

The General Conference of 1832

by Nathan Bangs

The General Conference of 1832 was a significant event in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, where delegates from various conferences gathered to discuss and address various issues and concerns within the church.

Scripture: Proverbs 22:6, 1 Corinthians 6:19, Ephesians 4:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, 1 Timothy 5:8, James 1:5, 1 Peter 1:16

Topics: "Church Growth", "Holiness Movement"

Description

Nathan Bangs preaches at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia in 1832. The conference addresses the importance of thankfulness, prayer, and direction from God in their work. They discuss the growth of the Church, the challenges faced, and the need for unity in spreading evangelical doctrines. Emphasis is placed on the importance of holiness, family religion, and the instruction of children in the Church. The conference also addresses the issues of intemperance, the duties of ministers, and the support for worn-out preachers, widows, and orphans.

Transcript

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, Zachariah 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 Conference: 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, Greenville 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. Tippet, 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 regard 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, 1832."

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: --

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." 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." 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?" Sabbath Schools. -- "Among the most efficient auxiliaries in the religious instruction of our children, we may rank sabbath schools. The good that has been 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."

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 bind us together; we must 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 bow 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 they 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 its best and most imposing form 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 and 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 gaining 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: --

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.

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: --

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. 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.

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. 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.

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. 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.

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 certain

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