christians from all sin. And it is equally evident, that if any sin remain, we are not cleansed from all sin. If any unrighteousness remain in the soul, it is not cleansed from all unrighteousness. Neither let any say that this relates to justification only, or the cleansing us from the guilt of sin : first, because this is confounding together what the Apostle clearly distinguishes, who mentions, first, to forgive us our sins, and then to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Secondly, because this is asserting justification by works, and in the strongest sense possible; it is making all inward, as well as all outward, holiness, necessarily previous to justification. For if the cleansing here spoken of is no other than the cleansing us from the guilt of siu, then we are not cleansed from guilt, that is, not justified, unless on condition of walking in the light, as he is in the light. It remains, then, that Christians are saved in this world from all sin, from all un righteousness; that they are now in such a sense perfect, as not to commit sin, and to be freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers." Wesley’s Works, vol. vi, pp. 489-491.

You are requested, my dear M., to read the above extracts with attention, and weigh well their import, and if you have leisure, to turn to the pages in Mr. Wesley’s Works, and consult the connexion of these passages, in which he answers sundry objections, which I omit for the sake of brevity.

1.A 06. LETTER VI

LETTER VI. The advice of Mr. Wesley Highly valuable Plain and home to the point He advises them, 1. To watch and pray; 9. To beware of enthusiasm; 3. Of Antinomialism. MY DEAR M : The following advices which

Mr. Wesley gave to those who professed the blessing of " perfect love" in his day, may be as applicable to such in our day, as they were to them. These advices are the more valuable from their being given by a man of deep experience in the things of God, who. no doubt, enjoyed the blessing himself, and whose sole object was, without fear or favour to any one for he regarded no man’s person, whether high or low, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, any further than his present and eternal interest was concerned to lead all in the way of truth and holiness, and that by addressing plain words directly to the understanding and heart, with out circumlocution, or any curious metaphysical reasoning, although any man of accurate know ledge, that reads him with attention, must at once perceive that he is reading a man who was a complete master of his subject, and that he understood the art of reasoning to perfection.

While, therefore, he makes no parade of logic, and seldom presents his argument in a logical form, he nevertheless clothes his thoughts with words of uncommon depth, and draws all his conclusions from established premises with that irresistible force which must carry conviction to every honest and enlightened mind. Avoiding curious and learned disquisitions on disputable points of doctrine, he takes his stand where every true minister should, and does, indeed, stand on the Scriptures of truth and thence derives all his arguments, and points them directly to the heart. But while the simplicity of truth is thus apparent in all the writings of Mr. Wesley, and more especially in those now under consideration, there is, at the same time, a peculiar tenderness of spirit, and mellowness of charity, and all the kindness of sympathizing love, manifestly pervading the whole. To the advice of such a man, such an author, to such a minister of the Lord Jesus, we cannot but listen with attention, and persuade ourselves to follow it so far as it seems to accord with sacred Scripture, with Christian experience, and enlightened reason.

" Q. What is the first advice* that you would give them?

" A. Watch and pray continually against pride. If God has cast it out, see that it enter no more : it is full as dangerous as desire. And you may slide back into it unawares; especially if you think there is no danger of it. Nay, but I ascribe all I have to God. So you may, and be proud nevertheless. For it is pride, not only to ascribe anything we have to ourselves, but to

* The advices which follow were published in a separate tract In the year 1762, under the title of " Cautions and Directions given to the Greatest Professors in the Methodist Societies," with the following motto :

" Set the false witnesses aside, Yet hold the truth forever fast."

It was evidently intended to guard the people against the mischievous extravagances of George Bell and his friends, a particular account of whom is given in Mr. Wesley's Journal afx>ut that period think we have what we really have not. Mr. L , for instance, ascribed all the light he had to God, and so far he was humble; but then he thought he had more light than any man living; and this was palpable pride. So you ascribe all the knowledge you have to God; and in this respect you are humble. But if you think you have more than you really have; or if you think you are so taught of God, as no longer to need man's teaching; pride lieth at the door. Yes, you have need to be taught, not only by Mr. Morgan, by one an other, by Mr. Maxfield, or me, but by the weakest preacher in London; yea, by all men. For God send- eth by whom he will send.

" Do not therefore say to any who would advise or reprove you, You are blind; you cannot teach me. Do not say, This is your wisdom, your carnal reason; but calmly weigh the thing before God.

" Always remember, much grace does not imply much light. These do not always go together As there may be much light where there is but little love, so there may be much love where there is little light. The heart has more heat than the eye; yet it cannot see. And God has wisely tempered the members of the body together, that none may say to another, I have no need of thee.

" To imagine none can teach you, but those who are themselves saved from sin, is a very great and dangerous mistake. Give not place to it for a moment; it would lead you into a thousand other mistakes, and that irrecoverably. No; dominion is not founded in grace, as the madmen of the last age talked. Obey and regard them that are over you in the Lord, and do not think you know better than them. Know their place and your own; always remembering, much love does not imply much light.

" The not observing this has led some into many mistakes, and into the appearance, at least, of pride. O beware of the appearance, and the thing! Let there be in you that lowly mind which was in Christ Jesus. And be ye likewise clothed with humility. Let it not only fill, but cover you all over. Let modesty and self- liffidence appear in all your words and actions. Let all you speak and do show that you arc little, and base, and mean, and vile in your own eyes.

" As one instance of this, be always ready to own any fault you have been in. If you have at any time thought, spoke, or acted wrong, be not backward to acknowledge it. Never dream that this will hurt the cause of God; no, it will further it. Be therefore open and frank, when you are taxed with anything; do not seek either to evade or disguise it; but let it appear just as it is, and you will thereby not hinder, but adorn the Gospel.

Q. What is the second advice which you would give them?

"A. Beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm. O keep at the utmost distance from it! Give no place to a heated imagination. Do not hastily ascribe things to God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions, or revelations to be from God. They may be from him. They may be from nature. They may be from the devil. Therefore, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God. Try all things by the written word, and let all bow down before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connexion with the context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning; every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.

" I advise you never to use the words, wisdom, reason, or knowledge, by way of reproach. On the contrary, pray that you yourself may abound in them more and more. If you mean worldly wisdom, useless know ledge, false reasoning, say so; and throw away the chaff , but not the wheat.

" One general inlet to enthusiasm is, expecting the end without the means : the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scriptures, and consulting the children of God; the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer, and steady watchfulness; the expecting any blessing without hearing the word of God at every opportunity.

" Some have been ignorant of this device of Satan. They have left off searching the Scriptures. They said, God writes all the Scriptures on my heart. There fore, I have no need to read it. Others thought they had not so much need of hearing, and so grew slack in attending the morning preaching. O take warning, you who are concerned herein! You have listened to the voice of a stranger. Fly back to Christ, and keep in the good old way, which was once delivered to the saints; the way that even a heathen bore testimony of: That the Christians rose early every day to sing hymns to Christ as God.

" The very desire of; growing in grace may some times be an inlet of enthusiasm. As it continually leads us to seek new grace, it may lead us unawares to seek something else new. besides new degrees of love to God and man. So it has led some to seek and fancy they had received gifts of a new kind, after a new heart, as, (1.) The loving God with all our mind: (2.) With all our soul: (3.) With all our strength: (4.) Oneness with God: (5.) Oneness with Christ: (6.) Having our life hid with Christ in God: (7.) Being dead with Christ: (8.) Rising with him: (9.) The sitting with him in heavenly places : (10.) The being taken up into his throne : (1 1.) The being in the New Jerusalem : (12.) The seeing the tabernacle of God come down among men. (13.) The being dead to all works: (14.) The not being liable to death, pain, or grief, or temptation.

" One ground of many of these mistakes is, the taking even- fresh, strong application of any of these scriptures to the heart, to be a gift of a new kind; not knowing that several of these scriptures are not fulfilled yet; that most of the others are fulfilled when we are justified; the rest, the moment we are sanctified. It remains only to experience them in higher degrees. This is all we have to expect.

" Another ground of these and a thousand mistakes, is, the not considering deeply, that love is the highest gift of God; humble, gentle, patient love; that all visions, revelations, manifestations, whatever, are little things compared to love; and that all the gifts above mentioned are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to it.

" It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this, the heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you arc asking others, Have you received this or that blessing? If you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you arc leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in vour heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham’s bosom.

" I say yet again, beware of enthusiasm. Such is the imagining you have the gift of prophesying, or of discerning of spirits, which I do not believe one of you has; no, nor ever had yet Beware of judging people to be either right or wrong by your own feelings. This is no Scriptural way of judging. O keep close to the law and to the testimony!

" Q. What is the third?

"A. Beware of Antinomiauism; making void the law, or any part of it, through faith. Enthusiasm naturally leads to this : indeed they can scarce be separated. This may steal upon you in a thousand forms, so that you cannot be too watchful against it. Take heed of everything, whether in principle or practice, which has any tendency thereto. Even that great truth, that Christ is the end of the law, may betray us into it, if we do not consider that he has adopted every point of the moral law, and grafted it into the law of love. Beware of thinking, Because I am filled with love, I need not have so much holiness. Because I pray always, therefore I need no set time for private prayer. Because I watch always, therefore I need no particular self- examination. Let us magnify the law, the whole written word, and make it honourable. Let this be our voice : J prize thy commandments above gold or precious stones. what love have I unto thy law! all the day long is my study in it. Beware of Antinomian books; particularly the works of Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh. They contain many excellent things; and this makes them the more dangerous. O be warned in time! Do not play with fire. Do not put your hand on the hole of a cockatrice den. I entreat you, beware of bigotry. Let not your love or beneficence be confined to Methodists, so called, only; much less to that very small part of them who seem to be renewed in love; or to those who believe yours and their report. make not this your Shibboleth! Beware of stillness; ceasing in a wrong sense from your own works. To mention one instance out of many . You have received, says one, a great blessing. But you began to talk of it, and to do this and that; so you lost it. You should have been still.

Beware of self-indulgence; yea, and making a virtue of it, laughing at self-denial, and taking up the cross daily, at fasting or abstinence. Beware of censorious- ness; thinking or calling them that any ways oppose you, whether in judgment or practice, blind, dead, fallen, or enemies to the work. Once more, beware of Solifidianism; crying nothing but. Believe, believe! and condemning those as ignorant or legal who speak in a more Scriptural way. At certain seasons, indeed, it may be right to treat of nothing but repentance, or merely of faith, or altogether of holiness; but, in general, our call is to declare the whole counsel of God, and to prophesy according to the analogy of faith. The written word treats of the whole and every particular branch of righteousness, descending to its minutest branches; as to be sober, courteous, diligent, patient, to honour all men. So. likewise, the Holy Spirit works the same in oar hearts, not merely creating desires after holiness in general, but strongly inclining us to every particular grace, leading us to every individual part of whatsoever is lovely. And this with the greatest propriety : for as by works faith is made perfect, or the completing or destroying the work of faith, and enjoying the favour, or suffering the displeasure, of God, greatly depends on every single act of obedience or disobedience." As there are objections to this doctrine some what peculiar to our day, I shall, Providence permitting, devote a few pages to their consideration, and endeavour so to obviate them as to set the subject before the reader in such a clear light, that he may rightly understand it and feel its force upon his conscience. In the mean time, I most sincerely beg an interest in the prayers of God’s people, that my head, my heart, and my pen, may be guided into all truth; that the " words of my lips and the meditations of

my heart " may be acceptable in the sight of God, and that I may be an humble instrument in shedding a ray of heavenly light upon this vitally important theme. I do sincerely praise God that this work of sanctification is reviving and advancing among us, and my prayer to God is, that it may continue to spread until its hallowing influences shall pervade the whole Church.

1.A 07. LETTER VII

LETTER VII.

Deep interest in the subject Union of those who enjoy perfect love Their holy fellowship Prayer for steadfastness Convinced of its necessity Piercing sense of inbred sin How produced This an evidence of the necessity of sanctification Not a mere opinion, but a heart-felt sense of its necessity Produces self-abhorrence The object of writing. MY DEAR M : The kind Christian spirit you have exemplified, since my acquaintance with you, has endeared you to my heart, and created an interest in your welfare, temporal and spiritual, present and future, of an indescribable character; and this has been heightened by every interview I have had the pleasure of having with you. And as you profess, and, I have no doubt, enjoy, the unspeakable blessing of " perfect love," and have frequently requested ray views on that subject, I have concluded to examine it as thoroughly as may be, that you, and others similarly situated, should any thing I can say be of any use, may be benefited by my remarks.

Among those who are possessed of this jewel of the Gospel, this " pearl of great price," for so it may be termed, by way of eminence there exists a union of spirit, a con geniality of heart, an interlocking of the affections, which binds them together " in the bundle of life," creating a sameness of feeling, views, and purposes, which characterize them as the holy followers of Him who prayed that they may be " made perfect in one." And I feel this with you in a very peculiar manner, so much so that I am constrained thus to avow it, though it may subject me to the charge of weakness, by those who do not understand the nature and effects of Divine love, or perhaps by others to vanity, in supposing myself entitled to a friendship of so hallowed a character a friendship with one so entirely devoted to God. Be it so. I will not disguise the truth for fear of giving offence to the carnal-minded, by saying that there exists between us, as well as between all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, with a perfect heart and willing mind, an inexplicable union of spirit, which remains the same, whether present or absent; which could be cemented only by having the " love of God spread abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost," and which is kept up by a reciprocal flow of that love which results from the communion of saints of that fellowship of which St. John speaks, when he says, " If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have FELLOW SHIP ONE WITH ANOTHER, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Let then the world scoff, if it will, and the mere formal professor of religion ridicule this sacred fellowship; but let you and I, and all who profess the inestimable blessing of " perfect love," exemplify the purity of its source, the delicate and refined nature of its effects upon the heart and affections, the innocence with which its possessors have intercourse one with another, by " doing righteousness, even as he is righteous." That you, my dear M., may steadily persevere in the path of holiness, in which the Lord has placed your feet, is my most fervent prayer; and I can assure you that it is no small encouragement to me to hear you say that you delight to remember me at the throne of your heavenly Father; but it is still a great er encouragement to us all to know that our great High Priest " ever LIVETH to make intercession for us." But how were you brought into the

possession of this blessing? In the first place, you were deeply convinced of inbred sin of heart-sin of the stirrings of anger when provoked, of pride when insulted, of impatience when crossed or disappointed, and a thousand name less evils which you felt at times, rankling in your heart, and which sometimes threatened to gain the dominion over you, though by constant watchfulness, prayer, and the exercise of faith in the Son of God, you obtained grace to enable you to resist their influence, and to prevent you from " being brought into bondage again." These evils you saw much more clearly than you did before you were justified, and, consequently, you had a more piercing and abiding sense of your native vileness than you ever had before. Not indeed because you were more vile, but merely because you saw yourself more clearly than you had done or could do before. And this piercing sense of your inward impurity was a certain evidence that the light of Divine truth was shining on your heart, revealing to your inmost soul all the latent evils of your nature.

Like the rays of the sun darting through the window, which reveal numberless motes that cannot be discovered elsewhere, not because there are more of these small particles there than there are in other parts of the room, but because the rays of the sun reveal them; this light of the Divine Spirit, shining into the windows of your heart, disclosed to your interior eye those numerous evils before alluded to, so piercingly indeed as to make you inwardly groan out, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" This penetrating sense of your native impurity caused you to doubt, sometimes, whether you had ever been made a partaker of the pardoning love of God; but yet, on recurring to the happy moment when Jesus spoke in accents of love to your soul, and whispered to your heart, "Thy sins are for given thee," you could not question the reality of that act of Divine grace; and as you steadily persevered, according to the light you had, you did not lose the consciousness of pardon, even amidst the conflicts you underwent arising from that inward feeling of inbred sin. You were enabled, therefore, notwithstanding those " fightings without and fears within," to hold fast your confidence in God, your faith in Jesus Christ, and to retain an evidence of your acceptance "in the Beloved." This indeed you must have done, or you could not have been sanctified by the " blood of the everlasting covenant;" for in order to be sanctified, we must retain our justification, otherwise we backslide, and need to be reclaimed before we can be entirely renewed in the image of God.

Well, this consciousness of inward impurity was a plain conviction of the necessity of being inwardly "cleansed from all" this "unrighteousness " this internal pollution; for I have no faith in a mere ideal thing of sanctification, a mere floating notion of something that is pleasant, delightful, and pretty, very pleasing to the imagination, unaccompanied by a piercing sense of its absolute necessity in order for the purification of the heart from the contamination of sin. But the sanctification for which I plead, on Scriptural ground, presupposes a self-loathing, arising from a heart-felt conviction of the native impurity of the heart; and this conviction is as evident, as piercing, deep, and genuine, as was the conviction for actual sin before we were pardoned or justified; with this difference, the latter was accompanied with a consciousness of condemnation, arising from a sense of guilt for our actual sins; the former creating a sweet distress of soul unaccompanied with guilt, but attended with self-abhorrence, on account of the deep stains of sin which we saw and felt in the depths of the soul, and which convinced us of the absolute necessity of an inward, thorough cleansing to fit us for the holy service of God here, and for the enjoyment of heaven hereafter.

Whence, I ask, is the necessity of sanctification? Its necessity arises from our impurity. It implies an inward cleansing. A cleansing from what? From what! From impurity. Unless, therefore, we are thoroughly convinced of this "inward dire disease," we cannot feel the necessity of being cleansed.

I have dwelt the longer upon this, because I fear there are many that deceive themselves upon this point. They have heard much upon the subject of sanctification, that it is a state of holiness greatly to be desired to make one hap py, and have pictured to themselves an idea of its superlative excellence, and with a view to obtain it have, as they thought, consecrated themselves to God, and claimed the blessing, without feeling its necessity arising from a consciousness of that impurity of heart which I have endeavoured to depict. This will not do. We must seek it because we need it. We need it because we are unholy. We are unholy be cause we have sinned. We have sinned, and thereby contracted not only a load of actual guilt, but also much increased our inherent depravity, so that impurity has interwoven itself into every fibre of the soul. And when the character of God is revealed to us in all the holiness of His immaculate nature, by which we are led to contrast ourselves with Him, we view such an awful disparity between Him and ourselves, that we are constrained to cry out, " I abhor myself, and repent as in dust and ashes." This self-abhorrence arises, as I have before remarked and I wish to press ibis point, my dear M., upon your heart with all the weight I can bring to bear upon it, because I consider it of the first importance that it should be clearly understood and fully felt from the light of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ upon the believing soul, by which it is led to see itself "exceeding sinful." The same light that disclosed this sinfulness this impurity this inbred defilement, points, at the same time, to the " Fountain that was opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness," and we hear the voice of God saying, Arise, come to the flowing fountain : and the heart replies, " I cannot wash my heart, But by believing thee, And waiting for thy blood t impart The spotless purity."

I shall endeavour to fortify these views from undisputed authority in my next. In the mean time, permit me to remark, to prevent any trembling soul that may read these lines from sinking down into despair, from a penetrating sense of its native vileness, that the blood of Jesus Christ is of sufficient efficacy to cleanse the foulest stains of sin. Yes, he may say, in the language of our inimitable poet, " There for me the Saviour stands; Shows his wounds, and spreads his hands :

God is love! I know, I feel; Jesus weeps, and loves me still."

I write not thus to prevent you, my dear M., from sinking in despair, for I know that you have experienced not only this consciousness of your native impurity, but a happy deliverance from it, and can say, as I have often heard you say, " Now I have found the ground wherein Sure my soul’s anchor may remain : The wounds of Jesus for my sin, Before the world’s foundation slain; Whose mercy shall unshaken stay, When heaven and earth are fled away." That your "soul’s anchor" may "remain" firmly fixed on that sure " foundation," is the earnest prayer, just now put up, of your affectionate friend.

1.A 08. LETTER VIII

LETTER VIII The views expressed in the former letter sustained by an appeal to Job His great afflictions Justified in the midst of them all Yet not sanctified His confession This the language of every believing heart A more notable confession of Job His deliverance and full sanctification All in conformity to Wesley’s poetry Proved by quotations from his hymns. MY DEAR M : Believing that your heart is still beating with pulsations of love to God and man, and that you are ardently desirous to know the whole truth as it is in Jesus, I proceed to sustain the views I expressed in my former letter, by an appeal to that Book to which all our theories, whether they relate to doctrine, experience, or practice, must be brought for their final decision. The first that I shall refer to is the Book of Job, being probably the oldest inspired record we have, and containing an account of one of the most extraordinary instances of Divine Providence and grace, watching over the affairs of a favoured servant of God, in the midst of trials of the severest character, and which eventuated in his complete vindication from the accusations of his enemies, and his triumphant victory over all his foes. That Job was a righteous man from the beginning of his history, as recorded in the Book, is evident from the testimony of God himself, who says of him in chapter i, 1, that he " was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil." And during all the afflictions of body and mind through which he passed, the accusations of his mistaken friends, the calamities which fell upon his household, his property, his own person, and the many temptations which must have pressed upon him, to induce him to abjure his allegiance to his God in the midst of all these indescribable afflictions he said, " Till I die I will not re move my integrity from me." "Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." Job, therefore, must, even at this time, have enjoyed a " witness " of his acceptance before God, for his record was on high, his name was recorded in the Book of Life, as one of God’s favoured servants; in other words, he must have been justified in the sight of God, and have had so much of grace as to enable him to hold fast his integrity, and so to deport himself in the midst of all his trials, that it was said of him that he " sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." And yet it does not appear that, during this severe conflict, he enjoyed the sanctifying influences of God’s Spirit. Notwithstanding all these evidences of his uprightness, his steadfast confidence in God, his irreproachable life and conversation, yet, when God challenges him to answer for himself, in view of the awfully sub lime exhibition of the majestic holiness of his character, Job confesses his native vileness in the following memorable words, chapter xl, 3, 4, 5 : " Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."

Oh what a humiliating confession was this!

After all his suffering, which was permitted to come upon him for the trial of his faith and patience; after all the manifestations of God’s goodness in sustaining him amidst the fiery trial; after all the testimonies, even from God himself, in favour of the righteousness of his life; no sooner does the glory of God’s majesty burst upon him in its I will not say in all its effulgence, for I doubt whether any mortal man could bear up under such a full blaze of God’s "dazzling glory bright" effulgence,

than in this light he sees his many imperfections and his native impurity so vividly, and he feels the presence so consciously, that he cries out, in the language of deep self-abasement, " Behold, I am VILE!"

O! my dear M., is not this the language of every believing heart that has come to a thorough knowledge of itself of its native vileness? Was it not your language after the Lord shone into your soul, and thereby showed you all the latent evils that lay lurking undiscovered until that moment when God un locked the inner chamber of your heart, and showed you all, at least as much as you could bear to see, the " imagery " that long had enshrined itself there? Then indeed you cried out, in the language of the poet,

O that my LOAD OF SIN were gone!

O that I could at last submit,

At Jesus feet to lay it down,

To lay my soul at Jesus feet!" But we have a more notable confession from the lips of Job in chapter xlii, 5, 6, where he says, " I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee! Where fore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and This confession was extorted from Job after God had proclaimed himself more fully than He had done before his former confession. The manner in which God is represented as un folding the*glories of His august character, His awful majesty, is exhibited so illustriously, and his holiness shines out so conspicuously upon the mind of Job, that it sinks him into the dust, and ^ by comparing his own character with God s, the contrast was so striking that he said, ABHOR MYSELF, and repent in dust and ashes." Though, before this, he had known God, had acknowledged Him, had confided in Him as his reconciled Father, yet the brighter manifestations of his perfections now made to him, gave that clearer view of His immaculate purity, of the tremendous nature of His power, the displays of His consummate wisdom, of His intimate knowledge of all the affairs of men; and all this was exhibited to his astonished soul so vividly, that he felt himself surrounded, pervaded, and his inmost soul so sensibly touched with the presence of the immense Deity, that his former knowledge seemed re mote and imperfect in comparison to his present clearer and more intimate view. Hence he said, I have before only heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. What was the effect of that sight? I abhor myself!

O! the contrast between the holiness of God and the unholiness of unsanctified man, when the light of God shines upon his soul! In this " light we see light," and this light, shining into the otherwise dark chambers of the heart, discloses all the remains of unholiness, and creates an inextinguishable thirst after that righteousness which alone can satiate its longings.

How conformable to this view of himself, as expressed by Job, is that of our evangelical poet, whose poetical lines are always more especially when depicting, in his own glowing language, the blessings of perfect love full of fire! Hear him in the following energetic words :

Wilt thou suffer me to go

Lamenting all my days?

Shall I never, never know

Thy SANCTIFYING grace?

Wilt thou not thy LIGHT afford?

The DARKNESS from my soul remove!

Help me, Saviour; speak the word,

And perfect me in love."

I have caused the words to which I wish you, my dear M., to pay particular attention, to be printed in capitals, that you may fully perceive the contrast between the light and the darkness, and see how emphatically the poet makes the one expel the other, and how exactly conformable were his views and his feelings upon this subject to those of Job, and indeed to all the holy men of God in every age of the Church. That Job was delivered from the distressed vileness under which he groaned, and which he so feelingly confessed, is most evident from what God said of him in the subsequent part of chapter xlii, from verse 7 to 17. He there rebukes his mistaken friends, orders them to bring a suitable sacrifice to Job, and that his now sanctified servant, whom he had accepted, should pray for them, and "so the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning." He was now not only brought through the fiery trial, which God had doubtless permitted to come upon him for the testing of his fidelity, but he came off more than a conqueror; his heart was thoroughly purified - : *- -- 1 vileness; and so near was the access he had to God in prayer, that He declared he would hear him in behalf of his friends, who had so greatly erred in their estimate of Job’s character. The whole of this process, this confession of vileness, and this deliverance from it, is ex pressed in the following stanza, from the pen of a poet that may be justly called the " prince of poets," not only because he possessed the spirit of poetry in its highest excellence, but more especially because, as a Christian poet, he entered deeply into the human heart, as well as into the ocean of Divine truth, of Divine power and love, and poured forth, in strains of poetic melody and evangelical sentiment, all the feelings of a soul struggling under a consciousness of inbred sin, until it finally emerges into all the fulness of redeeming love. I love therefore to read him. I love to hear his hymns sung. And I love to quote him for your edification : not indeed because I think you a stranger to the exquisitely fine touches of his lyric pen, but merely to remind you of your indebtedness to CHARLES WESLEY for the finest specimens of true poetical excellence, and for the sweetest, the most deep, experimental, and practical examples of evangelical songs. The following is the verse to which I allude, and I have emphasized the words to which I wish more especially to call your attention, as expressing the sentiments I have endeavoured to inculcate :

VILEST of the sinful race,

Lo! I answer to thy call :

MEANEST vessel of thy grace,

Grace divinely free for all;

Lo! I come to do THY WILL,

ALL thy counsel to fulfil."

After having pondered well and attentively upon these words, every one of which expresses a deep thought, a Divine Scriptural truth, you may turn to the following, which you may read and sing, and read and sing again, and then read and sing a third time, until you feel their deep import pervading your whole soul :

"Eager for thee I ask and pant,

So strong the principle divine

CARRIES me out with SWEET constraint,

Till ALL my hallow d soul it thine :

Plunged in the Godhead’s deepest sea,

And lost in thy immensity!"

I have not emphasized any word in the two last lines, because no emphasis can make them more emphatic than they really are, nor add anything to the immeasurable depth of their meaning. May you, my dear M., be Plunged in the Godhead’s deepest sea.

And lost in its immensity. what must the soul of the poet have felt when he penned these words! Surely his mind must have been expanded with a believing view of the unfathomable depth, and the im measurable length, and breadth, and height of the ocean of God’s love, while his soul panted to plunge into it, and be lost in its IMMENSITY!

I have purposely concluded this letter with these views of the subject, to prevent any one who may read what I write from desponding, from a consciousness of his heart-felt impurity. To such bruised, trembling souls, I would present, for their encouragement, the following lines :

Redemption in his blood

He calls you to receive :

Look unto me, your pardoning God;

BELIEVE, he cries, BELIEVE."

1.A 09. LETTER IX

LETTER IX. The subject continued Sustained by the experience of Isaiah Other texts imply the same truth. Psalms 51:10; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ezekiel 36:25 The views confirmed by extracts from Wes ley, from Fletcher, from Mrs. Rogers These all sustain the doctrine of native impurity Poetry quoted to prove the same How delivered Poetry quoted for encouragement. " MY DEAR M : I still pursue the subject of my last, and cite a few more Scripture authorities in confirmation of the sentiments I have advanced. Look at that memorable passage in Isaiah 6:3-7. In the fifth verse the prophet confesses his vileness in the following words : " Then said I, Woe is me! for I am a man of unclean lips, and 1 dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." How came he to this humbling view of himself? He tells us by saying, " Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts;" and the King, the Lord of hosts, is denominated in the third verse " holy, holy, holy," while the "whole earth" is said to be " full of his glory."

It was therefore this view of the holy character of God which filled the soul of Isaiah with that knowledge of his own heart, that made him cry out, in the bitter anguish of his heart, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips!" Nor was he left to perish there, or to groan for ever under this conscious load of his guilt and impurity; for it is added in the sixth and seventh verses, " Then flew one of the seraphims, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" that is, thou art justified and sanctified, for not only his actual iniquity was forgiven, but his internal pollution was washed away, implying most evidently two separate and distinct acts of divine grace, whether a long or short time apart, we cannot tell. The question arises, How came Isaiah to this sight of himself? What made him exclaim, " Wo is me, for I am a man of unclean lips?" Was it not from a view of the glorious holiness of God, which he himself revealed to his servant, in such a clear manner as to make manifest all the hidden secrets of his heart, the same as he did to Job?

I must be more brief in my subsequent quotations, or I shall extend the subject to an undue length. All these promises and prayers for a " clean heart," for a " pure heart," and for the cleansing efficacy of the merits of Christ, are predicated of the fact of the inherent impurity of the heart and its affections. Thus David, in Psalms 51:10, after having prayed, in verse nine, for the blotting out of all his iniquities, that is, for the pardon of his actual sins, says, with all the earnestness arising from conscious impurity, " Create in me a clean heart, God, and renew a right spirit within me." What necessity of praying for a clean heart, unless his heart were already defiled? And if the forgiveness of his actual sins implied or included this inward cleansing at the same time, why pray for it to be done a second time? The thing would be absurd on either supposition either by sup posing that he had no inward impurity to be removed, or that his justification and sanctification were the same thing. So also in that often quoted passage in 2 Corinthians 7:1, in which the apostle exhorts his Corinthian brethren, in view of the promises, to " cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Here not only their moral pollution is implied, but it is expressly mentioned as being incorporated both in the flesh, the body,

and the spirit the soul; and from this filthiness he presses upon them the necessity of an inward cleansing; and to encourage them in this work, he reminds them of the promises, doubtless referring to Ezekiel 36:26, of God to that effect " I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."

Now these texts are amply sufficient and they could be multiplied to almost any extent to prove the postulatum with which I commenced, namely, that the first step toward obtaining a sanctification of our natures is to be convinced of its absolute necessity, from an in ward consciousness of our impurity not merely an acknowledgment, arising from the presentation of truth to the understanding, that we are naturally sinful; but the heart must be made thoroughly sensible of the fact, from the shining of God's Spirit into its darkest corners. This it is that shows us that we must be purified by the blood of Christ, that we may offer unto God an acceptable service here, and be prepared for his holy sanctuary hereafter. But are these views in conformity to those expressed by our standard writers? I think they are. To be convinced of this, read over Mr. Wesley's two sermons; the one entitled, " Sin in believers," and the other, " Repentance of believers," and you will see his sentiments drawn out at length, in which he strenuously contends that all those who are justified, but not yet wholly sanctified, have " inward sin, sinful tempers, passion, or affection; such as pride, self-will, love of the world, in some kind and degree; such as lust, anger, peevishness; any disposition contrary to the mind which was in Christ."

Mr. Fletcher bears testimony to the same truth in the following words :

" To promote this deep repentance, consider how many spiritual evils haunt your breast. Look into the inward chamber of imagery, where assuming self-love, surrounded by a multitude of vain thoughts, foolish de-sires, and wild imaginations, keeps her court Grieve that your heart, which should be all flesh, is yet partly stone; and that your soul, which should be only a temple for the Holy Ghost, is yet so frequently turned into a den of thieves, a hole for the cockatrice, a nest for a brood of spiritual vipers, for the remains of envy, jealousy, fretfulness, anger, pride, impatience, peevishness, formality, sloth, prejudice, bigotry, carnal confidence, evil shame, self-righteousness, tormenting fears, un charitable suspicion, idolatrous love, and I know not how many of the evils which form the retinue of hypocrisy and unbelief. Through grace detect these evils by a close attention to what passes in your own heart at all times, but especially in an hour of temptation. By frequent and deep confession, drag out all these abominations; these sins which would not have Christ to reign over you; bring them before him; place them in the light of his countenance; and if you do it in faith, that light and the warmth of his love will kill them, as the light and heat of the sun kill the worms which the plough turns to the open air in a dry summer's day." Fletclters Checks, vol. ii, p. 643.

Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers says, speaking of the necessity of " perfect love :"

" I have resolved this day, to set myself more fully than ever to attain victor} , complete victory, over the evils of my heart, which so often spring up and trouble me; and to this end I will, by thy grace, O my God, mortify every rising desire, and deny myself wholly; and fast more exactly, and pray more abundantly yea, I will begin afresh, and devote myself wholly to thee, Lord my God! I can say, Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee; but I would love thee with all my heart, and soul, and strength."*

These authorities, both from the Holy Scriptures and our standard writers, are sufficient to show that we are warranted in believing that sin remains in the heart, even after the penitent believer has been pardoned, or justified by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If anything more were wanting to confirm this point, it may be found in those excellent hymns which are sung in all our worshipping assemblies. In addition to those I quoted in my last, I will present you with a few more specimens. Read attentively the following, in the old edition, for it is left out in the revised copy, much to my regret :

" O great mountain, who art thou?

Immense, immovable!

High as heaven aspires thy brow,

Thy foot sinks deep as hell!

Thee, alas! I long have known,

Long have felt thee fix d within;

Still beneath thy weight I groan;

Thou art indwelling sin.

" Thou art darkness in my mind,

Perverseness in my will!

Love inordinate and blind,

That always cleaves to ill :

· This quotation is made from the second part of her Journal, which has never been republished in this country, from which I design to give some interesting extracts hereafter.

Every passion’s wild excess;

Anger, lust, and pride thou art;

Thou art sin and sinfulness,

And unbelief of heart." Nor does the poet leave himself or his readers to pine away and die under this ponderous weight of indwelling sin, which he so graphically describes, and so feelingly deplores. His words are so full of comfort, and so strongly express the unshaken confidence he had in the power and efficacy of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting them, not only that you, my dear M., may see how exactly they agree with your own happy experience, but that any others who may read these lines, and still be groaning under a consciousness of inbred sin, may take courage and fly immediately to Christ, who was " manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil." Hear him in the following energetic lines :

Christ, the Head, the corner-stone,

Shall be brought forth in me;

Glory be to Christ alone!

His grace shall set me FREE :

I shall shout my Saviour’s name;

Him I evermore shall praise;

All the work of grace proclaim,

Of SANCTIFYING GRACE.

" Christ hath the foundation laid,

And Christ shall build me up;

Surely I shall SOON be made

Partaker of my hope;

Author of my faith he is,

He its ftuither shall be;

PERFECT LOVE shall seal me his

To all eternity."

I have, as usual, emphasized the words to which I wish to call your attention, that you may see how fully and emphatically the poet carries the soul along, from the twilight of early dawn to the light of morning, and thence ascends with him to the top of the mountain of holiness, and seats him in the sunshine of God’s smiling countenance, by the side of Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. O, my dear M., does not your soul catch fire at reading the above words? I feel assured, from my own experience, that you cannot read them, much less sing them, " with the spirit and understanding," without feeling your heart expanding with increasing- love to God and man, and without bending the knee in grateful adoration to God for raising up such a man as Charles Wesley to furnish His Church with hymns so Scriptural, experimental, and spiritual. With your glad heart filled thus with Glory and with God," you can exult in the ever-brightening prospect which looms up before your ravished soul, while you shout forth the following words with a sweet anticipation of entering at last into the land of rest :

" The promised laud from Pisgah’s top,*

I sow exult to see;

My hope is full (O glorious hopo!)

Of immortality." With these words trembling upon your lips, while their deep meaning is playing around your heart, kindling up the fire of divine love, 1 bid you adieu for the present.

* Compare tins rerse from the pen of Charles Wesley with the following from Watts :

" Could we but climb where Moses stood, And view the landscape o’er" implying a doubt whether it were possible for a believer, with all the advantages he possesses, to ascend the mountain of

holiness, and by faith view the " landscape " beyond the " cold flood" of death while Wesley boldly ascends the lofty summit, sees the land delightfully spread out before him, and, as he triumphantly sings in another verse :

" Rejoicing now in earnest hope,

I stand, and from the mountain top

See all the land below :

Rivers of milk and honey rise,

And all the fruits of Paradise

In endless plenty grow."

While Watts is crawling along up the sides of the mountain, doubting the possibility of reaching its summit, from whence he may look into the promised land, Wesley mounts at once to the top of Pisgah, ami from thence he views, with the keen eye of faith,

" A land of corn, and wine, and oil,

Favour’d with God’s peculiar smile,

With every blessing blest." Which poet do you prefer?

1.A 10. LETTER X

LETTER X. The possibility of attaining this blessing Proved from the de sign of Christ’s coming From the nature of pure religion This incompatible -with sin Its possibility appears from the premises From the language of our poet Several verses quoted. MY DEAR M : Having, as I believe, fully proved the necessity of an entire sanctification of our natures, I will now attempt to demonstrate its possibility. This arises, in the first place, from the benevolent design of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For what purpose, it may be asked, did the Son of God come into our world, preach, suffer, die, rise again, ascend to heaven, and for what purpose does he now live at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us? This purpose is most explicitly declared in the word of God : " His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Here the very end of his coming is expressly announced by the angel of the Lord to Joseph, namely, that he should " save his people from, 1 not in, " their sins."

" Who gave himself for us, that he might re deem us from ALL iniquity, and PURIFY to him self a peculiar people, zealous of good works." To say that no one is redeemed from ALL iniquity in this life, and purified here to the service of God, is to say that the very design for which the Saviour " gave himself for us " is universally defeated.

" For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

What are the works of the devil" but sin? Surely this beautiful world, with all its rich and varied productions, our food and raiment, and all the blessings of life, are not the devil’s works. He did not make the world. The Apostle Paul will tell us what are the works of the devil. Speaking of the " prince of the power of the air" that is, the prince of darkness, who dwells in the air or atmosphere he says, who "now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience." Here then are found the works of the devil, in the hearts of the children of disobedience.

If, then, the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and as these works are found in the hearts of the children of disobedience, He must empty the heart of sin, which is emphatically the devil’s work, and till it with His own pure love.

Now will any man say that the very end for which Jesus Christ was born the express design for which He gave himself for us the declared purpose for which he was manifested, shall never be accomplished? He who says this, does in effect say, that the Son of God forsook the realms of glory, came into our world, suffered and died, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, where he ever liveth in his godlike power, but is continually defeated in the purpose for which he did and continues to do all this! And can a more injurious reflection be cast upon the Son of God than this? Its possibility arises, in the second place, from the very nature of that religion which Jesus Christ came to establish in the hearts of the children of men.

What is the nature of this religion? It is nothing less nor more than love to God and man. Love, without any mixture of hatred. Love ac companied with meekness, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, and goodness, which inward graces of the Holy Spirit are always exemplified by an

external obedience to the commandments of God. This is the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. This He came to establish. This He has pledged Himself to work in all those who believe on Him.

Now can this religion consist or subsist in a heart that is filled with sin? We might as well believe that light and darkness can co-exist, can occupy the same place, as to suppose that this "pure and undefiled religion" can dwell in a heart that is occupied by the works of the devil. Allowing that when grace begins to operate on the heart of a sinner, his heart is full of sin, one or the other, either sin or grace, must ultimately gain the predominance. They cannot long co exist. And which will finally prevail, provided the believing, penitent sinner resign himself up into the hands of God, persevere in the path of obedience, we cannot doubt, if we rely on the promises of God, that He will thrust out these enemies of His; Jesus will " bind the strong man armed, spoil his goods, and cast him out," and take possession of the mansion himself, and reign without a rival there. Christ and Belial have no concord, any more than light and darkness.

Let, then, this Divine love fill the heart, and all hatred is expelled, and with it this hatred, which is the root of all evil this hatred to God and man being the pivot on which the soul of the sinner turns in all his whirling acts of disobedience all his sinful propensities are expelled slain annihilated and love fills every avenue of the soul, actuates the believer in all he thinks, desires, and dot-s. Its possibility arises, in the third place, from the many promises of God to that effect. God, indeed, has pledged himself to accomplish this great work in the hearts of all who come unto Him with penitent, believing hearts. "I WILL circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God with ALL thy heart, and with all thy strength;" and the fulfilment of this promise, our Saviour tells us, is the answering the whole demands of the law.

Now can any promise be more full, absolute, and comprehensive, than this? And remember, my dear M., that God has said that He will circumcise thy heart, that He will "cleanse the heart from all unrighteousness." And the apostle, after having prayed God to sanctify the Thessalonians wholly, " soul, body, and spirit," manifestly with a view to remove all cause of doubt respecting the possibility of this thorough work being wrought in them, adds this most encouraging declaration : " FAITHFUL is he that called yon, who also WILL DO IT." HE WILL do it. And will He not?

What puny arm is that which lifts itself up against the omnipotent arm of Jehovah? Can it prevail? Nay, indeed! " Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the GREATNESS OF HIS STRENGTH? I that speak in righteousness, MIGHTY TO SAVE!" What words are these! How full of majesty! Of majesty? How full of comfort! He is the God and Saviour, travelling in the greatness of his strength! He speaks in righteousness, but, above all, He is mighty to SAVE! O what ful ness of comfort is unfolded in these words! I cannot express the wonderfulness of the idea impressed on my mind while meditating upon these words. So full of majesty of goodness of loving-kindness of Divine consolation! The poet has expressed, much better than I can, what occupies my heart at this very moment of writing :

"Jesus, thy boundless love to me, No thought can reach, no tongue declare : O knit my thankful heart to thee, And reign without a rival there." And I tremblingly adopt the following lines, which you, my dear M., can adopt with a full, overflowing heart :

" Thine wholly, thine alone I am, Be thou alone my constant flame."

Turn to Isaiah lxiii, 1-9, and read the whole passage; then turn to the 321st Hymn, old edi tion, and read and sing it too, if you choose for I know you can through the first and second part, and then doubt, if you can, the ability and willingness of the Almighty Saviour to save you to the uttermost and to keep you saved every moment of your life! You will perceive, from these promises and a thousand others might be added, for the Bible is full of them, both in the Old and New Testaments, they sparkle in the symbolical heavens like the stars in the firmament, though like these they all disappear when the bright Sun of Righteousness bursts upon the soul in His own effulgence, dissipating every cloud from the intellectual horizon I say, from these promises you will perceive that the accomplishment of this work does not depend upon our strength, upon our works, either of repentance or faith, only as a condition on which the promise is to be fulfilled, but upon the power, the faithfulness, the LOVING-KINDXESS of our covenant-keeping God upon our adorable, Almighty Jesus. And is He not able to accomplish all that he has promised? What though Satan rage and vent his spite,

" In vain doth Satan rage his hour, Beyond his chain lie cannot go; Our Jesus shall stir up his power, And soon avenge us of our foe."

God, therefore, shall shortly bruise Satan beneath our feet. If the work of sanctification depended, in whole or in part, upon us, upon our strength or goodness, we might well despair of its ever being effected. But it does not. We must, to be sure, repent, believe, seek, watch, and pray, part with all our idols, and be come willing that all our sins should be slain; but, after all this, unless God interpose, by his almighty power unless Jesus Christ come to our aid by the omnipotence of His grace un less the Holy Spirit apply the promises by the internal energy of His mighty working, our repentance, believing, watching, and praying, were all vain. But we may rest assured that God will fulfil His promise to those that believe it "with a heart unto righteousness." We may be as sure of this as that there is a God. He HAS spoken the word, and He cannot lie. " Because he could swear by no greater, He hath sworn by Himself, In blessing I will bless thee." We have, therefore, the oath of God, which is no thing less than God himself, pledging himself, solemnly engaging all his attributes to the fulfilment of his word. On this word on the veracity of his immutable promise we may rely with the utmost confidence, with the most un wavering faith, and, doing so, we cannot be disappointed. In view of these things, who will say that it is impossible? Let him say it that dare contradict God. Let him say it who has the hardi hood to insult Him to His face, by telling Him, " Thou art a liar! I believe not what thou say- est." But let you and I give God the glory of being true to all His promises. Let us sing, ill the language of the poet :

" Lord, wo BELIEVE the promise sure! The promised Comforter impart! Apply thy blood to make us PUUK; To KEEP us pure in life and heart." So exactly does our poetry correspond with the sentiments of Holy Scripture, that I can not quote it too often, and more especially for your taste; for you, who are such an enthusiastic admirer of our hymns. Take the following as expressive of the strongest confidence in the efficacy of the Saviour’s blood, to break the hardest, and to purify and to cleanse the foulest heart :

" More hard than marble is my heart, And foul with sins of deepest stain; But thou the mighty Saviour art; Nor flow d thy cleansing blood in vain; Ah, soften, melt this rock, and may Thy blood wash all these stains away." Does not your glad heart, while meditating upon these encouraging words, thrill with gratitude to God? and as your eye runs along the page until it lights on the

following, with which I conclude this letter, only with adding a silent prayer to Almighty God, that the aspiration it breathes may be answered, even while you send it up to His throne, to the joy of your heart :

" Still let thy love point out the way :

How wondrous things thy love hath wrought I Still lead me, lest I go astray;

Direct my work, inspire my thought; And if 1 fall, soon may I hear Thy voice, and know that love is near "

1.A 11. LETTER XI

LETTER XI.

Another ground of possibility The promise of the Holy Spirit This always necessary, as well under the old as the new dispensation Proved from sundry examples The common privilege of all believers The Scriptures our guide But these insist on the necessity of the Spirit This the most vital principle of Christianity As without the Spirit there is no lif Sustained by quotations of poetry. MY DEAR M : Knowing that you are not willing to take anything for granted that is not well substantiated, and being desirous to grant all your requests, though you should style your self an "importunate beggar/ I proceed to show, as well as 1 am able, another ground of the possibility of the attainment of perfect love. And if I do not fully meet your wishes, propote your doubts, state your objections, and I will endeavour to gratify the one and to obviate the other, for it gives me unspeakable pleasure thus to converse with you, and to be an humble instrument in the hands of God of communicating light and comfort to such a child of God.

Another ground of this possibility arises from the promise of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the gift of the Holy Spirit did not originate with Jesus Christ, though this dispensation was more fully opened under the Gospel, and particularly at and after the day of Pentecost, than it had ever been before. Yet all the holy men of God, patriarchs and prophets, old men and maidens, looked for the aid of the Holy Spirit, to enlighten their understandings, to soften, change, and purify their hearts, as much under the old, as those did under the new dispensation. It is therefore a great mistake to suppose that they trusted in rites and ceremonies for salvation, however numerously or punctually they might be performed. They were those only who forsook the true worship of God, and trusted in "a vain show," in outward sacrifices and oblations, and substituted these external observances for the " circumcision of the heart," that trusted in these things for the purification of their natures, in dependently of the Holy Spirit. David, who was among the most scrupulous in attending to all the ritual of the sanctuary, arranging the priests in order, appointing the singers and trumpeters to their respective places, said, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering : The sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalms 51:16-17. And what could produce this broken and con trite heart, with which God was so much better pleased than He was with burnt-offerings and sacrifices, but the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, breaking down its natural hardness, and subduing its proud and lofty bearing into a con trite submission to the will of God? This David knew perfectly well, and therefore he thus prays in the llth and 12th verses of this same chapter : " Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit,"

It would indeed be almost endless to quote the numerous passages, or to refer to the many examples, where this dependence upon the Holy Spirit is proved even under the Old Testament dispensation. External rites and ceremonies were but symbols of God’s presence, through which he shone by His Spirit upon their hearts, and through them upon the world around about them.

Hence when God spoke to Moses through the burning bush, this burning bush was the symbol of His presence, the external sign of His voice, but the voice itself was spoken to Moses heart by the Spirit of God. How could it be otherwise, seeing that God is a Spirit, and therefore must always manifest Him self spiritually, if at all, to the soul. But if we turn our attention to the New Testament, we shall find this presence of the Holy Spirit peculiarly set forth as the grand privilege of His people, as the efficient agent to work mightily in them in effecting repentance, faith, regeneration, and sanctification. To see this in the clearest light, read, my dear M., the xivth, xvth, and xvith chapters of St. John's Gospel, and then the viiith chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and read the words of the Saviour as if spoken directly to you, for the promise of the Holy Spirit is " unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," in every nation, even to the end of the world. Acts 2:39.

How erroneous are the views of those who suppose that this promise of the Spirit was restricted to the apostolic age of the Church! They who assert this heartless error, would deprive the Christian of one of the surest, the greatest, and most efficient, as well as exhaust- less sources of comfort, of strength, and the most encouraging aids he can possibly have. These errorists pretend that the Scriptures are our rule, and that consequently we have no need of the Holy Spirit.

I allow that the Holy Scriptures are our in fallible rule. But what do the Scriptures teach on this subject? Do they not declare most explicitly, that " If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his?" The Scriptures all along point the believer to this very promise, as being made to him, and exhort him to come to this flowing fountain, and drink, and live for ever.

What would you, my dear M., think of a man who should publish a book describing where a mine of gold is located, and point out the way by which it could be found, and one of your friends should read the book, and then say he has the gold, merely because he has read the book that describes it, but never takes a single step to ascertain its location, or to possess him self of the rich treasure? Would you not believe him a simpleton? I think you would, and that too very justly. Equally foolish are those who profess to take the Scriptures for their guide, read their sacred pages, and then content themselves with this theoretical knowledge, with out searching for the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which can be revealed to their hearts only by that eternal " Spirit which searches all things, yea, the deep things of God" that Spirit which takes of the things of Christ, and gives them unto his disciples, " even the Spirit of TRUTH, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but YE know him, for he DWELLETH with YOU, and shall be IN YOU." John 14:17.

I take it for granted, therefore, without any further proof, that it is the high and distinguished privilege of all the children of God to have this Holy Spirit to enlighten their understandings, to change and purify their hearts, to guide them in all their ways, to comfort them in all their afflictions, to support them in all their trials, to strengthen them in all their labours, and to shine upon their path, otherwise dark and gloomy, and make it plain before their face. This I consider one of the most vital principles of Christianity. Strip it of this, and you have but a lifeless corpse. Deprive it of this, and you have the "letter that killeth," but have not the " Spirit that giveth life." It is this Spirit that "giveth wisdom to the simple" that unlocks the otherwise hidden meaning of the sacred Scriptures, so that we may read and understand the "words of the Book." Hence those who have this holy Spirit need not fear being en tangled in the net of error, because He is a " Spirit of

TRUTH," and the promise is, that when " He is come he shall lead you into ALL TRUTH," that is, all truth necessary for your salvation.

Now the question to be decided is, Is not this Spirit fully adequate to

"Kill and make alive" to kill sin in the heart, and to make the soul alive to God to separate the soul from sin, and to unite it to God by faith in Jesus Christ? Of this, it appears to me, there can be no doubt. He is called the eternal Spirit. And this eternal Spirit is said to work MIGHTILY in them that believe. What then is too hard or difficult for Him to effect? Cannot that eternal Spirit that garnished the heavens with their beauty that said to the world, be, and it was that keeps the worlds in motion that raised Jesus Christ from the dead that penetrates the deepest recesses of the human heart that quickens souls dead in trespasses and sins cannot THIS Spirit, with all its energies, expel sin from the heart of the believer, and make "all things new?" He certainly can. He as certainly will, provided only that we yield a willing obedience to His teachings, and consent to be moulded, by His all- forming Hand, into the image of God.

O, my dear M., do you not remember the happy hour, when, after a long, anxious, and painful struggle of soul, in which you groaned under a consciousness of inbred sin, the Holy Spirit descended upon you, whispered peace to your heart, and brought with this inward peace, joy in the Holy Ghost? Did not his irradiating beams shine through all your soul, and did you not in that very moment look up, and behold " the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ?" Yes, you did. And the Spirit itself lore witness with your spirit that you were a child of God. And how often, since that most happy era of your life, in prayer, under the preaching of a living minister, in reading and meditating, in conversing with Christian friends, whose spirits were akin to yours, have you felt your heart burning with Divine fire! And this fire was kindled upon the altar of your heart by the secret workings of the Holy Spirit. How often, also, when your soul has been in heaviness through manifold temptations, have you felt yourself suddenly relieved, the tempter was banished, your soul leaped for joy, and you felt the " love of God, wave after wave, roll over you." What caused this but the Spirit of God? Hence He is styled the COMFORTER.

O ye dead formalists! deprive us not of this Divine Comforter. Teach us not a religion that has a body without a soul. Tell us not of a Christianity that is destitute of the inward life, created, kept up, and invigorated by the living principle infused into it by the vivifying power of the eternal Spirit. Talk as eloquently as you please about such a Christianity, and fortify yourself as you may with arguments drawn from your dried-up fountain of metaphysics, and we will believe you not. I and my friend M. will still sing, in the language of our own inimitable poet " Expand thy wings, celestial Dove, And brooding o er my nature’s night, Call forth a ray of heavenly love, Let there in my dark soul be light, And fill th illustrated abyss With glorious beams of endless bliss."

Let then the formalist boast himself, if he will, of the beauty of his forms, and starve himself with its husks; we, my dear M., and all who are "dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ," will feast on the rich banquet provided for us by the Saviour, and imparted to us by the Spirit of truth and love. Yes, we will sing, believingly sing, " Let there be light! again command, And light there in our hearts shall be; We then through FAITH shall understand Thy great mysterious majesty; And by the SHINING OK THY GRACE, Behold in CHUIST thy GLORIOUS FACE."

1.A 12. LETTER XII

LETTER XII. Its possibility proved from the intercession of Christ This truth not insisted upon as much as its importance demands Essential to the Christian system Contrasted with heathenism Christ liveth in Godlike power Intercedes for his people- Sympathizes with them On this truth Paul founds his argument in favour of complete sanctification He is an almighty and living Saviour He sends the Spirit to cement the hearts of God's people in love For this he prayed All proved from Charles Wesley's Hymns. MY DEAR M : Having proved the possibility of attaining to this invaluable blessing from the design of our Saviour's coming into the world, and from the promises of God made to believers in Christ Jesus, let us inquire if there be not another ground of possibility, arising out of the certainty of the continued intercession of the Lord Jesus. This truth, namely, that Jesus Christ continually liveth at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us, I have frequently thought, is not sufficiently insisted upon in our public administrations, or brought so prominently before the people as its importance demands. We dwell much, and very properly too, upon the death of Christ, by which he made an atonement for our sins. But suppose he had died upon the cross, and had been committed to the tomb : if we had no evidence that he now liveth, what possible benefit could we derive from his death? He would be but a dead Saviour a dead God! Nay, he would have been an impostor; for he had frequently declared to his disciples that he should rise from the dead; and, therefore, unless he had actually risen, and furnished them with indubitable evidence of the fact, all his predictions in relation to that momentous truth would has been fallacious; and hence the failure to demonstrate the reality of his resurrection would have proved him an impostor. But it was equally essential that he should ascend to heaven, that he might there enter upon the government of the world. For, allowing that he arose from the dead, where is he? No one ever pretended that he is on the earth. No one ever believed that he is still wandering up and down among men that he is now " going about doing good," a he did in tho days of his incarnation. But he must be either here or in the invisible world, if indeed he liveth at all.

Besides, if Jesus Christ do not now live, Christianity is stripped of one of its most striking peculiarities. It has, indeed, nothing to raise it above heathenism.

Wherein does Christianity differ from heathen ism? In addition to the purity and sublimity of its doctrines, and the morality of its precepts, it differs from it in this, above all other points : it proclaims a risen, a living Saviour an inter ceding High Priest one that can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and hence can sympathize with us in all our afflictions, temptations, losses, and disappointments; whereas heathenism taught its disciples to worship the manes of dead heroes, statesmen, philosophers, and poets. They never pretended that any of these ever rose from the dead, and that they now live to make intercession for men on the earth. Hence, the prophets and apostles accused them of worshipping idols, or nothings, as the word idols signifies, because the objects of their worship existed only in their imaginations, and there fore had no real existence, and therefore could neither hear nor save those who called upon them. In direct contrast with this barren, heartless theory, the apostles proclaimed an exalted Saviour, who lived in Godlike power, and who is deeply, permanently, and sympathizingly interested in the welfare of

his people. He was not like the Jove of the heathen, whom they represented as lolling upon the clouds in indo lent inactivity, or with a malicious sportiveness darting down thunder and lightning upon the inhabitants of the earth, thus taking a diabolical delight in their miser}-; on the contrary, the ascended Lord whom they preached was seated at the right hand of God the Father, and, while armed with omnipotence, his heart is full of compassion for the lambs of his flock while wielding the sceptre of the universe, he is ever attentive to the minutrst wants of his people while upholding all things by the word of his power, he condescends to listen to the prayers of his saints, to deliver those who may be suffering temptations, to soothe their sorrows, and to comfort their hearts with the consolations of his Spirit.

Now it is upon this grand truth, this characteristic peculiarity of the Christian system, by which its claims rise high above the claims of all other systems of religion, whether of Jews or heathen, that the apostle Paul founds his argument in favour of the complete sanctification, and preservation in holiness, of the souls of God’s believing people. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25.

Here is the ground of strong confidence to those " who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them." Why is he able to save to the uttermost? Because he ever LIVETH and he ever liveth to make INTERCESSION for them. He is not like unto the gods of the " heathen around about," whose bodies are mouldering in the dust, and whose souls, allowing that they exist in the Elysian fields, are incapable, from their finite and limited nature, of either knowing the necessities or helping the infirmities of men upon the earth. No; he LIVETH. His soul, body, and divinity, forming an indissoluble union, live in eternal unity, and he continually exerts his Godlike power, and exercises his unbounded love, in behalf of those who come unto God by faith in him, and will therefore save them to the uttermost.

Here is the stronghold of the believer. He does not worship a dead god. He does not believe in, nor pray to, a god that cannot hear, nor feel, nor extend help to those who put their trust in him. Neither does he worship a being who is indifferent to his interests. He trusts in an almighty Saviour, who can and will save him to the uttermost, even from all his sins will save him in the hour of temptation from the influence of all pernicious error and, finally, with an everlasting salvation.

O, my dear M., what a Saviour have you have we! for I too presume to claim an interest in his powerful, merciful intercession. Yes, it is through this intercession that my most un profitable life has been prolonged, that my sins have been pardoned, that my soul is now blessed with Divine consolation, and that my heart is strengthened, and moved to write these lines to my dear friend, whom " I love for the truth’s sake."

Forgive this piece of egotism. My heart, indeed, is so warmed with a consciousness of Divine love, that I can scarcely refrain from proclaiming it aloud, and saying with the sweet singer of Israel, " Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." In the mean time it is drawn out in such sweet attraction to all the friends of Jesus, and especially to the one whom I now address, that I feel such a spiritual oneness of soul as could only be cemented by the love of God. Is not this implied in the prayer of the Lord Jesus, " That they may be ONE; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us : that the world may believe that thou hast sent me?" John 17:21.

What a sacred mystery is here unfolded! And surely when this prayer is answered, and the promise of the Father is fulfilled, this oneness of spirit is felt in the heart, and such love one for another pervades, actuates, and over flows the sanctified soul, as is " unspeakable and full of glory." And all this is the effect of the intercession of our merciful High Priest.

What an indissoluble connexion is prayed for by our Divine Saviour in the above words! The love of the Father flows into the Son, and through him it flows in streams of consolation into the hearts of all who truly believe on Him whom God the Father sent to be the Redeemer of the world, running from heart to heart, circulating, like the blood in the body, through the veins and arteries, into every avenue of the soul, softening, vivifying, and sanctifying all its faculties, and moulding all these lovers of God into one common image the image of the heavenly. This is better felt than expressed. In deed, the apostle says it is " unspeakable and full of glory." And is not our divine Intercessor able to effect this? Will he not do it? Yes, with our consent he unquestionably will.

Now, my dear M., you perceive though not for the first time, for you have long seen and felt it that there is no other way into the holiest of holies, but by the blood and inter cession of Christ. Hence you have sung, and will continue to sing, in the language of the poet:

" He ever lives above, For me to INTERCEDE, His all-redeeming love, His precious blood to PLEAD; His blood atoned for all our race. And sprinkles now the throne of grace."

You will not, I am persuaded, pass these words over lightly, much less slightingly, on account of their commonness, or the frequency with which they are sung, but will mark their deep import, and put the most implicit confidence in their Scriptural truth, and you shall feel for yourself that the " Spirit answers to the blood, And tells you you are born of God." And if you want your faith strengthened, your hope animated, and your love increased, and your whole soul quickened into new life, turn to the 595th hymn, among the additional hymns, old edition, and read it through, and you will see how the soul of the poet swelled with gratitude to God, and how, by strong faith in Jesus Christ, he bid defiance to his spiritual enemies. In the name of Jesus, his great High Priest, his powerful Intercessor, he marches boldly up against his "gigantic foe," his "own besetting sin," hurls him from his seat, and prostrates him in the dust. Hear him nay, sing him in the following triumphant language :

" In the strength of Jesus name, I with the monster fight; Feeble and unarm d I am, But JESUS is my might; Mindful of his mercies past, Still I trust the same to prove; Still my HELPLESS soul I cast On his REDEEMING love."

What power and virtue did this sweet, this " feeble," this " helpless" singer in Israel find in the name and strength of Jesus, the " conquering King!" It would seem that while he felt himself weak as " helpless infancy," he felt at the same time such strong faith in his re deeming God, his living, omnipotent Intercessor, that he rises superior to all his enemies, arms himself with his strength, and goes forth to the warfare without a single doubt, nay, with the fullest confidence of a sure, certain, and triumphant victory but it is through Christ who strengtheneth him.

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting one more verse from this song of triumph, in which I know not which to admire most, the beauty of the poetry, the purity of the sentiment, or the strength of his faith, they are all so exquisitely blended together, and expressed with the energy of that language, coming from the depths of a heart overflowing with gratitude and love, which

bespeaks the earnestness and sincerity of his soul. Read, my dear M. f and let your glad heart go along with the words, the following lines, and I am sure your whole soul will be lifted above all doubt and fear, and you will feel yourself carried upon the wings of faith and love to the throne of the eternal God, and upheld in the arms of your heavenly Father :

" EVERY DAY the Lord of hosts His MIGHTY POWER displays; STILLS the proud Philistine’s bout, The threatening Gittite SLAYS : Israel’s God let all below, Conquror over SIN proclaim : O that all the earth might know The POWER OF JESUS NAME!" The more we feel of the power of redeeming, sanctifying grace, the more ardently do our hearts exclaim and therefore I know your heart exclaims, even while reading these lines " O that all the earth might know The power of Jesus name "

1.A 13. LETTER XIII

LETTER XIII. The nature of sanctification The word means to set apart from a common to a special purpose Proved from Scripture Hence it requires the death of a separation from sin Differs from justification To retain this, we must seek sanctification This is God’s will He can require nothing less For not seeking this, many backslide An appeal to M.’s experience Anticipation of future bliss All confirmed by our Hymns. MY DEAR M : Having shown the necessity and possibility of holiness of heart and life, it seems proper to attempt an explanation of its nature, or in what it consists.

Anything is said to be sanctified that is set apart from a common to a special service. The radical meaning of the word to sanctify, is, therefore, to set apart.* The word rendered holy has a kindred signification, implying that anything which has been taken from earthly and consecrated to heavenly,

* The Hebrew word fdq; (kadish,) which signifies to be pure, clean, is indifferently rendered by our translators, holy, pure, or to be sanctified, and imports a deliverance from physical, ceremonial, or moral pollution, and of course implies that what ever is thus cleansed, has been consecrated to the special service of Almighty God, or at least from a common to a special use. The Greek word, agioj, (agios,) has a kindred meaning to the above Hebrew word, into which the latter is translated in the Septuagint, both implying that whatever man or thing is thus denominated, has been set apart from common or earthly purposes to a special or religious purpose, or spiritual, or religious purposes, is denominated holy, or is set apart for a religious use. This is the radical import of those two words, and this radical meaning will be found to be kept up in all those places where they occur in the Holy Scriptures, however little or much they may differ in their various applications to different things and subjects. So it is said in Genesis 2:3 : " And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it" that is, he set it apart as a day of holy rest, and hence it has ever been denominated the holy Sabbath, because it has been set apart from the other days of the week from secular to sacred purposes. In Exodus 19:10, it reads : " And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes." The people were thus called upon to separate themselves from all uncleanness, to cease from their common and otherwise lawful avocations, that they might thus be prepared to hear the voice of God speaking unto them through his servant Moses, to whom God was about to reveal his law. This related chiefly to an external cleansing, though doubtless God required the internal purification of the heart, which was typified by the "washing of their clothes," and the abstaining from all fleshly indulgences.

Other passages might be quoted in support of this idea of sanctification, but these must suffice. There are one or two places, however, in which the word is used without any reference at all to the cleansing of the person from either external or internal pollution, as in John 17:19, where Jesus Christ saith, " And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth." Here the word most evidently signifies that setting apart, or that solemn dedication of

Himself to the glorious work of man's redemption, for which Jesus Christ came into our world, and which he accomplished by his death and resurrection, and not from any cleansing from cither natural, ceremonial, or moral pollution, for Jesus Christ was " holy" from the beginning, " harmless and un- defiled, and separate from sin," through the whole course of his spotless life.

Having thus ascertained the primary meaning of this most expressive word, and seen its various applications to men and things, let us examine its signification in its application to individual men and women, as sinners that need the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ. Taking along with us the radical meaning of the terra, implying a setting apart, it imports that all the powers of the soul and body have been, or must be, solemnly consecrated to God's holy service. This most assuredly includes " a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." The soul that is wholly sanctified is separated from sin, sin being entirely eradicated from the heart, so that it no longer " has do minion over him." In this sense it differs from justification, though every justified soul is in part sanctified, in the sense just now given, and in a lower sense it is wholly sanctified, that is, the soul that is now justified in the sight of God, is now solemnly dedicated to his service; having renounced " the world, the flesh, and the devil," he has pledged himself to be hereafter devoted to God, and to follow him according to the clearest light he has, and according to the best of his ability; and if he continue, as certainly he may, to " walk in the light, as He is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son will cleanse him from all unrighteousness," and that speedily and effectually. Nor can a justified man long retain his justification unless he persevere after sanctification; for no man can stand justified before God, while ho opposes or refuses to follow the will of God; and this is " His will, even our sanctification," fully declared, not only in the text just now cited, in which a part is put for the whole, and therefore fully includes the doctrine of entire sanctification for he that abstains from the vices prohibited in the context, will necessarily abstain from all others but generally throughout the word of God. In fact, the sum and substance of all God's requirements, the manifest aim of all his institutions, whether under the old or new dispensation the very design for which the Lord Jesus came into our world, suffered and died the definite object of all the commands and promises of God all these express, in unequivocal language, the will of God to be, that we should be holy. He cannot, indeed, consistently with his nature, require anything less. What is His nature? Is it not holy? Pure essential holiness? Is not then His will governed by this inflexible principle of His nature? To require, therefore, anything beside, or inferior to this, would be to contravene the immutable law of His own nature. This, then, is the unalterable law, the immutable will of God, that we should be sanctified. He cannot, as I have already said, require anything less. And this he has expressed a thousand times, in a thou sand different places, and in a thousand ways.

Well, now, can a man stand justified before God, who refuses to make this will THIS will manifested in such numerous ways, declared in such a variety of phraseology, and expressed in so many places, by such unambiguous lan guage I say, can a man retain his justification who does not make this WILL the supreme rule of his faith and practice? I hesitate not to affirm, and I believe every enlightened Christian, who is rightly instructed in the principles of Christianity, will say amen to my affirmation, that no man can stand justified in the sight of God, who does not either enjoy, or does not earnestly seek after, the full sanctification of his soul and body to God. For the lack of this there are so many weak and sickly among us, half dead and half alive professors of religion. They content themselves with some faint desires, unaccompanied with any strenuous, persevering

efforts after this "great salvation," hence their prayers are cold and formal, and when they attempt to sing, " Hoiianna* lamniish on their tongues, And their devotion dies."

They are in fact backslidden. They have " lost their first love," and perhaps they are already questioning the work of grace which God once wrought in their hearts. They are. in the language of St. Peter, " blind, and cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they were once purged from their old sins." What an awful state is this! Why is all this? Why? Alas! It is because they have neglected to "go on unto perfection." Instead of " forgetting the things that are behind, and pressing forward to the things which are before," aiming at the " prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus," they have looked back at their past experience, until they have lost sight of both it and the " mark of the prize set before them"- the prize of " perfect love," of entire sanctification of soul and body to God. They have lost the evidence of their acceptance in the Beloved, merely because they have neglected to make the will of God, which is their sanctification, the rule of their faith and practice.

I have been carried along so fast by following the current of my thoughts, that I find myself unable to finish the definition of sanctification in this letter, and must conclude with quoting a few verses of our most excellent Hymns, in confirmation of the views already expressed, merely premising that you, my dear M., have already anticipated me in what I have said, or may say, on this subject, by your own happy experience. You know, that when made a partaker of this great blessing, you had already, and at that interesting moment, more solemnly and unreservedly than ever, consecrated yourself, your whole soul and body, to the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that from that time to the present, you have felt that you are " not your own," but being " bought with a price," even the price of the blood of the Son of God, you are not at liberty to withdraw any part of the offering, but that you must continually keep yourself at the foot of the cross, while you look up with a believing, loving, obedient heart to your great LIVING Intercessor for the daily, the hourly, the every moment supplies of his Spirit and grace, to enable you to " stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free." Yes, you said, in the expressive language of the poet, " Pleasure, and wealth, and praise no more Shall lead my captive soul astray; Mj fond pursuits I all give o er, Thee, ONLY THEK, resolved to obey. My OWN IN ALL THINGS to resign, And know no other WILL but THINI." And having thus consecrated yourself to God, and felt the sealing influence of the Holy Spirit upon your inmost soul, enabling you to say, " Abba, Father, I know myself Thy child," you could exultingly, while looking around on the spiritual army of God, those especially who had gained the victory over sin, and were standing with their bright armour on, sing the following lines of the poet, of faith, of love, and of hope :

" Blest, O Israel, art thou!

What people is like thee! SAVED FROM SIN by Jesus now Thou art, and still shalt be. JESUS is thy seven-fold SHIELD, JESUS is thy FLAMING SWORD; Earth, and hell, and SIN shall yield To God’s Almighty word."* my God! What must the soul of the poet have felt when he penned these words! Armed with this panoply Divine, with " Jesus for his seven-fold shield," with " Jesus for his flaming sword," he might well bid defiance to " earth

* The pen of Charles Wesley never dipped deeper into the fountain of divine love, nor ever depicted in brighter colours the complete triumph of " perfect love," than it did in that ad mirable hymn. Hear him in the following glowing language :

" In a land of corn and wine, His lot shall be below, Comforts there, and blessings join, And milk and honey flow! Jacob’s WELL is IN HIS SOUL!

Gracious dews his heavens distill, FILL his soul, already FULL, And shall FOREVER FILL!"

1 pity the man that cannot relish the exquisitely fine touches of this poetry, nor perceive the depths of those words which recognize the Saviour’s metaphor of the " well of water spring ing up into everlasting life!" and hell," and have said and sung, and said and sung again, " Sin shall yield"

" To GOD’s ALMIGHTY WORD!" May you, my dear M., be thus " Equipp d for the war." And may the writer of these very imperfect letters have the unspeakable pleasure of sharing with you in the triumph of " Redeeming grace and dying love." May we together sing, in anticipation of the uncreated, the indescribable, the inconceivable glories of heaven " There we shall meet again, When all our toils are o er, And death, and grief, and pain, And parting are no more; We shall with our brethren rise, And grasp thee in the flaming skies.

"O happy, happy day. That calls thy exiles home! The heavens shall pus away, The earth receive its doom : Earth we shall view, and heaven destroy d, And shout above the fiery void!" Shall it be so? Yes, by the grace the rich abounding grace of God in Christ Jesus I can, I think, with trembling humility, and yet with a firm, unwavering faith in the promises of God, say " These EYES shall see them fall, Mountains, and stars, and skies! These EYES shall see them all Out of their ashes rise! These LIPS His praises shall rehearse, Whose nod restores the universe."

O, my dear M., shall our eyes see that grand consummation with joy? How poor do all the glories of this world appear when compared to those of that! May you and I share in those glories! And may a spark of the Divine love, which I feel burning in my heart at this moment of writing, be communicated to the heart of my friend!

1.A 14. LETTER XIV

LETTER XIV. A further explanation of sanctification Paul’s doctrine A death of sin and a life of holiness Explanation of the terms death and life The two states incompatible with each other John supports the same doctrine It is God’s work to sanctify And therefore it can be done The same truth proved from poetry. MY DEAR M : We have already seen that anything which is holy or sanctified has been set apart, or consecrated to the special service of Almighty God. And in the application of the term to an individual, it imports that he has solemnly consecrated himself, his soul and body, his time and talent, to God, to be used and employed in any way that he may see fit. The least that is implied in this entire consecration is, that he is delivered from sin, properly so called.* No truth, indeed, is more unequivocally revealed and frequently insisted upon in the Holy Scriptures than the absolute necessity, as well as the easy possibility, of a deliverance from sin, in order that we may be " holy, and without blame before Him in love all the days of our lives." "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Romans 6:1-2.

Many doubtingly inquire now, How is it possible for us to be delivered from sin? Not so the apostle Paul. His clear and comprehensive views of the rich provisions of the Gospel of the grace of God his strong faith in the efficacy of the blood of Christ his firm confidence in the mighty working of the eternal Spirit made him wonder that any one should say that there is a necessity for our living any longer in sin. Nay, he asserts in the above text the utter impossibility of a person that is " DEAD to sin LIVING

* See the extracts from Wesley, for the distinction between wilful sin and the sin of ignorance; between those infirmities inseparable from human nature, and tins properly so called any longer therein." And this will appear most evident to every person who duly considers the import of those words, dead and alive. When a man is said to be dead to a thing, it is the same as to say that he is separated from it the word death meaning the effect of separation the thing separated ceasing to live, though it may still exist in another form. Thus, if we separate a limb from the body, the separated limb dies, as a necessary consequence. This might easily be illustrated by a thousand examples, but its plainness renders this unnecessary.

Well now, if the Christian be dead to sin, sin is separated from his soul, eradicated from his nature, so that it no longer reigns over him, or rules within him. From this " body of death," that is, the body of sin, which brought spiritual death upon his soul, and long hung about him, like a rotting carcass, he is now delivered, so that a divorce has been effected from all his corrupt passions and appetites the " old man, with all his evil deeds, is crucified," slain, and entirely severed from his soul.

Now, how can a man that is thus dead to sin separated cut off from it LIVE any longer therein? To be alive to a thing, is to be united to it life being the effect of union. Thus, while the soul and body remain united, they live together in the flesh, but the moment a separation takes place, the body dies, as a necessary consequence. Can a man be dead, that is, separated from sin, and at the

same time live, that is, be united to it? Can a man be separated from the city of New- York, and at the same time be united, that is, live here? The thing is utterly impossible. Hence says the apostle, in verses 6 and 7 :

" Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be DE STROYED, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead" to sin this being destroyed by the baptism of the Holy Ghost " is freed from sin," entirely separated from it. He then exhorts them to " reckon themselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." " Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." And if sin be so effectually destroyed that it does not reign in the "mortal body," so entirely conquered that all the bodily appetites and passions are so sanctified that we need not indulge in any fleshly gratification that is inconsistent with the pure principle of holiness, surely the soul, which is, under the grace of God, the prime mover and regulator of all the bodily appetites and passions, must also, and more especially, be freed from the dominion, yea, from the very inbeing of sin.

Texts of Scripture speaking a similar language could easily be multiplied, but my space will not allow of an extended use of them. There is one passage, however, in 1 John 3:9, so fully in point, and which tends so completely to establish the doctrine under discussion, that after referring you, my dear M , to the entire passage, 1 to 9, I must take the liberty of quo ting the ninth verse for its full confirmation. It is as follows :

" Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin : for his seed remaineth in him : and he can not sin, because he is born of God." This is strong, as well as plain and unequivocal language. He cannot sin that is, he can not, consistently with his high and holy character, as an adopted child of God, born to a heavenly inheritance, and, as such, bound to obey all the laws of his heavenly Father, who has taken him into a sacred union with him self, through faith in his Son, demean and disgrace the purity and dignity of his new relationship, by stooping to the drudgery of sinning in thought, word, or deed. Not that he has no power to sin, for he still possesses all the natural moral power he ever did, and therefore might, as easily as Eve and Adam did, " turn away from the holy commandment de livered unto him;" but the "law of God being written on his heart, and imprinted in his in ward parts," so long as he obeys its precepts, " walks in the light as he is in the light," he has fellowship with God, and with all the " holy brethren," and he " keeps himself unspotted from the world." In this sense " he cannot sin, because he is born of God," and his " seed remaineth in him;" so long as it remaineth in him as a LIVING, active principle, it vegetates, buds, and blossoms, and bears fruit to the glory of God; and his heavenly Father " purges him, that he may bring forth more fruit;" and whatsoever he doeth prospers, because his work is of and in the Lord. This death unto sin, however, is not procured without a violent and painful struggle. As the death of the body is generally preceded and accompanied by violent pains, and struggling agonies, so this spiritual death of the " body of sin" this separation of sin from the soul is attended with the most painful sensations, arising from the strong grasp which sin has upon the soul, and the powerful bias created by years of habitually yielding to the dictates of corrupt nature. And it is not to be supposed that this severance between the affections of the heart and those sinful objects around which they have so long entwined themselves, can be effected without inflicting pain; and hence the Holy Scriptures compare it to some of the most exquisitely painful sensations to which human nature can be subjected; hence also the tears that are shed, the groans that are uttered,

the earnest prayers that are offered, the strenuous efforts that are made to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by a person that is struggling under the tyrannical power of inbred sin, and striving to deliver himself from its cruel grasp. He may weep, groan, pray, and believe in vain, unless the Lord God Omnipotent come down to his help. The moment, however, the " sword of the Spirit" is unsheathed, and wielded by the hand of Omnipotence, and enters the heart, " piercing to the dividing asunder the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow," the close and strong connexion that had long existed between the affections and sinful objects is cut asunder, and the freed affections, healed of the wounds thus made by the separation effected, by the balm of Jesus blood, instantly fly up, and fix themselves " on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father."

Now the redeemed purified soul sinks down into a calm submission to the will of God. The stormy passions subside, the warring elements within cease their raging, unbelief is expelled, and the sanctified soul feels all that heaven-born peace, which Jesus promised to his disciples when he said, " My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have PEACE : be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." I have conquered, by the operation of my Spirit, all that worldly disposition by which you were so much troubled while struggling to get free from the dominion of sin, and now you have that " peace of God which passeth all understanding."

How conformable to the above sentiments, all drawn from sacred Scripture, are the following, expressed in the glowing language of the poet of Methodism :

" Thou hidden love of God, whose height, Whose depth unfathomed, no man knows , see from far thy beauteous light, Inly I sigh for thy repose; My HEART is PAIN'D, nor can it be At KKST till it find rest IN THIS." And how ardently does the poet supplicate for a separation between the affections of his heart and the objects of sense with which he is surrounded, in the following verse!

" Is there a thing beneath the sun, That strives with thee my heart to share 1 Ah, TEAR it thence, and REIGN ALONE, The Lord of every motion there! Then shall my heart from EARTH BE FREE, When it hath found REPOSE IN THEE."

I must beg of you, my dear M., to read this hymn, the 304th of the old collection, through, and mark how completely the poet depicts the painful sensations the soul that is panting, struggling, and reaching forth the trembling hand of faith, passes through, while he prays in the following language for spiritual life :

" O hide this self from me, that I No more, but Christ in me may live! My vile affections CRUCIFY, Nor let ONE darling lust SURVIVE! In all things nothing may I see, Nothing desire or seek but THEE."

How any one can read, and, above all, sing such hymns, and then doubt the possibility of attaining the heights and depths of perfect love, of having his " vile affections crucified," of having his " heart from earth made free," so that not " one darling lust should survive," I am at a loss to conceive. And Charles Wesley was not a man to put unmeaning words into the month of a congregation, and teach them to sing,

" Speak to my inmost soul, I am thy love, thy God, thy all, To feel thy power, to hear thy voice, To TASTE THY LOVE, be all my choice," while he did not believe any such thing attain able. No, no! He meant what he said, and he said what he felt. And may you, my dear M., and all who read these words, be able to say and sing in faith, in full confiding faith, in that faith which takes hold on God, and believes the promise sure :

" Reign in me, Lord, thy foes control, Who would not own thy sway;

Diffuse THINE IMAGE THROUGH MY SOUL, Shine to the perfect day.

" Scatter the LAST REMAINS of SIN, And SEAL me thine abode; O make me glorious all within, A TEMPLE BUILT BY GOD."

1.A 15. LETTER XV

LETTER XV. The evidence of sanctification Direct, indirect, and external The direct witness This the doctrine of all evangelical Christians The way so plain, that no one need err Contrary opinion absurd The witness is God’s Spirit This bears wit ness to His own work Shines by His own light Proved by sundry arguments By our poetry. MY DEAR M : Having shown the possibility and nature of holiness or sanctification, it seems proper that we should inquire into the evidence of its existence. This is three-fold.

1. Its internal, or direct witness, to the heart of the believer.

2. Its indirect evidence, which is its fruits, called the fruits of the Spirit.

3. Its external evidence, called keeping the commandments of God. In regard to the first evidence, the internal witness of the Holy Spirit, which bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God the sacred Scriptures are full of it, so full that all the holy men of God, patriarchs and prophets, primitive fathers of the Church, re formers, Luther and Calvin, and every true evangelic minister, bear testimony to its truth and reality, either in direct and explicit terms, or by necessary inference. Indeed it would be one of the greatest absurdities imaginable to suppose that God would require us to seek after any particular blessing, and threaten us with ever lasting destruction if we did not find it, and promise us a present and an eternal reward if we did, and yet never let us know whether we had come into its possession or not. An earthly parent who should deal thus with his child; that is, command him to do a certain job of work, and threaten him with a severe punishment if he did not do it, and a certain reward if he did, and yet never let the child know whether or not he had done it, would be denounced, by every reflecting mind, as cruel, unfit to rule, and would be deprived, if justly dealt with, of his parental authority. And shall we attribute to our heavenly Father such a capital defect in his government? Has he marked out the road to heaven with such obscure lines, that those who are making their escape from earth to heaven can never know whether they are in it or not? Has he required us to be holy, and has He, at the same time, left holiness so obscurely defined, so imperfectly described, and the way to obtain it so uncertainly marked out, that those who seek it, and actually find it, are so left in the dark that they can never know whether they are in the way or not, or whether they are in the possession of that holiness which is the object of their pursuit? Surely this cannot be so.

Nay, so far from this being the unhappy case, the way of holiness, thrown up for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in, is so plain, that the "wayfaring man, though a fool" in other respects, " need not err therein." God has made the way to heaven, which is the way of holiness, so plain, and furnished us with such evidences of its plan, of its reality, of its length and breadth, that no one, unless he be wilfully blind, or inexcusably careless, need mistake it, or dangerously err therein, or live without a satisfactory witness in himself that he possesses the requisite qualifications for the enjoyment of God in heaven. But let us inquire what this witness is. It is none other than God’s Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are his children. His Spirit bears witness to His own work, in every step of its progress, from conviction of sin to repentance, faith in Jesus Christ to

justification, regeneration, sanctification, and so on in the path of holiness, until the purified believer arrives to the kingdom of glory. Not a single step does the sinner take in the way of repentance, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for the pardon of his sins, the surrendering of his whole heart to God by faith in Christ for the entire destruction of sin, and the full sanctification of his nature, and all his subsequent progress in the path of obedience to the commandments of God, but what God shines upon the work by his Holy Spirit, illuminates his understanding, sheds his heavenly rays into the darkest corners of his heart, communicates strength to make him to repent, believe, and finally, when the work either of justification or sanctification is accomplished, bears testimony to God’s work upon the soul, that it is done, and well done too, for " all God’s work is perfect." Thus the Spirit goes before us, opens the way, removes the stumbling- blocks, scatters our enemies, overcomes, by our yielding to His holy influence and this yielding itself is in consequence of His aids our native opposition to the ways of God, and finally, when we are adopted into the family of God, enables us to " cry, Abba, Father, I know myself thy child." Do you doubtingly ask, How shall I know it? No you do not. You, my dear M., re member perfectly well, when, after a long struggle of soul, in which you poured out strong cries and tears to God for this very blessing, being encouraged by those Christian friends who surrounded you, and mingled their prayers of faith with yours, the Lord appeared to your troubled heart, removed the load of inward pollution under which you groaned, shed abroad his love in your heart, and spoke, in accents of the kindest compassion, not indeed with an audible voice, but with the sweet whispers of his Spirit, " I will; be thou clean." In that moment you felt the storm which had raged within hushed to silence, and all was calm and peace, and you sank down into the arms of your heavenly Father, saying, from the very depths of the soul, " Thy will, which is my sanctification, be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Did you doubt in that moment but that God had accomplished the work of holiness in your heart? No, you did not. Wherefore? Because the Holy Spirit had taken the things of Christ and given them to you, and you could but rejoice in the things that you had received; and you no more doubted that these blessings the blessings of peace, of love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, came from God, than you did of your own existence. What brought this assurance? It was the " Spirit of truth" which cannot lie or deceive any of God’s people. It was this that overshadowed you, that penetrated into the depths of the soul, and that brought up from thence, first, a " hungering and thirsting after righteousness, a longing desire after this very kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," creating within your heart a resolute determination that you would devote yourself hereafter exclusively to the service of Almighty God. Have you ever either repented of this entire cooperation of soul and body, time and substance, to God, or seriously doubted the reality of the work? No, indeed! But this evidence, what is it? I cannot conceive of any evidence distinct and apart from that which accompanies, and therefore is inseparably connected with, the operations of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. What other evidence do we need that the sun shines than that which the sun itself brings, by the darting of its own rays upon the world? Light up a candle in a dark room. Does not the light bring an evidence, to all that see it, that it shines, and consequently that the candle burns? And what would you, my dear M., think of a man that should ask, in the midst of this glare of light, for an evidence distinct and apart from that light itself, that the candle burns, and that its rays are diffused through the room? Would you not conclude that he asked for an impossibility? Or, at least, that he wanted a superfluity of evidence? Would you not tell him to open his eyes, and see the light for himself, and then if he doubted its existence, he must continue in his skepticism? Surely argument would be lost on such an

unreasonable man.

Just so, when God shines upon the soul by the Holy Spirit, He brings an evidence of him self, that he is there. When the " Sun of righteousness rises on the soul with healing in his wings," disperses the clouds of ignorance from the understanding, removes sin from the heart, and sheds abroad Divine love there, He brings an evidence clear and strong, that he shines upon his own work, that the Divine Spirit has " wrought a perfect cure," and that he himself now " inhabits there." He is his own best evidence. When he works he does his work to such perfection, that it bears an impress of the Divine hand. When he speaks to the soul in accents of love, and says, " It is I : be not afraid," the sanctified soul recognizes the voice of his Lord and Master, and cries out, in the rapturous language of faith and love, " My Lord and my God!" " My beloved is mine, and I am his." " He has brought me into his banqueting- house, and his banner over me is love." This is the evidence, the internal evidence spoken to the inmost soul, by the sweet voice of that Spirit of TRUTH which Jesus Christ promised to his disciples, and which should be with them forever. He shines by his own rays, and they bring an evidence clear, strong, and undeniable, of his own presence, make an impression upon the soul of his own image, and write in legible characters his

"New best name of love" upon the heart; and when this is done, the sanctified soul looks up by faith, and " beholds the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ." Is not this, my dear M., your experience? Did you ask for any other evidence that you were " cleansed from all unrighteousness," than what the Divine Spirit brought to your heart in that very moment when he descended into your soul, and which was accompanied with a " Peace unknown to sensual minds?" When we " dwell in love, we dwell in God, and God in us," and where he is, he always brings an evidence of himself, and we cannot mistake his powerful, convincing voice, the shinings of his glory, the whispers of his Spirit, the feelings of his love, for the deceitful voice of Satan, the darkness of error and sin, and the feelings of hatred and envy. Did you, my dear M., ever read attentively the 590th hymn, in which the poet describes the feelings of a soul determined to rely on the promises of God, however impossible their fulfilment might appear to human reason? After leading the confiding soul along in the path of faith, and teaching him to sing " Though earth and hell the word gainsay, The word of God can never fail," he puts the following words into his mouth, and makes him sing most delightfully and triumphantly the song of deliverance from sin, and asserts the evidence of it as contained in his image which the Spirit of God had stamped on his heart :

" When thou the work of faith hast wrought, I HERE shall in thine IMAGE SHINE, Nor SIN in deed, or word, or thought; Let men exclaim, and fiends repine, They cannot break the firm decree, ALL things are POSSIBLE to me." Our hymns upon this subject are so numerous, and so fully prove the point under consideration respecting the witness of the Spirit, as well as its nature and fruits, that I can hardly quote amiss. Take the following as a sample among the many which you may find scattered up and down in the book, but more especially under the head, " For Full Redemption," and to which

I refer with the more pleasure, because I know that you, my dear M., delight to familiarize yourself with those Scriptural, deeply experimental, and lively devotional compositions; and likewise with a mournful fear that too many of our people either never read or sing them at all, or else look at them so slightingly that they neither understand nor feel their solemn import. The following is the verse

to which I refer :

" My PEACE, my LIFE, my COMFORT thou, My treasure and my all THOU ART! True WITNESS of my sonship, now ENGRAVING PARDON ON MT HEART, Seal of my sins in Christ forgiven, Earnest of love, and PLEDGE OF HEAVEN." The following is yet more in point :

" Thy WITNESS with my spirit bear That God, my God, INHABITS there;

Thou, with the Father and the Son, Eternal life’s co-eval beam, Be Christ IN ME, and 7 m kirn, Till PERFECT we are made In mu." May our most merciful Father give you and me, and all who read these lines, that peace, that life, that comfort, which arise from this witness, that God inhabits in our hearts, and makes us perfect in LOVE.

1.A 16. LETTER XVI

LETTER XVI. Its indirect evidence The fruits of the Spirit Love to God and man Poetry Joy The nature of holy joy Not always rapturous But submits to God’s will Rejoices in tribulation- Sentiment sustained by poetry All things work for good- Nothing will separate such a soul from God Poetry quoted. MY DEAR M : In addition to the direct witness of the Holy Spirit to the heart, which always accompanies the work of sanctification, there is inseparably connected with this the fruits of the Spirit. These fruits cannot appear unless the Spirit itself be present to produce them, any more than there can be a stream of water issuing from a dried-up fountain, or fruit upon a dead tree. If, therefore, we have the fruits, we may take it for granted that we have the Spirit, as this is the cause of those, and the effect cannot be unless its cause be present to produce it.

These fruits are enumerated in Galatians 5:22-23 : " But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and such is the excellence of these fruits, that the apostle says, " Against such there is no law," either human or divine.

Let us examine these fruits. LOVE to God and man. Love assimilates us into the likeness of God, for " God is love/ and he that " dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." This lovely fruit adorns the sanctified soul throughout, and makes him appear like God, as his visible representative among men. And is not love one of the most pleasant passions of the human soul? " Love worketh no ill to his neighbour." If I truly love my neighbour I cannot designedly do him an injury; on the contrary, I shall do him all the good in my power. Love also knits all those hearts together which possess it, and creates an indescribable union of spirit, which is more sensibly felt than easily expressed. So likewise those who have this love to God, cannot violate his commandments, nor do anything with a design to injure his cause, or to sully the glory of his holy character. Hence the poet teaches us to sing, " O grant that nothing in my soul May dwell but thy pure love alone; O may thy love possess me whole, My joy, my treasure, and my crown; Strange flames far from my heart remove : My every act, word, thought, be LOVE.

" O LOVE, how cheering is thy ray!

All pain before thy presence flies; Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away, Where er thy healing beams arise. O Jesus, nothing may I see Nothing desire or seek, but the " The poet identifies Jesus and love, declaring that he who has the one has the other also, for " JESUS AND LOVE ARE ONE." And this love is begotten in the soul by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, for the " love of God is spread abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost." The next fruit is JOY. "Ask," says the Saviour, "that your joy may be full." This joy, which is a fruit of the Spirit, is of the purest kind, comes from the purest source, and mingles with the purest minds. It is not always of that ecstatic, transporting character which carries its possessor away into the " third heavens," and makes him almost forget, for the time being, that he is in the body; for though sometimes his soul is thus elevated and elated, yet at other times he is oppressed with sorrow, burdened with crosses and disappointment, and is " in heaviness, through temptation." His joy arises principally from a belief that the will of God is accomplished, or is accomplishing in him. To this will he bows down with calm submission,

knowing that, as he is God’s child, nothing, great nor little, shall befall him but what is under the direction of infinite wisdom and goodness, and that, consequently, " all things shall work together for his good."

While in this frame of mind he can " count it all joy when he falls into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of his faith worketh patience." It requires, indeed, some experience in Divine things an experience acquired by learning many lessons in the school of Christ to enable us to " rejoice in tribulation;" yet the sanctified Christian will find, as he perseveres in the way, that even these temptations, from whatever source they may arise, and with what ever malignity they may be hurled at him, will all tend to test and purify his faith, to try his grace and improve his patience, and to pare off the rough edges of " peevish nature," and thus to make him shine the brighter in the kingdom of God. In this, therefore, he rejoices, not indeed on account of the pain he feels for " pain," under any circumstances, " is perfect misery," but because of the happy results of the fiery trial through which he is called to pass. He can therefore sing with a joyful heart,

" Though friends should all fail, and foos all unite, Yet one thing assures me, whatever betide, The promise assures me the Lord will provide." The poet has expressed this state of mind most admirably in the following verse :

" Yes, Lord, I shall see the bliss of thine own , Thy secret to me shall soon be made known , For SORROW and sadness I JOY shall receive, And share in the GLADNESS of all that believe."

Yes, " While in AFFLICTION’s FURNACE. And PASSING through the FIRE, Thy LOVE we PRAISE which knows no days, And ever brings us nigher; We clap our HANDS EXULTING, In thine Almighty favour, The LOVE DIVINE, which made us thine, Can keep us thine forever."

Read, my dear M., the two hymns from which I have quoted, the first on the 246th page, and the second beginning on the 239th page, old edition, and see if you will not be tempted to sing them with a joyful heart and a triumphant faith, as expressive of your own experience, at least in some stages of its progress in the way of holiness. Have you not often felt, even since your emancipation from the galling yoke of in bred sin, your heart penetrated with sorrow, your spirit pierced with grief, and your whole soul oppressed with a burden for which you could hardly account; and yet, in the midst of all these clouds which hovered around you, and for the moment darkened your sky, you would inwardly rejoice in God your Saviour, and sing with our deeply experienced poet, " By faith we see the glory To which thou shall restore us, The cross despise for that high prize Which thou hast set before us!" And when the Lord had brought you through the furnace, placed your feet on a broad place, dispersed the clouds which hung lowering in your spiritual horizon, by the rising of the bright beams of the "Sun of righteousness," did you not look back with joyful gratitude to God for giving you grace to sustain you under the pressure you felt; and do you not even now feel a glow of unutterable pleasure spring up and overflow your heart at the remembrance of " all the way in which the Lord hath led you?" I know you do. And not only so you feel your faith strengthened, your courage invigorated, your love expanded, and your hope con firmed, and even your joy increased, by this very conriict; and you can now trust in God with a firmer purpose than before, while you look forward with the most exquisite delight, anticipating an "abundant entrance into the ever lasting kingdom of God." Faith now says, with unwavering confidence,

" Peace, troubled soul, thou needst not fear, Thy great Provider still is Who fed thee last will feed thee still, Be CALM, and sink into His WILL."

Thus you can " rejoice in the Lord always," because you know you " love God," and there-fore "all things," all your crosses and disappointments, temptations, even your own infirmities, not excluding the sins of your enemies, and much more all your blessings, the society of the friends of Jesus, their prayers, preaching, and conversation, and ten thousand nameless blessings, which come upon you daily, from moment to moment, and often unasked for" God is able to give you abundantly more than you can ask or think," all these things " shall work TOGETHER /or your food /"

What a catalogue of blessings we have enumerated! They come, all couched together in this ample promise of God, like a cluster of golden coins, and fill the coffer of the heart with the richest gems of God’s spiritual kingdom. With such a comprehensive promise as this on which to hang our faith, I am sure we can joy and rejoice evermore in God our Saviour, and " Praise him for all that is past, And trust him for all that’s to come."

If ALL these things shall work TOGETHER, shall co-operate one with another, and mutually assist each other in " working out our salvation," then most assuredly we have the most abundant reason to rejoice and be glad all the days of our lives. If " not a hair of our head shall fall to the ground without our heavenly Father’s notice," so that nothing great or small shall hap pen to us but what is under the direction of his all-wise, all-powerful, all-loving, beneficent hand how can we repine how can we be discontented with our lot how can we complain of any of his dealings how, in a word, can we refrain from REJOICING that we are in the hands of such a benevolent " Father of our spirits?" With this view of the subject, is it any wonder that the Apostle Paul adopted that triumphant language which is found in Romans 8:33-39, in which he says, among other words of the strongest faith, "Nay, in all these things we are MORE than conquerors THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to SEPARATE us from the LOVE OF GOD WHICH is IN CHRIST JESUS." With such a persuasion as this, founded as it is upon the immutable promise of God, and confirmed in the hands of such a Mediator as is Jesus Christ, and assured to the heart of the sanctified believer by the sealing testimony of the Holy Spirit, of which the apostle had spoken in the previous part of this chapter, I say, with such a persuasion, founded upon such a promise, namely, that " all things shall work together for our good," we certainly can, nay, must " REJOICE in hope of the glory of God." With a well-founded persuasion that none of the things enumerated by the apostle shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, we may patiently bear all things, however grievous to flesh and blood; we may, believing, hope for all things, and joyfully anticipate a happy issue to all the events of God’s providence, whether adverse or prosperous, and calmly submit ourselves to his guidance in every state of our lives, knowing that they are all directed by a hand that cannot err. This subject is so copious, and my heart so full of it, that I hardly know how to stop; but the length of this letter admonishes me that I must bring it to a close, which I will endeavour to do by asking you, my dear M., to sing the following well-known and often repeated lines of Charles Wesley, which are so applicable to the subject under consideration :

" REJOICING NOW in earnest hope, I STAND, and from the MOUNTAIN TOP See all the land BELOW; Rivers of milk and honey rise, And all the fruits of paradise In endless plenty grow." With this triumphant song trembling upon your lips, you may lie down to rest in peace, and rise up in the morning with the following words issuing from your glad heart, and flowing from your joyful tongue :

" Rising to sing my Saviour’s prayer Thee may I publish all day long , And let thy precious word of grace Flow from my heart and fill my tongue . Fill aU my life with PUREST LOVE, And join me to the Church above."

1.A 17. LETTER XVII

LETTER XVII.

Meekness another fruit of the Spirit-Meekness and gentleness explained-Opposed to hardness-Meekness makes a person gentle and docUe Poetry Temperance explained Includes a proper government of all our appetites and passions Such person participate* of all the good things of life with thank fullness The Great God stoops to man Poetry quoted.

Mr DEAR M : The next fruit of the Spirit mentioned by the apostle is MEEKNESS. The radical meaning of the word from which this is translated is, to pound or bruise, and hence it describes a certain softness or mellowness of mind, produced by the internal operation, of the Holy Spirit, which makes the mind yield with facility to the impressions of truth. It stands, therefore, opposed to a certain stiffness or roughness of mind which appears in an unenlightened and uncultivated understanding which refuses to bow to truth, however forcibly expressed, and which unfits a man to be an agreeable member of society; so stiff, indeed, is he, that he will break before he will bend. The two persons the one that is meek and lowly, and the one that is stiff and lofty may be fitly compared to the green and the dry trees. While the former takes deep root in the earth, whence it derives sap and nourishment, and thence grows thriftily, gently bends to the breeze, so that every blast only tends to fasten its roots still deeper in the earth, and thus adds to its strength and thriftiness, the dead tree, standing stiff and unyielding, receives the blast, breaks instead of bending, and falls prostrate to the ground. Just so the man whose heart is the seat of sanctifying grace. He is firmly " rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus," and from him he receives daily supplies of grace and truth, by which his soul is nourished and strengthened; and while the blasts of temptation may fall heavily upon him, he may occasionally reel to and fro, while his soul, fixed upon the Rock of Ages, remains " steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;" and he de rives spiritual benefit from everything he hears, sees, or experiences, whether it be from friend or foe. In the midst of all these things, he meekly bows to the dictates of unerring Wisdom, receiving instruction from every source, whether it come from above or beneath, whether from God or Satan. Not so the dry, stiff Pharisee, or the lukewarm professor of religion. His heart, empty of the "meek and lowly mind" which was in Christ, and tilled with vain and high conceits of himself, frets and chafes under disappointments, presents a stiff front to every antagonist, lifts his proud heart against the providence of God, until he is finally crushed beneath the frowns of a justly- incensed Deity. There is no other way for him to escape this sad catastrophe, but to " break up the fallow-ground of the heart, and sow no more among thorns" let his heart be so mellowed that it will yield to the impressions of truth and goodness. This meekness of mind differs from gentleness, which, though mentioned first, refers to the external deportment, while meekness refers to the internal disposition : so that a man who is meek is gentle meekness qualifying him for that gentleness which distinguishes the refined, the sanctified Christian. These graces the one working in the heart, the other showing itself in the life form a peculiar gracefulness of temper and demeanour, which commends the person on whom they sit in holy loveliness, as worthy of all praise, all confidence and love. Like Eve in Paradise, as described by Milton, "For softness she,

and sweet attractive grace." The female especially who is adorned with these heavenly fruits, meekness and gentleness, shines in every circle in which she moves. Hence this " meek and quiet spirit," being that " inward adorning" which the apostle Peter so highly commends, is so far preferable to the " outward adorning of plaiting" or curling "the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on" gay or costly "apparel." Do you not, my dear M., greatly prefer this inward adorning, exemplified in gentleness of deportment, to all the mere tinsel of fashionable ornaments the empty frippery of the super cilious fop? I know you do, and therefore you sing so heartily the following lines, Give me "A heart resign'd, submissive, MEEK, My great Redeemer's throne, Where only Christ is heard to speak, Where Jesus reigns alone."

It is thus that you obey the precept of Jesus Christ when he said, " Learn of me, for I am

MEEK and LOWLY of heart." He not only be comes an exemplar for our imitation, but he en gages to work within us this heavenly disposition, by the internal energies of his Holy Spirit, moulding us into his own likeness, and stamping his image of meekness upon our hearts, so that we exemplify that spirit of tenderness of which the apostle speaks, when he tells the Thessalonians that he was "GENTLE among them, even as a nurse cherisheth her children." In perfect conformity with this sentiment, the poet teaches us to sing as follows :

" O that I, as a little child, May follow thee, and never rest, Till thou hast sweetly breathed thy MILD And LOWLY mind into my breast; Nor ever may we parted be, Till I become ONE SPIRIT with thee!"

See a person thus adorned with meekness and gentleness moving around in the circle of obedience to the commandments of God, and mingling in the society of his friends! He is so far from exacting that strict attention to him which i sense of justice and propriety would seem to dictate, he takes offence at nothing, but pays all due respect and Christian courtesy to all; and though he sees and deplores, as keenly as any one else, the foibles of others, he hides them under the mantle of charity, and meekly submits to whatever unavoidably arises out of the imperfections of human society kindly apologizing for human infirmities, foibles, and even for what may appear wilful aberrations from the rules of propriety. The last fruit mentioned in the catalogue of Christian graces is TEMPERANCE, which includes a right use of all the creatures of God. The legitimate meaning of this word is government, and it implies that he who has it has a strict and suitable government over all the passions and appetites of his soul and body; so much so that none of these are permitted to usurp dominion over him. His sanctified heart and enlightened understanding having mounted the throne, under their dictation he exercises a controlling influence over all his passions and appetites, keeping them in subjection to the dominion of grace the grace of sanctification so that, instead of being a slave to them, he makes them his servants, and while they obey his commands, they administer to his pleasure, and advance his temporal and spiritual interests. His passions of love, hate, desire, aversion, all his affinities and antipathies, of whatever sort or degree, his fears and hopes, are all sanctified, fixed on their right objects, and directed to their right ends. He loves God and man. and hates sin, and nothing else. He desires whatever is lawful and right, and has an aversion to whatever is unlawful and wrong. His affinities attach him to all who are of a kindred spirit with himself, feeling himself connected with them in the strongest bonds of the most refined friendship; while his antipathies are directed against not, indeed, with an angry feeling, leading to hostile acts all those who are actuated by a spirit of

malice and revenge; while, at the same time, he mourns over them with the feelings of pity and love. Thus are all the passions of his nature sanctified, and made subservient to his highest, most holy, and most enduring interests not excepting his ambition, which is now directed to the loftiest aims, impelling him forward in the conscientious use of all the means within his grasp for the attainment of God's glory, in his own and the salvation of his fellow-men. Hence he sings the following lines of the poet, from the very depths of his soul :

Whate'er my sinful flesh requires,

For thee I cheerfully forego;

My covetous and VAIN DESIRES,

My hopes of happiness below;

My tenses and my PASSIONS food.

And all my thirst for creature good." And as to his bodily appetites, they are regulated " by reason and by grace." He eats that sort and quantity of food which will best pro mote his health and strength, and drinks water, tea, or coffee, to satisfy his thirst, and wears those clothes which will make him the most comfortable, and inhabits as good a house, and keeps as warm a fire in winter, as his means will allow; but he can no more indulge in any of these things to excess, nor run in debt, and thereby live upon other people's money, for the sake of " needless self-indulgence," than he can swear profanely, or lie to and cheat his neighbour. Within these bounds, the sanctified Christian is permitted to enjoy all the good things of this life as fully and freely as any one else; and he has this advantage over others, namely, that he receives them all as the gifts of his heavenly Father, and therefore to be " used with thanksgiving, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

Nay, I think the holy man participates in all the blessings of life with a much more exquisite zest than he otherwise could, or than the unholy sinner can. The grace of sanctification has regulated all his appetites, fixed them on right objects, and taught him to select the most suitable means for their reasonable gratification; so that whenever he partakes of any of the temporal blessings of life, he knows that he is obeying God, for " whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever be does, he does all for the glory of God;" and hence he eats and drinks, and enjoys all the comforts of life, with a glad and thankful heart, ascribing all the glory of these things to God, to whom alone it is due.

Whenever he walks abroad upon the earth, and sees the rich variety of fruits and vegetables, the blooming flowers of spring, the rose and the lily, and a thousand other beautiful flowers, whose scent perfumes the air the fields waving with wheat and other grains the meadows carpeted with grass and all for the benefit, the sustenance, and comfort of man and beast how does his heart glow with gratitude to the Author and Giver of all these things! Nor is he con tent with gazing upon the earth, but lifts his wondering eyes to the heavens, where he sees, with inexpressible delight, the " sun shining in his strength," and, in the night, the azure vault decked with innumerable stars, and the moon shedding her silvery rays across the firmament, and thence to the earth, to light up the path for man. While beholding this magnificent canopy over his head, and this dazzling glory surrounding him on every side, he cries out with rapture, in the sublime language of the Psalmist, " The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work; day unto day

uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge."

"Eternal Wisdom! thee we praise, Thee thy creation sings; With thy loved name rocks, hills, and seas, And heaven’s higli palace, rings.

" Thy hand, how wide it spreads the sky!

How glorious to behold! Tinged with a blue of heavenly dye, And starr d with sparkling gold.

" There thou hast bid the globes of light Their endless circuits run; There the pale planets rule the night, The day obeys the sun." And yet, my dear M., this God, so great above our thoughts, that made, governs, and guides all these mighty "globes of light," deigns to come down to little, insignificant man, to commune with his heart; to make it, in fact, his own temple! So sweetly sings our poet :

" High throned on heaven’s eternal hill, In number, weight, and measure, still Thou sweetly orderest all that is; And yet thou deign st to COME TO ME, And GUIDE MT STEPS, that I, with THEE Enthroned, may reign in ENDLESS BLISS." May God speak these words to the heart of my friend, that it may bound in thanksgiving to God; and believing in his particular care, may it confidently repose on him in every circum stance of life, whether it be prosperous or ad verse.

1.A 18. LETTER XVIII

LETTER XVIII.

These graces viewed in a cluster From perfect love issues joy, peace, long-suffering Gentleness and meekness Temperance and fidelity Heart emptied of anger and every evil temper If those who indulge in impatience profess this blessing they are deceived How to deal with such persons But all are not deceived Humility the characteristic of the sanctified soul An appeal to M. for the truth advanced illustrated from Charles Wesley’s poetry. MY DEAR M : We have seen how the fruits of the Spirit adorn the sanctified Christian, and make him appear altogether lovely to the eye of every spiritual beholder. Let us endeavour to view these graces in a cluster, woven, as it were, together in a beautiful garment, not in deed of " many colours," but so intermixed that they will sweetly blend in each other, so as to form one harmonious robe, which will cover the holy man from head to foot, that he may appear " like the king’s daughter," not only all glorious within, but also outwardly " without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." In the first place, LOVE sits at the head, as queen of the graces, leading her fair daughters, " joy, peace, long-suffering," <fec., in the beautiful train; while TEMPERANCE closes the line with her growing influence over all the minor graces, and sets them off to the greatest possible advantage, making them all keep their proper places, doing obeisance to their divine Head and Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. From this " perfect love," which exists in the sanctified soul as a living fountain, issues JOY in the Holy Ghost, the soul " rejoicing evermore," even in the midst of sorrows, temptations, crosses, and disappointments; while PEACE sits calmly in the depths of the heart, amidst all the turbulence raging round about him; and LONG-SUFFERING comes in to aid in maintaining an equilibrium in the soul, while attracted this way and that by contrary forces; then, when upon the point of yielding to a fit of temporary impatience, in steps GENTLENESS, guided by MEEKNESS, and by her soft and winning voice soothes all the passions to submission to the dictates of GOODNESS, teaching them all the happy art of working in harmony one with the other, regulating the whole with kind reciprocity of feeling, and interchanging offices of friendship, and creating within the soul the sweetest harmony of mutual attraction and co-operation, FIDELITY guiding and applying all the energies of the sanctified soul to the specific object for which God has called us from " darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God." Thus is the heart emptied of anger, evil desire, and every unholy affection, and garnished with these heavenly graces of the Holy Spirit; while the person so adorned and beautified with these exhibits in his external deportment all the consistency which arises from a symmetry of character, formed by the Hand of the Master Work man. From the internal fountain of the heart, continually fed from the perennial Fountain of all goodness, all wisdom, all power, and all love, flow out unceasingly those pure streams of "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," which keep the wheels of life in perpetual activity; so that the person thus furnished moves around in the circle of obedience to the commands of God, striving, " as far as possible, to live peaceably," doing good, according to his power, to all men, both to their souls and bodies, using all possible means to " please his neighbour for his good to edification" and salvation.

Now allowing the truth of this representation that it is a real, and not a fanciful picture the objection which I have often heard made against those who profess this blessing of sanctification, that they are proud, hasty, easily of fended, impatient, &c., has no foundation in truth. How can a person that is meek and gentle which implies, and necessarily includes, the deepest humility be at the same time proud and impatient, seeing these virtues and vices are antipodes to each other? That there may be those who profess the blessing, who exhibit those unholy tempers, I allow. What is the consequence? They are deceived. They either act the hypocrite, or are mistaken in their experience. If the former, there is little hope in their case, for " the hope of the hypocrite shall perish." And of all characters in the world, a hypocritical professor of religion is the most to be dreaded. If the latter, a little friendly conversation, conducted in the true spirit of Christianity, with that humility that the objector so much commends, and that brotherly kindness in which he thinks his fellow-professor is wanting, may set him right, by convincing him of his error, which, when convinced of it, no one will be more ready to acknowledge, bewail, and rectify, than the sincere Christian. But do not let him, for his own sake, as well as for the sake of the person he suspects, approach him with a lordly dictation, or denounce him with a harsh dogmatism, as though he were sent to " lord it over God’s heritage," and to determine ex cathedra, as with unerring certainty, on the states of all with whom he may come in contact, lest he betray that very pride he professes so much to abhor, and so severely to condemn in others; but let him go rather in the spirit of humility, and, with the utmost tenderness, enter into a familiar Christian conversation with the person concerned, convince him by his spirit and manner that he seeks his good, and not merely tantalize him with critical inquiries. In this way, if sincerity preside in both their hearts, he may be instrumental of "converting a sinner from the error of his ways, and of hiding," or cancelling, " a multitude of sins." But I cannot allow that all who profess this blessing give evidence of their deception by an exhibition of the marks of pride and impatience. That which may be taken for pride may be no thing more than a just indignation at sin, at littleness of soul, at absurdity, and probably at the petulance displayed by the fastidious critic, all of which loudly calls for the reprobation, with suitable language and gesture, of the holy, well- informed Christian. Jesus Christ himself, though among the meekest of men, and who proved his humility by condescending to take " upon him the form of a servant, and become obedient to death, even the death of the cross," rebuked the hypocritical lawyers and Pharisees with the utmost sternness, manifou <1 his abhorrence of the wickedness of Herod, by calling him a " fox," and denounced the jus>t judgments of God upon that " wicked and adulterous generation," while he turned away from the Sanhedrim in the synagogue, who were watching him for evil, " with anger," that is, a just indignation, " being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." No doubt his enemies thought him a proud heretic because he would not stoop to humour their prejudices, but strongly rebuked them for their obstinacy, their pride, and arrogancy. At any rate, humility, a humiliating view of himself, of his gifts and attainments that humility which disclaims all merit in anything he has done, does, or may do; that humility which excludes all boasting, except in the cross of Christ which keeps him low at the feet of Jesus which annihilates self in view of the in effable glory of God; yea, that humility which makes him actually feel " less than the least of all God’s saints" which makes him willing to wash the feet of the saints, or to do the meanest offices for any of God’s people, and teaches him to prefer others before himself this humility distinguishes the sanctified Christian, and shines out in all his words and actions. Do you not, my dear M., know this to be true by your own experience? When the Lord appeared for your deliverance, did you not feel the depth and reality of those words

of the poet, which he puts into the mouth of a soul panting after this " second rest?"

" Open my faith’s interior eye;

Display THY OLOBT from above; And all I AM shall SINK and die, Lost in ASTONISHMENT AND LOVI."

Yes, when the " interior eye" of the mind is so fully opened as to see clearly the depth of that pollution which cleaves to the soul, and at the same time to behold the inefiable "glory from above," which surrounds the Godhead of Jesus Christ, a ray of which is now darted down into the labouring soul, the contrast is so great that we sink down and sing, As less than nothing in his sight,

And feel that Christ is all in all." In all such the prayer in the following lines is answered :

Save me from PRIDE, the PLAGUE EXPEL;

Jesus, thine HUMBLE self impart;

O let thy mind within me dwell,

O give me LOWLINESS of heart."

Sprinkle me, Saviour, with thy blood,

And all thy GENTLENESS is MINE." Did you ever feel less in your own estimation, more unworthy, more helpless, more undeserving of the least notice of God’s compassionate eye, than you did in that moment when the Lord took your feet from the mire and clay in which you felt yourself sinking deeper and deeper every step you took, and placed them upon the Rock of Ages? And have you not continued ever since, in the same spirit of humility, singing, as you sung at the first moment of your participation of this blessing, the following expressive language of OUR favourite poet?

Confound, o’erpower me by thy grace;

I would be by MYSELF ABHORR’D :

ALL might, ALL majesty, ALL praise,

ALL GLORY be to Christ my Lord."

O how do these words thrill in the heart of the sanctified believer! He sings yes, you, my dear M., sing them with an increasing de light, because they so exactly express the feelings of your humble heart; and just so long as you continue to enjoy this inestimable blessing, you will continue their use, from a feeling sense of their truth and adaptedness to your condition. In the next verse you will perceive the poet’s idea of Christian perfection. Hear him, or rather sing him, and the next time I have the pleasure of seeing you, I must ask the favour of your singing those two, and the following verse for my edification :

" Now let me gain perfection’s HEIGHT;

Now let ME into nothing fall, As less than nothing in thy sight, And feel that Christ is ALL IN ALL-" With these words I bid you adieu for the pre sent, by simply adding my earnest prayer, that you

may lie down and rise up protected by the everlasting arms.

1.A 19. LETTER IXX

LETTER XIX

External evidence Keeping the commandments The sanctified soul must do more than the letter of the law demands He must feed the poor, Ac. The spirit of the law may require this, but the letter does not The sacred Scriptures explicit en this subject -Many Ignorantly transgress This shows the necessity of the atonement Salvation, from first to last, of grace -Proved from Scripture and our hymns. MY DEAR M : Having attended to the direct and indirect evidence of entire sanctification, both of which relate principally to the person himself though visibly manifested to others in the spirit and general demeanour it remains only to consider the external evidence, called keeping the commandments of God.

Though there has been some controversy upon this branch of the subject, yet it has arisen more, I apprehend, from a misunderstanding in the use of terms, than from any radical dillience of opinion as to the real thing itself. All will agree, I think, that no sanctified soul can wilfully violate any precept of the moral code as expressed in the ten commandments, as this " Law is written upon the heart, and imprinted upon the inward parts," the whole of which is comprehended by our Divine Teacher, in loving God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. And who will say that there is any necessity for such a soul thus made holy, in which the love of God and man reigns pre dominant to have any other gods besides the one living and true God to low down to idols to take the name of God in vain to violate the Sabbath to dishonour his father or mother to kill unlawfully to commit adultery to steal to bear false witness to covet that which is not his own? This is the letter of the law, and surely an unconverted man may refrain from a violating its letter in any of his outward conduct. But when the heart has been circumcised by the sword of God’s Spirit by that Spirit which " pierceth to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," the joints of the harness, " and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" so that we love God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves, we are qualified to obey this law in its spirit and design.

Indeed, if we examine the subject with careful attention, we shall find, I presume to believe, that the holy Christian is required to do more than the mere letter of this law requires. Where is it said in any precept of this law, You shall feed the poor, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those that are in prison, take up the cross, mortify the deeds of the flesh? Where is the minister of the sanctuary commanded to go and preach the Gospel to every creature? And where in this law are the thousands of benevolent institutions recognized, which are springing up every day, and which grow out of the prolific soil which is prepared, watered, and fructified by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and kept fruitful by the rich supplies of sanctifying grace?

If any say that these are all implied or included in the spirit of the law, as interpreted by our Saviour, I contend not be it so. But then such must allow that holy Christians exemplify in their spirit and conduct this spirituality of the law, or else deny that the good works above enumerated are performed. To do the latter they will not attempt, and therefore they must admit that " all the law is fulfilled in this one word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And surely if this

Divine love occupies the heart and it unquestionably does if the heart be filled with "perfect love" that heart is perpetually " devising liberal things" for the benefit of his neighbour, and is also constantly flowing out in love, praise, and thanks giving to God, crying out in the language of David, " how I love thy law! It is my meditation by day and night. It is sweeter to me than the honey descending from the honey comb." On no point of Christian practice are the sacred Scriptures more plain and full than they are upon this. " He that saith he loveth God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar," saith St. John, who, though his heart was full of love, so much so, that it constantly overflowed with words and streams of love towards all men, in these words expressed himself with unusual bluntness and honest boldness. And what would be said of a man professing holiness of heart, should he indulge himself in idolatry, in lying or stealing, and in breaking the Sabbath, in covetousness, or in wilfully violating any other precept of this moral code? Would he not be denounced a hypocrite? Would you, my dear M., admit such a professor as your associate? Would you not rather repel him with just indignation, as unfit for the society of holy Christians? If your kind nature would not permit you to go thus far, I think your love to his soul, your keen sense of consistency of character, would impel you to endeavour to convince him of his error, to open his eyes, that he might see the awful gulf yawning before him; and you would exhort him to fly from it before it swallowed him up to look to Jesus for the pardon of his sins, and then for such a sanctification of his nature as should conform him to the image of God which image is shadowed forth in that law which the apostle, pronounces " holy, just, and good."

I have said no sanctified Christian can wilfully violate any precept of this moral code. That such a man may ignorantly transgress it, I al low, this ignorance arising out of the infirmities of his nature, and therefore inseparable from humanity. Thus a man may conceive erroneously of God, and may, therefore, through this misconception, be guilty of a species of idolatry; or he may, through ignorance of the fact, tell a falsehood, while he thinks he is speaking the truth and in a thousand other instances he may innocently provided he has taken all due pains to ascertain the truth, and an accurate knowledge of his duty violate any precept of this law, in its spirit and design; and were it not for the blood of atonement, and the continual intercession of the Lord Jesus, he would stand condemned, for the law knows no mercy, and has made no provision for pardon and purification. Every soul, therefore, the holiest not excepted, must say in truth, " Every moment, Lord, I need The merit of thy death." But he can say, with equal certainty, in view of the meritorious death and perpetual intercession of the Lord Jesus, " One only gift can JUSTIFY The boasting soul that knows his God; When JESUS DOTH HIS BLOOD APPLY, I glory in his SPRINKLED BLOOD. The Lord my Righteousness I praise, I triumph in the love divine, The wisdom, wealth, and strength of grace, In CHRIST TO ENDLESS AGES MINE."

Through this medium, through the merits and strength of Christ, he receives not only atonement for his past wilful transgressions that is, whenever he repents and believes and for his present sins of ignorance, but also super natural strength to enable him to keep the law with an upright and sincere heart, for "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

There is another error to be guarded against in the discussion of this subject, and this is, That the keeping of the moral law is not a condition of either justification or sanctification.

We are justified and sanctified, and also kept in a state of justification and sanctification, by GRACE, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no truth more frequently insisted upon or more prominently set forth in the Holy Scriptures than this, namely, That our salvation, from If ginning to end, in its most incipient stage, through every step of its progress, from conviction of sin to pardon, and from that to full sanctification, and then onward in the way of holiness, until we arrive to the kingdom of eternal glory, is all of GRACE the rich, abounding GRACE OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS so that every soul that is or shall be so un speakably happy as to arrive at that consummation of glory, will " bring forth the head-stone thereof, shouting, GRACE, GRACE unto it!" So our poet teaches us to sing with the sweetest melody, while our hearts are set in tune by the oil of redeeming and sanctifying grace :

" Father, God, thy love we praise, Which gave thy Son to die; Jesus, full of truth and GRACE, Alike we GLORIFY : Spirit, Comforter divine, Praise by all to thee be given, Till we in FULL CHORUS join, And earth is TURN'D TO HEAVIH."

Turn, my dear M., to the 292d hymn, old collection, and you will see in what " sweet ac cord" and " choral symphonies " that evangelical poet teaches us to ascribe our salvation from sin here, and our admittance into the kingdom of God hereafter, to " the God of truth and grace," and how sweetly and delightfully he blends the praise of those below with those above, to " The mystic Three in One." But this grace of God in Christ Jesus occupying the heart, filling it full of Divine love, and this love becoming the moving, ruling principle of action, not only the motive is pure, but the actions flowing there from are pure also, perfectly conformable, so far as knowledge is concerned, to the precepts of God's moral law. Hence he prays, " Thy NATURE be my LAW, Thy SPOTLESS SANCTITY; And sweetly every moment draw My happy soul to thee.

SOUL OF MY SOUL, REMAIN! Who didst for all fulfil, In ME, O Lord, FULFIL AGAIN Thy heavenly Father's will." Can a soul in whom this prayer is answered, wilfully violate any known command of God? No, indeed! He would as soon enter into a league with Satan, and proclaim an eternal war against Jesus Christ, as to rise in opposition to this " law," which is " God's nature," his " spot less sanctity," and to which his purified soul is " sweetly every moment drawn." The law of faith in Jesus Christ binds him to the throne of God, and the law of "perfect love" conforms him to the Divine image, and these two great leading principles impel him forward in the path of obedience; so that his happy soul remains connected with the soul of God, as the poet expresses it, and the " will of God," which is his " sanctification," is fulfilled in him. He now says, " The sharpness of thy two-edged sword, Enable me to endure; Till bold to say, My hallowing Lord Hath wrought a PERFECT CUBK. I see the exceeding BROAD COMMAND, Which all contains in one; Enlarge my heart to understand The mystery unknown."

I shall endeavour, in my next, to establish these views by unquestionable authority. In the mean time, permit me to say, and this shall conclude this long letter, that so long as you, my dear M., continue to exemplify the purity of your heart by the purity of your conduct, by keeping the commandments of God, and no longer, I will believe in your sincerity, and continue you my friendship, and address you in the language of the poet :

" Come, lot us ascend My companion and friend, To taste of the banquet above;

If thy heart be as mint, If for Jesus it pine, Come up into the chariot of lord."

1.A 20. LETTER XX

LETTER XX.

God’s laws practicable Angelic and Adamic laws Not binding on us Moral law binding Perpetual Yet no unconverted sinner keeps it Wesley’s views of the law Fletcher’s Clarke’s Watson’s Peck’s To these the author agrees The Scripture testimony Illustrated by poetry. MY DEAR M : I think God never gave a law to any of his creatures that they could not keep, provided they availed themselves of the means he established to enable them to keep it. And he has manifested his wisdom and goodness in adapting his laws to the nature, capacities, and circumstances of the various orders of his intelligent and unintelligent creatures.

Thus he doubtless required and still requires of the holy angels, the most perfect unsinning obedience to him, of which their perfect natures and large capacities were capable; and for ceasing to do this a part of them were thrown down to hell. To Adam, also, He gave a law which demanded a perfect obedience every way suited to his nature and capacity, which could have been nothing less than loving God with all his heart, and a manifestation of this love in every act of external obedience; and so long as Adam continued thus to obey he stood " justified by the deeds of" that law under which he was placed. But he sinned, and we all sinned in him, and have consequently " come short of the glory of God" have cast ourselves off from the protection of his glorious power. Hence we are no longer under the Adamic covenant, which was i covenant of works, but are placed under a covenant of grace, confirmed in the hands of a Mediator. And until this Mediator should come, and make an atonement for sin by " the sacrifice of himself," God substituted, for the time being, the sacrificial law, first successfully used by Abel, and subsequently practised by the patriarchs, until Moses came, and prescribed, under the direction of God, the whole ritual of the Jewish service. These sacrifices were intended to set forth the purity of God on the one hand, and the impurity and sinfulness of men on the other, and the necessity of an atonement for both wilful and involuntary sins, or sins of ignorance, in order to render the acts of worship acceptable. The whole of this was a remedial system, and derived all its efficacy from pointing to the Lord Jesus, who was to come as the great atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

Now this law, with all its burdensome ceremonies, the people could, and the pious and conscientious among them did keep; and by keeping it according to its spirit and design, were justified in the sight of God. I say the pious portion of the people did keep the ceremonial law. How were they made pious? Not by obedience to this law. Like Abraham, they were justified by faith. Like him, their hearts were renovated and sanctified by the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, applying the merits of the Lord Jesus, the promised Messiah, washing away their sins; and these were received by faith in his infinite atonement.

Well, then, to regulate their conduct, that they might furnish an irrefutable evidence of this purity of heart, God gave them the moral law, written upon two tables of stone,* the sub stance of which was engraven upon every sanctified heart by the Spirit of God himself, so that they could fulfil its

precepts. This law is eternal in its obligations. While the angelic law is adapted to angels, and therefore only obligatory upon them; while the Adamic covenant was suited to him in Paradise, as a holy, wise, and innocent man, and therefore ceases to be binding upon us as a condition of salvation; and while the ceremonial law of Moses, no longer needed, is utterly abolished by the coming of Christ, and therefore is binding upon no one, the moral law remains, and will forever remain in all its force, and is therefore the rule by which all men are bound to regulate their conduct.

[* I do not say this was the origin of the moral law. This law is founded in the immutable nature and fitness of things the nature of God and the nature of man and prescribes what is fit and right, and therefore must be binding upon all rational intelligences; and hence all were bound by its precepts, as well before as after the giving of the law by Moses, and being thus founded, it can never be either repealed, or relax in its demands, so long as those relations exist to which it is suited. It was only then made known in legible characters, being inscribed on tables of stone.* But do any keep it? " No mere man since the fall," while in his unrenewed state, doth ever keep it, but doth daily break it in thought, word, and deed;" and hence all such are condemned, and would remain forever condemned, were it not for the merciful interference of the Lord Jesus, the second Adam, who, whenever we believe in him as our almighty Redeemer and Saviour, brings us from under the curse of the law, and justifies us freely by his grace; and on condition of our " walking in the light, as he is in the light, cleanses us from all unrighteousness." Now the sanctified Christian, having a new nature, a new principle of action, new motives to impel him forward, in consequence of Divine love reigning in his heart, is enabled to keep this law, by loving God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself.

Let us now inquire if this be not according to the sentiments of our standard writers upon this subject. Thus Mr. Wesley, in his sermon on Matt, 5:17 to 29, after having explained the nature and obligations of the law, says :

" From all this we may learn that there is no contrariety at all between the law and the Gospel; that there is no need for the law to pass away, in order to the establishing of the Gospel. Indeed, neither of them supersedes the other, but they agree perfectly well together. Yea, the very same words, considered in different re spects, are parts both of the law and of the Gospel. If they are considered as commandments, they are parts of the law; if as promises, of the Gospel. Thus, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy -heart, when considered as a commandment, is a branch of the law; when regarded as a promise, is an essential part of the Gospel; the Gospel being no other than the commands of the law, proposed by way of promise. There is, therefore, the closest connexion that can be conceived between the law and the Gospel. On the one hand, the law continually makes way for and points us to the Gospel; on the other, the Gospel continually leads us to a more exact fulfilling of the law." And in the latter part of the sermon, while drawing the contrast between the Pharisee and the Christian, he says :

" But still the righteousness of a Christian exceeds all this righteousness of a Scribe "or Pharisee, by fulfilling the spirit as well as the letter of the law; by inward as well as outward obedience. In this, in the spirituality of it, it admits of no comparison. This is the point which our Lord has so largely proved in the whole tenor of this discourse." And he further adds :

" Be not content to keep the whole law and offend in one point. Hold thou fast all his commandments, and all false ways do thou utterly abhor. Do all the things whatsoever he hath commanded, and that with all thy might. Thou canst do all things through Christ strengthening thee; though without him thou canst do nothing."

Mr. Fletcher, in his Checks, vol. 1, pp. 100, 101, after having shown that the Levitical law was abolished, and that Jesus Christ saves us whenever we repent and believe, from the curse of the law, denounced upon actual transgressors, says :

"And did our Lord side with Antinomians? Just the reverse. Far from repealing the two above-mentioned precepts, he asserts that on them hang all tin- law and the prophets; and had the four Gospels been then written, he would, no doubt, have represented them as subservient to the establishing of the law, as he did the Book of Isaiah, the evangelical prophet. Such high thoughts had he of the law, that when a lawyer expressed his veneration for it by declaring that the love of God and our neighbour was more than all the whole burnt- offerings and sacrifices, Jesus, seeing that he had answered discreetly, said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of tiod. Tin- Gospel itself terminates in the fulfilling of the commandments."

Dr. Clarke, also, in his notes on Matt, 5:17- 20, says :

" He completes this law, and the sayings of his prophets, in his members, by giving them grace to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and their neighbour as themselves." And in respect, to the righteousness of the Christian exceeding the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, he remarks :

"Unless it [your righteousness] take in not only the letter, but the spirit and design of the moral and ritual precept; the one directing you how to walk so as to please God. the other pointing out Christ the great atonement, through and by which a sinner is enabled to do so, more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, who only attended to the letter of the law, and had, indeed, made even that of no effect by their tradition, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." In his notes on Romans 8:4, That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, he says :

" That the guilt might be pardoned through the merit of that sacrifice; and that we might be enabled, by His own grace and Spirit, to walk in newness of life, loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves; and thus the righteousness, the spirit, design, and purpose of the law is fulfilled in us, through the strength of the Spirit of Christ, which is here put in opposition to the weakness of the law through thejteh"

Mr. Watson, also, in his Institutes, vol. ii, p. 470, bears the following testimony to the obligations of the moral law, which he supports by a variety of facts and arguments :

" The summary of the law and the prophets, which is to love God with all our heart, and to serve him with all our strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves, is unquestionably enjoined, and even rc-euactcd, by the Christian lawgiver." And on page 471 he has the following:

: We have the whole decalogue brought into the Christian code of morals by a distinct injunction of its separate precepts, and by their recognition as a permanent and unchangeable obligation. The fourth commandment, respecting the Sabbath only, being so far cxcepted, that its injunction is not so expressly marked. This, however, is no exception in fact; for besides that its original place in

the two tables sufficiently distinguishes it ^from all positive, ceremonial, and typical precepts, and gives it a moral character in respect of its ends which are, first, mercy to servants and cattle, and, second, the worship of Almighty God, undisturbed by worldly interruptions and cares it is necessarily included in that law which our Lord declares he came not to destroy or abrogatein that law which St. Paul declares to be estal>- lis/ted by faith, and among those commandments which our Lord declares must be Ayyrf, if any one would enUr into lift"

Dr. Peck says :

" The question has never been raised in the Church, except by rank Antinomians, whether men are bound to keep the commandments of God, or, which is the same thing, to be governed by the moral law. Nor has the practicability of this duty ever been denied by any others, except, perhaps, the old school Calvinists. But the question at issue is, whether the fulfilling of the law, which is both obligatory and attainable, amounts to perfect obedience. " Christian Perfection, page 261. With this I heartily agree, and hence have not used the word "perfect obedience" on ac count of the ignorance and infirmities of our nature, which inadvertently lead to those deviations from the perfect rule of right, which require the atoning merits and continual intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ to render our works acceptable. The above comments, with the exception of the one on Romans 8:4, and Dr. Peck s, are founded on the following words of our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount :

" Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven : but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." This celebrated passage of Scripture must set the question at rest respecting the perpetually binding influence of the moral law, and therefore nothing more need be said on the subject.

O, my dear M., can we love God, the Author, and not love his law which he has given for the regulation of our conduct? Is not this law tho face of God unveiled to man, the "brightest efflux," as Wesley says, "of his nature," the clear development of his purpose, and the most distinct expression of his will? And therefore what more substantial evidence can we give of our allegiance to the Sovereign, than a cheerful, loving obedience, according to the best of our knowledge and power, to his commandments? Hence says our poet :

" Lo! I come with JOY to DO The blessed Master's WILL Him in OUTWAKD WORKS pursue, And serve his pleasure still; Faithful to my Lord's COMMAND*, I still would choose the better part; Serve with careful Martha's handi, And loving Mary's HEAET."

Unite the two, "loving Mary's heart," and " careful Martha's hands," or, in other words, unite a loving heart and a careful hand, unite inward and outward religion, so that we can say, "Careful without care I am," and we have the " perfect Christian," May my dear M. adopt, with a full confiding heart, the next verse of that most admirable hymn, in which the poet so sweetly blends together a calm submission to the will of God, and a diligent discharge of every duty :

" Careful without care I am, Nor feel my HAPPY TOIL; Kept in PEACE in Jesus name, Supported by his SMILE; JOYFUL thus by FAITH to show, I find his SERVICE my reward; Every WORK I do below, I DO IT TO MY LORD."

1.A 21. LETTER XXI

LETTER XXI.

How to attain sanctification 1. To feel its necessity : 2. To - believe in its attainableness : 3. To apprehend its nature: 4. To understand its evidence : 5. To be determined to seek it It is all of grace Must be received by faith alone An error stated Why so much importance attached to faith The Spirit of God goes before, and prepares the way Charles Wesley’s poetry. MY DEAR M : I humbly trust that I have succeeded in showing the necessity, the propriety, the nature, and the evidences of holiness, or entire sanctification. And now, the most important part of my work remains to be done; and I most ardently pray, that my head, my heart, and my pen may be guided aright : that the one may be enlightened by the Holy Spirit; that the other may be warmed with Divine love, and that my pen may be directed by the " wisdom coming from above," that I may see the way clearly, and understand the mind of God on this subject; that my heart may willingly and lovingly follow after, and fully enter into it, and that my pen may lucidly, plainly, and fully mark out the way in which inquiring souls may seek and find the " pearl of great price;" so that no one, however weak or strong, may be led astray. The first thing -essential to its attainment, is to perceive and feel its necessity; for no one will ever seek for a thing of which he does not feel the need. This necessity I have pointed out in my first, second, and third letters. The second thing requisite is to believe un hesitatingly believe in its possibility. This, I think, I have abundantly shown in my fourth, fifth, and sixth letters. I say the imperfect believer must fully believe in the possibility of attaining " perfect love," or he will never seek after it, with a view to its present attainment for a man would be the veriest fool among fools to seek after a thing perfectly beyond his reach, or which he believed to be wholly unattainable. The third thing is, as clearly as may be to apprehend its nature, otherwise his views will be confused or erroneous, and perhaps altogether false, and therefore, though he may seek after it, he will do it confusedly or erroneously, and perhaps altogether falsely; and hence, as he is pursuing a phantom of his own imagination, he will never obtain the object of his pursuit. To prevent such a fatal catastrophe, I have endeavoured, according to the ability which God gave me, in my seventh and eighth letters, to describe its nature, or to show in what it consists. The fourth prerequisite i to understand its evidence, which I have presented in the subsequent letters, to which my readers for, my dear M., I presume to have some other readers be sides yourself are referred. The last thing requisite is, to be determined to seek after it with full purpose of heart, and never to rest satisfied until it is found, and also to know the way in which it may be found; and this I shall now endeavour to point out as Scripturally and as plainly as possible. In the first place, let it be deeply engraven upon the heart as it was, and is, upon the heart of my dear friend, to whom I write that every blessing with which the soul is blessed is of GRACE pure, unmerited, and unbounded GRACE manifested in Christ Jesus, and conveved to the soul by the direct or indirect operation of the Holy Spirit. Neither reading nor hearing the word of God, partaking of the holy sacraments, repentance, prayer, nor even believing, will be effectual to this or any other degree of salvation, only so far as it may be accompanied by the operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart in the inmost soul, moulding it into the image of God. In

the next place, it must be conceded on all hands that it is to be received, if ever received at all, by a simple act of faith. This inevitably follows from the former proposition, namely, that it is all of GRACE; for the very idea of a thing's being of grace, is that it is a FREE GIFT; for this enters into the very composition of grace, the word essentially signifying a free, unmerited GIFT; and therefore it is not, and cannot be, bestowed as a reward for any work done by us, whether it be a work of piety towards God, or of mercy or benevolence towards man. None of these works, or all together, can make us any better, more worthy, or more fitted for the re ception of any blessing from God, than what we now are; and the best of us, considered in our natural, unrenewed state, are but hell-deserving sinners; and considered in relation to God's holy law, which is as unbending in its demands as the throne of God itself, should be only worthy of eternal damnation. This being the case, if we are ever made the partakers of this "great salvation," we must receive it by faith only. But let us carefully guard against some errors that may arise out of this doctrine of salvation by faith. It is so stated, not because there is any intrinsic excellence in faith, or the act of believing, simply considered, any more than in any other act of the mind; but it is because the believing soul lays hold on God through Jesus Christ, who is " able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." It is not, there fore, the simple act of believing that saves us, but the truth in which we believe. " If the TRUTH make you free, ye shall be free indeed." It is the truth, therefore the TRUTH OF GOD of that God that cannot lie of Him who has said, " I will cleanse you from all your filthiness " it is the truth of this God, who is faithful and WILL DO IT that saves the trembling soul that comes to him by faith, saying, " Lord, I BELIEVE thy every word, Thy every PROMISE TRUE; And lo! I wait on thee, my Lord, Till I my strength RENEW." This will appear still more evident when it is considered that the belief of an error is the same act of the mind as the belief of the truth. Believing is compared to eating. Here are two beggars, to whom is given a piece of bread. The one eats his bread and dies; the other eats his and lives. Now the act of eating was precisely the same in both cases. They both took the bread, masticated it with their teeth, and swallowed it : but the effects were far different; the one dies and the other lives. What caused this difference? What? The one piece of bread contained poisonous matter, and the other was wholesome. It was the quality of the bread, therefore, and not the act of eating, which produced these different effects. And in all cases, when we are nourished by our food, it is the food that nourishes us, and not the act of eating; although the eating is so essential to our living that, let ever so much food, and that of the best quality, be furnished, unless we partake of it we cannot live.

Just so in respect to those who are seeking this " pure and undefiled religion." The one believes he has it when he has it not, and like the beggar who ate the poisoned bread, believing an error, he has no spiritual life; and will, unless he is undeceived by the application of truth to his heart, ultimately die. The other lays hold by faith on the promises of God, holds fast until God speaks in accents of love to his soul, " I will; be thou clean." " Come ye out from among them, and I will receive you;" and he "arises and shines, having the glory of God risen upon him;" and he now "lives by faith in the Son of God, who gave himself for him." Now, the simple act of believing, in these two cases, was precisely the same, but the effects were far different; and these were caused, not by the act of the mind in believing, but by the thing believed. The one believed an error and died. The other believed a truth and lived. It was, therefore, the thing believed that both saved and killed. Hence the vast importance of the proposition of our Saviour, before quoted, " If the TRUTH make you free, ye shall be free indeed." But some will doubtless say, if this be so, why is so much importance attached to faith? Why is it so frequently said, in substance, " He that

believeth shall be saved " " Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" "The just shall live by faith?" The reason is very obvious. Take the simile of eating the bread for an illustration. Let there be ever so much and so good food provided, unless we eat we cannot live. And so also, though the provisions of the Gospel are simple, " Enough for all, enough for each, Enough forever more," and though they are freely offered to us, unless we receive them we cannot be profited by them; cannot be saved from our sins, and be made partakers of this " great salvation;" and there is no other way for us to receive them, but by simply believing "with the heart unto righteousness." But in all this process the Lord goes before and prepares the way, by the operation of his Holy Spirit upon the heart, pointing out the way for the penitent sinner and this penitence itself is the effect of the Spirit working within him to come to Jesus Christ by faith; and then working in the heart of the justified believer, convincing him of the necessity of entire sanctification, presenting to his mind the Lord Jesus, whose blood is now ready to " cleanse him from all unrighteousness," and finally enabling him to throw himself, by a simple act of faith, upon the mercy of God in Christ Jesus for the full salvation of his soul from all sin, and when thus saved he sees and feels that it is all of grace, from beginning to its end.

Let us, my dear M., be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of this preparation of heart by the inworking of the Holy Spirit, which, as the apostle says, " works mightily in you that believe," stirring up within us a desire after this very thing, creating a " hungering and thirsting after" this perfect " righteousness," and in the mean time begetting a self- loathing, and a thorough consciousness of our utter inability to save ourselves by anything we can possibly do; and while in this state of mind, " burdened, sick, and faint," throwing ourselves helpless at the feet of Jesus, we cry out in the expressive language of the poet, in that most admirable of all the admirable hymns Charles Wesley ever wrote, and which Dr. Watts said was worth all the poetry he had ever written :

" What though my shrinking flesh complain, And murmur to contend so LONG;

I rise superior to my pain : When I am weak, then am I strong! And when MY ALL of strength shall FAIL, I SHALL WITH THE GOD-MAN PREVAIL." And 0, with what earnestness does this "weak," "self-despairing" one, struggling as under a mighty load of inward pollutions, staggering, "fainting" under his burden, and totally failing to find any relief in himself, or in any thing but the Almighty Saviour whom he so importunately seeks I say with what vehement earnestness does he pray in the next verse :

" Yield to me NOW, for I am WEAK,

But CONFIDENT in SELF-DESPAIR

I Speak to my heart, in blessings speak;

Be conquer d by my INSTANT PRAYER :

SPEAK, or thou never hence shall move,

And tell me if thy name be love."

I can hardly deny myself the pleasure of anticipating the happy deliverance of the soul which is brought into the glorious liberties of God’s sanctified children, which I design, if God gives me

strength for the task, to portray in a future letter, by quoting the next verse in this most exquisitely sweet and powerfully descriptive hymn, so delightfully expressive of the feelings of a soul receiving an answer to its " instant prayer." Read it, my dear M., ay, sing it with a heart overflowing with loving gratitude to God for manifesting such .love to our fallen world, and for raising up such a man as Charles Wesley, whose finest touches of poetry have cheered the hearts of thousands as they do mine at this moment of writing of weary, yet happy pilgrims from this to the land of rest. After that strong prayer of faith, the poet puts the following language into the mouth of his seeking, penitent believer, expressive of his joy at having found the object of his pursuit :

" Tis LOVE! tis LOVE! Thou diedst for me;

I know the whisper in my heart : The morning breaks, the shadows flee, One universal love thou art; To me, to all, thy bowels move, Thy nature and thy name is LOVE."

I leave you, my dear M., to find out the emphatical words, for they seem to me every one so full of meaning, that I know not how to distinguish one from the other, except it be the first two and the last. With this I must bid you adieu for the pre sent, with a promise, by God’s permission, to resume in my next, the subject of the way to attain the blessing about which I am writing.

1.A 22. LETTER XXII

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Fletcher and Hester Ann Rogers -Their interview related Mr. Fletcher relates his experience Loses the blessing four times by not confessing it Confesses his folly He now pro fesses to be " dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God" Through Jesus Christ He then called on all to confess Christ Exhorted them to come to Him Many professed the blessing The blessed effect upon Mrs. Rogers The whole commended to the reader. MY DEAR M : You have doubtless read much of Mr. Fletcher, as well as of Hester Ann Rogers, both of whom were living and dying examples of " perfect love." The former, you know, wrote largely in its defence, and were it not that objections assume new aspects, no thing more need be said on the subject. My object has been, without stating these objections in a formal manner, to meet and obviate them.

I think, after all, the most irrefutable evidence of the truth and reality of this doctrine is to be found in the experience and life of those who have professed its enjoyment. And there is an interesting fragment of the experience of Mr. Fletcher, preserved in the " Extracts from the Journal of Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers," being the second part of her Journal, not published in this country, in which he narrates the manner of his coming into the possession of this great blessing; and as I cannot doubt that it will be read by you, my dear M., and by all others who take an interest in this subject, I take the liberty of presenting it, as an illustration of the truth of what I have advanced. Mrs. Rogers introduces the account thus :

" I was kept all the morning in solemn expectation of blessings in seeing and conversing with Mr. Fletcher; till just before he arrived it was suggested, Thou wilt be disappointed; thou art expecting from man, and not from God. Fora moment my faith seemed staggered : but 1 fell on my knees before the Lord, owning him aa the only source of all my hopes and happiness; and he o abundantly filled me with his love, that natnro was almost overpowered; and I felt as if I must have expired at his feet, had not tears relieved me."

She then proceeds to relate the interview she had with Mr. Fletcher, in the following words :

" During these happy moments of communion with my God, Mr. Fletcher, Miss Bosanquet, and Mrs. Crosby arrived. When I entered the room where they were assembled, the heavenly man was giving out the following verses, with such animation as I have seldom witnessed :

" Near us, assisting Jesus, stand;

Give us the opening heavens to see; Thee to behold at God’s right hand, And yield our parting souls to Thee.

" My Father, O my Father, hear, And send the fiery chariot down! Let Israel’s flaming steeds appear, And whirl us to the starry crown! 14 We, we would die for Jesus too,

Through tortures, fires, and seas of blood; And all triumphantly break through, And plunge into the depths of God!"

After this, he poured out his full soul to God in prayer. Indeed, his every breath seemed to be a continuance of prayer or praise, or spiritual instruction; and every word that fell from his lips appeared to be accompanied by unction from above.

" After dinner, he inquired respecting Miss L., saying he had seen my letters to her. I took out her last to me, which he desired me to read; and kindly explained several things he had written to her, which she did not clearly comprehend; particularly that (in his words) all who enjoy perfect love possess also the gift of prophecy. By this, he said, he did not mean the miraculous gift of foretelling future events; but the magnifying God, by speaking unto men with the new heart of "love, and the new tongue of praise; as on the day of Pentecost, those who were filled with the Holy Ghost glorified God by speaking of his wonderful works, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This utterance he called the gift of prophecy; and earnestly insisted, that we might all prove the same baptismal fire of love that descended on that day on the primeval Church, seeing the promise was unto them and to their children, and to all them that arc afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. That we, as they, if we assert our privilege, may, with great power, bear witness of the grace of our Lord Jesus, and spread the flame of love we feel, by speaking unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort, among all our acquaintance. One hundred and twenty such souls he believed would set the world on fire.

" But he observed, the reason why those perfected in love did not more fully spread the savour of grace waa, because they do not, in general, plead for a more abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, both in his gifts and graces. He then earnestly exhorted all present to seek this fulness of love, and this gift of utterance; and taking my hand, proceeded, Will you, my sister, be one who shall spread the sacred flame? Come, my friend, I will covenant with you; we will join to magnify the Lord, and bear our testimony before men and an-i-N. Will you r

" In deep humility, but filled with the presence and power of God, I answered, with flowing tears, In the strength of Jesus, I trill.

" Glory be to God! glory be to God! said he, many times over; and his holy oul was filled with praise Lord, strengthen thy feeble dust to keep this covenant even unto death!

" I had a solemn season of communion with God be fore the meeting in Mr. Smith’s parlour. When we came there, after singing and prayer, Mr. Fletcher stood up, and said,

" My dear brethren and sisters, God is here! I feel him in this place. But I am ashamed; I would hide my face in the dust. I have dishonoured my God, and denied my Saviour by not confessing him. I have grieved his Spirit. I have been ashamed and afraid to declare what he hath done for my soul; but I am sensible of my folly, and deeply humbled on account thereof, and he has restored my soul.

" Last Wednesday evening, He instructed and commanded me, by his word, Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, I obeyed the voice of God, and now obey it, by declaring, to the praise of his love, I am freed from sin. Yea, I now bear witness, to the glory of his grace, I am dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, who is

my Lord, and reigns over every motion in my soul.

" I have received this blessing four or five times be fore; but I grieved the Spirit of God by not making confession, and as often I let it go. I lost it by not observing and obeying the order of God, who hath told us, With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; which latter I neglected.

" Once the tempter suggested, What you feel cannot be the blessing; perfection is something higher. You are not delivered from mistakes, ignorances, real errors in judgment, in memory, &c. : therefore, though you nre delivered from sinful tempers, you ought not to make a profession that you are holy. I listened to these things, and soon discovered I had lost what God had bestowed.

(i When I had re-obtained the same glorious deliverance, the bait was offered under another form. The enemy now said, Wait a few days, or weeks, and see if the fruits of sanctification appear, before you profess so great a salvation. I had no sooner yielded to await for the fruits, but I began to doubt of the witness, which before I had felt in my heart; and was in a little time sensible I had lost both.

" A third time, with shame I confess it, I was kept from being a witness for my Lord, by the suggestion, Thou art a public character, a city set upon a hill; the world and professors have all an eye upon thee; and if some future trial should overcome thee, or if, as before, thou shouldest by any means lose the blessing, what a dishonour and reproach will it be to the doctrine of heart-holiness?

" A fourth time, Satan prevailed over a worm by, It is true, thou art now freed from sin, thou knowest that Gospel-perfection is perfect love; that love is the ful filling of the law, not of Adam, but of Gospel grace; and that many ignorances, mistakes, &c., are consistent with perfect love; but how many thousands will not believe this! How many affirm that every transgression of the Adamic law, the law of perfect innocence suited to Adam’s sinless nature, his perfect body and soul, every transgression of this law, is sin! and therefore, if thou profess thyself freed from sin, all these will give thy profession the lie. Enjoy, therefore, what God hath wrought in thy soul, and hold it last, without declaring publicly, I am freed from bin; I am holy; I am perfect in love. But again I found, He that hideth his Lord’s talent, and improveth it not, from that unprofitable servant shall be taken away even that he hath.

" Now, my brethren, you see my folly : I have confessed in your presence, and now I resolve in your presence also, henceforth I will confess my Master to all the world. And I declare unto you, in the presence of God the Holy Trinity, I am now dead indeed unto sin. I do not say, I am crucified with Christ, because some of our well-meaning brethren say by this can only be meant a gradual dying unto sin, for a man who is crucified is a long time in dying; but I profess unto you I am dead unto sin, and that as effectually as my original nature was free from righteousness. But then, if our good brethren the Calvinists will still insist, Every ignorance, every involuntary mistake, is sin, we will not quarrel; then, in this sense I am not freed from sin, for I am not freed from these things- But, if I may venture to believe my Lord Jesus, if love be the fulfilling of the law, then I know that these things are consistent with love, with a single eye, and a pure heart; and I there fore dare to reckon thus in the presence of you all; and I mean to declare myself henceforth, before men and angels, dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ.

" Mind, it is still through Jesus, and in Jesus, not independent of him, or separate from him. I have taken him to be my Prophet, Priest, and King; my indwelling Holiness; my All in all. He is all I want; and I wait for the more full and entire fulfilment of that prayer of Christ, Let them be one in us; even that pentecostal blessing, that baptism of the Spirit poured out on the whole Church now upon earth, that shall make us all of one heart and one mind. O for the pure primeval flame! O for the fulness of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost! O my brethren and sisters, pray, pray, pray, for this effusion of the Spirit! Wretde, agonize with God till it be given.

" Then he called upon all present to confess the Lord Jesus. And if any, said he, have not the gift of utterance, pray for it, and it shall be given. You are commanded to covet earnestly and to pray for gifts, not for vour own sake, but for that of the Church. A man without gifts is like the king in disguise; he appears as a subject only. You are Icings and priests uuto God : Put on your robes, and wear on your garter, conspicuous to all, HOLINESS TO THE LORD! Reckon yourselves now dead indeed unto sin.

" You who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, what wait you for 1 Delay not. Unite your selves to Jesus, your Holiness, by believing; take to yourselves this great salvation; take it now. You must receive it by faith: Faith lays hold, and says, It is mine. As when you reckon with your creditor, with your host, and when you have paid all, reckon yourself free; so now reckon with God. Jesus hath paid all for thee; purchased not only thy pardon, but thine inward holiness. Now it is God’s command, Reckon thyself dead indeed unto sin; freed from sin, and alive unto God, now, this moment. O reckon now! Fear not; be lieve, believe, believe! and continue to believe every moment; for it is retained, as it is received, by faith alone. Whosoever thou art that wilt perseveringly believe, it will be as a fire in thy l>osom, and constrain thee to confess with thy mouth, thy Lord a&d King JESUS! and in spreading the sacred flame of love thou wilt b saved to the very uttermost

" My dear brethren, make a noble confession this night. Hide nothing from us of all that the Lord hath done for you. Yea, strengthen my hands, and let us offer the sacrifice of praise.

"After Mr. Fletcher ceased to speak, about thirty witnessed for Jesus, that they, through grace, were dead unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Numbers were so affected that they could not speak. I felt what was truly unutterable; I sunk into nothing; I was lost in the fulness of the Triune God!

" When the meeting was concluded, Mr. IT., taking hold of my hand, said, Glory be to God, my dear sister, for the testimony you have borne this night! and still holding my hand between his, he repeated several times, Glory be to God! I was so afresh filled witf^a weight of love, that I was constrained to retire, and vent my full soul in tears before the Lord."

I commend this truly interesting matter most heartily to you, my dear M., and to all who may condescend to read these letters, and to those more especially who either profess or are seeking after this invaluable blessing, and particularly that part of it in which Mr. Fletcher urges the necessity of declaring " what God had done for his soul." I fear many stumble here, not considering that God has pledged himself to keep those in " perfect peace" who cleave unto hh*. " with full purpose of heart."

1.A 23. LETTER XXIII

LETTER XXIII

It must be looked for now Without a moment’s delay It is the gift of God All of grace The way to attain it now illustrated This doctrine from Wesley From Fletcher Mrs. Palmer Dr. Peck From Charles Wesley’s poetry. MY DEAR M : In my last I endeavoured to point out the way in which the penitent believer must come into the possession of this blessing of " perfect love," or holiness of heart. If what I have advanced be true, as I am fully persuaded it is, then it follows, of necessity, that it may be received NOW this very moment without a moment’s delay. For if it is all of grace, received by a single act of believing, then we must receive it, if we ever receive it at all, now, in the present tense, without any other preparation than what God has already wrought in the heart by the operation of His Spirit, convincing us of its necessity, opening to our minds the way to attain it, demonstrating that "all things are now ready," that God is now able and willing to save us from all our sins this very moment and the moment we unhesitatingly believe, then we are saved, not indeed because we believe it, but we believe it because it is a fact,* that we "are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God." The salvation which is the gift of God has come, it is even now at the door of our hearts, and all we have to do to receive and enjoy it, is to open the door, by removing the bar of un belief with the key of faith, and let the Saviour, who stands at the door, with "all his great salvation," into our inmost souls and when this is done we are saved, so that we may " reckon ourselves dead unto sin, and alive unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Here is the key-stone of the arch which binds the whole spiritual building together THROUGH OCR LORD JESUS CHRIST. As I before said, it is not the simple act of believing that saves us, but it is the truth believed it is the object on

* There are two facts to be believed in order to be sanctified : The first is, that God is now ready and willing to sanctify us just as we are; and we must hold on to this truth until He does it; and, secondly, when He does it, we shall believe it, because it is done, and we have a witness of the fact. Hence the assertion in the text, that "we are saved, not because we believe it, but we believe it because it is a fact" a fact already revealed to the heart by the Holy Spirit, and therefore we believe it as an established fact, supported by competent testimony. And any man who believes himself sanctified before he has this evidence of the fact, believes an error, though he was fully authorized to believe, the moment he set himself to seek it with all his heart, that God was then ready and willing to save him from all his sins and sanctify him wholly. which the soul reposes that brings salvation it is the believing in the LORD JESUS CHRIST this is the truth that saves us, because there is an efficacy in the name of Jesus Christ, not found in any other name in the whole range of intelligences. It is therefore through this grand connecting medium between heaven and earth, between God and man, that this great salvation is brought to the soul of him who hangs upon Him by a single act of believing, and then, on this sole condition, HE saves us by an amazing act of GRACE.

It is like this : A man is standing on a dangerous precipice. He cannot go back for fear of falling into the hands of his enemies, who have driven him to this place. He cannot leap the chasm because it is so wide. He dare not descend for fear of falling into the yawning gulf. In this dilemma he hears a voice calling to him from the bottom of the gulf, " Let your self fall, and I will catch you, and land you safely on the other side. To convince you of the truth of what I say, here are A, B, and C, and some dozen others, all of whom were once in the same predicament in which you find yourself, and they all threw themselves into my arms, and they are now safely landed on the other side of the gulf. Let them speak, and testify for me." They all, with one consent, confirm the truth of what that strange voice had asserted. The poor, trembling man is thus induced to throw himself into the hands of his friend, and the next moment he finds himself safe over the gulf, joining the others in a song of praise to the benevolence, fidelity, and strength of their friend.

Just so the trembling, penitent believer finds himself standing upon the verge of despair. He has been seeking after deliverance from inbred sin for days and months. During all this time he has been striving to fit himself more perfectly for the blessing by prayer and fasting, mortifying the flesh, and other good works, but he could not grasp the prize of perfect love. Here he stands, half believing, half doubting, trembling as upon a precipice, afraid to go back and not daring to venture forward, when the voice of Jesus Christ, his Almighty Friend, salutes his ears, saying, " All things are possible to him that believes. Throw yourself, by a simple act of faith, into my arms, and I will hold you fast. Here are my friends, and your friends, all of whom will testify that they were once in a similar predicament to yourself, but they cast their souls into my hands, and I sup ported them." To the truth of this they all testify. Finally the seeking soul cries out, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief!" Help instantly comes. His inward distress is now removed, his soul is now filled " with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

He now wonders why he did not sooner believe, and enter into rest, not duly consider ing that all this time God has been preparing his heart for the reception of this very blessing, in this very way, and that therefore he has finally received it at the time and manner which God had himself prescribed, with the exception of his hesitancy in taking God at his word; for this unbelief he is now ashamed, because he knows that it was dishonouring to God to discredit his word, inasmuch as all "his promises are yea and amen, to the glory of God the Father." In respect to the duty of all those who have solemnly consecrated themselves to God, to believe that he is now, this very moment, able and willing to save them from all their sins, without a minute’s delay, all our writers on this subject agree. Thus Wesley, vol. vi, p. 505, says :

" Nay, but ask that it may be done now; to-day, while it is called to-day. Do not call this setting God a time. Certainly, to-day is his time as well’s to-morrow. Make haste, man, make hnste! Let " Thy soul break out in strong desire, The perfect bliss to prove;

Thy longing heart be all on fire To be dissolved in love."

Mr. Fletcher, also, in vol. ii, p. 639, says :

" Hence it follows that the most evangelical method of following after the perfection to which we are immediately called, is that of seeking it now, by endeavouring fully to lay hold on the promise of that perfection through faith, just as if our repeated acts of obedience could never help us forward."

Mrs. Palmer says :

" Yes, THERE is A SHORTER WAY!! I am sure this long waiting and struggling with the powers of darkness is not necessary." " How many, whom infinite love would long since have brought into this state, in stead of seeking to be brought into the possession at once, are seeking a preparation for the reception of it!" " God requires present holiness." Way of Holiness, pp. 17, 18, 19.

Dr. Peck says, Christian Perfection, p. 407 : " We must believe that this blessing is for us noiv. The faith that the blessing may be had some time or another at some future indefinite period will not prevail. It must contemplate the provision as within our reach as now at hand. It will not admit of delay. It knows no inconvenient season. It says, Surely now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." In this, then, we are all agreed, that every thing is fully prepared by the wisdom and goodness of God; the "fallings are killed," "the table is spread," and all things are now ready for the reception of the blessing of entire sanctification; so that whenever the penitent believer is prepared, by being willing to part with all his sins, to surrender his whole heart to God, he may receive the promised cleansing by a simple net of faith in Jesus Christ.

This, I believe, is in conformity to the experience of every sanctified soul. Do you not remember, my dear M., when you cried out, in the language of the poet " Into thy gracious HANDS 1 FALL, And with the arms of FAITH EMBRACE;

King of Glory, hear my call!

O raise me, heal me by THY GRACE! Now righteous through thy GRACE / am; No condemnation now I dread;

1 TASTE SALVATION in thy name;

ALIVE in thee, my living Head." And in respect to the earnestness with which the soul, in this state, is taught to look for a present blessing, fully believing that God is now, this very moment, able and willing to save to the uttermost, is fully expressed in a number of our hymns. Take the following as a sample :

" Rock of Israel! cleft for me, For us, for all mankind, See, thy feeblest followers, see, Who call thy death to mind : Still the fountain of thy blood STANDS FOR SINNERS OPEN D WIDE; Now, e en NOW, my Lord, mv God, I WASH MK IN THY Mnr.

Now e en NOW, we all plunge in, And DRINK the purple wave; This the antidote for sin, Tis this our souls shall save : With the LIFE OF JESUS fed, Lo! from strength to strength we rise, Folio w djjy our Rock, and led To meet Thee in the skies."

Equally expressive are the following words of the same inimitable poet, whose words of fire, I am sure, I cannot too often quote, especially for you, and for all those Methodists who ad mire the poetical genius of Charles Wesley. He says, in the 326th hymn, " Now, e en NOW, I yield, I yield, With ALL MY SINS to part; Jesus, speak my pardon seaVd, And PURIFY my heart; Purge the LOVE OF SIN AWAY, Then I into NOTHING FALL; Then I see the perfect day, And CHRIST is ALL IN ALL." And to show you, my dear M., how fully the poet has taught us to rely most implicitly on the grace of God in Christ Jesus, for this great salvation, I will quote one more verse from the 308th hymn. It reads as follows :

"Jesus, thou art our King! To me thy succour bring Christ the mighty one art thou, Help for all on thee is laid : This the word; I claim it NOW; Send me NOW the promised aid." May God help you, my dear M., who 1,,-m. obtained this invaluable blessing, to hold it fast by faith, and to prove the genuineness of your faith by good works, and especially the work of inviting all your Christian associates to seek for the high prize of " perfect love." ^ That this good work is advancing in the Church, I greatly rejoice to believe, and my sole object in writing these letters, is to contribute my mite towards its deepening and widening in the hearts of all God’s professing people, as well as to communicate strength and comfort to the heart of my friend.

1.A 24. LETTER XXIV

LETTER XXIV. An objection stated-Answered-He grow, faster, in consequence of being sanctified-Illustrated-No other way to avoid apostasy than to press forward-No standing still-No foundation for the objection-The sanctified soul will grow to all eternity Confirmed by our Hymns. MY DEAR M : It has been objected by some, that if we are made partakers of entire sanctification, we are so perfect that we cannot grow any more. That this objection is founded in error, will appear manifest from the following considerations. Which child is is likely to grow faster-the one that is born in a healthy state, has suitable care taken of him, is nourished with wholesome food, and takes a proper degree of exercise-- or the one that has a sickly constitution, has, consequently, no appetite for substantial food, and is unable to strengthen his physical system by due exercise? Common sense will anser, that the former must necessarily grow with the greatest thriftiness.

Well, the sanctified Christian is restored to perfect soundness of heart and mind, has a sharp appetitue for spiritual food, and is ever ready to exercise himself in every good word and work. Such a soul is, therefore, prepared to "grow up into Christ, his living Head, in all things," much faster than the one yet labouring under the "dire disease" of "inbred sin." All his mental powers are in vigourous action-- his understanding is enlightened-- his affections are purified-- his heart is expanded with holy love to God and man--his motives are pure, and he aims at right objects in all his pursits-- he has a keen relish for the word of God-- believes heartily all the promises of God, and obeys his commandments. Does not such a man "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ?" Is he not prepared, rom the state of his heart, as well as from the equilibrium introduced into all his mental faculties, and into all the passions and appetites of his nature, to "grow up to the perfect statue of a man in Christ Jesus," much more steadily, thriftily, and of course, more surely, than the one who is still lingering along under the weakening disease of the remains of sin in his heart? I think there can be but one opinion upon this subject.

We know very well that mankind are represented, in their natural state, as sickly, diseased, "bruised and mangled by the fall;" so much so, that "from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot there is no soundness." In this state the great Physician finds them. He takes them under his care, and to those who are willing to submit to his prescriptions, he pledges himself to effect a "perfect cure." This is done in justification and sanctification, the patient, in the mean time, submitting to take the bitter pill of repentance, while he exercises himself in prayer and faith. But a person who stops at justification has but half a cure performed. He is still sick at heart, and while labouring under this heart-sickness he certainly cannot grow up into Christ in all things as fast as he could were this remaining disease removed.

Besides, there is no other way to avoid backsliding from God, than to strive after this entire sanctification. Hence the reason why so " many are sickly and weakly" among us, and others are "falling asleep" in the arms of carnal security, is, because they have not been urged on in the path of holiness because they have not "forgotten the things which are behind, and pressed towards

the mark for the prize of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus"--because they did not " leave the principles of the doc trine of Christ, and go on to perfection." And I scruple not to lay it down as an invariable rule, that unless a justified Christian continually press on in the way of holiness, and seek earnestly after entire sanctification, he will inevitably " lose his first love," slide back into a state of lukewarmness, and finally apostatize from God. No man can stand justified before God while he goes counter to his will. And this is the " will of God, even our sanctification," declared not only in the text just now quoted, but generally throughout the word of God, both in the Old and the New Testament. Well, can a man retain his justification that does not make this will the supreme rule of his faith and practice? Certainly he cannot. If, then, he would retain a consciousness of his " acceptance in the Beloved," he must " lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset him, and run with patience the race that is set before him, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith," that he may receive from him continual supplies of grace to strengthen him for the race, and wisdom to direct him in the selection of the means necessary for his growth in the Divine life.

It is so true, that it has become an established maxim, that there is " no standing still " in this " work of faith and labour of love." We must be either gaining or losing; either going forward or backward. Those, therefore, who do not go forward, must go backward; and those that thus go backward will most assuredly lose their standing in a state of justification, and, of course, fall into a state of condemnation while those who go forward, according to their best light and ability, will gradually gain a victory over their besetting sins, will be delivered in the hour of temptation, until finally they will be able to say, sin is totally destroyed from their hearts, and the " life they now live, they live by faith in the Son of God" "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and death."

There is, therefore, no foundation for this very common objection, that if a man is made " perfect in love," there is no room for growth. There are, in fact, degrees of perfection. As Mr. Fletcher has somewhere said, a bud is a perfect bud, but not a perfect flower, and a perfect flower is not perfect fruit, and the fruit may not be yet perfectly ripe. Each stage is perfect in its kind and degree, though the bud is very im perfect when compared to the ripened fruit. So the bud of conviction may be perfect in its kind, while the blossom of justification presents an other degree of perfection, and the full-shaped fruit of sanctification presents a higher degree of perfection than either of the former, and then the sanctified Christian must go on ripening in every holy grace of the Spirit, until, like a ripe shock of corn, he is gathered into the garner of his Lord. And even after his arrival there, I apprehend he will be ever growing, his capacities will be continually expanding, so that he can comprehend new beauties of God and his works; new mysteries will be unfolded to his delighted view, while his holy soul shall for ever drink of those rivers of pleasures which flow from His right hand forever more. But the sanctified Christian will not only thus grow in wisdom, in humility, in faith, and abound more and more in good works, but he will labour more cheerfully, more easily, vigorously, safely, and profitably. As a sound, healthy man can eat and work much more than he that is sickly, so the Christian that is made "every whit whole," by the healing efficacy of Jesus blood, can do his Master’s work to much better purpose than he that is still labouring under the sin-sick disease of the remains of the carnal mind. He can pray with a stronger faith, watch against the slightest touches of temptations to sin with greater vigilance and success, can speak to others

on the subject of salvation with much more ease and propriety, and enter into all the works of benevolence with a deeper sense of their importance, than he otherwise could.

How full of this subject, this continued growth in the Divine life, are our Hymns, to which I so frequently refer with the more pleasure, not only because you, my dear M., admire them so much, and sing them so heartily and delightfully, but because they are so exactly conformable to Scripture, and agree so perfectly with the experience of every holy Christian.

" Yet ONWARD I baste to the heavenly feast; That, THAT it the FULNESS; but THIS is the TAITI!" But turn to the 283d hymn, old collection, and see how earnestly the poet prays God to " let his wisdom be his guide," and God's " peace and love his portion be," and then concludes the hymn in the following words of faith and prayer :

" Arm me with thy whole armour, Lord!

Support my WEAKNESS with THY MIGHT; Gird on MY THIGH THY conquring SWORD, And shield me in the threatning fight : From FAITH to FAITH, from GHACE to GRACE, So in thy strength shall I GO ON; Till heaven and earth flee from thy face, And glory END what grace BEGUN." And as if eager to grasp the whole length and breadth of sanctifying love, he says, " Give me the ENLARG D desire, And OPEN, Lord, my soul, Thy own fulness to require, And comprehend the whole. STRETCH my faith's capacity WIDER and yet WIDER still; Then with all that is in thee, My SOUl FOREVER FILL!"

It would seem that the poet adopted the principle of perpetual progression, a continual enlargement of the mental capacity, not only while we live in this world, but to all eternity. And what is there incongruous in this? Are not the works of the Almighty sufficiently magnificent to occupy the mightiest intellect in their contemplation, in their minutest examinations, as well as to command the wondering admiration of the most profound thinker, to all eternity?

O, my dear M., this is a subject too vast to dwell upon. It overwhelms us by its greatness!

" Astonish d at thy frowning brow, Earth, hell, and heaven's strong pillars bow;

Terrible majesty is thine! Who then can that vast love express, Which bows thee down to me, who less Than nothing am, till thou art mine!"

1.A 25. LETTER XXV

LETTER XXV.

How the blessing is kept Walk in Christ-Live in Him by faith God’s work to sanctify and keep us Poetry and Scripture quoted in proof None can withstand God Proved from Scripture and our Hymns St. Paul’s triumphant declaration It is enough The security of the sanctified asserted. MY DEAR M : Many, I suppose, have been deterred from seeking the entire sanctification of their natures from a fear that, though they might obtain it, they should not be able to keep it. This fear arises, I apprehend, from erroneous views respecting not only the nature of the blessing itself, but also of the manner in which it is to be kept.

It is true we have a duty to perform. " As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." Call to remembrance the manner in which you received Christ Jesus as your almighty, your present Saviour. Was it not by faith? But this faith was not exercised in him, until you were led to renounce all dependence upon yourself, as well as on every other creature, thing, or work. It was exercised also in the midst of prayer, accompanied by deep repentance, a renunciation of all sin, a sacrifice of self- love, earnest watchings against the intrusion of errors and sinful indulgence, and an intense de sire after the " one thing needful." But not withstanding all these exercises, none of them, nor all of them together, could have procured the blessing, unless God had bestowed it upon you by his Holy Spirit, applying directly to the heart the merits of the Lord Jesus, by which all sin was washed away. The work of sanctification is therefore eminently the work of God. He effects it in the heart by the mighty energies of his Holy Spirit. Not all our mourning, self-loathing, sincere repentance, fasting, praying, and even believing, would bring the blessing to our souls, until God himself " work within us to will and to do of his own good pleasure."

None is like Jeshurun’s God, So great, so strong, so high! Lo! he spreads his wings abroad, He rides upon the sky! Israel is his first-born son :

God, the Almighty God, is THINK; See him to THY HELP COME DOWN, The excellence divine!"

Read this hymn through, my dear M., not carelessly, nor hurriedly, but attentively, marking every word, and note particularly the 2d and 6th verses, and see how emphatically our evangelical poet ascribed our salvation from sin to that God who spreads around the head of those who come to him for help, " The everlasting arms."

Well, now, as we are indebted to God’s free, unbounded, unmerited grace in Christ Jesus for the reception of this great salvation, so we must remain indebted to the same almighty hand for its continuance.

" But is it possible that I Should live, and SIN no MORE?"

Hear the answer the poet gives to his own question :

" Lord, if on thee I dare rely, The FAITH shall bring the POWKB." This is in perfect accordance with the declaration of the Apostle Peter: "Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Observe! "Ye are kept." But how kept? "By the POWER OF GOD!" Not by your faith, simply considered, but only by faith, as a medium through which this continuous salvation is kept in the soul by the power of God. And I would ask, with all humility, and yet with strong faith in the veracity and ability of God, whether HE be not fully adequate to keep and preserve from all their enemies, however numerous, subtle, or strong, the souls that have " fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope that is set before them?" Hence he sings most delightfully, and with a strong, triumphant faith, " Thee the great Jehovah deigns To succour and defend; Thee the eternal God sustains, Thy Maker and thy Friend : Israel, what hast thou to fear?

Safe from all impending harms, Round thee and beneath are spread The everlasting arms."

I have not marked any particular words in the above stanza, to distinguish them from the rest as being more emphatical, because every noun and verb appear to be full of meaning expressive of the surest sustenance, support, and comfort to a believing, sanctified soul, so that he may confidently say, " The world, sin, death, oppose in vain; Thou, by thy dying, death hast slain, My great Deliverer and my God! In vain does the old dragon rage, In vaiu all hell its powers engage;

None can withstand thy conquering blood."

If none of the powers of hell, not even the "old Dragon" himself, can "withstand the conquering blood" of the Son of God, which is continually applied to the heart of the believer, not only to cleanse but to keep him clean, what has this believing soul however feeble, ignorant, or even helpless in himself what, I say, has he to fear? If he only fears and loves God, puts his trust in him, obeys his commandments with a filial heart, he may bid defiance to all his enemies, and adopt the following language of the same inimitable poet, whose celestial strains have animated the hearts of many a weary pilgrim in his way to the land of rest :

" By faith I plunge me in this sea;

Here is my hope, my joy, my rest; Hither, when hell assails, I flee :

I look into my Saviour’s breast : Away, sad doubt, and anxious fear! Mercy is all that’s written there."

O that our souls may fully enter into the spirit of these words, and catch a spark of the heavenly flame which burned upon the altar of his heart, and exercise a portion of that strong, triumphant faith, which bound him fast to the throne of God, and made him hang upon the promises, when he so confidently sung, and taught others to sing, " Fix d on this ground will I remain, Though my heart fail, and flesh decay; This anchor shall my soul sustain, When earth’s foundations melt away; Mercy’s full power I then shall prove, Loved with an everlas infr love "

O! my dear M., does not your soul feel a new impulse of holy joy while reading the above lines? and do you not find, descending into the very depths of your heart, that settled peace of God which passeth all human understanding, while you, in imitation of the poet, fix your firm, unwavering faith on that promise, made to every believing soul which proves the genuineness of its faith by its fidelity in every good word and work, " I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?" If this be the feeling of your heart, you do but sympathize with your unworthy friend and bro ther, whose heart

expands, while writing, with an enlarged desire to make known, as far as in him lies, the riches of Divine grace, with which God has furnished the persevering believer, to buoy him up amidst the turbulent waves of the sea of life, and to give him those transporting anticipations of entering upon that tranquil ocean of eternal repose, " Where all the ship's company meet."

How numerous, how rich, how full are the promises of God to this effect! Among others which might be selected, take the following from the lips of Christ himself: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28. This promise is as full and as absolute as words can possibly make it. If, therefore, the sheep of Christ only listen to his voice, follow him in faith and love, refusing to hearken to " the voice of a stranger," they are safe as the power, goodness, and veracity of God can make them for they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of his hand : and, with a view to render sure doubly sure, Jesus Christ adds, "And my Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man shall pluck them out of my Father's hands."

Though it is allowed that a sanctified believer may apostatize from God, yet, so long as he perseveres with fidelity, he is perfectly safe, because God has pledged himself to keep him under the hollow of his hand; and hence the apostle asks, " Who shall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" There is no reason, therefore, to fear, provided only we are faithful in the performance of our duty, but that God will perfect the work, will "carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ;" and no man, no power in earth or hell, shall ever be able to " pluck us out of his Father's hand."

It was this view of the subject which enabled St. Paul to adopt that triumphant language in Romans 8:35-39, in which he asks, " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus." On what is this persuasion founded? It is founded, 1. On the certainty of his own, and the experience of those of whom he wrote, of the sanctifying grace of God, respecting whom he had said, in verses 1-4, that " the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made them free from the law of sin and death," and who "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." So long as they continue thus to walk straight-for ward in the path of obedience to the commands of God, living by faith in Jesus Christ, they are perfectly safe, being " kept by the power of God." It is founded, 2. On the blood, and righteousness, and continued intercession of the Lord Jesus.

" Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketli intercession for us."

It is enough! If the death of Christ was suffered for us if his resurrection and continual intercession are in our behalf if his strength is imparted to us if the Holy Spirit has descended upon us to justify, regenerate, and sanctify our natures if this same Holy Spirit is continually with us, to guide and comfort us, and help our infirmities then, so long as we yield ourselves to his teachings, and consent to follow the Lamb wheresoever he may lead us, then may we confidently persuade

ourselves that nothing " shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."

Here, then, is the security of the sanctified Christian. So long as he is faithful, he is under the protection of the everlasting anus, and therefore may rest securely amidst storms and tempests, amidst temptations and trials, equally as calmly and confidently as in the most serene days of prosperity and happiness. In the midst of all these things he oau say,

" Yea, let men rage, since thou wilt spread Thy shadowing wings around my head , Since in all pain thy tender love Will still my sure refreshment prove."

1.A 26. LETTER XXVI

LETTER XXVI.

Duty of the sanctified To confess it Proved from the Psalmist From St. Pau] When a man speaks of what he knows, his words carry conviction An appeal to M. Example of the leper This confession commits us Mr. Wesley’s practice quoted Concluding remarks Poetry quoted in favour of the doctrine. My DEAR M : I cannot, consistently with my sense of duty, conclude these letters with out endeavouring to point out the duty of those who have come into the possession of sanctification. In the first place, it is the unquestionable duty of all such, on all suitable occasions, to proclaim it; for though it may be good to " hide the secrets of a king, it is right to proclaim the loving-kindness of God." While it is said that " with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," it is added, " with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." It is therefore as much our duty to make a " confession with the mouth" of what God has done for us, as it is to " believe with the heart" in Jesus Christ " unto righteousness."

Read over the Scriptures, and advert particularly to those parts where the saints of God are represented as " declaring what God had done for their souls." The Psalms especially are full of these declarations. " Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." Psalms 51:12-13. And then in the sixty-sixth Psalm, sixteenth verse, he says : " Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." And this declaration of what God had done for his soul was the most effectual way of teaching transgressors the ways of God, because by so doing his ways of saving sinners were more fully explained than otherwise they could be, and hence became the most efficient means of converting sinners to God. And when St. Paul was arrested by the fury of the mob, and brought before the rulers at Jerusalem to answer for himself, instead of entering into a laboured argument in his justification, he simply related his experience of Divine things how the Lord had appeared to him on his way to Damascus, and how he was delivered from his blindness by the ministry of Ananias. And this narration of facts carried such conviction to the heart of his judge that he exclaimed : " Almost thou persuadest me to be A Christian!" When ,1 man speaks of the things that he has seen nnH frit, and eperinlly when the hearers have confidence in his honesty, intelligence, and veracity, it is hardly possible to resist the conviction which his words carry to the understanding and heart; and, indeed, there is something in the language of truth, when uttered from an honest heart, and with a sincere tongue, which bespeaks for it a candid attention; the very intonations of the voice, as well as the expressions of the countenance, indicate that the speaker designs to lead you into truth. Hence a certain, undefinable sobriety marks every feature of the countenance, and sits prominently upon the words of the lips of that man who utters the real sentiments of his heart. And a sanctified soul hath this honesty of heart, so that the words of truth dwell on his lips; and though the superficial hearer may suspect him for a time, and the Pharisee may affect to despise him, yet he will gradually gain the confidence of all, and finally win the affections and command the esteem of the good and pious of all ranks of Christians :

" For honesty hath many gains, and well the wise have known This will prosper to the end, and fill their house with gold."

Tupper. Had you, my dear M, declined to tell your experience of the love of God, do you think you could have enjoyed it so fully as you now do? Could you have retained it for any length of time? I very much doubt it. " He that is ashamed of me, and of my words, before this wicked and adulterous generation, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and his holy angels," says Jesus Christ. And among the many gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, are the following : " Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." And the ten lepers that were cleansed by the word of Jesus Christ, the account of which is recorded in Luke 17:12-19, only one of whom, and he a Samaritan, "returned to give glory to God;" and to him the Saviour said, " Arise " for he had prostrated himself " at his feet, giving him thanks," " go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." What became of the others we cannot tell, but the probability is, that they again mingled with their brethren, the unbelieving Jews, and ultimately deprived themselves of the healing efficacy of Jesus Christ’s powerful word, by not acknowledging his healing authority.

There is an instructive lesson to be derived from this narrative. The grateful leper, feeling his indebtedness to the Lord Jesus, "turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God." Glorified God! In whatever other way we may glorify God, we learn from this, that by an humble acknowledgment of our dependence on him for his blessings, and more particularly for the healing efficacy of his cleansing blood, we thereby glorify his name, for this is an ac knowledgment of his power, goodness and veracity. Nor is it enough to acknowledge these attributes in general terms, but we must, if we would benefit ourselves and others, be particular and definite in the relation of our experience of Divine things. And though we may not be able to dive into the depths of the ocean of Divine love, and fully explain the manner of His work ing, yet we may be sufficiently particular to give an intelligible account of the working of the Spirit may explain with sufficient particularity the dealings of God with our souls, to make it profitable to all those who are earnestly seeking after the same blessing.

Besides, this acknowledgment of the love of God commits us to the cause in a way from which we cannot well retreat. As Whitefield said to Charles Wesley, soon after the conversion of the latter, when, the former urging him to go into the fields and preach, he objected, on ac count of his weakness of faith; "That is the very way to strengthen your faith; for you will have taken a stand from which you cannot well retreat." Charles Wesley went, and found the words of Whitefield verified. And so all those whom the Lord has blessed with perfect love will find, that by an humble confession of what God has done for them, on all suitable occasions, their faith will be increased, their hope and love confirmed, and their courage greatly invigorated, for they will have taken a stand from which they cannot well go back; and it will, moreover, be a means of guarding them against any inconsistency of con duct, for they will instinctively say, " We have taken the vows of our God upon us, and we must now guard against charging God foolishly, or sinning with our lips, lest we bring a reproach upon his name, and a disgrace upon ourselves." This will also encourage others who are seeking after the same blessing, to pursue after it, as well as point out the way in which they are to obtain it.

I say they are to do this on all suitable occasions. They need not blab it out at all times, before all companies, and never in a boasting way, as if anxious to proclaim their own righteousness, or to

exhibit themselves as infallible examples of holiness. This would be to defeat the very object they ought to have in view. This object is not to exalt themselves by proclaiming their own righteousness, but to exalt the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and to encourage others to seek it with full purpose of heart. In exact conformity with this Scriptural view of the subject, Mr. Wesley exhorted his people to make known the goodness of God to their souls; and hence the establishment of class and band-meetings, love-feasts, and other religious associations, in which select meetings they might freely express their religious experience, and more especially make known the loving-kindness of God in redeeming them "from all iniquity."

I cannot, indeed, hardly conceive how a soul, filled with the fire of Divine love, can refrain from making it known. His intense desire to proclaim the goodness of God will impel him to open his mouth, that he may give expression to the feelings of his heart. Hence he says,

" Then will I tell to sinners round What a dear Saviour I have found; I ll point to thy redeeming blood, And say, Behold the way to God!"

It is time that I bring these letters to a close, though I have much matter yet in my heart on this most delightful theme, which, if life and health permit, I may express at some future time.* * Thus far was written for the Christian Advocate and Journal, and the Letters which follow have been composed since. In closing these remarks, permit me to say, that I am truly thankful to Almighty God for enabling me thus to express my most mature thoughts upon this deeply interesting subject. And if you, my dear M , and any others of my readers, have received benefit from what I have written, give God the glory, and pray for the writer, that the remainder of his days may be sacredly devoted to the cause of Christian holiness, and that he may exemplify its purity and excellence in his spirit and practice. May we say with the poet I have so often quoted, and the re-perusal of whose hymns, while com posing these letters, has heightened much, in my estimation, their unrivalled excellence, as well as more indelibly impressed their deep, experimental and spiritual meaning upon my heart, and thereby created a fresh glow of gratitude to God for raising up such a man as Charles Wesley, and giving him ability to furnish the Church with such inimitable productions of his evangelical heart and pen may we, I say, adopt the following lines with a sincere faith and joyful hope :

" Come, and all our sorrows chase, Wipe the tears from every face; Gladness let UH now obtain, Partners of thy endless reign.

Death, the latest foe, destroy; Sorrow then shall yield to joy; Gloomy grief shall flee away, Swallow d up in endless day." In the mean time, I trust you, my dear M- will join with me in the following prayer :- " Our friendship SANCTIFY and BLESS, Unmix d with SELFISHNESS and PRIDE; THY glory be our SINGLE AIM! In all OUR intercourse below, Still let us in THY footsteps go, And never MEET but in THY NAME.

Fix on THYSELF our single eye;

Still let us on THYSELF RELY, For all the help that each conveys; The help as from THY HAND receive, And still to thee all GLORY GIVE, All THANKS, all MIGHT, all LOVE, all PRAISE."

1.A 27. LETTER XXVII

LETTER XXVII.

Superior advantages of sanctification Creates a keener relish for spiritual things The judgment is enlightened Can more heartily enter upon God’s work His faith is stronger Speaks with more effect If a minister, he preaches with more power He shines the brighter His example more hallowed All these things present strong motives to seek for sanctification Confirmed by poetry. My DEAR M : To what has already been said in favour of the entire sanctification of the soul, I wish to add a few words on the superior ad vantages such possess in getting and doing good. As a sound, healthy man can eat his food with u keener relish, and do his work with greater vigour than a sickly man. so a person who is restored to perfect spiritual health has a much more keen relish for spiritual food, and can labour in the vineyard of the Lord with an energy and perseverance to which the person who is still lingering under the disease of in bred sin is a stranger. All his faculties are in vigorous exercise all duly balanced, his understanding is enlightened, so that he can judge accurately respecting truth and duty can discriminate not only between right and wrong as they are marked out in the great code of morals, but also between proprieties and improprieties; and then his will is so bent that it follows with voluntary alacrity the dictates of his well-in formed understanding, and all the affections of his heart, being purified from everything unholy, are placed on " things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

Now this man is certainly fitted, both from the maturity of his judgment, the dictates of an enlightened conscience, the subordination of his will to the will of God, and the conformity of his desires to the standard of purity, to enter into the work of God in prayer and praise, and in the discharge of every duty, whether it be to God or man, with greater energy, delight, and perseverance, than the man can who still labours under the darkening, weakening, and debasing influence of sin, whether outward or inward, whether it relates to the desires of the heart or the actions of the life. On this account, there fore, if there was no other, the sanctified soul is qualified both to receive and impart good far better than he otherwise could be. But there are other reasons for this. The Holy Scriptures teach that according to our faith it shall be done unto us. Now faith to the soul is what the eye is to the body. And as the eye cannot see things accurately when any dust is lodged in it, or a disease infects it, so this eye of the soul cannot apprehend God as he is, cannot perceive clearly Divine truth, much less can it rely implicitly upon the promises of God, so long as it is obscured by sin, or weakened by its influence upon the soul. It is, therefore, only when these evil diseases are removed that the soul is prepared to exercise that strong faith in God, which cries out, " It shall be done."

Until the soul is entirely sanctified to God, there is less or more of unbelief mixed up with all we say or do. But when sin is removed from the heart, and it is filled with Divine love, this unbelief is also banished, and the soul looks up, being "strong in faith, giving glory to God." And this faith, be it remembered, is not con fined to the simple act of believing by which the soul is justified or sanctified, but it includes the holding fast upon the promises of God under all possible

circumstances, through the whole pro gress of our pilgrimage; so that whatever we do, whether we sing, pray, converse, preach, or give of our substance, we do it all in faith, fully believing that God will accept and bless the labour of our hearts and hands.

Now a man that acts under the influence of this vigorous, this lively, this energetic faith, can certainly do much more in the cause of God than he who lingers along under the deadening effects of unbelief, not seeming to care whether he be successful in his efforts or not; and this sanctified soul cries out in the strong and vehement language of the poet :

" In the strength of God I rise, I run to meet my foe; FAITH the word of God applies, And lays the giant low; FAITH in Jesus conqng name Slings the sin-destroying stone, Points the word's unerring aim, And brings the monster down."

Whenever the soul, armed with this mighty faith, that " Laughs at impossibilities, And crie* it shall be done." offers a prayer to God, he offers it in faith, believing that, inasmuch as he prays according to God's will, submitting himself and everything else to that will alone, his prayer will be answered, for he fully believes his " Every promise true."

Whenever he speaks in the name of his God, he believes He will bless his word either to the conviction, the conversion, the sanctification, the strengthening, or the comforting of those to whom he speaks, and therefore he does not " spend his strength for naught." Is he a minister? If he be thus consecrated to God, enjoying the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, his word will "distil as the dew upon the tender herb, and as the rain upon the grass." His words will drop fatness upon the souls of God's people, and they will feel that this man speaks in the Holy Ghost, " with much assurance," "in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power," because they have in their own hearts a lively sense of the truths which he utters, and the Spirit of God bears witness to their spirits that he is sent of God to preach unto them "Jesus and the resurrection." And though all the sinners that hear him may not be converted, vet, when he addresses himself to them, a conviction of the truth will fasten upon their consciences, and they will go away, not so much admiring the preacher, as condemning themselves; while the people of God will praise Him for sending them an ambassador who has been made unto them a " savour of life unto life."

Such a man ascends the pulpit in the fear and love of God, being deeply impressed with an awful sense of the tremendous responsibility he acts under while he endeavours to unfold the otherwise hidden truths of Divine revelation, and with his heart heaving under the pressure he feels, he earnestly lifts it in prayer to God that he will assist him with the energies of the Holy Spirit that his word may be accompanied with the Divine unction, and that it may b<: carried in the demonstration of the Spirit to the con sciences of all that hear him. This prayrr is offered in faith. He believes that God, for Christ's sake, will hear him. He is not disap pointed. His own soul is blessed his In-art is enlarged his understanding is fruitful the word of God is lik - " lire shut up in his bon- and he pours forth a -(ream <>f Divine truth with which the heritage of the Lord is watered, and every plant thrives nnd grows, bearing fruit even unto perfection. This is the man of God : his soul is sanctified, and he has been sanctified, that is, set apart for a minister of the sanctuary, and he speaks with an earnestness, a sincerity, and with a power in the Holy Ghost, which cannot well be mistaken for mere empty declamation. It is not empty declamation. No well-informed man attributes this to him. All such feel in their inmost souls that he speaks what he knows, and utters the genuine sentiments of his heart, of a heart that " Swells unutterably full Of

glory, and of God."

Under the influence of this holy feeling, he adopts the following language of the sweet but powerful poet of our Israel :

" My talents, gifts, and graces, Lord, Into thy blessed hands I give; And let me live to preach thy word; And let me to thy glory live; My every sacred moment spend, In publishing the sinner’s Friend.

" Enlarge, inflame, and fill my heart With boundless charity divine! So shall I all my strength exert, And love them with a zeal like thine; And lead them to thy open side, The sheep for whom the Shepherd died." The same may be said, in some measure at least, of every holy Christian. In his pious walk and conversation in the private circles in which he moves, in the constant exercise of that faith which unites him to God through Christ, he carries a hallowing influence with him, draws constantly around him the souls that are seeking after an interest in Christ, or are yearning after full redemption in his blood, and points them in fnith to the " Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." This faith becomes an active principle, impelling its possessor on in acts of charity to the souls and bodies of men enables him to face dangers, to overcome obstacles, to encounter and conquer opposition, and to triumph in the Lord at all times.

Again, Christians are compared to stars, and even to the sun in the firmament, and these stars cannot emit their rays clearly while surrounded with clouds, nor can the sun exhibit its brilliancy except the atmosphere be free from mists or clouds. Just so the Christian, while surrounded by the clouds of darkness, or while the rays of his character are intercepted by the mists arising from the pool of inbred sin which yet remains in him, cannot until entirely sanctified to God, exhibit that clear light which shines forth in the tempers, the words, and the actions of a holy Christian. In order, therefore, that he may perfectly answer the end of his calling, namely, to be a " light in the world," and let his " light so shine before men that they may see his good works and glorify his Father who is in heaven," he must be " cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," be "holy in all manner of conversation," walking continually as " seeing Him who is invisible." Hence, the soul that pants after God, that longs to be useful to his fellow- men, and feels unceasingly his dependence on God for faith, light, and love, adopts with the utmost earnestness the following language of the poet :

" God of all-sufficient grace, My God in Christ thou art! Bid me walk before thy face, Till I am PURE in heart. Till, transform d by FAITH divine, I gain that perfect love unknown, Bright in all thine image shine By putting on thy Son." When this deep and earnest prayer is answered, so that they shine " bright in all His image," then are they qualified, and not till then, to exhibit such an example to those with whom they have intercourse, as shall lead them to the fountain which washes away the foulest stains of sin. Then it may be said of them in truth, that they " Beyond the reach of mortals, spread Their light where er they go; And heavenly influences shed On all the world below."

Yes, and " their lustre shall still increase, unto the perfect day."

Now, what a motive does this three-fold view of the subject present, to induce the sincere Christian never to rest until he is entirely sanctified to God! I know full well that it is th> honest desire of every converted soul, from the moment of his conversion though he may not have attained to all

the heights and depths of perfect love to get and do all the good he can. He desires, above all things, that others his near relations, his neighbours, and indeed all the world should participate with him in the unspeakable blessing of pardoning love. Yet he often finds that " when he would do good, evil is present with him, so that the good he would, he doeth it not." His faith is comparatively weak, his love is not of that ardent kind which characterizes the holy soul, and his zeal in the cause of God often flags for want of a strong principle of internal energy to urge him forward in the path of duty. But let him get his soul " baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire," with that "holy fire" which shall consume all his sins, and fill him with strong faith and love, and let him feel that inextinguishable zeal for God’s glory which leads him forth to make sacrifices for Jesus Christ, and he will find himself in a new element, moving, or rather being moved, under the promptings of a holy impulse, and animated with higher hopes and brighter anticipations of ultimate success in his work.

There can therefore be no doubt that a sanctified soul is prepared both to get and do more good in the world than he otherwise could either get or do. His nature is freed from the weaken ing disease of sin his faith is stronger his love is warmer his light shines the brighter, and consequently his whole man is prepared to enter into the work of God with a more enlightened understanding, and with a much more vigorous action than he could possibly do while destitute of this unspeakable blessing.

I cannot conclude this letter more appropriately than in the words of the poet I have so often quoted, and which I delight to refer to, because they exceed any other poetry ever printed on the subject of perfect love. He says respecting this holy soul :

" In a land of com and wine, His lot shall be below; Comforts there and blessings join, And milk and honey flow! Jacob’s well is in his soul;

Gracious dews his heavens distil : Fill his soul, already full, And shall forever fill." May you, my dear M., find this to be your "lot," that your soul may be forever full "of glory and of God!"

1.A 28. LETTER XXVIII

LETTER XXVIII.

Must be fitted for death here A definition of death The effect of separation Distinction between death and annihilation Matter itself indestructible Love of life natural to all Its use The more holy, the more we desire to live Anecdote of a preacher Of Whitefield and Tennent Nevertheless we must all die Death a curse It shall be destroyed Love of life buoys up the believer Cure of melancholy. MY DEAR M : I think it cannot be disputed but that a sanctified soul is prepared to die. It is equally certain that none others are thus pre pared. Unless we adopt the absurd notion of a death purgatory, or a purgatory after death, it is indisputable that a soul must be purified from sin here, or never enter the heaven of holiness hereafter. This, however, has been sufficiently demonstrated in my previous letters, and, in deed, is plainly implied in every requisition of the gospel respecting the necessity of purity of heart to prepare us to see the face of God in peace. "Without holiness no man shall see God."

Without saying more on this branch of the subject, my design in the present letter is to speak on the subject of DEATH itself. But what is death? However difficult it may be to give such a philosophical definition of death as to free it from all obscurities and objections, I think such a definition may be given as will answer our purpose, and present the subject clearly to the mind. Death, then, is the effect of separation. You separate a limb from the body, and the separated limb dies as a necessary consequence. Separate a vegetable from the earth, whence it derives its nourishment, and the vegetable dies. This definition will enable us understand the nature of that penalty denounced upon our first parents, if they should presume to violate the command of God, which prohibited them from eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. " In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;" that is, thou shalt be separated from communion with me, thy God, and separated from the garden of pleasure in which thou wast destined to dwell, and finally thy soul and body shall be separated. All this, and much more, was included in that original sentence denounced upon Adam, as a punishment for his sin. So also, the spiritual death which comes upon the soul as a consequence of sinning against God, includes, 1. A separation of the soul from communion with God; and, 2. Provided the sinner dies in his sins, an everlasting separation, a " banishment from the presence of God, and-the glory of his power." The death, therefore, which we now contemplate, is a separation of the soul and body, and then, at putrefaction, a separation of the component parts of the body itself; so that each element flies off to its native element, and there mingles again together air to air, water to water, fire to fire, and earth to earth. This is the death of the body. So says Tupper,

" And corruption, closely noted, is but a dissolving of the parts : The parts remain, and nothing lost to build a better whole."

We must carefully distinguish between death and annihilation* This latter is a word that cannot be understood literally; for not anything which exists, so far as we know, is susceptible of annihilation; that is, of being reduced back to nothing to a nonentity. All that matter, in its grossest form, or most

refined essence, is capable of undergoing by the separation of its elementary principles, is a modification of its existence; for it exists, in all its essential properties, as much after this separation as it did

* The thought of annihilation is painful! None can wiih It but to floe from guilt. Dr. Young very justly says : " Should st thon be good how infinite thy loss Guilt only makes annihilation gain. Bless d scheme! which life deprives of comfort, death Of hope; and which vice alone recommends." before, only it exists in a modified form. Thus the body that dies mingles again with the elements of which it was composed, and goes to form other bodies, either of vegetables or animals; and thus continues to change its form from one vegetable or animal to another, ad infinitum, so far as we know, but never ceases to be, in some modified form, always perceptible to the senses whenever it comes within their range.* Annihilation, therefore, is a word the literal signification of which cannot be explained by experiment, either by the process of nature, or by any chemical analysis. Not so death, or the separation of those parts of which bodies are composed. This is taking place daily, hourly, nay, momentarily, before our eyes. Our friends are dying, all animals are dying, and the vegetables are decaying continually in the midst of us. In the midst of this ever-changing state of beings and things what do we see? We see a fulfillment of the original decree denounced upon sinning Adam : " Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou re turn." And under this decree we find ourselves included. We are doomed to death. Our bodies must soon be separated from our souls, * There is much truth in the following line of Dr. Young : " From human mould we eat our daily bread." and then the bodies themselves must be separated at putrefaction; so that their elementary principles shall fly off, and mingle with their native elements. Have we reason to fear death? Surely those who are fully prepared to meet it, by being entirely sanctified, have not. Yet I apprehend that most of even these have an instinctive aversion to death, and can say from their own experience, 41 How deep implanted iu the heart of man, The dread of death!

Not, indeed, because they fear to meet it as a conquered enemy, but chiefly because it is an enemy with whom though conquered, he is not slain they must contend, and finally overcome, in order to enter into life everlasting. But however much or little we may fear death, we all have an inextinguishable love of life. And I know not but that the more holy a per son is, the longer he wishes to live; because he is conscious that while he lives, he can be instrumental in both getting and doing more and more good. For though he can say with St. Paul, that for him " to die is gain," yet " to live is Christ;" that is, is for the glory of Christ; and it is for the glory of Christ that he should be instrumental in the conversion and sanctification of immortal souls; and the longer such a man lives, and diligently labours in the vineyard of the Lord, the more souls he may be the means of bringing to Christ, and thus surround him with a wider circle and a more brilliant halo of glory.

You, my dear M., will join with me, I doubt not, in admiring the saying I once heard drop from the lips of a devoted minister in the pulpit, namely, " That he would greatly prefer, were it left to his choice, to be an itinerant minister of Jesus Christ, than to be an angel in heaven. Yea," said he, " I would not exchange places with Gabriel! Why not? Because, while I am thus employed, I may be instrumental of snatching some sinners as brands from the burning; but if I were a disembodied spirit, I could no longer preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, but must be content in enjoying my rest in heaven. I therefore wish to live as long as God shall see fit to prolong my life, that I may promote the glory of Christ in the salvation of sinners." This was a wise saying, indicative of an en lightened understanding and a pious heart. Thus the poet expresses it :

" I would the precious time redeem, And longer live for this alone, To spend, and be spent, for them aloue, Who have not yet my Saviour known : Fully on these my mission prove, And only breathe, to breathe thy love." This brings to my mind an anecdote I once heard respecting Whitefield. It seems that Whitefield was in the habit of sighing out, every now and then, " that my work were done, that I might go to heaven!" Being in company one day with a number of clergymen, among whom was the holy Mr. Tennent, Whitefield, as usual, sighed out, " O that my work were done, that I might receive my reward!" and then ap pealed to the brethren present, whether that was not a just sentiment. To which they all except Mr. Tennent, who said nothing assented. Whitefield then appealed to Tennent, and wished to know what he thought of it. This holy and considerate man replied, " I think it is a very foolish wish. What would you think, if you had a hired man at work in your field, who, in stead of working on with cheerfulness, were to look up at the sun every now and then, and sigh out, O that my work were done, that the sun would set, that I might receive my wages? Would you not conclude that he was a lazy, mercenary being, who was more anxious to get through his day's work, and get his wages, than he was to serve his employer?"

These sensible remarks opened their eyes to the folly of expressing a continual desire to die and go to heaven, instead of being content to labour on cheerfully in the vineyard of the Lord, striving to do all the good we can, knowing that the longer we live, the more we suffer and do in our Master's service, the greater will be our reward, and the brighter our crown in heaven. But we must all die! And the prayer of the holy soul is expressed in the following words of the poet :

" O that without a lingering groan, I may the welcome word receive; My body with my charge lay down, And cease at once to work and live!"

Death is a curse, and therefore must be endured as a mark of God's displeasure at sin. And surely we cannot look at this curse with pleasure, only as it is an entrance into life, after which all living animals long. I say all living animals long for life. And this is a mark of God's benevolence his fixing in the very nature of man this inextinguishable love of life, and, of course, an aversion to death. Hence we instinctively shrink back from everything which threatens death. To avoid it, man will submit to all manner of hardships, privations, and sufferings, and will take the most nauseous food in order to prolong his life. " All that a man hath, will he give for his life," is a truth written in every man's breast. Were it not for this strong love of life, the world would soon become depopulated. For who else would submit to the pains, the labours, the privations, the disappointments, and the sufferings of the pre sent life? I apprehend no one! If we were entirely indifferent to life could embrace death with the same pleasure that we go to sleep, eat our food, or enjoy the society of our friends, all would die soon, and the earth would become a barren desert.

It appears, therefore, that God has wisely and benevolently implanted this inextinguishable love of life in every human heart, and he has provided a means by which it may be gratified to its fullest extent, for " he that doeth the will of God, abideth forever." It is, therefore, to this innate principle of our nature that God addresses himself, in order to induce us to embrace the Lord Jesus as our Almighty Saviour. " He that believeth on him, shall have ever lasting life." Hence the hope of life of ever lasting life after death has sustained the holy Christian in the midst of his trials, supported the martyr in his pangs, and stimulates the believer in Christ to perseverance amidst the oppositions, the crosses, and the sufferings, with which he may be called to contend, to the termination of his

pilgrimage. It is respecting such that the poet says, " Who are these array d in white, Brighter than the noon-day sun? Foremost of the sons of light;

Nearest the eternal throne 1 These are they that bore the cross;

Nobly for their Master stood; Suffrers in his righteous cause;

Follwers of the risen* God." This hope reconciles us to death. We no longer view it as an enemy merely, but as a friend, come to admit us into the presence of Him who came to conquer this enemy, and convert him, against his will, into, and actually makes him do the office of, a friend! Indulging in this blooming hope, he can adopt the following words of the same unrivalled poet :

" Jesus, in thy great Name I go, To conquer death, my final foe; And when I quit this cumbrous clay, And soar on angels wings away, My soul the second death defies, And reigns ETERNAL in the skies."

I thank God for this view of death! To what am I indebted for it? To Christianity. This has brought life and immortality to light. It

* 1 have substituted " risen" for " dying," which the poet used, for very obvious reasons has not only brought life and immortality to light, but it has provided a medium by which the sinner may be reconciled to God, and may be thoroughly sanctified, and thereby fitted to participate in those pure joys which "are at his right hand forever more." Hence I anticipate the day, when it shall be said of me, as well as of my dear M., and all those who have " washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,"

" And let this feeble body fail, And let it faint or die; My soul shall quit the mournful vale, And soar to worlds oo high : Shall join the disembodied saints, And find its long-sought rest, That only bliss for which it pants, In the Redeemer’s breast." In the mean time we may adopt the following, as the anxious inquiry of our hearts :

" And am I only bom to die . And must I suddenly comply With nature’s stern decree T What after death for me remains T Celestial joys, or hellish pains, To all eternity."

Hence the necessity of employing ourselves, while our probation lasts, to the best possible advantage. And surely every pious heart will adopt the following language of the same hymn from which I before quoted :

" How then ought I on earth to live, While God prolongs the kind reprieve, And props the house of clay? My sole concern, my single care, To watch, and tremble, and prepare Against that fatal day." And to guard ourselves against the gloom which the contemplation of death tends to cast upon our minds, let us look beyond the tomb to those fields of immortality, "where our posses sion lies." How well calculated to inspire this thought are the following words of Young :

" See, from the tomb, as from an humble shrine, Truth, radiant goddess! sallies on my soul, And puts delusion’s dusky train to flight; Dispels the mists our sulky passions cause, From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene, And shows the real estimate of things." May you, my dear M., and I, and all who believe in immortality, so live, that whenever death comes, it may " show us the real estimate of things," and find us fully prepared for " an abundant entrance into the everlasting

kingdom of our God!"

1.A 29. LETTER XXIX

LETTER XXIX

Resurrection of the body an article of belief peculiar to Christianity Obscurely revealed to the Jews A wonderful truth- he germ preserved-Fully set forth in the Sacred Scriptures -Incorporated in the Christian system What sort of body shall be raised Not the same that was deposited in the earth -A spiritual body Tins the triumph of Christianity-Quota- >n from Charles Wesley’s poetry-From Tupper-A thrilling ruth Reason why the body must bo sanctified II, pared to participate with the soul in the joys of heaveu We should therefore keep our bodies pure Soul and body act cou- jomtly, and therefore .share in tho reward-Quotation from Young’s Night Thoughts.

|Mv DEAR M : One of the most glorious truth-: of Divine revelation is that which asserts the resurrection of the just and unjust. And this is a truth peculiar to Christianity. Heathenism taught it not. Its belief in the immortality of the soul was more conjectural than otherwise, and as to the resurrection of the body, and its consequent immortality, it never dreamed of such a thing. Jt remained, then-fore, for Christianity to announce this truth in plain and intelligible lan-uau e, and thus to render that certain which had W,i aforetime left not only in doubt, but altogether unheard of throughout all the Gentile world. And it appears that in our Saviour’s time the Jews themselves had become so blinded, that however clearly some of their prophets mi^ht ln\e pn.rl.- im. d this truth, they had lost sight of it, and hence, while they marvelled when He taught them the spiritual resurrection of the soul from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, He said unto them, " Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." This was a truth which it seems they had never thought of believing; for though it had been taught by some of their prophets, it had been so obscurely expressed, that it had not been incorporated as an article of their religious belief hence their astonishment at its announcement by our Saviour, in the above quoted words. This, to be sure, is a wonderful truth! To think that these bodies which have been mouldering in the dust for centuries, shall finally be raised by the power of God, and made " like unto Christ’s glorious body," is a truth far surpassing the human understanding, and could be believed only on an express declaration of God himself, and this declaration has been made. All that is necessary to form the identity of the human body, shall, it seems, be preserved during all the mutations through which matter shall pass from death to the resurrection, and this shall be the germ of which the future body shall be formed by that Almighty hand wlii-.-h shall raise it from the dead. That this is a doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures no one can seriously doubt., however mysterious it may appear to human philosophy, or incredible to the eye of human reason. The apostle Paul in the 15th chapter of the first Kpistle to the Corinthians, sets it forth in the most express terms, in the following words: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there be no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up

Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised : and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miser able." Ver. 12-19.

How any man can read these words of the apostle, and then doubt of the resurrection of the dead, I am at a loss to conceive, as they as sert most positively the certainty of the fact, so much so as to say, that if this do not come to pass, the whole Christian system is a fabrication. Even the resurrection of Christ, of which there is no fact of Divine revelation more surely asserted, falls to the ground, and of course, all the apostolic preaching, as it was all grounded upon it, is proved false. The fact, therefore, of the resurrection of the body is incorporated into the Christian system, and it is as much an article of faith as is the being and attributes of God, or any other truth whatever. In the subsequent part of this same chapter, namely, from verse 35 to 49, the apostle answers the querist, of what sort of bodies the saints shall come forth from the grave; and he shows that it is not that same body that was deposited in the earth that shall be raised, any more than it is the same seed that was sown that springs up and bears fruit. "It was sown a natural body, but it is raised a spiritual body." So changed is this raised body, that it would appear the apostle could find no word in the language to represent the idea that he had of it, and therefore he uses a compound term, " spiritual body," in order to represent it, indicating that it is of such a nature as neither to be wholly spiritual nor wholly material, but partaking some what of the nature of both spirit and matter, or, as he terms it in another verse, a " celestial body," in distinction from a " terrestrial body." What ever may be its nature, however it may be changed, refined, or spiritualized, we are certain that it will be immortalized, be entirely freed from corruption, and put beyond the reach of decay; and thus will be finished the grand work of redemption, not only in the emancipation of the soul from the slavery of sin, but the deliverance of the body from the bondage of corruption. This is the complete triumph of Christ over the power and work of Satan in the introduction of sin into our world, by which came " death and all our woe." Death itself shall be destroyed, and one universal life shall exist and flourish; so that in the " new heavens and new earth," which God shall have formed out of the present heavens and earth destroyed, nothing shall ever again " hurt or destroy;" but one eternal "day without night," life without death, pleasure without pain, union without separation, shall forever exist, live, and flourish in perennial growth and exquisite happiness. This whole subject is beautifully unfolded in words of poetic fire, creating a melody as sweet as ever saluted a mortal ear, and yet as grand as ever expanded before a human understanding, in those well-known, though but seldom sung, lines of Charles Wesley. read them, my dear M., and meditate on every word you read, in the following stanzas, which must have sprung from a heart thoroughly penetrated with a firm belief in the future retribution of the righteous dead, and their resurrection from their dusty tombs. Surely the poet’s pen must have been dipped in the oil of sanctifying grace to enable it to run so smoothly and nimbly over the subject of the final restoration of all things, and to have painted the sublime scene in such varied and beautiful colours :

Stand th omnipotent decree;

Jehovah’s will be done; Nature’s end we wait to see, And hear her final groan. Let this earth dissolve, and blend In death the wicked and the just; Let those pond rous orbs descend, And grind us into dust :

Rests secure the righteous man; At his Redeemer’s beck, Sure t emerge and rise again, And mount above the wreck : Lo! the heavenly spirit towers, Like flames o er nature’s funeral pyre Triumphs in immortal powers, And claps his wings of fire.

Nothing hath the just to lose, By worlds on worlds destroy d;

Far beneath his feet he view*, With smiles, the flaming void; Sees this universe renew d, The grand millennial reign begun , Shouts, with all the sons of God, Around th eternal throne!

Resting in this glorious hope, To be at last restored, Yield we now our bodies up, To earthquake, plague, or sword : List niug for the call divine, The latest trumpet of the seven, Soon our soul and dust shall join, And both fly up to heaven." The same thought is expressed, though in less beautiful language and poetical grandeur, yet equally true to inspiration, by Tupper, in his chapter on " Immortality," a chapter which you, my dear M., I know have read attentively, for I find it full of your marks, especially these lines which speak of the love of God displayed in this sublime work of the resurrection of the dead, and hence I conclude, that this is a subject on which you are wont to contemplate. The following are the words to which I allude :

" Why should it seem a thing impossible to thce, O man of many doubts, That God shall wake the dead, and give this mortal immortality? Is it that such riches are insearchable, the bounty too profuse! And yet, what gift, to cease or change, is worthy of the King Almighty?

For, remember, the moment thou art not, thou mlghteit M well not have been." But poetry apart, is not this a subject on which angel minds must ponder with supreme delight? To behold the dead, small and great, "new rising from the tomb," coming forth at the command of God, renovated, refined from all those grosser compages with which they were before disfigured, clogged, and rendered mortal, now made "like unto Christ’s glorious body," all " immortal and divine!" Surely, if at the first creation, " all the sons of God shouted for joy," those same "first-born sons of light" must raise a more thrilling shout of praise to God at beholding this new creation rising into existence by the command of the most high God! And with what holy delight will the redeemed souls hail the appearance of those raised bodies, their old companions in tribulation, in labour, in watching, and fasting?

O, my dear M., with what rapturous delight may the saints look forward, and joyfully anticipate the day, when their bodies shall be raised, reanimated, immortalized, and thus become the fit receptacles for their purified souls, and they shall unitedly enter the paradise of God, to go no more out forever and forever! This is a con summation not only " to be devoutly wished," but to be looked for with the most longing expectation, and laboured after with the utmost diligence and steady perseverance.

Now we see a reason why the apostle prayed that we might be " sanctified throughout soul, BODY, and spirit," and that we might be " pre served blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus," in the clouds of heaven, to awake our slumbering dust, and to fashion us " like unto Christ’s glorious body." We see also a reason why he said, " Your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, if any man defile the temple of God," that is, defile the sanctified body by sin, "him will God destroy." These bodies of ours which have been thus sanctified set apart for the ser vice of God, and in which the Spirit of God dwelt, and by whose holy influence they have been actuated in all their movements, have been watched over by our Divine Shepherd, even after they

were deposited in the tomb; all that is necessary to form their identity has been preserved amid all the mutations through which they may have passed from death to the resurrection, and then, at " the voice of the Son of God," they " shall come forth," as the poet teaches us to sing, " From earth they shall quickly remove, And mount to their native abode, The house of their Father above, The palace of angel* and God."

Yes, at that glad hour, " Our mourning is all at an end, When, raised by the life-giving Word, We see the new city descend, Adorn d as a bride for her Lord : The city so holy and clean, No sorrow can breathe in the air : No gloom of affliction or sin : No shadow of evil is there ." The bodies, therefore, that have participated with the souls in labour and suffering, in joy and sorrow, in temptation and deliverance, in all the meanderings of human life, shall share with them, after the morning of the resurrection, in all the joys, the rewards, and all the glories of heaven. They shall be completely fitted, not only by having been sanctified to the service of God while on earth, but also, and more espe cially, by the refining process of the grave, by which all the mere fleshy particles are destroyed, and all the carnal propensities have been forever annihilated, to be^ as the angels of God, " who neither marry nor are given in marriage," pure, etherial beings, or, as the apostle expresses it, " spiritual bodies," by which we are to under stand that they are as nearly assimilated into the likeness of angels as they can be, with out participating with them entirely in their purely spiritual nature they being so entirely clianged, that their bodies themselves are no longer earthly, or fleshly, but spiritual and heavenly. what a motive does this present to impel us forward in the grand work to which we are called! To think that these bodies of ours, while actuated by our souls, may, by being consecrated to the service of God, be made sub servient to the advancement of the cause of Christ what an inducement is this, to employ our tongues, our hands, and feet, with all our material faculties, in the holy service of Al mighty God! How careful should we there fore be not to defile our bodies by any sinful indulgence, but to "keep our garments unspotted from the world!" The chief instrument, indeed, of sin, is the body. It is through the medium of the body that temptations are presented to the soul, to draw off its allegiance from its rightful sovereign, and whenever the soul yields to the temptation, the body itself is precipitated with the soul into the vortex of sin. Hence the necessity of watching these natural " avenues of evil," that no temptation be permitted to gain an ascendency over us, or to start us aside from the straightforward course of obedience to the com ands of God. For this the poet prays in the following wordb :

" Take my soul and body’s powers;

Take my mem ry, rniud, and will; All my GOODS, and all my hours;

AH I know, and all I feel; All I think, or speak, or do; Take my heart, but make it new." Do you not perceive, my dear M., how the poet recognises the truth I am endeavouring to inculcate, when he prays that his body may be taken into the service of God, and not only " all he thinks," but " all he speaks," for we speak with our tongues as well as think with our minds may be taken under his direction. Indeed, while we continue in this world, the soul and body are so closely united, that they must work jointly; the body is the instrument of conveying ideas or thoughts to the mind, and then the mind puts forth its volitions, and moves the body to action; and all this is done, reciprocally acting upon each other, like true bosom friends, who move each other forward by mutual acts of kindness, until they are separated by death, when the soul flies away to paradise, and the body, no longer moved by an active spirit, sinks away to the grave, there to sleep until the resurrection.

Then it may be said and sung, " Angels catch the approving sound, Bow, and bless the just award;

Hail the heir with glory crown d, Now rejoicing with his Lord, Fuller joys ordain d to know, Waiting for the gon ral doom, When the archangel's trump shall blow RISE, TE DEAD, TO JUDGMENT COME "

This, my dear M., is the consummation of our wishes! What more, indeed, can we ask? Both our souls and bodies, having been sanctified by the blood of Christ, "washed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," the one passed from the other immediately into the presence of God, and the other passed through the grave, and ultimately is raised by the power of God, are finally reunited, and now spend an eternity in " praising God and the Lamb!" This is " above all we could ask or think." Let us therefore, this once, unite in ascribing " honour, and glory, and power, and dominion, to God and the Lamb, forever and ever." The following lines of Young are so full to the point, <is well as expressive of the most joy ous and triumphant faith in the resurrection of the body, and its consequent immortality in end less felicity and as I know that you, my dear M., delight to luxuriate in the prolific field of sacred poetry I cannot conclude this letter more appropriately, than by quoting th-m. They are as follows :

" The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain! O the bunt gates! crush d sting Ueinolt.sh d throne!

Last gasp of vanquish d death! Shout earth and heaven! This sum of good to man! whose nature, then, Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb!

Then, then, I rose; then first humanity Triumphant pass d the crystal ports of light, (Stupendous guest!) and seiz d eternal youth, Seiz d in our name. E er since, tis blasphemous To call man mortal. Man's mortality Was then transferr d to death; and heaven's duration Unalienably seal d to this frail frame, This child of dust Man, all-immortal! hail!

Hail, Heaven! all-lavish of strange gifts to man!

Thine all the glory; man's the boundless bliss.

Bound, every heart! and every bosom, burn!

O what a scale of miracles is here! Its lowest round, high planted on the skies; Its towering summit, lost beyond the thought Of man or angel! O that I could climb The wonderful ascent, with equal praise!

Praise! How for ever (if astonishment Will give thee leave;) my praise! for ever flow;

Praise ardent, cordial, constant; to high Heaven More fragrant, than Arabia sacrificed, And all her spicy mountains in a flame." The wonderful theme which inspired the poet's heart, and gave such eloquence to his pen, was that of redemption, including the death and resurrection of the Son of God; but from this sublime fact he deduced the certainty of the resurrection of the pious dead, and hence he sung,

" O when will death (now stingless,) like a friend, Admit me of their choir? O when will death This mouldering, old partition-wall throw down? Give beings, one in nature, one abode? O death divine! that givest us to the skies!"

1.A 30. LETTER XXX

LETTER XXX.

We are saved by grace Rewarded according to our works These two truths reconciled Salvation one thing, reward an other All saved by grace, the nest not excepted Yet rewarded according to our works Hence the different degrees of glory will be in proportion to our works Harmony of these two truths, salvation by grace, arid reward of works Every pious work will be rewarded What a motive this to diligence For every act of obedience shall be rewarded. MY DEAR M : Having attended to the resurrection of the dead in the former letter, it seems proper to inquire now respecting the re wards which the saints shall have bestowed on them by the Judge of heaven and earth.

There are two truths equally revealed in the Sacred Scriptures, and which, therefore, equally claim our attention and challenge our belief. The first is, that we arc saved by grace. That our salvation from first to last, including the en tire scheme of redemption by Jesus Christ, our conviction for sin, justification, sanctification, and our preservation in holiness, and our glorification at the right hand of God, is all of grace that it all originated, is carried on, and perfected by the free grace of God in Christ Jesus this is a truth unequivocally revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and is attested by every experimental Christian from the creation down to the JM time. Let this, therefore, remain an established axiom in our theological creed. The second is no less certain, namely, that we are rewarded according to our works. This is also unequivocally asserted in numerous pas sages of Holy Scripture, and so precious are the good works of the pious considered by our Saviour, that he said, " Whosoever giveth a cup of cold water to any, in the name of a disciple, he shall not lose his reward."

Now, our business is to reconcile these two truths, and to show not only that they are not contradictory one to the other, but that they subsist in perfect harmony, and consequently that they support and defend each other.

Salvation, then, is one thing, and reward an other. A man may be saved by an amazing act of Divine grace, and yet have no reward. Thus, the thief upon the cross was saved, but he had no reward, merely because he had done no good works. This is the case also with all those who die in infancy they are saved by an act of grace, merely because Jesus Christ made an unconditional atonement for them, and thus bought them off from the curse of the Adamic law. Though thus saved, they have no reward. So also, I suppose, thousands are saved upon a dying bed, who, in their last, moments, repent, believe in Christ, and ask for mercy, and are snatched from the burning pool, by an astonishing act of Divine grace while others are " saved so as by fire," that is, they do but just escape, in consequence of the imperfect manner in which they have prepared themselves for death and judgment, owing to the incorrect views they had respecting the plan of salvation. These all have escaped from their sins by an amazing act of Divine grace extended to them for the sake of what Jesus Christ did for them, and hence they will finally sing the song of deliverance to God’s unbounded love in redeeming them from their sins, and washing them in the

blood of the Lamb, in such an undeserved way and time.

Indeed we are all, the best of us not excepted, saved by grace. Were it not so, we could not be saved at all, for " we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and therefore need pardon and sanctification to fit us for the enjoyment of God in heaven. And even the most holy among us have, at times, been guilty of many aberrations from the strict rule of justice, and therefore have fallen under the curse of God's holy laws, and should therefore be condemned, were it not for the grace of God in Christ Jesus, which saves us from the guilt thus incurred, washes nit th- st:iins i.f -in, and thereby prepares us to shout the praises of re deeming love forever. It is, moreover, by the grace of God that we are kept from falling, pre served from moment to moment in the path of purity, and " strengthened with might in the inner man," to do and suffer His righteous will. This is all of grace, from first to last. Hence all who are saved at all, are saved by grace, and must therefore shout in the great day, " Grace, grace unto it!"

Nevertheless, such is the goodness of God, that he is pleased to reward every act of obedience to his commands, whether it be by way of sacrifice of property, reputation, labour in his cause, or acts of mercy and charity to the souls and bodies of his needy followers and others. Hence it is said, that every man shall be " rewarded according to his works." This, as is well known, is declared in numerous places in the Holy Scriptures. Thus in that well known passage, Matt, 25:31-46, in which the distinction is marked between the righteous and the wicked at the last day, and the reasons assigned why the one shall be received into the kingdom of heaven, and the other " shall go away into everlasting punishment," into that "lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels." To the righteous the King is represented as saying,

"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : Naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Now it is manifest from this, and other similar passages which occur in various parts of the Sacred Writings, that those who are found at the right hand of God at the last day, will all be rewarded according as their works have been in this world; and hence it appears reasonable to believe, that the several degrees of glory shall be in exact proportion to the measure and weight of their good works; for these will form the criterion by which they shall be tried when God "comes to make up his jewels." The apostle speaks of the different degrees of reward in 1 Corinthians 15:41-42, where he says, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." These words cortninlv indicate thnt thore shall be different degrees of glory among those who are raised from the dead, as much so as there are different degrees of brightness and splendour among the stars of the firmament; and this comparison had long before been authorized by the prophet Daniel, who had said, that " they that turn many to righteousness should shine as the stars, forever and ever," that is, they shall emit various degrees of splendour : and these shall be in proportion to their capacities, and the amount of their good works; or the number of their talents, and the manner in which they have improved them; for it is evident that each servant shall be rewarded or punished, not according to the number of talents merely with which he was favoured,

but in proportion to the manner in which he improved or neglected to improve them, " Crown d with righteousness, arise Far above these nether skies."

They shall participate, each one according as he has fulfilled his holy trust, " done good in his day and generation," in all the glory peculiar to his allotment in the bright galaxy of the renovated firmament of the " new heavens," and in this " New world, his truth to prove, A world of righteousness and love."

I said that these two truths, salvation by grace, and the reward by works, not only harmonize together, but that they mutually support and de fend each other. Thus, salvation from sin by grace fits the soul to bring fortli good works. "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good also." And as where there is good fruit on a tree, this fruit demonstrates that the tree is good; so where good works are found in the actions of a professed Christian, they unequivocally prove, that the heart which produces them must be good also; and where the heart is good, thence will proceed those good works which God will reward : and thus they reciprocally sustain and defend each other, and demonstrate the reality of the work of grace on the heart. Grace re fines the soul, and the soul thus refined is adorned with the graces of the Holy Spirit, and the life is loaded with good works, and then these present an irrefutable argument in favour of the genuineness of the refining process of the Holy Spirit; and all these together proclaim the goodness of God in thus redeeming the soul from sin, and thereby fitting it to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Thus our poet teaches us to sing:

" Meet it is, and jiut, and right, That we should bo wholly thin*; In thy only will delight, la thy blessed tervict join :

O that every WORK and word, Might proclaim how good thou art;

Holiness unto the Lord Still be written on our heart."

It is grace, therefore, that qualifies the holy believer to bring forth these good works, these works of piety, and many which demonstrate to the world that a new creation has been formed in the heart, and that all the actions of the life now proceed from a hallowed motive; for the fountain whence proceed these streams of mercy with which Emmanuel’s land is watered, and by which the souls and bodies of God’s people are refreshed and invigorated, has been purified by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; and hence, such as is the fountain, such are the streams, and such are their effects.

Now what a motive does this present to diligence in the improvement of our time and talent! If every act of obedience performed with a pure motive is to be rewarded in heaven, should we not be extremely careful to fill up every niche of time in acts of piety to God and mercy to man? And if the several degrees of glory are to be in proportion to the amount of good works per formed, then it follows that the more we do and suffer in the cause of God, the brighter we shall shine in the kingdom of heaven. What floods of glory then shall burst forth upon the patriarchs and prophets, and all those holy apostles, saints, and martyrs, who laboured and suffered in the cause of Christ, from age to age, and whose works have followed them to the bar of God! I know not, indeed, but that all the con sequences of their works will be reckoned in the amount. If so, then their reward will be increased in the same proportion as their words and actions shall continue to influence mankind! How vast then will be the reward of those whose example is quoted from age to age, and

whose good works stand recorded upon the page of history, as exemplifying the grace of God which sanctified their natures, and thereby rendered their works good and acceptable in the sight of God, and profitable to man! How earnestly, therefore, should we pray, in the language of the poet, " If o poor a worm as I May to thy great glory live, All my ACTIONS SANCTIFY, All my WORDS and thought! receive , Claim me Tor thy SERVICE, claim ALL I HAVE, AND ALL I AM."

Think not, my dear M., that because you love to be " little and unknown, Lov d and priz d by God alone," therefore that you will have little or no reward. Your labours of love, springing from a loving heart, your many acts of hospitality shown to the servants of God, your many unostentatious gifts to the poor in your neighbourhood, your acts of benevolence to the institutions of the Church, your words of counsel to the ignorant to the vicious, as well as the inquiring mind and the crosses you bear for Christ’s sake, as also the trials you endure from your relative position, shall be remembered by your heavenly Father, and will all meet with an ample reward at his hands in the last day, when " life is swallowed up of immortality." Let this then be your consolation, that "not a hair of your head shall fall to the ground without your heavenly Father’s notice," and that every "cup of cold water," that is, every act of benevolence, how ever small or great, shall not "lose its reward," and Christ will say unto you, " Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of my disciples, ye have done it unto me." Yes, my dear M., you shall with all " The saints in his presence receive Their great and eternal REWARD; In Jesus, in heaven, they live, They reign in the smile of their Lord. The flame of angelical love Is kindled at Jesus’s face; And all the enjoyment above Consists in the rapturous gaze." The thought expressed in these concluding words, suggests the nature of that happiness which the saints shall enjoy in heaven, which will be considered in the next letter, and there fore I shall conclude this by simply remarking, that all this reward of which I have spoken, originates not from the merits of the works per formed, but from the grace of God in Christ Jesus, which led him to make a promise of be stowing it upon the faithful, persevering believer, with a view to stimulate him to diligence in every good word and work. Hence he says in the words of the same poet I have so frequently quoted,

" Thou, Lord, on whom I still depend, Shalt keep me faithful to the end : I trust thy truth, and love, and power, Shall save me till my latest hour; And when I lay this body down, REWARD with an immortal crown."

1.A 31. LETTER XXXI

LETTER XXXI.

Beholding the glory of God a principal source of happiness- Negative character of enjoyment No pain, <fec. Wicked cease from troubling Positive character of it Fulness of joy Recognise each other Proved from Tupper The author anticipates the pleasure of recognising his friends Poetry This pleasure shall never end Increase of knowledge another source of enjoyment This evident to those who taste the pleasure of knowledge Saints shall raise the highest notes of praise Angels unite with them in songs of praise Concludes with poetry by Charles Wesley. MY DEAR M : No doubt that one portion of the enjoyment of the saints in heaven will consist in the glory which they shall inherit as a reward of their good works. But this is not all, and by no means the principal part of their happiness. Its principal source will, doubtless, be in beholding the glory of God as manifested in Christ Jesus, for then, and there, they shall " see Him as He is." We now " see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as we are known." Those mysterious workings of Divine providence which we could not comprehend in this world; the reasons and ends of God’s dispensations, which were often hidden from our view; and all those deep designs into which we could not penetrate with our limited perceptions, shall be fully unfolded, explained, and made plain to us when we get home to glory.

One part of the happiness of the heavenly world will be of a negative character. There will be " no pain, nor sickness, nor death;" there " shall be no night there; nor shall they have any need of the sun, for the Lord God and the Lamb shall be the light" of that holy temple. The power and goodness of God shall forever have removed, through the process of the grave and the resurrection, having first, in this life, purified their souls from the pollution of sin all the causes of sickness, pain, and death; they shall never be permitted to infect that holy atmosphere, or to seize upon those raised and immortal bodies which will inhabit the New Jerusalem; and the glory of God will shine so resplendently as to banish all moral and natural darkness from that holy palace of " Angels and of God." So our poet teaches us to sing in that admirable hymn, which seems to have been com posed with a bright anticipation of a joyful en trance into that heavenly world, where all is light and peace. Surely his soul must have expanded with a full and delightful view of the superlative happiness which awaited him on his release from the bondage in which he was held in this life, when he penned those words of poetic melody and rapturous delight. Hear him, my dear M , while he depicts in glowing colors, and in numbers so sweet and smooth as to charm the dulcet ears of even angels them selves, those ecstatic joys in which the saints shall participate at the right hand of God :

" No need of the sun in that day Which never is follow d by night, Where Jesus’s beauties display A pure and a permanent light : The Lamb is their Light and their Sun, And, lo! by reflection they shine; With Jesus ineffably one. And bright in effulgence divine." In the present life the righteous are often annoyed with the conduct of the wicked, with a tempting devil, and with the allurements of a vain and deceitful world. But there "the wicked cease from troubling;" the devil shall have been

"cast into the lake of fire;" and all vanity and deceit shall be forever separated from those " new heavens and new earth." These, with a thousand other nameless evils which " flesh is heir to," shall be forever banished from our sight, being excluded from the New Jerusalem.

How beautifully is this all expressed in the following words of the poet!

" Our mourning is all at an end, When, rained by the life-giving Word, We see the new city descend, Adorn d as a bride for her Lord : The city so holy and clean, No sorrow can breathe in the air; No gloom of affliction or siii; No shadow of evil is there." But their enjoyment shall not be merely of a negative character. They shall have " fulness of joy, for at His right hand there are pleasures forever more." As I have already said, there is the pleasure of beholding God " without a dimming veil between," of being assimilated into the likeness of Jesus Christ, and participating in all the joys of the upper world all those joys arising from perfect health of body and mind a perfect supply of all our wants, and perfect union with all the redeemed of the Lord, and a never ending felicity in the beatitudes of heaven. But shall we recognise each other in heaven? Undoubtedly we shall. Is not this fully implied in those words of the Saviour, Luke 13:28, "When ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and 50:-i- cob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out?" For if those who are summoned to the judgment-seat to be condemned are permitted to recognise those holy men of God. Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob, and all the holy prophets, surely those associated with them in the kingdom of God will know them personally, and be able to distinguish one from the other. Yes : then " shall we know even as we are known;" and one part of our joy shall consist in the renewal of that holy fellowship which we enjoyed on earth, and recounting together those acts of Di vine love which brought us safely through our trials, and made us " more than conquerors, through him that loved us." How just and true, then, as well as exhilarating, are the words of the poet, when he says :

" I yearn for realms where fancy shall be filled, and the ecstacies of freedom shall be felt, And the soul reign gloriously, risen to its royal destinies. I look to recognise again through the beautiful mask of their perfection The dear familiar faces I have somewhere loved on earth. 1 long to talk with grateful tongue of storms and perils past, And praise the mighty Pilot that hath steered us through the rapids.

He shall be the form of it all; the very heart of gladness : My soul is athirst for God for God in man!"

These sentiments perfectly accord with the feelings and desires of every sanctified soul. All such feel that union one with another which makes them desire each other’s society, and they delight even now to converse one with an other, to mingle their souls together in mutual acts of kindness. And surely they would be deprived of one source of the purest enjoyment in the heavenly world, were they denied the privilege of recognising each other there, of conversing together, and hailing one another blessed forever more. Hence those " dear, familiar faces," as the poet expresses it, will be recognised again when they meet on that eternal shore, and they shall more sweetly than ever interlock their affections, intermingle their souls, and interchange their sentiments of love and friendship, recount those mutual sorrows, afflictions, and trials, through which they had passed in this world, and all shall unite together in " praise to the mighty Pilot," in ascribing " honour and glory, power and dominion, to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever."

Allowing that the saints in heaven have a personal existence, as they unquestionably have, and especially at the resurrection have an identity of bodily appearance, I can see no possible reason why those who were acquainted with each other in this world, should not recognise each other in that; and thus heighten each other's enjoyment by mutual recognitions, mutual congratulations, and mutual interchanges of love for love, and joy for joy with n perpetual round of mutual pleasure, arising from the eternal sunshine of God's smiling countenance beaming upon them in the face of Jesus Christ. There parents will salute their children, hus bands their wives, one friend will hail his other friend, and ministers will meet their flocks; while those who have been peculiarly blessed under their ministry, and who have been endeared to them by a thousand acts of kindness, and tender offices of friendship, will clasp each other in the arms with inexpressible delight, while they all bow together, and sing :

" More than conquerors at last, Here we* find our trials o er; We have all oar sufferings past, Hunger now and thirst no more. No excessive heat we feel From the sun's directer ray; In a holier clime we dwell, Region of eternal day."

I certainly look forward with a delightful anticipation to that day when I shall have the unspeakable pleasure of hailing the numerous friends with whom I have been associated in the bonds of Christian fellowship some of whom were converted under my ministry; and they and others were often strengthened an

* I have altered the third to the first person, to accommodate the language to the supposed circumstances. comforted by the words God enabled me to speak and comfort myself with the contemplation of spending an eternity with them in the paradise of God! This pleasant thought softens the bed of affliction, fills the heart with rapture, alleviates the pain of parting with those here in whose society I have often taken such exquisite delight. And therefore I comfort myself with the pleasing expectation of a re-union with those from whom I shall never no, never be severed. Did not the poet feel something of this, when he penned those well-known, often-repeated, and often-sung and sung too by holy souls with rapturous delight words, which I give with the more pleasure, because I know that you, my dear M- -- , dwell upon them with a pleasing anticipation of one day realizing their complete fulfilment. I allude to the following :

" O what are all my su/Tring* here, If, Lord, thou count me meet With that enraptur d host to appear, And worship at thy feet! Give joy or grief, give ease or pain, Take life or friend* away; But let me FIND THEM ALL AOAI*, In that ETERNAL DAY."

Surely the poet M.-^-.l himself with the bright hope of finding his numerous " friends again in that eternal day!" And may we not participate with him in this desire and expectation? We may we do; for I know that your holy heart beats high in the well-grounded hope of a re-union in " that bright world above " with those whom you have loved on earth; and I certainly have a kindred feeling in my poor heart, that, however unworthy, I may be permitted to renew my friendship, and to connect my fellowship with all those ivith whom my heart has been united in the bonds of Christian love, in an eternity of reciprocal acts of kindness, and mingle with them around the throne of God. An eternity thus enjoyed! the transporting word! In this imperfect state of being, our pleasures are often interrupted by pains, our happiness by misery, and our most exquisite enjoyments are transitory in their nature they all must soon terminate; but in that world of bliss to which the saints are hastening, there is not only universal delight it shall never be interrupted by a fear that it will

end; it shall continually roll on, wave after wave, swelling as it rolls, to all eternity! This is enough, and therefore no words can make it appear more lastincr than is included in that word, ETERNITY!

Strangers and pilgrims here below, This earth, we know, is not our place; But hasten through the vile of woe,

And, restless to behold thy face,

Swift to our heavenly country move,

OUR EVERLASTING HOME ABOVE."

Another source of enjoyment shall be the perpetual increase of our knowledge. In this world our knowledge, at best, is imperfect. We are often deceived through the fallibility of- our judgment liable to imposition by the stratagems of others, through false appearances, and by a thousand other hallucinations that are continu ally playing around our imaginations, and tempting us to yield our understanding and heart to their exclusive sway; so that even when we arrive at truth we seem to hold it with a trembling hand, fearing it may slip from us before we are aware of it. Though, therefore, we may be so far successful as to find the truth, how little of it do we know! We are often compelled to dwell upon the surface of things, without being able to dive into their depths, to scan their essences, or to comprehend those secret laws by which the world is sustain ed, governed, and kept in perpetual motion. Hence, as the apostle expresses it, W<- know but in part." We know, indeed, that we exist, that the world exists around us, because we see it, and all those self-evident truths with which

\ve are surrounded; but how little do we know of the internal structure of our bodies, of the powers of our minds, of those mysterious laws which bind them together; and how much less still do we know of that curious mechanism by which the world is held together, and each planet and system is made to keep its place and move around continually in its respective orbit? But in that bright world, all those impediments to the ascertainment of truth being re moved, we shall see things clearly all will appear as it is; and though we may not be able to discover the whole field of vision at once, yet we shall be ever ranging through it with in creasing delight, while God will unfold to our ravished vision, new, and ever-varying beauties, of his "eternal power and Godhead," as dis played in his magnificent works. With this prospect before him, the poet expresses himself in the following delightful strains :

" I long to behold Him array d With glory and light from above; The King in his beauty display d, His beauty of holiest love : I languish and sigh to be there, Where Jesus hath fix d his abode; O when shall we meet in the air, And fly to the mountain of God!" And in the prospect of eternally dwelling on that happy shore, with his vision of knowledge immeasurably enlarged, he breaks out in the following language :

" With him I on Zion shall stand.

For Jesus hath spoken the word;

The BREADTH of Immanuel’s land

Survey by the light of my Lord." To those who can testify by their own experience to the pleasure which every new discovery of truth affords to the mind even here, I need say nothing to convince them of the exquisite delight that this ever- increasing, ever-unfolding, and ever-expanding " breadth of Immanuel's land " shall impart to those redeemed and saved souls who shall be perpetually " surveying it in the light of the Lord." O the transport! O the fulness of that joy with which tluir souls will be ravished to all eternity! O, my dear M , does not this anticipation fill your soul with an overwhelming sense of the goodness of that God who hath redeemed you, and washed you in the blood of the Lamb? To think that we shall be permitted to gaze upon the beauties of God in Christ; to turn this way and that, ami at every turn meet an object that we love; to have some new truth in all its uncreated beau ties presented to us; and thus we shall past from truth to truth, from one scene of beauty to another, and that to all eternity! Is not this enough to fill the soul with ecstatic delight, and make us cry out in those poetical strains with which the pen of Charles Wesley moved, while his holy heart dictated the following words?

" Away with our sorrow and fear, We soon shall recover our home; The city of saints shall appear, The day of eternity come. From earth we shall quickly remove, And mount to our native abode; The house of our Father above, The palace of angels and God."

I know not how to quit this theme; it is so glorious, so ravishing to the soul! As Tupper expresses it,

" Thou shall drink, and deeply, filling the mind with marvels; Thou shall watch no more, lingering, disappointed of thy hope; Thou shall roam where road is none, a traveller untrammelled, Speeding at a wish, emancipate, to where the stars are seen."

Yes; from that river, exhaustless as its Fountain, shall forever flow those streams, not only of Divine joy, but of endless knowledge, which shall fill the soul with the purest pleasure and the most ecstatic delight. But who shall swell the highest note of praise? I know that the angels are represented as being nearest the throne, but they are only as servants of the redeemed, who were before sent to " minister unto the heirs of salvation," and now join in the general acclamation of giving glory to God for having washed the saints in the blood of the Lamb, and clothed them in robes white and clean, that these might appear without spot or wrinkle, "adorned as a bride to meet her bridegroom." While, therefore, the angels unite with the saints in ascribing honour and glory to God, the latter shall far exceed the former in raising their notes of praise for the wonders of redeeming love, and in shouting forth their loud hallelujahs to God and the Lamb forever and ever; because they have tasted of redeeming and sanctifying love, and have been made partakers of His great salvation, and have passed through the fire of affliction unhurt, thoroughly purified from all their sins; and therefore they shall sing a song of praise that does not belong to the an gels, and cannot be adopted by them, but shall be sung exclusively by those that have been thus " redeemed from the earth." Hut they shall both unite in ascribing the honour and glory to Jesus Christ, in whom the Godhead's rays are concentrated, and from whom they are radiated forth in every direction, and over shadow the whole heavenly host as with a cloud of glory. Take from heaven this supreme object of Jove, worship, and adoration, and heaven itself would be emptied of its glory, and ita inhabitants would lack a common centre of praise, and would, methinks, mournfully inquire, Where is He " that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father?" But while they look up and behold Him seated upon the throne, a thrill of joy runs through their hearts, and they all, angels and saints,

unite in one common anthem of praise, " Saying, Amen : blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever," and all heaven re sounds. " For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall lead them to living fountains of water," of which they shall drink, and never thirst again. To HIM BE, therefore, GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER. This is in exact accordance with our own poet, whom I have so often quoted, and whose poetry is so conformable to the language of truth, that it cannot be appealed to with too much frequency. Hear him in the following flowing numbers :

" Angel powers the throne surround;

Next the saints in glory they; Lull d with the transporting sound, They their silent homage pay : Prostrate on their face, before God and his Messiah fall; Then in hymns of praise adore, SHOUT THE LAMB THAT DIED FOB ALL I" may you, my dear M., and I, and all who read these lines, together with all who profess the name of Christ, so live, that we may all join in the general chorus of Be it so, we all reply :

Him let all our orders praise; Him that did for sinners die, Saviour of the favour d race! Render we our Ood his right.

Glory, wisdom, thanks, and power. Honour, majesty, and might.

Praise Him, Praise Him evermore!" To this your full heart cries, Amen, and my heart echoes back the loud assent, while we unitedly proclaim " Raised by the breath of love divine.

We urge our way. with strength renewed; The church of the Brut-born to join. We travel to the mount of Ood : With Joy upon our heads arise. And meet our Saviour in the skies." THE END.

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