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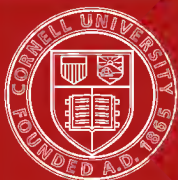
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Geo. Peck,

EARLY METHODISM

WITHIN THE

BOUNDS OF THE OLD GENESEE CONFERENCE

FROM 1788 TO 1828;

OR,

THE FIRST FORTY YEARS OF WESLEYAN EVANGELISM
IN NORTHERN PENNSYLVANIA, CENTRAL AND
WESTERN NEW YORK, AND CANADA.

CONTAINING

SKETCHES OF INTERESTING LOCALITIES, EXCITING SCENES,
AND PROMINENT ACTORS.

BY GEORGE PECK, D.D.

SECOND THOUSAND.

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P R E F A C E.

METHODISM is one of the great facts of modern civilization, and its vital elements are brought out in its practical results, and particularly in the examples of its actors, great and small. The history of Methodism in one age or place is its history in all ages and places, with the exception of the slight variation which is effected by time.

New facts, or old ones revived, may increase the vividness of the impression, or vary the lights and shades of the picture, but they create nothing, change nothing essential to the system. They are media through which the system may be studied, and are only valuable as they make the principles which they represent more tangible and practical.

It is a benefit to the world to wrest facts from oblivion, and give them a permanent record, if the facts give force to great principles, and if they are so set forth and clothed as to facilitate their study. The merit of a historian consists in diligence in the collection of facts, and in the judgment with which they are painted and arranged. The picture must be both truthful and captivating; without the first quality a false impression is made, and without the second no impression at all.

In the present work the object has been to rescue from oblivion important facts relating to a distinct period and a particular locality, but which have a significance in relation to the character of a great system of principles and instrumentalities. Every new fact, and every new variety of facts, gives increased vigor and completeness to the system, and helps the impression. In an effort to aid this result the writer has labored with a diligence which a profound conviction of its importance is calculated to inspire. He loves the institutions of Methodism, and has been led to the conclusion that their study in their original freshness is important to this age.

There may be seen in early Methodism some adventitious circumstances which have passed away, and which ought not to be revived; but, at the same time, there are vital elements of the system, which are essential to its identity and efficiency, which are seen to great advantage in the history of our fathers. The thorough study of its early developments and struggles may greatly aid us in preserving it in its integrity and purity.

The author frankly confesses that he has an admiration of *primitive Methodism*, both in Europe and America, and especially as it existed in the interior, in the backwoods among the pioneers of the country, and as maintained by the old pioneer preachers. To him there is a charm about it superior to romance. The moral sublimity of the scenes which transpired in those good old times transcends in stirring interest the highest flights of the imagination in its fictitious creations.

The real importance of early Methodism arises from the fact that it was the dawning of a glorious day, the beginning of a great work of God, the opening of a portion of the divine plan for the renovation and salvation of the world. Viewed in this light, the author has found his inspiration in his theme. The labor has been severe but pleasant, and the results which he has reached are far more satisfactory to his own mind than was anticipated at the commencement.

The process of constructing original history is synthetical, that of collecting facts or fragments, and, by a philosophical method, uniting them in one harmonious whole. The diligence necessary in collecting the facts, the study in understanding them, and the practical wisdom in construing them, constitute the real difficulty in the way of success.

Whether the present volume is a success or a failure the author now leaves to the judgment of an enlightened public. He has received important aid from a large number of friends, and to these he tenders his most cordial thanks. They are too numerous to be named, and he would not be invidious by naming some and neglecting others equally worthy of mention. He has intended to give due credit for whatever has been contributed to the volume by others, and whatever he has copied.

With this explanation the volume is sent forth, with the fervent prayer that the blessings of God may attend it and crown it with success.

GEORGE PECK.

SCRANTON, PA., *March* 27, 1860.

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EARLY METHODISM.

BOOK I.

SOUTHERN DIVISION OF THE HISTORY, 1788-1810.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF METHODISM.

METHODISM is the name of that form of evangelical religion which sprung up under the labors of the Wesleys and Whitefield during the former part of the eighteenth century.

The first society or class was organized in the year 1739. This was the commencement of a movement which has resulted in a revival of primitive Christianity throughout Protestant Christendom, and its establishment in many pagan countries. Methodism is essentially aggressive, and one of the laws of its being is progress. It had its origin in the University of Oxford, but the island of Great Britain could not long contain its energizing spirit. It passed over the Irish Channel, and penetrated the deep gloom of that land which for centuries had been stultified by the incubus of Romish and High-Church formalism.

Having achieved miracles in England and Ireland, Methodism crossed the Atlantic and commenced its operations in America. PHILIP EMBURY, an Irish local preacher, commenced preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the city of

New York in the year 1766. A small society was organized by Embury, and their meetings were held in "a rigging loft" in William-street, until John-street Church was erected in the year 1768.

ROBERT STRAWBRIDGE, another Irish local preacher, emigrated to America, and opened his mission as a preacher of the Gospel in Frederic county, Maryland, about the same time that Embury commenced his labors in New York. From these two points the work of revival spread, east, west, north, and south, until the whole country was in a blaze. The doctrines of sudden conversion, of the witness of the Spirit, of a present, a free, and a full salvation preached with the earnestness of conviction, and the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, arrested the attention of the slumbering multitudes, and awakened into activity the backslidden and lukewarm Churches. This activity in some instances exhibited itself in the way of countenance and co-operation, and in others in the form of alarm and deadly hostility. There was no compromise offered; it was either submission and fealty to the cause of God and his truth, or war, by "the sword of the Spirit," until the last foe should fall.

The old Puritans of "the standing order" in the Eastern States protested against the intrusions of the "strollers" upon their "parishes," and the High-Churchmen of the south shook their heads and vociferated, "Fanaticism! wild fire!" The dead Churches were stirred up, but at first it was like the rattling of dead men's bones. "There was a noise and shaking," while, by the instrumentality of a few pious preachers, God was bringing "bone to its bone," and was about to raise up "an exceeding great army." The movement was an earthquake which shook the mountains and broke up old foundations, and a fire which fused the masse and prepared them for a recasting—a transformation into a new form of spiritual life. The instrumentality was humble but the influence which attended it was mighty. The simple truth, drawn from the word of God, wielded in the un

studied eloquence of sanctified feeling, mightily broke down the barriers of prejudice and melted hard hearts. Multitudes came together crying out, "These that turn the world upside down have come hither also." Sinners wept and prayed, and there was a great shout of triumph among the followers of the new light both in city and in country.

The work in America was reinforced from time to time, by missionaries of Mr. Wesley's appointment, until the Revolutionary war disturbed the relations of the two countries. Francis Asbury was one of these missionaries; and although several of them returned to England upon the breaking out of hostilities, he stood at his post until the fearful struggle was over, and then identified himself for life with the country of his adoption.

In 1782 the independence of the United States was acknowledged by the government of Great Britain, and peace established between the two countries; and in 1784, at the "Christmas Conference" the "Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States" was duly organized. Thomas Coke, LL.D., a presbyter of the Church of England, received from Mr. Wesley letters of episcopal authority, and came to this country for the purpose of meeting a pressing necessity of the Methodist people, affording them an ordained ministry, who in an orderly manner could administer the holy sacraments and feed their flocks with the bread of life. For this they had often sent over their earnest prayers to Mr. Wesley, whom they regarded, under God, as their spiritual father.

Mr. Wesley preferred the episcopal form of Church government, but, from a careful study of the fathers and the records of the primitive Church, had been led to abandon the idea of *apostolical succession*, and to adopt that of an *official* episcopacy, constituted by the presbytery, or body of elders. The primitive bishop he considered as *primus inter pares*, or first among equals, and not of a separate and independent order by divine right. He said he considered himself "as scriptural a bishop as there was in En-

gland." He accordingly gave the sanction of his authority so far as it could go, to the origination of an episcopacy in the Methodist societies in America. Dr. Coke called a conference of the preachers, December 25, 1784, and the conference formally received him as their bishop, and elected Francis Asbury as joint superintendent. Asbury maintained his right to the episcopal office upon the following grounds: "1. Divine authority; 2. Seniority in America; 3. The election of the General Conference; 4. Ordination by Thomas Coke, William Philip Otterbien, German Presbyterian minister, Richard Whatcoat, Thomas Vasey; 5. The signs of an apostle."

Mr. Wesley's plan of Church organization and the action of the "Christmas Conference" gave great satisfaction to the Methodist people throughout the country, albeit this gave huge offense to High-Churchmen both in England and America. Under the new regimen the word of God mightily grew and prevailed, and many of the saved were added to the Church. It had now been eighteen years since Philip Embury first commenced preaching in New York, and "the numbers in society" are set down at 83 preachers and 14,988 members.

The economy and discipline of Methodism had come into being upon what, by ecclesiastical writers, is called "the exigency of necessity," but had already grown into a system. The fundamental principle of this system is *itinerant ministry*. It is from this standpoint only that the ecclesiastical polity of Methodism can be seen to advantage, or its consistency, symmetry, and efficiency be properly appreciated. Following out this plan, the Methodist preachers spread themselves over the country entering every open door, penetrating the forests, and traversing the frontier settlements—carrying the Gospel of salvation to every hamlet, until nearly every nook and corner had been penetrated by the light of salvation.

The two points from which the light of Methodism radiated were in the neighborhoods of the Hudson and of the

Chesapeake; but the rays soon met and commingled on the banks of the Delaware, the Susquehanna, the Mohawk, the St. Lawrence, and the northern lakes. About four years after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church a ray of the new light fell into the Wyoming Valley, and kindled up a flame there which still burns, and we trust will continue to blaze higher and higher until the glorious millennium. The particulars of the work in Wyoming will be the next thing in order.

CHAPTER II.

WYOMING.

THE Wyoming Valley being a principal point whence the Methodist movement emanated which spread over northern Pennsylvania and western New York, it may be proper to devote some attention to this celebrated locality prior to a delineation of the origin and progress of Methodism throughout those regions.

Wyoming is a corruption of *Maughwauwame*. The name is composed of *maughwau* large, and *wame* plains, THE LARGE PLAINS.*

This name was doubtless originally applied exclusively to the valley which lies on the Susquehanna, in the county of Luzerne, state of Pennsylvania. This is a beautiful vale lying northeast and southwest, about twenty-one miles by three. In history, however, the name is used for a far more extended territory, included in a tract granted by the crown of Great Britain to a Connecticut company, and by them purchased from the Indians.

Wyoming was once a favorite haunt of the aboriginal inhabitants, but had come to be regarded as a distant and

* See Wyoming: its History, stirring Incidents, and romantic Adventures, by the author, pp. 9, 10.

secluded region, not being near the great towns and headquarters of the Iroquois, or the Six Confederate Nations, by whom it was claimed.

The Delawares, having fallen to the condition of a subordinate tribe, were ordered to leave the country on the Delaware and take possession of Wyoming, where they were found when the whites first visited the country.

COUNT ZINZENDORF VISITS WYOMING.

Count Zinzendorf visited Wyoming in 1742, and is supposed to have been the first white man who set foot upon this secluded spot. It is situated fifty miles beyond the site of Bethlehem, the Moravian town, which is now of world-wide renown, but was then just commenced. The way to it lay across the Blue Mountains and through a trackless wilderness. The enterprise was a most hazardous one; but missionary zeal was adequate to the undertaking. All that the Moravian missionaries as yet knew of Wyoming was what they learned from friendly Indians, and the sum of the whole matter was, that it was inhabited by a tribe of pagan Indians, who were banished from the great world to a small but beautiful vale upon the Susquehanna, where they lived in the practice of their blind superstitions. The count had crossed the ocean to preach the Gospel to the poor Indians, and no labor or danger was sufficient to turn him aside from his purpose. He applied to Conrad Weiser, a celebrated Indian agent and interpreter, to accompany him as a guide. Weiser was too much engaged to allow him to comply with the count's request, but furnished him with letters to a missionary by the name of Mack, who, together with his wife, who could speak the language of the Delawares, proceeded immediately with him upon his perilous mission.

The Indians were much alarmed on the arrival of the strangers, who pitched their tents on the bank of the river, a little below their town. The purpose of the visit being made known, the chiefs assembled in council to take the subject into consideration. They were not able to under-

stand how it was that a man should cross the great water, and make a journey over the mountains into the wilderness, merely to instruct the Delawares, and that he should do all this without compensation. With them the more probable solution of the enterprise was a scheme for the conquest of the Indians and the possession of their lands. It was consequently gravely determined to assassinate the party, and to do it privately, lest the knowledge of the transaction should bring on them the vengeance of the English, who were settling the country below the mountains.

Zinzendorf was alone in his tent, seated upon a bundle of dry weeds, engaged in writing, when the assassins approached to execute their bloody commission. It was night, and the cool air of September had rendered a small fire necessary to his comfort. A blanket hung upon pins was the only guard to the entrance of his tent. The warmth of his fire had brought out a large rattlesnake, which lay in the weeds, and to enjoy its influence the reptile had crawled through the tent and passed over one of the count's legs unobserved. At this moment the Indians stealthily approached the tent, and peeping in at a slight opening of the curtain, saw the venerable man, too deeply engaged in thought to notice their approach, or the venomous reptile which lay before him. The savages were filled with amazement, and hastily returning to the town, they informed their companions that the *Great Spirit* protected the white man, for they had found him with no door but a blanket, and had seen a large rattlesnake crawl over his legs without attempting to injure him. This circumstance, together with the influence of Conrad Wieser, who soon came on in person to the count's aid, had great influence with the Indians, and probably had no inconsiderable hand in inducing many of them afterward to embrace Christianity. The count, after having spent twenty days at Wyoming, returned to Bethlehem.

MORAVIAN MISSIONS AMONG THE DELAWARES.

The Moravians made considerable efforts to bring the Indians of Wyoming under the influence of the Gospel. There were large numbers of Delawares in the valley, their principal town being situated not far below the site now occupied by the borough of Wilkesbarre. Some hundreds of these native children of the forest received the rite of baptism, and exhibited the fruit of a change of heart. At Wyalusing, a number of Christian Indians had united together, without a pastor, for purposes of Christian fellowship.

The Rev. Daniel Zeizburger came to their aid, and took them under his pastoral supervision. Under his direction the settlement soon exhibited signs of a state of great prosperity. Lands were cleared and fenced, and homes arose for the poor scattered people. Grain, cattle, horses, and poultry were introduced, and schools opened for the education of the children. A church was erected, and a bell sounded from its tower to call the people to the worship of the living God.*

At Sheshequin, there was a large settlement of Indians, many of whom embraced Christianity under the labors of Rothe, the missionary, who was a most pious and zealous laborer in the cause of Indian enlightenment; one of a noble band of self-sacrificing men whose labors will be rewarded at the resurrection of the just.

For six years the congregations at Wyalusing and Sheshequin continued to enjoy peace and prosperity, but causes finally combined to render their circumstances unhappy. The Six Nations had sold their lands to the Connecticut people. White men persisted in tempting them with spirituous liquors, and the Delawares on the Ohio were anxious

*This town was situated below the mouth of Wyalusing Creek, in the neighborhood of what is called Brown Town. Their burying place was on the bank of the river, and as the bank was carried away by the stream, the bones of the dead could be seen not many years since.

that they should emigrate and join them. Hence, after deliberate consultation with Zeizburger and Heckwalder at Wyalusing in 1770, the final decision to remove was adopted, and the succeeding year about two hundred and fifty Indians, in two parties, set out for Ohio. One party, chiefly consisting of men, with eighty oxen and other stock in proportion, went through the wilderness, suffering great privations and hardships. Another party, with the women and children, descended the river in canoes, spent a day at Wyoming, shed a tear over the graves of their departed friends, and then left their beloved Susquehanna to return no more forever. They went to the West to be cruelly massacred by a band of wicked and fanatical Indian-killers near the close of the Revolutionary war. The story of their cruel fate is told by the historians of the country.

The war spirit which took possession of the Indians put an end to the work of religion and civilization among them, and the ground which had been sanctified by prayer and praise was subsequently stained with human gore. But for the war between France and England, and that between England and the colonies, the aborigines of this country might, with comparatively little labor, have been reclaimed from the habits of savage life and their heathen superstitions; but being prevailed upon to take "the war path," their conversion was then out of the question, and ever since has appeared to be almost a forlorn hope. War in its influence upon all classes is degrading and demoralizing, and that it should have this tendency in its influence upon the savage heart is by no means strange.

SETTLEMENT AND BLOODY WARS OF WYOMING.

In 1750 the New England people first visited Wyoming, and in 1753 they sent out a party to make a map of the country, preparatory to making a settlement there. The proprietors of Pennsylvania also obtained a royal grant of the same territory, and purchased it of the Indians, which originated conflicting claims to the ownership of the soil be-

tween the Connecticut and the Pennsylvania people, each being supported by their respective governments. The two parties of immigrants came into stern collision upon the soil, and hence arose "the Pennamite and Yankee wars." These wars were bloody, demoralizing, and in all respects most disastrous. The difficulties between the two classes of settlers commenced in 1769, and were finally terminated in 1799, after a continuance of thirty years.*

In the mean time the war broke out between the colonies and the mother country. The Indians were enlisted on the side of Great Britain, and made the most fearful demonstrations of their savage temper, and their barbarous modes of warfare upon the frontier settlements. Wyoming drank deeply of the cup of vengeance. The famous Indian battle on the 3d of July, 1778, in which three hundred patriots met upon the battle field nearly a thousand British, tories, and Indians, under the command of Colonel John Butler, and were all, excepting about sixty, shot down or cruelly massacred in cool blood, nearly annihilated the settlement. On that fatal day widows and orphans were made in great numbers, and shrieks and groans and sighs were sent up to heaven from the ill-starred valley like the sound of many waters. The remnants of the settlement, consisting mostly of women and children, attended by a few old men and boys, fled to the wilderness, and there some perished with hunger and fatigue in "the shades of death;"† while many, almost by a miracle, succeeded in reaching the settlements at the east, and finally found their way to New England. The remnants of many of the families which were broken to pieces and scattered by the unequal and sanguinary conflict upon the plains soon returned to their beloved Wyoming, and then became permanently settled. They were, however, constantly harassed by bands of the merciless sav-

* See Wyoming, etc., by the author.

† A dense pine forest in the mountain, about ten miles east of the valley, and so named from the fact that there death released several of the fugitives from their toils and sorrows on the first night after their flight.

ages, who robbed, killed, and made prisoners, as opportunity served. Strange scenes mark the whole history of Wyoming from the period of its first settlement to the termination of the civil war.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF WYOMING.

Wyoming was a battle-field, both between the whites and Indians, and the Connecticut and Pennsylvania people, because it was considered a prize worth contending for. The Yankees, who had left their rocky hills behind them, and found in the western wilderness a sort of paradise, were slow in making up their minds to abandon the fertile soil of THE GREAT PLAIN. Having had a taste of the wheat, the corn, the fish, the wild game, and wild fruits of Wyoming, they clung to it with a death grasp, and as often as they were driven across the eastern mountains they gathered strength, and returned in the face of the most fearful hardships, and even of death itself. Such was the luxuriance of the soil, and such the resources of the mountains and rivers, that the hardy and industrious settlers, after having been again and again robbed of their last penny, and left with scarcely rags enough to cover their nakedness, as often, in a very short period and with a few brave struggles, arose to a condition of competency and comfort.* It was no barren soil for which such contests were waged, and which suffered so many wasting desolations without being deserted by its inhabitants.

When the Yankee power in Wyoming had become too strong to be subdued, and the people of Pennsylvania, by a potent public sentiment, had forced their law-makers to listen to sober counsels, and the greedy land-jobbers to relax their grasp, compromises were enacted which settled the disturbed elements of society, and ushered in a period of peace and great prosperity. Industry was quickened, the country was cleared up, the population was increased,

* See the "Stories and Personal Experiences of Mrs. Myers and Mrs. Bedford," Wyoming, etc., pp. 133-220.

and Wyoming was a beautiful, quiet, prosperous, and happy rural district. It soon needed a market, and a turnpike road was constructed across the Pocono to Easton, on the Delaware. Hither the farmers brought their wheat, a distance of sixty miles, in the summer on heavy wagons, and in winter on sleds. Here they procured their groceries, cloths, etc. The river was also a channel of commerce, but its navigation was difficult and dangerous, and was only attempted by a few of the most hardy and enterprising adventurers. Still Wyoming was far away from the great business world, nestled in the mountains in isolation and solitude.

The spirit of modern improvement finally brought about a great change in the condition of things. Now the North Branch Canal and the railroads bring it into close neighborly associations with New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the Great West. The whistle of the locomotive and the thunder of the cars have broken the stillness and gloom of the past, and a new era has dawned upon this beauteous land.

Beneath the surface, at unequal depths, in the valleys of Wyoming and the Lackawanna lies an unbroken basin of anthracite coal of the finest quality and in inexhaustible quantity. Many veins of different thicknesses are now penetrated, and the coal and iron business gives character to the commerce of the country. Now all is astir where but a few years since all was as still and silent as the house of death. Agriculture is still a profitable business here; it is, however, but a small interest in comparison with that of the coal and iron. Where the crops which were raised by the farmers once sought a distant and cheap market, vast amounts of flour, pork, and beef, from Western New York, Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio, are now consumed. Wyoming is now and must continue to be a great mining district; but it differs from nearly all the other mining districts in the world, in that it possesses a luxuriant soil, and is capable of sustaining a dense population from its own resources.

CHAPTER III.

WYOMING, NORTHUMBERLAND, AND TIOGA CIRCUITS,
1788-1792.

ORIGIN OF METHODISM IN WYOMING.

THE revolutionary storm had blown over, and its blighting moral influence was now to be encountered by the Christian minds of the country. Morals and religion had suffered fearfully everywhere, but perhaps nowhere more than in Wyoming.

The elements of which society was to be constructed, and reduced to a settled and stable condition in Wyoming, may well be imagined. The impoverishing and demoralizing effects of the war with Great Britain, aggravated by the employment of the savages, who once owned the soil, and considered themselves in some sense as robbed of their natural birthright, and the still more desolating influences of a civil war, afforded no very flattering promises of the formation of a moral and orderly community. Parties were there who had met in the field of deadly conflict, and in whose bosoms still rankled the most terrible hatred. The relics of the army were sprinkled through the community; and some of these, both male and female, had imbibed habits which are common to the camp, and were not likely, upon the return of peace, easily to change their moral hue. Old grudges, and the universal anxiety for the comforts of life and the quiet of home, now would be supposed adverse to the immediate organization of the institutions of religion. Old Parson Johnson, a Congregationalist, was in Wilkesbarre, having survived the perils of the wars, and there had been occasional religious services held in different places; but there was no general religious movement in Wyoming

until the year 1788, five years after the termination of the Revolutionary war, and ten years subsequent to the fatal 3d of July, when the soil was stained with the hearts' blood of the little patriot band of her first settlers.

In 1784, as we have seen, the Methodist Episcopal Church was duly organized at the "Christmas Conference." Methodism had been propagated in Maryland, Delaware, New York, and Pennsylvania. It had commenced to work like leaven in the meal, and was seen taking root in many remote settlements and sparsely settled districts along the Hudson, the Delaware, and the Susquehanna. As the enterprising were crowding into the famous and beautiful Valley of Wyoming, Methodism crossed the mountains and commenced its work in *Kingston*. Here the first Methodist meetings were held, and here it was that Methodism, as a form of Christianity and an element of religious power, commenced its triumphs in Wyoming.

The commencement of Methodism in Wyoming was not the fruit of missionary labor, or of the regular preaching of an authorized ministry, but of the efforts of a mere layman, and he was a humble mechanic.

ANNING OWEN came to Wyoming from New England with the daring spirits who emigrated after the commencement of the Revolutionary war. He was one of the handful of courageous men who were defeated and scattered by an overwhelming force under the command of Colonel John Butler. In the battle he was by the side of his brother-in-law, Benjamin Carpenter. He stood the fire of the enemy, and answered it, shot after shot, in such quick succession that the barrel of his gun became burning hot. "My gun is so hot that I cannot hold it," exclaimed the brave patriot soldier. "Do the best you can then," was the reply of his friend. A shot or two more, and the day was lost. Owen and Carpenter fled to the river, and secreted themselves under cover of a large grape-vine which hung from the branches of a tree and lay in the water. Roger Searl, a lad, followed them, and the three lay in safety until the darkness

of the night enabled them to gain the fort. They were a portion of the small number who escaped with their lives from the bloody encounter without swimming the river. The place of their concealment was near the mouth of Shoemaker's Creek. While there fearful sights of barbarous cruelty in the river above pained their eyes and stung their souls to agony. They saw through the leaves Windecker, the tory, tomahawk Shoemaker and set his body afloat, and the mangled corpse of their friend and neighbor passed quietly by them, carried slowly down into the eddy by the current.

In the account which Mr. Owen often subsequently gave of his escape, he stated that, when upon the run, he expected every moment to be shot or tomahawked, and the terrible thought of being sent into eternity unprepared filled his soul with horror. He then resolved if he should be killed that he would fall on his face and spend his last breath in prayer to God for mercy. He prayed as he ran, and when he lay in the water his every breath was occupied with the silent but earnest prayer, "God have mercy on my soul!" There and then it was that he gave his heart to God, and vowed to be his forever. He was spared, and did not, as thousands do, forget the vows he made in the hour of his distress.

Mr. Owen returned to the East with the fugitives, but he was a changed man. He considered his deliverance from death as little short of a miracle, and that in it there was a wise and gracious design, which had reference to his eternal well-being. He was now a man of prayer, possessed a tender conscience, and indulged a trembling hope in Christ.

In this condition Mr. Owen became acquainted with the Methodists. Their earnest and powerful preaching, and the doctrines which they taught, met in his heart a ready response. He was of an ardent temperament, and was never in favor of half-way measures in anything. He soon drank in the spirit of the early Methodists, and was as full of enthusiasm as any of them. His religious experience became more deep and thorough, and his evidence of sins forgiven

more clear and satisfactory. He now rejoiced greatly in the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free, and panted to be useful. The language of his inmost soul was :

“ O that the world might taste and see
The riches of his grace !
The arms of love that compass me
Would all mankind embrace.”

In this state of mind Mr. Owen returned to Wyoming and settled among his old companions in tribulation. He was a blacksmith, and he commenced, as he supposed, hammering out his fortune between Kingston village and Fortyfort, at the point where the highway crosses Toby's Creek. There still stands the humble frame house which he built, and which his family occupied for many years.

Mr. Owen had no sooner become settled in Wyoming than he commenced conversation with his neighbors upon the subject of religion, and began with many tears to tell them what great things God had done for his soul. His words were as coals of fire upon the heads and the hearts of those he addressed, and he soon found a deep sympathy with his ideas and feelings was abroad and rapidly extending. He appointed prayer-meetings in his own house. The people were melted down under his prayers, his exhortations, and singing. He was invited to appoint meetings at other places in the neighborhood, and he listened to the call. A revival of religion broke out at Ross Hill, about a mile from his residence, and just across the line which separates the townships of Kingston and Plymouth. Great power attended the simple, earnest efforts of the blacksmith, and souls were converted to God. He studied the openings of Providence, and tried in all things to follow the divine light. He was regarded by the young converts as their spiritual father, and to him they looked for advice and comfort.

Mr. Owen, now considering himself providentially called upon to provide, at least temporarily, for the spiritual wants of his flock, formed them into a class. Most of the members of the little band residing in the neighborhood of Ross Hill,

that point became the center of operations. This class was called the Ross Hill class until the old order of things passed away.

There is still lingering upon the shores of time one member of this class—the first Methodist class formed within the bounds of our territory—and that is Mrs. DEBORAH BEDFORD. This “mother in Israel” has ever been a uniform and consistent Christian and an unflinching Methodist, and it is especially fortunate that she has been spared to leave behind her a record of the origin of Methodism in the Wyoming Valley. She is one of the number who have traveled with the Church from early youth to extreme old age without ever having the slightest stain upon her Christian character, or exhibiting the least evidence of backsliding, or even of wavering, in her Christian course. She has been a member of the Church for *seventy-two years*, and for *forty-two years* of this period it has been our happiness to enjoy her acquaintance and her personal friendship. She is now in the full exercise of her intellectual faculties, often attends divine service, and is patiently waiting for her Lord to say, It is enough; come up higher.

Mrs. Bedford says she joined the class at Ross Hill in 1788, in the fall; and she thinks Mr. Owen commenced meetings and formed the class in the spring of the same year. The little band were for the time well content to regard as their spiritual guide the man who had first raised the standard of the cross in their midst, and been the means, under God, of their conversion. He had not been constituted in the regular way either preacher, exhorter, or class-leader; and yet he exercised the functions of all these offices, under the sanction of Providence, and to the great satisfaction and edification of the little Church in the wilderness.

Mr. Owen proceeded for a while under his extraordinary commission, but finally began to be seriously exercised in mind upon the subject of the ministry.

Benjamin Carpenter, Esq., had become a member of Mr.

Owen's class, and was laboring under similar impressions. Upon comparing notes, they concluded to settle the question by opening the Bible and following the lead of the first passage which presented itself. Squire Carpenter handed the Bible to Mr. Owen, and upon opening it, the first sentence his eyes fell upon was: "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." Squire Carpenter said, "I cannot." Mr. Owen said, "I will." The thing with him was settled, and he then began to meditate upon the measures necessary to carry into effect his resolution. He visited some point at the East, where Methodism had a local habitation and a name, and on returning, at a meeting of his society, he said: "I have received a regular license to preach, and now have full power to proceed in the work."

Upon an examination of the old Minutes, it will be seen that Wyoming was not recognized until 1791—three years after the organization of the first class.

Upon being asked what they did for preaching all this time, Mrs. Bedford answered: "O, Father Owen hammered away for us, and we did very well. We were all happy in God, and were not so very particular."

This lady gives the following list of the Ross Hill class: Anning Owen and wife, Mr. Gray and wife, Abram Adams, Stephen Baker and wife, Mrs. Wooley, and Nancy Wooley. Subsequently came in Mrs. Ruth Pierce, Alice and Hannah Pierce, Samuel Carver and his father, and Joseph Brown, Captain Ebenezer Parish and wife, and Darius Williams and wife.

In conversation subsequently to giving this list, Mrs. Bedford said the Pierce members did not join until some time after she did. Four or five years must have elapsed, as from other data it seems well settled that Aunt Ruth Pierce did not become a member of the class until 1792.

The account of Mrs. Bedford's conversion, in her own simple and appropriate language, is as follows: "I joined the class in the sixteenth year of my age. I had been under concern of mind from May, I think, to September. I was

alone when I was awakened, and was then keeping house for my father at Pittston,* where he and my uncle were building a forge. I was singing the two following lines :

‘ O may it all my powers engage,
To do my Master’s will.’

The inquiry came home to me, ‘ Do you strive to do your Master’s will?’ I was then flung into the greatest agony of mind; I walked the floor and wrung my hands, and then fell upon my knees and cried for mercy; but I felt as if there was no mercy for me. Then I opened the Bible, and that condemned me. I continued between hope and despair for five months. It was on Thursday night, in prayer-meeting in Kingston, that the Lord set my soul at liberty. The meeting was a very solemn one, and when the last prayer was finished my burden rolled off, and my soul was filled with love, light, and power; it seemed as if the walls of the house praised God. The change was soon discovered in my countenance. Sister Owen asked me the state of my mind, and I expressed my feelings as well as I could. Glory to God for all he did for my soul that night! This is my experience as well as I can tell it.” The pious reader will say, And that is *well* enough; no one need tell a better experience, or tell it in more appropriate and eloquent language.

Mrs. Bedford gives the following account of the progress of the work. She says: “ When Mr. Owen and Mr. Gray moved in, they, with Mr. Adams, immediately set up prayer-meetings and class-meetings, and the Lord poured out his Spirit upon us. Saints rejoiced and praised God, and sinners fell on the floor and cried for mercy, and few were able to keep their seats. These meetings were held on Sundays, Sunday evenings, and Thursday nights. This disturbed the enemy’s camp, and raised persecution against us, and our names were cast out as evil; but the more they persecuted us the more the Lord blessed us.

“ The first minister that was sent among us was Mr.

* The place was near the Lackawanna station, on the railroad.
Early Methodism.

Mills, the next was Mr. Lovel. They came from Newburgh circuit.

NATHANIEL B. MILLS had the honor of being the first Methodist itinerant who found his way over the mountains into the classic vale of Wyoming. In the fall of 1824, when the writer was in charge of the Susquehanna district, this veteran soldier of the cross visited Wilkesbarre, on the occasion of a quarterly meeting, with the venerable Henry Smith, who then had charge of the Northumberland district, Baltimore Conference. This was a great treat to us all. Father Mills then informed us that he was the first itinerant Methodist preacher who visited Wyoming, and, both in public and in private, gave stirring accounts of the incidents of that visit. This was in 1789, when he traveled Newburgh circuit. Joseph Lovel traveled on Newburgh circuit in 1790, and he was the next preacher who visited the valley. These early missions to Wyoming were not protracted or often repeated. Of Mr. Lovel Mrs. Bedford says: "He preached but a few times and then went away."

At this period there were no conference liues. The "elder" had a certain number of circuits in charge, and the preachers attended conference as directed by Bishop Asbury. In 1790 "Thomas Morrell, elder," embraced within his district New York, Elizabethtown, Long Island, New Rochelle, and Newburgh.

The next conference held its session in New York, May 26, 1791. At that conference James Campbell was appointed to Wyoming, and Robert Cloud was elder. His district embraced Newburgh, Wyoming, New York, New Rochelle, and Long Island. We know little of his labors on the district: one of his quarterly meetings, however, is recollected.

Mrs. Bedford says: "Our first quarterly meeting was held at Ross Hill in a barn. I think Mr. Cloud was our presiding elder. We had a very solemn meeting; the Lord was truly with us. The Lord now added daily to his Church. I had been taught that it was a dreadful thing to

partake of the sacrament unworthily. I cried to the Lord, that if it was my duty to keep away I might be enabled to do so. I said, Lord, I am not worthy. The answer was, Go in my name. I stepped from seat to seat until I came to the last; I then knelt down and partook. I felt sweet peace and consolation, and went home rejoicing that the Lord assisted me to discharge my duty."

According to the Minutes, Robert Cloud was continued in charge of the same district in 1792. He however only traveled on the district a small portion of the year, and in 1793 he stands among such as were "under a location through bodily weakness or family concerns."

ORIGIN OF METHODISM IN NORTHUMBERLAND CIRCUIT.

Northumberland circuit appears on the Minutes in 1791, the year in which Wyoming makes its first appearance; but the Methodist movement in Wyoming commenced two years earlier than in the valleys below. The following account of the inauguration of the movement in Northumberland is taken from a "Summary History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the West Branch Valley, by A. H. M'Henry," being an appendix to the "History of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna, by J. F. Meguinness." Mr. M'Henry says: "As regards the Methodist Church, the first authentic information of their efforts to promote the Gospel in this region is from the Minutes of the conference held at Baltimore, May 6, 1791. A new circuit, with others in different parts, called Northumberland, was formed, and two preachers appointed, namely: Richard Parrott and Lewis Browning. The country had previously been explored by the former without receiving or asking any compensation for his services or expenses. This circuit, from the time of its formation till 1806, extended over the following territory: From Wilkesbarre,* down the valley of the North Branch to Northumberland,

* From Wilkesbarre to Brier Creek the territory belonged to Wyoming circuit.

through the West Branch, including White Deer, Hole Valley, and up the Bald Eagle, about four miles above Millsburgh, and the same distance up Spring Creek from Bellefonte to Penn's Valley, near and south of Potter's Fort; thence by the old horse-path to Buffalo Valley and Northumberland.

"Each preacher traveled around this circuit in four weeks, preaching every day, except where the distance was too great, as from Penn's to Buffalo Valleys, thus supplying each appointment once in two weeks. During the first part of the year 1791 there was no regular preaching place from Northumberland to Lycoming Creek; the latter was at the house of Arad Sutton. This house, or a part of it, is yet standing on the east bank of the Lycoming Creek, on the main road from Williamsport to Jersey Shore, and is now owned by Oliver Watson, Esq., of the former place. At this place was formed the first society above Northumberland. After a lapse of sixty-five years, it would not be expected to find many of the members of that society living; yet two still survive, namely, Letitia Williams, of Montoursville, aged eighty-two years and one month; and Rebecca Smith, of Lycoming township, aged ninety-four and a half years. She came to Lycoming in 1774. Mrs. Williams did not join the society till about 1795.

"The names of the members of the first class are given entire, as follows: James Bailey, leader; Rhoda Bailey, Amariah Sutton, Martha Sutton, John Sutton, Dorothy Sutton, Harman Updegraff, Eric Updegraff, Susanna Updegraff, Hannah Sutton,* Rebecca Smith, living; Alexander Smith, Ebenezer Still, Letitia Williams, living.

"Soon after the organization of this class, societies were formed at various other points. At Larry's Creek was one of the earliest above, or perhaps, at a yet earlier time, Antis's, on Bald Eagle.

"In the month of August, 1806, a camp-meeting was held on Chillisquaqua Creek, half a mile from the river. This was the first camp-meeting held in this section of the state."

* Died April, 1855, in Indiana, aged ninety-four years and four months.

There was a meeting-house at Sutton's, of which we hear much in the accounts of the old preachers. A log meeting-house was at Antis's, where there was a great revival of religion in the days of George Harmon's presiding eldership on the Susquehanna district.

In 1792 William Colbert and James Campbell stand on the Minutes connected with Northumberland circuit. Colbert has left a journal of his travels, to which we shall make frequent allusions as we proceed.

Thomas Ware succeeded Robert Cloud in charge of the district. In his published autobiography, Mr. Ware says: "In the spring of 1792 I was appointed to Staten Island, where I labored a short time with much satisfaction and some success, and then took charge of the Susquehanna district."

Previous to Mr. Campbell's coming to Wyoming circuit the work of God had spread extensively through the valley. It had run from Ross Hill to the upper part of Kingston, had gone down to Plymouth, and had extended across the river to Hanover and Newport.

Mrs. Bedford was the daughter of James Sutton, Esq., and he had removed to Pittston, and in connection with his father-in-law, Dr. W. Hooker Smith, had erected a forge. Mrs. Bedford says: "Mr. Campbell preached at my father's once in two weeks; my mother, myself, and two of the workmen were all that were in the class. It was like preaching to the walls. Pittston was, at that time, a very hardened place, and great prejudice was raised against us."

In 1791, the year Mr. Campbell took charge of Wyoming circuit, *one hundred members* are reported, and, as near as can be ascertained, fifty of those belonged to the Ross Hill class. Such was the success of the blacksmith preacher, and the earnest men and women who came up to his help, during the first three years of their labors without regular pastoral supervision.

In 1792 William Hardesty stands connected with Wyoming circuit, but we can find no traces of his labors, and survivors do not recollect him. It is probable he never

came to the circuit. Mrs. Bedford says: "Anthony Turck followed Mr. Campbell." Mr. Turek was admitted on trial the following year, and it is probable he was employed this year by the elder.

CHAPTER IV.

WYOMING, TIOGA, AND SENECA CIRCUITS, 1792-1800.

ORIGIN OF METHODISM IN TIOGA.

About this period a current of emigration moved northward, and several Methodist families from Wyoming, and further south, settled in the Tioga country. These sheep scattered through the wilderness, called for the aid and supervision of regular pastors. These emigrations led to the organization of Tioga circuit.

At Tioga was once the residence of "Queen Esther." Here she bore rule, and here she celebrated idolatrous rites. Her dumb gods were here found among the ashes of her temple, which was consumed by fire at the command of Col. Hartley in 1778. She was a half-breed, partially educated, partially civilized, and partially Christianized; still the savage and the heathen were prevailing elements in her character.*

Wyalusing and Sheshequin constituted the scenes of a serious experiment, on the part of the Moravian missionaries, to civilize and Christianize a body of Delaware Indians. All that prayer, self-denying labor, and pious example could do for the poor Indian was done here. Eternity alone will reveal the sacrifices and sufferings of those self-denying servants of Jesus Christ in the cause of Indian improvement. They deserved to succeed—they doubtless did succeed in fitting a few of the poor children of the forest for heaven; but the demon of war arrested them in the midst of their godlike labors, and the star of hope went down in darkness.

* See Queen Esther's Rock, Wyoming, p. 284.

In 1792 the name of John Hill stands connected with Tioga. No circuit having distinct bounds had as yet been formed there. Tioga was a mission of indefinite extent, designed to embrace the new settlements from Wyalusing north and west wherever they might be found nestled in the dense and lofty forests.

It is not certain that Hill entered this new field during the year, but it was entered and cultivated by another, who made for himself a history as a pioneer preacher. This was WILLIAM COLBERT. In the Minutes Mr. Colbert stands connected this year with Northumberland circuit; but fortunately he has left a diary, which contains a record of his travels and labors during his life, and we have been so fortunate as to obtain it. For this favor we are indebted to Miss Elizabeth Colbert, his daughter, who is its owner, and keeps it as a sacred relic.

We shall find Mr. Colbert at the General Conference of 1792 in the city of Baltimore, and then shall follow him to the wilds of Tioga.

Thursday, Nov. 1. General Conference of the bishops, elders, and deacons of the M. E. Church met in Baltimore. The rules of the house were drawn up to-day, and few debates about them.

Friday, 2. It was moved in the General Conference to-day that the power of the bishop should be so far abridged that in case a preacher could make it appear that the bishop in his appointment had injured him, by appealing from the bishop to the conference, the bishop [if the conference should sustain the appeal] should give him an appointment elsewhere, which was seconded and ably defended by O'Kelley, Ivey, Hull, Garrettson, and Swift; and opposed by Reed, Willis, Morrell, Everett, and others.

Saturday, 3. The day spent in debate about the appeal.

Sunday, 4. Dr. Coke preached a delightful sermon from Rom. viii, 16. In the afternoon O'Kelley preached on Luke xvii, 5. The power of the Lord attended the word. At night Willis preached on Psalm xcv, 10, 11.

"Monday, 5. The day spent in debate about the appeal. It was put to vote, but was not carried. This so grieved O'Kelley that he withdrew from the connection.

"Tuesday, 6. The conference undertook the revisal of the form of Discipline as concerns the duties of elders, deacons, and preachers. I attended conference from Wednesday, 7, to Thursday, 15, except Thursday forenoon. On Wednesday, 14, James Thomas and I were ordained elders, and I was appointed to fill the station of Wyoming and Tioga."

MR. COLBERT'S MISSION TO TIOGA.

Mr. Colbert set off upon his northern trip without delay, taking Northumberland in his way. His brief stay at this place he thus notices :

"Monday, 26. Rode to Northumberland, and lodged at William Bonham's, who was not at home. I was treated kindly by the family.

"Tuesday, 27. Spent the day in getting ready for my journey. Preached at night on Matt. xviii, 3.

"Wednesday, 28. Spent a little time in reading the life of that good man, Mr. Brainerd. At night met a class. I am not as much engaged in religious exercises as I ought to be. Too much of my precious time slips away unimproved. O that I may be more engaged in the work of God than ever!"

What a lesson we have here! Mr. Colbert stops with his old friends to prepare for his journey to the frontier settlements. He is upon a toilsome and hazardous journey, but he thinks not of rest. He spends but two whole days in the place, and one evening he preaches; the next day he reads the Life of Brainerd and meets a class, and then sits down and writes in his diary that he is "not as much engaged in religious exercises as he ought to be!"

We will now give the reader some specimens of the travels of a pioneer Methodist preacher through the center of the present Wyoming Conference :

"Thursday, 29. Rode from Northumberland to Joseph

Ogden's, at Fishing Creek. Fell in company with Mr. Morgan at Mahoning Creek, where I had to pay a quarter of a dollar for their riding my horse over the creek ; what I could have done myself.

"Friday, 30. Spends the day with his old friends, Robert Owen and Widow Salmon.

"Saturday, Dec. 1. I bid farewell to my kind old friends at Ogden's, and set off for Tioga. Called at Isaac Holways, at Berwick. Rode to Salem, and lodged at Amos Park's. These are truly friendly people. The woman has had a Christian experience. I am happy that I found them. I called at one Cortwright's, about a mile back, who, I believe, when they found I was a Methodist preacher, did not want me to stay with them. They readily directed me to Park's, and I as cheerfully went.*

"Sunday, 2. I have had one of the worst roads from Salem to Nanticoke, in Wyoming, where I, for the second time, heard a Presbyterian minister preach. His name is Gray. He spoke from 2 Cor. iv, 17. He preached at Shobel Bidlack's. He spoke well. I lodged at Aaron Hunt's. Three beds were brought out and laid on the floor ; I had one of them.

"Monday, 3. This morning set off for Tioga ; got to Lackawanna in the afternoon, where I fed my horse at Baldwin's tavern, on the bank of the Susquehanna. I traveled on, thinking that when I got to Dalystown I would get some refreshment for myself ; but I was so unfortunate as to wander into an uninhabited wilderness, till the gloomy wings of starless and moonless night began to cover me. I was miles from the habitation of any human being, in the cold month of December, surrounded by howling, ravening wolves and greedy bears. Inferring from several chunks [extinguished firebrands] lying by a brook that some solitary traveler must have taken up his lodging here, and that there could be no house near, I turned my horse about and

*Brother L. Grant says they subsequently became good Methodists, and were very hospitable.

measured back my weary steps the rough and solitary way I came. And through the merciful providence of God I returned to the settlement and got a night's quarters at one Scott's, where I thought myself well off in getting a little Indian bread and butter for my supper. After some religious conversation, and prayer with the family, I lay down in a filthy cabin to take a little rest, after a day of hard toil. May the Lord enable me, with true Christian patience and magnanimity of soul, to endure all the hardships incident to a traveling life among the hideous mountains before me!

"*Tuesday, 4.* Paid one and sixpence for my accommodations—the man was moderate in his charge—and being impatient to see Dalychtown, I set off without my breakfast. But O perplexing! I missed my way again; and after traveling up a lofty mountain found the road wound around down the river, and it brought me in sight of the house I left. I then attempted to keep the river side, but this was impracticable, so I had to turn back again, glad enough to get out of the narrows. This morning breakfasted on a frozen turnip. I called at a house, wanting something for me and my horse, but the uncomfortable reply, 'No bread,' again was heard. However, here I got something for my horse, and at a house a little distance off I got something for my almost half starved self, at the moderate price of a fivepenny bit. So strengthened and refreshed, I crossed a towering mountain to Dalychtown, that long desired place. But how am I mistaken! Instead of finding a tavern here, where man and horse might be refreshed, the ideal Dalychtown vanished, and the real one—a smoky log cabin or two—heaves in view.* I lodged at old Mr. Jones's. The old man I met by the way; the old woman and a girl were at home. I spent the evening very agreeably with them, reading the Life of John Haime. May I never murmur at a few hardships in such a work!

* This place was on the east side of the Susquehanna, below Gardner's Ferry.

“*Wednesday, 5.* A day or two of rest would have been very agreeable to me; but as the old woman expressed much satisfaction at the favorableness of the day to the traveler, I bid her farewell, with thanks, and reached Teague’s Hill [now called Russel Hill, between Tunkhannock and Meshoppen] a miserable place indeed, kept by one Mulson. It was almost sunset when I got there; the next house was about six miles off, and a very gloomy way to it; so on the dirty top of Teague’s Hill I have to stay, with two hunters, a young woman, and the man and his wife. I took up my lodging on some bed clothes, with my head in the chimney corner.

“*Thursday 6.* Rejoicing at the return of the morning, I paid two and sixpence for my accommodations, and set off on my journey. It is really hard times with me. I had to sell one of Wesley’s funeral sermons for sixpence that I should have had elevenpence for, to help pay my reckoning. I rode six miles before I got anything for my poor horse. At Wigdon’s, at Meshoppen, I called for something for my horse, and some smoky dirty corn was brought. But as for myself, I thought I would wait a little longer before I would eat in such a filthy place. I talked to the filthy woman, who was sitting over the ashes with three or four dirty children in the chimney-corner, about the salvation of her soul. She was kind; she took nothing for what I had; so I proceeded on my journey, and arrived at Gideon Baldwin’s, the lowest [farthest south] house on my Tioga circuit. They received me kindly, and got me something to eat. I have traveled over hills and mountains without breakfast or dinner.”

Baldwin’s was at the mouth of the Wyalusing. The distance which our traveler toiled on “over hills and mountains without breakfast or dinner,” must have been about twenty-five miles, a long way, considering the state of the roads, for a man to travel fasting. The reader will remark that Mr. Colbert was always much annoyed by filthy people and filthy lodgings. He was of a respectable family,

and was raised in an old country where the comforts of life were abundant and society was comparatively refined. One must have some little experience in frontier life to be able to appreciate the sacrifices which such a man would make in associating with wild hunters, dirty and ragged men, women, and children! Then to think of setting out upon such a journey without money, having to sell a pamphlet worth *eleven cents* for *sixpence* to pay his lodging bill, and feeling so poor over the loss of *fivepence* as to sit down and mourn over it. Ah! "hard times," sure enough. What but a strong sense of duty would have kept a man in any kind of heart through such "times" as these? But our itinerant now has some relief. He has reached his field of labor; he meets with a kind reception and finds comfortable quarters. We will now follow him around his circuit:

"*Friday, 7.* I rested myself at my good old friend Baldwin's; read my Bible, and the experience of several of the preachers.

"*Saturday, 8.* Spent reading the Bible and Preacher's Experience, and in the evening lectured on the 5th of Matt, twelve verses.

"*Sunday, 9.* I preached at Guy Wells's on Acts iii, 19. Old Mr. Stafford, a Baptist preacher, was present. When I had done he preached on Sol. Songs ii, 10. He told the people that Christ had done all, and they had nothing to do.

"*Monday, 10.* Preached to a few people up Wyalusing Creek at one Pierce's. He and his wife have their names on our class-paper down the creek at Baldwin's, but are not well enough acquainted with Methodism to like class-meetings. But the woman can give as satisfactory an account of her conversion as I ever heard. And what a pity! she is one of those that believe in the impossibility of a final fall after a real conversion. I returned to Baldwin's. This man's heart and house are open to all who come.

"*Tuesday, 11.* I rode from Baldwin's to Burney's. I was

happy in singing the praises of God. I preached on Matt. v, 6, and sung the fifty-sixth hymn of our collection. Rode with C. M. to our old friend B.'s. Here I could not enjoy myself; the people are shamefully dirty.

"*Wednesday, 12.* I preached at Elijah Townsend's on Rev. xxii, 17. In this place Satan had been sowing the seeds of discord in the society. I expect to have trouble with this people. After preaching I rode with C. M. to Nathan Brown's, across Breakneck Hill, a horrid precipice.

"*Thursday, 13.* I preached to a few people at Nathan Brown's, some of whom were Baptists, on Matt. v, 4. This is the most comfortable house I have been in since I left Northumberland. Nathan Brown and his wife are very kind people.

"*Friday, 14.* Rode from Nathan Brown's, in New Sheshequin, to Daniel M'Dowel's, in Chemung, York state, where I was well used. I preached at night on 2 Cor. xiii, 5. I had not freedom in speaking. The land here is excellent, and is not so hemmed in with mountains as it is lower down the river; it is on the Tioga River.

"*Saturday, 15.* Rode to Mr. Seeley's, up Seeley's Creek, and spoke at night on the second paragraph of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. This is a very thick settlement, and the land is excellent.

"*Sunday, 16.* From old Mr. Seeley's I rode to John Koukle's, at Newtown Point. He received me very kindly. I went with him and heard Mr. Parks preach on Rev. iii, 20. Mr. Parks was very friendly; he wanted me to preach for him, but this I refused to do. At night I preached at Lough's tavern, at Newtown Point, on Matt. v, 6. Part of my congregation were drunk. Lord, give me humility and watchfulness.

"*Monday, 17.* I crossed the Tioga River, and, much to my satisfaction, I found my friend Vandervoort and his family, with whom I was acquainted when I traveled in Northumberland circuit. I dined with them, prayed with them, and parted with them. I rode to old Mr. Kress's and

preached at night on 1 Cor. vi, 19, 20, with freedom. I see and feel my want of more zeal and love.

" *Tuesday*, 18. I preached at Nathan Brown's on 2 Cor. xiii, 5. Wretch that I am! I ought to be thankful for the freedom I sometimes have in speaking. If I should be an instrument in the hands of God of saving any it will be a great blessing, should I even be lost myself; but no blessing to me.

" *Wednesday*, 19. I rode from Nathan Brown's to Breakneck Hill, where I crossed the river to one Mr. Foster's, to be satisfied whether or not I had an appointment there, and found I had none. A Mr. Blackman took me over the river, who was honest enough to tell me he never liked the Methodist doctrine. I asked him why? He said he did not like their preaching that a man could fall from grace; and as to perfection there was no such thing in the world, and that none could live without sin. I asked him if anything unclean could enter into the kingdom of heaven. I also told him it was written: 'Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' But as he would fly from one thing to another, I thought it was not worth while to talk with him. I hope I dealt honestly with him in what I did say before I left him.

"After I got over Breakneck Hill I overtook an old man with a keg of whisky on his back. I could not leave him without telling him of the evil of whisky drinking. I thought he was drunk, but he received what I said kindly. At night I exhorted at friend Townsend's with freedom.

"*Thursday*, 20. I preached at Brother Rice's, in Shuffield's Flats, on 1 Thess. v, 17. I felt freedom in speaking. I rode through the Narrows on the Susquehanna. Here are excellent stones to build with, and yet the people live in miserable cabins, some of them without chimnies. If you speak to them about being more decent, they will plead that they are in a new country and have many difficulties to encounter.* I feel the need of watching and prayer.

* What they said was true, and a very fair justification.

"*Friday, 21.* Spent part of the day reading and writing, and in the evening met the class in Shuffield's Flats, the first class I have met in the circuit. I read to them the Rules, desiring to know whether they want to continue in society. Preached at a friendly man's house by the name of Alexander, on 1 Cor. vi, 19, 20. I have, thank God! reason to hope that general satisfaction was given.

"*Saturday, 22.* Agreeably to the request of a friend, I spent this day visiting. If we visit to edification it is well. I wish all my visits were more so. It was with some difficulty I got along the Narrows with Brother Rice to Gideon Baldwin's at Wyalusing."

Mr. Colbert had now encompassed a two weeks' circuit and come back to the place of beginning. The incidents which he records are not striking or extraordinary, but his Journal shows the points which were first visited by the Methodist itinerants as they pushed their way to the north; it also illustrates the condition of the country and the character of the people. The simple narration of facts which we have copied furnishes a multitude of subjects for reflection, but we leave them for the present as we found them. On his second round Mr. Colbert visits several new places which in after times became famous in the history of Methodism, and introduces names which obtained some considerable notoriety.

He says: "*Thursday, 25.* I left friend Baldwin's oppressed in spirit, under a sense of my unprofitableness. It was very late when I got to Burney's, and some of the people had gone away. I endeavored to preach to those who stayed on Heb. iii, 14. After I had done, a poor unhappy son of Belial came in to abuse me. Mrs. Burney reproved him. I left Burney's and crossed the river to old Mr. Cole's. Here I wanted to regulate the society, but found them very refractory. Old Mr. Cole's daughter Mary is the wife of the man that abused me at Burney's; she is a great enthusiast, and has a turn for poetry."

The locality is not far from the present village of Tow-

anda. This "old Mr. Cole" was the father of Rev Elisha Cole, who once traveled and preached in the state of Delaware, lived long on the paternal inheritance, was extensively known as a local preacher, and by everybody called "Father Cole." We often enjoyed his hospitalities when we traveled the Susquehanna district in 1824-5. And there we found "Mary," the "great enthusiast," who had "a turn for poetry" in the days of Mr. Colbert, now a confirmed maniac. Her husband's name was Culverson. Of him we have little knowledge; nothing indeed which would redeem him from the stigma fixed upon his character in Mr. Colbert's Journal. Domestic trouble, so far as we remember, drove his wife into madness, and for many years "Aunt Molly" was both an object of pity and a source of amusement. She lived in a cabin a few rods from her brother's dwelling, dressed fantastically, planned and cultivated her garden according to no model on earth, sang hymns and quoted Scripture almost without bounds, and with her wit and drollery would convulse an old Connecticut deacon with laughter. When "the elder" came "Aunt Molly" was always on hand. Sometimes she had to be told that the elder was tired and she must "go home." This always displeased her, and called forth a storm of crazy eloquence of which "Elisha" was most naturally the butt. On one such occasion she screamed out: "The devil rules and reigns here. I tell you, elder, you had better flee as Lot did out of Sodom." In one of her rambles Judge Gore, to frighten her, threatened to put her in jail. She returned home in a great rage, and proceeded to overhaul all her garments and rip out all the *gores*. She ever after maintained that the *gores* were all from the devil, and she would have none of them about her. Her well-thumbed old pocket Bible she carried in a pocket in her dress on her side, which was just of the capacity necessary to contain the precious treasure.

"*Wednesday, January 2, 1793,*" Mr. Colbert "preached at one Foster's, at Sugar Creek."

Under date of January 14, Mr. Colbert tells us that he "received a letter from a man living at Awaga, [Owego,] in which he was requested to come there and preach."

On the same day he was invited to the house of a Mr. Martin, son of a Presbyterian minister, who seemed to be under awakening, but was much in the dark. Mr. Colbert gave him an earnest exhortation, which probably was not lost.

Mr. Colbert visited "Old Sheshequin," and preached "at Captain Clark's" * on "Wednesday, 16th of January." He remarks: "The woman of this house put me in mind of Martha. I had not much satisfaction in preaching; attention was wanting. After meeting in came Squire Murray, a great Universalist, a believer in eternal justification. I believe he is an ungodly man. He says he was once a public speaker among the Baptists, and thought Christ died for only a part of mankind, and that none of those for whom Christ died could perish; and now he says he believes that Christ died for all, and that none will be lost. I felt sorry that I spent so much time in arguing with him."

"*Friday, 25.* It was with difficulty that I got through the Narrows on account of the ice. I preached at one Bennett's, near Mahontowango, with freedom, on 1 Cor. vi, 19, 20. If any good is done, to God be all the glory. These people are very willing to hear. This locality is now known as Nichols, where live the Shoemakers and Coryells, and has for many years been famous for Methodism."

Mr. Colbert suffered much, and passed through many perils from the necessity he was in of constantly crossing the Susquehanna without bridges or ferries. In January and February he makes the following entries in his diary:

"*Thursday, January 31.* I rode the river to Mr. Townsend's. This is a very cold day and night.

* Here Henry B. Bascom was awakened and converted at a meeting held by Rev. L. Grant in 1811. We heard Bascom say, in 1836, that Grant was his spiritual father.

"*Friday, February 1.* I crossed the river on the ice; called at old Mr. Cole's.

"*Saturday, 2.* I preached at Brother Rice's with much satisfaction, and for the benefit of others gave an account of the work of God with myself. I intended to go to Wyalusing, and made an attempt to cross on the ice; but my horse fell in up to his neck, and I declined going."

We know right well what all this means. To "ride the river" means to ford it on horseback. This is no very pleasant undertaking in midwinter. To cross on newly-formed ice is generally dangerous, and to have your horse under you "go down up to his neck" is terrible. These scenes were so common in olden times that they excited little attention. The people who cross the turbulent Susquehanna upon the elegant and permanent bridges which now span its waters every few miles, know but little of what their fathers endured fifty years ago. Traveling a circuit along this river in 1793 was labor indeed. Much later than this period there was something more than mere romance in the life of a traveling preacher "in the Susquehanna country," as we have reason to know from actual experience.

Superstition and a love of the marvelous are prominent features of backwoods life. While at Newtown, Mr. Colbert makes the following entry in his Journal:

"In this place they talk of very strange things, such as hearing groans. One says he saw an apparition, but will not tell who it was or what it said to him.

"*Monday, 11.* I spent a little time with Dr. Park, who is very friendly to me. He told me a remarkable dream of Judge Miller's daughter, which was, as well as I can recollect, as follows: That a young man, who was killed with the handle of a pitchfork, came to her to inform her that there is a hell, which it is said her father's family did not believe. Mr. Park says groans have been heard in the day time, while the people were sitting by the fire, and while the young woman was relating her dream; but I do not understand that it has any effect upon them." •

So true is it that "if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one should arise from the dead." It seems that the people believed in the supernatural character of these strange things, yet no moral impression followed them. Pretended apparitions and "spiritual manifestations" are usually barren of valuable moral results. We have known a few instances in which extraordinary *dreams* have been followed by thorough conviction and conversion.

Mr. Colbert records another struggle with the ice and water on the Susquehanna.

"*Wednesday, 13.* I visited two families, apparently well-disposed, in my way from Chemung to Nathan Brown's. I thank God that I was not killed or crippled coming through the Narrows between Tioga Point and New Shesh-equin. It snowed hard, and my horse balling made the riding very unpleasant on the best of roads; but when I came to where the water flowing from the precipice was frozen and covered with snow it became intolerable. So I had to dismount, and was driven to the dangerous alternative of going on the ice on the side of the river. The ice broke into large pieces as I led my horse, and let me down into the water more than knee deep. I had to exert myself to keep my horse from plunging on me. By a kind Providence I was enabled to mount him and he took me through. By the time I was well out my surtout was frozen as stiff as a horn, but I felt no cold. I soon rode to Nathan Brown's, and was not sorry that the people did not come to preaching this dismal night, after I had had such a distressing journey."

One of the usual accompaniments of a religious meeting in former times was the crying of children. This is not unfrequently the case even now in the rural districts. This was a part of the arrangements which Mr. Colbert could not endure. Those who remember him speak of this feature in his character. In his diary we have frequent allusions to the inconvenience which he was subjected to from this cause. One instance will suffice as a specimen:

"*Sunday, 17.* I preached at Guy Wells's. Soon after I read my text I knew not but I should be obliged to sit down and say nothing, as there were so many noisy children present; but their noise abated, and I made out, through the assistance of God, to speak with satisfaction. By what I hear I suppose the people in these parts think I have a very weak head, because I cannot preach when there are a number of children about me bawling louder than I can speak."

It certainly requires a *strong head*, or no ordinary strength of nerve and will, to preach under such circumstances. Nothing but compassion for mothers, who must carry crying babies to meeting or never go themselves, can reconcile any preacher to the screaming of children in the house of God. Sometimes the thing appears in a form that nobody should be expected to endure. When the child screams amain, and resists, with kicks and blows, every effort to pacify it, and the mother seems to be in no wise embarrassed, nor to think of anybody or anything but the *poor baby* and its troubles, and the attention of the whole house is directed to the scene of confusion, the preacher may as well pause and order the nuisance removed.

Mr. Colbert came to Tioga without money, and it does not appear that his finances were materially improved while he labored there. The following entries in his diary bear upon the subject:

"*Sunday, March 31.* I preached at Wyalusing. Four weeks ago I gave out for a public collection in this place to be made to-day, but very few came to meeting. My friend Baldwin spoke of the collection, but nobody said anything in reply. So I came off without anything, and I can truly say that I shall be happy if this was all that I have to trouble me in this circuit.

"*Sunday, April 7.* I preached at Newtown Point. In the afternoon I preached at Squire Hammond's, and here collected 21s. 3d.

"*Tuesday, 9.* I preached at Kress's, and in the evening

in the school-house at Chemung. In this place I collected 4s. 10d. It may be that I have done preaching in Tioga."

The whole amount of Mr. Colbert's receipts during his four months of hard labor on Tioga circuit was *three dollars and fourteen cents!* yet he utters not one word of complaint.

MR. WARE VISITS TIOGA, AND MR. COLBERT RETURNS TO WYOMING.

On the 11th of April Mr. Colbert met the Rev. Thomas Ware at Townsend's. He had come on in the capacity of "elder." He attended a quarterly meeting, administered the sacrament, preached several edifying discourses, and then took Mr. Colbert with him to Wyoming. Here is Mr. Colbert's account of the journey down the river :

"*Monday, 15.* Brother Ware and I arose early and got into a boat at New Sheshequin, going down the river, which ran through the mountains at all points of the compass till dark, when we stopped at a cabin by the river side. Here we could get no straw to sleep on ; however, Brother Ware fixed himself on a chest, with a bunch of tow for his pillow, and I suppose thought himself well off. For my part, I had to get the hay out of the boat for my bed, which a passenger begged part of.

"*Tuesday, 16.* At about twelve o'clock we landed in Wilkesbarre, the seat of justice for Luzerne county. It was very pleasant coming down Susquehanna this morning. We dined at old friend Mann's, then rode to Richard Inman's.

"I have been four months and eight days in Tioga circuit, one of the most disagreeable places for traveling I was ever in, among a refractory sort of people. I lived hard and labored hard, but I fear did but little good. *I joined but three in society while I was there ;* but I think there is a prospect of good being done. May the labors of my successor be blessed more than mine have been!" What a tale of woes ! and yet the man's heart is whole within him.

"*Wednesday, 17.* Brother Ware left me ; he is a man I have a very high opinion of. Now I have the charge of

Wyoming circuit. May the Lord give me wisdom, grace, and patience, that I may deal with these people as one who has the worth of souls at heart."

"*Saturday, 20.* I have seen twenty-nine years this day. Amid many difficulties and dangers I have been preserved by the providence of God. O that the remainder of my days may be spent to his glory! I dined with three of our Methodist sisters in a mill. A birth-day festival! Rode to Wilkesbarre, called at my old friend Mann's, where I am very kindly received. Wanting my boots mended, I carried them to the prison, under the court-house, to a prisoner, as there was no shoemaker in town, and paid him double what he asked for mending them, as he was a poor prisoner.

"*Sunday, 21.* This morning the prison was evacuated, and only one of my boots mended; he probably had not time to mend both. I preached in the Court-house in the morning on Mark vi, 12, and in the afternoon at Richard Inman's on 2 Cor. xiii, 5.

"*Friday, 26.* I rode to brother Owen's.

"*Saturday, 27.* Rode to one Jackson's, (Philip Jackson,) whose wife is in society; he was once in himself." He lived on what is now called the Fisher Gay place, on which the monument stands.

"*Sunday, 28.* I preached at Rosecrantz's, on Matt. vii, 21-23. In the afternoon at Captain Parish's." Rosecrantz lived where "the old Red House," or the "Captain Breese House," now stands, on the bluff near the Wyoming depot, and Captain Parish lived on Ross Hill. At night he preached at Captain Ransom's, in Shawney, where he enters the following in his diary: "Mrs. Ransom is a daughter of afflictions; she was desirous of having preaching and being baptized with her four children. I thank God I have been enabled to speak with freedom to-day."

"*Wednesday, May 8.* Rode to Lackawanna Forge, and preached at James Sutton's on 1 Cor. vi, 19, 20. Here I met with a disputing Calvinist. Sister Sutton and her daughter, [Mrs. Bedford, our most intelligent living witness

of the events of those times,] appear to be very clever women. Our friend Sutton has not joined the Society, but appears to be a man of a very excellent spirit."

On the Sabbath he preached at Rosecrantz's, Captain Parish's and Shawney. Hence he proceeded to Briar Creek; preached, and found pleasant quarters with Thomas Bowman.* Thursday he came back to Parks's, in Salem. Here he notes his condition of mind:

"I knew not how I could preach, but I thought I would try and do as well as I could. I did, and the Lord be praised. I don't know that I have seen the word attended with more power since I left Maryland. My text was Amos xi, 12. Though the life of a traveling preacher is very laborious and fatiguing it is what I glory in.

"*Sunday, 19.* I preached at the meeting-house, and in the afternoon at Wilkesbarre. I fear these are a hardened people."

"The meeting-house"—"*our* meeting-house," as he sometimes calls it—was a small house erected by the Methodists and their friends on Hanover Green. A larger house, built for the exclusive occupancy of the Presbyterians, stood nearby, and both rotted down without ever being finished. They were still standing, but in a ruinous condition, when we came to Wyoming, in 1818. Unfinished as was this "meeting-house," we infer from Mr. Colbert's Journal that it was regularly occupied as a preaching place. Bishop Asbury preached in it when he visited Wyoming.

When Mr. Colbert next came to Capouse he "preached to a few people at Brother How's; met a small class; the Lord was present; lodged at Joseph Waller's." How's and Waller's were his regular places for preaching and lodging his term through.

* Thomas and Christian Bowman were brothers; both local preachers; lived in the same neighborhood. Christian came into the country in 1792, and Thomas in 1793; each always kept a prophet's chamber, and, until they built a church, provided a chapel in their dwellings, or rather turned their houses into chapels, as often as required by the exigencies of the work, to the interests of which they were both ardently devoted.

About this time Anning Owen began to take a position with his brethren as a preacher. On the 7th of June Mr Colbert notes that he "set off with Brother Owen for Northumberland Quarterly Meeting. On our way Brother Owen preached at Shawney, at Captain Ransom's. I exhorted after him." When they arrived at the place of the meeting "Alward White was preaching; Brother Owen exhorted after him. At night Brother Owen preached," and "on Sabbath evening Brother Owen preached again." The Wyoming blacksmith had his full share of prominence and responsibility on this occasion, especially considering that he was as yet a mere local preacher.

In June Mr. Colbert experienced another change in his field of labor. He says: "*Monday, 10.* I am now on my way around Northumberland circuit." For several months he continued to pass regularly around "Northumberland and Wyoming." The Northumberland circuit at this time seems to have embraced the whole country from the Susquehanna to the Alleghany Mountains, including the Bald Eagle and Juniata countries, Penn's Valley, Buffalo Valley, and the settlements on the West Branch, penetrating in the wilderness as far north as Loyalsocks. This was an ample field, but it was thoroughly explored by the hardy itinerant, who for his labor received little or nothing more of pecuniary compensation than simple sustenance. And the men who were engaged in this toilsome and self-denying work literally "had no certain dwelling-place." They no sooner had formed a few acquaintances than they were ordered to another field—a few "rounds" only, and they were off, hundreds of miles, to some new and strange country.

BISHOP ASBURY VISITS WYOMING.

1793. This year constitutes an interesting era in the history of the work of God in our territory. Five years had passed since the organization of the first class at Ross Hill; one hundred and seventy-seven members had been enrolled, and two circuits regularly formed, and supplied

with preachers. The work had now assumed a sufficient amount of importance to attract the attention of Bishop Asbury, and to demand a personal visit from that apostolic man. Accordingly, on a journey from Maryland to New York the latter part of June and the fore part of July, he was in Wyoming and vicinity. The following is the notice of this visit in the bishop's Journal—characteristic enough :

“Thursday, (June) 27, was to me a day of trial. We set out late toward Northumberland; night coming on, we stopped at Penn's Creek. Next morning we went to Northumberland to breakfast. It has a little chapel, that serves as a school-house, belonging to the Methodists. We have a few kind, respectable friends, whose circumstances are comfortable. I gave them a sermon on John xiv, 6, and in the afternoon paid Sunbury a visit. The people here are almost all Dutch. I was enabled to speak alarming words on Acts iv, 12.

“July 2. After preaching on ‘the grace of God appearing to ~~all~~ men,’ we wrought up the hills and narrows to Wyoming. We stopped at a poor house; nevertheless they were rich enough to sell us half a bushel of oats, and had sense enough to make us pay well for them. We reached Mr. P——'s about eleven o'clock. I found riding in the night caused a return of my rheumatic complaint through my breast and shoulders. But all is well; the Lord is with us.

“Thursday, 4, being the anniversary of American independence, there was a great noise among the sinners. A few of us went down to Shawney, called a few people from their work, and found it good for us to be there.

“Sunday, 7. The Lord has spoken in awful peals of thunder. O what havoc was made here fifteen years ago! Most of the inhabitants were either cut off or driven away. The people might have clothed themselves in sackcloth and ashes on the third, if in white and glory on the fourth of July. The inhabitants here are very wicked; but I feel as if the

Lord would return. I hope Brothers F., I., and P.* will be owned of the Lord. The man at whose house I was to preach made a frolic the day before; it was said he sent a mile across the river to one of his neighbors, taking him from his work, and telling him he was about to bleed to death. This falsity was invented, I suppose, to incline the man to come. The people would not come to his house; I had to walk a mile through burning heat to preach.† I was severely exercised in mind, hardly knowing where to go to get a quiet, clean place to lie down.

"*Monday, 8.* I took the wilderness, through the mountains, up the Lackawanna, on the Twelve Mile Swamp; this place is famous for dirt and lofty hemlock. We lodged in the middle of the swamp, at S——'s, and made out better than we expected."

Here the good bishop left our territory, crossed the Delaware, and went through New Jersey to New York. This must have been a fearful jaunt in that early period.

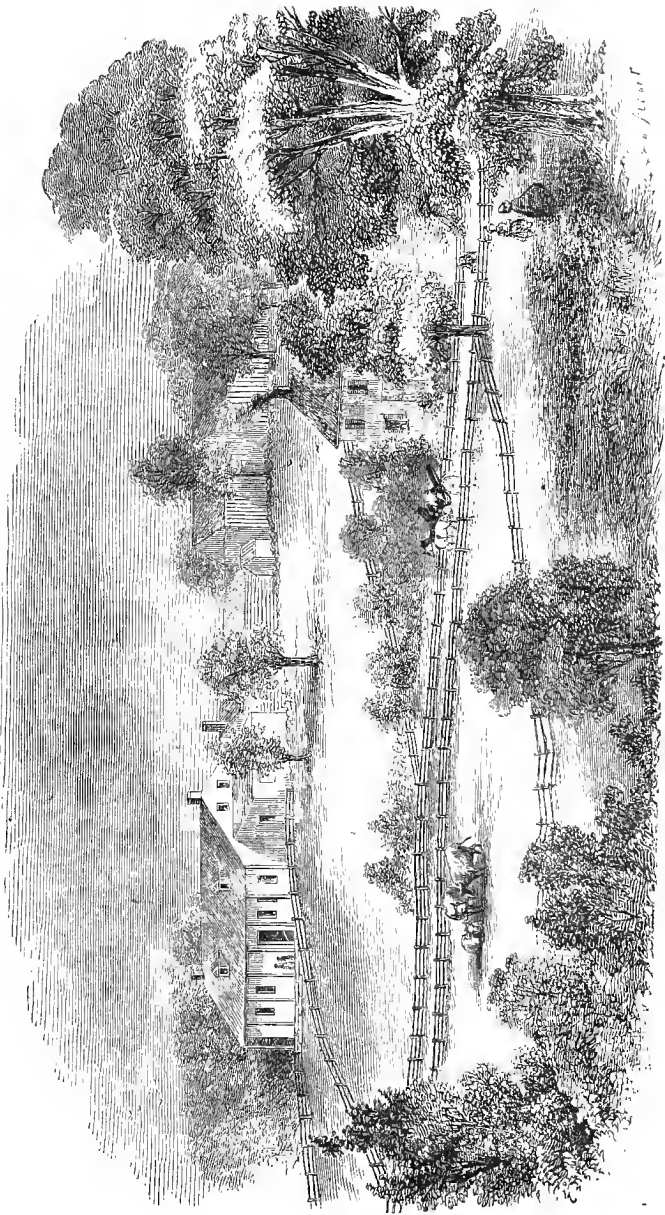
Bishop Asbury's visit to Wyoming occurred during Mr. Colbert's pastorship, and is thus recorded in his diary:

"*Sunday, June 30.* I met Bishop Asbury in Northumberland. I found him up stairs at Widow Taggart's. When I entered the room he spoke to me in a way I never was spoken to by him before; he was very agreeable. At eleven o'clock he preached in the meeting-house, and in the afternoon at Sunbury. At night Brother Hill preached in Northumberland. I was very much rejoiced at seeing four preachers in this part of the world; but I had my feelings hurt very much before I went to bed at William Bonham's.

"*Monday, July 1.* This morning I set out with Bishop Asbury and Brother Henry Hill for Joseph Ogden's, Fishing Creek. I directed them the way to friend Ogden's, and

* Probably Frisby, Inman, and Parish. If this "hope" was realized, eternity only can reveal the fact and its extent.

† This walk was from Richard Inman's, in Buttonwood, to the meeting-house on Hanover Green. See Mr. Colbert's diary.



CAPTAIN PARISH'S RESIDENCE AT ROSS HILL, WYOMING.

went to Catawissa and preached to a congregation of decent people in a mill. Isaiah Hines invited me to drink tea with him. I accepted the invitation, and in the afternoon rode on to Joseph Ogden's, where Bishop Asbury preached at night. Brother Hill exhorted, and I sung and prayed; and seeing the people unwilling to leave the house, I spoke to them a short time. I never saw them so wrought upon before.

"Tuesday, 2. We left friend Ogden's, called and prayed with old Mother Salmons, and went on to Berwick. Bishop Asbury preached to a considerable congregation at Isaac Hall's, after which we proceeded on to Captain Parish's, at Ross Hill, Wyoming. It was late before we got there, along the most disagreeable road. I had the pleasure of killing two rattlesnakes. I never saw one alive before.

"Wednesday, 3. Bishop Asbury preached at Captain Parish's. The discourse was made a blessing to me.

"Thursday, 4, spent at Captain Parish's. We have had a heavy thunderstorm.

"Friday, 5. Went with the bishop to Captain Satterthwaites, where I expected he would have preached; but the people would not attend at the captain's house, as there was drinking and revelry there yesterday. The people met at Rosecrantz's, but the captain was so affronted that he would not attend. This afternoon we had another thunderstorm.

"Saturday, 6. We came to Wilkesbarre. The bishop preached to a small congregation in the court-house. We went home with Richard Inman.

"Sunday, 7. At the meeting-house, by the request of the bishop, I exhorted, sung, prayed, and read the first lesson for the day. Brother Hill sung, prayed, and read the second lesson, after which the bishop preached, and after him Brother Owen and Brother Hill exhorted. In the afternoon the bishop and Brother Hill preached in the court-house at Wilkesbarre. The people have had four sermons preached to them to-day in this house."

On Monday, 8, Bishop Asbury went on his way east, and Mr. Colbert resumed his course of appointments.

The writer has had the good fortune to secure an autograph letter from the bishop to the Rev. Thomas Morrell, dated "Wyoming, July 3, 1793." For this he is indebted to the kindness of the Rev. Francis A. Morrell, of the New Jersey Conference. It was obtained and laid by as a mere relic, but it now has a historical importance which was not foreseen at the time it was obtained. The following is the letter :

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—Every occurrence gives an opportunity of information. These frontier circuits here suffer the want of my presence to see the state of matters. That very person who was Hammetting* is greatly concerned as a mercenary(?) in this circuit; no wonder he should let loose. I am, and hope I shall be a terror to evil-doers, especially ministers. Will you, the next letter you have an occasion to write to John Dickins, direct said Dickins to desire Daniel Hitt, on the Pittsburgh circuit, to take the earliest opportunity to let Valentine Cook, upon the Clarksburgh circuit, know to come and meet me at the Baltimore Conference, October 20, 1793. I have found a vast body of Dutch on Northumberland circuit, and the said Cook can preach in Dutch. Had I known it at Conference I would have stationed him there. I believe there are several young men who will do as well on Clarksburgh as he. I am convinced I ought to station preachers all the year; and it appears not right to take all the preachers away. There are such disorders it gives a great opening to men, devils, and sin. Our poor preachers keep Lent a great part of the year here. Our towns and cities, at least our conferences, ought not to let them starve for clothing. I have had a pretty long campaign in the backwoods ever since March. I judge it will be best for half the preachers from Albany, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Jersey to attend

* Following the lead of Mr. Hammett, who seceded in the South.

at York Conference, that we may keep the work going on. I think we must absolutely never let the preachers wholly leave their circuits; this is what was never suffered in England for fear of havoc. It is pressing times in America."

"Thine as ever,

F. ASBURY."

There are personal allusions, both in the Journal and the letter, which it is difficult, at this distance of time, to settle, and indeed it is not important to settle them. The most important fact brought out in the letter is that the bishop judged a certain grade of talent necessary to meet the demands of "these frontier circuits," which, as yet, had not been upon the ground, and he took measures immediately to meet the emergency.. He rightly judged that the work had "suffered the want of his presence to see the state of matters," and he provided to bring on the needed help from the conference to assemble at Baltimore in the following autumn. The letter is dated July 3, 1793, and the conference sat October 20 of the same year. At this conference a new district was constituted, consisting of only four charges, Northumberland, Tioga, Wyoming, and Seneca Lake, and *Valentine Cook* was appointed to the charge of it. This was a wise and salutary arrangement. Cook was exactly the man for that particular kind of work which this new country required, and he had few quarterly meetings, and consequently ample time to act the part of a missionary, and prepare the way for the organization of new circuits.

MR. COLBERT CLOSES HIS LABORS ON WYOMING AND NORTH-
UMBERLAND, GOES TO THE NORTH, AND THEN LEAVES OUR
FIELD.

July 20, in an account of a quarterly meeting at Aaron Hunt's, at Nanticoke, Mr. Colbert says: "Brother Campbell preached with liberty and power. Brother Owen and I spoke after him. The Lord was present at night; Brother Owen preached, several of the friends prayed, and the windows of heaven were opened. An old Presbyterian by the

name of Moore, who came about thirty miles up the river to this quarterly meeting, was in raptures of joy, seeing so many people engaged with God.

"Sunday, 21. This was a glorious morning; in the love-feast we had a feast of love. Brother J. Campbell preached, Brother Owen exhorted, and I preached after him. For the first time in my life I administered the Lord's Supper. This meeting was held in Widow Bidlack's barn. The Lord confines not himself to the heavens, or to temples built expressly for the purposes of religious worship, but is found by all his faithful followers in whatever place he is sought with sincerity."

Barns, for many years after this, were common places for the holding of quarterly meetings. Many a barn, like that of Widow Bidlack's in the case above referred to, has been sanctified by the presence and power of God, and been the spiritual birthplace of precious souls. Quarterly meetings were just beginning to be considered great occasions in the interior, and to exert a great influence on the public mind. The people came from afar to attend them, and returned home full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. The one noticed by Mr. Colbert was one of a series of these means of grace, which, within the course of a few years, were largely concerned in the permanent establishment of Methodism in Wyoming and its surroundings.

"Wednesday, Aug. 7. I was prevented from going to Berwick to-day to preach, and stayed at Christian Bowman's. It was truly delightful to see the people going from house to house and joining in the blessed exercise of singing and prayer. O that this may be the beginning of the best of days among them! From what has been said, I have some reason to hope that my visit among this people, since I left Tioga, has been rendered a blessing, and if so, may I have a heart to ascribe all the glory to God, from whom all good comes."

On the 11th of June, 1792, when Mr. Colbert was traveling Northumberland circuit, he first visited Christian Bow-

man. He says he "preached in the woods to a few people that came out." In some notes on Mr. Colbert's journal, furnished us by Jesse Bowman, Esq., it is stated that "Christian Bowman had moved into the neighborhood from Northampton County, Pa., four miles below the Water Gap on the Delaware, and with his family, located at the place here mentioned. He arrived in April previous. It was almost an unbroken wilderness; he was one of the first pioneers. Here he erected a tent as a temporary shelter, while preparing and gathering materials for the new log house. There was then no house or other building in which to preach, and this sermon, preached under the tent, was the first ever delivered in the neighborhood." Henceforth "Briar Creek" was a place quite famous for Methodism.

"*Saturday*, 10, I spent in reading my Bible, and the Life and Death of Thomas Walsh.

"*Sunday*, 11, I preached at Aaron Hunt's, and in the afternoon in the court-house at Wilkesbarre. Made a public collection, and got 13s. 5d. Lawyer Catlin, formerly an opposer of the Methodists, invited me home with him, and treated me kindly.

"I received a friendly letter to-day from Miss Christiana Johnson, a young woman, I believe, of good sense, and of an excellent spirit. What she has in friendship addressed to me in verse, I shall, for my own satisfaction, here insert verbatim:

'You, sir, have ventured thus to come
A wild and craggy road,
Willingly left your former home
To visit our abode.

'I hope your labor 'll not be spent
In vain along our shores;
Nor you have reason to repent
You came within our doors.

'And may your path with flowers be spread,
While through the woods you rove;
May you with joy the carpet tread
Throughout the Luzerne grove.

' May Heaven grant you sweet repast—
Religion all your theme ;
Make each day happier than the last
Along the winding stream.

' And when these borders you do leave,
And can no longer stay,
May you a laurel crown receive
That never fades away.' ”

We have copied these lines as illustrative of the times. Miss Johnson was a daughter of “old priest Johnson,” as he is called by the old people who remember him. He was a Presbyterian minister, who came into the country with the early Yankee settlers, was in Forty Fort on the day of the battle, and went to John Butler’s headquarters, with others, with a flag of truce, and assisted in negotiating the capitulation. He settled in Wilkesbarre, and some of his descendants are there still. The daughter, who wrote the above lines, became a Methodist, married a Methodist, and died in the Methodist faith and in the communion of the Methodist Church. Her conversion to Methodism affords undoubted evidence that, as a distinct form of Christianity, it had already attained considerable influence over the public mind in Wyoming. We have copied Miss Christiana’s rhymes to Mr. Colbert, not because there is much of the spirit of the Muses in them, but as a specimen of the literature and sentiment of that early period of the history of our country. Like the old patriotic ballads, it is valuable as a specimen of home-made poetry, as well as an evidence of ardent piety and generous hospitality.

Monday, August 12, Mr. Colbert makes the first mention of Benjamin Bidlack. He simply says: “I visited our brother Benjamin Bidlack in Shawney, who lies very ill.”

THORNTON FLEMING—A TOUR TO THE LAKE COUNTRY.

In September of this year Mr. Colbert met “the long expected Thornton Fleming” in Northumberland. This

devoted minister, it seems, went to the northern frontier, on a sort of exploring expedition, in advance of his appointment as "elder" in that hard field, which position he occupies on the Minutes for the following year. He passes up the North Branch of the Susquehanna in company with Mr. Colbert, preaching at Berwick, Salem, Nanticoke, Wilkesbarre, and Kingston. These two primitive missionaries met at Northumberland on the 10th of September, and parted at Abram Goodwin's, in Kingston, on the 24th of the same month. Upon parting, Mr. Colbert remarks: "This morning Brother Fleming took his leave of me. He is gone to explore the dreary regions of Tioga." He penetrated the north far beyond "the gloomy regions of Tioga," into the lake country, where new settlements were scattered through the wilderness, the hardy settlers sharing the country with the aboriginal inhabitants, whose neighborhood was not always the most pleasant or safe. We shall have occasion to speak further of this man and his labors hereafter.

October 26, Mr. Colbert notices his first meeting with his "new colleague, Brother Turck." He remarks that he "preached a long but entertaining metaphorical sermon from Isa. xxi, 5. Brother Paynter and I exhorted after him." He proceeds:

"*Sunday, 27.* This morning held a love-feast; preached at Squire Myers's. Brother Paynter preached on Matthew x, 32, 33. After him I preached from Luke xxii, 19, and administered the Lord's Supper; Brother Owen assisted. Brothers Paynter and Turck exhorted powerfully." The scene of the labors here recorded lay but a few rods from the site of the Methodist Church and the Wyoming Conference Seminary in Kingston. The place is now occupied by the descendants of the man Mr. Colbert frequently mentions, and calls "my friend Abram Goodwin."

Mr. Colbert now followed Mr. Fleming to the north. He says:

"*Thursday, 29.* I took my leave of Brother Turck, and

set out on my journey for the dreary and ice-glazed mountains of Tioga; came as far as Abram Goodwin's."

Mr. Colbert met with his old friends in Tioga, who greeted him with joy. Here he found "Brother James Smith, a good young Irishman, who was on his way to the lakes." This man was long a member of the Philadelphia Conference, and was familiarly called "Irish Jimmy."

Finding Mr. Fleming at New Sheshequin, and there assisting him at a quarterly meeting, Mr. Colbert then made an excursion out between the Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. The following account of his visit to Geneva is curious and interesting. "Geneva," he says, "is a beautifully situated little town on the northwest corner of the Seneca Lake. I went to Mr. Anning's, as I was directed by Brother Depew, an acquaintance of Mr. Anning; Mr. Anning was not at home, and I felt that *I* was not at home. But I felt that I durst not leave the town before I had preached if I could get any place to preach in. I asked Mrs. Anning if she was willing to let me preach in her house; she consented, though with a little reluctance; and considering the little pains taken to notify the people, I had a large congregation for the place. I was, thank God! enabled to preach with a degree of life and power. The people behaved as well as I could expect, considering all things, and spoke to me in that friendly manner that people who behave themselves with decency in a strange country ought to be spoken to.

"*Thursday, November 19.* Brothers Smith, Cole, and myself were well used at Mr. Manning's, where we lodged last night. This morning Mrs. Jennings, the tavern-keeper's wife, invited us to breakfast. I found the people very friendly and agreeable. By the time I rode from Geneva to the ferry on Cayuga Lake I was very hungry. I stopped at the house on the west side of the lake and asked for something to eat, but they told me they had no bread. A pot of potatoes being on the fire, I was glad to get some of them. But, to my great satisfaction, while I was sitting by the potato pot a man came in with a bag of wheat flour on

his back. I now procured some bread to eat and some to take with me, and it was well I did, for when I crossed the lake to Captain Harris's, where I lodged and took supper, they had no bread." So it was then, in a country where the people now live on the finest of the wheat, and all have an abundance. In 1793 bread was scarce, and in some cases not to be obtained. We will follow our pioneer preacher a little farther.

"*Wednesday, 20.* From Harris's Ferry I rode up the east side of the Cayuga Lake, through an Indian settlement, to a small place called Scipio. I stopped at the Widow Franklin's, and had preaching appointed at early candle-light at Squire Phelps's. The people would not attend until an arbitration was ended, so that I became impatient waiting for them and was about going away, but was persuaded to wait a little longer, which I consented to do. When the people began to come in I commenced singing. After singing and prayer I had a house full, to whom I preached from Rom. v, 19. The people were attentive until the last prayer, when by the time I was on my knees they began to pour out of doors as though tumbling over each other. I knew not what to make of it, but when I got up I was enabled to account for the confusion, a house next door but one being wrapped in flames.

"*Thursday, 21.* Rode to William Goodwin's.

"*Friday, 22.* I preached at Mr. Atwater's, and baptized a child for Mr. Konkle. At night preached at Robert M'Dowall's, at the head of the Cayuga Lake," now Ithaca.*

"*Saturday, 23.* I had a very cold night's lodging last

* We have read with great interest "Methodism in Ithaca," by the late lamented Rev. C. D. Burritt. His general accuracy all must admit; but on some points his materials did not furnish him with precise information. He truly makes William Colbert the first Methodist preacher who preached in what is now Ithaca. The year 1793 is right, but it was not "on a pleasant morning in the month of June," but on Friday evening, the 22d of November, that the event occurred. Mr. Colbert was not the "junior preacher on Northumberland circuit," but the preacher in charge on Wyoming. It is true that Mrs. M'Dowall "soon became a Methodist," and "the first in Ithaca," as Mr. Burritt informs us.

night. I got very little sleep, so that I was obliged to rise early, especially as I had a long ride before me of more than thirty miles without an inhabitant to Andrew Alden's at Owaga, [Owego,] on the northeast branch of the Susquehanna. I was fortunate in finding two fires on the road this cold morning.

"*Sunday, 24.* Felt unwell last night, but through mercy was enabled to preach with a degree of life and power at Andrew Alden's."

Mr. Colbert now commenced his return journey. From Owego he came to his friend Nathan Brown's at New Sheshequin; thence to his "old friend Baldwin's at Wyalusing," where he met "Brother Fleming." On Thursday, November 28, he came to Mason Alden's at Meshoppen. Thence down to Wyoming he met with several incidents of a somewhat novel character, which he records.

"*Friday, 29.* Rode from Meshoppen to Tunkhannock, where I met with Sister Sutton, who lives in Lackawanna, and Mrs. Benedict, a Baptist sister. As we were in a wilderness we had victuals with us, and with a deal of satisfaction we all three sat down upon a rock in the woods and ate our dinner. We then crossed a mountain over to Lackawanna. The timbers on the top of this mountain were bent over the road with ice, but on the side of the mountain we saw no ice. We traveled until night came on, and very dark it was. I was under fearful apprehensions of having to lodge in the woods, but fortunately we got to Dr. Smith's, Sister Sutton's father.*

* We read this adventure to Mrs. Bedford, upon which her countenance brightened up, and she remarked: "I recollect it well; but he has left out a part of the story. When it became so dark that they were obliged to trust entirely to their horses, Mr. Colbert being in advance, his horse refused to go on. He spurred the animal, but he would not advance another step. Whereupon he dismounted, and laying hold of a shrub, he reached forward his feet until he found he was upon the verge of a precipice. They changed their course and escaped being dashed to pieces. They were upon the brink of a perpendicular ledge of several hundred feet in height." It will be recollected that Mrs. Bedford is a daughter of Mrs. Sutton.

"*Saturday, 30.* This morning I felt no freedom to call the family together for prayers, and came away without saying anything about it to them. I rode to Brother Waters's, where I met with Brother Turck."

It was at Dr. William Hooker Smith's that Mr. Colbert lodged. The doctor was reported a skeptic, and would not be likely to propose prayers; but he was a gentleman, and, had his guest proposed it, would not have objected. Whether the course pursued by Mr. Colbert was the best one may admit of some question; still it was the one which most men would be likely to take under similar circumstances.

On December 2 Mr. Colbert is at Stephen Baker's, in Kingston, where he preached, and "Brother Turck formed four bands." Baker lived on the old road between Forty Fort and Wilkesbarre, on what is now called the Church place. This was thenceforth a place of resort and rest for the preachers, and frequently a preaching place.

VALENTINE COOK COMMENCES HIS LABORS IN WYOMING.

A new actor now comes upon the stage. It is the famous Valentine Cook. Mr. Colbert takes the following notice of his coming and of the commencement of his labors:

"*Thursday, 5.* I met with Brother Cook at Anning Owen's. He informed me that I was appointed to Montgomery circuit, on the western shore of Maryland, the place of my nativity. After my rough tour into the lake country I felt very willing to spend the winter in Wyoming; but a journey of more than one hundred and fifty miles to the southward lies before me.

"*Friday, 6.* I heard Brother Cook preach at Shawney. He is an excellent preacher and an excellent man. I parted with him and went on with Brother Turck to Andrew Blanchard's.

"*Saturday, 7.* Rode to Berwick. The Lord has done great things since I was here. A notorious backslider has

been healed, a sinner brought to the knowledge of the truth, and some are groaning for redemption in the blood of Jesus; and the Lord be praised, I am happy with them.

"*Sunday, 8.* I preached at Berwick, joined a class of children, and rode to Christian Bowman's. This has been a happy day with me."

Here we part with Mr. Colbert for the present, but shall find him going over the same ground hereafter.

It had been only a little more than one year since he first went to Tioga. During this period he had ranged through the vast territory embraced within Tioga, Wyoming, Northumberland, and the lakes with the greatest zeal and diligence, nursing the feeble societies and proclaiming salvation to the perishing with encouraging prospects, but without any marked success. His seemed to be the work of preparing the way; others entered into his labors.

Valentine Cook had the reputation of a man of learning, and no one doubted that he was a man of decided talents. He was "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and his sermons took the citadel of the heart by storm. The people in multitudes flocked to hear him, and the power of God attended his preaching in a wonderful manner. When the writer of these pages first came to Wyoming, in 1818, there were many people scattered through the circuit who were converted by his instrumentality, and who regarded him as almost an angel. There are still lingering upon the shore a number who remember him well, although most of them were mere children when his powerful voice echoed among the valleys and mountains of Northern Pennsylvania and Southern New York. Among the anecdotes which we recollect to have heard of the effects of his powerful sermons was one concerning a certain Presbyterian deacon. The deacon went out with the multitude to hear the great Methodist preacher. He preached in a grove, and the mass of people waved and fell before his tremendous oratory like the trees of the forest before a terrible tempest. The good deacon began to feel nervous; he thought he

would fly, but found his limbs not strong enough to carry him away. He held up by a tree until the excitement had in a manner subsided, and then returned home, resolved fully never to put himself in the way of such strange influences again. "Why," said he to his good wife, "if I had undertaken to get away I should certainly have fallen my whole length on the ground." Under the impression, or pretending to be, that a sort of charm or witchery attended Mr. Cook's preaching, he could never be prevailed upon to hear him again.

ANTHONY TURCK.

ANTHONY TURCK labored in the Wyoming circuit this year with Mr. Colbert, and being a decided character deserves something more than a passing notice. Mrs. Bedford says: "Father Turck was a German, a plain rough man; was much engaged."

The late Calvin Wadamus, of Plymouth, was converted this year under the labors of Valentine Cook, and he was a great admirer of "Daddy Turck." In giving some account of him to the writer, years ago, he finished by saying: "O, he would clap his hands, and lift up his chair and dash it down on the floor, and call for the power until he made everything move—yes, he would." The writer has heard the name of "Father Turck" mentioned with great affection and reverence by the old Methodists since his earliest recollections.

The Rev. Charles Giles, in his "Pioneer," gives an account of a quarterly meeting in Burlington, Otsego county, New York, and in that account has a brief sentence in relation to this old school Methodist preacher, which illustrates the strong points in his character. He says: "In the afternoon of the same day also a mighty excitement was felt throughout the whole assembly; careless sinners became alarmed, and, though the rain poured down without, they rushed in haste into the pitiless shower. Elder Turck, one of the rough hewers of those days, cried out to them thus:

‘Sinners ! you are chained ; if you run from the power of God the devil will have you.’ ”

After laboring in his Master’s vineyard for ten years he was called to his reward. The following brief account of his character and death appears in the Minutes for 1803 :

“ Anthony Turck, of Low Dutch descent, a native of New York state ; he was received into the traveling connection in 1793 ; a holy and devout man, indefatigable and successful in his labors, subject to great afflictions and trials ; he expressed some time before and in his last illness an increasing sweetness in communion with God. His death sickness was short and severe ; but notwithstanding, he gave to them that attended him great marks of patience, resignation, and victory in death. He departed this life March 13, 1803, in Freehold circuit, Monmouth county, New Jersey.”

This year James Thomas stands connected with Tioga, and a new circuit appears upon the Minutes, called Seneca Lake, and James Smith is the preacher. The work now rapidly extended among the new settlements east of the Cayuga and between the Cayuga and Seneca Lakes.

In 1794 JAMES PAYNTER traveled the Wyoming circuit. This man was somewhat advanced in life ; was a good preacher, and was both acceptable and useful. Mrs. Bedford says : “ He was a man of few words out of the pulpit ; was always exceedingly grave.”

Christian and Thomas Bowman had invited the preachers to establish a regular appointment at Briar Creek, whither Father Paynter was directing his course in one of his regular rounds, but being overtaken by the darkness of the night, he found himself lost in the woods. He lifted up his voice and made the woods ring. He was within the hearing of the hospitable domicile of Thomas Bowman, who promptly lighted a handful of pine splinters, and set off for the purpose of relieving the weary and perplexed itinerant. Great was the preacher’s joy when he saw the light approaching, and heard the well-known voice of his friend. He could

now moralize upon the importance of his own mission, that of guiding the poor lost wanderer from the wilderness of this world to his home in heaven.

Mr. Paynter traded his horse in Berwick, and was imposed upon with a refractory, tricky horse, which threw and badly bruised him. He was perhaps fifty years old at the time. The man who defrauded him that summer lost a very valuable horse by a fall on a harrow, which was considered by many a providential retribution. Sometimes the providence of God visits wicked men in a way to bring their sins to their remembrance, and to cover them with disgrace.

THE WORK AT THE NORTH.

The work progressed rapidly at the north this year. Mr. Burritt says : " This year Mr. Alexander, the grandfather of Rev. Manly Tooker, came into the country from Pennsylvania, and settled near the spot now occupied by the village of Lansingville, thirteen miles north of Ithaca. He had been an attendant upon the Episcopal Church, but his daughter, who afterward became Mrs. Tooker, and who still survives,* was received into the Methodist society, and baptized by Anning Owen while yet in Pennsylvania, so that she was properly the first lay member of the Methodist Episcopal Church who came into that region. Not long after their arrival Miss Alexander heard in some way that there was to be a Methodist preacher at what is now called Ithaca on a certain Sabbath. Filled with zeal, she was so successful as to persuade quite a number of persons to set out with her on the Sabbath morning for the meeting. Nineteen, we are told, made this novel journey in a flatboat from the starting-place to the southeast corner of the lake, and from thence on foot, creeping as they best could through the bushes, for there were no roads in those days. When they arrived they were greatly disappointed in learning that the preacher, who was no other than Valentine Cook, had just concluded ; but soon rejoiced by obtaining a promise from him to

* She has since gone to rest.

preach to them in half an hour. In the mean time Mr. Cook, with a few others, walked away from the gathering to the cabin of Mr. Hinepaw, where he sat down to rest. While there he was offered some bread and butter as a refreshment, which he declined; but soon after observing a child eagerly devouring some of the same, he fell to exhorting those present to have the same appetite for spiritual things. When their sermon was concluded the company started for their homes, but were not able to reach them that night. We are told that they tarried on the west side of the lake, and finished the journey on Monday.

"The preaching was in the M'Dowell house, which was the stopping-place of the weary itinerant. Toward the close of the year Alward White was sent on the circuit, but does not seem to have preached regularly in Ithaca, at least not till the latter months of the conference year, while instead we hear of John Broadhead and Cornelius Mars, called by some 'thundering Mars,' on account of his manner of preaching. How Broadhead came to be in the region we cannot discover, as his name on the Minutes is set to Northumberland circuit; but probably he was sent north by his presiding elder for an especial work.* The name of Mars does not appear on the Minutes at all.

"At the same time Thornton Fleming was appointed presiding elder of a district composed of Tioga and Seneca circuits and Nova Scotia, which latter part he probably visited but once, as we hear of him often in this region. Valentine Cook, however, continued to be elder over most of his former charge, and visited Ithaca quite often in company with Fleming.

"Broadhead began to manifest, even then, the great pulpit abilities for which he afterward became so noted. With a large commanding person, and a clear, sonorous voice, he captivated all hearts, and sinners trembled as he

* It is more likely that he had not yet entered upon his duties on Northumberland. The conference at which he received his appointment to the charge sat in October, and this was his first year.

described the awful scenes of the approaching judgment. Thus from Sinai he hurled the thunderbolts of divine denunciation and startled the slumbering conscience; but this was not all his power, for he could speak from Zion too, and with touching tenderness portray the sad and solemn scenes of Calvary, while with irresistible power he pressed the weeping mourner to the Saviour. Under such preaching occurred the first revival in Ithaea, for four or five were soon converted, and ere long a class of eighteen formed, whose names were as follows: Mrs. M'Dowall, Peter Vanorman and wife, George Sager and his mother, William and Richard Pangburn, Elias De Pew, Abram and Mary Smith, Catherine Hinepaw, Mr. Jackson and Rachel, his daughter, Dr. Simons, Garrett Shoemaker and wife, and Cornelius Shoemaker and his wife. Most of this number lived two or three miles out of the settlement, but all met for class and preaching at M'Dowall's."

The following account of the introduction of Methodism into Benton, Yates Co., N. Y., and the beautiful story of two brave girls walking thirty-five miles through the woods to attend a quarterly meeting, is taken from an article by Dr. F. G. Hibbard, published in the Northern Christian Advocate. There was a heroism in those good old times which is not now in the Church; or perhaps we should say, does not manifest itself in the same way. Circumstances have changed, and so have the manners and habits of the people.

"The first society was organized in the fall of 1793, and consisted of ten members, namely: Ezra Cole, Sabra Cole, Eliphalet Hull, Huldah Hull, Mathew Cole, Delia Cole, George Wheeler, Martha Wheeler, Sarah Buel, Lois Cole. Most of these have fallen asleep; but Sarah Buel, Martha Wheeler, and Delia Cole, now Delia Pettit, still remain to witness the power and grace of God to this generation also. While their public assemblages were generally accommodated in the private house of Brother Wheeler, their quarterly meetings were moved about to accommodate

circumstances. The second and third quarterly meetings held in Benton, and probably the second and third in the Genesee country, as it was then called, were held in the house of Eliphalet Hull, then residing on Flat-street, about two miles from Benton Center. But humble as was their external condition, and devoid of that prestige which attracts a worldly mind, they lived in the freedom and power of the Gospel; and few as they were, they kept the rules of Discipline. At their love-feasts, for the greater retirement, and to preserve the primitive Methodist order of closed doors, they assembled in an upper room, where from the entire circuit twenty or thirty persons might be found convened. Brother Hull was their first class-leader. He was a faithful and stable man, a noted singer and a happy Christian, and his labors and example were blessed to the Church.

"It may well be imagined that going to quarterly meeting in those days was no luxury to the flesh, however refreshing to the spirit. From variable distances within a hundred miles the people met, traversing Indian paths, and guided by 'blazed trees' through a wilderness roamed by the panther, the wolf, the bear, the deer, not to speak of the coy and treacherous reptile. Still, as early as 1794 many new roads were laid out, and the hand of civilization began to show itself in various public improvements. This year also the county of Steuben was created from the southern district of old Ontario.

"The town of Bath, Steuben county, began to be settled in 1793, in the midst of a vast wilderness; and in 1796 that section for eight miles around contained above eight hundred souls. Among its first sturdy occupants was John Chambers. He had experienced religion, and himself, wife, and two daughters, Anna and Polly, had been members of the Church, before coming to Bath. These, with an elder brother, composed the family.

"In the month of May, 1795, a quarterly meeting was to be held in Benton, and Anna and Polly, the former sixteen

years and the latter fourteen, ardent in their first love, and hungry for the word of life, entreated permission to attend. The distance was about thirty-five miles; but as boats then plied up and down the Crooked Lake about twenty miles of the way, and with their brother to attend them, it was deemed practicable, and parental consent was obtained for the journey. The brother and sisters were to meet at the head of the lake and embark together. Full of buoyant hope, the girls set out upon their journey and reached the place of rendezvous in time, but to their inexpressible grief and disappointment, all the boats had left on their downward trip. This was an unexpected calamity. What should they do? Brother had not yet arrived, and for a while they stood perplexed, whelmed in sorrow. Their hearts were fixed on the quarterly meeting, and they had but too eagerly anticipated once more hearing the words of life, and mingling their souls and voices with the humble, worshiping band. To return home, and thus defeat all their anxious hopes, was more than they could endure.

“No preaching had yet been had in Bath. Yet to proceed by land, and on foot, seemed a rash and insuperable undertaking. A forest stretched before them of over twenty miles in length, through which but an imperfect path lay, and as yet but one wagon had ventured through—an achievement much talked of in those days. In the middle of this forest was a log tavern, a ‘half way house,’ the only human dwelling that cheered the long and lonely distance. Wild animals and reptiles yet disputed the right of soil against the invading foot of civilization, and the equally wild Indian yet strolled along his ancient lakes and hunting grounds, reluctant to leave them forever for the distant West. Besides, brother had not arrived, and if they ventured on foot at all, his protecting arm seemed necessary. Yet, after weighing all these circumstances in tearful and prayerful anxiety, they concluded they were able to endure the fatigue, and their desire for the word of God prevailed; they resolved to start for the quarterly meeting. Their brother

they knew would follow, and perhaps soon overtake them.

“The day was wasting, and they had not a moment to lose. A friend instructed them to keep the lake in sight all the way, and they would not lose their path, and with these slender prospects they set out for the meeting. The sun was already fast dipping the western sky, and the shadows of evening began to fall around, before our travelers reached the half-way house. Tears and doubts would sometimes rise, and at length the fearful possibility of having to pass the night in the open forest, exposed to the prowling wolf or the stealthy panther, flashed across the mind. The younger, girl-like, wept, but the elder resolutely encouraged her drooping spirit and they urged their weary way forward. On they went, through tangled shrub, and fen, and fallen trees, praying, fearing, hoping. At length, just at the setting in of night, the rude though welcome ‘lodging-place in the wilderness for wayfaring men’ appeared in sight. Their spirits now revive. They approach, and enter with many apologies for their forlorn and unprotected appearance, explain to the good landlady the object of their journey, and that they are daughters of Mr. Chambers, of Bath, and their brother is expected to overtake them. The lady welcomed them in, informed them she knew their brother, as he had traveled that road, and assured them they should be hospitably entertained and protected.”

“Scarcely had her kind words allayed the embarrassment and fears of our young heroines when the brother himself arrived, out of breath, with his coat on his arm, in great agitation. As he opened the door and saw his sisters he sprang forward and clasped them in his arms, exclaiming, ‘O my sisters, I never expected to see you again! I supposed you were lost.’ They soon, however, composed themselves to rest, and in the morning our three pilgrims resumed their journey with renovated spirits. At the foot of the lake they crossed the outlet on floating logs and fallen trees, and arrived in good season at the humble log

house of Robert Chism, a Methodist residing at the north part of the present village of Penn Yan, where the house of Dr. Judd now stands. Here they were cordially received, and joined in the services of a watch-night. Valentine Cook, the presiding elder, was there. Next morning they journeyed on to Benton, four miles farther, and enjoyed the long anticipated quarterly meeting. These two sisters are still alive. They are both widows: the elder is the widow of the late Brother Briggs, of Milo, Yates county, and the other the widow of the late Mr. Nichols, of the same place: both having lived faithful to God through a long life, are now patiently waiting in joyful hope of that 'better country, which is the heavenly.'

GREAT QUARTERLY MEETINGS ON WYOMING CIRCUIT, 1795.

A quarterly meeting was held this year at Amos Parks's, in Salem, of which Mrs. Bedford has glowing recollections. In relation to it she says: "I received information from Ross Hill that there was to be a quarterly meeting this side of Berwick, and I was urged to go. It was late in the fall, and a light snow fell the night before. Darius Williams, Captain Parish and his wife, Sophia Gallop, (long known subsequently as Aunt Via Smith,) and I made up the company. Below Plymouth it was all woods, with no road; we were on horseback and followed a mere foot-path. We put up on Saturday night with a Methodist family this side of the place of the meeting, but arrived on Sabbath morning in time for the love-feast. I have forgotten who was the presiding elder,* but Mr. Jewell was on the circuit at that time.†

* It was Valentine Cook.

† Joseph Jewell was received on trial in 1795, and it seems probable that he was employed by the elder in 1794. Mrs. Anna Briggs, of Milo Center, says she was converted when Joseph Jewell was upon the circuit, at a quarterly meeting in the meeting-house below Buttonwood, and that Alward White succeeded Mr. Jewell. Mrs. Briggs's maiden name was Chambers, and she joined the class at Philip Jackson's. Mrs. Briggs's story, which we took from her lips, proves our theory with regard to Jewell's appointment to Wyoming. Valentine Cook was undoubtedly the presiding elder on the occasion of which Mrs. Bedford speaks.

"Mr. Parks, his wife, and daughter Nancy, were members. We had a truly interesting season, and we were subsequently informed that many were added to the Church as the fruit of the meeting. The next day we returned home, and Ashbel Waller and his wife accompanied us. Snow and rain together were falling, just enough to make it uncomfortable; but we enjoyed so much of the presence of God that we considered this but a small matter. The Lord was truly with us.

"When we came to the creek it was so swollen that it seemed impassable. We all sat for a moment upon our horses crying to God to help us. At length Darius Williams threw up his arms toward heaven, and cried out, 'The Lord will carry us through.' The men then rode through and we followed them. We crossed the angry stream without harm.

"That night we all stayed at Darius Williams's and had a prayer-meeting. Sister Waller had been under doubts and fears, but that night they were all removed, and she shouted 'Glory to God!' Her husband fell upon the floor, crying, 'Glory! glory to God!' and praised the Lord with all his might for what he had done for his wife, and for the manifestation of his power among us, for it was truly great."

Another of Mr. Cook's great quarterly meetings was held in the upper part of Kingston in 1795. This was the third year of Mr. Cook's labors on the district which included Wyoming circuit, and was still more successful than either of the preceding. Alward White was stationed on the circuit, and was very useful. His quarterly meeting still lingers in the memory of some who were led to the place by their pious mothers, they themselves being children. Mrs. Bedford's account of this meeting is as follows: "There was a quarterly meeting held in Kingston, at Philip Jackson's. He then lived on the place now owned and occupied by Fisher Gay. Valentine Cook was the presiding elder, and Alward White was the circuit preacher. The quarterly conference was held up stairs. We heard them

shouting and praising the Lord. My mother, Betsey Dennison, Polly Dennison, Clara Pierce, Polly Pierce, and myself went into an adjoining room and looked in, when we saw them all lying on the floor. The one near the door said, 'Sisters, come in.' We went into the room, and as soon as we entered the place we all fell, so wonderfully was the power of God manifested on that occasion. James Carpenter, who was not then a professor of religion, came into the first room, and we asked him to come in, but he would not. He told us afterward that he did not dare to come into the room, for he knew that if he had stepped over the threshold of the door he would have fallen.

"The next morning in the love-feast it seemed as if all the members, both preachers and people, were filled with the love and power of God. After love-feast Elder Cook preached a most powerful sermon, and Brother White gave out an earnest and moving exhortation. The work now went on rapidly and spread far and wide."

In those days quarterly conferences were not mere meetings of business, but were occasions of searching examinations and fervent prayer; and the official members often came from them, like Moses from the mount, reflecting the divine glory. No wonder that at a quarterly conference where all were overwhelmed with adoring wonder, the work of God should receive a new impulse.

BLACK WALNUT—ELDER STURTEVANT.

Mrs. Bedford says: "My father then lived in Exeter, and I was able to go to other places to meeting often. About this time I visited my brother William, who lived above Black Walnut Bottom, now known by the name of Lacyville. He had experienced religion, and had gathered a class of about a dozen persons. I found them very happy in religion. Old Elder Sturtevant, a Baptist minister, had given out an appointment on a particular Sunday to preach to both Methodists and Baptists. His object was to unite them together as one people. I told some of our brethren

that I thought we should get a drubbing that day, and that we must cry to the Lord for help, for we should need it. The elder took for his text John x, 1: 'Verily I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.' Then he told us the way to come in at the door was to believe and be baptized by immersion. He gave us quite a long discourse on the subject.

"After the sermon was finished my brother went out and opened his hymn book, when we all gathered around him. Sister Young, one of the members of our Church, came to me crying bitterly, and saying: 'Elder Sturtevant wanted us to be united as one people, but he has now shut up the door.' Then I said to her: 'This reminds me of the war between the Pennamites and Yankees. The Pennamites told our people that if they would lay down their arms they would be one. Our men laid down their arms, when the Pennamites took them up, and bound our men and sent them to jail.' Then I shouted, 'Glory to God! they can neither bind us nor send us to jail.' My brother sang an appropriate hymn, when we went into the house and stood up and sang another hymn. The Lord showed who his people were that day. There was a good many of Elder Sturtevant's people who stayed with us, and appeared very friendly, but seemed rather gloomy. Then we went into another room and held a class-meeting. After singing and prayer we arose and told our experience—such power and love as was manifested. The experiences were told with such clearness that it was evident that the work was of God. My brother spoke to the members of the Baptist Church who were present. They said that they had once enjoyed religion, but now did not as they wished to. He then spoke to Mr. Agard, a Baptist minister, and he told pretty much the same story; but he encouraged us to go on, as he thought we were right."

REVIVAL IN WILKESBARRE.

This year there was an outpouring of the Spirit in the borough of Wilkesbarre, and many were converted. Some of those who were the subjects of the work were hard cases, but they were thoroughly renovated, and made bright Christians—steady and useful members of the Church—who died as they lived, in the faith of the Gospel. But the work was not confined to this class; it entered some of the best families, and shook the strong foundations of infidelity. Three ladies of character were the subjects of the work; two of them were prevented from uniting with the society by the prejudices and opposition of their husbands; but the third, Mrs. Duane, fought her way through, and identified herself with the little despised company. She was the widow of Timothy Pierce, who was killed in the Indian battle; and she was subsequently married to Mr. Duane, who at the time was skeptically inclined, and was a bitter persecutor of the Methodists. We are happy to learn from Mrs. Denison, of Kingston, a daughter of Benjamin Carpenter, whose name has been mentioned before, that Duane was converted toward the close of his life “up the river,” and expressed himself as “only wishing to live that he might tell the world that there is a reality in religion.” This information is refreshing; but history must be just, and for that reason we have made mention of his early opposition to Methodism.

This man, Duane, had the reputation of laying a plan to fumigate the little company of Methodists with brimstone, and drive them from their humble sanctuary. From what we had heard of this feat, many years ago, when the persons who came down from those times were numerous, we always supposed it was successful; but it may be presumed that Mrs. Bedford gives us the true version of the story. It is as follows:

“When the great revival was in Wilkesbarre, Elder Cook and Brother White were the preachers. One night, when

Elder Cook was preaching, a number of persons agreed to smoke them out with brimstone matches. These matches were made by winding a cloth, or paper, around a stick, and rolling it in melted brimstone. Their plan was to light these matches and throw them down the chimney. The person who was appointed to carry out the project went upon the roof and lit his matches, and from some cause let go his hold and slid down the roof, and came to the ground matches in hand in the midst of his companions. The fumes of the burning brimstone almost stifled them, and they had to run for life. It did not molest the meeting, for the worshipers knew nothing about it until the persons concerned in the scheme told of it themselves, when it made a great deal of amusement for both saints and sinners."

The conference year 1795 closed Mr. Cook's labors on what—after the district had a name—was called Susquehanna district. The parting scene at Ross Hill we shall give hereafter, from a cotemporary witness. As Mr. Cook returned no more to this field, this will be the appropriate place to notice more particularly his history and character.

SKETCH OF VALENTINE COOK.

Valentine Cook was one of the extraordinary men raised up in this country to form the character of society while our civil and ecclesiastical institutions were in their infancy. God never wants agencies for the accomplishment of his great designs. He selects instruments and adapts them to the ends which he proposes to accomplish. The history of the church is replete with evidences of this truth; and in the history of Methodism, more eminently than in that of any other form of Christianity, does it appear that the special providence of God was concerned in calling and qualifying ministers during the early and more critical period of its existence.

Cook was in all respects a most extraordinary man, and was exactly suited to meet a pressing demand at many

points, and particularly upon the frontier. He was born in Pennsylvania, and brought up in Western Virginia. He was early addicted to hunting and conversing with nature in her deep solitudes; and by wandering, and often lodging in the woods, he acquired a boldness and a hardness of muscle which fitted him for a life of privation and endurance. While a lad he exhibited strong evidence of an active and vigorous mind. He read, he thought, he studied. The Bible was his principal book, but not the only one. He became concerned for his soul, and was led to Christ for salvation by the Methodist preachers. He was opposed and jeered by his father and friends, but adhered to his "new religion," as it was called, with such tenacity, that his father finally became convinced that his son had a conscience in the matter that should not be forced from its chosen channel. Young Cook was thankful for the liberty which his father gave him, of serving God in his own way without molestation, but was not contented with being left to himself. He now commenced offensive operations. He greatly longed for the salvation of his friends. He proposed to set up *family prayers*. This was readily conceded, for God had already heard him in heaven, and begun to work upon the heart of his father.

The extraordinary endowments of young Cook were soon so developed as to convince all that he was destined to a high sphere of usefulness. Cokesbury College had just commenced its short but brilliant history, and here the young man was sent to gain a competent education to qualify him for the great work of the ministry to which he felt himself called. He left the college probably in 1787, and immediately commenced his labors as an exhorter, and to his great joy soon saw much fruit of his earnest appeals.

Mr. Cook was admitted into the traveling connection in 1788, and traveled Calvert circuit; in 1789 he traveled Gloucester; in 1790, Lancaster; in 1791, Berkeley; in 1792 he stands on the Minutes connected with Pittsburgh, but was laboring on Clarksburgh when Bishop Asbury called him

away to Wyoming and the northern frontier. The next year, 1793, he was ordained elder, and was put in charge of a district.

We have given some sketches of his labors upon this new field, to which, as Mr. Asbury rightly judged, he was especially adapted.

The spirit in which he prosecuted his labors in the new and uncultivated regions of the north, and some of the hardships which he endured, may be gathered from an original letter, published in the *Northern Christian Advocate* for August 25, 1858. Many thanks are due to the brother who rescued this letter from oblivion. We give his brief, but pertinent introduction to the letter in connection with the letter itself:

“DEAR BROTHER HIBBARD,—I have succeeded in transcribing from the mutilated original the following letter. I think I have every word. We learn from it something of the hardships of *Life in the Itinerancy* in this section sixty-four years ago, and that the sin of dram-drinking was not looked upon with indifference even at that day.

“Very truly yours, MYRON COLE.

“BENTON CENTER, *April 5, 1858.*”

“TO JAMES SMITH, PREACHER IN THE LAKES CIRCUIT.

“VERY DEAR BROTHER,—These hints may enable you to form some idea of my circumstances. I have now walked near sixty or seventy miles, and am within ten miles of the head of the lakes, at Mr. Weiburn’s, who I somewhat expect will lend me a beast, as I am obliged to leave my horse with but small hopes of his recovery. Yesterday I walked upward of thirty miles in mud and water, being wet all day without; yet heaven was within. Glory to God! I had three tempters to encounter, the devil, the *mosquitoes*, and my horse; and the rain and my wet clothes were my element, and God my comforter, and victory my white horse. Hitherto, O Lord, hast thou been my helper, and I trust thou wilt save to the end.

"Brother Fleming is to take my appointments through Tioga. I mean to overtake him if possible, and get him to attend the quarterly meetings downward in my stead, and so return to the Lakes circuit in a few weeks, all which I shall have to do afoot if I can't get a horse. You can fix your circuit as you think best, but only appoint for yourself till I come myself, or send one. If Brother Fleming's horse should not be recovered I shall have to go on. My trials are furious, but I am not discouraged. I hope you'll pray for me. It would be necessary when you meet the classes to examine closely and urge union, and give a close exhortation at the end of the meeting, enforcing and pressing the several duties of the members. That class-leader at Appleton (not Brother Baily) has been intoxicated. I would not admit him, even on trial, without verbal obligations that he will not drink another drop, excepting in cases of medicine, and that himself shall not be physician in the case. If you can get a class, it would be well to make Brother Baily leader. I thought the Discipline would stir them. Satan is not willing they should be Methodists, for he knows their sins will get no rest among us. "

"I am, as ever, sincerely and affectionately in Christ,

" VALENTINE COOK.

" *May 24, 1794.*"

What language could be framed into the form of a eulogy by the greatest master of rhetoric, which would give a better idea of a great soul, than the simple, unstudied, and undorned tale given in this letter. Such was the man, and such his work.

His fervent prayers, his powerful sermons, his great meekness and charity, and his profound knowledge of men and things, carried a mighty influence, and made deep and abiding impressions. All felt that a great man had made his appearance in the humble garb of a Methodist preacher. His work was to save souls. He took no reward for his services; his friends at the south replenished his wardrobe

as occasion required. Having completed his three years of hard work among the mountains and valleys of the wild Susquehanna and the northern lakes, he recrossed the Alleghanies, where he served two years as "elder," and in 1798 he was sent as a missionary to Kentucky. During this year he was married to Miss Abigail Slaughter.

The excessive labors of Mr. Cook had now so wrought upon his physical constitution that he was no longer able to endure the hardships of the heavy charges of that period, and in 1799 he located, and stands so reported in the Minutes for 1800.

During the subsequent part of his life he was generally engaged in teaching in academies, for which he was eminently qualified. Still he preached Christ with unabated zeal and great success.

Dr. Stevenson, Mr. Cook's biographer, says :

"He finally removed to Logan county, Kentucky, where he permanently settled his rapidly increasing family on a small farm some three miles north of Russellville. Here he remained to the day of his death, teaching, sometimes in town, and at other times in his own immediate neighborhood. In all these different positions and relations he shared to the fullest possible extent the respect and confidence of the people as an able, devoted, and self-sacrificing minister of the Gospel; while as a teacher he was regarded as among the most competent and successful in the country. He had the honor of numbering among his pupils some who have subsequently been distinguished as eminent physicians, lawyers, and statesmen."

"But," says the doctor, "the preaching of the Gospel, as the instrument ordained of God for the accomplishment of human salvation, was his one great work. However he may have been employed, whether at the handles of his plow, in the schoolroom, workshop, or presiding over the interests of a college, the winning of souls to Christ by the proclamation of his truth was the all-absorbing theme of his meditations, the great cardinal object to which his thoughts

and efforts were constantly directed. At all times and in every place, he was ready to preach Jesus and him crucified. By day and by night, during the week, as well as on the holy Sabbath, he was ever ready to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to a perishing world. To him the place was nothing. Whenever the people were assembled and willing to hear, whether in the church, the court-house, the school-room, or the market-place, in the palaces of the rich and the hovels of the poor, to the slaves in their quarters as well as to the vast multitudes on the camp-ground, he was never found unprepared to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. No ordinary circumstances could prevent the full and faithful discharge of his duty in this respect. His movements were never affected by the inclemency of the season. Through summer's heat and winter's cold, mid falling rains and driving snows, he was always at his appointments, holding forth in strains of melting sweetness the Gospel of the grace of God. The conversion of sinners, whether poor or rich, learned or illiterate, bond or free, was the all-engrossing subject of his thoughts and the all-controlling intent of his life. His word, whether in the pulpit, the class-room, the prayer-meeting, or the social circle, at all times and in every place was 'quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow.' Wherever his lot was cast he was the instrument of bringing many to the knowledge of the truth. Through his instrumentality the ignorant were enlightened, the unbelieving convinced, the careless awakened, and weeping penitents pointed to 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.' Like his blessed Master, he was constantly 'going about doing good.' The ministry and membership of the Church everywhere felt the potency of his example, and in many instances were led to put on the armor anew for the battle.

"Prayer-meetings were established, classes revived, societies raised up, and new Churches organized wherever his

labors were employed or his influence felt. There are hundreds, and perhaps thousands, still living throughout the great West, who, under God, are indebted to the instrumentality of Valentine Cook for all their hopes of immortality and eternal life.

"We will not be surprised at this when it is recollected that few men ever read the Holy Scriptures with so much anxious solicitude to understand, practice, and proclaim to 'a world of sinners lost' the whole counsel of God. The Bible was his constant companion, at home and abroad, in public and in private. Other books he read as opportunity served and occasion required, but the Bible he read every day. Whether found in his private study, the school-room, the field, or the forest, he always had the precious volume at command. He was often observed poring over its sacred pages when traveling on horseback as well as on foot. So thoroughly was he posted in the teaching of the inspired penmen that no passage could be called for that he was not able to repeat, or to which he could not turn in a few moments. Of him it may in truth be said he was 'mighty in the Scriptures.' In the pulpit he usually announced the book, chapter, and verse of his quotations; and when he deemed it necessary, as he sometimes did, for the establishment of an important position or doctrine, it was truly astonishing with what facility he could call up his proofs from all the different parts of the inspired volume."

Many instances which illustrate his wonderful power as a preacher have been related to us by those who heard him while he labored in this territory. Often opposers were struck dumb and sometimes fell to the ground. These circumstances gave rise to an idea that he had the power of enchantment, and that it was dangerous to come near him. The venerable Charles Harris, still living, informed us that he had received such impressions, but still resolved to go, and hear and see for himself. He attended a meeting at Col. Dennison's, and on entering the house Mr. Cook

and Alward White, who was then on the circuit, were singing. He soon began to feel a strange tremor pass over him. "There," said he to himself, "the witchery is coming." But he was too brave to run, and he supported himself through for that time. An instance related by his biographer had many parallels in our field. It is as follows:

"At a camp-meeting held in Southern Kentucky, while Mr. Cook was preaching on these words: 'Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee,' a gentleman arose in the congregation and exclaimed, under great excitement: 'Stop! stop till I can get out of this place!' Mr. Cook immediately paused, and said, 'Let us pray for that man.' The gentleman started from his place, but just as he reached the outskirts of the assembly he sank to the earth and began to cry aloud for mercy."

Mr. Cook's great power lay in the simplicity and force of his language, the earnestness of his spirit, his powerful sympathy, and his firm hold on God. No one ever complained that the language of this great man was above his comprehension; no one listened to his glowing eloquence without feeling that he uttered the deep convictions of his own mind; none doubted that he was moved by love for the souls of men in his self-sacrificing labors. All who heard him felt that he came freshly charged with a commission from heaven, and that God was in the words he uttered. Such were his habits of communion with God that his manners appeared to the uninitiated wholly inexplicable. Mrs. Bedford says that on one occasion, as a company were returning from a great meeting in Kingston, Mr. Cook rode on before them. He entered the Narrows between Kingston and Exeter, and was soon out of sight. A turn in the road brought him into view, when he was reeling from side to side like a drunken man. His hands were sometimes clasped, and at others raised toward heaven, and his eyes directed upward. The old lady's ex-

planation was the true one. "He was just as happy as he could be, and thought no one saw him but his Saviour, with whom he was holding sweet communion." This manner of the good man while traveling the highway actually led to the slanderous remark of an enemy that "the old d—l was drunk." "Ah," added Mrs. B., after giving the solution, "he was not drunk, but was filled with the Holy Ghost."

Upon the peculiarities of Mr. Cook his biographer says:

"Valentine Cook had his peculiarities, and we might add, his eccentricities also. Being almost constantly absorbed in thought, and, withal, having a mind so constituted that when directed to any particular subject he seemed to lose sight in a great measure of everything else, he was generally regarded as an absent-minded man. It was related of him that, soon after his marriage, his wife accompanied him to one of his appointments. After preaching an excellent sermon he mounted his horse and rode back to the residence of his father-in-law, where they were then living. When he entered the hall-door Mrs. Slaughter very naturally asked him what had become of his wife. He was deeply mortified, and immediately started back in pursuit of her. When they met, perceiving that her feelings were very much wounded, he burst into tears, and made every explanation that the nature of the case would admit, assuring her that for the future he would try to do better, which he no doubt did; but to little or no purpose: the like occurrences marked his whole history, notwithstanding his oft-repeated efforts to divest himself of the liability.

"He was frequently known to leave his horse tied up in the woods, or safely housed in the stable of some friend where he had preached, and walk all the way home, never once thinking of his horse, until interrogated on the subject by his wife or children. On one occasion he started for an appointment some six or eight miles from his residence. When but a short distance from the chapel at which he was

to preach he turned aside into the barrens, as was his custom, for the purpose of spending a while in private devotion. On remounting his horse and returning to the road he unwittingly took the wrong end, and was jogging along toward home, humming a favorite tune, when met by some of his friends who were going to hear him preach. 'Well, brethren,' said the old gentleman, very pleasantly, 'are you not going the wrong way?' They thought not. 'We are going to Bibb's Chapel to hear you preach, and this is certainly the right road.' He appeared much astonished, but yielding the point he turned about and accompanied them to the church, being much more inclined than any of the company to laugh at his blunder.

"During the earthquakes, or 'shakes,' as they were commonly called, with which many portions of the Western country were visited in 1811 and 1812, on a dark and stormy night, when the earth was rocking and reeling to and fro like a drunken man, Mr. Cook is said to have sprung from his bed and started to the door. His wife, fearing that he was about to leave the room, exclaimed: 'O my dear husband! you are not going to leave me, I hope?' He replied: 'If my Lord is coming I can wait for no one.'"

Mrs. Bedford gives an instance of his absence of mind not quite so strange as the above instances, but still of the same class. He had left an oil cloth cloak with her to be lined, and some other articles of clothing were also deposited with her at the same time. When he was at her father's house for the last time Mrs. Sutton said to her daughter, now Mrs. Bedford, "We will see whether Brother Cook will think of his clothes." They waited until he had bid them adieu, and given them his blessing, when he was reminded of his cloak, etc. He seemed to awake as from a dream, and thanked his kind friends for their care of his interests, and taking the articles he turned his face toward the south, and they saw him no more.

Bishop Morris says of Mr. Cook that "he was emphat-

ically a man of prayer and faith, and, like Enoch, walked with God. Perhaps no man of modern times was more deeply imbued with the spirit of grace, had more experience in 'the deep things of God,' or felt more deadness to the world than Valentine Cook. One consequence was, he sometimes betrayed absence of mind in commonplace matters. Indeed, when he retired for secret devotion, just before public service, his friends had to watch him, or he would pray till after the time appointed for him to commence preaching."

"While Brother Cook was remarkable for solemnity, both of appearance and deportment, there was, in his natural composition, a spice of eccentricity sufficient to attract attention, but not to destroy his ministerial influence. On one occasion he commenced his public discourse in a country place thus: 'As I was riding along the road to-day I saw a man walk out into his field with a yoke under his arm; by the motion of the stick he brought up two bullocks, and placed the yoke upon them. At another place I saw an ass standing by a corn-crib, waiting for his daily provender.' Then he read for his text, 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.' Isa. i, 3. He was a ready man, had a fruitful mind, and, no doubt, what he had seen on the way suggested the subject of his discourse."

Another of his characteristics was a fondness for music. Dr. Stevenson says:

"Mr. Cook was remarkably fond of music, instrumental as well as vocal. He was a good singer himself, and wherever he went encouraged the young people especially to learn to sing, never forgetting the apostolic injunction, 'with the Spirit, and with the understanding also.' He used to say that he never felt fully prepared for preaching until he heard a good old-fashioned hymn, or evangelical song well sung. While he lived in the towns of Kentucky he would sometimes sit for hours at his window by night, listening with the most intense delight to the soft and mel-

low strains of the flute and violin, or to the more shrill and piercing notes of the clarionet. When he resided in the vicinity of Russellville, the young men of the town, knowing his fondness for music, were in the habit of giving him serenades at late hours of the night. On such occasions they always received a cordial welcome, and were more than remunerated for their trouble by his fatherly counsels, which were usually given in a manner so very impressive as never to be erased from their memory. Incidents and anecdotes related by this venerable apostle of Methodism are still recited with peculiar interest by some who participated in those nocturnal visitations. But of Mr. Cook's peculiarities we have said enough, perhaps too much, although a volume might be filled with such matter."

Mr. Cook, when he had become venerable for age, and considering his end near, desired to make a tour to the East and visit the scenes of his former labors. In the autumn of 1820 he carried out that project. He mounted his horse in the spirit of the ancient Methodist chivalry, which fired the souls of Wesley and Asbury, and which so strongly marked his character and movements when he entered the Wyoming Valley, nearly thirty years before. Well mounted, and equipped with his saddle-bags and pocket Bible, no young itinerant ever left home with a lighter heart than did he.

As he commenced this mission the old adversary resolved to prevent his success, and, as the good man subsequently related the affair to the Rev. Dr. Drake, proceeded upon a well-considered plan, but after all was unsuccessful. Here is the story :

"The day I left Uniontown and commenced the ascent of the Alleghany Mountains, the devil came to me and said : 'You are one of the most learned men of the Methodist Church ; your fame has already reached the eastern cities. If you will change your manner in the pulpit a little, make your discourses more erudite, your style more florid, your manner less earnest and boisterous, you will be admired by

the learned; the papers will be filled with your praise. New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore will throng the churches where you preach.' 'Ah, Satan, is that you?' said the venerable man, as he reined up his horse to a standstill; "I will go not one step farther unless you leave.' Leaving the road a few hundred yards, I found the bottom of a deep ravine, where I thought myself safe from observation; I dismounted, tied my horse, fell on my knees, head to the ground, (the snow was about six inches deep.) I had been there but a few minutes when the devil again accosted me, and said: 'You look for all the world like a bear; (his dress was a black overcoat with long cape;) some hunter will soon see you and shoot you.' I sprang up and looked in every direction for the hunter, but saw no one. 'Ah, Satan, that's you again. Let them shoot, I will not leave till you leave.'"

"Here he wrestled for a long time; here he got the victory. Satan was bruised beneath his feet; angels came and ministered to him. He went on his way rejoicing, resolved to 'preach the preaching' which his Master bade him, without any reference to self-aggrandizement."

He passed through Lexington, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh. His biographer says:

"From Pittsburgh he went on to New York, Philadelphia, and from thence to Baltimore, where he remained during the principal part of the winter, preaching to the vast crowds that flocked to hear him. A gracious revival followed his labors. Scores and hundreds were awakened, and converted to God through his instrumentality."

In this trip he did not visit Wyoming, as so great a distance out of the direct course which he had marked out would have added too much to the labor of his journey.

He was in the city of Baltimore during the session of the Conference of 1821. Of his appearance and labors on that occasion we have received the following particulars from the Rev. Gideon Lanning, then a member of the Baltimore Conference, who was present;

"In 1821 or 1822 Rev. V. Cook visited several places of his early ministry, and came to Baltimore while the Conference was in session. His appearing among us was fraught with as much interest as was that of the coming of Titus. It was announced that he would preach at 3 P.M., and the large church on Eutaw-street was filled with anxious hearers, many of whom were preachers, and several of them companions of his early toils. At the appointed hour he appeared in the pulpit, a venerable stalwart figure, 'clothed with humility,' with a countenance beaming with benignity. Read his hymn in an artless manner; singing over, he began to pray, and soon prayed 'the heavenly blessing down;' gave out his text, 'Whereas I was once blind I now see.' Every eye was fixed upon him, and soon suffused with tears; the heart was thrilled, and began to melt. By seeing and hearing this man of God, I obtained a clearer view of that Scripture, 'full of faith and the Holy Ghost,' than I had ever received before. From that conference I went to a charge in Virginia. I had heard of a great revival on a part of that circuit a few months before. On my arrival they told me how it was brought about: Valentine Cook had been there visiting, and he preached to the people, and went from house to house talking to them about 'Jesus,' and persuading them to become Christians."

Mr. Cook was kind-hearted and loved peace, but he was not the man to desert his colors in the hour of peril. He was a clear-headed man, a master of logic, and when truth was assailed by the abettors of error he was on hand for a brave defense. He had two controversies in the course of his life which are considered as having exerted a decided and wide-spread influence upon the cause of Methodism in the West. One was before he came to Wyoming, and the other was subsequently. The first was with a minister of the Scotch Seceders, upon the issues between the Calvinists and Arminians; and the second was with a Baptist minister on the subject of baptism. His argument on baptism is published in an Appendix with his Memoirs, and is in some

respects original, and in its main points quite conclusive.

The debate, if such it should be called, with the Scotch divine was a singular affair. His assailant had probably been aroused by the popularity of the young itinerant, and sent out a challenge to all the world, that is, *a part* of the world, that part embracing Mr. Cook and all the rest of the Arminians. Mr. Cook felt himself called upon to meet the champion in the open field, and an appointment was accordingly made for a public debate. The champion came on with a great flourish of trumpets. On finding the congregation, who had assembled in the woods, impatiently waiting, he gave them this apology: "I'm here in ample time to give the youngster a dose from which he'll not soon recover." Upon eying the plain, unpretending Methodist preacher, he exclaimed, with rude and haughty mien: "What! is this the young man who has had the impertinence to assail the doctrines of grace?" "No, sir," replied Mr. Cook, "I have never assailed the doctrines of grace, though I have entered my protest against the prominent peculiarities of the Calvinistic system."

The haughty Scotchman would enter into no arrangements to secure fair play in the fight, but was bent upon killing off the stripling, and then leaving the field with glory. He accordingly proceeded with a furious tirade against Wesley and his system for two hours, when he took his seat completely exhausted.

Mr. Cook opened his part of the act with a fervent prayer, after which he commenced his defense with some trepidation. As he proceeded, however, his confidence improved. His defense of Wesley and his followers took hold of the mind of the vast crowd before him, and such was the evident effect upon them that the learned divine could not contain himself, and springing to his feet he vociferated: "Wolf! wolf! wolf in sheep's clothing!" But his writhing and bawling were of no avail. Mr. Cook proceeded, and the people listened. His voice improved in compass, and his

argument rose in brilliancy and power, until the old platform shook and seemed crumbling to atoms. The poor old dominie could endure the pelting of the storm no longer, and hastily arose, and with what voice he had left, bawled out: "Follow me, follow me, and leave the babbler to himself." It was a failure. Only two or three followed the learned parson, while the dense crowd remained and listened with astonishment to the almost superhuman eloquence and overwhelming demonstrations of the young orator. The people were upon their feet, and with strained eyes and open mouths gave breathless attention to the discourse to its close; and when Mr. Cook took his seat the crowd were in tears, and for some little time remained motionless. It was a perfect triumph; the fame of the young preacher spread far and wide, and his praise was in the mouth of all, not excepting the orthodox of 'auld lang syne.' One demanded, "Did you ever hear such a man?" "Never," was the answer. One stern old Covenanter was, however, proof against all the influences of the occasion. As he was returning from the novel scene he heard so many expressions of admiration of the young preacher that his pious horror broke loose: "Sirs," said he, "I perceive that ye are in great danger of being led captive by the de'il at his will. Ha'e ye never read how that Satan can transform himself into an angel o' light, that he may, if it were possible, deceive the very elect? I tell ye, sirs, he's a dangerous mon, and the less ye ha'e to do wi' him the better for us a'." Well done, Davey Dean; that's orthodox!

The facts of the above sketch were reported by Bishop Roberts, who was present, and are found in Dr. Stevenson's book. In relation to the results of this singular and interesting encounter the doctor remarks: "It is well known to those who are acquainted with the early history of Methodism in Western Pennsylvania, that this controversy was the means of opening to her ministry a 'great and effectual door' of usefulness. From that day forward the Methodist Church, in all that mountain range of country, has been rapidly

advancing in numbers and influence. The truth of this remark could be readily established by the testimony of many living witnesses were it deemed necessary."

Mr. Cook had for some time labored under an impression that he should soon be called to his reward, but it was not with him a matter of painful concern. His end was befitting such a life as he had lived, and such a character as he had sustained. The account given by his biographer is as follows :

"A short time previous to his death he attended a camp-meeting some eight or ten miles from home. As usual, he labored with great zeal and success. He preached on the Sabbath to a vast crowd, from these words: 'For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' 2 Corinthians iv, 17. After a solemn and very impressive pause, he lifted his eyes to heaven and said: 'What! our *afflictions* work for us a *weight of glory!*—a *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!*' and added, 'I believe it with all my heart, because thou, O God, hast revealed it in this blessed volume.' The effect upon the congregation is said to have been very remarkable, and the discourse throughout has been represented as among the most able and effective that he ever delivered. This was the last sermon he preached, as I was informed by his weeping widow a few months after his death.

"On his return home from this meeting he was violently attacked with bilious fever. His case from the first was considered doubtful, and finally hopeless. Conscious of his approaching dissolution, he called his wife and children to his bedside, and after taking a last earthly leave of his family, he committed them, with many expressions of confidence, to the guidance and protection of Almighty Goodness. When asked by one of his neighbors, a few moments before his death, how he felt, he answered, 'I scarcely know;' and then added, 'When I think of Jesus, and of living with him forever, I am so filled with the love of God that I scarcely know whether I am in the body or out of

the body.' These were the last words that ever fell from his lips. He died as he had lived, 'strong in faith, giving glory to God.'"

We have no date of the death of Mr. Cook, or account of his age when he left the world. These are matters of comparatively small moment, still we wonder that his biographer has omitted what is so usually found in connection with every life and death which is worthy of a record. Bishop Morris, not very confidently, gives, what must be near the truth, the date of Mr. Cook's death some time in the year 1823. His age, it is probable, was not far from sixty.

CHAPTER V.

RESULTS — CHARACTERS.

VALENTINE COOK had gone, but the fruit of his labors, and that of his predecessors and coadjutors, remained. The first class, as we have seen, was organized by Anning Owen, at Ross Hill, in 1788. Captain Ebenezer Parish was appointed leader. He was the first Methodist class-leader in Wyoming, and for several years did good service to the Church. His house was the regular preaching place, and he had the honor of entertaining Bishop Asbury the first time he visited the valley. He was fond of company, and was finally betrayed by his old habits, and made shipwreck of the faith. Apostasies are severe trials to the Church even now, in her strength; but how much greater must the afflictions which she endured from such sources have been when she was feeble.

A class had been formed in the upper part of the settlement, perhaps in the latter part of the year 1792. Abram Goodwin, Benjamin and Gilbert Carpenter, a German by the name of Rosecrantz, Stephen Jenkins, Philip Jackson,

and others, are mentioned as prominent members. Jenkins, it is believed, was leader of this class. Rosecrantz's house and Jackson's house were famous in those days as meeting places, sanctified by the presence and power of God and the conversion of souls.

Darius Williams succeeded Captain Parish as leader of the class at Ross Hill. He was one of the most splendid singers we ever listened to. He became a mighty exhorter, was long a local preacher, and although his zeal was somewhat fitful, yet his general course was onward and his influence salutary.

Abel Pierce, Esq., settled in Kingston before the war on the ancient river bank, a little higher than the town of Wilkesbarre; the place is now occupied by the heirs of Pierce Butler, Esq. He was exceedingly eccentric, and his wife, if possible, more so than himself. She lived long after the death of her companion, and was called "Aunt Ruth," and when she became quite old, "Grandmother Pierce." Mrs. Pierce became an early convert to Methodism. She was naturally full of humor, and not destitute of pride and self-conceit. She heard so much about the Methodists that she thought it worth her while to see what they were made of. She supposed, of course, they were a pack of fanatical fools who might furnish her with a little amusement. Upon learning that a Methodist preacher was at a Mr. Buck's, who lived near by, she called to look at him. According to her own account, she entered the room where he was with a haughty air, feeling nothing but contempt for the strange being upon whom she came to gaze. But no sooner did she set her eyes upon him than she was struck with the solemnity and heavenly sweetness of his countenance.* She immediately sunk down, in her own estimation, into the character of a poor miserable sinner, and left the house with her head drooping and her heart aching. She was soon a decided Methodist, and her house ever after was a most pleasant home for the preachers.

* The preacher was the Rev. Wm. Colbert.

“Grandmother Pierce” was at all the meetings in Wilkesbarre and Kingston when the writer traveled the Wyoming circuit, in 1818–19, and then she was the life of every circle she entered. She was independent, frank, earnest, kind-hearted, sociable, and not a little eccentric. When old and wrinkled she had all the fire of youth running through her veins. Her wit and her drollery made her a most desirable appendage of all the social circles, whether composed of the old or the young. She had a sharp, squealing voice, without the least tinge of the graces of modulation or regard for the critical ear. She was a sort of licensed character, saying just what she pleased and as she pleased without giving offense. Her irony was sometimes exceedingly cutting, and yet its victim would laugh heartily at the manner of it, while it really cut to the quick. Like the old Roman Catholic martyr, Sir Thomas More, she kept up the same habit of uttering witty and queer sayings to the last—just as full of them upon her deathbed as ever. But it must not be inferred that this unique old lady was entirely made up of the qualities above attributed to her; her wit and humor were seasoned with good common sense, kindness of heart, and the spirit of religion. She understood the persons with whom she was dealing, and the circumstances by which she was surrounded. She was never out of time, never ungraceful, because she had the art of making it understood that she had no mean, selfish ends to answer; that she had a generous, large heart in her; that she feared her God and loved everybody; but that she was her own model, and cared not a fig whether it was like anything else in the wide world or not.

The following singular instance is illustrative of her independence: One Sabbath day, after the morning service in Wilkesbarre, she went to Mr. Joseph Slocum’s, to dine with the preacher. An English gentleman and lady were boarding at Mr. Slocum’s. The lady took occasion to make several contemptuous remarks in relation to the Methodists. The preacher was young, and Aunt Ruth felt a

sympathy for him. It would have been ungallant for him, to enter the list against the lady; and Mrs. Slocum, though deeply grieved, reserved her resentment for a private interview. Aunt Ruth was bound by no law of politeness to ignore the insult, and she squealed out, "Take care! you hurt! you hurt!" This was all that was said at the time.

It was not long before the lady visited Mrs. Pierce, with several ladies of Wilkesbarre. She was received with common politeness, and proceeded to enjoy the afternoon, not failing, however, to show her high sense of the greatness of Old England, and her own superiority to everybody else. Tea came on in due time, and "Aunt Ruth," as usual, was the principal object of interest and attraction. She kept things in motion, and often convulsed the whole circle with laughter by her wit and humor. Tea being over, she called her ladyship aside and said to her: "Now you may go home." The lady blushed; and seemed rather inclined to resent the insult; but there was the little old woman standing before her like an iron pillar, unmoved by passion, with her piercing eye upon her, and manifesting a remarkable indifference to the consequences. The lady quailed and left. She knew there was for her no redress, and she took the rebuke in silence, and, it may be hoped, profited by it.

Her utterances, voice, and action, altogether, were a perfect remedy for hypochondria. The most sober-sided old nope would be flung into a fit of laughter by her singular associations, and the manner in which they were hashed up and given out, before he had time to fortify himself against her irresistible and always victorious sallies. The beauty of the whole was that she never made an effort to be witty, nor seemed to be aware that she was so considered. She never laughed at her own fun. It was always an explosion of home combustibles, the outbursting of an exuberance of original and strange associations.

Her religious exercises partook largely of her natural

manner, but were considerably modified by strong religious feelings. She was not remarkably gifted in speaking or in prayer, but she was always on hand. She spoke in every love-feast, she prayed in every prayer-meeting; but would often stop abruptly, without anything like a closing sentence. She sometimes talked and exhorted in her prayers, and not unfrequently prayed in her exhortations. It was all the same; whatever she did for God was done with a heart and will which kindled up the fire of sympathy all around her.

One of her speeches in love-feast was this, and little or nothing else: "The devil tempts me, he tempts me, he tempts; but I say I won't, I won't, I won't!"

She had a strength of nerve that under some circumstances would have fitted her for a heroine. Once, on coming to Forty Fort to love-feast, she was thrown from her carriage and dislocated her shoulder, or elbow; but, nothing daunted, on she came to the church. The pain in her arm was so severe that she retired to a house hard by and had her joint adjusted by a surgeon, and then returned to the love-feast and made her speech, as though nothing had happened. This remarkable woman died in great peace at her residence in Kingston.

One of her daughters married Lord Butler, Esq., son of Colonel Zebulon Butler, and her great grandchildren now constitute a large and influential circle. Methodism owes much to the Pierce family, but principally to the female portion of it.

There were two sisters of Squire Pierce—the husband of the venerable lady whose character has been briefly sketched above—Alice and Hannah, who were among the earliest Methodists. These ladies lived in "single blessedness" to the close of life. They kept house by themselves on the west bank of "Butler's Creek," a short distance below their brother's residence. Their plain, neat dwelling was often the place of resort for the little band of praying men and women in the infancy of the Church. It was within the

bounds of the Ross Hill class, and took its turn in accommodating the "prayer-meeting." These maiden ladies were perfect specimens of the old style Methodist women: earnest in spirit, always present at the means of grace, free and generous in their efforts to sustain the preachers, plain as a pipe-stem, known and read of all as Methodists by the simplicity of their apparel.

Mrs. Duane, already noticed, had two daughters, Clara and Polly, who were also members of the society. Clara married the Rev. Alward White, late a member of the Philadelphia Conference, who traveled Wyoming circuit in the years 1795 and 1796.

BENJAMIN BIDLACK was converted some time during the year 1793, as Mr. Colbert speaks of him as a "brother" in July of that year. He had been a Revolutionary soldier, and had contracted the habit of drinking to intoxication. He was fond of company, and full of fun and frolic. He, however, had many noble qualities, and among the rest a reverence for religion, and a fondness for the place of public worship, where he sometimes made his appearance under the influence of liquor, although he never made disturbance in the congregation. He sometimes sang with great gusto, and even "raised the tune," when he could scarcely stand without holding upon something.

Anthony Turck was a rough-and-tumble preacher. He was a Dutchman, full of zeal and bold as a lion. At one of his meetings "Ben Bidlack," as he was called, presented himself unusually sober, but with a bottle of rum in his pocket, the neck of the bottle sticking out. The seats being full, Bidlack stood up by the door with his arms folded, and seemed to listen with great attention.

It was not long before the preacher turned upon the drunkard with unmitigated severity. He made him out a fool and a brute; yea, worse than a decent sort of beast. He would plunge into the mire and wallow like a hog, the most filthy of all animals; he would curse, swear, and blaspheme the God who made him; he would carry the *hell fire*,

which all but made a devil of him, in his pocket to the house of God. This was fearfully personal, and gave great alarm to some of the congregation, who knew Bidlack well.

Aunt Ruth Pierce, who then was in her first love, as she often told the story, was frightened, for she thought of nothing short of a battle between the preacher and the insulted old soldier. She thought if the preacher resisted, which was a possible thing, for he was a man of pluck, that he would be worsted, and in any event would be flogged within an inch of his life. She was nervous, more so than usual, and that was quite unnecessary, until the preacher finished his discourse, when, to her utter astonishment, Bidlack seemed to sneak away like a coward. Ah! Bidlack was whipped. Instead of resenting the attack, he went home stung with remorse; and it was soon remarked that "Ben Bidlack had become a Methodist." He had indeed become a penitent, and, with his characteristic frankness and courage, he publicly declared his heartfelt sorrow for his former course of life, and his firm purpose of amendment. After weeks of anguish he experienced the peace of God, which passeth all understanding. He hastened to proclaim to the world that he had found the Saviour. He had a heart full of sympathy, and his powerful voice found full scope in his earnest exhortations, fervent prayers, and in singing the songs of Zion. He lived in Newport, but he soon visited the brethren in different parts of the valley at their meetings, and great numbers of his old companions in folly came out to hear him. Upon hearing him deliver an exhortation Aunt Ruth Pierce predicted that he "would make a preacher," and so he did. We purpose to give the reader a full report of his labors and character hereafter.

COLONEL DENISON and his lady and three daughters became members of the Methodist Church. Colonel Denison and Betsey Sills were the first couple married in Wyoming, and the colonel commanded the left wing of the patriot

forces on the occasion of "the Indian battle." He was a man of great influence in the country, of which sufficient proof was given by the responsible positions which he was called by his fellow-citizens to fill.

He was a kind-hearted and ardently pious man. His house was open to the weary itinerants, and too much could scarcely be done by the family for their comfort. All the preachers made it a place of rest and refreshment, while several at different times were quartered there as a regular boarding place. The colonel died in great peace. His excellent lady survived him several years, and then followed him to the abodes of the blessed. The venerable Asbury was there several times entertained, as we learn both from his journal and the testimony of members of the family still living.

The sons, Lazarus and George, were highly respectable gentlemen, the former a farmer, who lived and died on the old homestead; the other a lawyer of great power and influence in the state. He was a member of Congress in 1820, and made a strong speech against the admission of Missouri into the Union as a slave state. These gentlemen were both cherished friends of the Methodists, although neither of them made a profession of religion.

ASHBEL WALLER lived in Carytown, two miles below Wilkesbarre. He was an earnest Methodist; became a local preacher, and was very useful. His labors during these early times through the valley were very much blessed. He was one of the principal instruments of establishing Methodism in Plymouth, as we are told by Mrs. Pringle, a daughter of Benjamin Harvey, who has a distinct recollection of the man and his labors. He early removed to the Holland Purchase in Western New York.

JAMES SUTTON, Esq., the father of Mrs. Bedford, his wife, one son, and three daughters, united early with the Methodist society. Mr. Sutton was a man of large heart, simple manners, uniform life—a respectable and influential citizen. Mrs. Sutton was an active, sociable, pleasant little body,

good company for young people as long as she lived. She was a lady of great force of character and great devotion to the cause of religion. She was an earnest and consistent Methodist, and was never more happy than when providing comforts for the Methodist preachers in her own neat and quiet house. The daughters were all ladies of excellent character and great respectability. Mrs. Bedford gives the following account of her family :

“My father originally belonged to the Society of Friends, and always led an exemplary life. He became a Methodist, and in consequence of his godly conversation he suffered the most violent persecutions from the enemies of religion. Under the severe trials arising from these bitter hostilities he was accustomed to smile and remark : ‘This is my consolation : the day is coming when I shall meet my enemies before a just God ; then it will be known who is right and who is wrong.’ When he lay upon his death-bed he enjoyed all his mental faculties, and with the greatest composure of mind, and with unshaken confidence in his God, spoke of going home to rest. He died in his own house, in Exeter, in the eighty-first year of his age.”

The persecutions of which Mrs. B. speaks subsided long before Mr. Sutton died, and he lived in peace with all the world, and was much respected by all classes for many years before he went to his great reward.

“My mother,” says Mrs. B., “survived my father ten years, and died after a sickness of only eight days. Her last sickness was very severe, but she had no Christian friend to converse with upon the state of her mind at the time. I could get but little information concerning her feelings on her death-bed from the young people who attended her, but I trust she has gone home to her Father’s kingdom. She died at Exeter in the eighty-sixth year of her age.”

Mrs. Sutton continued to occupy the old mansion during her lifetime, usually attended by some of her grandchildren. She was frequently importuned by her son Samuel, settled near by, to leave the old house and live with him ; but she

steadily refused to do this, having made up her mind to remain in the place where she had lived so long and so happily with the companion of her youth, until God should permit their pure spirits to be reunited in heaven. As for society, she had little that was congenial except occasional visits from her children or grandchildren, the Methodist preachers, or some of her old Christian associates from other places. Hence the comparative solitude in which she met the final struggle. As to her preparation for death, that will not for a moment be doubted by any one who had the happiness of her acquaintance. The writer knew her long and well, and he will never forget the last time he saw her. It was at a quarterly meeting in the old church at Forty Fort. During the love-feast she occupied a pew near the pulpit, and when she commenced speaking she stepped out into the aisle, and soon became so animated that she walked back and forth and shouted aloud the praises of the Lord. Her testimony made a powerful impression, and while she was speaking her clear, shrill voice was often nearly drowned by the shouts and loud weeping which filled the house. She must then have been about eighty years of age.

Mrs. Sutton was the daughter of Dr. Hooker Smith, one of the great men of the Revolutionary times. And she herself belonged to a noble race of matrons, who endured their full share of the toils and sacrifices of the glorious fight with the dense forests, the wild beasts, and the wild Indians, and the dastardly Tories, which resulted in the fruitful fields, quiet houses, flourishing schools, colleges, and churches, and the free institutions which now constitute America the glory of all lands.

The old Sutton house was situated in a gorge of the west mountain, in the side of a steep hill, about twelve miles above Forty Fort. A mountain torrent rushes through the gorge, upon which Squire Sutton erected a grist-mill. He had a taste for "milling," and for a large portion of his life he was engaged in that business. The spot was secluded, just at the head of a considerable narrows on the winding

Susquehanna. In that immediate neighborhood the population was spare, and the people a delving, hardy race. Forty-two years ago, when the writer first visited that spot, the scenery was exceedingly wild and picturesque. Up the creek you saw a deep chasm cut through rocks, and shaded with trees and shrubs, the most perfect specimen of gloom and solitude. Across the river the chain of mountains which follows the river, now advancing to the very edge, and again receding, and leaving a rich bottom, and ever varying in form and height, presents a most wild and poetic view.

Here it was that "Father and Mother Sutton" passed half a century together, entertained two generations of Methodist preachers, received visits from distinguished guests, dispensed charities to the poor, and kept up an altar for the worship of Jehovah. Here the venerable Asbury found a home to his liking, of which he gives ample evidence in his Journal.

One of the daughters, Polly, married Putnam Catlin, Esq., a gentleman of the bar, who then followed his profession in Wilkesbarre. He spent many years of his life in Susquehanna county, residing at different times in Brooklyn, Montrose, and Great Bend. Mrs. Catlin was a plain, modest, but sensible lady. Her husband was fond of show, she was the reverse; but they lived in great harmony. The Methodist preachers were ever welcome at Mr. Catlin's well-furnished house and table. Mrs. Bedford says: "My sister, Polly Catlin, died at her son-in-law's, in Delta, N. Y., in the seventy-fourth year of her age. On her death-bed, when she was told that she could not live until night, she was perfectly composed, adding, 'Christ is mine and I am his.' Mr. Catlin once told me that he should have been led to doubt the reality of religion but for her exemplary life." She was the mother of a numerous family, and among her sons is George Catlin, Esq., the celebrated artist, known to the whole world.

"My sister, Sallie Sterling," says Mrs. Bedford, "experienced religion, I think, not long before her death. The

Methodists were her people, but she experienced some difficulties in enjoying an intimate connection with them. When she was dying her husband sat behind and supported her. 'How good it is,' said she, 'on a death-bed to have a God to go to.' Major Sterling fainted, and had to be helped out of the room.

"My brother William died in the Lake country. He died suddenly while traveling the road. He expired but a few minutes after talking with a friend, to all appearance in perfect health. I afterward learned from his son that he held out faithful to the end."

The Carver family contributed largely to the influence and establishment of Methodism in Wyoming. Samuel Carver became a most acceptable and useful local preacher. He was a sensible, industrious, earnest man: his life was without reproach, and he won souls to Christ.

The Rev. NOAH WADHAMS was a Congregationalist minister, and a graduate of Princeton. He settled in Plymouth after his sons had been there some time. He had previously been settled as pastor at the East. When he came to Wyoming he was soon baptized with the spirit of Methodism, and commenced preaching here and there wherever he found an opening. He joined the Methodist Church, and was a local preacher. He spent his latter years in preaching and laboring with great zeal and acceptability for the promotion of the interests of the societies. His son Moses was a simple-hearted, earnest Christian, and was appointed class-leader after Mr. Coleman died. His widow still survives. Mr. Wadhams having died while yet a young man, his widow was married to Josiah Wright, Esq., of Plymouth.

CALVIN WADHAMS, of Plymouth, was the son of the minister just noticed, and was converted under the labors of Valentine Cook. He contributed largely to the erection of a building called "the Academy," adapted both to the purposes of a school and of religious worship. The upper story was seated, and fitted up with a pulpit and an altar, and was the only church in Plymouth for, perhaps, fifty

years. Mr. Wadhams's house was ever open to the preachers, and was often filled full on quarterly-meeting occasions. His first wife was a pious lady, and a few years after her death he was married to the Widow Lucas. She lived with her first husband on Ross Hill, and there became a Methodist at an early period in the history of that society.

Calvin Wadhams amassed a large property, which was mostly inherited by his only son, Samuel Wadhams, Esq., who now occupies the paternal residence. Methodism has been cherished in the family down to the fourth generation, and is still a vital element in the whole circle.

The first family in Plymouth brought thoroughly under the influence of Methodism was the Coleman family. Mr. Jeremiah Coleman, his wife and two daughters, lived and died exemplary and influential members of the Church. Mr. Coleman had a comfortable home, to which he invited the preachers, and that was no small part of the "material aid" so necessary during the early history of the Church. Mr. Coleman was the first class-leader in Plymouth. His two daughters, Mrs. Hodge and Mrs. Holley, were active members of the Church, and made up a part of one of the most admirable circles of pious women that we ever became acquainted with, in 1818 and several years subsequently. They were glowing lights in the Church of God to the end.

Mrs. Wooley is spoken of by Mrs. Bedford as one of the first Methodists with whom she became acquainted. She is still remembered in different neighborhoods. She was poor as to this world's goods, a portion of the time dependent upon the kindness of friends for a home. On the occasion of the Ice Flood she was carried away by the flood, in her house, from "Butler's Creek," on the Kingston Flats. The ice forming a dam in "Tobey's Eddy," her house came to a stand just above that point, surrounded by mountains of ice. She commenced a pilgrimage toward the nearest point of land. The cakes of ice lay jammed together in wild confusion, presenting anything but an even surface. She could not walk; her only mode of locomotion was by

creeping on her hands and knees. She struggled along, passing over the sharp edges of the large cakes of ice, ascending and descending enormous piles, until she had worn out her hands, and traces of blood marked her path. To save her wounded and bleeding hands she took off her shoes and put her hands into them, and thus protecting her gashed fingers, palms, and wrists, she wound her weary way for half a mile, when she once more set her feet on terra firma. "Aunt Wooley" held on her way to a goodly old age, and died in peace in a small house in Wilkesbarre.

Mrs. Huldah Cary, the widow of COMFORT CARY, is still living with her son-in-law, Mr. Corwell, in Brooklyn, Pa. Her maiden name was Weeks. She had three brothers killed in the Indian battle, and her father, an old man, was left in charge of three young widows and twelve grandchildren! She was then five years of age. She returned to New England with her father, where she remained until the Indian troubles were over, and then came again to Wyoming, where she was married in 1789, and lived until her husband died and she was old. She gives the following account of the origin of the 'classes in Wilkesbarre, Hanover, and Newport :

"Anning Owen preached in Hanover, and formed a class there in 1790. Ashbel and Joseph Waller, John How, and Abram Adams were the first men who joined the class. Ashbel Waller was the first class-leader; he became a local preacher, and then Abram Adams took charge of the class. Old Mrs. Waller was a member of the first class."

We saw this old saint, under most interesting circumstances, in Windsor, N. Y., in 1816. We were a mere stripling, it being the first year of our itinerancy. On coming into the place we were told that a lady, by the name of Canfield, was at Captain Waller's and wished us to call. We called and found Mother Canfield, a school mate of our father and mother in Danbury, Conn., and a friend and neighbor in Middlefield, N. Y., in our boyish days. Here we found "Grandmother Waller," we think, about ninety

years of age, who kept her bed constantly, and had done so for many years. Captain Waller at this time was a Baptist, but "Grandmother" was a Methodist, dyed in the wool. She fired up, and talked of the good old times and the good old preachers with great animation. We knew not the localities nor the persons she referred to, and were not prepared to enter into her feelings so fully as we could have done a few years subsequently, when they became familiar to us as household words. She seemed wholly given up to God, and perfectly happy. She had not heard a Methodist sermon for years, and no ado but we must preach for her. Accordingly an appointment was announced, and in the evening the neighbors gathered in, and we took our position behind a chair at the door of her room, and preached a consolatory discourse, which seemed to the dear old creature like water to the thirsty soul. She waved her hands, often responded, and, although with a feeble voice, shouted "Glory to God!" Not long after this she departed in great peace.

Methodism had a few adherents in Wilkesbarre before Valentine Cook came into the country. Mr. Colbert, in the month of April, put up with "old friend Mann," with whom he found comfortable quarters whenever he visited the place. Mr. Mann's, we presume, was the first house in the county seat which was opened to the Methodist preachers, and it was here that Valentine Cook proclaimed the Gospel to those who came to hear, whether from motives of curiosity or for higher and better reasons. When he first preached there he was threatened with mob violence. When Duane's party undertook to smoke him out with brimstone, after the meeting was concluded he took his horse and rode to Hanover for quarters. Mrs. Cary says Cook was called "the greatest preacher that ever was; a very learned man too."

At this time Mrs. Cary, with her husband, lived in Carytown. Mr. Cary and his wife experienced religion just before Cook left the district in 1796. In March of that year they attended one of Mr. Cook's quarterly meetings

on Ross Hill ; it was held in the house of Aaron Dean. She says : " We came to the river at Wilkesbarre, and the ice ran so thick that the ferryman refused to ferry us over, but he told us we might have the boat if we would risk the undertaking. There were fifteen of us, and we pushed out ; we were driven down far below the landing place, but we finally reached the shore in safety. We had a glorious meeting." Mr. Cook preached his last sermon in the valley on Ross Hill on Acts xx, from verse 17 to the close of the chapter. Mrs. Cary says her husband went over to hear him, and said it was the most wonderful sermon he ever heard. All were melted down, and sighs, groans, and sobs filled the house. The people wept, the preacher wept ; and after the sermon a hearty squeeze of the hand of the man of God, with a convulsive utterance of " Farewell," was responded to in a most dignified, affectionate manner by the preacher. " Farewell, brother, farewell, sister ; God bless you ; be faithful ; we shall meet in heaven." The text was applicable. He left, and they of the valley saw his face no more.

Mr. Cary removed from Carytown to Hanover in 1791. Azel Dana, father of Hon. Amasa Dana, of Ithaca, N. Y., Mrs. Cary says, was the first class-leader in Wilkesbarre. When he died, which she thinks was in 1804, her husband, Comfort Cary, was appointed leader. He lived four miles from town ; but it was nothing in those days for a class-leader to walk much farther than that, two or three times every week, to meet the class and attend prayer-meetings.

At about the time Mr. Owen formed the class in Hanover, he also formed one in Newport, four miles below. The Smiths (Martin and Jonathan) and the Reeders were the first who joined the class in Newport. Benjamin Bidlack lived in a little log-cabin in Newport, near where Lee's Mills now stand. The classes in Hanover and Newport were probably organized in 1792 ; it may be a year or two earlier.

Michael H. R. Wilson stands connected with Tioga, and Hamilton Jefferson and Anning Owen with Seneca.

In 1796 the numbers stood thus : Wyoming, 221 ; Tioga, 138 ; Seneca, 215.

This year Alward White was returned to Wyoming circuit, and this year he was married to Miss Clara Pierce located, and removed to Maryland. He had traveled four years : the first year on Pittsburgh circuit, the second on Seneca Lake, and the third and fourth on Wyoming. He was a man of an excellent spirit, was estimated a good preacher, and was quite successful in our territory. He visited Wyoming some time in 1825, and preached in Wilkesbarre. His presence brought back old recollections to the minds of many who were then living. The following brief memoir of him is found in the Minutes for 1833 :

“ ALWARD WHITE. In the early part of his life he devoted himself to the service of God. In 1793 he commenced his itinerant career, but after traveling four years he located and lived in the city of Baltimore. In 1819 he was readmitted as a member of the Philadelphia Conference, and continued in this work until his death. He was an acceptable preacher, modest and unassuming in his manners, and firm in his friendships. He died in peace at his residence in Greenborough, Md., November 23. 1832.”

CHAPTER VI.

PROGRESS OF THE WORK, 1797-1800.

1797. This year, for the first time, the elders who had charge of a number of circuits are denominated *presiding* elders, and Thomas Ware was appointed to the charge of the district embracing Philadelphia and Wilmington, and the country northward to the lakes.

Mr. Ware was a calm, modest man, and contrasted rather unfavorably with the great man who preceded him. He was pleasant and instructive in the family, and soon found

his way to the hearts of the people; but he had not the power over men, the commanding eloquence and the overwhelming pathos of Valentine Cook. Such was the marked difference between the two, that the more zealous part of the Methodist membership could scarcely withhold expressions of disappointment, and some of them did not do it. On his first appearance at a quarterly meeting in Kingston, Mr. Ware preached on Saturday; and in the prayer-meeting in the evening Darius Williams, who was then all in a blaze, used the following language in his prayer: "O Lord, bless our new elder and give him more religion, or he will be trod down in the gate;" to which many responded "amen." The elder bore the implied reproof in silence, doubtless knowing how to appreciate all such indications. He was by no means deficient either in religion or talents, but his sermons were not the tornadoes to which the people had been accustomed. If a presiding elder did not break down everything before him, he did not, in their estimation, magnify his office.

This year ROGER BENTON was the preacher on Wyoming circuit. Mrs. Bedford says "he was a short, thickset man, and a smart preacher." In relation to this man, the Rev. Gideon Lanning bears the following testimony: "He was "one of the early preachers in Wyoming Valley; was one of the most modest, meek, and uniformly consistent men I ever knew. He had a stentorian voice, and was an excellent preacher; but about 1803, having had a severe fit of sickness, he resumed his labors too soon upon his circuit, and greatly injured his voice, so that in 1805 he located. He married and settled on a farm near Newark, N. Y., where he lived until within a few years, when he died in great peace, having always enjoyed the esteem and confidence of his neighbors and of the Church. A better man I never knew."

James Stokes was on Tioga, and Anning Owen and Johnson Dunham were on Seneca circuit. The numbers this year advanced on Seneca, and declined on Wyoming and Tioga.

REV. WILLIAM COLBERT IN OUR FIELD AGAIN.

In April, 1797, Mr. Colbert makes his appearance again in our territory, pen in hand, jotting down the names of places and persons, and the circumstances which he thinks worthy of note. He enters the valley of Wyoming from the east, and after traveling for a while on Wyoming circuit, he again visits Tioga and the Lake country.

The itinerancy was not at this time so systematic and regular an institution as at present. This year Colbert appears on the Minutes in connection with the Chester circuit, and in 1798 with Wyoming; but, from his journal, it appears that he continued on Bristol circuit, where he had labored in 1796, until he left for Wyoming.

We shall copy freely from Mr. Colbert's journal, particularly while he is at the north, not so much for the sake of the incidents which it contains, as for the purpose of fixing lines, names, and dates which are important to subsequent history.

Thursday, April 6. I set off this morning from John Alexander's for Wyoming. Got as far as Prescott's tavern—a very disagreeable ride. Here I found such a disagreeable company that I omitted proposing to go to prayer in the family.

Friday, 7. Rode through the rain—through 'the shades of death'—passed the Susquehanna, and got once more to Darius Williams's, in Wyoming, where I found my good old colleague, Elisha Cole.

Saturday, 8. I preached at a quarterly meeting extra, held at Darius Williams's; Alward White and Elisha Cole exhorted. We lodged at Aaron Dean's.

Sunday, 9. This morning we had a happy love-feast. Elisha Cole preached from Acts xxii, 19; Alward White gave an exhortation after him; and I preached from Luke xxii, 19, and administered the Lord's Supper. At night Elisha Cole preached at the school-house, near Colonel Denison's. I sung and prayed after him, and lodged, with

Michael Roby Hines Wilson, a young invalid preacher,* at Colonel Denison's. I have felt well among my brethren in Wyoming.

"*Monday, 10*, I spent at Colonel Denison's, for I felt the want of rest." And a good place it was to *rest*.

"*Tuesday 11*. I crossed the river and preached at Burger's. While I was speaking, a sick young man came in and desired liberty to lie down. After I had preached, and spoken to the class, I spoke to him, and found him of deistical principles. I crossed the river again, drank tea at Mr. Smith's, and lodged at Squire Carpenter's. His family used me with great kindness. Since I was in this country the Lord has taken from them a daughter who had not been long married; but happy for her that she embraced religion while in health. She was a delightful singer, and I trust she has gone to sing on high.†

"*Wednesday, 12*. Rode from Carpenter's to my old friend Rosecrantz's, where I used formerly to preach, and from Rosecrantz's to Darius Williams's. From Williams's I walked a little distance to a friend's by the name of Pierce, and while I was conversing with Sister Pierce,‡ who should walk up but David Downing, from the state of Delaware, who was moving, with his wife and seven children, having seventy or eighty miles of the worst road yet to go. It is well if this is not the beginning of sorrows with these people.

"*Thursday, 13*. At night preached at Jeremiah Coleman's, and met a class. Here the friends are lively.

"*Friday, 14*. Preached at Ashbel Waller's, and spent the afternoon and part of the evening in reading "The Shipwreck," an elegant poem, by William Falconer.

"*Saturday, 15*. Got through "The Shipwreck" and preached

* He was engaged in marriage to Elizabeth Denison, but he went to his great reward before the union was consummated; and Miss Elizabeth was subsequently married to Colonel Elijah Shoemaker.

† She was married to Jacob Bradford, Esq., who subsequently married Deborah Sutton, one of our most valuable contributors.

‡ Aunt Ruth Pierce.

at old Mother Hide's, in Hanover, and returned to Ashbel Waller's.

"*Sunday, 16.* Preached in the Court-house in Wilkesbarre to an attentive congregation, some of whom, I suppose, were deists. I felt myself for some time at a loss for a subject to address these people on. I wanted to preach pointedly against deism, but was afraid I should not do justice to such an important subject; and as it seemed probable that a great part of them professed to believe the Bible, I spoke to them accordingly, and concluded with a word of caution to the deists."

Mr. Colbert had been told, what was a fact, that several of the leading spirits in the town were disciples of Elihu Palmer, known as "Blind Palmer," author of a dangerous book entitled "The Principles of Nature." Many years ago we read the copy of this book, which belonged to Dr. William Hooker Smith's library. This work, together with the "Age of Reason," was circulated and read by the *men* of Wilkesbarre, but not by the *women*. A brother of Blind Palmer lived in Wilkesbarre; he was a lawyer and a man of influence, and took a leading part in the infidel circle. The old leaven of infidelity, we fear, has never been wholly exterminated from the old town, although it has ceased to exercise much public influence. We say the women of the ancient borough of Wilkesbarre adhered to Christianity. So it was, and hence the notorious fact that the leading men of the town opposed Methodism, and some of them persecuted the Methodists, while their wives were brought under its influence and rendered it most effective support. A number of those would have united with the little despised community had a positive interdict not been laid upon them by their husbands.

Mr. Colbert proceeds: "Dined at the Widow Johnson's; crossed the river and preached at the school-house, near Colonel Denison's, and lodged at Colonel Denison's."

"*Monday, 17.* Preached at Benjamin Carpenter's, and lodged at ——. These are kind people, but the chil-

dren are so noisy there is no satisfaction to be had in the place.

"*Tuesday, 18.* Rode to Benjamin Carpenter's. The weather too inclement to travel. My time was too short to accomplish my business if I had stayed; and then no weather a man can live in ought to stop him, that is, when he can do no good by remaining.

"*Wednesday, 19.* Rode from Carpenter's to James Rice's. Attended a prayer-meeting at friend Smith's at night, and found myself in my element.

"*Thursday, 20.* Rode from James Rice's to Amos Parks's, in Salem. A glorious change has taken place in this family since I was here. Mrs. Parks, who used to be dead and Calvinistic, is now alive, and several of the children converted.

"*Friday, 21.* Rode from Amos Parks's to Christian Bowman's, where I met with a very kind reception, and at night we had a prayer-meeting.

"*Saturday, 22.* Richard Sneath met me at Christian Bowman's, where is held a quarterly meeting. Brother Sneath preached. David Davies gave an exhortation. I then preached, and Ashbel Waller gave an exhortation. At night we held a prayer-meeting at Thomas Bowman's. I have had strange feelings to-day, but hope I shall be enabled by grace to overcome my soul's enemy.

"*Sunday, 23.* We had a happy love-feast, after which Richard Sneath preached. Ashbel Waller preached after him. I preached after Waller, and administered the Lord's Supper. In the afternoon I rode with Richard Sneath to my old friend Ogden's and preached."

Mr. Colbert continued in the Northumberland circuit for more than two weeks, visiting its principal appointments, when he turned toward the north.

"*Saturday, May 6.* Dined at John Salmon's, prayed at Robert Owen's and the Widow Salmon's, and rode on to Christian Bowman's. Thus have I bid adieu to Fishing Creek once more.

“From much-loved friends whene’er I part,
A pensive sadness fills my heart;
Past scenes my fancy wanders o’er,
And sighs to think they are no more.”

“*Sunday, 7.* Spent the forenoon at Christian Bowman’s. I felt unhappy in mind. I preached at three o’clock, with liberty. William Brandon gave an exhortation, and with him I lodged at my old friend Isaac Holloway’s, where I suppose we spent half the night in conversation.

“*Monday, 8.* I preached at Berwick, though with little freedom. Brother Brandon spake after me. Rode on to Amos Parks’s, in Salem, where we had a meeting, and spent the evening very agreeably.

“*Tuesday, 9.* We rode from Salem to Andrew Blanchard’s, and thence to Jeremiah Coleman’s, in Shawney.

“*Wednesday, 10.* We rode from Coleman’s to Colonel Denison’s. Dined with Alward White and Michael R. H. Wilson; and I rode on to James Sutton’s. Thus have I got on the frontiers of Wyoming once more, on my way to Tioga. Hard times I now expect.”

MR. COLBERT VISITS TIOGA AND SENECA.

“*Thursday, 11.* I have had a long and tiresome ride over the Luzerne Mountains, from Sutton’s to Humphrey Brown’s Favern, a disagreeable place. I had to lodge in a room with three or four vile wretches. As the company of such abominable beings is so disagreeable here on earth, what care ought to be taken to escape hell, where they are much worse.

“*Friday, 12.* Rode from Brown’s to my old friend Cole’s, where I believe they were glad to see me. O how much better it is for me to be here than where I was last night!

“*Saturday, 13.* Rode from Cole’s to my friend Green’s, at Sheshequin. Dined and rode on to Daniel M’Dowall’s, at Chemung. I have severe exercises of mind.

“*Sunday, 14.* Preached at my old friend Kress’s, and

administered the Lord's Supper. Here the children were so noisy that I have not had much satisfaction in preaching.

"*Monday, 15.* Rode from Kress's to John Dow's, at the head of the Seneca Lake, where I was kindly received and well used.

"*Tuesday, 16.* Rode through a wilderness of about eighteen miles, on the east side of the Seneca Lake, in company with a very venerable man by the name of Landers, who parted with me before I got to Squire Parker's, in Jerusalem, Ontario county, N. Y. I was well received and kindly used by the Squire, who is a great admirer of the works of Baron Emanuel Swedenborg.

"*Wednesday, 17.* Spent at Squire Parker's, who gave me an account of the dealings of the Lord with him. The account of his conversion is Scriptural and rational. After his conversion he joined the New Lights, with whom he continued some time before he went into the army; and it is very strange that when he returned from the army he was drawn off, with a number more, by Jemima Wilkerson, a very extraordinary woman, who styled herself the Universal Friend. She says that the soul that once inhabited her body is now in heaven, and that the soul of Jesus Christ now dwells in her. The Squire has now left her, and, I suppose, has become a disciple of Swedenborg, but is very friendly to the Methodists.

"*Thursday, 18.* I spent at Squire Parker's, and felt much indisposed in body and mind.

"*Friday, 19.* Rode from Parker's to Wheeler's and Hull's, and thence to David Benton's. From Benton's we went to hear a Mr. Irish, a Baptist, preach. He appeared to be in earnest. He is a Calvinist, and pleases a great number of the people in this country, though I do not consider him the greatest preacher I ever heard.

"*Saturday, 20.* Began our quarterly meeting in Seneca circuit, at David Benton's. Hamilton Jefferson preached an excellent sermon. I preached after him, and Amning Owen

preached after me. We had reason to be thankful for as much of the presence of the Lord as was with us.

“*Sunday, 21.* This morning the Lord was with us in the love-feast in David Benton’s house. Public preaching was in the house. I preached with little satisfaction, *on account of the disagreeable noise of children* and the restlessness of some of the congregation. Anning Owen preached with liberty, and Hamilton Jefferson from Sol. Song, ii, 11, 12. I thought it was a little curious that he should preach from, ‘Lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone,’ when there was an appearance of a great rain within a quarter of an hour of us. We closed divine service for this day with the administration of the Lord’s Supper.

“*Monday, 22.* I spent with Hamilton Jefferson at James Parshall’s. These people are very kind.

“*Tuesday, 23.* We spent at Caleb Andrews’s. I read some in the Bible and in Watt’s Lyric Poems.

“*Wednesday, 24.* We dined with Cornelius Morris, once a member of our Church and a preacher, but now not with us, though he loves us. May the Lord bring him back! We lodged at David Benton’s.

“*Thursday, 25.* We spent at our friends Carpenter’s and Wedon’s. My reading has been the Bible and Watson’s Apology.

“*Friday, 26.* The morning clear and cold. We have had a long ride; crossing the Cayuga Lake at Harris’s Ferry, we proceeded to Asa Bailey’s, in Scipio; our conversation was upon subjects of an interesting nature.

“*Saturday, 27.* The day has been very unfavorable for our quarterly meeting, which we held at Samuel Phelps’s, an uncomfortable place. We had a storm of wind, rain, lightning, and thunder. I preached from 1 Cor. vi, 19, 20, and Hamilton Jefferson from 1 Cor. xiii, 13. I find our good friends in these parts are very talkative. We were kindly entertained at Squire Sherwood’s.

“*Sunday, 28.* This morning our love-feast was open, and some of our friends spoke, much to my satisfaction. Ham-

ilton Jefferson preached, and I preached after him with freedom.

"*Monday, 29.* Wind from the north and cold. We rode from Squire Sherwood's to Asa Bailey's.

"*Tuesday, 30.* My friend Jefferson left me. I finished Watson's Apology for the Bible, went with my friends Bailey, his wife, and Sister Holden, to Mr. Edey's, where I endeavored to explain the nature of our doctrine and discipline. I drank tea at Mr. Mead's, and returned home with my friends.

"*Wednesday, 31.* Rode to Samuel Phelps's and Squire Sherwood's, where I spent part of my time, with some satisfaction, reading Stackhouse's Body of Divinity.

"*Thursday, June 1.* A very sharp frost this morning. I preached at Samuel Phelps's, and at night held a prayer-meeting. I am apprehensive the enemy is meditating the ruin of the society in this place.

"*Friday, 2.* I preached at a school-house near Asa Bailey's, and also at Asa Jackson's.

"*Saturday, 3.* I rode from Jackson's, on the Owasco Lake, to Captain John Grover's and preached. While I was here a Baptist man came in, much elated, informing the old people that their son Thomas had given in his experience at their covenant meeting, and his mother expressed a great willingness that he should be baptized.

"*Sunday, 4.* I preached at a school-house near Captain Edward Wheeler's. After preaching I had a long parley with Captain Wheeler, who chose to withdraw from society because I would not give my consent for him to neglect his own meetings to hear other preachers. Another also, whose name is on the class paper, got up and went home. In the afternoon, on my way to Mr. Olmsted's, I saw a number of people gathered to hear Mr. Irish, among whom were some of our Methodists. One of them I had been acquainted with four or five years. I asked him if he was going to our meeting, and he told me he was if Elder Irish did not come. I rode to my appointment and had the

greater part of the Baptist preacher's congregation. I found them an inattentive set.

"*Monday, 5.* On my way to Mr. Buck's, at his request I called at Mr. Atwell's, who yesterday told me he wanted to ask me some questions. I soon found him an unreasonable fatalist, and not worth disputing with, so I left him. I preached at Captain Buck's, and in the afternoon at Mr. Thompson's.

"*Tuesday, 6.* I preached at Mr. Bennet's; there has been a great fall of rain to-day.

"*Wednesday, 7.* I have had a very disagreeable ride from Bennet's, to where a few women had gathered for preaching, but was called off, before I began, to a woman in the neighborhood who was sick, therefore I neither preached, prayed, nor exhorted, but chose to ride until ten o'clock at night in preference to staying in the filth among children, cattle, hogs, and, no doubt, an army of fleas.

"*Thursday, 8.* Preached at David Benton's. I felt confined in speaking.

"*Friday, 9.* Dined at Ezra Cole's and preached at Abram Voke's. The people behaved well, and were very conformable in worship. The weather has been warm these two days.

"*Saturday, 10.* Rode from Ezra Cole's to Squire Parker's. The day very warm and a thunder shower.

"*Sunday, 11.* Preached at Townsend's school-house with a degree of freedom, and in the afternoon at Squire Parker's. I have great cause to be thankful that though I am sometimes so distressed that life is a burden, I feel some relief after preaching. I have had large congregations to-day.

"*March, 12.* Dined at Mr. Lawrence's, and rode on to the Crooked Lake to my old friend Townsend's. I believe they were glad to see me, and I enjoyed myself well among them.

"*Tuesday, 13.* On my way from Elisha Townsend's to Michael Pearce's, in a very lonesome place far from any

house, I was overtaken by a thunder-storm which was truly alarming. The wind was blowing, the lightning blazing, the thunder roaring, and the rain so pouring down that I could not see to escape the timber that might be falling around me. I was wet enough when I reached my appointment, and found it hard to get a dry corner to stand and preach in. Here we have several blind people members of our society. Blindness, it seems, is hereditary with the family.

"*Wednesday, 14.* Rode to Joel Moore's, through Canandai-gua, a large town for so new a country, near a lake of the same name. Its situation is delightful. I preached at Moore's.

"*Thursday, 15.* Preached at Thomas Spencer's with a degree of freedom. I was much hurt with the behavior of some of the congregation, standing and staring me in the face in time of prayer.

"*Friday, 16.* We have had a powerful fall of rain to-day, which detained me at Thomas Spencer's until after twelve o'clock. I rode to Joel Gillet's. We have seen a remarkable light at the north to-night.

"*Saturday, 17.* I preached at Sharon Booth's. Several stayed in class-meeting, some of them Baptists, and one old lady, a Presbyterian. This old lady had never heard that God had foreordained that a certain number should be unconditionally saved, and the rest unconditionally lost, though nothing is held forth more plainly in the Confession of Faith. And it is evident that the Baptists are ashamed of their confession of faith, for none of those who have lately joined say they have seen it.

"*Sunday, 18.* Rode from Joel Gillet's to Major Swift's. I was very near getting lost in the woods by taking a path that led to a sugar camp. When I got to Swift's none attended in consequence of a powerful fall of rain. I dined and rode on to Deacon Reeves's. These northern people are remarkable for titles. In consequence of sickness at Deacon Reeves's, I stopped at Deacon Foster's and tried to preach there. Here I saw several persons I had been acquainted with on the Susquehanna between four and five

years ago. Deacon Foster is a very talkative man, but I hope he has religion. He used me very kindly. I do not feel well. I believe it is because I am so much exposed to the weather.

"*Monday, 19.* I have had a long and tedious ride through the shade of lofty trees to Prince Gruger's, and preached, but not with much satisfaction.

"*Tuesday, 20.* Rode to Mr. Reynolds's, on the east side of the Cayuga Lake. The impious deportment of a man I was under the disagreeable necessity of lodging with made me feel very uneasy in my mind.

"*Wednesday, 21.* I have had a very muddy ride to William Winter's, and preached with a degree of satisfaction and met a class. It has been remarkably cold these three days past.

"*Thursday, 22.* Had a very wet and dirty ride to Samuel Wybern's, where I preached.

"*Friday, 23.* Had a very disagreeable ride through the bushes to Dycr Smith's. There has been a powerful fall of rain this morning. Our friend Smith, his wife, a brother, and three children, live in a little log pen, covered with split pieces of wood. I found but two people that came to meeting, a man and his wife by the name of Buck. I read to them the fifth chapter of Matthew, sung and prayed with them. In this place I dined, and enjoyed myself very well. I would rather be in a pen with the clean and decent, than in a palace with the filthy. I rode on to Richard Goodwin's, on the Cayuga Lake. These are clean people. I spent part of the evening with old Richard Goodwin. I believe he is a good man.

"*Saturday, 24.* I rode from Richard Goodwin's to Robert M'Dowall's, at the head of Cayuga Lake, and from M'Dowall's to William Goodwin's, and a very disagreeable ride I have had of it through the mud. A man needs to have a good constitution and a large stock of patience to travel this circuit. May the Lord bless me with the latter!

"*Sunday, 25.* Last night I went to bed with a chill, suc-

ceeded by a fever, and was very unwell all night. I believe the cause is being so much exposed to the great rains which have fallen since I came into this part of the world. The people called to hear preaching in the forenoon. I did not feel able to sit up, but wishing them to hear something, in the name of the Lord I made an attempt to preach, but found myself unable, and had to lie down, desiring the friends to hold a prayer-meeting. After several of them had prayed I made a second attempt, and was enabled to preach and meet two classes. In the afternoon I rode to Robert Alexander's, and found Alward White preaching. I gave an exhortation after him, and have reason to be thankful that I feel better than I did in the morning.

"Monday, 26. Rode to Alward White's, where I was severely attacked with pains in my limbs, chills, and fever. I feel the want of more grace."

The chills and fever followed Mr. Colbert for several weeks, much longer than would have been the case could he have laid by in comfortable quarters and been well cared for but a short time. He, however, must travel and preach when he could stand up. Fever and ague was a common affliction in the lake country in those days, even with those who had to endure much less exposure to the wind and weather than fell to the lot of Mr. Colbert. No one who has ever been afflicted with this disease, even under ordinary circumstances, will wonder that the good man found it necessary to pray for "more grace." To suffer "every other day" from a severe chill, followed by a burning fever, and to be obliged, in addition to this, to endure "long rides through the mud, where one cannot go out of a walk, exposed to heavy rains, bad food, dirty houses, and sleepless nights, in consequence of swarms of fleas," was quite too much for anybody with only an ordinary stock of grace and patience. "But," Mr. Colbert remarks, "these are light things, and scarcely worthy of being put in the catalogue of what is suffered for Christ and the good of souls." True,

very true; and that, as our itinerant adds, "in this country many might do better," is also true.

There is a word, however, to be said for the first settlers of our country. No one who has not tried pioneer life knows the difficulty of building comfortable houses, such as will secure the inmates from the storms and the cold, making good roads, keeping clean, and conquering the swarms of insects which infest the woods. A few old people who now live in the country visited by Mr. Colbert can appreciate his complaints, and feel a sympathy for him in his troubles; while the great majority who now inhabit that garden of America once called "the lake country," would be likely to consider his groanings as the fretting of a fastidious old bachelor, who could be pleased with nothing.

As to the unhealthiness of "the lake country," we had an opportunity of forming a judgment, although we were at a distance. We were raised among the hills of Otsego, N. Y., on the turnpike leading from Albany to the lakes. Multitudes of emigrants from New England thronged this road; and not a few of those who went out West in the spring strong and healthy, returned in the fall pale and emaciated, preferring to enjoy health among the rocks of New England rather than to shake, and burn, and suffer from headache for half of the time in the fertile country bounding the Cayuga and Seneca. Miasmatic diseases passed away from this country with the dense forests and the stagnant pools, and it has now long been as healthy as any portion of the world.

The brave hearts that stood it out, and buffeted the dangers and difficulties of the country when it was a frontier, must have the Gospel, and our old itinerants were the men to carry it to them. They could shake and burn one day, and encounter the storm and mud, and preach in open, comfortless log "pens" the next, for the sake of Christ and souls. So did the heroic Colbert.

We have given enough of Mr Colbert's Journal to show the extent and character of Seneca circuit in 1797. He was

sent to this field to do missionary work for a few months. The labor was hard, the sacrifices great, and as to the *pay*, he says nothing about it. The probability is that he received little more than his board and the keeping of his horse. Upon closing his labors upon the circuit he makes the following record :

"I have traveled from the 20th of May to the 12th of September on Seneca circuit, in Ontario and Onondaga counties, in the State of New York, among the lakes Canandaigua, Honeoye, and Crooked Lake, west and southwest, and Cayuga, Owaseo, and Skaneateles, east and northeast of the Seneca Lake. The inhabitants are principally immigrants from the New England States, the older settlements in the State of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, and, toward the Honeoye, some are from Maryland. Hamilton Jefferson has been my colleague, a man high in the esteem of many of the people. The people generally have been raised under a Calvinistic ministry ; some of them pretend to some knowledge of experimental religion, of which I will not say they are totally ignorant, but I am afraid but few of them enjoy it. The Calvinistic is a system of dangerous tendency. Some who joined us appear to be much alive to God. In many places the people are extremely ignorant, and in others they are well informed.

"The face of the country is beautiful, the land very fertile, and the cattle grow to an enormous size. I have been credibly informed that four hundred bushels of wheat have been raised from eight bushels of seed. The sugar tree grows very large. The water is bad to wash, and disagreeable to drink. Truly I can say that since I have been in this country my life has been one continual scene of toil."

The field was a hard one, and, for a time, not very productive. During Mr. Colbert's nearly four months' labor in Seneca circuit, it is remarkable that he "joined in society" only a very few ; and we are inclined to think these had nearly all been members in other places. This fact is

partly to be accounted for in the character of the materials he had to deal with. Old-fashioned Calvinism was interwoven in the very texture of the thoughts and feelings of the people. God's eternal decrees, imputed righteousness, the impossibility of falling from grace, and the necessary continuance of sin in believers, was the sum of their theology; and to talk these doctrines up was the sum total of the religion of too many of them.

Comparing Mr. Colbert's report of the state of things in this country now, and that which he gives of a visit in the fall of 1792, we can see considerable advance. He found hospitality everywhere, and was entertained by the best families in the country. Societies had been formed in many places, and the circuit now extended from Skaneateles Lake to the Canandaigua, covering all the intermediate settlements; but in the only villages mentioned by Mr. Colbert, Geneva and Canandaigua, there was no regular appointment established at this period. The leaven was working but very slowly, and the preachers were obliged literally to walk by faith, not by sight.

Mr. Colbert, in company with several of the preachers, set out for conference. He attended a quarterly meeting at Henry Salsbury's, near Towanda, thence passed down the river to Blackwalnut, where he preached in the Baptist meeting-house, and lodged with old Elder Sturtevant, who had married a Methodist lady for a second wife, and had become quite changed from what he was when the Methodists first made their appearance in Blackwalnut. The company next stopped at Squire Sutton's, where they found hospitality and comfort. The next point was Squire Carpenter's, where they had another quarterly meeting, at which there was, as usual, a large supply of sermons and exhortations, and they had a good time.

"Monday, September 25," Mr. Colbert "preached at Wilkesbarre, though not with much freedom, and lodged at the Widow Johnson's." This was the widow of "Priest Johnson," who, it seems, had considerable regard for the

Methodists, and opened her doors for the accommodation of the preachers. Then the company proceeded to Philadelphia, and thence to Duck Creek, in Maryland. to the conference.

In the Minutes for 1798 Mr. Colbert stands connected with Wyoming circuit. From October, 1797, to August, 1798, he had traveled Strasburgh circuit. He entered the Wyoming Valley once more, and attended a quarterly meeting at Darius Williams's, in Kingston, August 18 and 19, Thomas Ware presiding. Mr. Colbert's journal during this conference year, which closed June 8, 1799, is very brief; simply making note of the places he visited, the texts he preached from, and taking a mere glance at a few circumstances which fell under his notice. He traveled Wyoming and Northumberland circuits with John Lackey and John Leach, he probably having the charge of both circuits.

Things in Wyoming seem not to have changed much from the time Mr. Colbert left in 1793. Some changes in the names of the persons with whom he lodged, and at whose houses he preached, indicate slight alterations in the condition or local habitation of the people, and an accession of members, or at least of friends. He now stops at Benjamin Reeder's, in Newport; at Elijah Inman's, in Buttonwood or Hanover; at Daniel Taylor's, in Capouse or Providence; and preached at Squire Carpenter's instead of Rosecrantz's, in the upper part of Kingston. Preaches at Jesse Gardner's, on the Plains; at Eden Rugger's, in Bedford; at William George's, in Wilkesbarre. "Here," he says, "Mrs. Holenback was kind enough to invite me to lodge at her house, as our friend George is a poor man. She appears to be a Christian woman, and treated me with much civility." Benjamin Bidlack and Darius Williams appear in the character of exhorters at quarterly meetings. Samuel Holley's, in Shawney, is the principal stopping place. and Mrs. Holley and Mrs. Hodge, daughters of Jeremiah Coleman, are prominent members, attending the preacher to other ap-

pointments, and traveling a distance to attend quarterly meetings.

1799. This year a different arrangement of the districts connects the northern portion of our field with Albany and the country on the Mohawk, William M'Lenahan being presiding elder. Cayuga and Oneida are connected; the former probably taking from Seneca circuit the territory east of the Cayuga lake. The circuits are supplied thus:

Seneca—Jonathan Bateman.

Tioga—John Leach and David Dunham.

Wyoming and Northumberland—James Moore, Benjamin Bidlack, and David Stevens.

James Moore was an Irishman, a man of good preaching abilities and no little shrewdness. He was plain, but neat in his dress, and precise in his manners. He was not a little pestered with an application for assistance, in procuring license to preach, by Nathan Parish, brother to the captain of whom we have spoken. Mr. Moore did not believe Parish called to the work, but in order to dispose of the case in the best manner, he proposed to hear him preach a trial sermon. To this Parish readily consented. The appointment was made, and Mr. Moore prayed most earnestly for the would-be preacher; but he did not pray in the ordinary way that God would help him, but he prayed God to *confound* him. Parish tried hard but could do nothing. He sat down utterly vanquished, and gave up the idea of his call until long after this. He was for some cause separated from the Methodist Church, and became a Universalist; then occasionally he had the preaching fever, and sometimes tried his hand at talking up "the Abrahamic faith." Then Jimmy Moore was not present to pray *against* him and he succeeded better, but never very well.

Benjamin Bidlack was among the people who had known him from the time of his return from the army, and they all believed in the reality of his conversion, and as to his preaching abilities they were universally conceded. He was a mighty exhorter; he sung and prayed gloriously, and God

blessed his labors. Under one of his sermons at Wilkesbarre, perhaps the first one he delivered there, a miserable woman who had been in the army must needs go and hear "Ben. Badlock"* preach. The old soldier wielded the sword of the Spirit like a mighty man of war, and the Magdalene was cut to the heart. She finally found peace, and lived long in the Church without reproach, and at last died in hope. We often met her in class in 1818-19, and we had the story of her conversion from Father Bidlack after her death.

This year a class of forty members was formed at Charles Harris's, over the Kingston mountain. Previously Gilbert Carpenter had commenced his labors as a local preacher, and had a regular appointment there. He was much in earnest, and God gave him success.

Charles Harris, the first-fruits of Methodism in that locality, is now, in 1859, ninety-two years of age. At this advanced age he is hale and strong, his memory clear, and his soul happy in God. He gave us the following account of the commencement of the work under the labors of "Uncle Gill Carpenter," as he was familiarly called: "Reuben Williams, my brother-in-law, and I were awakened at about the same time, but he came into the liberty first, and was as bold as a lion. He said we must have a prayer-meeting, and accordingly one was appointed at my house. When the time came only a few were present. My brother-in-law told me I must begin the meeting. At first I knew not what to do, but finally concluded I must try; and I read the hymn beginning,

‘Show pity, Lord, O Lord forgive.’

It was a melting time; my mother was present and was awakened. Our next meeting was at Williams's. This was Uncle Gill's appointment, but being a rainy day and but few present, we had a prayer-meeting. My mother was deeply distressed, and made a prayer exactly as fol-

* This was the ancient method of pronouncing his name.

lows: 'Lord, have mercy on me, for I am poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. Amen.' The work went on. Samuel Carver was the leader."

"Father Harris" lives in the same place still, and there it was that we took down his recollections of former times. "The Harris appointment" remains to the present time, and there many have been born into the kingdom of Christ. The old patriarch still remains with his children around him, all zealous for God and the Church. He is patiently waiting the Master's summons; but we hope may yet live for several years, for his life is no burden either to himself or any one else. Father Harris is a *happy old man*, with perhaps as little to regret in the retrospect as any other man living.

The following is an account (by Rev. L. Cole) of an encounter of Father Harris with two Presbyterian ministers: "When Father Harris and Mrs. Horton were both young in religion, two ministers were at the house of Squire Hollister. They sent for Mr. Harris and Mrs. Horton. One of them asked the latter if she loved God; she answered, 'Yes.' 'Would you love God if you knew he would send you to hell?' She was puzzled at this, and did not answer. They then asked Mr. Harris, 'Do you love God?' - 'Yes.' 'Why do you love God?' Ans. 'Because he first loved me.' Min. 'Mr. Harris, would you love God if you knew he would send you to hell?' Ans. 'No.' 'Now,' said Mr. Harris, 'I want to ask you a question. Do souls in hell love God?' Ans. 'No.' 'How then can sinners in the way to hell love God if they do not love God in hell.' The clergymen were puzzled by the young Methodist convert, and he was permitted to rejoice in the full assurance of faith without further molestation by those bigoted and persecuting parsons, who seemed to wish to trouble Methodist converts."

David Stevens was the first traveling preacher who visited "the Harris neighborhood." He was admitted on trial in 1795, and continued to travel within the bounds of the

Baltimore Conference until 1825. He died December 15 of that year, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, frequently saying to those who attended him, "My peace flows like a river." He was a faithful laborer, and was an instrument in the hands of God in the conversion of many souls.

1800. This year "Northumberland and Wyoming" are attached to the southern district, and Joseph Everett is presiding elder. The preachers are Ephraim Chambers, Edward Larkin, and Asa Smith. Chambers was a very large man and a strong preacher. He is represented by those who remember him as a man in advanced life, being quite gray, and having a commanding voice and manner. His preaching created a great sensation throughout the country, and was attended with great good. The word of God mightily grew and prevailed this year throughout the circuit. The progress of the work was manifested more in an increased interest in the religious services, and particularly in the preaching of the word, than in additions to the societies.

This year was distinguished by the erection of the first meeting-house in Wilkesbarre, the seat of justice for Luzerne county. The church was built by a general subscription without specification as to what denomination should have the control of it. After it was inclosed Ephraim Chambers preached a funeral sermon in the new church, which occasioned some wag to observe, "That will be a Methodist church, you'll see." This was not a prophecy, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but it turned out to be true some years afterward.

CHAPTER VII.

METHODISM IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT, 1801-1810.

THIS year the districts are named for the first time. This is called the Philadelphia district, James Everett, presiding elder. Ephraim Chambers and Anning Owen were stationed on Wyoming circuit in 1801. Owen had been preaching in this field for at least ten years, and yet he was appointed by the bishop to labor another year upon the same ground. Indeed, he had been hammering upon the consciences of the people of Wyoming, as an exhorter or preacher, ever since the summer of 1788, and either the people did not consider him worn out or they were not consulted in the appointment.

This year "Elder Chambers" began to reap the fruits of the labor of the preceding year in the awakening and conversion of souls. A revival broke out on the Plains. Roger Searle was baptized in the winter by immersion, a hole being cut through the ice in order to accomplish it. This was a great novelty in the country.

Mrs. Wright says the personal appearance of Mr. Chambers was prepossessing, and he was called by common consent "The great gun of the Gospel." He had powerful lungs, and used them to advantage; he was very shrewd and devotedly pious. He was once preaching to a large congregation in a grove at Shickshinney; a man by the name of Silas Jackson climbed up into a tree. Mr. Chambers as he proceeded in his discourse fired up, as he was wont to do, and thundered forth, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." "Well, then," says Jackson, "if that be the case I'll come down," and suiting the action to the words descended, to the no small amusement of the congregation. Mr. Chambers was conscious of the responsi-

bilities resting upon him as an ambassador of Christ. In passing Tilberry's Ledge, about five miles below this place, he was once heard to groan out in the anguish of his spirit: "Who knows but that some poor sinners will call upon this mountain to hide them from the presence of Him that sitteth upon the throne."*

A class was formed on the Tunkhannock, at Fancher's. A class was also formed at Hopbottom, consisting of four persons, namely: Jacob Tukesberry and wife, Silas Servis, and Mrs. Saunders.

1802. This year is distinguished for the division of the work into conferences. Northumberland and Wyoming circuits are embraced within the Philadelphia district, Philadelphia Conference. Thomas Ware is the presiding elder, and Ephraim Chambers and William Brandon are the preachers on Wyoming circuit.

The latter part of this conference year we begin to find footprints in the form of quarterly conference records. We have been favored by Samuel Wadhams, Esq., with the loan of a book which he found in the desk of his father, the late Calvin Wadhams, containing the following title-page: "Steward's Book for Wyoming circuit; Ashbel Waller, moved away; Darius Williams, Christian Bowman, Moses Wadhams, deceased."

These names are erased by horizontal lines; then below stands the following: "Stewards: Darius Williams, Calvin Wadhams, Solomon Chapin."

The first record is of a quarterly meeting held at Ross Hill March 26 and 27, 1803.

The column of receipts contains the following credits: Wilkesbarre, \$2 93; Plains, \$1 70; Pittston, \$0 50; Providence, \$0 40; Little Beach Woods, —; Great Beach Woods, —; Staunton Settlement, —; Tunkhannock Creek, —; Atherton's, —; Exeter, \$1 11; Kingston, \$4 37½; Carver's, \$1 37½; Ross Hill, \$2 02; Plymouth,

* Letter from Rev. Leonard Cole on the Origin of Methodism in Plymouth.

\$2 50; Briar Creek, \$0 50; Salem, —; Newport, \$3 48; Nanticoke, \$1 48; Public Collection, \$10 46; Public Collection, \$3 38.

The following are the disbursements: Ephraim Chambers—expenses, \$3 00; quarterage, \$9 10; \$1 13. William Brandon—expenses, \$2 25; quarterage, \$18 20; \$2 25.

1803. The Philadelphia Conference held its session for this year in May. A new district appears on the Minutes this year called Susquehanna, James Smith, presiding elder. The preachers were James Polemus and Hugh M'Curdy. The old people say that M'Curdy was a Philadelphian, and soon became "homesick," and left, no more to return* to the circuit. Thomas Dunn came on in his place, and was admitted on trial at the next conference.

It is said that Smith was both popular and useful. When he first made his appearance in Wyoming he met with an amusing reception. The quarterly meeting was in a barn, and what was unusual in those times, the presiding elder arrived late. He came to Mr. Coleman's and found the house left in charge of a little girl. He asked the child if there was meeting in the place that day. The answer was, "Yes, sir; but it will be of no use for you to go, for they do not let sinners in."

Polemus was popular and useful. He is represented as a great exhorter. His appeals were often overwhelming, and revivals followed him wherever he went. Crandall Wilcox, Nathaniel Crandall, and others on the Plains, were the fruit of his labors.

Dunn was a young man, and sometimes put on airs. At Jacob Tukesberry's a large bowl of mush was set on the table. Dunn, gazing at it, asked, "How do you eat that?" Mr. Tukesberry was occasionally inclined to indulge in a little dry humor, and he answered, "With your fork." If

* He remained until the second quarterly meeting. See Steward's Book.

the question was seriously put, the young man was not much wiser for the answer; if it was ironical, as is probable, he received as good as he sent.

The finances of this year foot up as follows: First quarter, \$32 78; second quarter, it is noted that "the several societies paid to the stewards money which paid the preachers off—the minutes were lost;" third quarter, there was received and paid \$49 95; the fourth quarter, \$41 72. Supposing the receipts of the second quarter to have amounted to about the average of \$45, the whole receipts of the year would be \$169 45.

According to this estimate, \$169 45 was all that was paid for the support of the presiding elder and two preachers, and to defray their traveling expenses.

There is nothing recorded in this book but the financial matters: it is valuable, however, as evidence of the extent of the circuit, and the comparative strength of the different appointments. Taking the contributions as a basis of estimate, Wilkesbarre takes rank among the weaker appointments. The same fact appears for years. Kingston, Ross Hill, Newport, Plymouth, and Big Beech Wood,* give more than the county town. This only illustrates a general fact, and that is, that Methodism took root first, and was most rapidly developed in the rural districts. It was by making a lodgment in the country, among the farmers, and commencing operations in private houses and school-houses, that Methodism first acquired notoriety and influence, and by shedding light upon the towns from all sides, it finally made itself felt among the more polished classes. We have before seen that there were strong elements of opposition in Wilkesbarre to be conquered. Those elements made desperate resistance, and only yielded to persevering efforts.

* We could find no explanation of a distinction made in the old Wyoming Stewards' Book between "Big Beech Woods" and "Little Beech Woods," until we asked the venerable George Harmon where those localities were. His answer was, that Big Beech Woods was the Dutch settlement in Canaan, and Little Beech Woods was near Hop-bottom—probably Springville Hollow.

Since Mr. Colbert traveled Wyoming, in 1798-9, the circuit had been considerably enlarged, now extending up the Tnnkhamock to Fancher's—into the Beech Woods in Susquehanna and Wayne counties.

1804. This year the Susquehanna district stands in connection with the Baltimore Conference with the same presiding elder, James Smith, in charge. Morris Howe and Robert Burch were the preachers. The presiding elder and the preachers were well received, being each in his way above mediocrity. Smith we have met with before, in the lake country, in Colbert's Journal. He was called Irish Jemmy from the time of his becoming a preacher. He was regarded as a good preacher, but a little queer. Howe was a great exhorter, and Burch, they say, was a very sociable man, and a good preacher. We have seen all these men; with the last we became very well acquainted. Howe's pathetic strains, and Smith and Burch's Irish wit, are spoken of by the few who remain of the Methodists of that day with no little interest.

1805. This year Anning Owen is presiding elder on the Susquehanna district, and James Paynter and Joseph Carson are the preachers on Wyoming circuit. Of Father Paynter we have before spoken. He had traveled on Wyoming circuit in 1794, and was remembered and loved as a devout and holy man. Carson was a young man, having been received this year on trial. He was full of zeal, and was the means of a great awakening and the conversion of many souls. Father Harris says: "Ann and Aner Carver and Phebe Alerton were awakened under a sermon which he preached on 'The harvest is past and the summer is ended.'" The latter said: "If Brother Carson would preach that sermon all around the circuit every body would be converted." Ann Carver married a Mulison, and is still living. We heard her speak in love-feast on Sabbath, June 5, 1859. She is the only survivor of the old generation of Carvers.

"The great and first revival in this section of country, extending throughout Brier Creek, Roaring Creek, Huntington, and the intermediate and adjacent country, including hundreds of increase, commenced in the third story of Thomas Bowman's stone house, Brier Creek, still standing. The room included the entire upper story. It was a quarterly meeting, September, 1805. The room was always crowded and packed full; Anning Owen, presiding elder, James Paynter and Joseph Carson, circuit preachers. Christopher Frye, from Lycoming circuit, was very efficient at that revival; he was a fine-looking, large man, and an excellent preacher."—*Jesse Bowman*.

1806. Christopher Frye and Alfred Griffith are the preachers on Wyoming circuit this year.

The following curious incidents are related by Dr. Nadal, in a sketch of Mr. Griffith given in the Ladies Repository:

"In 1806 the subject of our sketch was received into the Baltimore Conference and appointed to Wyoming circuit, with Christopher Frye as his colleague. The circuit, like all others in that day, was large, and the fare poor and coarse enough. The only drink they had besides water was coffee (?) made of buckwheat bread. The process of making this drink was to hold a piece of buckwheat bread, called a slap-jack, in the fire in the tongs till completely charred, and then to boil it in an iron pot. The liquor thus obtained, sweetened with maple sugar, received from Mr. Griffith the name of "slap-jack coffee," and by this designation came to be generally known. As to eating, from early in June till autumn, except when on the Flats, they had not a morsel of meat of any kind.* Poultry could not be raised, nor pigs, nor sheep, for as soon as anything of the sort made its ap-

* One unacquainted with the country embraced in Wyoming circuit would scarcely have a correct idea of it from this representation. At this time the circuit had been so extended as to embrace several new settlements in Susquehanna and Wayne counties, then called the Big and Little Beech Woods and the Swamp. Here were the poverty, the "slap-jack

pearance it was carried off by the foxes, the bears, the panthers, or the wolves. If now and then a man was found bold enough to attempt to keep a hog, the pen was built just at the front door of the cabin; and if he owned a calf it was brought up and tied behind the house every night, and the guns kept loaded, and at hand, to drive off or kill the invading panther or wolf. As they rested at night on their bear-skins or deer-skins, they frequently heard around them the wailing scream of the panther or the howl of the wolf; and the sight of the bear was more common than that of a pig or a lamb.

"The sleeping was as poor in some instances as the eating and drinking. About fifty miles from the Flats lived a humble family by the name of Cramer, consisting of husband and wife, with one son, Abram. Their house was both stopping place and church for our young itinerant, who had for his bed, when he remained over night with them, the frame of an old loom, across whose beams were laid slats, and on the slats a bear-skin or two. These, with a pair of clean sheets, which were kept exclusively for the preachers, and a few superincumbent duds, constituted the sleeping apparatus. Abe, as he was familiarly called, was the preacher's bed-fellow, and on one occasion, when Mr. Griffith had just committed himself to his room and bear-skins for the night, and lay waiting for young Abram, who was a stalwart boy of twenty, he happened to cast his eye in one corner of the room, or rather of the barn, that room being the only one, when a sight met him at once puzzling and grotesque. There was good mother Cramer, with her boy, Abe, before her, who stood, with lamblike docility, while the old lady pinned around him a snow-white sheet, which reached from the chin to the ground, making him look, his decidedly human head

coffee" and "no meat." "The Flats" is the Wyoming Valley. Twelve appointments out of eighteen were located on the river, where the people lived comfortably in 1806, and never heard of such a thing as "slap-jack coffee."

being excepted, for all the world like a veritable ghost. 'Why, mother,' said the young preacher, 'what on earth are you doing to Abe? Are you making a ghost of him?'

"'No, child,' replied the inventive housewife, 'no, but Abe isn't fit to sleep with a preacher unless he is wrapped up in some such way as this.'

"At one of his appointments the young preacher was met by an Irishman, by the name of Matthew Bortree, who had been a Methodist in his native country, but having emigrated to this country, and settled where he enjoyed no religious advantages, he had become cold and backslidden. But the Holy Spirit again visited him, and he became deeply anxious to retrieve his spiritual losses, and the object of his present visit was to get the promise of the preachers to visit his settlement, and establish there an appointment. The settlement was of about twenty years' standing, and yet a sermon had never been heard, nor a minister of the gospel seen in it.

"Upon consultation between the preachers it was agreed that Mr. Griffith should make the first visit to the new field, and preach the Gospel in the regions beyond to people who had never heard its joyful proclamation. The time was fixed, and a young man was to be sent to meet the preacher at Kramer's, and conduct him through the great wilderness called the 'Big Beech Woods' to Bortree's house. In pursuance of his engagement, at the proper time Mr. Griffith started for Kramer's, rode all day without eating a morsel, and reached the friendly cabin about nightfall, having come about fifty miles. Of course he was weary and hungry. Mother Kramer said she was glad to see him, but sorry he had come, for she had nothing, nothing at all to give him to eat. Mr. Griffith said he was sorry too, for he was very hungry; couldn't Mother Kramer possibly find something that a man could eat? The good woman promised to try, and upon rumaging among some broken crockery she found a dry crust of bread, which, added to a very

small fish which Abe had that day caught in the branch, and which she immediately cooked, was the supper and dinner of the young preacher, after a ride of fifty miles and preaching twice.

“The fish and the bread, which Providence made sufficient without a miracle, being found, the good woman drew out a wash-tub and placed a board over it for a table, on which in the moiety of a plate she arrayed the dinner, and before which she placed a three-legged stool; she invited the preacher to eat, adding, as she concluded her invitation, ‘There’s your dinner; it’s all I have; if I had more you should have it. But if you are a good man it’s good enough for you, and if not it’s too good.’

By daybreak the next morning the father and Abe had returned from the mill, whither they had gone to replenish their exhausted larder, and the young itinerant had, considering time and place, a good breakfast, plenty of corn bread, washed down with slap-jack coffee, that and nothing else.

“The next evening he and his guide arrived at the settlement, and were met by seventy or eighty persons, all anxious to see that strange sight, a preacher. He put up with Bortree, and no sooner was he in the house than they insisted he should preach the same evening. He consented and while he preached the people gazed and wondered; not one present, perhaps, except Bortree, had ever before been witness of such a scene. The next day he preached morning, afternoon, and night. After the second service he was approached by a great rough fellow by the name of Bill Clemens, who asked him what he meant by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The answer was given by reading from the Discipline the General Rules and the articles of faith. Clemens, with ill-suppressed indications of feeling, remarked that if that was all he would not object to becoming a Methodist himself. The appointment was regularly kept up, and when winter set in the seriousness marked from the first had grown into deep penitence, and there was a repe-

tition of those scenes of revival which had been witnessed in so many parts of the county. The young preacher could but observe that these people, who had never beheld a revival, had never even read of one when converted, wept, rejoiced, shouted, just as he had seen so many do in his native state; and before conference every man and woman, and every child over fourteen years old in the whole settlement, had professed religion and joined the Church, with a single exception, and he was a whisky seller. Even this man's wife was brought in. The reformation, however, took from him his occupation, and cursing the neighborhood into heaps he left for parts unknown. Matthew Bortree became a local preacher, and Bill Clemens a class-leader, and on the spot where Bortree's house stood now stands, as we are informed, a fine church."

Frye was a large man, had a great voice, and a fiery soul. Mrs. Fanny Cary says: "He was a great preacher, and a great exhorter. He would pray, and sing, and get happy; and the people would hang around him. Great revivals followed him."

Father Harris says when Frye first came on to the circuit, he was much tried with shouting and jumping; but on a certain occasion, in his old log house, he saw him get happy and jump so high that his head came into contact with a shelf nailed under the beams. Of course he said no more against shouting and jumping. He further says that some of the lawyers of Wilkesbarre said he was a fool to be a Methodist preacher, as he was fit for a statesman or any other professional character. As Mr. Frye was a very stout man, when he came on the circuit rumor said that "if the rowdies did not take care he would take them by the neck and throw them out doors;" to which they replied that "if he did not take care he would get fried." His course, however, was very conciliatory, and he secured the respect of all classes.

Mrs. Garland, daughter of Jacob Tukesbury, now living in Hopbottom, gives the following account of Mr. Frye's

labors in that place: "There was quite an accession to the Church this year. Frye was as rough as a meat-ax. From the commencement the meetings had been held in my father's kitchen. My grandfather at first was a persecutor. My mother had been a Presbyterian, and when she prayed it was in a low tone of voice. My grandfather would often say to her, when in prayer: 'Pray louder, I want to hear you.' On one occasion when Frye was preaching, grandfather began to weep. Mother asked Frye, after preaching, to let him come into class-meeting. Frye had not noticed the evidence of deep emotion in grandfather, and he answered her very roughly: 'You know he is an old persecutor, and what do you want him in class-meeting for?' 'I believe,' said my mother, 'he is under conviction, for I saw him weep.' 'O,' replied Frye, 'I wish your charity bag was not quite so large.' My mother, nothing daunted, brought the old gentleman in, broken-hearted, and weeping like a child. Mrs. Saunders had never before professed religion. But when she saw mother leading grandfather into class-meeting she started on herself, and as she entered the door she began to shout. All seemed to catch the spirit, and such a shout I never heard from so small a company.

"John Stull, a German, was under conviction, but his wife opposed him. On a certain occasion there was considerable noise made; he became angry, and said he did not want to go to heaven in that way. This was a sad point in his history, for he became a contemner of religion and religious people; and many years after, when he was an old man, he declared he had never had any feeling on the subject of religion since that time. Old Mr. Foster Horton, in general, was a fine man, but was occasionally overcome with drink. When he got over it he would confess, and promise amendment. On one of these occasions old Mr. Stull said he had got Horton off into the devil's church three times, but he guessed the Lord would get him after all. Horton finally died happy.

Nicholas Horton was a class-leader and steward, and he

was a great stickler for *order* in worship. Richard Saunders was a poor, simple young man, having just sense enough to enter into the religious sympathies of the times, but not enough to know that he could not pray to edification in public. His prayers were so simple and incoherent that they occasioned much merriment among the outsiders.* Nicholas Horton told Richard that he must not pray any more in meeting, for his praying was so weak and blundering that he tried the brethren. Poor Richard laid this deeply at heart, and shed many tears over it. He knew not how to get along, feeling it his duty to pray, and wishing not to give offense. He finally concluded that as God could do all things, he would go to him and ask him to learn him how to pray better. When Uncle Bagley was coming to meeting on Sunday morning he heard a human voice in the woods. The tones were solemn and plaintive. He stole up near, and found it was Richard. He listened, and heard, often repeated, these words: 'O Jesus, do learn me how to pray! brethren tried with me, I pray so! O Lord! O Lord! O Lord! do learn me to pray!' Uncle Bagley came to meeting and told the tale, weeping, and they all agreed to let Richard pray as well as he could. The restriction was taken off, much to the comfort of the poor, simple creature, and he went on as usual, probably presuming that God had answered prayer and taught him to pray. Richard Saunders died very happy."

After Nicholas Horton Mr. Eaton, who lived in Springville Hollow, six miles distant, was class-leader. Next to him Jacob Tukesbury occupied the place, which he continued to do until Edward Paine came into the place, in 1810.

* We once heard Richard pray. His prayer consisted in broken utterances: "O Lord! O Lord! O Lord! O help! O help! O come! O come! O Lord! O Lord! O Lord!" The close was the one, we were told, which he uniformly used: "Forever eend, amen!" When his prayer was thus formally closed he was as happy as a king. He shouted "glory!" and bounded like a sporting lamb on the green-sward, overflowing with life and delightful emotions.

In a communication from Rev. William Round, we are informed that Mrs. Polly Potter says she thinks Frye was the first Methodist preacher who preached in *Gibson*. This was during the year now under review, when Frye and Griffith traveled on Wyoming circuit. Margaret Bennet and George Williams were the first Methodists in Gibson. Williams came to the place in 1809, and Mrs. Bennet the year before. There was then no class there. Williams joined the class at Mount Pleasant, and Mrs. Bennet first joined the Baptists, and subsequently the Methodists, at Hopbottom. They had both been Methodists at the East. These two persons were pillars in the little Church in Gibson when we traveled the Bridgewater circuit in 1819. The first Methodist sermon was preached at the house of a Mr. Brundage, a Baptist, on what is now called the Thomas place, near where the church now stands.

The preachers of that period found their way to the people, however deeply buried in the dense forests, without waiting to be invited. They preached and lodged at the houses of Baptists, Presbyterians, and all others who would receive them.

1807. This year, in the months of June and July, Bishop Asbury made a tour through the country, from the Hudson up the Mohawk, on to the lake country, and thence south down the Susquehanna. Through the whole route he touches Mr. Colbert's old points, and finds many of the same hearts and hands open to supply his wants which ministered to the early pioneer. Having reached "Daniel Dorsey's," and preached in the region round about, he set his face toward Tioga. We give here several extracts from his Journal:

"*Thursday, July 9.* At Kress's. We set out, dining at Doan's, and came to Catrine, at the head of Seneca Lake, thirty miles; the swamps, sloughs, ruts, and stumps made it awful moving. We lodged at Baldwin's tavern.

"*Friday, 10.* We directed our route through New Town, upon the east branch of the Susquehanna, [now Elmira, on the Chemung, a branch of the Susquehanna, but not "the

east branch,"] to Shonemang, [Chemung;] rested a while at Jacob Crosse's, and then passed the narrows of the river, continuing on by Shepherd's mill to Taylor's tavern. It was ten o'clock, and I was fearful of driving further in the dark.

"*Saturday, 11*, brought us to the camp-meeting on Squire Light's ground. We found it had been in operation two days. God is in the camp, and with us. Since the last Sabbath we have traveled one hundred and twenty miles; and with good roads and even ground we might have made three hundred miles in the same time. The heights of the Susquehanna are stupendous; the bottom-lands very fertile; but this river runs through a country of unpleasing aspect, morally and physically. Rude, irregular, uncultivated is the ground; wild, ignorant, and wicked are the people. They have not been wearied by my labors; except the neighborhood of Lancaster, and by what I may once have done in a visit to Wyoming, they are strangers to them. I am now on my first journey of toil and suffering through Genesee and Tioga. I preached on the camp-ground from Matt. xviii, 2. Some sots were a little disorderly, but the greater part of the congregation were very attentive. Weak as I was I did not spare myself, my subject, or my hearers. It may be I spoke to one thousand people."

"*Sunday, 12*. My subject was 2 Cor. v, 20. My congregation may have doubled in numbers to-day, and there were no troublesome drunkards. I feel as if God would own this meeting now, and continue to own it many days, in various families and places. I ordained five worthy men, local preachers, namely, Daniel Wilcox, John B. Hudson, Samuel Emmitt, John M'Caine, and Nathaniel Lewis, to the office of deacon. Had I not made this visit these men might have waited a long time, or taken a long ride to find me. In the afternoon, Sabbath, there was an uproar among the people. Some intoxicated young men seated themselves by the women, and refused to move until compelled. They fought those men who came to take them away; and

when the presiding elder interfered they struck at him, and one of the guards also, who was helping by order of the constables. There were magistrates, such as they were, to cry peace. The Owego gentry fled away, cackling falsehood, like wild geese. One Kemp, chief bully, arrested A. Owen on Monday morning for the sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, and fighting of this Kemp and his crew. The presiding elder was charged with having struck Kemp, and then running away. Nor was the poor bishop spared; he too had been fighting. It was well for him that he was not on the ground at the time. I was quiet in my room.

"Monday, 13. We rode to Tioga, and Brother Shipper gave us our dinner. A ride of sixteen miles brought us to Mineer's, where we lodged. Tioga Point, at the junction of Chemung and the river, is a pleasant spot.

"Tuesday, 14. We came six miles to Judge Gore's. Here I preached upon John vii, 17. When we set out on Wednesday we found we were obliged to take the carriage over a precipice by hand. The road to the ferry was rough; and behold, the boat was gone, and the bank caved and washed away. A lock upon the wheel, and the assistance of a strap, enabled us to pass the sulkey down by hand. Major Gaylor, at Wyalusing, lodged us well and freely.

"Thursday, 16. We came eleven miles to breakfast at Sturtevant's; and eleven miles more brought us to Hunt's Ferry. After dining at Vosburg's, free and kind, we went on to Newton Smith's, ten miles further. I ordained my host a deacon in his own house.

"Friday, 17. To Sutton's, ten miles; the house neat as a palace, and we were entertained like kings by a king and queen. It was no small consolation to lie down on a clean floor after all we had suffered from dirt and its consequences. Once more I am at Wyoming. We have worried through and clambered over one hundred miles of the rough roads of wild Susquehanna. O the precipitous banks,

winding narrows, rocks, sideling hills, obstructed paths, and fords scarcely fordable, ruts, stumps, and gulleys !

"*Sunday, 19.* I went to the woods and preached, and ordained Christian and Thomas Bowman deacons. Before I got through my discourse the rain came on, and I made a brief finish ; the people were attentive. In the afternoon the preachers and many of the people went to a barn ; there were showers of rain and thunder while service was performing. My first visit to Wyoming was in great toil and to little purpose. I am afraid I shall have no better success now.

"*Monday, 20.* We set out on a turnpike road, but O dreadful ! I came sliding down a dug road precipice, dark and deep, but safe. About nine o'clock we made Mr. Merwin's tavern ; and here we drank, and smoke, and wagons, *but we closed with prayer.* We came along early on Tuesday through the Wind Gap, seventeen miles, to Heller's and breakfasted."

The service in Wyoming, directed by the bishop, is well remembered by several persons who were present. "The woods" was the grove by the old Forty Fort church. This was the year that church was built, and the timber was lying about at the time Bishop Asbury was there. A stand was prepared for the preachers under the shade. When the bishop kneeled to pray it began to sprinkle, and Wm. Butler kneeled by his side and held an umbrella over him. Before he had finished his sermon sharp lightning flashed and terrible thunder roared. Many were alarmed and fled, but the good bishop was calm as a summer evening. A little girl who was brought by her mother to hear the bishop was frightened by the thunder and lightning ; observing the calmness of the good man, she thought "it is religion that makes him so fearless amid the storm." The impressions which she received on that occasion never left her until she found the Saviour. That little girl is now a lady far down the vale of years, but still lives to tell the story of that interesting day.

The bishop's description of the roads would be no exag-

eration if it had been written a dozen years afterward when we came down from the north to Wyoming. As to the complaints which are made by Mr. Colbert and Bishop Asbury of the domestic habits of the people with respect to comforts, cleanliness, and the like, let it be understood that those complaints came from two *bachelors*, who could scarcely appreciate the difficulties in the way of keeping clean among burnt logs and stumps, and especially of keeping a large group of children in a perfectly tidy condition. The poor mothers who raise numerous families in the woods, among smoldering log-heaps and burning brush, are entitled to a little consideration. We plead for the early settlers, and must modestly protest against the too summary condemnation of our worthy fathers and mothers, because occasionally they were not able to keep the rich and adhesive soil always, and all of it, under the soles of their feet. They had not relapsed into barbarism, although "dirt and all its consequences" were often inconveniently present in their log-cabins. We speak from personal knowledge, and make this defense in downright good faith, albeit we used to have our senses shocked occasionally with certain unseemly things of which such great complaint is often heard coming down from the olden times.

The bishop seems to have no adequate idea of the importance of his first visit to Wyoming. He wrongly judges that it was "to little purpose." We have already seen that the plans which he conceived on the ground, in 1793, resulted in a great awakening, and that the fruits of the labors of that great man, Valentine Cook, whom he sent for from Wyoming, were both abundant and permanent. It is well, perhaps, that we do not always know how much we are doing.

This year Gideon Draper and William Butler are the preachers upon Wyoming circuit. This was the first year of Butler's itinerancy. He was a devoted young man, and, as one who remembers him well says, "he preached only to save souls, and was much beloved."

The meeting-house at Forty Fort was so far completed this year as to be occupied for divine service, and it was arranged that the Methodists and Presbyterians should occupy it alternately. There was a great revival in the circuit, which resulted in the addition of one hundred members.

CANAAN CIRCUIT FORMED.

Before Bishop Asbury left Wyoming he directed Gideon Draper to spend his time, for the remainder of the year, on what was subsequently called Canaan circuit, but what was then called "the Mission." Mr. Draper immediately crossed Cobb's Mountain and entered upon his work. Daniel Hitt, who traveled this year with Bishop Asbury, left the bishop at Kingston, and passed on with Mr. Draper through the swamp toward New York.*

Mr. Draper first called at Major Woodbridge's, in what is now Salem, Wayne county. He was in his mill; it was a log mill; and when Mr. Draper opened to him his business the major was somewhat reserved, but treated him with becoming courtesy. Mr. D. proposed to preach the next Sabbath, and the major did not object. He invited Mr. Draper to partake of the hospitalities of his house, but said nothing about his having a regular appointment in the place until after the Sabbath, when he heard him preach three times. The people flocked out to hear the missionary, and gave great attention to the word. Indeed, at the very first there were evident indications of a divine influence at work upon the hearts of the people.

Major Woodbridge was a Presbyterian of many years standing, although in no wise bigoted. He was a man of intelligence, of character, and of influence. He was a little slow to pledge himself for the support of the new sect, but he lent an ear, and proceeded as he saw the light. Having heard Mr. Draper, and seen the interest which was awakened among the people, he had no doubt but that God was

*The account of Mr. Draper's labors on the mission were received from him at his house in Clifton, New York, November, 1859.

in the movement, and he promised him his most cordial support. He invited Mr. Draper to establish regular preaching at his house, and gave him every facility in his work.

He gave him a letter of introduction to Squire Chapman, at Pawpack, and caused an appointment to be sent on in advance. On his way Mr. Draper preached in the Irish Settlement, in Newfoundland, now Sterling. Here was settled a number of Irish Methodist families which had been formed into a class under Frye and Griffith.

As Mr. Draper proceeded from the Irish settlement to Squire Chapman's he overtook two young men; one of them was quite talkative, and finally said he was going to Squire Chapman's to hear one Draper preach. He had heard that Draper had raised the devil at Woodbridge's, but he did not believe he could do anything at Chapman's. He was going to hear what the fellow had to say for himself. Well, said Mr. Draper, I am going there too, and we will go in company and see how he makes out. The fellow was completely thrown from his guard by Mr. Draper's manner. They talked on like old eronies, the young man not failing in every way to show his contempt for the Methodists and his respect for the stranger, who, although he had the appearance of a gentleman, was as sociable and as good a fellow as could be scared up anywhere in the woods.

They came within sight of the house where the Methodist meeting was to be held, and there were horses tied to the fence, and people standing around the house, everything, indeed, indicating a large gathering. Mr. Draper's new friend insisted on taking charge of his horse, and followed him into the house, and seated himself near by him. The people were talking about the preacher, and doubting whether he would come. Mr. Draper was seated near a rough partition, and heard Mrs. Chapman, from the other side, express regret to her husband that the appointment had been given out.

When the time arrived Mr. Draper arose, taking his hymn book and small Bible from his pocket, and remarked that he supposed it was time to begin the meeting. Everybody

was surprised, but no one so much as the young man who had unwittingly taken the preacher under his patronage. The congregation was quiet and respectful at first, but before the discourse was concluded many wept, and a universal interest was excited.

At the conclusion of the service Mr. Draper informed the people that he was a missionary, and if any of them wished to have their children baptized he would attend to it at their houses the next day. Accordingly, the day following he went from house to house, teaching and baptizing. The parents wept, the children stared, and some of them were badly frightened.

Squire Chapman gladly consented to the proposition for another appointment, and gave Mr. Draper letters of introduction to his friends.

Mr. Draper appointed a love-feast to be held in Major Woodbridge's barn. They admitted all who wished to come in, and the barn was full. There were only three or four to speak, but they spoke over and over. Major Woodbridge, his wife, and a Dutch woman, were all that Mr. D. had to help him. The Dutch woman became boisterous, and the major was a little alarmed, and came to Mr. D. and asked him if that would not do harm. Mr. D. told him he rather thought not, and his friend seemed content.

Many were awakened, and the meeting continued until late at night. An old raftsmen, seventy years of age, was awakened and converted. Mr. D. told the major to take the names of all who wished to join the society, and he must lead the meetings. Twenty-two persons gave him their names, and he was regularly installed as a *class-leader* in the Methodist Church almost before he was aware of it.

A revival followed the first meeting at Squire Chapman's, and a class was formed there. The Squire was appointed leader, and the young fellow whose acquaintance the preacher made by the way, on his first visit, was converted, and Mr. D. appointed him assistant leader.

Major Woodbridge and Squire Chapman were both pious

Presbyterians, who had long been lamenting the comparative heathenism of the country, and praying for relief. They wisely judged that Methodism was just the thing for the times, and became fully enlisted in its aggressive movements. They were widely known, and with their endorsement Mr. D. everywhere had access to the best families.

Mr. D. next went to the Delaware, bearing a letter of introduction to a Dr. Pew, who was a man of means, and had built a stone church for the accommodation of his neighbors who wished to attend divine service. He was kindly received, and continued there a week. He crossed the Delaware and preached. From this point he sent on an appointment to Bethany by Sheriff Woodward. Dr. Pew was now his friend and gave him his influence. It was in the winter that he visited Bethany, and sixteen sleigh loads followed him to the county seat.

At Bethany he found that an old Baptist elder had warned the people against him as "an English spy" and "a horse-thief." A large congregation assembled in the court-house to hear him. He referred to the slanderous report, and, calling the slanderer by name, wished to know if he were present. Upon being told that he was not there, he gave a satisfactory account of himself, and left another appointment. The next day he called upon the old elder and gave him his choice, either to take back what he had said, or to sustain a prosecution. He wisely chose the former, and thus the matter ended.

The intelligence of the conversion to Methodism of Major Woodbridge and Squire Chapman, and many other Presbyterians, had gone back to New England, and a decided effort was set on foot to retake the ground. Missionaries were dispatched to these newly settled regions to teach the people the orthodox doctrines of the "old standing order," and to reclaim apostates from Calvinism. Some of these missionaries were not the men for the work, and their labors had no other effect than to confirm the converts to Methodism in their new faith. Mr. D. gives a few illustrations of this :

He came to Mount Pleasant, and was met at the door by the landlady, who knew him, and told that a Presbyterian minister was there. He went in and found the gentleman in the midst of a story of converting a Methodist preacher at Chenango. When Mr. H. had concluded his story Mr. Draper said a few words, at which he took huge offense, and, upon hearing some one address Mr. D. by name, he added, "Draper? I have heard of him; he is more of a knave than a fool." The two missionaries were obliged to sleep in the same bed. Mr. H. was furious, and went to bed in a towering passion. Mr. D. teased him, and he became so boisterous that some boys, who listened on the outside of the house, reported that he cursed and swore at Draper.

In the morning Mr. D. asked Mr. H. where he was going. "I am going to Squire Chapman's, he is a Presbyterian," was the answer. Mr. D. rejoined, "I am going there too; he was once a Presbyterian, but he has joined the Methodists." Mr. D. met the missionary both at Squire Chapman's and Major Woodbridge's, and the gentleman wholly failed to bring back any one of the many who had left the Calvinistic for the Methodist faith.

Mr. D. met the Rev. Seth Williston* at Oquago. He was a missionary, but a man of an entirely different stamp from Mr. H. He treated Mr. D. with courtesy, but made fight against his Arminianism. At Oquago Mr. W. warned the people against believing in "absolute perfection." Mr. D. told him he knew of nobody who believed in that doctrine.

They rode together to Hopbottom, where Mr. W. preached, and Mr. D. exhorted after him. Under the exhortation some of the Methodists shouted, which seemed to put Mr. W. into a state of great uneasiness, and he tried to escape from the room, but Mr. D. so managed as to block up the only way out. The next day Mr. W. accused Mr.

* The man who had the controversy with Dr. Bangs, which first brought the doctor before the public as an author,

D. of shutting him in, and compelling him to hear the Methodists bawl. It was done, however, with great good-nature, and Mr. D. did not deny the charge.

These collisions were by no means uncommon in those early times. They had their evil consequences, and yet were not wholly barren of good results. They had the effect to draw the lines between truth and error, and to promote study and investigation. They sharpened the wits of the old preachers, and compelled them to turn their attention occasionally to polemics, which, as a general thing, resulted in the confirmation of the people in the Methodistic faith.

1808. This year Anning Owen leaves the Susquehanna district, and James Herron is appointed in his place. James Reiley and Henry Monteith are the preachers on Wyoming circuit. Reiley was a fleshy man, a very good preacher, and well received.* Monteith was a tall man, with very large eyes, and a good preacher. He usually entered the houses where he made his visits with the apostolical salutation, "Peace be on this house."

A. Owen was this year appointed to the Lycoming circuit, and G. Draper to Canaan.

This year the preachers received each his full allowance of \$80. There was a "surplus of \$16 83½ sent on to conference by Brother C. Frye."

We have noticed that a class was formed in Salem during the preceding year. We have before us a communication from Anson Goodrich, of that place, dated March 13, 1857, in which we have valuable additional information with regard to the origin of Methodism in Salem and some other places, which we will now give the reader. He says:

"Ephraim Bidwell and Dorcas his wife came from Connecticut and settled in this town—then Canaan—in the year 1800. They were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was by an invitation from Mr. Bidwell that year, or the following, that two preachers, Chambers and

* He died September 28, 1841.

Polemus, preached several times; the opinion is that they came from Susquehanna." They came from Wyoming; Chambers probably in 1801 or 1802, and Polemus in 1803. Mr. Goodrich continues:

"I recollect hearing Mr. Owen, Christopher Frye, and Alfred Griffith preach in barns, dwelling-houses, and a log school-house, in fact the only school-house in what is now Salem. Mr. Owen was presiding elder, and held the first quarterly meeting which was ever witnessed by the people here, in Major Woodbridge's barn. The major was a staunch Calvinist, and manifested much opposition to the fanatics, as they were called, upon their first making their appearance in the country.

"About this time the Rev. Seth Williston came here as a missionary, and manifested much opposition to the preachers' coming, and the people hearing them. Before there was a class here Father Owen had a conference meeting, as there were two or three Presbyterian friends here, asking them as to the state of their minds. A Mr. Kimbal was present, who had previously declared to Father Owen that he was a disciple of Thomas Paine. Mr. Owen, supposing that the Lord had reached his heart, asked him the state of his mind. He arose and said: 'I neither fear God, man, nor the devil.' 'God have mercy upon your poor soul,' replied Father Owen; to which Kimbal responded, 'Amen.' The wretched man lived and died without hope; but his father experienced religion in 1806 or 1807, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, and connected himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church in Palmyra, and died, at the age of ninety-two, happy in God.

"The first class was formed in 1807, under Gideon Draper and William Butler. Major Woodbridge's prejudices were removed when he saw evidence that God was in the work, and he connected himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was appointed the first class-leader, and continued to hold that office until his death, in 1811 or 1812, having been for forty years a member of the Presbyterian

Church. His children not being Methodists, employed me to go to Kingston after the Rev. Mr. Hoyt, to preach his funeral sermon. I traveled in the night over Cobb's mountain, and returned with him the next day.

"The following persons were members of the first class formed in Salem in 1807: Theodore Woodbridge, Ephraim and Dorcas Bidwell, Harris and Ruey Hamlin, Ruey Hamlin, (now Mrs. Baldwin, of Minnesota,) Michael Mitchel and wife, Catharine Hamlin, (now Mrs. Lee, of Canaan,) Irena Potter, Dorcas Miller, Charles and Ann Goodrich, Charles Goodrich, Jr., Timothy and Betsy Holister, Josiah and Ennice Curtis, Gideon and Ann Curtis, Fitch H. Curtis, William Cobb, Salmon and Sally Jones, Joseph Miller, William and Ann Dayton, Sanford and Laminta Wright, Jeremiah and Ruth Osgood, Edmund and Rebecca Nicholson, and Oliver Hamlin. Five of the above are now living in Salem; their ages are from sixty-six to ninety-six. The remainder, excepting Mrs. Baldwin and Mrs. Lee, have gone to their heavenly rest."

The old stewards' book for Canaan circuit, commencing with August 14, 1808, is now before us. Thomas Elliott is here recognized as one of the preachers on the circuit, and receives quarterage and traveling expenses. He stands on the Minutes this year connected with Tioga circuit. He was probably brought on to help fill up the work, as the circuit extended over a large territory, embracing many new settlements at a considerable distance from each other.

A great religious interest prevailed this year on Northumberland circuit, and the meeting-room, in the second story of Thomas Bowman's house, in Brier Creek, became too contracted for the accommodation of the people, particularly on quarterly meeting occasions. The necessities of the work called for an extraordinary effort on the part of the Methodist people to build a church.

"The stone church at Brier Creek was erected in 1808; Thomas Curran and John Rhodes, late of Milton, deceased, were the preachers on the Northumberland circuit. This

was the first Methodist Episcopal church building used by the Methodist denomination exclusively anywhere on the Susquehanna River, between the Wyoming Valley and the 'Sutton Church,'* two miles above Williamsport, near Lycoming Creek.

"The stone church at Brier Creek was the rallying point for the Methodist people from Milton, Lewisburgh, Northumberland, Wyoming Valley and the surrounding country. At quarterly meetings, held at Christian and Thomas Bowman's, before the church was built, people came thirty-five miles, men and women, on horseback. From Wyoming Valley: Ann Denison, Sarah Brown, Sarah Harvey, (afterward wife of Rev. George Lane,) Eunice Wakeman, niece of Mrs. Joseph Wright, a young woman of *extraordinary* mind and talents."

1809. Gideon Draper is presiding elder on the Susquehanna district this year.† George Lane and Abram Denison are the preachers on Wyoming circuit.

This year the first camp-meeting was held in Luzerne county. It was located near the head of Wyoming Valley, was a large meeting, and attended with great good. Mrs. Fanny Cary was at the meeting, and says it was as large a camp-meeting as she has ever attended since. People were there from fifty miles around.

Mrs. Cary also speaks with great animation of a quarterly meeting held this year at the meeting-house at Forty Fort. There was a great crowd present at the meeting on Saturday. Hopbottom, Canaan, and Salem, in Wayne county; Black Walnut, Wyalusing, Huntington, Berwick, Brier Creek, and Northumberland, each contributed its share. It was feared that accommodations could not be provided for so many. After all had been quartered in the neighborhood that could

* The latter went to decay, was inclosed in a field, and finally fell to pieces. The small grave-yard marks the spot.

† Herron was unpopular, and objections to his continuance were made to Bishop Asbury by B. Bidlack and W. B. Lacey, and he was superseded.

be, Darius Williams mounted his horse and rode up, singing, with great spirit and power :

“ I'm happy, I'm happy ; O wondrous account !
My joys are immortal ; I stand on the mount,
I gaze on my treasure and long to be there,
With angels, my kindred, and Jesus my dear.”

When he had concluded the verse he said : “ I've got a house that will hold forty, and a heart that will hold a hundred ; all who want places follow me ! ” and as he rode off a large train followed him. As the company arrived his good wife had half a barrel of potpie smoking, which she had cooked in a large iron kettle. The potpie, and other things on the same scale, supplied the company with a plentiful dinner. The table was cleared away, and then came on the singing, and praying, and shouting. The sound of that old-fashioned quarterly prayer-meeting rolled up the side of Ross Hill and sent its echo across the river, and was re-echoed from the Wilkesbarre mountain. It was a holy season and a glorious triumph. Late in the evening the men went to their lodgings in the barn, singing and shouting, and the women spread down beds on the floor, and when sufficiently free from excitement fell asleep. On Sabbath morning the love-feast was one of the old sort. Speaking, rejoicing, singing, and shouting—each occupied a place. The whole mass was in a blaze, and great and amazing was the triumph of the happy and entranced multitude. That was one of the good old times never to be forgotten.

It would seem, from the records of the old stewards' book, that after the quarterly meeting in December, 1809, George Lane retired from the labors of the circuit ; for in March, 1810, Samuel Carver receives traveling expenses and quarterage for one quarter. The record is in G. Lane's handwriting, and nothing is charged to him. The remnant of the year, from March to July, the time of the first session of the Genesee Conference, Lane's place was supplied by Loring Grant, who had been traveling on Northumberland circuit.

This year Canaan circuit is embraced within the Schuylkill district; William Hunter, presiding elder, Anning Owen and James Quail, preachers. Quail is represented as "a young man eminent for his piety, and diligent in his ministerial duties." He died in the Lord, June, 1816.

1810. This year is distinguished by the

ORGANIZATION OF THE GENESEE CONFERENCE.

Bishop Asbury had for some time regarded the western part of the state of New York as a promising field for Methodism, and the center of a prospective conference. From 1796 to 1812 the bishops had "authority to appoint other yearly conferences, if a sufficient number of new circuits be anywhere found for that purpose." It was in the exercise of this discretion that Bishops Asbury and M'Kendree had appointed the Genesee Conference. The work had so extended in the northern part of Pennsylvania, the western part of New York, and in the two provinces of Canada, that a new conference, which would make the eighth, was now loudly called for. The preachers were obliged to go from the shores of Lake Erie and from Canada to Philadelphia, on horseback, to conference. This conference holding its sessions in March or April, the roads were of course nearly impassable, and the preachers were necessarily kept from their circuits for a long time. These circumstances made it necessary that some relief should be sought, and the means of relief was wisely judged of by the bishops.

The measure, however, was severely criticised. It was censured as harsh and tyrannical; it being assumed that a handful of men were separated from the cities, and almost from the blessings of civilized society, and that they would be left to suffer and starve without the means of relief. The objectors had very inadequate ideas of the resources of the country covered by the new conference, and the rapidity with which an intelligent population was crowding into it from almost all parts of the world. Our pioneer bishop, however, understood the question well, much better

than those who considered themselves competent critics of his proceedings.

The conference assembled in Lyons, in an old storehouse lately occupied as a corn-barn, belonging to Judge Dorsey, on the 20th of July. In his Journal the bishop briefly notes: "*Wednesday*. I arrived this evening at Daniel Dorsey's. *Friday*. Conference began to-day. *Sabbath, 22*. Preached at the encampment. *Wednesday*. Conference ended; great order and dispatch in business; stationed sixty-three preachers."

The preachers on Wyoming circuit are Thomas Wright and Elijah Metcalf. Mrs. Cary thinks Wright left before his year expired, and Father Bidlack took his place. By all we can learn, Wright made but a feeble impression. We have no record of this year after the session of the Genesee Conference in the old stewards' book, and a hiatus of four years occurs in the records of the circuit between the old book and the one which follows it.

The preachers this year on Canaan circuit are George Harmon and Samuel Thompson. In an interview with our venerable friend Harmon, at his own house in Camillus, N. Y., November 29, 1859, we received from him the following particulars in relation to Canaan circuit, and his labors in that field during the conference year of 1810:

The turnpike from the Great Bend to Newburgh was then in process of construction. The preachers on Canaan circuit then crossed the Delaware, and preached at Cohecton, Cross's, Hurd's Settlement, or White Lake, Liberty, and Mamakating Hollow, at Smith's; crossed the Shawangunk Mountain, and preached at Higgins's and at Squire Stoddard's; recrossed the mountain, and preached at Carpenter's Point. These appointments required the preachers to travel extensively over Sullivan and Orange counties in the state of New York.

At Carpenter's Point, now Port Jervis, Mr. Harmon crossed the Delaware and visited Milford. On his first visit to that place he inquired for "the most respectable

family in town." He was directed to a particular house, to which he proceeded and introduced himself. He was politely received and invited to preach there. A good congregation assembled. At the close of his discourse Mr. Harmon informed the people that he should pass through the place once in four weeks, and if they wished it he would preach for them on one condition, and that was that they would provide him with respectable lodgings and keep his horse. The condition was accepted, and the contract closed. He preached there through the year, but after a while the people so far deviated from the bargain as to take up a collection for him. On the old stewards' book the place stands credited with \$2 25 at the final settlement, June 18, 1811.

Mr. Harmon formed a class at Cherry Ridge; he was invited by the wife of Dr. Collins to go home with her and put up at her house. When Dr. Collins came home Mrs. Collins said to him: "I have invited Mr. Harmon to put up with us, and I hope you will not insult him."

To which the doctor dryly responded: "When the king is absent the queen makes the laws."

"Well, then," said Mr. Harmon, "I hope the king will not abrogate what the queen has done in this case."

"No, indeed, sir," answered the doctor.

Mr. Harmon preached at Cherry Ridge, in the presence of a Presbyterian missionary, on the text, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die."

The gentleman thought that the drift of the discourse was against the doctrine of the infallible perseverance of the saints. Upon being invited by Mr. Harmon to speak he arose, and proceeded to remark that grace in the soul is compared to leaven in meal, and leaven is a new principle independent of the meal. When he had finished his analogical argument, Mr. Harmon arose and addressed an old lady who was present thus: "Mother, can you make leaven without meal?"

"Well," said the old lady, "I think it would be poor stuff."

"Well, mother," Mr. Harmon proceeded, "what becomes of your bread when it is made?"

"We eat it when it is good," she answered; "but when it is sour or becomes moldy we give it to the hogs."

The missionary did not undertake to mend up his figure.

Mr. Harmon formed a class at Bethany, and appointed Joseph Miller leader. He was sheriff of the county, and a man of respectability. Before he left the place Mr. Harmon was informed that the Baptists had sent for an elder, and intended to break up the class. He sent a local preacher to fill his appointments, and remained a week. The elder did not come, but left Mr. Harmon to himself, and he had a fine revival, and received into the society a number more.

Mr. Harmon formed a class at the mouth of the Lackawaxen; most of the persons were of the name of Barnes. He also formed a class at Kent's Settlement, four or five miles west of Belmont.

The preachers of the circuit each received \$49 98 and their traveling expenses.

Let the present race of preachers survey the territory, think of the roads as they then were, and of the accommodations, and look at the scanty pittance which the preachers received, and ask themselves if the contrast presents no occasion for gratitude and contentment. Here is embraced the whole of the present Honesdale district, consisting of seventeen charges, besides portions of Wyoming, Wyalusing, and Binghamton districts, and a portion of New York and New Jersey Conferences. This is the extent of Canaan circuit in 1810. The roads cannot be conceived of now. We know what they were ten years later; and then, O Sorrows of Werter! mud! rocks! stumps and roots! pole bridges and *no* bridges! To travel these roads in hunger, cold, nakedness, and weariness, and often to lodge in open cabins, among dirt and insects, and receive *almost*

fifty dollars in the course of the year. This was the itinerancy in 1810 in the Genesee Conference.

An old slander, often uttered within the period of our recollection, was, that the Methodist preachers were a poor lazy set of men, going about and getting their living out of the people rather than to work and earn it. This malicious falsehood was refuted by the labors and sacrifices of the brave and self-denying old preachers every day and every hour. Follow these men around their large circuits; eat with them, sleep with them, preach with them, pray with them, suffer with them, and weep with them, and then say if in a worldly point of view their lot is an enviable one.

They had their enjoyments, but they were not such as earth affords. They were of a higher origin; they were the joys of the heavenly communion; the joys of hope, of faith, of charity; of being "poor, yet making many rich;" of "having nothing, yet possessing all things." A noble class of men were our fathers; may their zeal and sacrificing spirit never die out of the Church! We of the present generation, cannot suffer as they did; but we can emulate their zeal and devotion to the cause of God, and the best interests of humanity. These elements of ministerial character are to-day as necessary as in the days of old.

BOOK II.

NORTHERN DIVISION OF THE HISTORY, 1788-1810.



CHAPTER I.

METHODISM IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICT, 1788-1800.

WE have seen that the first recognition of Wyoming circuit on the Minutes was in 1791. This same year is distinguished by the evidence of progress on the west of the Hudson in a higher latitude. Two new circuits appear on the Minutes this year in this direction, namely, Saratoga and Otsego, the former containing one hundred members and the latter eighty. Methodism had already found its way into the new settlements up the valley of the Mohawk, and along the line between Albany and Cooperstown, and perhaps still further west.

In 1788 the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson was appointed to the charge of a district embracing an extensive territory in the valley of the Hudson and on the shores of Lake Champlain. Several zealous young men were put under his charge, and he was directed by Bishop Asbury "to do the best he could." In his Journal he says: "I was very uneasy in my mind, being unacquainted with the country, an entire stranger to its inhabitants, there being no Methodists further 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 the conference adjourned I requested the young men to meet me. Light seemed so to reflect on my path that I gave them directions where to begin, and which way to form their circuits. I also appointed the time of each quarterly meeting, requested them to take up a collection in every place where they preached, and told them that I should go up the North River to the extreme parts of the work, visiting the towns and cities on the way, and in my return I should visit them all and hold their quarterly meetings. I had no doubt but the Lord would do wonders, for the young men were pious, zealous, and laborious."*

The method pursued by these "young men" was to travel through the portion of the country which they proposed to embrace in their circuit, and inquire who would open their doors for their reception, and for the accommodation of such of their neighbors as might wish to listen to the preaching of the Gospel. They found open doors and willing hearts everywhere, notwithstanding the strong prejudices which generally prevailed against the new sect. Samuel Wigton and Lemuel Smith were sent to the extreme north, one to Cambridge circuit, and the other to Champlain, or rather they proceeded to form circuits which were to be called by those names. They labored, however, together.

Smith and Wigton came together to Hampton, Washington county, New York, and called at the house of Mr. Samuel Bibbins, and opened to him their mission. They were made welcome to the hospitalities of his house and permitted to preach there. Samuel Bibbins, jr., declared that he had seen these two men in a dream, and knew them as soon as he laid his eyes upon them. At the first meeting the husband, wife, and son Samuel, with many others, were awakened. A class was immediately formed, and thenceforward Mr. Bibbins's house was the home of the Methodist preachers, and, as often as was required, the place of preaching.

* Life of Garrettson.

Samuel Bibbins, jr., was unusually gifted in prayer and exhortation, and soon became a local preacher. The work of revival followed him, and hundreds were converted through his instrumentality.* In after years he was admitted into the Genesee Conference, and was a successful laborer to the close of his life, which took place in 1856.

The work spread rapidly in all directions. It was in vain that the people were warned to avoid the "ignorant Methodists," who were "the false prophets who should come in the last days, and if it were possible deceive the very elect." The people would go to hear them, and hearing them, they became convicted of sin, and that ended the argument of their pastors. The work spread into Vermont and at the west into the new settlements.

After Mr. Garrettson had passed over his district he reports that "many houses, and hands, and hearts were opened; and," he says, "before the commencement of the winter we had several large circuits formed, and the most of the preachers were comfortably situated; sinners in a variety of places began to inquire what they must do to be saved."

In 1791 Philip Wager and Jonathan Newman were sent into the Otsego country to form a circuit, and they reported eighty members. This year Otsego county was formed, being taken from Montgomery. It was a wild country, the settlements few and far between; there were scarcely any roads, and the people were poor, wicked, and reckless. The country was settled, so far as it was settled at all, mostly by New England people. They had been educated in the Calvinistic creed, and forced to attend church on the

* A strange providence is connected with the record of these facts. On the fifth of July, 1859, Rev. Elisha Bibbins, the youngest son of Samuel Bibbins, sen., made us a visit, and communicated the particulars related in the text. We told him they were very timely, as we had just reached the period to which they refer, and needed the information just then as a link in the chain of events. He conversed upon the events of those times, as he had received them from his father and brothers, with great interest and animation. The next morning he died in our private room, where he had been brought, in a severe paroxysm, at about four o'clock.

Sabbath; but when once separated from their early associations, and freed from the restrictions of the Puritanic code, they, as a general thing, broke loose from all moral restraints, and were a Sabbath-breaking, irreligious race, some of them almost as wild and savage as the wolves and bears which often invaded their inclosures.

To such a population the Gospel, as preached by the old Methodist preachers, was admirably adapted. The preachers were plain, common-sense, brave men. They were taken from among the masses, accustomed to privations, used to danger, trained to hard work; their sympathies were with the people, and they took hold of their hearts.

Many of the old preachers had served in the army in the Revolutionary struggle, and some of them had been giants in wickedness. Such men were not likely to prove cowards in the great moral struggle in which they were engaged. They had fought for liberty under their country's banner, and had faced death in almost every form; and how were they likely to face the enemies of God and truth, and fight under the banner of Christ for the liberation of the slaves of sin and Satan? Ah! they were as brave soldiers of the cross as they had been soldiers for civil liberty and American independence. Jonathan Newman was just the man for the work assigned him. He became identified with Otsego circuit, and his dust sleeps under its green turf. He was a mighty preacher, and was usually in the advance line of attack. He was the first Methodist preacher who visited many interesting points where Methodism now holds, and has long held an enviable position.

In 1792 two new circuits are formed, still further at the north, on the St. Lawrence, called Cataraque and Oswegatchie. This year Jonathan Newman and James Covel are upon Otsego circuit, and they extended their labors up the Mohawk Valley, and over the wild ridges and vales where originate the tributaries of the Susquehanna.

The *elders* in this early period acted more as missionaries than in later times. They not only followed their preach-

ers in their pioneer work, and attended the quarterly meetings, but they often made excursions into unexplored territory, and planted the standard of the cross quite in advance of the circuit lines. This year Mr. Garrettson made a journey to the west as far as Whitestown, and prepared the way for the establishment of regular appointments, and for embracing that region within the bounds of a circuit on the Mohawk River.

Mr. Garrettson visited Utica in 1824 with his family, and it was our impression that he then gave us an account of that visit; but to be certain of the fact we addressed a line to Miss Mary R. Garrettson upon the subject, and received from her the following in reply:

"RHINEBECK, Dec. 23, 1859.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I have been examining my father's papers, as well as the weak state of my eyes would allow. I think there are no journals for either of the years you mention, except a very short one for '91, in which the western part of this state is not mentioned. However, I know that my father's first district in this state led him as far west as Whitestown, near Utica, for I heard him speak of it, not only when we were in Utica in 1824, but before and after. I think he was the first presiding elder that region ever saw."

In an article headed "Saguoit Station," in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* for April 10, 1840, by Rev. Z. Paddock, we have confirmatory evidence of the fact which we have taken much pains to establish. Dr. Paddock says: "Forty years ago the approaching season the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, of precious memory, preached the first Methodist sermon that was probably ever heard in this neighborhood. The services were performed in a private dwelling, which then stood about two miles from this place, on the direct road to Utica, but which has long since gone to decay. There are a few, and only a few, now living who heard the sermon in question; but their memory of it and of its distinguished author is distinct, vivid, and affecting."

This year terminated Mr. Garrettson's labors as presiding elder in the western settlements, and we are not able to find any trace of a regular quarterly meeting so far west as Whitestown until the following year.

In 1793 Thomas Ware succeeds Freeborn Garrettson in charge of the district including the part of the state of New York west of the Hudson. This year Herkimer circuit appears on the Minutes, with Jonathan Newman and David Bartine as the preachers.

There is still preserved a stewards' book, which was kept by the late Elijah Davis, of Saquoit, who was probably the first circuit steward in Paris, in which the following is the first record of the collections and disbursements of a quarter: "At a quarterly meeting held in Paris, Dec. 28, 1793," "Brother Newman" is paid "£3. 18s. 2d." It is probable that "the elder" was not present at this quarterly meeting. This year Mr. Newman preached in Paris, and made it a regular appointment in Herkimer circuit. The old people say he was the first Methodist preacher who preached in Saquoit.

The next record is as follows: "At a quarterly meeting held at Fort Plain, November 29, 1794, paid Thomas Ware, elder, 8s. 0d.; Smith Weeks, £4 2s. 1½d.; William Vredenburg, £1 4s. 0d.; John Daniels, 6s. 6d. Total, £6 0s. 7½d."

This old book gives abundant evidence of the long rides, numerous appointments, and small pay of the old preachers.*

1794. Delaware circuit appears upon the Minutes, with a membership of two hundred and ninety. This circuit lay on the head waters of the Delaware, embracing the country west of the Catskill Mountains and east of the Susquehanna valley. The hardy itinerants found their way among the

* This book we often saw and examined when we lived in the house of our venerable friend Davis, in 1821, and are now happy to acknowledge our obligations to the Rev. G. C. Elliott, of the Oneida Conference, for a copy of a considerable portion of its curious details.

towering peaks of the Catskills and the deep valleys of the Delaware River, and Schoharie and Cherry Valley Creeks, (as rough and romantic a region as civilization ever penetrated,) and there won multitudes to Christ.

In 1795 we mark the progress of the work at the north in the addition of Bay of Quinte and Niagara to the list of circuits. The flame had now extended along the shore of Lake Ontario, and begins to shine across the Canada line. There are two hundred and sixty-five members on Bay of Quinte and sixty-four on Niagara. The work now moves on northward and westward with encouraging rapidity.

We find no new circuit recognized in our territory for the next three years. In 1798 Chenango appears, and here is Jonathan Newman again, in charge of a new circuit. This circuit took in the extremes of Otsego, Herkimer, and Tioga, embracing the Chenango and Unadilla valleys, and many small and remote settlements among the hills. Free-born Garrettsen, presiding elder.

In 1799 we find in the Minutes Mohawk, and Cayuga and Oneida added to the list of circuits. Mohawk is taken from Herkimer and has one hundred and eighteen members. Oneida has only twenty-eight. William M'Lenahan, presiding elder.

The year 1800 was signalized by many gracious revivals of religion, and a great enlargement of the work. Within the portion of the state of New York west of Albany and Saratoga circuits, we now find fifteen hundred and seventy-three members.

This year Barzillai Willy and William Vredenburg are upon Chenango circuit. The latter we recollect to have heard in old Middlefield, our native place, when we were a boy. He was what was called a Low Dutchman—a man six feet high and well proportioned, with a pleasant face and a stentorian voice. There was no religious excitement in the place at the time, but he poured out such a tide of earnest appeals and exhortations that a young lady broke down and wept. She subsequently experienced religion.

His whole frame seemed to be agitated, and waving and clapping his great hands he roared out, "I am after souls, and souls I must have," and he was not disappointed.

Mrs. Hubbard, a sister of the late Rev. Samuel Morrison, related to us the following anecdote of Vredenburg: The late Brother Smith Arnold, previous to his becoming a preacher, living somewhere near the Hudson, opened his doors for preaching. One of the preachers came and greatly interested the people. Arnold was a young Methodist, and had high hopes that his neighbors would continue to be gratified with the meetings. Two weeks after the first appointment a large awkward man rode up to his door and inquired, "Does Smit Airnold live here?" Upon being answered in the affirmative, the stranger dismounted, took his saddle-bags upon his arm and walked in. Very much to Mr. Arnold's consternation, he found that the Low Dutchman was the preacher. In the evening the people collected, and the stranger read a hymn in broken English, and proceeded to address the throne of grace. To Mr. Arnold there seemed to be little in the prayer but earnestness; it would all be well enough in a circle of Methodists, but he was sure that his neighbors would be so disgusted as to leave the house before he commenced preaching. But, much to his astonishment, they all took their seats and seemed ready to listen with becoming gravity. He proceeded with his sermon, or rather his exhortation, in a most vehement strain. He lifted his tremendous voice to its highest strains, and vociferated the terrors of the law and the invitations of the Gospel, ejecting a shower of saliva from his mouth. Mr. Arnold was overwhelmed with confusion. His imagination was so wrought up that he thought he saw the curled lip and the wagging head every where through the congregation when he dared to open his eyes.

The meeting was closed, and the people retired in silence, as he supposed, out of respect to him. The preacher was off early the next morning, but had no sooner gone than one

of Mr. Arnold's neighbors—one of many for whom he had been hearing—came in with a sad countenance. As soon as he saw him he tried to prepare his mind for a sound abusing. But what was his astonishment when the man, in broken accents, interrupted with sobs, began to talk about his sins and his exposure to ruin. In the course of the day he found that the arrows of the Almighty, awkwardly but unerringly hurled by the Dutchman, had done extensive execution, and were rankling in many hearts. This singular beginning resulted in a powerful revival and the salvation of many souls.

We will now return to Chenango circuit, where, in the year 1800, William Vredenburg was one of the preachers. A great revival took place this year in Brookfield, and the Giles family were converted and brought over to Methodism. The following somewhat particular account of this event is from the pen of Rev. Charles Giles, one of the subjects of the work :

“The year 1800 opened in our history, and brought a glorious reformation with it. My sister Anna, who was older than myself, was among the first-fruits of that spiritual harvest. She possessed a great share of vivacity, and was excessively fond of gayety and amusements. Her readiness in conversation, frank and easy manners, won her many friends, and gave her a high rank among her associates. Hence a strange pulse of feeling was excited among the youth of the town, when it was known that she was under religious impressions. But while they were so concerned on account of her seriousness, she was praying to God for mercy and salvation. Shortly after her prayers were answered, and her anxious soul was released from the power of sin and unbelief. Joy and peace gained entire control over her consecrated spirit.

“But before she had received the evidence of her justification, the apparent opposition to her religious course manifested by her father, in his doubting looks and expressions respecting a change of heart, and Jesus Christ for-

giving sins, occasioned a great conflict in her mind. One night, with deep anxiety of soul, she prayed before retiring to rest, that something comforting might be revealed to her in the visions of the night. While there wrapped in soft repose—according to her own version—“I seemed to be transported into an open space; there, on my left hand, a glorious being appeared with a smile on his countenance; and it was impressed on my understanding that the being whom I beheld was the Saviour. On my right hand stood my father. I was very anxious to go to Jesus Christ the Saviour; though I stood musing in profound silence, it seemed that my father knew the secret desires of my heart, and felt a strong opposition to my ardent inclination. Hence he stretched out his hand toward me filled with bright dollars, and said, “Here, child, don’t go to heaven through Christ.” I turned and looked on my left hand, then gazed on the money; then turned back again and looked on the Saviour, who at length spoke and said to me, “I am the way.” When I awoke in the morning I found it was a dream.

“It was, however, impressed on my mind that I must communicate this singular dream to my father; which undertaking seemed difficult for me to perform, in the position I then occupied. Knowing my father’s prejudices, I was fearful that he would not receive it kindly if I should relate the vision to him. I was resolved, however, to do what appeared to be my duty, leaving the consequences in the hand of Providence. Accordingly, as soon as a convenient opportunity afforded in the morning, I communicated the dream to my father, who heard me attentively, and for some reason appeared much affected. But I did not then inform him who the man was that offered me the money, nor did he question me on the subject at that time. After relating my dream, I immediately retired into my room, and knelt down before the Lord to pray: I was there, in silent devotion, when my father opened the door and came in. Signs of mental distress were evidently depicted on his coun-

tenance as he walked slowly along and sat down. Though my feelings before were intense, stronger emotions were excited in my trembling heart when my father said to me, with a solemn, anxious look, "Do you know the person who presented the money to you, in your dream?" "Yes, father, I do," was my reply; "the person was yourself." Immediately he fell into extreme agony of mind, and without control he wept aloud. The sound of his lamentations brought my mother into the room, where I tried to pray for them, and mingled my flowing tears with theirs at the altar of devotion.'

"Truly my father, by the incident of my sister's dream, was deeply affected at the time; it being so remarkably personal, he could not resist its influence; still, it did not appear that he felt much mental anguish on account of his own sinfulness. The wonderful effects produced by the reformation there had evidently disturbed his mind, and led him to examine his system of faith critically, which was assailed at that time by a new kind of arguments, and stood trembling on its false and rotten foundation. Weighing these conflicting subjects kept his mind continually vacillating; at one time opposing, at another yielding, according to the changeful tide of his feelings. In this perplexed state of mind my father appeared at the time my sister stated her dream to him.

"So time rolled onward, and week succeeded week, laden with the effects of good and evil, till the following eventful hour came. My sister Anna, whose dream I have related, had been growing stronger in faith and confidence as she pursued her pious course. On a memorable morning she came from her room under the influence of divine love, threw her arms around her mother's neck, and, with tears and melting tones of affection, exhorted her to pray, and to give her soul into the compassionate arms of Christ. Then, urged by the same holy impulse, she flew to her father, sprinkling the floor with tears as she went, and fell on his neck, exhorting him to seek salvation—to fly to Jesus Christ

for mercy, who was willing to forgive his sins, and restore him to divine favor. The rest of us were silent, sad spectators of the moving scene.

"Although my father had been, in years elapsed, a strong advocate for Universalism, in this awful moment his delusive theory fled instantly away, like chaff before the wind. His soul was moved with horror. He melted like wax amid a flame. While tears flowed down his face, in extreme agitation of mind and with a faltering, tremulous voice, he cried aloud: 'O! I fear that there is no mercy for me! I have rebelled against God so long that I am now left hopeless under his frown. But, children,' continued he, 'there is mercy for you; you have not sinned as long as I have, or grieved the Spirit of God by opposing the truth, and defending errors as I have done. You all can obtain forgiveness and be happy forever.'

"As my father ceased speaking, while his sorrows were audible, my sister knelt before the throne of mercy and prayed that the God of salvation would have compassion on us all, who were at the time melted into tenderness around her. Solemn and deep impressions were made by the Spirit of God on each trembling breast, which created an ardent desire in our hearts to be saved from sin; a sense of which was then pressing heavily upon our troubled spirits.

"Imboldened by the grace of God which abounded in her heart, this converted sister improved every opportunity to communicate to her youthful associates the wonderful things she had experienced, and exhorted them to repent, and pray, and seek salvation. Such affectionate admonitions coming often suddenly upon them, when they were unprepared for resistance, and coming from one also whom they highly esteemed, produced amazing effects. A deep seriousness was becoming apparent among them, and, indeed, the same happy influence was spreading through all classes of community."

"On a memorable night I obtained the evidence, the witness

of the Spirit sealed upon my heart. That evening a meeting was appointed for prayer, about one quarter of a mile from my father's residence; it so happened that my parents were not at the meeting. Many gathered to the appointed place, some of whom were rejoicing in the liberty of salvation, while others were sorrowing in deep distress of mind. After singing a suitable hymn, we all knelt before the throne of grace to pray, and to give ourselves to God in a sacred covenant. As the devotional exercise progressed, sighs and awful wailings were heard rising from every part of the congregation. The lady of the house, together with others, who were in extreme agony of soul, cried aloud for mercy; no one rebuked them for crying. It was an awful, overwhelming season. The sound broke the repose and stillness of the night, and was borne along the valley, and fell impressively on the sleepless organs of my dear parents at home.

"While these exercises were going on around me I was knelt before a bench, in deep thoughtfulness, wrapped almost in speechless awe. My mind, at the time, was so abstracted from the things of earth, and absorbed in carefulness about my own soul, that time moved onward unnoticed, and the cries and distress of others passed over me like sounds in a dream. Our minister and our pious friends, like guardian angels, remained with us, praying with ceaseless solicitude for our salvation, and speaking to us often to keep the promises of God before our mental vision.

"The distress of my mind at that time, however, did not proceed from a burden of guilt and condemnation as before. But my labor was an intense desire to be a Christian; I wanted a knowledge and witness of the fact imprinted on my heart. While I was there knelt before the Lord, with the eye of my mind directed heavenward, a strait gate appeared to my view, which it seemed I had entered; and directly before me a beautiful narrow way opened, ascending to the throne of God. And on each side of this celestial

highway I descried a dreary desert, where I saw many of my wretched fellow-beings wandering in darkness, entangled with spells and snares, groping their way amid the dismal chaos. While gazing with wonder on the scene around me, I thought that I saw the glorious angel of the covenant descending on this heavenly road, and, as he came near, part of his crimson mantle seemed to wave over me, impressing my mind, at the same time, with this solemn charge: '*Doubt no more!*'

"All this I believed was only a wakeful, ideal vision, which passed before the eye of my mind at the time. Still it might have been the effect of some supernatural agency. These views, however, did not constitute any part of the foundation of my Christian hope. Benevolent feelings, love to God and his cause, a concern for the souls of my fellow-mortals, together with the peace, assurance, and faith which I felt at the time, formed the basis of my hope. These evidences, to my conscious mind, possessed the power and attributes of a reality. These heaven-born feelings and blessings, which I had felt before and then enjoyed, established the fact that I had before received the remission of my sins; that when the burden of condemnation rolled off, and left my mind in a tranquil, happy state, then I was renewed in spirit, and passed from death to life. So the events of that night confirmed me in the belief that I was in the kingdom of grace. My enraptured spirit was borne on the wings of faith and love, while my mortal frame was bent before the throne of grace. The night, I found, had passed away like a dream. The harbinger of day was entering the windows as the meeting came to a close.

"My sister Betsey, who was younger than myself, was one among the number who that night obtained a happy deliverance from sin. It was a joyful morning to us and to many. Everything in nature appeared to wear a new aspect. Heaven and earth seemed to rejoice together, while our youthful hearts exulted with rapture unknown before. The minister requested us before we left the place to de

clare to our friends what great things the Lord had wrought for us, which obvious duty we performed with pleasure.

"As the influence of the mighty reformation spread, my oldest brother, Nicholas, came into the kingdom of grace, after enduring many conflicts with the common enemy, who followed him with sore temptations. At length the angels in heaven, and all of us, rejoiced over my dear parents, who also were consoled with redeeming grace. Finally, the whole family, and almost the entire neighborhood, together with many in the adjoining settlements, became subjects of the blessed work. The wilderness and solitary places were glad. The trees clapped their hands, while the valleys echoed the sound of the triumphal songs of free grace and free salvation."

This is a fair specimen of what occurred in many places during this interesting period. The Spirit was poured out from on high upon multitudes, and men and women, old and young, dreamed dreams, saw visions, and were filled with the spirit of prophecy.

This year the first Methodist meeting-house within the bounds of the old Genesee Conference was undertaken in the settlement on the Sauquoit, called "the Paris meeting-house." Our excellent friend, the Rev. Dr. Paddock, in an article on the "Sauquoit station," published in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, 1840, gives the following interesting account of the erection of this church:

"In the year 1800 the circuit began to talk of building a place of worship, and in the succeeding year, having obtained a subscription of \$800, payable chiefly in labor, resolved on commencing the work. The house now occupied by the Sauquoit society is the fruit of that effort.* At the laying of the foundation stone the late Kirkland Griffin, Esq., then a member of this society, but now a saint in heaven, knelt and offered up prayer to God. The work progressed, and when the house was ready to be raised, brethren and *sisters*

* Since this was written, we learn the old house has given place to a permanent brick structure.—G. P.

in large numbers, considering the sparseness of the population, came together; the latter furnishing in true temperance style, cake and cheese as the most appropriate refreshment. Before the raising was commenced, the Rev. Lemuel Smith, a local preacher, gave out the hymn beginning

‘What now is my object and aim,
What now is my hope and desire,’

which all present cordially united in singing, when with great ardor and appropriateness he addressed the throne of grace. After the building was up, and before the persons present separated, there were again singing and prayer directed by the same individual. The house thus erected has probably been the spiritual birthplace of more than a thousand souls; and how many have been blessed, and comforted, and sanctified within its sacred walls eternity alone can determine. With the exception of perhaps one log chapel, it was the first Methodist meeting-house erected in the state of New York west of Albany. The first sermon preached in it was delivered by the late Rev. Bishop Whatcoat, the house being then in an unfinished state.”

A new district is formed this year, partly in the United States and partly in Canada.

CHAPTER II.

METHODISM IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICT, 1801–1810.

1801. The report of the members shows a large increase this year.

1802. The Rev. William Colbert is appointed presiding elder on Albany district at the conference in May. His diary furnishes much information with regard to the outlines of the circuits and the progress of the work. Albany district is in the Philadelphia Conference, and embraces the territory from the Hudson west as far as the settlements had proceeded within the state of New York.

The first entry which we find is Wednesday, July 7, at Seely's,* in Westmoreland. He "preached in Seely's barn," but seems not to have been in a very happy mood. From this point he proceeded to Augusta, and thence to Sherburn, dining at "friend Graham's" on his way. John Graham lived in Hamilton, on the northern extremity of Colchester settlement, and was one of the first Methodists in that region. He still had his residence there in 1814, but about this time removed west.

The quarterly meeting at Sherburn was at what was called "The old Four Corners," west of Sherburn village some four miles. This was an early center of Methodist influence. In those early times quarterly meetings were great occasions. The presiding elder was ordinarily sustained by half a dozen preachers, one or more following him from one quarterly meeting to another. The Low Dutchman, Hoyer, seems at this time to have been quite a constant companion of Mr. Colbert, and to have preached at least once at each quarterly meeting, either on Saturday or Sabbath. He was a bachelor, very eccentric, but sincere and earnest. He was admitted on trial in 1803, traveled for several years and then located. He was a hypochondriac, and sometimes gave his traveling companions great annoyance. An old Methodist once related to us an amusing instance of his nervousness. He was as usual one of the presiding elder's train, and the company came to a considerable stream, the Unadilla, which they had to cross. A freshet had taken away the bridge, and the stream must be forded below. Hoyer dare not 'ride the river.' The commencement to rebuild the bridge had been made, and progressed so far as that the sleepers were laid. Hoyer concluded to make the experiment of walking on one of the sleepers and let one of the company lead his horse across at the ford. The company passed over, but what was their

* William Seely was a plain, earnest, old style local preacher, who in his day, did good service to the Church, contributing his strength, influence, and money to the cause of Methodism. He died as he lived, a good man.

consternation when they saw poor Hoyer lose his self-command, lie down on his stomach on the log and throw his arms and legs around it, roaring for help with all his might. Two men walked the log and tried hard to persuade him to make some effort to rise and walk on, but the thing he alleged impossible; he would certainly fall into the river and be drowned. Finding all reasoning in this direction useless, they tried another method: "Well," said one, "we cannot stay here; we must go on and leave him to his fate. Farewell, Brother Hoyer." "O! O! O! don't leave me here!" Hoyer exclaimed convulsively. "Well, then get up and look right up to heaven and pray, and by God's help we will save you. Brother Hoyer, have you no faith at all? If so, you are in a poor state to die here." The terrified traveler rallied and looked up, and was soon safe.

In our boyish days we used to hear much of "Brother Hoyer," and often heard the sisters making themselves merry over his queer antics. In 1821 we saw him for the first and only time, and heard him speak in a love-feast in Sauquoit. Everybody believed him a good man, and sometimes he preached with great power.

In relation to the Sherburn quarterly meeting, Mr. Colbert makes the following entry in his diary:

"*Saturday, 10.* With Brothers Covel, Sweet, and Woodward at Sherburn. Our Brother Hoyer preached us a very plain, honest sermon from John iii, 16. Brother Sweet gave an exhortation; after him Brother Covel spoke with power. I spoke after him and concluded the meeting. Our business in conference was carried on with much moderation, and finished with peace and unanimity.

"*Sunday, 11.* This morning, at the opening of the love-feast, I felt as if shadows, clouds, and darkness rested upon me, but, glory to God! the Lord displayed his power, members spoke feelingly, and at the close of the meeting the mourners were invited to come forward and join us in prayer for deliverance. They came up, surrounded the table, the Lord poured out his Spirit, and in answer to prayer several were brought

to rejoice in the God of their salvation. So great was the stir that the doors were not opened until near twelve o'clock, and then with difficulty we got the people out of the barn into the woods. The scene under the tall beech and maple trees was truly delightful. Brother Dewey preached for us a most excellent sermon from John iv, 35, 36. Brother Sweet prayed, and Brother Woodward gave an exhortation. I spoke and Brother Covell closed the meeting. We then administered the Lord's Supper under the trees, and a blessed solemn time we had. Glory to God! We lodged at William Stover's."

Mr. Colbert thence proceeded through Onondaga Hollow to Marcellus, where he lodged at Alexander Adams's, "preached at a school-house," and here "Brother Hoyer gave an exhortation and dealt out the truth in such plainness" that he was afraid "some of them were not well pleased." He went on from Adams's to Thompson's, where he halted a day or two and read Mr. Taggart's book against Methodism. Methodism was no longer a thing that its enemies might frown down. It had assumed an importance which made it a mark for heavy ordnance, hence Taggart's attack upon it. It was answered in New England, and never was felt there as a real obstacle in the way of the progress of Methodism. Shadrach Bostwick contemplated an answer to this famous book, but William Thacher did the work.* We once saw a copy of Thacher's pamphlet, but have no distinct impression of its merits.

Mr. Colbert next moves on to Cayuga circuit. His quarterly meeting was at "friend Edie's." His entry in his diary for Sunday morning is curious; he says: "I thank God that I am brought to see the light of another morning. Here I conceive it might not be improper to insert an affair of last night. In one room six of us lodged in three beds; two of the beds were on bedsteads and one on the floor. About midnight I was awakened by a horrid yell, which

* Bostwick had nearly finished his book when the MS. was destroyed by fire. He did not resume the work.

appeared to be between the head of the bed in which Brothers Willis and Vandusen lay and the foot of that in which lay Brother Hoyer and myself. When I arose to see what was the matter Brother Hoyer was sitting up, and about to seize fast hold of me. I supposed him to be in a fit, and in an instant sprang from the bed taking the sheet with me. I flew to the door, when Brother Vandusen sprang from the foot of his bed, and in his flight had his shirt sleeve torn by Brother Willis, who laid hold of him as he sprang up. Brother Daniel White, who laid on the floor with another young man, rose up and found the young man clinging around him. Brother Alward White and his wife lay in another room trembling and sweating. Friend Edie, his wife and children, were awakened up-stairs, and his daughter found herself not far from the top of the ladder.

"Never did I see so many people so panic struck. They declared that such hideous yells they never heard before. For my part I do not recollect hearing but one, but I must confess that I never was so frightened in all my life. Brother Willis, an excellent man, had nerve enough to sustain the shock. Brother Hoyer at first laughed at us, but finding all about him so shocked, began to feel fear very sensibly. Brother Alward White thinks that it was an infernal spirit; and perhaps nothing else could have made such a noise and excited such fears. For my part, I conceive that we cannot find out what it was, and that it will be most prudent to be reserved in our conjectures."

This was a singular incident, but we see not why it might not be accounted for without presuming upon the agency of an evil spirit. Is it not probable that the nervous Dutchman, Brother Hoyer, had an alarming dream, which brought from him an unearthly yell or two? Perhaps he thought himself plunging from the log into the river, or in some other imminent peril, and uttered a convulsive scream. The fright produced no very serious consequences, whatever was its real origin.

Hoyer, who had traveled with Mr. Colbert for "five

weeks," is now left on Cayuga circuit, to supply the place of Brother Willis, who goes to Oneida.

Monday, 9, Mr. Colbert passed through "Scipio, a handsome country, crossed the Cayuga bridge, a mile more or less, on through a fine settlement called Phelps," to his "old friend Pierce Granger's, where" he "found Brother Weeks, who informed him that" his "old friend Captain Dorsey wished to see" him. The next record is all natural :

"*Tuesday, 20.* Rode to Daniel Dorsey's, where I found myself at home, and felt something like being in Maryland. I should be glad to spend a good deal of my time in this place. Captain Dorsey has a handsome farm in Lyons; and here, to my joy, I found a number of Marylanders."

On Wednesday Mr. Colbert preached "to a very serious and attentive little congregation at friend Dorsey's with satisfaction," and says: "If my feelings do not deceive me, there will be good done in this place. Several appeared to be much affected."

"*Thursday, 22.* Spent at my friend Dorsey's. This is a very agreeable family, and a place of rest for the poor wandering preachers."

None know better how to appreciate such "a place of rest" than an itinerant preacher.

His quarterly meeting for Seneca circuit was "at Zebulon Norton's, in Charlestown." Nothing of special interest seems to have transpired at that meeting. Mr. Colbert proceeds to Tioga, and puts up with his old friend Elisha Cole. He remarks that he does not see any improvement in the country since he first visited it "in '92, except in the roads." The quarterly meeting was at "Friend Tabor's, in Towanda. A blessing came on Sabbath morning." He says:

"*Sunday, August 1.* This morning the Lord favored us with a shower both of rain and of his Spirit. Several were brought on their knees, and cried for mercy, in the love-feast. I thought it a pity we could not continue praying

with them, on account of the preaching at eleven o'clock. However, so concerned were they that they retired to the woods, and spent some time on their knees on the damp ground in prayer to God."

He goes on his way, but new trials await him.

"*Friday, 6.* This morning I have done what I do not remember to have done since I have been in the Methodist Church—I forgot to call the family to prayer, and never thought of it until I had gone several miles on the road. I felt very much distressed and cast down at the thought of it. I have suffered much this day riding through the rain, in company with Stephen Colgrove, between forty and fifty miles. In the night we got lost in the woods on the side of a mountain, among the hemlocks, old trees, roots, and holes. It was truly distressing. Brother Colgrove called several times, and was finally answered. The hearing of a human voice was very pleasant; but how to extricate ourselves from the brush and roots we knew not. We called for a light, but none came. Fortunately we found our way into a good road, which led us to a settlement at ten o'clock, and came to the brother-in-law's of Brother Colgrove, by the name of Pepper. He lived in a small house with another family; the whole number of both families made up fourteen. They used us as well as they could, and we felt thankful to God and to them.

"*Saturday, 7.* We got breakfast with our kind friends this morning, *but not before we called the family together for prayers.*" The quarterly meeting for Delaware circuit was at Elijah Calkins's. "O how we are pestered for want of room at our quarterly meetings in this county!" adds he, in bitterness of spirit. "Brother Newman" here met him, and preached on Sunday; and during the administration of the sacrament the cloud of mercy broke, and Mr. Colbert shouts: "Glory to God! he displayed his power, and it is said that two persons found the Lord, and numbers were brought to cry to God for a clean heart. A great solemnity rested on the countenances of the people, and I trust that

the fruits of the meeting will be seen in the world of glory."

Mr. Colbert thence proceeded in his regular route to Albany and Saratoga, and around to Otsego. He passed up the Mohawk country, preaching and baptizing, to Pickard's, in Springfield, where he held his quarterly meeting for Otsego circuit.

By some unaccountable mishap Otsego circuit disappears from the Minutes in 1796, and is not restored until 1803. It is evident that this old circuit, the next in age to Albany, and as old as Saratoga, had not been merged in some other circuit; for when Mr. Colbert takes charge of Albany district, in 1802, he recognizes Otsego circuit, and gives it four regular quarterly meetings. Jonathan Newman is present at the quarterly meeting at Pickard's, and his name disappears from the Minutes this year. It is probable that he had charge of the circuit, and that both the preachers and circuit were omitted by mistake. There are many similar mistakes in the old Minutes.

Mr. Colbert proceeds on his regular tour to Herkimer circuit, and thence to Western. This is a new circuit, taken from Mohawk, Oneida, and Chenango.

September 15, Mr. Colbert comes to Squire Pray's and finds a union meeting in progress. Lorenzo Dow was preaching in the grove. He says: "Lorenzo is tall, of a very slender form; his countenance is serene, solemn, but not dejected, and his words, or rather God's words delivered by him, cut like a sword. Brother Catlin,* one of our local preachers, spoke after him, and while he was speaking Brother Newman came forward, and, hearing him touch on principles, told him not to mind principles but to preach experience. He continued for a little while and then concluded. The ministers of the different denominations were called upon by Brother Newman to repair to a council chamber at Squire Pray's, where too much was said by some on union, union! Not that I, by any means, wanted to hear

* When a boy we often heard him.

controversy at such a meeting as this. It was agreed that Mr. Vining, a Baptist elder, and Brother Covel, should preach. Mr. Vining preached from John xvii, 21: 'That they all may be one,' etc.; and Brother Covel preached from Phil. i, 10: 'That ye may approve things that are excellent.' But the people became so noisy that he did not finish his discourse.

At night Lorenzo Dow preached a powerful sermon under the trees, by candle-light, from Acts xvii, 6: "These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also." He gave the preachers, as well as others, a solemn warning; but it was in an excellent spirit. Brother —— exhorted after him, and many were brought to cry for mercy. I gave out preaching the next night, and lodged at Squire Pray's, a very disagreeable place for me on account of the great number of people, although the Squire is a very kind man.

"*Thursday, 16.* Brother Ebenezer White preached at six o'clock, from Sol. Song, first seven verses of the fourth chapter. At ten o'clock Elder Straight, an open communion Baptist, gave us a sermon from Isa. xxxii, 2. Brother Swaim exhorted after him, and I preached after Brother Swaim's exhortation. When I concluded Brother Newman preached from 2 Cor. xiii, 11: 'Be of one mind.' In my judgment the people were kept too long in a sitting posture, although they paid great attention. We had an intermission, after which the Methodists and the open communion Baptists united in the sacramental service, and it was a blessed season. Indians and Africans came forward. It was romantic enough to see the people climbing the trees over the heads of many hundreds.

"At night Lorenzo Dow delivered one of the greatest discourses I ever heard against atheism, deism, and Calvinism. He took his text in about the middle of his sermon. Brother Covel arose after him and said that a young man desired the prayers of the preachers. Several others desired to be prayed for, and at length there was a wonderful display of

divine power in the large congregation, beneath the boughs of the trees and the starry heavens.

"*Friday, 17.* This morning Brother Swaim preached an excellent sermon from 1 Tim. i, 5: 'Now the end of the commandment is charity,' etc. Brother Newman appointed a meeting for the preachers in the council chamber; they had met there twice before. After this a young Presbyterian minister gave us an excellent sermon from Isa. i, 18. Brother Newman then gave liberty to the people to tell their experiences. I arose and spoke of the blessed effects of hearing Christian experience. I then took my leave and rode to Mr. Stanton's, at Paris. They are Baptists, but very kind, and I believe they enjoy religion."

The Methodist traveling preachers present at this union meeting, Mr. Colbert tells us, were "Benjamin Bidlack, Zenas Covell, Frederic Woodward, Matthias Swaim, Asa Cummings, William Hill, Ebenezer White, Jonathan Newman, Smith Arnold, Lorenzo Dow, with a great number of local preachers." There were present "nine Baptist and two Presbyterian preachers." He says: "Some things were delivered on the stage and in the council not agreeable to my mind; but I thank God I felt well, and, I believe, great good was done."

Several things in this record are worthy of note. At that period it was strange that a union meeting should be held. The other denominations were then straining every nerve to keep the Methodists down. They were considered as intruders, and were often treated as such by ministers of those denominations who, as they claimed, had possession of the ground; albeit the Methodist preachers everywhere acted as pioneers, "going out into the highways and hedges," and carrying the tidings of salvation to those who were destitute of the Gospel, and utterly without pastoral supervision. This was the general fact; but by this time the old, earnest pioneer preachers had made so strong an impression upon the public mind as to command no little respect, and a new line of policy was commenced, one which has since been

pursued upon a large scale. Bigoted sectarians, finding that the new sect had taken deep hold of the public mind, and that they could not be crushed by opposition, put themselves into a sort of fraternal relation with them, and then they cried "Union, union!" The motive was often but poorly disguised; it was to avail themselves of the results of Methodist revivals. Still the work of God went on, and union meetings, even when there could be no *communion*, were the means of good.

We have here the names of several prominent actors in the great Methodist movement in the interior of New York. Some of them we have previously noticed, and others we shall meet with frequently hereafter.

LORENZO DOW.

The eccentric Lorenzo Dow had got well under way as a marvel of a preacher. He commenced traveling and preaching in 1798, being then but eighteen years of age. He was appointed to Cambridge circuit with Timothy Dewey. In 1799 he was appointed to Essex, but soon left his circuit under a strong impression that he had a special mission to Ireland. Away he went across the ocean, and for some time attracted considerable attention in Ireland and England. He was dropped by the conference, and never again connected himself with the itinerancy in the regular way, but traveled and preached independently, being responsible to no ecclesiastical body. Still Dow was a Methodist in doctrine and in feeling, and often rendered valuable service to the Methodist Episcopal Church in various ways.

When Mr. Colbert heard him at the union meeting it had not been long since his return from Europe, and he was now rambling up and down the country and attracting vast crowds of earnest and astonished listeners. He often preached with great power, and was the means of many awakenings and conversions. He was zealous, shrewd, often witty, evangelical, bold, and eccentric. He was an original. There was never but one Lorenzo Dow. He found

a congenial spirit in "Peggy," whom he married, and who traveled with him over the continent, sharing, as far as possible, in his labors and privations. He spent years in the south among the planters and the slaves, but rested at no point for any considerable time. He often traveled through our territory, preaching as he went to vast multitudes. We heard him for the first time in Cazenovia, in 1816. He stood in the piazza of the old Madison County House, on the second story, and addressed thousands who stood on the green. He drove his own carriage, rode sometimes at the rate of forty or fifty miles a day, and preached four or five times. He passed on west about four weeks previously, and addressed all who could be hurried together without previous notice, and left an appointment for a particular day and hour on his return, which he promptly met, and then disappeared. Of course horse-flesh suffered sadly under Dow's hands. On being once rebuked by a friend for a want of mercy to his beast, he replied: "Souls are worth more than old horses."

He was stoop-shouldered, a confirmed asthmatic, breathing and speaking apparently with great difficulty. His voice was harsh, being worn threadbare by constant use; his shoulders moving convulsively up and down, as he worked his vocal organs as laboriously as a man would work at a dry pump, although with a little more success. He never shaved; his hair hung negligently down his back and over his shoulders in long, undressed twists. He seemed to have as little to do with soap and water as with a razor. All this helped to make up a character such as no one had ever seen before.

Lorenzo was a brave polemic. He assailed the isms with unmerciful severity. In many of his sermons he undertook a complete refutation of Atheism, Deism, Universalism, and Calvinism. He figured considerably as a writer. We have before us a copy of his "Polemical works: New York, printed and sold by J. C. Totten, 9 Bowery, 1814;" a 12mo. of 300 pages. His Journals, and those of his wife "Peggy," are

quite voluminous. His writings have passed through various editions, and have been extensively circulated and read. Most of them are quite readable; some of them instructive. His mode of reasoning may be seen in his "Chain of five Links, two Hooks, and a Swivel." He often reasons consecutively and logically, and not unfrequently deals in aphorisms and sarcasms, which are more telling upon common minds than the severest logic. "A double L does not spell a part;" and, "You can and you can't, you shall and you shan't; you'll be damned if you do, and you'll be damned if you don't," announced and reiterated in the hearing of thousands, were often more terrible blows inflicted upon the Calvinistic doctrines of limited atonement and the decree of reprobation than the most learned and ingenious reasoning.

Dow held himself bound by no conventional laws of society. He feared nobody, and cared for nothing beyond the simple claims of conscience. He was just as likely to open his batteries against Calvinism in a Presbyterian church as anywhere else. The fear of man was not a snare to this singular character; nor was he very much restrained by the common laws of courtesy. He seemed to take it for granted, that when he was invited to a pulpit he entered it, by common consent, eccentricities and all.

He was deeply interested in New England politics at the time the question of Church and State was agitated, and contributed his full share in the reduction of "the standing order" to a level with other denominations. He often rallied vast assemblies, and held them for three, and even four hours together, upon the impolicy and the vices of religious establishments, or the support of a particular denomination by law, and the support of the ministry by taxation. In those discourses the most terrible facts came out without the least mitigation—such as selling a poor man's cow at public auction to pay the minister. And there was no use in the murmurs of dissatisfaction. The more "the galled jade winced" the heavier the burden was heaped upon

his back. It was Lorenzo Dow, and there was no use in saying a word. Every effort in the way of trying to sustain the old order of things really, as he used to say, only made a bad matter worse.

Dow performed many curious antics, which were published in the papers and rehearsed everywhere until they became familiar as household words. As a specimen, the story of his raising the devil may suffice. Dow put up at a tavern in the South, and soon discovered that the landlord was absent from home, and that there was an unusual intimacy between the landlady and a gentleman visitor. The landlord returned in the evening, as it would seem, unexpectedly, and put his good lady and her friend into a panic. Under the directions of the lady the terrified visitor jumped into an empty hogshead and the lady covered him with cotton. The landlord came in half drunk, but was most *affectionately* received by his good wife. Upon finding Dow in his house he very unceremoniously demanded that he should raise the devil for him, alleging that he had often heard that he could do it. Dow declined, but the landlord insisted. "You will be frightened when you see him," said Dow. "No I shan't," added the brave man. "Well," said Dow, "if I must raise the devil I must;" and taking the candle in his hand, he said, "Follow me." Passing into the back room, and coming up to the hogshead, he adroitly lighted the cotton with the candle, and, sure enough, up came the devil enveloped in a blaze! Not a word did his satanic majesty say, but instantly disappeared. The fellow was completely deceived, and the next day went before a magistrate and made oath that Dow really raised the devil in his house, and he saw him. The matter being likely to call for a repetition of the miracle, and it not being probable that he would meet with the concurrence of the same favorable circumstances, Dow was obliged to make a public explanation.

Dow's last special mission was to expose the Jesuits. He lectured long and loud upon the wiles of the disciples

of Loyola; showed up their eternal intermeddling with politics, and their designs upon the free institutions of this country. He expounded the prophecies, quoted history, poured out a flood of invective, and warned the nation most solemnly of the perils which were impending. On his way to Washington, for the purpose of enlightening and awakening the government upon the subject, he passed through Wyoming. He delivered several powerful discourses in the old church in Kingston, and passed on south. In one of his discourses he said the Jesuits were watching him, and would kill him if they dare, but knowing that if he should be missing they would be suspected, they dare not molest him. He went on to Washington, and there died suddenly a few weeks after this. Some surmised that he was poisoned by the Jesuits; whether this was so, or whether he died of an organic affection of the heart, or from some other cause, we know not.

Lorenzo Dow was a strange specimen of humanity. He was called, and often called himself, "crazy Dow." He was not a lunatic, nor was he a monomaniac; for if he was insane on one point he was equally so on many. He was so eccentric as to border on insanity in everything. His conduct could not with justice be judged of by the ordinary laws of social or conventional propriety. Upon the whole, we always had a very high opinion of his piety and his integrity. He was a strange, good man—a man of rare natural endowments, but with an intellect of so peculiar a cast as to constitute him a great oddity, and in some respects an enigma. In his day he did much good and some harm. His influence upon the mind of the public fairly entitles him to a place in the history of the Church and of the times in which he lived.

Mr. Colbert makes another entry in his diary in relation to Dow. From Squire Pray's he went to Paris Hill, where he held a quarterly meeting, at Barak Cooley's. On Sunday he says: "For public preaching we repaired to the woods, where Lorenzo Dow delivered a discourse, with-

out taking a text, of three hours and twenty minutes in length, in which he said much against Calvinism, and what was much to the purpose. Many of the Calvinists complain, but they cannot confute his arguments. When he had done I administered the Lord's Supper, I suppose, to more than a hundred. At night held a meeting at Barak Cooley's and administered the Lord's Supper to Cooley's mother, an aged woman. It was a good time. Brother Kernaghan professed to have his soul sanctified, and Ruth Ridgemount, a young woman, was converted. In the love-feast to-day some gave us their names as subjects of prayer. We lodged at Brother Tibble's, where we had an excellent time in family prayer."

After preaching several times in different neighborhoods in Paris, Mr. Colbert proceeded to Daniel Seeley's, in Westmoreland, the place of his next quarterly meeting. Paris is in Chenango circuit, and Seeley's in Oneida. The two stand united in the Minutes, but they seem to have had separate quarterly meetings. Paris and Westmoreland were taken from Whitestown in 1792; it had become quite populous, and Methodism was working its way through all the settlements. Cooley's and Seeley's were headquarters for the Methodist preachers for many years, and Seeley's barn was the scene of many quarterly meetings which were talked of for a long time. What sort of a preaching place it was in Colbert's time, and how he enjoyed it, we may learn from his diary. He says:

"After the love-feast I preached from Heb. ii, 3. A barn filled with hay, straw, and people is a very disagreeable place to me. I would rather preach three sermons out of doors than one in such a place. The people felt themselves so disagreeably situated that they could not stay. The congregation was very restless. It is strange that so many preachers are so opposed to preaching out of doors when they see such inconveniences attending preaching to large congregations." We are not ignorant of the difficulty of preaching under such circumstances. There is no rebound-

ing of the voice, but it seems to be absorbed and wholly to vanish the moment it leaves the mouth of the speaker. We used under such circumstances, to suffer the most intense agony, and afterward to have the most mortifying sense of failure; but there was often no help for it. We had to preach to the people in barns or nowhere. Still these old barns were often gracious places.

"We lodged," says Mr. Colbert, "at Friend Tompkins's." Here he remarks that he was treated "with politeness." Of this we have no doubt, for we were treated in the same way at "Friend Tompkins's" many years after that. Here our itinerant takes occasion to remark that "among the Americans, in these northern parts, we have to wait on ourselves, which takes us in the course of the year many days from useful studies." Friend Tompkins and his wife were from the Green Isle, and would not allow "the preacher" to take care of his own horse. This made Mr. Colbert think of Maryland, where "servants" were plenty, and a traveler had nothing to do but to "walk in and be seated," and hear the order: "Boy, take that horse to the stable and feed him," and thenceforward felt himself relieved from all care with regard to his beast. "In these northern parts" things are marvelously different, excepting at such places as "Friend Tompkins's" or "Daniel Dorsey's."

On his way west Mr. Colbert passed "through a settlement of the Oneida Indians, with which" he "was much delighted," and does not fail to contrast them with some whites he had often observed, as to the appearance of their dwellings and the cleanliness of their persons.

He next visits Cayuga circuit, putting up with his friend "Judge Sherwood, of Scipio." He says:

"*Friday, October 1.* I rode in company with Brothers Vandusen and Kernaghan from Judge Sherwood's to Abel White's, in Milton, where they have built them a handsome meeting-house, standing on an eminence of gradual ascent, thirty feet by thirty-five. It affords me pleasure to see in

this wilderness I passed through nine years ago so many civilized people, and what is still better, so many Christianized and hearty in the cause of Methodism, which of all forms of Christianity I believe the best in the world."

He seems to have been somewhat disturbed in his feelings by a "want of order and subordination in the love-feast." They, notwithstanding, "had a very good time." He says: "I preached afterward; the congregation was so restless, and so many squalling children in the house, that I had but little satisfaction in speaking. I administered the Lord's Supper, after which Brother Vandusen preached a short sermon and Brother Hoyer gave an exhortation. I baptized a great number of adults and children to-day." This was an old-fashioned quarterly meeting: two sermons, two exhortations, baptisms, sacrament, and doubtless much besides.

Mr. Colbert was now upon his old ground. He was the apostle of Methodism in this country. He had visited "the lakes" in 1793, when the country was just being opened, and a few settlements were scattered among the forests. He is now astonished to see the progress of *civilization*. Methodism was rapidly advancing, and had already achieved many triumphs. It was a potent element in the formation of society and the foundation of the local institutions of this new and fertile portion of the Empire State. Nine years previously Mr. Colbert suffered hunger, neglect, and untold perils here; complained of the filth and almost savage wildness of the people, and the utter destitution of nearly all the comforts of civilization in and around their dwellings, and sighed for the comfortable homes of old Maryland; but now he finds himself in the midst of a flourishing community, and everywhere greeted by hosts of intelligent Methodists, and large congregations of attentive hearers. He first came into "the lake country" from Wyoming, following the line of progress from the south; now he comes from the Hudson, following the movement from the East, and here he is at the point where two lines of missionary

aggression came together, and uniting their forces, had set the country in a blaze.

From Milton Mr. Colbert moves rapidly on to Lyons, where he finds himself at his good old Maryland home, Daniel Dorsey's. Here he attends his quarterly meeting for Seneca circuit. He says: "In our quarterly conference we appointed Brother D. Dorsey steward. At night we had a good prayer-meeting.

"*Sunday, October 10.* In the morning, glory to God! we had a refreshing in the love-feast, after which I preached with freedom to a very attentive congregation. Brothers Hoyer and Kernaghan exhorted, after which we administered the Lord's Supper. The Lord was with us of a truth. One found peace, and several were rejoicing with shouts of triumph. In the evening we had a prayer-meeting, intermixed with exhortations, at Daniel Dorsey's.

"*March 11.* Spent at Friend Dorsey's and Cole's very agreeably.

"*Tuesday, 12.* We arose this morning with the expectation of starting for Scipio, but so it was, we did not get from our friend Dorsey's. At night a few of the neighbors met for prayer-meeting at Brother Dorsey's. This morning a black woman was brought to cry out while Brother Kernaghan was at prayer. To-night she fell while Brother Hoyer was up and about to speak, but was prevented by her cries. We prayed and I gave an exhortation. She lay on the floor until near bedtime, when she went out professing to be happy.

"*Wednesday, 13.* The weather was warm and pleasant. With Brothers Hoyer and Kernaghan I started from Brother Daniel Dorsey's for Tioga circuit. We fed at Geneva and came on to Cayuga bridge, where we were overtaken with a shower of rain and wind. At sunset drank coffee at Cubert's tavern, east end of the bridge, and rode on through the rain to John Thompson's, in Marcellus, which kept us out till ten o'clock. Could we have had agreeable entertainment at a tavern we should not have stayed out so long. We have

paid in part for our long and very agreeable stay at our friend Dorsey's. But if I can reach my quarterly meeting, as I trust I shall, I do not lament staying among my friends and old acquaintances from Maryland."

Mr. Colbert had hurried on to Dorsey's as early as possible, and had lingered as long there as any degree of prudence would allow; for a whole week he had enjoyed the hospitalities of his "old acquaintances from Maryland," and who could blame him? Such hospitality and such fare were rare in "this northern region," even after all the progress which had been made in the condition of society. Our itinerant pursues his journey. We will give his simple but heart-sickening narrative on to his next quarterly meeting:

"*Thursday, 14.* The weather unpleasant. We rode from Thompson's to Onondaga Hollow, where we dined, and rode on through Pompey Hollow to Merrick's tavern, where we lodged, and a disagreeable ride we had. It was well Brother Hoyer parted with us this forenoon, as we had to ride till nine o'clock at night through the woods in a gloomy path down the mountain." Well indeed, for "Brother Hoyer" was a notorious coward, and might have been half-frightened out of his wits. Next we have an instructive reflection. Our traveler says:

"I think I may venture to say that licenses are granted to persons under circumstances which may be considered an imposition on travelers. They have no stable for a horse, and nothing better than a filthy hog-trough, and a dung-hill at their door, to feed him in." Alas for the traveler who was obliged to go through Pompey Hollow and stay at Merrick's in those days!

"*Friday, 15.* Arose early this morning and rode from Merrick's tavern to William Stover's, in Sherburn, where, in the evening, we had a thunder-storm. To-day we suffered for our breakfast, as the taverns we passed appeared to be such filthy places. However, we stopped at one where we saw the possibility of getting into the house by wading

through the dung at the door." After such trials William Stover's hospitable residence must have been a comfortable place of rest for the night. Methodist preachers for many years after this found comforts and welcome here. Our traveler proceeds :

" *Saturday, 16.* This morning we arose before day, got our breakfast by daylight, and started for the Tioga and Unadilla quarterly meeting with Brother Kernaghan and Sister West, from Sherburn, and a disagreeable ride we had through the rain over hills and mountains, crossing the Chenango and Unadilla to Benjamin Claus's at the Butternuts. We were wet and weary enough by the time we got there. The little house was filled ; Brother Osborne had preached, and Brother Booth had given an exhortation."

The meeting probably commenced at eleven o'clock in the morning, and Mr. Colbert and his company, and a lady with them, on horseback, had rode not less than thirty miles "through the rain and over hills and mountains," and arrived before the meeting had closed. This was the price paid for the blessings of a quarterly meeting in olden time. Women in those days often rode on horseback thirty, forty, and even fifty miles to a quarterly meeting, received a powerful blessing, and returned rejoicing.

They had a meeting in the evening. Some one preached, and Mr. Colbert "spoke a few words and dismissed the meeting." He remarks : "I feel very stupid after so long a ride over very unpleasant roads to places where I suffer for retirement. What little time I have for reading and private devotion !" How natural this. He proceeds :

" *Sunday, 17.* This morning we had a very happy time in love-feast. The friends were short and lively in their speeches. After love-feast, for want of room, we took the congregation into a meadow, where, under two sycamore trees, I preached with a degree of satisfaction. Brother White spoke after me. Brothers Kernaghan and Osborne exhorted after him. I baptized an aged woman and three others by sprinkling, administered the Lord's Supper, and

then baptized Wyatt Chamberlayne, by immersion, in the Butternut Creek. I trust this day's labor has not been in vain in the Lord. I have cause to be thankful for the degree of peace and satisfaction I feel in my mind, and for a hope that good has been done. O may I ever feel a heart to give glory to God for the good I see done on the earth!"

Mr. Colbert proceeded eastwardly, preached on Tuesday at a school-house in Pittsfield, and in the evening had a meeting "at Friend Abby's." On Wednesday they took breakfast "between daylight and sunrise, and rode on to Brother Newman's; stayed there an hour or two, prayed with the family, and rode on to Cooperstown, handsomely situated on the south end of Lake Otsego, Susquehanna's utmost spring. Stopped there a while and rode on to Daniel M'Allum's, where a few people were waiting. I preached to them with satisfaction from Amos v, 6. My life is a life of toil; I scarcely have time to read a chapter in the Bible some days." Such was the life of an itinerant preacher in the days of Mr. Colbert.

He is now in old Middlefield, near the place of our birth, and in the very house in which we first made a public profession of religion. Daniel M'Allum's house was the regular preaching place, and the place of the public prayer-meetings on Sundays when there was no preaching. Thither we went from Sabbath to Sabbath from the time of our being able to walk a mile to attend religious worship, which ordinarily consisted in a sermon from a local preacher, an exhortation from an exhorter, a sermon read by our beloved father, or a prayer-meeting. The Middlefield society was a strong society in those days, but still only at intervals enjoyed the labors of the traveling preachers on the Sabbath.

Mr. Colbert proceeded on through Cherry Valley "to Garret Vanvoor's, in Chattelet bush," the place of his quarterly meeting for Delaware circuit. On Sunday "the spacious barn floor was covered with a large congregation, very attentive indeed to the word."

"*Monday, 25,*" he says, "we rode from Vanvoor's to

Schenectady. I preached at night in the academy with a degree of freedom, I suppose, to fifty or sixty people, who were very attentive, and lodged at Friend Joice's. This is a very kind family; the old gentleman is a very sensible man, and has been a preacher, but I fear is now very low in religion. He discovers great backwardness to a society being raised, though there are members enough in town to form into a class.

"*Tuesday, 26.* Rode to William Vredenburg's and preached to a few women and four or five men, but not with much freedom among a number of bawling children."

"*Wednesday, 27.* I preached in Albany at night, but not with much life; after which I married the Rev. Cyrus Stebbins to Sally Mark.

"*Thursday, 28.* Spent in Albany, and at night preached on the hill at a Sister Davis's with a degree of life. Here there appear to be some under awakenings.

"*Saturday, 30.* Began our quarterly meeting at Coneskuena. We were favored with a great number of preachers. Cyrus Stebbins gave us a sermon on a very important subject, from 'Who is sufficient for these things?' M. Swain and myself exhorted after him. We have cause to be thankful for a good beginning. In the love-feast we had a refreshing season. It is said six or seven were converted in the love-feast, and several sanctified. Three professed to be sanctified last night at the watchnight, which I thought it best for me not to attend, as I had been unwell in Albany."

The love-feast was more than usually "public" because of rain, which prevented people from remaining out-doors. "And," he says, "I believe it was best, for we were favored with a wonderful display of the power of God. One man, as soon as the Lord converted his soul, ran out in the rain and went home, saying he must go home and tell his wife what the Lord had done for his soul."

Mr. Colbert next proceeded to his quarterly meeting for Saratoga circuit, at Stillwater. On Sabbath he preached "to

about a thousand " people "in Friend Myers's yard." On Friday he "had a long and tiresome ride from Friend Brewster's, in Johnstown, to Daniel M'Allum's, in Middlefield, through a very handsome and well improved country on the south side of the Mohawk river." He says: "I praise the Lord that I have this day enjoyed a degree of serenity of mind." The diary proceeds:

"*Saturday, 13.* Though I did not go to bed until about eleven o'clock, I arose this morning between three and four and rode from Middlefield to Edson's, in Milford, where we held our second quarterly meeting for Otsego circuit. We rode about six miles before sunrise. The morning, though cold, was very pleasant. As Cooperstown came in view, the rising sun had clothed the surrounding mountains with his golden light. The landscape was truly delightful to the eye of the traveler." We do not wonder that even a weary itinerant should be charmed with the beauty of sunrise as he gains the summit of "Cooperstown Hill." Our boyish days were familiar with that scene.

1803, January 1, finds Mr. Colbert at Sugar Creek, at Stephen Ballard's, the place of the Tioga quarterly meeting. He says: "This Sugar Creek is a gloomy looking place." No doubt it was so at that period, as were many places which long since were highly improved, and now smile in beauty and loveliness. He begins the year with pious reflections and resolutions, and has a very good quarterly meeting at this "gloomy looking place."

On leaving Sugar Creek Mr. Colbert is soon called to contend with a class of trials with which the old itinerants were quite familiar—those which a sensitive mind feels from observing a badly regulated household. Our traveler enjoys the hospitality of a family who "are kind almost to an extreme," but the parents seemed not to be well agreed in the management of their children. The husband undertakes to correct a small child, and the "foolish mother" manifests her dissent by "flying to him and snatching the rod from him and throwing it into the fire, crying and say-

ing that the child knows not what it was corrected for." Mr. C. adds, "I very freely gave her my opinion."

He passes on to another place, and there finds occasion for the following reflection: "This has been a day of trial to me. Rustic parents and untutored children! Such a house is more disagreeable to me than a wilderness at midnight, swarming with screeching owls and howling wolves. Was it not for the love I have for souls I should prefer the life of a hermit to the many disagreeable things I meet with at other people's houses." After this record, so expressive of Mr. Colbert's fine feelings and bachelor sensitiveness, we do not wonder at the next minute of the diary.

"*Wednesday, 5.* With pleasure I arose this morning about four o'clock, and with still greater pleasure mounted my horse, between daylight and sunrise, and rode about forty miles to Higley's tavern, in Randolph." Higley afterward became a Methodist, and Randolph a strong point for Methodism, as we shall see.

Mr. Colbert attends his quarterly meeting for Albany circuit on Wednesday, 12th. He says: "Here three were recommended to conference: John Blades, a good preacher and an aged man, sixty-three; Thomas Ireland, a young man about twenty-four; and Gideon Draper, about twenty-two. Our quarterly conference held until dark, after which I had to sit up until between one and two o'clock settling with the preachers.*

"*Thursday, 13.* We had a glorious display of divine power this morning in the love-feast, and a powerful time in public preaching. Brothers Draper, Ireland, Dillon, Vredenburg, Blades, Morton, and Stead, exhorted. The attention of the people was remarkable. Several were

* The preachers were charged with the books on their circuits; the presiding elders were charged with all the books on their districts by the book agents; and the presiding elders settled with the preachers at the last quarterly meeting, and the agents with the presiding elders at the conference.

powerfully awakened, two professed to be set at liberty, one previously very much hardened. The daughter of William Brown, one of our local preachers, was powerfully convicted, and we left her on her knees crying for mercy, declaring that she would never rise until God had blessed her."*

This was a grand old-fashioned quarterly meeting, and here it was that Gideon Draper commenced his public ministrations. He was, as we have seen, and shall see more hereafter, a prominent actor in our field.

Mr. Colbert preached in the city of Albany on Friday evening. "Here," he says, "when Brother Vredenburg got some engaged, as is common for our friend and brother, Brother Stebbins told him and some others to hold their peace. This hurt Brother Vredenburg." From this it would seem that even in the good old times there was some little diversity of taste among the Methodists on the subject of shouting.

"*Saturday, 22.* Mr. Colbert came to Elijah Davis's, in Saquoit, Herkimer circuit, where he and his traveling companions were so chilled with the cold that they sent forward "Brother Covel," whom they found there, to begin the meeting.

We next find Mr. Colbert beating off to the north and holding a quarterly meeting, for Western circuit, in the

* Mr. Brown was one of General Van Rensselaer's tenants, and received notice to make payment. He collected a load of wheat and went with it to Albany, and calling on the general told him that was all he could raise. "What do you do?" asked the general. "Work at tailoring, and let out my land," answered Brown. "Don't you preach sometimes?" asked the general. "Yes," was the answer. "Will you preach at my house to-night?" "Yes." The general called in his friends to hear the poor mechanic. He was a small man, and unpromising in appearance, and the landlord undoubtedly thought to have a little fun with him. Brown was shrewd and fearless. He took for his text, "They that will be rich," etc. The next day the general gave him a free lease of his farm during his life and that of his wife, receipted the back rents, and had his wheat ground and sent back to him. So his manly courage and Christian fidelity received a present reward? —*Rev. Gideon Draper.*

Black River country. He comes first to "Turin, and from thence to Purser's," where "he preached at night." "Here," he remarks, "the people as well as the place wear a wild aspect." This was the first quarterly meeting ever "held in this part of the country," and was held "at one Rogers's, where were poor preparations made for the accommodation of the people." Very likely, and yet probably as good as circumstances would allow.

"*Sunday, 30.* A very heavy snow-storm. But, thank God! we had as good a time as could be expected in the love-feast; after which I preached, and Brothers Lyon and Willy exhorted. "Thus ended our quarterly meeting at Black River. We lodged again at Friend Coffin's."

"*Monday, 31.* Rode from Watertown to Stephen Hart's, in Turin, which I find an agreeable place. The man is generous, the woman is clean and clever; a clean woman in some places is a rarity." This was the northern frontier, within the state of New York. A few Methodists were scattered through the wilds; and now that the presiding elder had visited the country, and attended a quarterly meeting, Methodism was fairly inaugurated amid the frost and the snow-banks.

Saturday, February 19. Mr. Colbert enters in his diary the following: "We lodged at Alward White's. Here I received, by Brother Benton, an animating letter from Timothy Dewey, which with pleasure I shall here insert." The letter is mutilated, and several lines of the introductory part are so broken up that it is impossible to recover the sense. The date is left perfect, and is February 16th, 1803. We shall copy all that is left of this letter, not only as an illustration of the spirit of the author, but as a commentary upon the times. The first word in the first perfect page is "wolves;" after this the writer proceeds:

"I fear they will devour the sheep unless they are hunted every day; they stand gaping on every side.

"My soul is with you if my body is not. O let your prayers to God ascend for me, that the Lord may prosper

my way, and strengthen me in body and soul for the work! I know not but I shall be dead before you get to conference; however, let what will come, I hope to keep on, for God is with me. O for a gust of divine power! Pray God that great Pompey may be wholly converted to the Christian faith. Surely the times of refreshing have come from the presence of the Lord. There is rising of *one hundred* members on Pompey circuit now, and if I am not mistaken there will be *two hundred* in a short time. Glory to our conquering Saviour! You need not think strange if you hear of my death, for I am mortal; but I hope to slay more at my death than all I ever did in my life before. I begin to get the victory over myself; I can begin and end a sermon in one hour. I think this will continue my health, or at least not waste all my strength at once. I want to do all the good I can; but I see in order to do this I must be good; this is what the people look for in ministers, and this they must have, or they will not profit; for what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord. God grant me faith working by love. I feel my soul fired, and though my strength fails my courage holds out.

"I wish you to write to me and give me a short account, if no more, of your success since you parted from me. I expect to write to conference by the mail, as several things stand in the way of my going, namely, my family, my health, and my circuit. The Lord knows I long to be with you, but I submit to providence, expecting you will remember me when you get there, whether I am dead or alive."

Here the letter ends abruptly, as there is a hiatus in the diary. This letter represents Timothy Dewey as he was during the palmy days of his itinerancy, a holy, earnest, powerful preacher, spending his strength for the glory of God and the good of souls. We shall hereafter see more of this great and good man.

The Philadelphia Conference held its session this year at Duck Creek, state of Delaware, May 1. At that conference the Genesee district was taken from the old Albany

district, and William Colbert was appointed to its charge. The charges in the new district are Otsego, Herkimer, Black River, Western, Chenango, Westmoreland, Pompey, Cayuga, Ontario, Seneca, Tioga. Three of these, namely, Black River, Pompey, and Ontario, are new circuits. Pompey had been formed during the preceding conference year, as is evident from Mr. Dewey's letter; and Black River was composed of new and mostly unexplored territory.

After conference, in June, we find Mr. Colbert at Milford, on the western bank of the Delaware, exclaiming, "O how unlike Milford in the Delaware state!" Doubtless the two places were very dissimilar, and who could appreciate the difference better than Mr. Colbert? From this point he comes to "Lumberland." He preached on his way and lodged in a deserted house "between two mountains," turning his horse out to graze. He had some reasonable apprehensions for his safety here, but committed himself to the care of Providence, and lying down with his head upon his saddle-bags fell asleep.

"*Friday, 24.*" Says he: "I was up and off before sunrise, and felt thankful that I got to Squire Catlin's at night."

"*Saturday, 25.* I rested at Squire Catlin's, and I felt much need of it." He preached twice on the Sabbath in a school-house. He remarks: "I have had an agreeable time at my friend Catlin's." Squire Catlin then resided on his place at the Great Bend, and his wife being a member of our Church, and he exceedingly courteous to the preachers, he was often called upon by them, and gave them the hospitalities of his comfortable home.

Mr. Colbert proceeded north, called at John Eastwood's and at Captain Calkins's, on the Unadilla, on the way to his quarterly meeting, at "Friend Potter's," for Herkimer circuit. Nothing particularly interesting is noted.

"*Tuesday, 12,*" he says, "I rode to Utica, a small village on the south side of the Mohawk; dined at Robert Stewart's." He attends his next quarterly meeting at Westmoreland.

"*Monday, August 1,*" he says, "spent with Timothy Dewey, at James Tomkins's."

"*Tuesday, 2.* In the afternoon rode to Kirkland Griffin's, in Paris.

"*Wednesday, 3.* Spent at Spencer Briggs's, reading Abbe Maury on Eloquence."

This place is what is now called Saquoit, from the name of the creek which passes through it. The station was one of the earliest in the old Genesee Conference, and on the Minutes went by the name of the township, Paris, for many years. The persons mentioned above were famous in Methodism.

September 21. Mr. Colbert "rode to Joseph Blair's, in Middlefield. Mrs. Blair was a second wife, and was the Anna Giles, of Brookfield, about whom Rev. Charles Giles gives us the interesting account which we have copied in another place.

"*Thursday, 22,*" says he "we spent at Middlefield, and at night Samuel Budd preached and I spoke after him. In this place there appears to be a very happy society."

November, 12. Quarterly meeting for Otsego circuit was held in Middlefield, and on this day Mr. Colbert records his arrival "at Joseph Blair's, cold and weary, about two o'clock, and found that the quarterly meeting, for convenience' sake, was held at our friend Green's in the neighborhood; but as we supposed the meeting would be ended before we could get there we kept the house. At night we had a tedious conference. May the Lord restore peace to the societies!

"How unfit for business after riding a hundred miles through storms of snow since the day before yesterday morning, with a fellow-traveler fearful of being thrown from his horse, or his horse falling down with him." Poor Hoyer! here he is again, traveling with the presiding elder through the storm, over bad roads, at, as he conceives, the imminent hazard of his life every moment. And the poor presiding elder endures all the vexations arising from the

alarms and groans of the good, but notional and cowardly brother, for the sake of his help at the quarterly meetings. He groans at night after a tedious and vexatious day's ride with such a "fellow-traveler," but one rousing sermon from the dear old Dutchman makes ample amends for all the inconveniences of the journey.

"*Sunday, 13,*" says Mr. Colbert, "we had a blessed love-feast and sacrament this morning; after which I preached from Matthew xviii, 3, and the Lord attended his word with power. Brothers Billings, Sweet, and Hill exhorted, and we left four or five crying for mercy when we returned to Joseph Blair's.

"*Monday, 14.* Spent at Joseph Blair's, and in the evening a few assembled to hold a prayer-meeting. Several of our sisters were carried away with ecstasies of joy. I cannot but make mention of the sorrows of Sister Green on account of her hardened daughter, Sally. Never did I see a mother in such agony for the salvation of a daughter. She prayed for her until she fell four or five times; and all this, with all the awful warnings and loving intreaties of others, brought not this stubborn mortal on her knees. There is a peculiar stiffness in the people of this northern clime, which often brings me to wish myself from among them; but they must be preached to.

"I believe, from what I have been told, that good has been done at our quarterly meeting. I have been informed that four were converted last night who were under conviction yesterday."

We understand all this perfectly, for we well remember nearly all the parties mentioned. "Aunt Green," as we used to call her, was a woman of great zeal and of unrivalled tenacity of purpose. "Her hardened daughter, Sally," was like her mother in unyielding firmness, or what might, without much injustice, be called obstinacy. She would never get upon her knees to accommodate anybody, until she felt constrained by the awakening Spirit of God. She was an independent thinker, and acted upon her own responsi-

bility. Her will was stronger than her sympathy, and we can see how she stood all the assaults in the form of threatenings and entreaties of the occasion described by Mr. C., without flinching in the least.

But Sally Green had another side to her character. She was generous and frank. The sensitiveness of her nature was deep and unobserved; her moral convictions concealed behind a rough exterior. A blunt refusal to make a religious effort with her simply meant, "Let me alone until I get ready, then I will start in my own way;" and so she did. Sally Green embraced religion at the same time we did, was baptized and united with the Church on the same day, and the last we knew of her she was still a worthy member of the Church. She was subsequently married to Mr. David Lent, of Mendon.

Mr. Colbert's severe judgment pronounced upon "the people of this northern clime," was the result of not fully understanding the Yankee character. The people of New England were trained to stand up in prayer. Kneeling was in their view an indication, if not a profession of *Methodism*, and they must be thoroughly broken down before they would come to their knees. When the southern people knelt, they often meant nothing more than an act of decent respect for religion; but the northern people came not down upon their knees until their hearts were melted into contrition, and they were willing to have it understood that they were ready to become fools for Christ's sake.

We next have a record in the diary which is of a piece with one which we have passed, but will now go back and gather up that the two may be seen together. They are small matters, but go to illustrate the condition of society, and the character of our old itinerant preachers.

"*Friday, October 27.* Spent at my friend Daniel Dorsey's mending my old boots. Brother Smith Weeks employed a part of the day in mending Brother Hoyer's boots. We are obliged to be frugal in this country.

"*Saturday, 28.* Spent at Daniel Dorsey's, the fore part

of the day in mending my shoes, and the latter part in reading the news, my Bible, and Fletcher and Benson against Priestley."

The other record is of the same class: "*November 15* I spent at Joseph Blair's, and began to provide for my feet by making me a pair of socks. *Wednesday, 16.* Busy making my socks. *Thursday, 17.* Spent at my good friend Blair's."

A short time previously he had mended up his boots; but the weather was waxing cold, and he needed something more than bare boots to keep his feet from freezing. He now spends three days at his good friend Blair's, during which time he makes for himself a pair of "socks," or something which answered the purpose of what we call overshoes. We should like to see just such "a pair of socks," and hand them to one of our modern young preachers, and say: "Here, my good brother, draw these over your boots, mount your horse and ride from Joseph Blair's to Canajoharie, through a November snow-storm, and attend a quarterly meeting among the Dutch." It would be a wonder if he would consent to the proposition. It is likely enough that he would not like the looks of the "socks," and would express his fear that he "might take cold."

But think of a company of Methodist preachers turning cobblers at *Judge Dorsey's*. Possibly there was no such functionary as a cobbler in Lyons at that time, yet there might have been, but the difficulty was to get the few pennies to settle the bill. The latter seems likely enough to have been the trouble, for Mr. Colbert put the proceeding upon the basis of economy. "We are obliged," says he, "to be frugal in this country." Noble men, those! One, and a presiding elder too, mending his own boots and shoes; and another doing the same thing for a poor brother who had not the skill to do it himself. Such men deserve to have their names immortalized in history.

Mr. Colbert proceeded on his regular track from Middlefield down the Mohawk River, thence to Utica, and thence to

the Black River, back to Pompey and Western, and thence takes his course of appointments through the lake country.

Monday, December 26, he tells us he spent with Smith Weeks at Jonah Tooker's.

"*Tuesday, 27.* I rode from Squire Tooker's to Jonah Green's, in Owego Woods, where I preached to a small congregation."

On Wednesday he rode to Owego village.

"*Thursday, 29.* James Herron and Samuel Budd fell in with me at Jonathan Gaskill's. I preached; the people were attentive. In the evening I rode to James Ross's and preached to a large congregation in the school-house at Nanticoke. James Herron preached after me, and Samuel Budd gave an exhortation."

"*Friday, 30.* On my journey to-day I stopped at Chenango Point to feed my horse, where I fell in with a company of the sons of Belial, who were drinking and swearing. I could not but reprove them, for which I had to bear the insolent language of one who was called Lawyer Derry. Any man of common sense, to hear how much he talked like a fool, we might suppose, would not think he had sense enough for a lawyer."

"Chenango Point," now our great and beautiful Binghamton, with its two Methodist churches and its elegant seminary, was in a sad moral condition in the days of Colbert, and for years subsequent to those days.

Saturday, 31, Mr. Colbert notes: "Our quarterly meeting commenced to-day at Noah Hoadley's, in Randolph; a number of decent young friends attended. I preached to them from 'Wilt thou be made whole?' Abram Miner and James Herron spoke after me, and Samuel Budd concluded with prayer. At night David Wilcox preached and Brother Budd and myself exhorted, and a lively time we had.

"*Sunday, January 1, 1804.* Glory to God! this year has begun well with me. We had a blessed love-feast this morning; many lately brought into the fold of the Redeemer

spoke delightfully. We administered the sacrament, after which I preached from Luke xiii, 6-9. Weaver, Budd, and Herron exhorted powerfully after me. Glory to God! this has been a happy day.

"*Monday, 2.* I rode from Noah Hoadley's to Roswell Higley's, where I dined and prayed, and set off for Lawyer Catlin's.

"*Tuesday, 3.* Rode from Lawyer Catlin's to Squire Lyons's.

"*Wednesday, 4.* Rode from Lyons's to John Eastwood's. This afternoon has been extremely cold.

"*Thursday, 5.* I have had a cold ride from John Eastwood's to Thomas Giles's. I found it farther than I expected, though I have not suffered as much with the cold as I did yesterday. I was out until in the night.

"*Friday, 6,* I spent at Thomas Giles's, in Brookfield, reading my Bible, and sixty pages of Dr. Huntington's abominable work, Calvinism Improved, in which he makes out the state of sinners as safe as the saints, and that the sufferings of both end with this life.*

"*Saturday, 7.* Began our quarterly meeting at Brookfield. Benjamin Bidlack preached for us. John B. Hudson and John Dickins exhorted after him, and I concluded the meeting. We repaired to Thomas Giles's to hold our quarterly conference, where John Dickins was recommended as a suitable person to be employed as a traveling preacher. At night Brother Dickins preached at Samuel Hill's. I was well satisfied with his discourse. I gave an exhortation after him, and John Graham spoke after me. It was a lively time. We left them shouting and rejoicing, and returned to Thomas Giles's.

"*Sunday, 8.* Cold as was the weather, and uncomfortable as was the barn, we had a time of refreshing this morning in the love-feast and at the sacrament; after which I preached. Benjamin Bidlack preached after me. Ebenezer White gave

* Thomas Giles before his conversion was a Universalist, and a friend of Hosea Ballou; it is likely the copy of Huntington which Mr. Colbert read was a volume of his old library.

an exhortation. We concluded the meeting and repaired to Bliss Webb's. Here Brother Bidlack preached a lengthy, good sermon, and I gave a short exhortation after him."

Mr. Colbert next proceeds to his Otsego quarterly meeting at Elwood's, in Stewart's Patent, on Wednesday. Next he proceeded to Henry Hathaway's, in Norway, to his Herkimer quarterly meeting on Saturday and Sabbath. Monday, 16, he rode from Shadrach Vincent's to David Spencer's, in Boons's Settlement. Tuesday, 17, he rode from David Spencer's to Solomon Molton's. Thursday, 19, he says: "I have suffered much in riding from my good friend Molton's, in Floyd, to Squire Wager's, in Western, from the extreme cold." Friday, 20, he spent at Squire Wager's, and finished Dr. Huntington's book, "a book," he says very truly, "much calculated to lead souls to destruction."* The last quarterly meeting for the year for Western circuit was held at Western, Saturday and Sabbath, 21st and 22d, at the close of which, cold as it was, Mr. Colbert "baptized a woman by immersion in the Mohawk River, and in the evening rode to Andrew Clark's." He heard Eber Cowles preach in the evening, and "he married a young man by the name of John Goodenough to Andrew Clark's daughter Rebecca." Monday, 23, he preached at Andrew Clark's.

"*Saturday*, 28. Quarterly meeting at Saquoit. Benjamin Bidlack preached. Charles Giles and myself exhorted after him." Sunday they had a good time in love-feast and sacrament. In the evening "had a cold ride to Barak Cooley's."

Monday, 30. He remarks: "I have suffered much to-day riding from Cooley's to Abner Camp's, in Cazenovia, in company with Brother Vandusen." Here Mr. C. had a quarterly meeting for Pompey circuit on Tuesday. He hurries on in accomplishing his fourth round.

Saturday, February 4, he speaks of "a long, cold ride from John Thompson's to Alward White's in Marcellus." "Had a good love-feast" on Sabbath morning; after which

* But advocating a theory that no modern Universalist holds.

he preached. He next proceeds to Cayuga, Ontario, and Seneca circuits, with no marked success. He makes his last visit to his old Maryland friends in Lyons, and works his way around to old Tioga, where he made his first missionary demonstrations in 1792.

Thursday, 23, he says: "Extreme cold. I suffered much in riding from Catharinetown to Newtown Point, where I dined, after which I rode to Jacob Kress's."

Friday, 24. This day he rode to Tioga Point with great apprehensions that he should there receive a letter informing him of the death of his father, but to his "great satisfaction," found one informing him of "his recovery."

Saturday, 25. His last quarterly meeting on the district was at Sugar Creek. Elisha Cole preached, and John B. Hudson exhorted. "I," says Mr. Colbert, "exhorted after him, and Brother Herron concluded the meeting."

Here Mr. C. makes a long lamentation over Samuel Budd, who had, as he considered the matter, very hastily married and gone off on a visit with his wife. He looks upon such men with suspicion. "The curse of God," he thinks, will be very likely "to follow" the men who "leave the work of God for the sake of a woman." At this distance of time it is difficult to form a correct opinion of the transaction of which Mr. Colbert complains, but sure it is that although Budd had success at first as a preacher he stumbled afterward. Whether the predicted *curse* fell upon him we dare not say; but it is certain that he became embarrassed in his Church relations, and finally connected himself with the Methodist Protestants.

The quarterly meeting at Ballard's concluded, Mr. Colbert parted with the preachers, and each one went his own way. He says: "I have now parted with all my brethren in the district, and am on my way to Baltimore, in Maryland." He moved on southward, preaching as often as he could find hearers.

Thursday, March 1, he says: "I took leave of my friends Elisha Cole and David Downing, and their families, and a

disagreeable ride I have had through the snow to John Hollenbeck's, where I was well entertained, and treated with more politeness than at any tavern between the Mohawk and Genesee rivers." He next stops at Mason Alden's, at Meshopen, where, he says, "I am kindly received by my old acquaintance." On Saturday he came to James Sutton's, and on Sunday rode on to Gilbert Carpenter's; "got there in the time of their class-meeting, and preached at night at Squire Benjamin Carpenter's." On Monday he "rode to Colonel Dennison's, and preached at night in the school-house." On Tuesday "rode to Darius Williams's, and preached at night. On Wednesday he dined at Squire Pierce's, then went "to William Grange's, in Wilkesbarre, and preached at night to a pretty little well-behaved congregation." Thursday, 8. "Preached at night at Shawney, at their school-house, and lodged at Mr. Hodge's. Sister Hodge is a very active, sensible, and pious woman."

Thence Mr. Colbert proceeds down the river to Andrew Blanchard's, Amos Park's, and Christian Bowman's. At the last-named place we take leave of him on the 15th March, 1804. He attended conference, and was appointed to Chesapeake district and never returned to this northern country.*

1804. This year our field is divided between three annual conferences. Black River, Western, and Herkimer are in the Albany district, New York Conference; Elijah Woolsey, presiding elder. Wyoming is in the Susquehanna district, Baltimore Conference; James Smith, presiding elder. The eight remaining circuits, namely, Chenango, Westmoreland, Otsego, Pompey, Cayuga, Ontario, Seneca, and Tioga constitute Genesee district, in the Philadelphia Conference. Joseph Jewell presiding elder.

The circuits are manned by the old tried warriors as-

* We have seen a letter from Mr. Colbert to Judge Dorsey, in which it is stated that Bishop Asbury wished him to return to Genesee district; but the health of his father was such that he considered it his duty to ask for an appointment at the South.

sisted by several new recruits. Among the former class are John Husselkus, Eber Cowles, Benjamin Bidlack, Ebenzer White, William Hill, Frederic Woodward, William Hoyer, Roger Benton, John Billings. Among the latter are Benoni Harris, Nathan Smith, John Dickins, Sylvester Hill, Parley Parker, Thomas Dunn. Several of these men had been raised up in the country where they commenced their labors, and were the fruit of the revivals of the last few years. They had been trained to hard work and hard fare, and were full of zeal for the cause of God and the conversion of sinners. Two of the bravest and most successful of the old pioneers, Jonathan Newman and Timothy Dewey, this year are found in the list of such as "are under a location through weakness of body or family concerns."

This year the preachers on Cayuga circuit commenced preaching in what is now the county seat of Cortland county, and is called Cortlandville. The following account of the introduction of Methodism into this interesting place, before it could be called a village, is taken from "The History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Cortland, by Rev. L. D. Davis," of the Oneida Conference:

"In 1804 Rev. William Hill, the preacher in charge of Cayuga circuit, visited this place, and established an appointment. He had formerly been a Baptist clergyman, but was now a member of the Philadelphia Conference, which extended north to the Canada line. On his arrival he called on Mr. Jonathan Hubbard, to whom he made known his business as an ambassador for Christ, and his wish to preach the Gospel to this people. Arrangements were accordingly made, and notice sent to the different families residing in the neighborhood, who assembled at the appointed time and listened to the word of life. So far as can now be ascertained this was the first sermon ever preached within the bounds of Cortland village. The congregation assembled at Mr. Hubbard's house, and consisted of about twenty persons, embracing most of those residing in this part of the town,

"There were, at the time of Mr. Hill's visit, but three houses within the limits of the present corporation. Mr. Crittendon had disposed of his house and land to Mr. Hubbard, who resided at what is now the corner of Main and Center streets, where this meeting was held. He had recently moved in with his family and adopted this as his future home. Though a member of the Presbyterian Church, he had, while residing in Massachusetts, frequently listened to the preaching of such men as Jesse Lee, George Pickering, Silas Stebbins, Timothy Dewey, and their co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord. Through the instrumentality of their labors Mrs. H. and two or three of their children had already become members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They were, therefore, prepared to extend a cordial welcome to a herald of the cross thus visiting them in the wilderness. At their request Mr. Hill left another appointment, and from that early date to the present regular Methodist preaching has been maintained in this place. Thomas Dunn was the junior preacher, and alternated with Mr. Hill in his rounds on the circuit.

"As the traveling preachers continued to visit Cortland,* it was soon deemed expedient to organize a society. Accordingly, in the winter of the same year, Mr. Hill received the following persons into the Church and formed them into a class, namely : Jonathan Hubbard, Mary Hubbard, James Hubbard, Abigail Hubbard, Elijah Batchelor, Martha Batchelor, Isaac Bassett, Polly Bassett, William Bassett, and Catherine Sherwood. Elijah Batchelor was appointed class-leader. He had been a member of the New York Conference, where he traveled for some years as an itinerant minister, and had now located and removed to this western country. It was through his influence that the circuit preachers were induced to labor here, and, as he often preached in their absence, he was greatly instrumental in building up and strengthening

* Though Cortlandville was then included in the town of Homer, it is here and elsewhere spoken of in these pages, for the purpose of avoiding confusion, by the name which it now bears.

the little society. He was, soon after, called upon to resume the active duties of the ministry, and, like a true disciple of Christ, left all and went forth to proclaim the glad tidings of peace to a lost and ruined world. The circuit embracing Cortland became several times his field of labor, so that his connection with the class here was not entirely broken off. Methodism, in her early struggles, was greatly indebted to his counsels and prayers for the degree of prosperity which she enjoyed. James Hubbard and Abigail, his sister, now Mrs. Bassett, are still with us as members of the Church to which they were then attached. During half a century they have identified their interests with this branch of Zion, and are yet permitted to rejoice in the prosperity that has attended the people of their choice. The others have, ere this, departed, as we humbly trust, to join the Church triumphant in the city of God above. They lived, however, to witness many trophies of redeeming grace, as sinners were brought into the kingdom of Christ through the instrumentality of this people.

"The society of ten members thus constituted was attached to Cayuga circuit, which was then embraced in Genesee district of the Philadelphia Conference. The district contained eight charges, which covered in their extent most of the territory now embraced in the five conferences lying wholly or in part in Western New York. Cayuga circuit, which had been taken from Seneca in 1799, extended from Lake Ontario on the north to a line near the old turnpike running east from Ithaca on the south, and from Cayuga Lake on the west to the Cincinnatus valley on the east. It was nearly as large as some modern conferences, and yet the unconquerable energy of two itinerant ministers enabled them to make regular visits to all its parts, and preach the Gospel to as many of its inhabitants as were willing to hear. To accomplish this extensive forests had to be threaded, without the least semblance of roads, and often with no other directions for their journey than the marks on the trees. Rivers had to be crossed without the help

of bridges, mountains ascended and descended with neither companion nor guide, and suffering and peril in a thousand forms endured without human alleviation or support. Added to all this, those itinerants were often reduced to extreme want, from the poverty of their brethren and the limited compensation which they received for their labors. Indeed, the subject of pay did not seem to be taken into the account. They lived with the settlers on the scantiest fare, and suffered with them, for the sole purpose of winning them to Christ. The record of such examples as they have left us is seldom to be found on the page of uninspired history.

“Rev. Joseph Jewell filled the office of presiding elder until the year 1808, when the district was transferred to New York Conference, and Rev. Peter Vannest appointed his successor. Neither of these men held quarterly meetings in Cortland. The circuit was large, and contained many societies more prominent than this, and better able to sustain the interest of these meetings.”

CHAPTER III.

METHODISM IN CANADA.

THE late venerable Peter Vannest, while enjoying the retirement suitable to his age and infirmities, sketched many of his recollections of pioneer service for the information of the public. Several rare contributions from him are to be found in the files of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*. We shall make some extracts from one of these communications, which may be found in the number for September 8, 1847.

In 1802 Joseph Jewell, presiding elder, from Upper Canada, came to the Philadelphia and New York Conferences

upon a recruiting expedition, as at that time no one was sent across the line without his consent. Mr. Vannest says: "I volunteered, and was sent to Oswegatchie. From a place called Bastard to the River Beddo was fourteen miles the way the road went; but to cross a point of woods it was but seven. I got a man to pilot me; he was soon bewildered, and said that we were lost, and despaired of ever finding the way out. We tried to track our way back, but it was impossible, the leaves were so thick; so I undertook to pilot myself, and soon found the road. We got safe to the appointment. At that place I found an Indian family encamped on the shore of the river. The man asked me for some tobacco, and I gave him some. The next morning I went to see him, and he offered me a fine leg of venison. I told him I did not want it. He said: 'You take 'em, you eat 'em, you welcome—'bacco.' I asked him how far their castle was. He held up his hands, and said so many hundred miles. I asked him to show me how he went. He took a stick and made a map on the sand, so complete as to show the lakes and rivers, and carrying places for their canoes through the woods. I asked him the distance from such to such a place. He began with his fingers thus: One finger for a hundred miles, a crooked finger for fifty, and a finger across the crooked one for twenty-five miles. I marked down as he went from place to place, and found out it was one thousand miles to an appointment. We had to go twenty miles without seeing a house, and were guided by marked trees, there being no roads. At one time my colleague was late in getting through the woods, when the wolves began to howl around him, and the poor man felt much alarmed; but he got through unhurt, for which he felt thankful to the Lord.

"I think in August I went to Bay of Quinte circuit, which was very large. In summer we crossed ferries, and in winter rode much on the ice. One appointment was thirty-four miles distant, without any stopping place. Most of the way was through the Indians' land. In summer I

used to stop about half way, in the woods, and turn my horse out where the Indians had had their fires. In winter I would take some oats in my saddle-bags, and make a place in the snow to feed my horse. In many places there were trees fallen across the path, which made it difficult getting around in deep snow. I asked the Indians why they did not cut out the trees. One said: "Indian like deer; where he cannot creep under he jump over." There was seldom any traveling that way, which made it bad, in deep snows, to break the road. At one time when the snow was deep, I went on the ice until I could see clear water, so I thought it time to go ashore. I got off my horse and led him, and the ice cracked at every step. If it had broken there would have been nothing but death for us both, but the good Lord preserved man and beast. I got to the woods in deep snow, and traveled up the shore till I found a small house, where I found out the course to my path through the woods. Keeping a good look-out for the marked trees, I at last found my appointment, about seven o'clock. If I had missed my path I do not know what would have become of me. At my stopping-place the family had no bread, nor meal to make any of till they borrowed some of a neighbor; so I got my dinner and supper about eleven o'clock on Saturday night. On Sabbath I preached. On Monday rode about five miles, crossed the bay, and then rode seventeen miles through the woods without seeing a house, preached, and met class for a day's work.

"In the spring of 1803 I led my horse about three miles on the ice on the Bay of Quinte, in the forenoon. That night the ice all sank to the bottom, so that the next morning there was none to be seen! So the good Lord has saved me from many dangers, both seen and unseen. Glory be to his holy name forever! Amen.

"In 1803 I went to Niagara circuit with a young man by the name of Samuel How. We had no presiding elder that year, so I had to attend quarterly meetings on that and on Long Point circuits.

"At a newly-settled place on the circuit I appointed a love-feast and sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It was a new thing in that place, and many attended. There was a small class there. I told the leader to admit all members and serious persons; so he let them in, until the house was filled to overflowing, but I did the best I could with the multitudes. I inquired why he let so many in. He said they all looked serious, and he did not know them.

"After meeting a genteel, looking man came to me and requested me to preach in his house. I said I did not think I could, as I had so many appointments; but I inquired where he lived, and what sort of a house he had. He said he had a large house; he kept tavern, and had a large ball-room, that would hold many. 'Sir,' said I, 'you do not want meeting in your house; there was no room for the Lord in the inn; but I thank you for your compliment. You know you do not want it, and the Lord knows you do not want it.' So the man went away, and before he got half way home he felt convicted, and said to himself: 'I did not want meeting; how did the man read my heart?' When he got home he made up his mind to sell his distillery, and make and sell no more whisky. So he gave his ball-room to the Lord for a place of worship until the society could get a better place. There were seven brothers of them, who, with their wives, all got religion, and a good work began in that place. So the Lord works in his own way. Glory be to his holy name!"

Through the labors of missionaries, some of whom remained but a short time, while others finally adopted the country, and remained there permanently, the work of God continued to advance in Canada. Young men were raised up from among the people of the provinces who did good service, and were especially adapted to the state of society, and were British subjects, and consequently not looked upon with an eye of jealousy, but had unrestricted access to all classes. By these means Methodism became firmly established in the Canadian provinces, and acquired a vast influ-

ence over the masses. The brave old pioneers, like Vannest, were the first to visit the poor, hardy, and hard-working people at their cabins, and tell them of the Saviour's love, and it was not easy to turn them away from the teachings and pastoral oversight of those who, under God, had been the means of their conversion.

CHAPTER IV.

METHODISM WEST OF THE GENESEE RIVER.

THE work of God kept pace with the advance of civilization westward. As the enterprising and hardy pioneers set themselves down in the wilderness and commenced felling the trees, the Spirit of God commenced the work of preparing the way for the seed of truth and the establishment of the Church in the wilderness. Some of the emigrants had been brought to God by the instrumentality of the Methodist preachers in the more thickly populated portions of the state at the east, and they did not leave their religion behind them.

Rev. Glezen Fillmore gives the following account of the rise of Methodism in that now flourishing and wealthy portion of the state of New York which lies west of the Genesee River.

David Hamlin came from Honeoye, and settled in a place called Pine Grove, now Clarence, in 1804. He was a Methodist, and kept up family worship. On the Sabbath he read one of Mr. Wesley's sermons to his family and such of his neighbors as desired to be present. He occasionally held meetings in other places, where he prayed and exhorted, thus acting the part of a John the Baptist in preparing the way of the Lord. For three years the few scattered sheep in the wilderness sought spiritual edification in

listening to the reading of a sermon and to the exhortations of a pious layman on the Lord's day. God was with this good man, and kept his spirit alive until the needed relief came.

At the Philadelphia Conference, in April, 1807, Peter Vannest was appointed a missionary to the Holland Purchase. He forded the Genesee River near the place where the city of Rochester now stands, and in the month of June preached his first sermon in what is now Ogden Center. The first class was formed in August, in that part of the town of Clarence, now Newstead, at the house of Charles Knight, who had emigrated the previous spring from Eaton, Madison county. The following is a list of the names of this class. Charles Knight, Lydia Knight, Leonard Osborn, Lydia Osborn, David Hamlin, Sen., Rebecca Hamlin, David Hamlin, Jun., Anna Hamlin, Rebecca Hamlin, 2d, Jedediah Felton, Persis Felton, and Persis Haines. The last named still lives, and is the oldest resident member of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the bounds of the Genesee Conference. All the others died in the faith, and now belong to the glorious company of heaven. Charles Knight was the first leader.

Daniel Hamlin's house was one of the best homes for the preachers in the Holland Purchase. He sometime met more than one eighth of the claim upon the whole circuit. He died at an advanced age. When near his end Dr. Smith, who attended him, said to him: "We have long seen how you have lived, now we wish to see how you will die. How do you feel now? What are your prospects?" The dying saint lifted his eyes toward heaven and exclaimed, "An ocean of glory!" and breathed his last.

Mr. Vannest held a sacrament at some point, probably in Middlebury, and had five communicants. He returned, according to the Minutes, fifty members.

1808. George Lane and Thomas Elliott were appointed to the Holland Purchase mission. Mr. Lane held the first

camp-meeting west of the Genesee River. This meeting was held in Caledonia, now Wheatland. This year a quarterly meeting was held in Clarence, at which James Herron presided, but left no very strong impression. He had contracted the habit of an extraordinary variation in his voice from a very high to an exceedingly low tone. Mr. Lane was unwearied in his labors, and was esteemed a very holy man. He reported ninety members.

The following extract from Mr. Lane's diary has been furnished us by his excellent lady, and will give the reader a good idea of his labors and dangers on this new field, and the spirit in which he bore himself under them :

"This day I started from the house of Brother Bush, where I formed a society of eight members, for Buffalo, a distance of fifty miles.

"At Cattaraugus I fell in company with a man and his wife, and a child eighteen months old, and two single men, who were all traveling in the same direction. The gentleman and his wife and infant, and one of the other men rode in the sleigh. The other man and myself were on horseback.

"When we came to the lake we were obliged to travel on the ice along or near the beach. The wind had blown the ice into such ridges it was nearly impossible to cross them ; in some places they were very high, and the cakes of ice were frozen together so loosely that we were in danger of falling through into the water. The wind blew like a hurricane, and caused the snow to fly as though it had been falling fast from the clouds. We were all the while nearly blinded by the flying snow, and we found it almost impossible to proceed on our way.

"After traveling about nineteen miles on land, and six on the ice, the night closed in upon us. What to do under the circumstances we could scarcely determine. The horses driven to the sleigh gave out. The snow had fallen to such a depth that it came above the body of the sleigh, which greatly increased the labor of the horses. For some dis-

tance the winds had kept an open space between the rocky shore on the right and the snowdrifts on the left. This space had been wide enough thus far for the sleigh and horses, until at length the drift crossed this open space, and closed it up so that we could proceed no farther. What to do we knew not; we first tried to force our horses through the drift. We who were on horseback first made the attempt; the snow was not only deep, but very hard packed by the strong wind and intense cold. The horses reared and sprang, and reared again, and struggled hard to get through, and appeared as though they were floundering in deep mire, and after a long while they succeeded.

“After getting safely through ourselves, I left my horse with the other gentleman and went to aid in bringing the sleigh through. After treading down the snow as well as we could, the owner of the horses took one side and I the other, with whip in hand, and tried to force them through the drift, which was accumulating at a fearful rate. But the horses, after repeated attempts, gave up the struggle, and would make no farther exertion. What expedient to try next, for a moment, we were at a loss. The night was upon us, the weather excessively cold, our animals as well as ourselves exposed to great suffering, the icicles had formed upon their legs, which rattled against each other as they traveled or stood shivering in the cold. The wind was blowing a gale from the northwest, and we were opposite a ledge of rocks which rose to the height of sixty feet for some distance along the shore, against which the snow was accumulating most fearfully. To remain where we were even for a short time would be certain death. Some of our company advised to try to find an opening through the rocks into the woods where we might encamp for the night, though we had neither fire, or food, or shelter, nor sufficient clothing to keep us warm or prevent us from freezing. But counter advice prevailed, and it was soon determined to unharness the horses and leave the sleigh. One of the travelers on horseback gave his horse to the lady, and her

husband with the child in his arms mounted one of the horses driven to the sleigh, while the other was rode by the traveler who gave his horse to the lady. Thus equipped, we determined by the blessing of God to make a desperate effort to reach the public house at Eighteen Mile Creek, many miles distant.

"To get clear of the snow-drift we were obliged to strike off on the lake, but we found the ice exceedingly rough, occasioned by the high wind when the lake was freezing. The snowdrift which we had to avoid on the shore had increased to an enormous height, and was said the next morning to be sixty feet high. We had traveled but a short distance when the horse which carried the man and child stumbled and fell, pitching both into the snow, which so completely covered them they could scarcely be seen. They were dug out however and reseated, and in a few minutes we were on our way again. My own mind had been greatly sustained and comforted throughout this journey of peril, and I confidently believed that He who saved St. Paul and the ship's company from perishing by sea would save us from perishing on Lake Erie. About nine o'clock at night we arrived safely at a public house kept by Mr. Ingleson, at Eighteen Mile Creek, and felt we were under unspeakably great obligations to our Almighty Preserver.

"The next morning the owner, with others, went in search of the sleigh, but could find nothing of it. The snow had covered it, and it could not be discovered for months. After the snow had disappeared, the sleigh with a hundred dollars of money, which had been left in it, was found, and the faithful dog who had remained to watch it was also there, dead, by the side of his master's property.

"*Tuesday, January 24.* I started again for Buffalo, but found the wind so high and the snow so drifted that, after traveling ten miles, I was obliged to stop at the house of Brother Titus. At night a few travelers came in, to whom, with the family, I was requested to deliver a discourse; but, according to a long-established practice, I sought a place for secret

prayer, and for want of a better retired to a log stable, but found no room there; so I went around the stable and cleared the snow away with my feet, (it was about two feet deep,) and kneeled there before the Lord to implore divine aid in delivering his message to the people; nor did I ask in vain, but found help from above.

“My route led me through the Indian village southwest of Buffalo, where the famous chief Red Jacket resided or frequently visited. I often called at their wigwams to inquire my way. The road was new, through woods; in winter plenty of snow, in the spring the mud very deep, the streams swollen; in many places the streams had to be forded; but notwithstanding all this, through the protecting care of my Heavenly Father I was saved from all my difficulties and dangers.”

1809. The preachers upon the mission were James Mitchell and Joseph Gatchell. In April of this year Glezen Fillmore came to Clarence an exhorter. He was converted and joined the Church in Westmoreland, at Daniel Seeley's. Mr. Fillmore went to a place now called Skinnerville, to see a family with whom he had been acquainted at the East. He was invited to come there and hold a meeting, and left an appointment for the next Sabbath. On Sabbath morning he went to the place, and on his approach to it he saw people wandering about carelessly, but upon arriving at the place of meeting he found no one there except the family. Brother Wright, the man of the house, seemed distressed at the disappointment, and rising under the influence of considerable excitement said: “I cannot stand it!” He went out and returned with two persons, a man by the name of Maltby and his wife. The family and these two constituted the congregation, but Mr. Fillmore, nothing daunted, proceeded with his meeting. Mr. Maltby and his wife seemed considerably impressed. At the close of the exercises Mr. Maltby said it had been “a solemn meeting,” repeating the words several times. He invited Mr. Fillmore to hold a meeting at his house the next Sabbath, to which he gave his

cordial consent. When the time arrived the house was full, and a good religious feeling prevailed. A revival immediately commenced and a society was formed. Mr. Maltby and his wife were among the converts, and he became a local preacher. Four of his sons are now members of the Erie Conference. Grand results often follow what appear to be small causes. Mr. Fillmore was licensed to preach, and continued his labors in a local capacity for the space of nine years, preaching in the newly opening settlements and preparing the way for the traveling preachers. This period he considers as one of the most useful and successful portions of his life.

We have seen that Mitchell and Gatchell were the preachers in the Holland Purchase in 1809. This year the country filled up rapidly. There was a pressing call for preaching in many places. Mitchell was very popular, and being unusually easy in his terms of membership, had a large increase. A camp-meeting was held in East Bethany, in the Bennett neighborhood, which was very successful; some were converted at this meeting who did good service to the Church.

1810. John Kimberlin and William Brown are the preachers. Kimberlin was occasionally very eloquent and produced strong impressions, and on other occasions he was depressed and made failures. Brown was eccentric. He carried with him a quotation Bible, and seemed to think that the way to explain and enforce the word of God was to group together the same words and phrases. As a specimen of his preaching take a sermon on the text: "A man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest." First he has a great number of places where "a man" is found, then a large number where "a hiding-place" occurs, then "the wind," and "a covert," and so on; winding up his discourse with a multitude of words and phrases similar to those employed in his text without reference to their connections; but as he seemed "to have the Bible all by heart," and would quote "book, chapter,

and verse," although his quotations amounted to nothing, and no one remembered one out of the hundred of his references, some called him "a great preacher."

William Brown, however, was zealous in the cause, and labored hard for the salvation of souls. He once said, if he should preach a fortnight and see no conversion he should think that he had missed his calling.

The last quarter of the year Brown was sent to Chautauque, and Ralph Lanning came on in his place. At the end of the quarter he reported one hundred and fifty members in that new field. He once had an appointment across the Conawango when the water was very high. He swam his horse across the turbulent stream, and, on reaching the opposite shore, became entangled in a grape vine. He finally succeeded in cutting away the brush with his pocket-knife, and thus made his escape.

Such adventures, perfectly common in those early times, go to illustrate the state of the country and the character and pluck of the old pioneer preachers. Traveling through the wilderness and crossing streams was then a laborious and a perilous business; and yet the old preachers faced the danger and fought their way through like heroes, as they were. It is a doubtful question whether a man should run the risk of his life, and that of his beast, to say nothing of becoming thoroughly drenched, on a cold day, merely to meet a small congregation. Perhaps, however, the question would not now by most persons be considered a doubtful one, but would be decided in the negative without a long debate.

SENECA CIRCUIT.

1805. Joseph Jewell is presiding elder on Genesee district. Some few changes in the occupants of the circuits.

This year the preachers on Seneca circuit were Thomas Smith and Charles Giles. They have both left a record of the labors of the year. Mr. Giles says:

"This ample circuit covered all that tract of land be-

tween the Cayuga and Seneca lakes, south and west of the Seneca lake and north to Lyons; encircling a large extent of country, thinly peopled; the inhabitants mostly poor."

Mr. Smith gives us the following particulars of his toils, dangers, and successes:

"*May 1, 1805.* Conference was held at Chestertown, Maryland, and I was appointed to Seneca circuit, in the Genesee country, state of New York. I was six hundred miles from the field of my labor. The distance around my circuit was three hundred miles, and the distance from one appointment to another was from five to fifty miles.

"*May 16.* I set out for the north to my circuit, the field of my labor for the ensuing conference year. On my way I passed through Asbury, New Jersey, where I put up with my esteemed friend Mr. M'Cullough, and on a short notice had a congregation, to which I preached. The next day I renewed my journey. On coming to the Blue Mountain, and passing through the Water Gap, I was waylaid by a man waiting to kill me, from whom I made the narrowest escape. He missed his blow, or he would have had my life, with my horse, and money, etc. Before he could renew the charge I was escaped as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

"*May 21.* I preached in Wilkesbarre, a handsome town on the Susquehanna. I put up with a Mr. Penson, who treated me politely and kindly. The next day I renewed my journey toward the wilderness of Genesee.

"*June 3.* I reached my circuit, and the next day I preached to my backwoods friends, and was comforted with their company and conversation. I have passed through various scenes in coming to this circuit since I left Maryland. I will instance one, a trying one to me, when I was lost and bewildered:

"Having got out of my way on the side of a mountain, and aiming for the top in an Indian path, I ascended to where my horse could not turn round. I then alighted, and went on foot to see if I could get around the mountain. I believed that I could, and returned to my horse.

To undertake to turn him about would be to cause him to fall some hundreds of yards; to go forward he could but die. I tied the lash of my whip to the end of his bridle, to keep as much space between me and my horse as I could, and led him, the mountain still extending up some hundred yards further: we went on till we came to the point of the mountain which projected over the Susquehanna River. This was the trying moment. Behold a man and horse in a sloping path, twelve inches broad, on a shelving rock, suspended as it were in the air, or projecting from the mountain's peak, hundreds of yards above the river's bed! How dreadful! Through the providence of God I got safe with my horse to the valley, when I dedicated *one hour* to God in prayer. I was told by the inhabitants that men and horses had fallen from this point of the mountain, and that, consequently, this way had long been abandoned. I have been in perils in the wilderness, in perils among venomous animals, in perils among the red men of the forest; and yet I live. May it be to glorify God on earth and to win souls to God!

"*June 8.* I passed through the Catherine Swamps alone and lonesome, only here and there passing a red man's house or Indian wigwam.

"*June 13.* I came to the cottage of Dr. Chamberlain, where I was most cordially received; but I had not long been there when a little girl came and inquired if I were a minister; if I were, her father wished to see me, for he was dying. Mrs. Chamberlain desired me to go and see the dying man while she prepared me some dinner. I did so; and when I returned the ash-cake was baking, and the bear-meat broiling. After I had eaten and prayed with the family, I set out for my next appointment on a hungry horse. Late in the afternoon I came to another preaching place. On riding up to the house a plain-looking man came out, and said: 'Art thou he that shall come, or do we look for another?' I said: 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord.'

To which he rejoined, 'Welcome in, thou servant of the Most High: in his name come in.'

"*June 14.* Having preached twice and rode forty miles, and night coming on, I rode up to a cabin. 'How do you do, friends. Do you know one Thomas Smith, a Methodist preacher?' 'No, sir; we don't know him.' 'I am the man: can I stay here to-night?' 'You cannot.' 'Good-by.'

"*June 27.* I preached at Geneva, a handsome town on the outlet of Seneca Lake. The people are very civil, very polite, making money, and some striving for heaven. Lord, grant that they may obtain the heavenly goal!

"*June 29.* I preached at Mr. M'Gregory's. Here were some warm-hearted people, who loved God and them that served him. And here were more Indians. They were very polite, but without the fear of God. They drink rum; and get drunk. Poor souls! Lord, have mercy on them!

"*July 3.* This day I swam my horse across a dangerous river, and passed through several Indian towns. There were the shining tomahawk and the glittering scalping-knife. I preached twice, and returned unhurt. To God be the glory!

"It has been said by some people that ministers preach for the sake of ease and profit. I know one that has rode four thousand miles, and preached four hundred sermons in one year; and laid many nights on wet cabin-floors, and sometimes covered with snow through the night, and his horse standing under a pelting storm of snow or rain; and at the end of that year receiving his traveling expenses and *four* silver dollars of his salary. Now if this be a life of pleasure, ease, and profit, pray what is a life of labor and toil?

"*July 24.* After preaching I was taken with a fever, and lay in a cabin six days on three old chairs; but the people were kind, and God was with me, and all was well.

"*August 9.* A camp-meeting was held on my circuit, which was kept up almost day and night. Preachers and people were at their posts, and all at work for God, and sinners were deeply affected, and came pleading with God

for mercy and pardon; and every morning's sun brought new subjects of rejoicing in souls converted. The red men of the forest came to the meeting, stood amazed, shed tears; then wiped their eyes, and said, 'Poor Indian, born to die!' A gentleman from Kent county, Maryland, came to this meeting, and spoke to one of these Indians, asking him some questions; the Indian gave the Christian a stern look in the face, and said: 'Sir, if you have anything to say to me you must wait till preaching is over.' Poor Christian, how justly rebuked by the heathen! A camp-meeting was a new thing in this new country. This was the first that was held in these parts, and much was said by some against preachers and people; forgetting that while their tongues were swelling the reproach of falsehood and shame, they were lighting up the road for a painful march to the sorrows of the dead.

"*August 18.* We have already gathered in considerable fruit of our camp-meeting. Our societies are increasing.

"*September 7.* I am bending my course northward, and preaching in many barren and destitute places, where the Gospel is new; and here and there I find a lost sheep willing to return to the fold. After preaching twice to-day, I put up in the evening, tired and hungry.

"*September 10.* I was at a camp-meeting on Cayuga circuit. On Sunday a gentleman was put up to preach who was not of us, a very learned and talented divine. He took occasion in that sermon to underrate the Methodist preachers, and represented them as anything but gentlemen and scholars. He then told us that God from all eternity had decreed whatever comes to pass; and that the number to be saved and the number to be lost were so definite that there was no adding to the one or diminishing the other. When he had closed his subject, an elder in his Church rose and said that his minister had preached doctrines that day he had never heard him preach before, and if that doctrine was true, he could not see why he should give him twenty-five dollars a year for preaching

to him; for if he were to be lost, lost he would be, if he were to give him his whole estate; and if he were to be saved, saved he would be, if he gave him not one dollar. 'And now,' said he, 'I am no more a Presbyterian; from this time I am a Methodist;' and that week himself and ten others came and joined the Methodist Church. I do not believe there was a sermon preached on that ground that did the Methodist cause so much good as those few remarks of our friend Bailey.

"*October 12.* In the afternoon I came into a new settlement, and called at the house of J. G. for entertainment, and was kindly received. Had myself and colleague been two angels from heaven Mrs. G. could have received us no more kindly. We preached that night; and the next morning, on leaving, Mrs. G. made Brother Giles a present of what he greatly needed.

"*October 16.* My appointment brought me to Lyons, where I preached in the evening. Here we had a respectable society and a small meeting-house. But the people of Lyons were generally wicked: they took pleasure in unrighteousness, in deriding the ways of God, and in persecuting the humble followers of Jesus Christ. They interrupted and insulted us in our religious worship, and on this evening they were worse than usual. I paused until I got their attention, and then remarked that I should not wonder if Lyons should be visited on the morrow in a way that it never had been before, and perhaps never would be again to the end of time. We then had quietness to the close of the meeting. When the congregation was dismissed, and I had come out of the house, the people gathered around me, and with one voice cried out, 'For God's sake, Mr. Smith, tell us what is to happen here to-morrow?' I replied, 'Let to-morrow speak for itself.' I went home with brother D. Dorsey, a short distance from the town. After breakfast the next day I said to Sister Dorsey, 'I wish you to go with me into Lyons this morning, as there are some families to which I cannot get access without you.' She, being acquainted with

the place, readily consented. At nine o'clock A. M. we entered the town. Scores from the country were already there, and the place was in commotion. We went to the house of Mr. —, where we were politely received. I knew if we could storm *that* castle the day was ours. After conversing some time, I remarked that Mrs. Dorsey and myself were on a visit to Lyons, and, if it were agreeable, we would pray before we parted. 'By all means, Mr. Smith; by all means, sir.' Before prayer was over there were scores of people at the door, and by this time the order of the day began to be understood; and they that feared God were at their posts, coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. We then went, in large procession, from house to house, entering every door in order, and praying for the souls of the families. Our little band soon increased by some three or four hundred. When we came near the tavern, where we had been so derided, it was inquired, 'Will they admit us?' But the doors and windows being open, we entered in, and was there ever such a shout while storming Lucifer's castle? At four o'clock in the afternoon we called a halt, to see what was done; and forming a circle on the green, the new converts were invited within the circle, when *thirty-two* came in, who that day had found the pearl of great price, Christ in them the hope of glory. These thirty-two, and eight more, were added to the Church of God on that afternoon. Thanks be to God, this was another good day's work in the Lord's vineyard. This meeting produced a pleasing change in Lyons, and Methodism gained a footing in that place it never had before. To God be the glory!

"October 22. I preached at Wagoner's Mills. Here the enemy of souls had long reigned in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and he was enraged at the prosperity of our Zion, so newly established here. In time of preaching a mob roared upon us, and broke us up, and threw the congregation into confusion. But the civil authorities interfered, and Lucifer and his fiendlike crew were subdued,

and the flock was again collected, when I renewed my subject by preaching it over to them: the people got engaged in prayer; and the God that answereth by fire, spake as never man spake. Satan's kingdom shook! Some cried for mercy; some ran away; some fell to the floor, crying, 'Save, Lord, or we perish.' Several were converted to God, and joined the Church on probation. We met class and had a good time. Surely this has been a day of great conflict; but God has given quietness to his lambs, and fed them in green pastures, and led them beside the still waters.

"*December 26.* I set out before day for my next appointment, and after riding fifty miles through a steady rain, late at night I called at a tavern, and after supper and prayers I called for a room, that I might retire. But finding it wet, and the wind and rain driving into it, I asked the landlord to let me return to the fire and sit by it all night, or otherwise I should get my death. He consented, and in the morning I gave him fifty cents, and rode twelve miles for breakfast, and that day preached three sermons, and retired at night much fatigued.

"During the month of December, although nothing special has been done, yet we have faithfully attended our appointments, and nothing has been left undone. We have preached, administered the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and baptism, and met the classes, which have been well attended.

"*January 1, 1806.* This day the Lord gave light to my mind. We had a good time in class. The Lord added three to our number. Though our discouragements are many in this section of the Lord's vineyard, yet the peace of God, the hope of heaven, and the prosperity of Zion, sweeten labor, and open in the soul a little heaven.

"*January 14.* I have suffered much from the cold, and uncomfortable lodgings, exposed to snow and rain beating on me through the night; yet my health has been astonishingly preserved, and my soul has been happy in God. This morning, rising before day and roasting some potatoes, I got some milk and ate my breakfast; then getting my

horse, I was off, leaving the family asleep. In the course of the day I fell in with Brother Charles Giles, my colleague. At night we arrived at Brother G.'s. The weather was extremely cold, and we met with a cold reception from the family until Brother G. came in, when we felt more pleasant. We preached that night in a school-house, about a mile from Brother G.'s. When the meeting was dismissed, Brother G. went out with the people and left us. Thus circumstanced, Brother Giles and myself concluded we would stay in the school-house all night, and brought in wood enough to last till morning. But after having built up the fire and laid us down, Brother G. came in, and made an apology for leaving us. We then went home with him; and I will leave it to Brother Charles if we had not a hard time of it. You remember our sufferings at the barn, and how we hugged each other, and cried with cold and hunger. Shall we not remember it in heaven?

"January 17. I preached on the head waters of the Seneca lake, and had a good time. The word of truth and power came like a two-edged sword to the sinner's heart. Some obtained mercy and salvation, and went home justified in Christ Jesus.

"January 20. I went to the Charlestown quarterly meeting, to see the presiding elder on business of the Church. I was pleased with that part of the Genesee settlement. Bloomfield township is a splendid place. There is in it a straight road, which for three miles has houses on both sides. But Charlestown township excels in grandeur. To a stranger it would seem as if the kings of the earth had gathered together there, and made the place their residence. Both their dwellings and churches are grand. It was settled by Presbyterians.

"January 25. I left Charlestown and returned to my circuit. Coming from that beautiful spot made my field of labor look dreary. But the word of God preached in Charlestown did not profit more than in the wilderness.

"February 10. For two weeks past the weather has been exceedingly cold. People have frozen to death on the road.

The snow on a level is nine feet deep in the fields and woods ; but the public roads being open, we have the finest sleighing I ever saw.

"*February 12.* I preached on John iii, 16 : " For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That word *everlasting* sounded well in the ears of believers. The congregation was small, but they received the word joyfully.

"*February 13.* I preached, and the Lord was with us. Some ladies cried, and wiped their eyes, and wished they were good.

"*February 20.* For the last week the weather has been more moderate, and our congregations larger, and our prospects brighter. To-day I got lost in a dreary wilderness, and the consternation of my mind was great until I met with some hunters, who very kindly conducted me out of my difficulties, and I arrived at Brother Brainard's in time to meet the congregation, and had a comfortable time with my forest friends, while I preached on John xx, 13 : ' Woman, why weepest thou ? She said unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord.' While explaining this text, mercy and love were poured down in abundance, and God's dear children were filled with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

"*February 23.* I rode thirty miles through one of the most severe snow-storms I ever saw, in order to meet a congregation at night, but on account of the severity of the weather none attended.

" By coming into this part of the country, and in Seneca circuit, I became acquainted with the character of Miss Jemima Wilkinson, from New England, known by the appellation of the Universal Friend. She professed herself to be the *Son* of God, and said she had power to convert the soul, and sanctify believers, and bring them to heaven, and to condemn and sentence to eternal misery all that rejected the offers of mercy from her. She admitted that

her present body was the body of Jemima Wilkinson, but contended that her *soul* was in heaven; that when she died her body was the most pure female body in the world; and therefore the divinity of Jesus Christ, as she says, entered her person *bodily*, that the redemption of mankind might be accomplished. For, says she, 'As there were two jointly in the fall of man, that is to say, the male and the female, so there must be two jointly in the atonement, the male and the female, or the redemption of man could never have been completed.' She has a splendid church and dwelling on Crooked Lake. Her disciples are many; among whom are some of the most wealthy people of the state of New York. Those who join her Church must pledge themselves to live singly, and if they have families they must abandon their wives and children. Some forty men and women have dedicated their natural lives to her service, that she may save their souls when they die.

"At the request of some, I preached a sermon in the green woods near her dwelling, exposing her system and doctrine, from Rev. ii, 20: 'Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach, and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.' Many attended this meeting. It was the largest concourse of people I have seen in this country. On this subject I said all I could, and closed the meeting, when the multitude disappeared, and Jemima's disciples gathered around her to rehearse what they could to her. She wept, and then put the black mark of reprobation on me.

"*March 3.* I preached on Isaiah xxxv, 10: 'And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion,' etc. We had a solemn time. The word of God made a deep impression on all; and while the spirit of weeping and mourning was manifested by some, the spirit of rejoicing and exultation was felt by others. This was a good meeting.

"*March 17.* The weather has been wet and cold; but zeal and hope, and love for souls, will bring a man through

many difficulties. I preached on Luke xii, 32 : 'Fear not little flock,' etc. I thought I could see in the countenances of the people a disposition to respond, 'Amen ; Lord, give us the kingdom.' We met class, and had a gracious time. I received three on probation.

" *March 23.* Brother Giles and myself met to form a plan of the circuit. We leave for our successors four thousand miles to be traveled in twelve months, and four hundred sermons each to preach. The Lord give them grace and strength to perform all we have left them to do, and what we ourselves have done ; 'so shall the wilderness blossom as the rose, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.'"

FATHER KENT'S VISIT TO OTSEGO AND CHENANGO CIRCUITS.

The scenes described in the following letter were laid in the older portions of our territory. Brookfield and Middlefield were strongholds of Methodism at the time of Father Kent's visit, and for many years subsequently ; and although the places were located some thirty-five miles apart, yet the members of the two classes were familiar with each other, and interchanged visits at their quarterly meetings.

"REV. G. PECK: MY DEAR BROTHER,—Your sketch of the society in Middlefield, N. Y., in the *Advocate*, revived afresh in my mind the gracious season which I enjoyed with that people about the first of March, 1805. I had a brother living in Smyrna, and another moving thither from the eastern part of Vermont, who desired me take his wife and child in my sleigh, and aid him in his journey.

"We stopped in Middlefield about noon to feed our horses ; the tavern crowded. One man eating his bread and cheese, called for a half pint of cider. 'A half pint,' said the landlord, 'why, that is a Methodist draught.' The man was rather indignant at being suspected a Methodist, and the man of the bar explained himself. The reason I said so was this : if Methodists call for anything to drink

they only call for half as much as other people.' Good, good, thought I; and I should like to get acquainted with some of those Methodists. He ordered a mug of cider for the men, and the matter seemed settled.

"I found my brother next door to my good friend and brother, Dr. Grant, who had lived in Whitingham, Vt. On Sunday I went with his family to quarterly meeting in Brookfield,* and heard Brother Timothy Dewey preach a warm discourse. Brother J. Jewell, presiding elder, gave out for love-feast next morning in the *barn* where we then were, and told them who he wished would attend, and who he hoped would stay away, in a style that was new to me. He said: 'We don't want any *swearing* Universalists here, nor *drunken* Baptists, nor *lying* Presbyterians; we have enough of this sort of people among ourselves, and we don't need to import any.' In quarterly conference Brother Charles Giles was recommended to the Philadelphia Conference for admission. Great gathering at love-feast, and the house surrounded by sleighs; a good supply of preachers; J. Husselkus, Benoni Harris, Ebenezer White, and J. Billings. Some of the shouters had remarkably strong voices. Brother Harris placed his own emphasis upon *amen*, and the season was a time of refreshing.

"Toward the close some mischievous fellows broke into the stable window and poured in like a flood. Some tried to stop the current, but it only made a tumult. The barn was large, but could not contain the people. The presiding elder gave out he would preach in the house, and have Brother Kent to preach in the barn, and retired, and most of the preachers with him. Some were shouting, or singing, or exhorting in different parts of the barn, and vain triflers, full of glee, talking and laughing without restraint. I asked a brother how we should get the people quiet. He said he could not tell. I arose but could not be heard but a

* Rev. Loring Grant, who was at that quarterly meeting, says it was held at Underwood's, in Columbus. It was within what was the township of Brookfield, until the very year of Father Kent's visit, 1805, when the township of Columbus was formed.

short distance, and said to this effect: 'I am a stranger from Vermont and want to tell you a story.' This I frequently repeated, and as my voice extended they became silent until all was quiet, and I spoke in substance as follows: 'There is an idea in New England that the people in York state are Sabbathless and uncultivated, and irreligious in their manners, for it is said they have *no law* to enforce the observance of the Sabbath, etc.; but I crossed the Green Mountains last spring into this state, and passed down to New York, attending meetings by the way, and was exceedingly pleased with the good behavior of all the congregations which I saw. When I got home I told our people they were mistaken about the Yorkers, that they behaved as well at meeting as our people do in New England; but I have thought this morning whether I must go home and tell them I have found one congregation of a different character?' By this time every eye was fixed, and all were as quiet as possible. I found great freedom and enlargement, and indeed it seemed good to be there. I doubt not but scores were much more comfortable in that barn in the winter, with the great doors open to give us light, than thousands of modern delicate hearers in their warmed churches, with carpeted floors and cushioned seats.

"I was obliged by reason of a thaw to leave my sleigh and return on horseback. Parted with Brother Jewell on Tuesday morning, who told me where to call in Middlefield at night, (I have forgotten the name,*) and tell them that I directed you to call there, and they will keep you over night. I called on the Dutch family, a little distance to the left of the main road, and told the lady at the door my errand. She paused and said: 'We have a meeting here to-night, but you may come in.' Being cold, I had a good excuse to keep on my overcoat, in hope not to be suspected. A local preacher was there, J. Crawford,† who I

* It was at Nicholas Writer's, or Rector's, as the name was always spoken.

† An eccentric, almost deranged man, whom we often saw at the paternal mansion in those days. He told a wonderful experience. He was

found was to preach. After supper I sat in the corner; numbers had come in whispering and querying about the stranger. Soon Brother Crawford came and asked me various questions, which I answered freely, such as 'Where do you reside?' 'In Vermont.' 'On what circuit?' 'Athens!' 'Who are the stationed preachers?' 'They are Asa Kent and James Young.' He went back to the brethren and appeared to report. A brother started to come, and I said to myself, he will not be so modest as Brother Crawford has been, and I shall be found out. His name was Peck,* and he asked me what he might call my name, I told him. O you are the man that preached at Brookfield last Sunday! we have heard of you, and now you must preach to-night. I thought of the landlord's slur, and wanted to see how such Methodists worshiped, but no excuse would be accepted. I spoke on 'The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree.' We soon found ourselves in a heavenly element, and we drank freely of the waters of salvation. It was equal to our best meetings upon the Green Mountains. Next morning the woman of the house said: 'When you came last night we thought you were a rogue.' 'And how came you to think so?' 'Because a young man put up with one of our brethren as a Methodist a few weeks ago, and they asked him to pray and he refused, saying that he was not good at praying, was better at speaking. He was going west, and we thought you might be the one, and was returning, and if you had been we would have found you out!' 'That is just right. If a stranger puts up with you as a Methodist, you ought to find out whether he is one, and if he is honest at heart he will like you the better for it.'

"A. KENT.

"NEW BEDFORD, *June 3, 1851.*"

1806. There is no change in the Genesee district this year, excepting the addition of Lyons circuit. Some brought almost through the pains of hell into the kingdom. He was a simple-hearted, good man, but we know nothing of his subsequent history.

* Luther Peck, the class-leader, and father of the author.

changes among the preachers. Thomas Elliott, James Kelsey, and Amos Jenks are admitted, and appointed within the Genesee district. There is a decrease of thirty members within the district.

1807. The presiding elder is the same. The Holland Purchase Mission is added to the number of charges, with Peter Vannest in charge. Clement Hickman, Aaron Baxter, George M'Cracken, and Samuel Talbott are admitted, and appointed within the district. There is an increase this year of three hundred and forty-two.

1808. This year there is a new arrangement of the districts. Susquehanna district is transferred to the Philadelphia Conference, and takes in a considerable amount of territory which formerly was embraced within the Genesee district. Tioga, Canisteo, Holland Purchase, Caledonia, Ontario, Lyons, and Seneca are within this territory.

Cayuga district, with Peter Vannest presiding elder, in the New York Conference, embraces Chenango, Otsego, Westmoreland, Pompey, Scipio, Cayuga, Black River, Western, and Herkimer.

Within the Susquehanna district Canisteo and Caledonia are new circuits.

The circuits which were embraced within the Genesee district when Mr. Colbert traveled on it, in 1803, now contain a membership of five thousand two hundred and eighty-eight, the increase being larger than that of any former year.

1809. The districts are reported this year the same as last, Susquehanna, in the Philadelphia, and Cayuga in the New York Conference. The increase is still encouraging. Gideon Draper is presiding elder on the Susquehanna district, and Peter Vanhest on Cayuga.

We have before us a general summary of the old Tioga circuit from the hand of the venerable Loring Grant, who, it seems, commenced his itinerant life on this circuit during the present year. This is the proper place to introduce it, and we are sure it will be read with interest.

“Going back of your inquiries, I commence by saying that in 1807, when I was some eighteen years old, my oldest brother, Isaac, and myself moved within the bounds of old Tioga circuit. Brothers Burch and Burgess were the circuit preachers; and in the fall of 1808, Brother Best and Brother Kimberlin being the preachers, I was licensed to preach, at the house of Brother Stevens, in Randolph; the presiding elder opposing it, on the grounds, first, that no one had ever heard me; and next, I was fashionably dressed. I was called in and informed by his reverence that the vote was unanimous for granting a license, but for his part he was at a loss for reasons for such action, and wanted to know how I would feel before a congregation with my two-breasted coat, short vest, and high pantaloons. At the next quarterly meeting held on Sugar Creek, in the winter of 1808 and 1809, at which time, as a matter of course, being rather more modest and diffident than now, I was afraid of the presiding elder as I should have been of a bear; but he dragged me to his side in a rude pulpit, and made me exhort. The Lord helped me, and the old bachelor became my friend. At that quarterly conference I was recommended to the Philadelphia Conference to travel, and being asked if I was ready to take a circuit, I said I had not yet clothed myself like a Methodist preacher. That, he said, would make no difference; it was a small matter, and could be arranged at my own convenience. He wished me to take the place of Brother Best on the Tioga circuit till he should return or I get my appointment. Accordingly, on the first day of March, 1809, that is, forty-eight years ago next Sabbath morning, I left my father's house in Smithville (where you have often been) and rode to Coventry, and that evening preached at Squire Elliott's; from that over on to Susquehanna, a short distance below Bainbridge; thence to Oquago, and then to Randolph; and after visiting Osborn Hollow, I returned to Oquago and preached at Squire Brush's. From Squire Brush's I crossed the Oquago Mountain to old Brother Hale's, the deer hunter, but

good man, and, as you know, the father of the girl the notorious Joe Smith stole and made a wife of. From Brother Hale's I went to Brother Comfort's, father of the Rev. Silas Comfort, of the Oneida Conference, who at that time was a little boy. Brother Comfort, Sen., professed to be awakened by reading C. Giles's 'Dagon of Calvinism; or, the Young Hammerer.' What do you think, doctor, of that as the means of a man's conversion?

"From Brother Comfort's I returned down the river to a Brother Rood's, then to Chenango Point, or Binghamton. Ten miles below, at Choconut, lived a Mr. Cafferty, an old Methodist from New Jersey, full of anecdotes, mostly relating to the early Methodist preachers, their talents, masterly efforts in bringing sinners to Christ, and their great skill in vanquishing the enemies of Methodism; of that class there were many in those days. They (ministers) were considered in those early days as the false prophets that were to come in the latter days deceiving, if it were possible, the very elect. It was thought by many, and not unfrequently by the clergy, to be an evidence of great moral courage, and even a Christian duty, to attack and abuse our ministers; and yet, strange as it might seem to some, God always gave them words of wisdom and power by which their persecutors were confounded. One of our ministers with whom I was acquainted was collared in the pulpit by an Episcopal clergyman, and peace was restored by the aid of a magistrate; but the Lord gave him words of wisdom and power, and his antagonist was overpowered by the truth. It was in that neighborhood (Nanticoke) that Christopher Frye preached on a quarterly meeting occasion with such power (physical) that he split off all the ornaments from the top of the pulpit, which fell, with startling effect, on the congregation below.

"From this place I went near Owego, where I met my colleague, and in a little canoe that might have been carried on a man's shoulder, Palmer Roberts and myself started down the river to an appointment, the wind blowing like a

tornado, threatening to engulf us ; but Brother Roberts sung the familiar lines :

‘ Sometimes temptation blows
A dreadful hurricane,’ etc ;

and at length sung out, “ Brother Grant, you paddle and I’ll pray.” We finally succeeded in making land, which we had but little expected. Our circuit led us over the mountains on to the waters of the Wyalusing Creek, and at Brother Canfield’s we found a most hearty welcome. One night I recollect being in company with a young Methodist preacher, Mrs. Grant with her little babe being with us, the night dark, so much so as to be able almost to feel it. The roads never having been leveled, or the old logs removed, we worked our way on, lifting our wagon over stumps and logs, and sometimes in the greatest danger ; one going before and leading the forward horse, the other jumping from side to side to keep if possible the wagon right side up, Mrs. Grant in the mean while in the back end on a side-saddle. So we kept on until we broke our thills, when each took a horse, one carrying the babe, the other Mrs. Grant, till some time before day we met a hearty welcome from one of the brothers Canfield. Although he was awakened a little earlier than usual, yet he received us gladly.

“ On the Creek lived a brother Ezekiel Brown, one of the firmest friends of the itinerant. Those were days when, if we had greater toils than now, we had *warmer friends*. Near this, in the winter of 1810–11, in crossing the creek, or river, from our friend Luckey’s, (cousin of Dr. Samuel,) the water was running over the ice like water from the tail of a mill ; suddenly my horse fell through the ice without a moment’s warning, yet I was enabled to leap from my horse to the ice, portmanteau in hand, holding to my bridle. My horse was several times carried under the ice, the water running swiftly, about ten feet deep ; but speaking quick to him, and at the same time pulling with the bridle, he would breast the current. At length he seemed to swell up, and threw his fore feet upon the ice, and, with the blessing of

God upon the efforts employed, out he came. The call for help brought the neighbors some time after the horse was safe on *terra firma*, and my portmanteau well filled with water. Of course my effects were well drenched and my books spoiled.

It was in this neighborhood that I was left by my presiding elder, (the second time I was sent to the circuit,) having received my appointment from the bishop at the first session of the Genesee Conference, (held in Judge Dorsey's storehouse, near the now village of Lyons, in 1810,) to hold my quarterly meetings, without the presence of a single preacher; myself, only twenty-one years of age, having the charge of a circuit four hundred miles around, with thirty preaching places, over the rivers, and hills, and far away. This circuit extended down the Wyalusing to its mouth, then up the Wysox, and from the mouth to the head waters of the Towanda, and on to the head waters of the Lycoming Creek, being thirty miles between appointments. At this appointment among the hills we used to see a good old lady, who uniformly attended meeting, coming ten miles to preaching on a week day, living only twenty miles above Williamsport, on the west branch of the Susquehanna. One day, having rode thirty miles in the rain, on horseback, (that being the only mode of traveling in those days,) without food or shelter, I concluded the good old sister would disappoint us, but on arriving at the house, lo! the faithful Christian was ready to alight from her horse at the time that I did. 'So, sister, the rain did not keep you from the house of worship.' 'No,' was the reply; 'if our ministers can come thirty miles in the rain without refreshment, I think I can afford to ride ten to hear them.' From this the circuit extended over to the Sugar Creek, thence to the river again at Sheshequin. At old Sheshequin, at the house of Captain Clark, I preached, and on one occasion there was a lad of about sixteen, or a little rising, by the name of H. B. Bascom, (later Bishop Bascom, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,) to hear me preach, and during the

sermon wept much; in the class meeting he professed conversion, and joined the Church as a probationer. But it was not until the General Conference of 1828, at Pittsburgh, that I knew that the green boy that I took into Church at Captain Clark's was the man of world-wide popularity. This I learned from himself. From Sheshequin we went on to Tioga Point, then up to Waverly, where I found Renaldo M. Everts, and licensed him to exhort; then up to Newtown, or Elmira, then back to the main river, up to Owego, then to Caroline, then across over into Lisle, so on to Green to the place of beginning."

In the mean time the work had been prospering in Canada, and two flourishing districts, under the direction of Samuel Coats and Joseph Sawyer as presiding elders had been organized, containing fourteen circuits and a membership of two thousand five hundred and forty.

1810. This year terminates the burdensome process of going to New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore, to Conference. The plan which Bishop Asbury had for some time revolved of a new conference was perfected this year, and the preachers stationed within the Susquehanna, Cayuga, and the two Canada districts were notified to meet at Judge Dorsey's, in Lyons, on July 20. There the Genesee Conference was organized, embracing the districts notified in the Minutes of the previous year, with the exception of the Lower Canada district, consisting of five charges, which was retained in the New York Conference until 1812, when it was transferred to the Genesee Conference, with Nathan Bangs presiding elder.

The war between Great Britain and the United States put a stop to the intercourse between the United States and Canada, and this deprived Mr. (now Dr.) Bangs of his charge, and deprived the Genesee Conference both of the district and the incumbent. When peace was restored the district came back, but the old presiding elder was fixed in New York. The new conference came very near drawing a great prize; but for the memorable war of 1812 Nathan Bangs might have become a Geneseean.

CHAPTER V.

SKETCHES OF CHARACTERS.

ANNING OWEN.

THIS famous pioneer preacher was *the apostle of Methodism in Wyoming*. We have seen that he was in the Indian battle in Wyoming, in 1778, and that he was then for the first time brought to a fixed determination to seek the salvation of his soul. In the memoir of him in the Minutes for 1814, it is said that "he was a native of the state of New York," and that "he experienced the pardoning love of God in the early part of his life, and soon after attached himself to the Congregational Church." He may have been a member of the Congregational Church from early life for aught we know, but we have received the most reliable proof that in the relation of his Christian experience he always dated his convictions and conversion at the time of the battle.

Mrs. Garland, of Brooklyn, Pa., says that she heard Father Owen tell his experience in love-feast, when he was presiding elder, and it was on this wise: "When the retreat commenced on the battle-field he thought he should almost certainly be killed, and should go straight to hell. He began to pray, and determined that, should he be shot, he would fall on his face, and his last breath should be spent in calling upon God for mercy. He secreted himself under a grape-vine on the margin of the river, and there he gave his heart to God, and had never taken back the pledge. He found peace to his soul before he left the place, being there several hours." The story was told with so much feeling that it produced a wonderful effect upon those who were present. Sally Owen, his daughter, jumped and shouted.

Mrs. Fanny Cary says: Once in a love-feast Roger Searle spoke. "Ah, Brother Searle," said Father Owen, "we both

had like to have gone to hell together from under the grape-vine."*

Mr. Owen became acquainted with the Methodists at the East, whither the New England people who escaped the rifle and tomahawk fled after the fatal third of July, 1778. He returned to Kingston in 1787 or '88, put up a cabin for the accommodation of his family, and commenced working at his trade as a blacksmith. He at the same time commenced conversing with his neighbors upon the subject of religion, and finding some who were religiously inclined, he proposed to them to come to his house and join him in a prayer-meeting. This was the commencement of the movement which we have previously sketched.

In due time Owen became a local preacher, and was ordained a deacon before he commenced traveling. He was admitted on trial in 1795, but we find him connected with no charge on the Minutes of this year. He undoubtedly had an appointment, and it not appearing is an error in the Minutes. The series of appointments which Mr. Owen filled, and which we shall proceed to give, is the best possible illustration of his character. They show him to have been a man of great self-denial and of indomitable perseverance.

In 1796 and 1797 he traveled Seneca circuit. This circuit was then in a new country, and far from his home. The next year, 1798, he traveled Albany circuit, on the Hudson. In 1799 he was stationed on Flanders circuit, in New Jersey. In 1800 he is upon Bristol circuit, near Philadelphia. He had occupied these extreme points for five years, and had not removed his family; of course was nearly all the time from home. His next appointment affords him some relief. In 1801 he is appointed to labor on Wyoming circuit. In 1802 he goes to Northumberland. This is not very far away; but in 1803 he goes to Strasburgh and Chester, in Chesapeake district, in the state of Delaware. In 1804 he is on Dauphin circuit, near Harrisburgh. During the three

* Searle had been in the battle, and lay near Owen in the water on that memorable occasion.



ANNING OWEN'S COTTAGE.

years succeeding he is presiding elder on Susquehanna district. He now could make comparatively frequent visits at his humble cottage in Kingston, but not long to remain. In 1808 he is appointed to Lycoming circuit, among the hemlock and spruce swamps of Center county. In 1809 he is on Canaan circuit, made up of small settlements at distant points to be traversed over bridle paths and most horrible roads.

All this time Mr. Owen's family had lived in a comparatively comfortable little house, which he built himself, still standing in Kingston, where industry and economy presided. Mrs. Owen, a neat little body, and her daughters, took in work when they could get it, and earned a great part of their living. Mrs. Owen, as is now remembered, often came to Mrs. Myers's with yarn which she had spun for her, and carried home necessities, which she received in compensation for her labor. She wore a plain, clean dress, a check apron, a white neckerchief, and a strap cap, all beautifully clean and smoothly ironed. Her conversation and manners were plain, simple, modest, and pious. Such was the woman that Mr. Owen felt himself called to leave in charge of his affairs for weeks and months together, with the privilege of earning much of her own living, and providing for and directing her children.

In 1810 Mr. Owen is appointed to Cayuga circuit; and now, for the first time, he removed his family. In 1811 he is on Seneca circuit; and in 1812 New Amsterdam, a portion of the old Holland Purchase mission, constitutes the scene of his labors. With this year his effective labors terminate.* He had a strong will and iron nerves, but nothing can stand intense and protracted friction. He had seen more than threescore years. During all these years, after he reached his majority, his motto was, Work! work! work! this world is no place for rest. His face was wrinkled, his head bald, and what of his hair remained was as white as show. The concluding paragraph of the memoir in the Minutes of this brave old soldier of the cross is as follows:

"Anning Owen labored faithfully, and endured much hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and has been rendered a great blessing to many souls. In 1813, in consequence of bodily debility, he received a superannuated

* Mr. Draper says that Mr. Owen did not take charge of New Amsterdam, but after attending a few quarterly meetings for him, while he was at the South on business, he retired to his place in Ulysses.

relation, in which he remained till he expired at his own house, in the town of Ulysses, Cayuga county, in the state of New York, in the month of April, 1814, of the prevalent epidemic. His wife also, about twelve hours after his decease, followed him to the world of spirits. He died in the sixty-third year of his age. He manifested great patience and resignation in the midst of his affliction; his confidence remained firm till his latest struggle. He was entirely willing to leave the world, and, without doubt, died in peace, and is now receiving the reward of his labors. Surely the last end of the good man is peace."

Mr. Owen was a man of an earnest spirit. He labored with all his might. He had a great voice, and he did not spare it. He thundered forth the terrors of the law in such tremendous tones, and prayed with such energy and power that he was often called "bawling Owen." It was not all voice, however. He was a man of great religious sympathy, and of mighty faith. Under his preaching sinners trembled, and sometimes fell to the ground like dead men.

There was, indeed, a certain want of polish and delicacy of expression about the old blacksmith which often gave huge offense, but which sometimes was telling, and cowed opposers. An eye and ear witness related to us, many years since, a somewhat characteristic assault upon a man of note in Wayne county. He was a land agent, and a zealous Presbyterian. The preacher aimed a blow at "land-jobbers." They were, he said, like a land-jobber of old, who offered to give away all the kingdoms of the earth, when the poor devil had not a foot of land in the world. The gentleman was uneasy under the sarcasm, but kept his propriety until a terrible bolt fell upon the head of "the Presbyterians;" then he arose and said: "It is too bad, and I cannot endure it." "Sit down, sir!" thundered the preacher. The enraged hearer took his seat and held his peace for a few minutes, when another shaft brought him to his feet again. "I won't endure such insults!" said he.

"To be called an eagle-eyed Presbyterian and a blue-skin by you, sir, is more than I will put up with!" "If you are not silent until I get through, sir," said the preacher, "I will complain of you to a magistrate and have you taken care of." The gentleman sat down, and concluded there was no better way than to stand the storm, as he was too proud to flee.

The following illustrations of Owen's character are from a communication from Mr. Anson Goodrich, of Salem, Wayne county. He says: "Father Owen was a zealous, good man, very eccentric, and at times quite eloquent. I never listened to the man who would excel him in preaching the terrors of the law against the workers of iniquity. In the winter of 1806 I was sent to school at Wilkesbarre. A quarterly meeting was held in the court-house. On Saturday evening there was a ball held at a public house, so near that the sound of the violin could be distinctly heard. The old gentleman prayed most fervently that the Lord would 'shake the company over hell, and put a stop to that hog-gut and horse-hair squeaking.' The next morning, when he was preaching from the text, 'He that believeth not shall be damned,' the boys put some brimstone under the back log in the south fire-place, and were waiting on tip-toe to see the result. When the effluvia was perceptible by the knowing ones, the preacher exclaimed with a voice like thunder: 'Unless you repent and are converted you will all be damned!' And with his strong voice raised to its highest pitch, and with a stamp of his foot on the floor, and bringing his fist down upon the judge's desk, he roared out: 'Sinners, don't you smell hell?'

"The old gentleman seemed in his element when he was debating the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation. On one occasion, when he was preaching at Major Woodbridge's, the Rev. Seth Williston was present by the major's invitation. The text was: 'Who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.' He urged that Christ died for all, not *a part*, as some men

preach, and labor to make people believe. These hirelings, wolves in sheep's clothing, would find it as difficult to make men believe such palpable nonsense as to make a horse-nail out of cold iron. They find the sheep in the mud, pull the fleece off, and then say, 'Poor sheep, poor sheep!' After the sermon Father Owen said: 'Brother Williston, will you close by prayer?' 'No,' was the response. Mr. Williston retired to an adjoining room, and told the major he believed Mr. Owen to be a deceived man; upon hearing which, the next day, Father Owen replied: 'Tell Mr. Williston, if it is so it was decreed from all eternity.'"

Mr. Owen was a shrewd man, and sometimes quite witty. In one of his sermons he was rallying the worldlings. "A man," said he, "who is seeking happiness in the world, is just like a cat chasing her own tail; she is often just on the point of catching it, but it flies away, and she never quite gets hold of it." Some rowdies in Huntington once shaved his horse's tail. In the morning he came out with his saddle-bags upon his arm, to mount his trusty beast standing by the bars; and observing the poor animal's degradation, after a moment's surprise he threw his saddle-bags across the saddle with an amusing expression of submission to the insult, and a disposition to make the best of a hard fate, and a mixing of the pious and the ludicrous, which was not uncommon with him; "Glory to God!" said he, "he is not like Samson, for he is as strong as ever." As a matter of course, his indignant host fell into a fit of laughter, and exchanged his purposes of retribution on the perpetrators of the indignity for admiration of the patience and good-humor of his insulted but worthy guest.

Mr. Owen was a ready man. It did not take him long to prepare a sermon under almost any circumstances. Mrs. Bedford relates a singular instance in point. He had an appointment at her father's house, but did not arrive until the people had waited for a long time, and were about to leave. He came in, and in a hurried manner sung and prayed, and opening the large family Bible which lay upon

the stand before him, he read for his text the first words which he saw, and went on with his discourse. After the meeting was closed and the people had retired, Mrs. Sutton said: "Brother Owen, how came you to take your text from the Apocrypha to-day?" "The Apocrypha!" exclaimed he in surprise; "the book of Ezra is not in the Apocrypha." "No, indeed," says Mrs. Sutton; "but you took your text from the first book of *Esdras*." "Did I, indeed?" said he; "well, sister, say nothing about it; the people will not know the difference."

The old soldier sometimes made chance shots which did great execution. On one occasion he fell in with a gentleman, like himself, traveling on horseback, to whom, as was his custom on almost all occasions, he broached the subject of religion. He found the stranger to be skeptical, and he entered into an argument with him upon the claims of revelation. So far as he could judge, his reasoning produced no impression upon the mind of the gentleman. They came to a fork in the road where they bade each other a civil adieu. The itinerant preacher, as though seized by some sudden inspiration, turned hastily about and called out: "See here, my friend, I have two more things to say to you which I wish you not to forget." "What are they?" demanded the stranger. "Hell is hot and eternity is long!" was the answer. Several years elapsed, and the interview with the stranger had passed from the mind of Mr. Owen, when after meeting, perhaps a quarterly meeting, he was accosted by a gentleman, who referred to the conversation by the way and asked him if he did not remember it, adding: "Those two things which you wished me not to forget fastened themselves upon my mind, and I never got rid of them until I sought and found the Saviour." He had then been for years a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and had desired to meet with the man who had so mysteriously been the instrument of his conversion, not knowing who he was or where he could be found.

Anning Owen was a plain, blunt man, sometimes un-

ceremonious and rude, but always conscientious and zealous for God and the truth. He feared neither men nor devils; he spared no vice, no error, nor had he much respect for the feelings of those who abetted either. A Presbyterian of high character and standing, who often listened to him in the days of his vigor, remarked to us a few days since: "Mr. Owen was down on the *isms*. He had a passage in almost every prayer against them. It was this: 'O Lord, put a stop to Mohammedanism, Judaism, Heathenism, Atheism, Deism, Universalism, Calvinism, and all other Devilisms.'"

It was evident that our Presbyterian friend considered Mr. Owen's classification of the *isms* somewhat defective, still the passage from the prayer was quoted with great good-nature. The fact is, Owen was rather a licensed character, scarcely held amenable to the common laws of taste and social propriety. He had a standard of his own, and cared very little whether it was approved by others or not. His mission was to reprove the vices, errors, and follies of mankind, and to turn sinners to God; and he was successful. Whether his measures were the best that could have been adopted is not now the question; that he was an instrument of much good is historically true. That he had admirable qualifications for the rugged work of a pioneer preacher, is not a debatable question. The wisdom of God is manifested in no part of the history of the Church more strikingly than in the selection and the adaptation of the agencies which were employed in the establishment of Methodism in Europe and America; and the history of the Methodist movement in the interior does not furnish an exception to this rule.

Mr. Owen had a wonderful command over his feelings. He encountered some domestic afflictions. His only son sickened and died; his name was Benjamin, and he was as dear to him as the youngest son of Jacob, by the same name, was to him. Mr. Owen preached the funeral sermon of this beloved and only son. His beloved Sally was taken

sick when he was on one of his distant circuits. He was sent for and came, but Sally was in her shroud. He was not disappointed, for, as he alleged, as he was pursuing his way at night he saw Sally arrayed in a clean white robe, and heard heavenly music. This he took for a warning that she was no more among the living. He preached her funeral sermon, and while he spoke of her conversion and pious life, and of the vision which he had on the way, the great tears rolled from his eyes in quick succession. His sunburnt and wrinkled face, and his snow-white locks, associated with the tenderness of his expressions, together with a sight of the cold clay of the lovely girl, wrung tears from all eyes, and left impressions which time could never efface. It was the predominance of the religious sentiment in Mr. Owen, and not the want of natural sympathy, which forced him into a position which in another would hardly be excused.

The following sketches, from an able pen, will furnish a suitable conclusion to the portrait which we have attempted. They are copied from articles on "The Wyoming Valley," in the Northern Christian Advocate, by the Rev. David Holmes :

"Physically. Anning Owen was a little above the ordinary size, with a dark complexion, piercing eye, athletic in appearance, and in fact possessed of a constitution capable of great endurance. His mental character, though good, was not strongly marked with any extraordinary feature. Justice requires us to say, however, that he possessed a sound mind, discriminating judgment, united with great firmness and decision of character. Convinced he was right, and his purpose once formed, nor men nor devils could turn him aside. Physically and intellectually, he was by natural constitution just the man for a Methodist preacher in the day in which he lived.

"His literary acquirements were small. Unblest with early advantages, and having commenced his ministry at an advanced period of life, it could not be expected he would

distinguish himself in the departments of science. Besides this, the nature of the work in those days threw almost insuperable difficulties in the way of this kind of improvement. The circuits were often hundreds of miles in extent and the roads almost impassable; the rides were long, and nearly every day in the week filled with an appointment. Under these circumstances the acquisition of literature was scarcely to be thought of; and yet such a man as Owen could never be at loss for adequate means of communication with the people. He regarded the Gospel as perfect in itself, not *needing* the embellishments of rhetoric or the tinsel of human learning to make it efficacious; and if he might not draw materials from scientific sources, yet he had a resort which never failed him, namely, the Bible, common sense, and a knowledge of human nature. His figures were natural, not fantastic; not the unreal creations of a wild and unchained imagination, but chosen from real life, and adapted to impress the mind of every grade of hearers. His speech was not with 'enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and with power.'

"The zeal of Owen was limited only by his ability. He seemed never to forget that his appropriate business was to save souls;

'To cry, Behold the Lamb!'

hence wherever he went, whether in the populous town or 'in the country waste,' in public or in private, he was in quest of souls for whom the Saviour died; and if perseverance in exhortation, entreaty, warning, supplication, and prayer could prevail, he never failed of the object.

"His warnings and reproofs were sometimes delivered with a bluntness that would no doubt offend the delicate ear in these days of refinement and fastidiousness; yet the fruits often illustrated the saying of the wise man: 'A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.'"

Anning Owen was a man of mighty faith and persevering prayer. It is said by those who knew him when presiding

elder, that the people always expected conversions at his quarterly meetings. He made his appeals direct to the heart, and if he saw the sinner affected under his preaching, he was sure to seek him when his sermon was ended, and seldom left him until happily converted to God. Often has he spent most of the night in prayer for the conversion of a single soul.

Owen was greatly fond of singing, and sung much himself; not that kind of singing which sacrifices piety and sense to *mere sound*, but spiritual singing, that which makes "melody in the heart to the Lord." His voice was strong and flexible, and distinguished for its richness and melody. There was one hymn which more than any other he delighted to sing. It was called "The Band of Music," and commences :

"O how charming!
O how charming!"

This hymn he sung at camp-meetings and quarterly meetings, in love-feasts, prayer-meetings, and class-meetings; he sung it on horseback as he traversed the wilderness in quest of souls, and on the day of his death his last strength was employed in singing

"O how charming!
O how charming!"

his voice failed, and an angelic band bore him away to unite in the "music" of heaven.

WILLIAM COLBERT

was a man of deep and ardent piety. His love for God and his fellow-creatures was the controlling principle of his life. His zeal was a steady flame. No labor or hazard turned him aside from the path of duty. He counted not his own life dear to him so that he might finish his course with joy. He traveled in all extremities of weather, and endured the greatest privations in his Master's service. He preached incessantly, and suffered no interest of the Church committed to his trust to languish for want of attention.

In this country Mr. Colbert was properly a missionary, and his work was missionary work. He broke up as much new ground as any other man of his period, and then the itinerant work mostly consisted in surveying and opening new fields of labor. Of what he passed through as a pioneer preacher we of the present generation can form but an imperfect estimate. In making up the account we must not merely take the measure of his labors in new fields, but we must consider who he was and what obstacles presented themselves in his vast and numerous fields of missionary toil.

Mr. Colbert was a native of Maryland, and had been accustomed to the comforts and luxuries of refined society. The contrast between the comfortable and elegant homes of Maryland and Delaware and the log-cabins and the stinted and homely fare of the New England settlers in Western New York, was so great as to shock the sensibilities of his nature, and fill him with disgust and loathing. When he wanted retirement, to be compelled to sit down among a troop of noisy children, and, at his quarterly meetings, to be crowded to suffocation at his lodging places by a flood of company, to such a mind as that of Mr. Colbert was more disagreeable than the terrors and gloom of a howling wilderness. The poor cookery, cold houses, dirt, and insects of a new country were to him real evils, for he had not been accustomed to such things. These, with a thousand and one unmentionable troubles, our missionary endured for the sake of Christ and the love of souls. In labors he was abundant. In journeys, exposure, frequent preaching, persevering, earnest efforts to extend the reign of Christ and save souls, he had few equals and perhaps no superior.

In his missionary tours in Tioga and the lake country in 1792 and 1793, his want of that immediate success which attended many of the old pioneers must have been exceedingly trying to his faith and patience. He labored four months in Tioga and only "joined three persons in society." Everywhere there seemed to be a stolid indifference to

religion; the only symptom of any interest on the subject of Methodism often was sharp opposition. There were exceptions to this condition of things, noble exceptions, but they were mere exceptions. Some of the better class of settlers received him to the hospitality of their hearths; but even these, while they treated the messenger with respect, rejected the message. Still he held on, bore himself nobly, having confidence that the seed which he was scattering would not all fail to vegetate; and after nine years of absence he returned to his old field of labor to find many green spots which were sterile when first visited by him. The hard blows which had been struck had caused the solid rocks to crumble, and the way was now comparatively plain. What strength of will, what plodding industry, what patient endurance, what hope, what far-reaching faith were necessary during those hard old times, when Colbert first climbed the mountains of the Susquehanna and waded the swamps among the lakes! And all these he had.

Mr. Colbert was a good preacher, sound in doctrine, clear in method, plain and practical, cogent in reasoning, and earnest in his appeals. His object was not so much to shine as to do good.

He was a true-hearted Methodist. The New England theology, with which he came into frequent contact, was an abomination to him. The rules of the Discipline he tried to *keep*, and not *mend*. But he was no bigot; his arms of charity embraced all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

The diary from which we have so largely quoted shows that our missionary was a student. He read the best books, as his scanty time and opportunities allowed, and profited by them. His keeping a diary, and keeping it up to the end of his long life, as we are told he did, is an evidence of his literary taste, methodical habits, and indomitable perseverance. The facts of this diary, simple and unstudied as it is, are a legacy to his family and to the Church beyond price. He was rather under size, well developed in physical

form, neat in person, somewhat sensitive, and always doing something.

Mr. Jesse Bowman, of Brier Creek, Pa., recollects the subject of this sketch perfectly, and has furnished us the following note of some of his peculiarities: "Mr. Colbert was a small, slender man, about one hundred and twenty-five pounds, not more; wore buckskin breeches, or small clothes, which he furbished up and repaired with yellow ochre, with which he was always supplied."

From a letter which Mr. Colbert wrote to Judge Dorsey, bearing date March, 1805, we learn that he was married to Miss Elizabeth Stroud on Nov. 1, 1804. From this time Stroudsburg, Monroe county, Pa., was Mr. Colbert's home. He located in 1811, was received again into the Philadelphia Conference in 1826, but did not do effective service. He lived much respected until 1833, when he was called to his great reward. His body reposes in the old graveyard in Stroudsburg, there to await the sound of the last trumpet.

BENONI HARRIS.

Among the men of small talents, and yet of great piety and marked character, who took a part in the labors of the itinerancy in our field, is the man whose name stands at the head of this section. Benoni was shabbily dressed, and was too simple to meet the taste even of those times of comparative simplicity. His exceedingly plain manners and his eccentricities mortified the preachers, and sometimes offended the people, and at the conference of 1810 a concerted effort was made to get rid of the poor little fellow, which proved successful. A record on the Journal of that year says: "Benoni Harris was charged with improprieties relative to dress, and a singular method of preaching, and he was advised to locate." This advice he followed, and the conference raised a collection of fifteen dollars for his benefit.

Thus closed six years in the itinerancy of one of the best,

and yet the most singular men who ever entered it. He was a very short man, not more, we should think, than five feet. He traveled Otsego circuit in 1805 and 1806, and we recollect him well. Short as he was, he was *loud*. When fairly under way he would put his hands to his ears and then dash them down, and stamp with his feet till he made things jar.

His stamping propensities once resulted in a most ludicrous scene. He was preaching in a sap bush, and, having no stage provided, he took his position upon the head of a hogshead. He preached and stamped until his foundation gave way, and down went the little man into the hogshead! The people laughed, but supposed the scene would soon be changed, when the eccentric little preacher should take another position. But how was their amusement increased when he went on with his sermon without the interruption of a sentence! his bald head just in sight, and his hands first flung up above his head, and then taking hold of the chime of the hogshead! When his sermon was concluded he was assisted out of his awkward pulpit, and, after a powerful prayer, he dismissed the people.

His *amens* were astounding, sometimes even to the earnest old Methodists, but often much more so to the wicked. The turnpike from Albany to Cooperstown was constructed during the time of his traveling Otsego. It passed our father's house, where Benoni often called. One morning he rode on west, and a gang of "the turnpikers" were moving along in the same direction. He was wretchedly mounted, and made anything but a respectable appearance. A wag of the company bantered him to trade horses, but he made no reply. They jcered him incessantly, while he did not appear to hear them, or even to know they were there. Finally one of them sung out, "Lord bless Brother Harris." Then he broke silence, and his response was "A—men," with a voice of thunder. The whole gang were taken down. They paused and let "Brother Harris" pass on without further molestation, which he did without uttering another

word, or turning to see what had become of his troublesome traveling companions.

In those days we were from eight to ten years of age, and Benoni was about our height, but considerably heavier. We saw him baptize, by immersion, in Red Creek two full grown young men, one of them Benjamin G. Paddock, and a young lady, and there we marveled at his physical strength, for he did the work manfully.

We were often deeply impressed under his earnest sermons, but were prodigiously mortified at his slovenly appearance, the rack of bones which he rode, and his saddle and bridle, which in sundry places were tied up with tow strings. He was as happy as a king amid all the horrors of poverty, dirt, and rags. He was a good man, without economy. He died in peace, and now needs no sympathy.

In justice to the memory of Benoni Harris, it ought to be said that, notwithstanding his shabby appearance and his oddities, he sometimes made a successful dash into the enemy's camp. He once called upon a vile opposer, and asked the privilege of praying in his house. At first he received abuse, and was peremptorily ordered to leave the house. But he kindly and earnestly expostulated with the enraged man, when, perhaps, his smallness of stature and his child-like simplicity were his only protection from personal violence. He knelt and prayed while the fellow swore. His prayer concluded, he asked him to go that evening and hear him preach. The proposition was rejected with cursing and bitterness. Nothing daunted, the little meek poverty-stricken saint says: "You will go, I know you will, and you will be converted." The enraged infidel was utterly surprised that any human being could hear such abuse with such patience, and half dumb with astonishment, and from a desire to get rid of his unwelcome visitor, he promised to attend meeting, and Benoni left. His friend was at meeting in good time, and received extra attention from the preacher. The result was that before the meeting closed

the infidel was on his knees. He was soundly converted and became a strong and influential Methodist.

Benoni made several efforts to regain his standing in the conference, but the body was inexorable. He bore his disappointments with Christian meekness, and continued during the rest of his life to labor in the capacity of a local preacher, and received many marks of affection from the people, whose kind consideration kept him fed and clothed; and this was all he cared for, so far as temporal interests are concerned.

JONATHAN NEWMAN.

Our earliest recollections are associated with the objects and aspects of a newly settled country. Our native town was partially settled before the Revolutionary war, and the settlers shared a common fate with that of their neighbors in Cherry Valley, when this portion of the country was overrun by the Indians and Tories. The portion of the inhabitants not able to bear arms fled in dismay; some were cruelly murdered, women and children were made prisoners, houses were consumed by fire, and the infant settlements were wholly laid waste.

After the acknowledgment of American independence by the mother country, the scattered inhabitants returned to their desolated homes, and erected dwellings, such as they could, and set out anew to live. When a boy we often listened to tales of suffering and bloodshed from the people, male and female, who were actors and sufferers in those troublous times. Our first recollections reach back to the period when most of them were still living in their log-cabins. There were only some three or four exceptions in the neighborhood, and two of these were public houses. The settlements were small and widely separated, the roads were terrible, and, of course, the people poor.

This was the state of things when the Methodist preachers first visited the frontier settlements in Otsego county, state of New York. Of the sufferings and privations which

these men had to endure, the present generation can have but a very imperfect idea. Their very existence depended upon the immediate impression which they made upon the minds of the rustic population; for they came with no other claims for shelter and food but those which were to be inferred from their divine commission to bring to the hungry sheep of the wilderness the spiritual food which they needed, and with which none as yet had supplied them. God opened the heart of many a Lydia, and almost miraculously supplied the wants of his faithful, self-denying servants.

The leading characteristics of the first preachers in the interior of this state were simplicity of manners, ardent piety, untiring perseverance, and a zeal for God which manifested itself by a vehemence of manner, both in prayer and preaching, which many in these days would consider downright rant or fanaticism. We do not say this was the case with all. There were some who were eminently sons of consolation; but the *thunderer* was the ruling spirit of those times.

The opposition with which they had to contend was fierce and often foolish. We recollect an anecdote related to us by Mr. Garrettson, who was the "elder" under whose supervision the first preachers were sent "out West" in 1791, which will illustrate the case. He was traveling on horseback, on a visitation to some portion of his district, when he fell in with a man traveling in the same way, who, after a little conversation, sung out, with earnestness, 'Have you heard the news?'

"What news, sir?" asked Mr. Garrettson.

"Why, sir, the king of England has sent over a parcel of spies that they call Methodists, and they are ransacking the whole country; you can scarcely go amiss of them."

"My friend," answered Mr. Garrettson, "these men are not spies sent from the king of England, they are the servants of the Most High, sent by him to warn sinners to flee the wrath to come, and I am one of them." He then be-

gan to belabor the stranger in old-fashioned Methodist preachers' style, when the exhortation proving too warm for him, he put whip to his horse and made off.

The Methodist preachers of those early times, as a class, were fine-looking men. With few exceptions they were not meanly dressed, and were respectably mounted. The people loved them, and were ever ready to share with them their small resources. These means might now be considered scarcely sufficient to keep soul and body together. To travel and labor night and day for six months or a year, and only receive *four or five dollars in money*, would be thought an absolutely desperate case in these times of abundant supplies and small sacrifices. This, however, was often done in those early times.

The manners and habits of the first preachers who visited our paternal residence made a deep and an abiding impression upon our memory and heart. They came to pray, to sing, and to exhort both parents and children to love the Saviour. Their religious exercises in the family were marked by solemnity and earnestness, and they always left a blessing behind them. Their sermons consisted mostly in strong appeals to the conscience, and often produced the most marvelous results.

One of the first two preachers stationed on Otsego circuit was Jonathan Newman, a man of marked character. He was received on trial and stationed on this circuit in 1791, with Philip Wager, and reappointed in 1792, in connection with James Covel. In 1793 he traveled on the Herkimer circuit with David Bartine. In 1794 he was stationed in Albany circuit with the same, and "Thomas Woolsey was to change with Jonathan Newman in six months." In 1795 his name stands among those "who are under a location through weakness of body or family concerns." There are *thirty-two* names in this list this year. In 1796 his name does not appear, but he probably occupied the same relation, and in the following year he is on the Herkimer circuit again. In 1798 he is on Chenango; 1799, Mohawk;

1800, Delaware; 1801, Oneida and Cayuga; 1802, his name is wanting; 1803, Herkimer; in 1804 he is again "under a location through weakness of body or family concerns," the latter we presume was the cause. After this his name does not appear, and he probably from this time became permanently located.

His location, we believe, was more the result of domestic embarrassments than a preference for secular occupations. He had a numerous family and an afflicted, nervous wife. It was difficult for him to remove his family; besides, if our impressions are correct, and they are derived from the conversations of those who knew the facts, his children greatly needed the constant supervision of a father. The long absences from home to which a traveling preacher of that period was subjected, were not always consistent with the demands made upon him by the state of his household.

"Father Newman," as he was called, entered into business, but, we believe, was not very successful. His residence was somewhere on the head waters of the Susquehanna, we believe in Otego, but precisely where, we never knew. He became the proprietor of a 'carding machine,' and drove a small trade in various articles, which often called him to Albany; and in his way he always made our paternal residence his stopping-place. We recollect with what mortification we often assisted in providing for the three skeleton horses which he usually drove before an old lumber-wagon, loaded with diverse sorts of merchandise. Our love for the old apostle, however, never declined, and we were always much gratified with his visits, especially when he arrived on a Saturday afternoon and preached on Sunday.

In 1810 or 1812 the old gentleman applied for readmission into the conference, but, on account of the state of his domestic concerns, his application was rejected. This act so grieved and disaffected him that he left the Church, and united with the people called Christians. Of course he

wholly lost his influence with the Methodists ; and although he several times preached in our neighborhood, while in connection with that society, we never heard him preach an entire sermon. Once we ventured to eavesdrop, for a short time, while he was preaching of an evening in the school-house hard by. We recollect that his drift was to show the evils of the division of the Church into *sects*, and prove, or rather *predict*, that "the separating walls would all soon be abolished, and that the *small stars* would all be united, and would constitute one glorious sun, which should warm and illuminate the whole earth."

Our childish heart grieved over Father Newman, and we recollect once to have ventured to express to a preacher our disapprobation of the act of the conference, by which he was tried, as the result proved, beyond his strength. We were, however, much comforted to learn, about the period of the commencement of our itinerant career, that our old favorite had renounced the peculiar notions of the "Unitarian Christians," and returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in whose bosom he spent the remnant of his days. We saw a small tract which he published, in which he asked "the pardon of God and man" for being the means of bringing that erratic sect into that part of the country. If he was oversensitive, and seriously erred in leaving the Church of his early choice, he made such amends as he could for the error he had committed, and by that means regained the confidence of his brethren.

Jonathan Newman was a man of about five feet eight or ten inches, of heavy build, and inclined to corpulency ; dark complexion, with a mild black eye. His voice was heavy and clear, capable of an immense compass. He spoke deliberately, and when in his highest strains was not heard with pain or uneasiness. When he was fairly under way he slightly drew one corner of his mouth in the direction of his ear, and rolled out peal after peal like the roaring of distant thunder.

He was listened to with great attention, and often his pathos so told upon the heart that a commotion was raised around him which would nearly drown his stentorian accents. Sometimes he preached unreasonably long. We recollect hearing our beloved and now sainted father give an animated account of a sermon delivered by Father Newman at a quarterly meeting. He preached on beyond the proper time for closing, and yet seemed to be waxing warmer and warmer, louder and louder, when the presiding elder, who sat behind him upon the stand, gently pulled the skirt of his coat as a signal for him to close. This act seemed to unchain the tempest which raged within him, and had been long struggling for a free and full utterance. He turned around, and thundered out: "Let my coat alone; I am determined to give the people a faithful and solemn warning before I sit down;" and on he careered for half an hour longer.

The first sermon of which we have any recollection was preached by Jonathan Newman in the first house of which memory now takes cognizance, the old log-house, not where we were born, but in which we spent the earliest period of early childhood which leaves permanent traces in the memory. The text of that sermon is to be found in Ezra i, 9, and consists in these words: "Nine and twenty knives." What use was made of the text we have not the slightest idea, but we recollect that the sermon was matter of conversation in the family and the region round about for years, and it was thought a most masterly production. Whether he used his knives to cut up "the old evil one," dissect infidelity, to prune the garden of the Lord, to pierce the heart, or for all these purposes, we cannot now tell; but there was evidence enough that they were neither suffered to be idle nor used in play, but were made to serve a purpose which was connected intimately with the destinies of many. Indeed, he flung them in so skillful a manner directly into the hearts of the people, that terrible paroxysms of godly sorrow were produced.

This sermon must have been preached when we were in the neighborhood of four years of age, and yet our recollection of the position and manner of the speaker, and the squeezing which we received by the crowd, while sitting in "the little chair" by the side of our dear "mamma," is perfectly fresh and distinct. The remark is often made, that we have very little idea of the power we have over the minds of children, and especially of the permanence of the impressions which we make upon their young hearts. This fact in our own early history is an instance of the truth and importance of a remark which has become trite, and is not sufficiently appreciated.

The following has been communicated by a friend :

"Jonathan Newman was born in the city of New York in the year 1770. He left his father at the early age of sixteen, and went and learned the tailor's trade, at which he continued to work until after the close of the Revolution, with the exception of three years that he was in the American ranks and served as a regular soldier. Soon after he was ordained by the New York Conference, and continued to travel and preach until he located at Hartwick, Otsego county. He was very much esteemed by his friends and brethren, and honored by all who knew him, for the love and attachment that he manifested toward the cause of Christ, and particularly for the untiring zeal and steadfast integrity that he exhibited to the world.

"As the facilities for a traveling minister in those days were very limited, he labored under a great disadvantage. Ofttimes was he obliged to travel by marked trees through the woods, and to endure all kinds of weather, as the country was new and thinly settled. He often had to retreat to some old tree to shelter himself from the raging storms and tempest. Notwithstanding all of this his heart swelled with devotion toward God, who directed his steps through the wilderness of life, and sustained him by his infinite power and goodness. Thus he continued his philanthropic course until old age and domestic requisitions put an end to his travel-

ing, which was a cause of much grief to him the remainder of his days. After he had been located a number of years, he was seized with a fatal disease, called the black jaundice, which confined him to his bed but six weeks before it deprived him of life. He had his senses until the last, and appeared to be calm and composed, willing to die, and with but a faint struggle he resigned his spirit. Thus ended the days of a venerable father and a useful minister of Christ.

“He was buried near Hartwick village, on Otego Creek. He has a beautiful marble monument erected at his grave which was purchased by the Church and his neighbors.”

TIMOTHY DEWEY.

Of the birth and early history of Mr. Dewey we know nothing. Of his death we learned from one of his sons, in 1850, that he had departed in peace a few months before. We shall here attempt a sketch of his character, and furnish reminiscences which will shed some light upon it.

Timothy Dewey commenced his labors as a traveling preacher in 1795, and located in 1804. He traveled on Redding, Pittsfield, Cambridge, New Rochelle, Vershire, Granville, and Pompey circuits. As a traveling preacher he labored with great zeal, and with equal success. In 1798 he was stationed on Cambridge circuit with the celebrated Lorenzo Dow. and between the two there existed an intimate friendship ever after. His location is a matter which is involved in some mystery, and was far from being satisfactory to himself. We have a few shreds of the story in our memory, derived from him, which amount to this: Bishop Asbury wished him to take an appointment at the south, but he was not willing to be removed to that part of the work; indeed, the health of his family rendered it morally impossible for him to comply, and the bishop was told that Brother Dewey would prefer a location to such an appointment as was proposed. But that he did not wish or expect to locate at that conference is perfectly evident from the whole tone of the letter which he wrote to

Mr. Colbert, just before the session of the conference, and which we have copied from his journal. For the same reasons which he gives in that letter for not attending the conference, he certainly could not remove a great distance. The unyielding Asbury acted upon one of his settled maxims—"We wish men to labor where we say, and not where they may choose;" and, quite unexpected to himself, Mr. Dewey learned that he was returned located on the Minutes. He was grieved, as he had reason to be; and although to the end of life he was proof against all temptation to leave the Methodist Episcopal Church, yet he never could be prevailed upon again to enter the traveling ranks.

For many years Mr. Dewey resided upon the great northern turnpike, between Chittenango and Manlius. His house having been built for a barn, was neither elegant nor convenient. Subsequently he lived in a comfortable cottage in Pompey Hollow, but removed from that place further west before he finished his course. His companion was rendered a perfectly helpless cripple by rheumatism, and heavily tasked the inexhaustible kindness and patience of one of the most affectionate husbands that ever lived. He lifted and carried her as though she had been an infant, and a portion of the time, when she was being moved, her joints cracked, and her frame seemed to rattle like a mass of dry bones in a sack.

Mr. Dewey was not remarkable for his ability as a financier, or skill in getting money, and was consequently poor as to the things of this world. He farmed on a small scale, but had he not been affectionately remembered by the good brethren among whom he occasionally labored, the necessities of his family would scarcely have been met. The health of Mrs. Dewey necessarily confined her husband much at home; but he often made excursions through the country, and remained for several weeks at a time, filling some opening, or attending to some special call of the Church.

Our acquaintance with Timothy Dewey commenced soon

after we entered the ministry, and then he was becoming venerable for age, and was called *Elder*, or *Father Dewey*. His power in the pulpit was then famous, and he was considered a man of rare attainments both in theology and upon general subjects.

Our quarterly meetings were then not entirely modernized, but were still considerable occasions. The people of a large circuit would come together, often from a distance of twenty or thirty miles. On Saturday, at eleven o'clock, the congregation would be large, and on the Sabbath would sometimes number thousands. Two sermons in succession were often preached, both on Saturday and Sabbath. One sermon never made up the complement without an earnest exhortation or two by some preacher or preachers present. Elder Dewey often made his appearance at these quarterly meetings, and preached "a great sermon;" always containing some rare exposition of scripture, or some pregnant passages which stirred up the souls of the people, and furnished a theme of conversation for months and years. Sometimes he made choice of a text which seemed to ordinary minds inexplicable—a text which they never had heard preached from, and which, when announced, they would naturally think, if they did not whisper, "What in the world will he make out of that text?" He once preached a sermon at a quarterly meeting at Utica, upon Hosea vii, 9: "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not." "Gray hairs," said the preacher, "are an evidence of decline." There is a theme, thought every one, as quick as a flash. *The decline of Christians* was the topic of the sermon. O how he pointed out the "gray hairs!" Every one felt that he had some of them, and felt the fact to lament and mourn over it. Notwithstanding religious decline or backsliding was a perfectly familiar topic, in this instance it was so marked with "gray hairs" that it assumed the character of novelty, and a powerful impression was made. The illustrations and general course of remark were all in the preacher's own peculiar style. His

analogies were all rare and striking, and "the sermon on gray hairs" was long a theme of remark among the people of that region.

Father Dewey was a man of eccentricities, and being firm to the very verge of obstinacy, he was incurable. His course was often strange, and apparently absurd; but when admonished of the fact it would appear that it had been a matter of reflection. Sometimes his reasons would be at hand, and at others the querist would be given to understand that he was meddling with what did not belong to him.

He had thoroughly studied all the difficult and controverted questions of theology, and would frequently grapple with them in his sermons with the strength of a giant; but it was not always that curious inquirers received from him satisfactory answers. A good sister once wanted her doubts resolved upon the difficult subject of God's foreknowledge. She asked the old sage "if God did not foreknow all things." "I don't know what God foreknows," was all the answer she could obtain.

Infidelity and the various erroneous dogmas afloat often received at the hand of this powerful thinker the most withering rebukes, and the most triumphant refutations. He brought to his aid philosophy, history, criticism, and logic; and woe to the opponent who stood in his way. Indeed, we believe few ever openly assailed him. It was quite enough for an errorist to see his foundation torn up and scattered to the four winds of heaven in one of his great sermons, without coming into personal conflict with him. He seldom preached without giving evidence that he was not only a sound, well-read divine, but that he was both a historian and a philosopher. Often when he did not happen to be known did he take the people by surprise. He was a plain man, even careless as to his personal appearance, and at first sight might be taken for an old plow-jogger. When he took the stand he made no great promise to the stranger. But when his text was announced, perhaps something that

no one had ever thought of making the foundation of a discourse, the question most natural was: "Is that some foolish old man who does not know what he is about, or is it some *wonder*, some great man from a distance who has not had time to change his linen? Who can it be?" In a few minutes he would stand out head and shoulders above all around him. The people would see the preachers straining their eyes and smiling as though they were listening to one of the old apostles just arisen from the dead. And as he warmed up the doubt would be dispelled, and all who had ever heard a description of him would be likely to say to themselves: "That must be Elder Dewey, or somebody very much like him." Those who had no knowledge of him at all would wonder where such a plain old man ever gathered up such a fund of knowledge, and how he had qualified himself to criticise the critics, and to stand up as an original thinker amid the greatest scholars and authors of both ancient and modern times. To those who knew the man all this was plain. He was a man of strong powers of mind, a profound thinker, an acute reasoner, and a great reader.

Father Dewey often made bold and unsparing assaults upon errors in manner and slight departures from what he considered the better mode of doing things. We once heard him at a camp-meeting undertake to modify the shouting, and some other exercises which in those days often accompanied it. It gave a terrible shock to a class of ranters present, but did not reform them. The preacher only expected to put upon their guard those who had not been carried wholly into the whirlpool of fanaticism, and save them from the danger, and in this he succeeded.

When we were stationed in Utica our people had some trouble about the singing. Some were for a choir in the gallery, while others wanted old-fashioned congregational singing. The two parties, in advance, had exerted themselves to secure the ear of the old patriarch, well knowing that he would be very likely to undertake a settlement of

the controversy by a bold stroke when he should take the pulpit. He heard them without giving any opinion, perhaps simply remarking : "This singing is a troublesome business." When he took the pulpit on Sabbath morning he announced for his text : "Man shall not live by bread alone." His position upon the text was taken on this wise : "People are prone to magnify some one thing, and often a very immaterial thing too, into everything, to make it all and in all. That is their 'bread,' and they want nothing but 'bread.' Sometimes it is this, and sometimes that, and sometimes the other thing. Sometimes it is a learned ministry, sometimes an eloquent ministry, and at other times plain, old-fashioned preaching ; sometimes fine churches, and at others plain, small churches ; sometimes singing in the gallery, and at others singing on the lower floor ; but 'man shall not live by bread alone.'" All saw his position at once and anticipated the result. That result was, that both parties took a severe castigation for magnifying a small matter beyond due bounds ; neither from that time looked to Father Dewey for sympathy, and the controversy abated.

At camp-meeting Father Dewey was in his glory. He needed the stimulus of a great occasion to spring his powers into vigorous action. He had a splendid voice for the open air : it had strength and compass, it was grave and manly, and as clear as the sound of a trumpet. When the lion in him became fully aroused his mighty soul needed no better avenue to the ears of the people than the wonderful vocal power with which the God of nature had endowed him. His mighty sentences would peal through the forest far beyond the bounds of a large encampment, and often arrest the attention of groups of strollers, who were beyond the circle of tents seeking their own amusement. On one occasion he rose upon the stand to address a vast concourse, which the presiding elder had labored long and in vain to persuade to become quietly seated. The old gentleman rose and slowly advanced to the front of the stand, and

without the least apparent excitement or straining of voice, he roared out: "What is the matter? why all this restlessness? What are you after? You wander about as if you knew not wherefore you had come together." He then commenced reading his hymn, and in a few minutes all were quietly seated.

We recollect attending three camp-meetings during one summers of 1816 and 1817 where Father Dewey was *the great man*. One was at Plymouth, on Lebanon circuit; one in Truxton, Cortland circuit; and the other on Broome circuit, six miles above Binghamton. At the meeting in Truxton he preached two or three powerful sermons, which did great execution. One of these sermons was preceded by a prayer which commenced in this wise: "Lord, have mercy upon wicked Presbyterians, hypocritical Baptists, and backslidden Methodists." This language gave great offense to some of the parties concerned, and was made a matter of no little complaining. The sermon which followed was based upon a portion of the epistles to "the seven churches of Asia."

At the Broome meeting he preached four sermons, every one of which was characterized by a holy unction, and made deep and lasting impressions. On Sabbath afternoon he was specially assisted. The sun shone directly in his face, and he perspired freely while he thundered and lightened, and almost made the earth tremble beneath his feet. Near the close of his sermon a young man in the congregation fell upon the ground, and struggled as if in the agonies of death. A prayer-meeting was commenced around him, and after a short period of deep distress he was happily converted. Thenceforward to the close of the meeting the work progressed powerfully, and many were brought into the liberty of the Gospel.

During this meeting a young man, who had just commenced experimenting upon his preaching propensities, was put up to preach. He undertook to preach a great and learned sermon, but made a total failure. What was par-

ticularly vexatious was that he seemed to think he was doing wonders. The preachers manifested great uneasiness, and some of them left the stand. When he had concluded his talk, having exhausted an hour and thirty or forty minutes, he came into the preachers' tent and asked "what was the matter" with a certain preacher who seemed to be particularly fidgety. "It is no wonder at all that he was uneasy," answered Father Dewey, "for you made awful work of it." The poor fellow just then shrank down into his natural dimensions and immediately evaporated, and we have not heard one word about him from that day to this. We hope he outlived the shock, and finally found his appropriate place in the Church.

At the camp-meeting at Plymouth there was no move among the people for several days; the devil seemed to dispute the ground inch by inch. A host of disorderly, noisy people were constantly prowling about the ground, and it seemed impossible to secure their attention. The faint-hearted were ready to despond, and the faith of the Church seemed weak. This was the very time when the soul of Father Dewey would be likely to be aroused, and then he would enter the arena girded with strength. On an evening when the ground was thronged with careless, disorderly people, the venerable man took the stand, and after a powerful prayer, one which waked up and melted the hearts of Christians, he gave out for his text these words of the prophet Amos: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." It was soon evident that the old warrior had taken up his heavy battle-ax and was about to use it to purpose. After a few introductory remarks he began to ply the consciences of sinners with the terrors of God's law, and to shake over them the rod of divine justice. His earnestness increased; his powerful voice pealed through the forest, sentence after sentence, in an ascending scale, both as to earnestness of manner and weight of expression, until his great soul seemed to be in a perfect tempest of excitement, and his warnings came down upon the people like tumbling rocks

precipitated from the hill-top by an earthquake. We were in the congregation, at some distance from the stand. The preachers in the stand were weeping and crying aloud, while the devout among the people were following closely in the wake.

At the height of his career the preacher paused for a moment and then broke out: "O sinner! sinner! are you determined to take hell by storm? Can you brave the vengeance of a righteous God? Can you dwell in devouring fire? Can you stand everlasting burnings? Is your flesh iron, and are your bones brass, that you dare to plunge into hell fire?" By this time the preacher had become profoundly sympathetic, and his mighty voice had softened down into tremulous tones of tenderness. The people, saints and sinners, together wept and sobbed.

The venerable man called on the prayer-meeting before he sat down, and we moved up toward the altar, whither the broken-hearted were making their way in great numbers. Near the altar we noticed a young man, greatly agitated, holding to a limb of a tree, and reeling to and fro like a drunken man. He said nothing, but continued for some time holding fast to the limb. Finally he broke his hold and came to the ground. He was removed to the altar, where many were seeking salvation. That night was our triumph; many were born into the kingdom of Christ who will praise God in eternity for Father Dewey's sermon.

The disturbers were either converted or frightened from the ground, for by ten o'clock in the evening not a careless, disorderly person could be seen.

The next morning we noticed a young man among the converts whom we knew; it was the same who held himself up by the limb, although we did not learn that fact until years afterward. This same young man has been for many years a member of the New York Conference.

The Rev. Timothy Dewey was a portly man, of perhaps five feet seven inches in height, dark complexion, black eyes, coal black hair, which hung in heavy curls upon his

shoulders. He was a great and good man, although not a little eccentric and occasionally intractable. He was ardently pious, a true-hearted Methodist, never moved by temptations to forsake the Church, although these were numerous and often urgent. He was flung out of his appropriate sphere when he was located, and this was a great loss to the Church and a source of serious embarrassment to him. Still he labored on to the close of a long life to promote the glory of God and the interests of the Church of his early choice, and he turned many to righteousness who will deck his crown in the day of his rejoicing.

BENJAMIN BIDLACK.

The Methodist preachers who planted the Gospel standard in the interior of this state were the *pioneers of the country*, and many of them officers or soldiers of the Revolutionary army. They were consequently men of nerve, and capable of great endurance. Were we to give our readers a catalogue of the appointments filled by the subject of this sketch, with only such an idea of their distances from each other and the extent of territory they covered as we might be able to furnish, without first giving some idea of his physical abilities, the facts would now scarcely be credited. Before we proceed to any details of his labors and character, we will take a birdseye view of his history previous to his entering upon the work of the ministry.

Benjamin Bidlack was of New England origin, and came with his father to the Valley of Wyoming in 1777. The history of his family is identified with the romantic period of the history of that far-famed valley. The father, when quite advanced in years, was captain of a company of old men, organized for the defense of their homes, while their sons entered the regular service, and were called away to other points of danger. He was surprised by a company of Indians, and suffered a distressing captivity, which only terminated with the war. One son was made prisoner on

Long Island, and "was starved to death by the British." Another was captain of a company in "the Indian battle" in Wyoming, and fell at the head of his company, only eight of the whole number surviving that fearful tragedy.

Benjamin was seven years in the service. He was at Boston when Washington assembled his forces to oppose Gage; at Trenton at the taking of the Hessians; at Yorktown at the surrender of Cornwallis; and in the camp at Newburgh when the army was disbanded. We have heard the old gentleman relate with the greatest interest the events which occurred on those great occasions under his own observation, and of which the historian has taken no note. When the Hessians were captured, he said General Washington passed along the lines of the little half-frozen army, the day being excessively cold, and exhorted the men not to drink to intoxication. His language was in this wise: "My brave fellows, God has given us the victory, but the enemy is close at hand in force; should you become helpless through drink, you will almost certainly fall into their hands." This warning he repeated over and over as he passed on from one point to another.

At Yorktown the French were ready to open upon the enemy first, and were impatient to commence, but Washington held them in. When the order was issued it seemed as if the heavens and earth were coming together. There was an incessant thundering and blazing night and day, the flame from the mouth of the cannon being so bright and constant that at any moment of the night you could see to pick up a pin. The British general called for a parley, but not being ready to comply with the terms of the American commander, "Now," said he, "give it to them hotter than ever," and the thunder of the cannon began again to shake the solid ground. The surrender soon succeeded.

He gave us an account of the encampment at Newburgh, building the road across the marsh, erecting "the temple of liberty," the debates on the subject of disbanding the army, "the Armstrong letters," the religious services on Sunday,

the "splendid singing" they had on those occasions, and the like. After all the many deliverances from death, he came near being killed by an accident just at the close of the war. At this time he drove a team, and upon throwing a bomb from the wagon it ignited, and sent the fragments like hail about his ears. This event made a deep impression on his mind. He truly concluded that the hand of God was concerned in his safety from the stroke of the deadly missiles which came within a hair's breadth of him on every side.

When peace with the mother country was concluded, he returned to the lovely Valley of Wyoming, as he hoped, to live in quiet, and to give succor to his aged sire in the decline of life. But, alas! he came to this spot, rendered so beautiful and lovely by the hand of nature's God, to see further exhibitions of the malignity of the human heart. "The Pennamite and Yankee war," a fierce and even bloody conflict between the Connecticut and Pennsylvania settlers for the title of the soil, was then renewed, and young Bidlack was what the Pennsylvanians called a "wild Yankee." He was not disposed to engage in the fray; for although he was as good a soldier as ever breathed, he had a kind heart, and, of course, hated this unnatural war. He engaged in business, and made a trip in a boat down the Susquehanna to Sunbury, about the distance of fifty miles. Here he was seized by the Pennsylvania party and put in jail.

He was a jovial fellow, and manifested so much good-nature, and was so fine a singer, that a company from the neighborhood frequently assembled in the evening to hear him sing songs. On one occasion he told them that he had a favorite song they had never heard; it was "The Old Swaggering Man;" but he could not sing it without more room, and he must have a staff in his hand, as the effect depended much on the action. Nothing suspicious, they gave him a cudgel, and allowed him liberty to make his sallies into the hall. All at once, as he commenced his chorus, "Here goes the old swaggering man," he darted out of the door, and in a trice was out of their reach, out-

distancing the fleetest of them. The next day he was safe at home, and was never more disturbed.

Bidlack having a most splendid voice, and being full of fun and frolic, was not unfrequently the center and life of sporting and drinking parties. Still he had religious notions and religious feelings, and, wild and wicked as he was, he would go to the Methodist meetings and lead the singing; sometimes, indeed, when he was scarcely in a condition to do it with becoming gravity.

At length he was awakened and converted to God, and henceforth he "sowed" no more "wild oats." He soon began to exhort his neighbors to flee from the wrath to come, and to sing the songs of Zion with a heart and a power that moved the feelings while it charmed the ear. "Ben Bidlack has become a Methodist preacher," rang through the country, and stirred up a mighty commotion.

The circumstances of his conversion have been given in another connection. His first circuit embraced his own neighborhood, and even the *jail* from which, but a few years before, he had escaped, shouting, "Here goes the old swaggering man." The appointment at least shows the state of the public mind in relation to him where he was best known, and is very much to his credit.

Mr. Bidlack was married, and, we think, had three children when he commenced traveling. During his effective relation to the conference he had sixteen appointments, standing in the following order: Wyoming, Seneca, Delaware, Ulster, Herkimer, Mohawk, Otsego, Chenango, Pompey, Seneca, Lyons, Shamokin, Northumberland, and Lycoming. Look at his removes. One year he goes from Wyoming to the Seneca Lake, and the next from that to the Delaware! This was itinerancy in deed and in truth. Any one who can recollect what was the condition of the roads forty years back, in the regions in which he traveled, and through which he removed his family, can in some measure appreciate the labors which he performed.

Mr. Bidlack was removed every year during his itiner-

ancy, with the exception of three. His first wife died, and he married the widow of Lawrence Myers, Esq., of Kingston, Wyoming, Pa.

In 1804 Mr. Bidlack was stationed on Otsego circuit, with John P. Weaver. It was during this year that we first saw him, and we well recollect the time, place, and circumstances. We were seven years of age, and had hold of the hand of our natural guardian.

In 1811 he located, but after an experiment of three years, he found worldly occupations incompatible with that freedom of soul and extent of spiritual enjoyment which he prized above rubies. Accordingly he again proffered himself to the conference in 1815, and did effective work for four years. Infirmities now accumulating upon him, he received a superannuated relation to the conference, and continued in this relation until his death.

At the period when we had our first sight of Mr. Bidlack he was a venerable looking man, and his bearing and conversation impressed us with a high degree of reverence for him. He removed his family to our neighborhood, in Middlefield, and occupied a *parsonage*, which was built, perhaps, for his special accommodation. But such a *parsonage* as it was! The location was in a field, at a distance from any road, in a most isolated and unfrequented locality. At the east were stretched out fields, and a few farm-houses were visible at the distance of one and two miles. At the west lay a deep gorge, in a steep slope of the hill, across which was the old "graveyard," or rather a number of graves, with a dilapidated post and rail fence around it; at the south a deep dell, covered with a growth of large white pine and hemlock trees, through which murmurs "Red Creek;" and at the north and northwest two houses, the nearest of which was within a quarter of a mile.

The reader may wish to know what sort of a house was this same parsonage. It was made of large pine logs, slightly hewed on the inside, with the openings between them "chinked," and plastered with mud. It was roofed

with boards and slabs, and, we should think, was about fourteen by sixteen feet. Here *stayed* the preacher's family, *alone*, during his long absences upon his circuit. He had three daughters, with whom we became somewhat acquainted, meeting them at school and at meeting.

Mr. Bidlack was now in the pride of his strength. He stood something over six feet, erect, with a full, prominent chest, broad shoulders, and powerful limbs. His black hair, slightly sprinkled with gray, hung upon his shoulders, and his large, open features bore an expression of gravity and benignity, mingled with cheerfulness, which at once preposessed one in his favor. His voice was powerful and harmonious. So far back as our first knowledge of him, his tones seemed to have lost some of their melody, and to have acquired a little roughness from excessive preaching in the open air, in barns, and in other places but ill securing the speaker against currents of air. Naturally his voice was the very soul of music, and much of its melody remained until he was very far advanced in life.

Benjamin Bidlack was an effective preacher, though not a profound thinker. His sermons were fine specimens of native eloquence, and were often attended with great power. One of his favorite discourses—at least it was a favorite with his hearers—was upon the words: "They that turn the world upside down have come hither also." In laying out his discourse on this text he proceeded: "First, I shall show that the world was made *right side up*. Secondly, That it has been turned *wrong side up*. And thirdly, That it is now to be turned *upside down*; then it will be *right side up again*." Here he had the main doctrines of every old-fashioned Methodist sermon directly in his way. First, man was created holy; secondly, he has fallen; and thirdly, he is redeemed by Christ, and must be regenerated by the Holy Ghost; then came the *exhortation* to sinners to "repent and be converted."

The sermons of Mr. Bidlack were plain expositions of Scripture, and manifested a thorough knowledge of the Bible,

and considerable acquaintance with the writings of Wesley and Fletcher. He was sometimes argumentative, always earnest, and not unfrequently truly pathetic. We have heard him preach most excellent, not to say great sermons. He often came out in his happiest style at camp-meetings and at conference, when it seemed that the circumstances by which he was surrounded affected him somewhat, as did the sound of the battle when he fought for the liberties of his country. He was respectably read in theology and history, although his early opportunities did not afford him the means of even a thorough English education. On one occasion it was his lot to follow a very finished speaker, and the natural impression upon his mind was, that there would be a great contrast between the elegant diction of the brother who had just taken his seat, and his old-fashioned, plain style of speaking; he, however, flung off all embarrassments, and set himself right with the audience by dryly remarking: "I don't understand grammar *as you fix it now-a-days*; but I suppose I can tell you some plain truth, in plain language." His "plain truth" took, and the old-fashioned preacher soon felt that he was appreciated by his hearers.

"Father Bidlack," for such we shall style him hereafter, was upon the superannuated list for twenty-five years; and during most of this period he was able to preach frequently, and he took a lively interest in all the movements of the Church. He preached a great many funeral sermons, and often these discourses were the very soul of sympathy. His words of comfort to the bereaved mother, when called to part with her idolized babe, were "as ointment poured forth." These occasions laid hold of his heart-strings, and often wrung from his eyes a flood of tears. But while he felt at his heart's core and wept, his tremulous voice fell upon the ear and the heart of grief as soothingly as angel whispers. "Dear, bereaved mother," he would say, "the Saviour says, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.' O you will meet and embrace your dear babe on the other side of

Jordan. Don't mourn that your loved one has become a cherub, is glorified in heaven, and is in the arms of Jesus."

It has often been said of Bishop Asbury that "he was mighty in prayer." The same might be said of Father Bidlack; but it can be said more emphatically that he was *mighty in praise*. His "Glory to God!" had in it a power which was unusual. There are many still alive who recollect a most unearthly scene which occurred at a camp-meeting near Rice's, in what is now called Truxville, in the summer of 1825. The saving power of God was eminently present from the very commencement to the close of the meeting. The first service was crowned with the conversion of souls; and while the tents were being taken down, and the people were dispersing, scores were engaged in prayer before the stand, and more than a score were earnestly seeking salvation. At a particular stage of this meeting Father Bidlack became almost entranced. Many of his neighbors and acquaintances, young and old, had been converted, and the work was rushing on with the power and sublimity of a tornado. The veteran soldier of the cross had won so many battles, and now seeing the cross waving in triumph over such masses, with a prospect of still moving on in its conquests indefinitely, he felt that it was a fit occasion for exultation. With his staff in his hand he moved out of his tent, and walked across the ground, apparently unconscious of the presence of any human being, shouting aloud: "Glory to God! Glory to God in the highest!" The noise of prayer and praise arising from hundreds, seemed for the moment to settle down to a murmur; all listening with unspeakable pleasure to the solemn thundering tones of praise and triumph of the old hero of the cross. Tears flowed, hearts throbbed, then again burst forth a volley of praise from the multitude, which almost made the foundations of the neighboring mountains tremble. It was a solemn, a glorious, a holy, and a heavenly scene; such a scene as we scarcely hope to witness again upon this earth. O it was a green spot in the history of many, very many,

either now living on earth or glorified in heaven ! It was a scene worth crossing oceans, worth a life of toil and suffering to witness. Tears of gratitude flow while faithful memory recalls it, and the pen is attempting, but in a feeble way, to transfer the impression to the minds of others.

At the time of the session of the Oneida Conference, in Wilkesbarre, in 1843, Father Bidlack was in second childhood. He wished to see the conference once more, and was, by his son, brought to the church and conducted in. We met him at the door, and supported him while he proceeded to the altar. He took the bishop's hand, but the fire of his eye had departed : instead of joyous greeting, there was little expression in his countenance, and his eyes exhibited a vacant stare. His hearing was imperfect ; and his head becoming dizzy, he was soon obliged to retire. "The strong men bow themselves, and all the daughters of music are brought low."

The few last years of the life of our subject were years of suffering and comparative inactivity. He was afflicted with a cancer in his nose, which made gradual progress until it became a source of much pain, and it is probable that it finally shortened his days. He died in peace on November 27, 1845, in the eighty-seventh year of his age. Here our story ends, where ends the history of all human beings. The patriot, the Christian, and the Methodist preacher, after a long life of severe discipline, during which he won laurels from his country, and gained stars for his crown in the day of his rejoicing, finally triumphed over the terrors of the grave, and went to his great reward.

BOOK III.

GENESEE CONFERENCE, 1810-1820.

CHAPTER I.

SUSQUEHANNA DISTRICT.

WYOMING CIRCUIT.

At the time of its organization the Genesee Conference was divided into three districts, Susquehanna, Cayuga, and Upper Canada.

We have seen that the conference relations of the territory which we have under review had been subject to a variety of changes, and that the sessions of the conferences which held the jurisdiction over this territory were always at a distance. To be obliged to go to New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore to attend the sessions of conference in the spring, when the roads were unusually bad, and to go the whole distance on horseback, was no inconsiderable burden on the preachers, and necessarily deprived the people of their pastors for a long time, often for three months every year. The organization of the Genesee Conference changed this condition of things very materially, relieving the preachers and the people of a heavy pressure.

In addition to this advantage the work was henceforth to become a unity; no longer under the government of different conferences, nor supplied by preachers of a great variety of views, growing out of a diversity of education and domestic and social prejudices and habits. There was to be no more exposure to a rotation of New Yorkers,

Southerners, and Yankees from New England. The young men born in the country, who were rapidly entering the ranks, were soon to take a leading part in conference business, and to exercise a controlling influence in molding the Church, and giving character to her local institutions. There would soon be Genesee preachers, Genesee Methodists, and, in a sense, Genesee Methodism, all things of home growth. But we need not anticipate the advancement, consolidation, unity, and stability of Methodism in our territory, growing out of its distinct identity and independence. These things will come out in the form of history as we follow the new conference in her development and progress.

The preachers on this circuit in 1811 were Noah Bigelow and William Brown. Nothing of special interest marked the history of this year.

1812. The Rev. George Harmon is presiding elder this year on the Susquehanna district. John Kimberlin and Elisha Bibbins are the preachers on the Wyoming circuit. Both made their mark. Kimberlin was a large, muscular man, and a man of considerable intellectual strength. He was retiring, and often appeared unsociable and even crusty. He visited but little, and when spoken to upon the subject he pleaded the divine direction: "Go not from house to house." A child cried when he was preaching in Plymouth; he paused, ran his fingers through his hair, and said: "I would as lief be in a hornets' nest as among crying children." During the early part of his ministry he had a fancy for bombastic words and phrases. The following is a specimen of an opening of one of his sermons, still remembered by living witnesses: "I have a physical evil in my organic structure; I must, therefore, avoid prolixity and study compendosity." The class at Pittston got into some confusion, and he burned up the class-paper, informing the members that they were all turned out of the Church, but if any of them would promise to behave themselves as Christians and Methodists they might join again.

He preached powerful sermons, which made deep impressions, and are still remembered.

We are happy to be able to present to the reader a survey of the Wyoming circuit as it was in 1812, from the pen of the Rev. Elisha Bibbins, prepared especially for this work :

"I have long thought of addressing myself to the task of furnishing you a few scraps for your history. I therefore begin with what was formerly Wyoming circuit. It was on that circuit I commenced my itinerant career in the year 1812, having as my colleague and preacher in charge Rev. John Kimberlin. The farthest point down the river was Newport, about ten miles below Wilkesbarre. There was but a small class in that place.

"We preached at a school-house not far from the dwelling of Jonathan Smith, an exhorter. There was an elder brother whose Christian name I have forgotten.* He too was a member of the Church.

"The next appointment in order was Wilkesbarre. Here we had a small but good society. There were some daring veterans of the cross ; among them, particularly worthy of notice, were Mothers Gridley and George. Sister Gridley was modest and somewhat retiring, yet in the discharge of her religious obligations to the Church and the world she was firm as a rock and fearless as a lion. She was greatly respected by the Church, and also by many in the higher walks of life beyond the pale of the Church.

"Sister George was by birth and education an English woman of the Yorkshire stamp. She acted, as long as I knew her, voluntarily as steward, both among the church-members and those who were not professors, in collecting funds for the support of the ministry ; and such were her manners and language that the better part of wisdom was to ask her what was the least she would take.

"Father George's house was a home for the preachers in those days. There we could find a quiet retreat, for they

* Martin.

had no children; and especially was it such to Brother Kimberlin, as he was not very partial to children; and moreover particularly interesting to him in view of a good cup of coffee, for which Sister George was deservedly famous. On one occasion Brother Kimberlin called, and was accosted by the old lady in the following quaint language: 'O John, I know what you love; you love a cup of coffee strong enough to bear up an iron wedge!' If my memory serves me correctly Comfort Cary was class-leader at this time.

"From Wilkesbarre we went to Pittston, and thence to Providence; and from Providence we went over the mountain, following a footpath, to the mouth of Tunkhannock Creek, about eleven miles, and crossed the Susquehanna, and put up either with Rev. John Wilson, an Englishman, or with Rev. Newton Smith. At this place Brother Kimberlin and myself were accustomed to meet once in two weeks. Here, too, one or the other of us was in the habit of preaching, and the lot generally fell upon poor Jonah, for it was next to an impossibility to get Brother Kimberlin to preach, from the fact that he was a man much afflicted with diffidence, and withal suffered intolerably from the *blues*.

"From this neighborhood we went up the Tunkhannock to Stark's Settlement, where we had a society and a preaching place. From this place we wended our way over hills and through narrow vales to what was then called Hopbottom, *now* Brooklyn, or, as some of the people would have it, *Hoppingbottom*. The former name, *Hopbottom*, was given to the place probably in reference to the great quantity of hops that grew in that region, and afterward the suffix *ing* was added as illustrative of the manner in which the Methodists exhibited their joy, in times of the outpouring of the Spirit, in leaping up and down. In these journeys we had fine opportunities for studying nature in some of its boldest and most rugged forms. I read many a page while traveling over these hills on horseback; I say 'on horseback,' for a man would have cut a sorry figure in

attempting to travel in a buggy in those days over those hills and among the rocks and roots, over logs, and around fallen trees.

“Here we found an excellent home at the house of that most devoted servant of God, Edward Paine. At this place we had a most excellent society, full of faith and the Holy Ghost! Here we had some seasons of great rejoicing and triumph in the Lord. They not only expressed their joy by loud shouts of triumph, but some of them would leap for joy, as intimated above. We had another appointment within about eight miles of the Great Bend, in what was then called Crowfoot’s Settlement. From this place we returned to Hopbottom.

“Our next appointment was at Springville, thence to Leynman’s Settlement. From this place we went to Meshopen. To reach Meshopen we had to ford the Meshopen Creek.

“I remember in the month of March, 1813, while on my way to my appointment, I came to the creek and found the water very high, and after riding some distance through the water I reached the east bank of the creek, and found a large body of ice on which I could stand free from the water. The water was too deep and swift to undertake to ride my horse through. This threw me into a quandary for a few moments. But I was soon relieved. I found three boards on the upper point of the island of ice on which I was standing. I took the longest one and ran it up the stream, and with the aid of the current succeeded in lodging the farther end of it on the end of a tree or log that projected into the stream from the other side of the creek. Then I put out the remaining two boards, and making me a long leader of my bridle, girths, and halter, and having carried my saddle across on the bridge which I had prepared, I went back to commence the perilous undertaking of getting my horse across. I then took my long halter and passed down among the trees to the ford, and then commanded my horse to come to me, and at the word

he plunged into the turbid stream, and by our combined efforts he came safely over.

“Our next appointment for preaching was at Braintrim, in the neighborhood of Captain Kinney’s; from thence we passed up the Tuscarora Creek into the neighborhood of Father Cogswell’s, and thence we went to what was called Hunt’s Ferry. Here we had some very devoted members. It was in this vicinity that I first became acquainted with Rev. George Evans, at that time an unpolished stone in God’s spiritual building, yet a man of much native talent.

“I omitted to state that we had an appointment at Brother George Hall’s, about a mile and a half up the river from the mouth of the Tuscarora. At this point permit me to relate an anecdote of Brother Kimberlin. Be it known, then, that he was no lover of *blue stockings or blue dye*. Sister Hall, preparatory to meeting, had set the ‘dye-tub’ under the bed, and while Brother Kimberlin was ministering to the people in spiritual thiugs, a mischievous urchin belonging to the household, with less of heaven in *his* thoughts, probably, than Brother Kimberlin, was employed far otherwise; for, whether by mishap, or of set purpose, or otherwise, he upset the *dye-tub* and spilled its unsavory contents upon the floor, which proved too much for the refined olfactories of Brother Kimberlin, and he was obliged to cease preaching.

“Our next appointment was in the neighborhood of Rev. Samuel Carver’s, a most excellent man and a good local preacher. He was a bright and shining light wherever he was known. Brother Carver was one of the mighty hunters of those days. Hence he often brought in savory meat, such as bears and coons. Now my colleague had an implacable aversion to coon’s flesh. It so happened that on one occasion, about the time that Sister Carver had prepared a dinner of coon’s flesh, Brother Kimberlin came in, and of course seated himself at the table with the family, asking no questions, (whether for conscience’ sake or not deponent saith not.) He ate most heartily, when about the

close of the repast Sister Carver inquired how he liked the meat. He replied, 'Very much.' She then informed him, that he had been eating coon's flesh, and, with the muscles of his face distorted, he exclaimed, 'Sister Carver, why did you do so?' and it was with some difficulty she could pacify him for the deception she had practiced upon him.

"Our next place of preaching was at Kingston and Plymouth. At the latter place I became acquainted with Rev. G. Lane, he having located some time previous, and was engaged in the mercantile business. Here, too, we found a small but most excellent society. Among the members here were some of the best women I ever knew. From them I received great help in trying to preach; but for them and Brother Lane I believe I should have turned back and gone home. There were four widows, namely, Sisters Harvey, Woolley, Turner, and Hodge, the mother of Rev. James Hodge. They were not ashamed to own Christ anywhere. Their memory is as ointment poured forth. May I meet them in heaven! We sometimes went from Central Kingston up into or over the mountain to a place called Harris's Settlement, and preached to a few families, but at what precise point I cannot now say.

"And now, doctor, after you have run your base line nearly from southwest to northeast, and have found your angles, right angles, and obtuse angles, and all other angles you can think of, you will have traveled about two hundred miles; and then take into account crossing the Susquehanna in warm, pleasant days, or swimming your horse by the side of a canoe amid cakes of ice for the space of three-quarters of a mile, or sitting in your saddle and swimming him across; or if you please to hold a moment and look on you will see the young itinerant on his horse riding up to one of the tributaries of the Tunkhannock; he pauses a moment to look at the swollen and turbid waters; he hesitates, but then he says it won't do; the people are now assembled for preaching only three-fourths of a mile ahead. Now

look. He takes his saddle-bags from under him, throws them over his shoulder, and then kneels on his saddle, and in they plunge, horse and rider; the waters break over the stern of his horse; now if you listen you can hear him say in mild, but firm tones, 'Steady, Major,' and in a moment they are across the stream, and the itinerant is among the people of God singing:

'Through creeks and rivers swift and wide,
Both high and low I have to ride;
Sometimes beat down some way before
I can safely reach the other shore.'

"We had no revivals on the circuit this year, except at Brooklyn. At that place the work of God continued through the year with increasing power.

"My colleague was a man of first-rate preaching talents, and a man of considerable reading; and sometimes he soared so far above the people in his discourses that the common people could not understand him. I recollect at a quarterly conference held in Kingston, when the question was asked, 'Are there any complaints?' Father Bidlack answered 'yes,' and proceeded to say that Brother Kimberlin fixed the rack so high that the old sheep could get no food, much less the lambs, and that he himself was compelled to find out what he meant by going to the dictionary. Sometimes Brother Kimberlin was very eloquent and overwhelming in his public ministrations.

"At this time the house of Mr. Sloeum, in Wilkesbarre, was a home for the preachers. His wife was a Methodist, and three of his daughters afterward became the subjects of converting grace, and joined the Methodist Church.

"The Plains was four miles up the river from Wilkesbarre. Here we had, as near as I recollect, a small class. Also a small class at Pittston. At Providence we had a class, and used to put up at the house of an old gentleman by the name of Ireland."

In 1813 Marmaduke Pearce was the preacher on Wy-

oming circuit. The northern portion of the circuit was constituted a new charge, called Bridgewater, and Wyoming was reduced to a two weeks' circuit with one preacher. Two local preachers from the state of Delaware, Caleb and Robert Kendall, settled in Stoddardsville, sixteen and a half miles east of Wilkesbarre, at the point where the East-on turnpike crosses the Lehigh. Mr. Pearce was requested to establish regular preaching at this place, which he did, formed a class, and embraced it in the regular plan of the circuit. Gilbert Barnes was converted and joined the class, and from that time was one of the most staid and devoted members of the church in the circuit. He was for many years a class-leader and Sunday-school superintendent in Wilkesbarre, and died there much respected and beloved by all. Mr. Pearce, as a preacher, possessed talents of a high grade, and commanded an unusual amount of public attention.

In 1814 Benjamin G. Paddock was appointed to Wyoming circuit. He was a young man and a splendid singer. He waked up great interest among the young people. This year the records of the quarterly-meeting conferences were entered in a book which was used for that purpose for thirty-eight years, and is labeled on the outside: "The circuit steward's book for Wyoming circuit." The first entry in this book purports to be a record of "the first quarterly meeting, held as a camp-meeting, at Plymouth, September 3, 4, 1814." The records for several years are in the handwriting of Mr. Pearce, and are all beautifully written, and the accounts are businesslike.

The camp-meeting of this year was the second which had been held in Wyoming, and was rendered a blessing to the circuit.

1815. Marmaduke Pearce is presiding elder on the Susquehanna district this year, and George W. Densmore is preacher in charge. He was an earnest and eloquent preacher, and was very useful.

1816-17. Elias Bowen labored on this circuit. At the

close of the last year of Mr. Bowen's term of service a camp-meeting was held on the road running from the village of Wyoming to Northmoreland, on land then occupied by a man by the name of Amey, now owned by Samuel Darland. The number of tents was not large, but the meeting was crowned with a blessing. The word preached took effect, and a goodly number of sinners were awakened and converted to God.

A company of young people from Forty Fort had a tent on the ground, and, for persons who made no pretensions to religion, were unusually interested in the exercises. At the close of the meeting it was evident that the Spirit of God was at work in their hearts. Not being sufficiently humbled to come out and seek religion openly, and yet feeling so deeply awakened as to resolve upon a change of life in some form, the leading spirit in the circle fixed her plan to escape from the camp-ground early on the morning of the close without exposing herself to the observation of the multitude, and to seek religion at home. The Myers tent was early taken down, and everything was in readiness to lead the procession of wagons and carriages down the mountain into the settlement. Betsey was so deeply wounded that she lost her power of self-control and wept bitterly. In passing through the deep ravine called Carpenter's Notch she sobbed and cried aloud. As the carriage moved out of the dense shade and entered the outskirts of the valley settlement, her cries became so loud that they were heard by those who were next in the train. The carriage paused, and on the invitation of a female friend, a daughter of Colonel Denison, Betsey Myers alighted from the wagon and fell upon her knees in the shade of a clump of oak and pine shrubs by the side of the road, crying, "God have mercy upon me a poor wicked sinner!" The way was soon blocked up. The whole train was arrested, and the attention of all was attracted to a little group of young ladies by the wayside weeping and praying. The preachers came along and they found agreeable work upon their hands

there on their way from the encampment. Other penitents joined the group, and there the voice of prayer, earnest prayer, ascended to heaven. It was not long before shouts of victory and songs of praise varied the exercises, and now here was the rare scene of a miniature camp-meeting by the wayside.

The attention of the neighborhood was attracted, and people came to the spot to see what was the matter who there sought and found salvation. For several hours the scenes of the camp-meeting altar were witnessed in that apparently chance collection of people on the highway. Cries of penitents were succeeded by shouts of deliverance, until some ten or a dozen were happily converted to God. Hundreds and thousands of times since that interesting morning has "the little camp-meeting" been alluded to in love-feasts and other social meetings. The Betsey Myers of the wayside meeting is now "Mrs. Locke," of Kingston, who is always in her place at the church.

The fame of the appendix to the camp-meeting spread far and wide, and a gracious religious influence was felt throughout the charge. The cause was in good hands. The Rev. George Lane, who had rendered good service at the camp-meeting, and had been present and deeply interested at the wayside meeting, took charge of the work while the preachers were at conference. He was then a local preacher and resided in Wilkesbarre. "Father Bidlack" and "Brother Lane" did the preaching, while Darius Williams managed the prayer-meetings. Influential families became interested in the revival and were identified with the Methodist cause, portions of them becoming members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mr. Lane took the names of those who wished to join the society and reported them to the preacher after conference.

1818. This year, on the application of Marmaduke Pearce, presiding elder, the writer of these pages was appointed to the Wyoming circuit. He reached his new field of labor and was hospitably received at Darius Williams's, in Kings-

ton, at the foot of Ross Hill, rendered memorable as the place where the first Methodist society was formed in Wyoming. His first Sabbath was divided between Kingston and Plymouth. This was the 9th of August. He found a good work of religion in progress at several appointments. The work at Forty Fort was in a most interesting state, and at Stoddardsville was sweeping everything before it. A wicked young man by the name of Lewis Stull had been frightened by what he considered an apparition of the devil in the woods at a shingle camp. He had thenceforward begun to pray, and the news of his awakening had made a profound sensation through the mountains among the lumbermen. Many were awakened and were turning to God. At our first appointment at this place we had a time of great power, and had several conversions.

The appointments returned were, on the west side of the river: Kingston, Plymouth, Bedford, now Truxville, Dallas, C. Conkle's, and J. Whittock's, in Northmoreland. On the east side: Wilkesbarre, Hanover, Lehigh, or Stoddardsville, Jacob's Plains, Pittston, Providence. The revivals at Kingston and Stoddardsville resulted in an addition of about sixty members to the charge. It was a good year on the whole; the additions made to the Church really increased her strength.

The calls for more preaching considerably enhanced our labors. We resumed the old appointments which had been dropped at Carver's, New Troy, and Newport, and established a preaching place in Abington, at Leach's.

This year concluded the disciplinary term of M. Pearce, our presiding elder.

1819. George Lane was readmitted and appointed to the charge of the district, and Marmaduke Pearce was appointed to the Wyoming circuit.

A camp-meeting was held in September of this year in Carpenter's Notch, on the hillside, just above Swetland's Mills. Among the effective efforts from the stand of this meeting was a sermon from M. Pearce and an exhortation

from G. Lane. The sermon was well argued, and closed under a high degree of excitement which electrified the whole encampment. The exhortation was a melting and overwhelming appeal to the unconverted. Many hardened sinners yielded to the call and were converted. The meeting was greatly blessed, and resulted in permanent additions to the Church.

Mr. Pearce was a delegate to the General Conference which was to sit in May of the present conference year. He traveled regularly for three quarters, and G. Peck was called from Bridgewater to supply his place for the last quarter.

The religious interest had somewhat declined on the circuit, although there had been no instance of backsliding among the young converts. The class at Providence was reorganized. The preaching was now at the Widow Hutchins's, and a Brother Buttolph was appointed leader; he had recently come in from the East and seemed to be an excellent man.

1820. This year and the following Elisha Bibbins was again appointed to the Wyoming circuit. There being a demand for more labor than one man could supply, Jacob Shepherd was employed to assist Mr. Bibbins. Bibbins was a great exhorter and Shepherd was a keen polemic. The condition of the circuit was considerably improved, there being an increase in the number of willing hearers and an improvement in the tone of piety among the members.

A camp-meeting was held this year upon the same ground which was occupied for that purpose the year before. This was also a profitable meeting. Darius Williams, Jun., was struck down and lay helpless in his father's arms for two hours, and when his strength was restored, smiled and said God had blessed him. He, by a process which we shall not attempt to explain, has turned out a Presbyterian preacher, and considers *shouting and falling mere fanaticism*.

CANAAN CIRCUIT.

In 1811 John Kimberlin is appointed to travel on Canaan circuit. We know little of Mr. Kimberlin's success the year, but for some reason a decline in the numbers on the circuit of one hundred and forty-seven is reported on the Minutes of the following year. It is probable that from bad health, or some other cause, he only spent part of the year upon the circuit, as on the stewards' book for that year Samuel Thompson receives quarterage as preacher, and nothing is said of J. Kimberlin.

1812. Loring Grant and Orrin Doolittle are on Canaan circuit. In the Minutes an increase of seventy-one members is reported for this year. The entries on the stewards' book are made by Mr. Grant.

1813. Joseph Hickok and Robert Minshall are stationed upon Canaan circuit. They were worthy men and successful laborers. This year J. Hickok organized a class of members in North Canaan and established a preaching place at Vena Lee's. The names of this class were, Vena Lee, Polly Lee, William Griffin, Sabrina Griffin, Stephen Blatchley, and Betsy Blatchley. Mrs. Lee, usually called Mother Lee, was a leading spirit, and decidedly better known than any other private member of the Church in the circuit. She was converted in Connecticut, and lived at different periods in Winsted, in Guilford, and in Middletown. In all these places she was well known in Methodist circles. In 1813 she came with her husband to Canaan, Wayne county, where a small class was soon organized. Here she lived until the death of her husband in 1852. She departed in peace in Carbondale in 1858.

Mrs. Lee's house was ever the home of the preachers and their families, and they were always made to feel that they were more than welcome. She was an earnest, determined Methodist, and always ready in every way to do her part to sustain its interests, its institutions, and its usages.

Mother Lee was distinguished by several peculiarities

She loved to exhort after the preacher had concluded his sermon, and, if she was not stopped off, her voice would be heard the moment he closed. Her exhortations were fluent, earnest, sensible, and generally well received. She strenuously adhered to "old-fashioned Methodism" in the simplicity of its exterior, and in its doctrines and spirit, and often contended for it with more zeal than was pleasant to many of our modern Methodists. She persisted in telling people of their faults; nor did she always spare the preachers. Her feelings were somewhat variable; she was subject to great depression of spirits, but she still kept her course. She was a ruling spirit, decidedly, but not in a bad sense, *a strong-minded woman*. She was a friend to the poor, and a great nurse. Much of her time during the latter part of her life was spent in visiting the sick, to whom she often rendered most acceptable aid. On one of her pilgrimages to the sick room she was thrown from her carriage and dislocated her right elbow. The joint was not properly adjusted by the surgeon, and her arm was long almost useless. She was finally led to pray for the restoration of her arm. But how was this to be done? That she could not tell. It was, however, finally done by what seemed to be an accident. She had a hard fall upon her lame arm, and the effect of the fall was to remove the difficulty, and restore her arm to its original power of motion. We saw and examined her arm when it was almost useless, and after its restoration, and had the manner of the cure from her.

Mrs. Lee had her defects, but, taken all in all, was a striking instance of the triumphs of grace over a rugged nature, and for long years she led a life of great devotedness to the cause of God, and was very useful in the Church.

She was present at all the quarterly meetings within her reach, often going forty and fifty miles, and driving her own carriage, or riding on horseback. Her husband was a quiet, good man, who let his wife always have her way, for two good reasons: One was because he thought her way right, and the other because he knew very well that she would

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have it any way. They lived together in the utmost harmony, and we have no doubt are reunited in heaven.

1814. James Gilmore and Israel Cook are the preachers on Canaan circuit. Gilmore was eccentric, but full of energy, and inclined to bold experiments. As a specimen of what is told of him on that circuit we give the following: A young woman, the daughter of a good Methodist brother, obstinately refused to be converted, or even to kneel in family prayer. He tried in various ways to move her, but all was in vain. "Well," said he, "you are determined to go to hell, and if you will go, then the sooner you go the better." This rather shocked her; but she was utterly astounded when he prayed in the family to hear him call her name, and tell the Lord how wicked she was, and then ask the Lord, "if she would not repent, to kill her and take her out of the way of others whom she was hindering."

She got out of his way as soon as prayer was over, and went off in a great state of excitement. She told the story to a young friend, and, fretting and chafing, said "she thought as likely as not that the Lord would kill her," adding that "if he did she would lay the blame all to Gilmore." The poor girl finally became penitent, and lived and died in the Church.

1815. Ebenezer Doolittle stands connected with Canaan circuit this year. He is assisted by Robert Montgomery, a hard working man, but unsuccessful.

1816. Israel Cook is the preacher, and William Brandon assistant: the first a good little man, the second a shrewd old Irishman, who had once been returned on the Minutes expelled, but was permitted to try his hand again as a supply.

1818. Isaac Grant stands connected with Canaan circuit. Mr. Grant was an earnest, faithful, and successful laborer. He was a man of great faith, mighty sympathies, and untiring perseverance. Under the labors of such a preacher the Church would not be likely to be in a state of spiritual death.

A camp-meeting was held, early in September of this year, in Salem, which, on the invitation of our presiding elder, we attended. We crossed Cobb's Mountain in a considerable company of men and women on horseback, led by our magnificent presiding elder on a mammoth horse. All in all it was a novel scene to us, and there was a sprinkling of romance in a train of travelers on saddles, composed of men and women, old and young, climbing the mountain and clambering over rocks, upon which the old Yankees trod when they first visited fair Wyoming, and upon which they dropped their sweat and tears as they fled from the murderous savages. Many of them crossed this mountain on foot, we were well mounted; they traveled in peril of their lives, we in safety.

The encampment was small, the ground rough, and the tents poorly built. Everything was rude and primitive; but God was there. The work of awakening and conversion soon commenced, and the groans of the wounded and the shouts of the saved resounded through the forest of tall hemlock and beech trees. How many were converted we did not learn, but we were happy in subsequent years to find some who were there brought to God, bright and shining lights in the Church.

The first time we ever saw Mrs. Vena Lee, for many years generally known as "Mother Lee," was at that camp-meeting. She prayed, exhorted, and shouted until she all but fainted, over and over again.

There we saw a young man converted after a palpable insult which was enough to wake up the devil in him. The young man was standing by the altar, leaning upon the railing, making sport at the exercises inside. "Father Caleb Kendall" approached him, and said in a taunting, provoking manner, "You are a pretty fellow, standing here and making game of sacred things, with your ruffle sticking out of your bosom; *as likely as not it is not paid for.*" We thought the old gentleman would be knocked down, but nothing of the sort occurred; the fellow sneaked away.

That evening a young man was found by this same Father Kendall in great distress near the altar. The old gentleman took him into the preacher's stand, and prayed for him long and loud. Finally he was converted, and arose and shouted. When his face and breast were exposed to the light he was discovered to be the same young man whom Father Kendall had given such a terrible blast in the afternoon; but his ruffle! it had parted with its starch and had assumed the color of the ground, upon which he had rolled in agony under a fearful load of guilt. Father Kendall, whose chosen method with transgressors was that of rough dealing, of course was confirmed in his habits.

1819. This year Abram Dawson traveled Canaan circuit. He was a good preacher, but his success was not marked.

1820. It was the lot of the writer to travel Canaan circuit this year. He found it a very hard field. The roads were terrible, the country new, the people poor, and the rides tiresome and often perilous. At Bethany, the county seat for Wayne county, was an aged and talented Presbyterian minister by the name of Gershom Williams. He was soon discovered to be a foxy enemy to Methodism. The first appointment for the year in the village occurred during the session of the court, and Judge Scott, the circuit judge of the district, had the kindness to speak a good word for the new preacher at his boarding-house. When he entered the court-house, which was the only preaching place in the town, he saw his friend, Judge Scott, of Wilkesbarre, with a number of lawyers, and all the notables of the town, with a crowded house, seated and waiting. The congregations through the year were large and respectable, and the old dominie showed the Methodist preacher special marks of friendship. The next year he fell into disgrace.

Canaan circuit was now a two weeks' circuit, with ten regular appointments. The people were simple-minded, kind-hearted, and there was a good religious feeling throughout the circuit. Some of the people came far to meeting, and enjoyed with a relish what cost them hard toiling and

sacrifices. The country and the people were improving rapidly. It was a hard, rough circuit, but was still vastly in advance of what it was when traveled by Anning Owen, Gideon Draper, and George Harmon. The preacher received during the year in grain, meat, meal, maple sugar, and other articles, too numerous to mention, about one hundred dollars, all told.

BRIDGEWATER CIRCUIT.

In 1813 Bridgewater circuit first makes its appearance on the Minutes. John Hazzard and Elijah Warren are the preachers. We recollect Hazzard well, as he commenced traveling on Otsego circuit. He was evidently a very pious man, but a very poor speaker. He had the worst habit of stammering which we recollect ever to have witnessed in a public speaker. It was absolutely painful to listen to him. Warren had a wonderful tendency to follow *impressions*. It is reported of him, that upon passing a house which was situated some distance from the road, he had an impression that it was his duty to go to the house and converse with the people on the subject of religion. He passed on and began to feel that he was grieving the Spirit. He turned about, and fastening his horse to the fence, deliberately let down the bars and went up to the house. He was very devout, prayed for success with the inmates of the house in his contemplated effort to win them over to the ways of religion. He knocked at the door, but received no answer. He knocked again, but still all was silent within. Upon examination, to his utter confusion, he found that the house was vacant! It was a lesson to the brother which, it may be hoped, he never forgot.

1814. This year the preachers upon Bridgewater circuit were Elisha Bibbins and Wyatt Chamberlayne. The circuit was large, and the preachers labored earnestly and ably for the good of the people. Hopbottom was famous for the spirituality and zeal of the membership. This was the center of the circuit, and gave tone to the whole. Some of

the meetings, to the eye of an outsider, were scenes of confusion. There was much of holy zeal there, but a little mixed up with something like fanaticism. The jumping spirit was often witnessed in the Hopbottom society, and some of the best members, male and female, were occasionally under its influence. When much excited they would commence moving up and down, apparently without effort or a knowledge of what they were doing. The movement was perfectly graceful, and yet evidently unstudied. It was one of the phenomena which attended the great religious excitements of early Methodism.

Three hundred members were returned upon the Minutes at the close of this year.

1816. There was a camp-meeting in September of this year on the land of Edward Paine, in Hopbottom, which we attended. This was "the cold summer," and it was a season of scarcity and gloom. Frost had destroyed the crops in this part of the country, and the prospects of living appeared dull and doubtful. The nights and mornings were cold, and there scarcely seemed to be enough of the fire of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the people to counteract the chill from the atmosphere. M. Pearce, the presiding elder, preached a powerful sermon on the evidences of Christianity, from the words of Nicodemus: "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." A few souls were converted, and some Christians quickened.

1818. Ebenczer Doolittle and Edward Paine were the preachers. Doolittle was a considerable Scripturist, but without tact. This year a singular preacher of the Baptist denomination, by the name of Solomon Dimack, began to attract attention along the Susquehanna, between Tunckhannock and Wyalusing. He broached various heresies, which Mr. Doolittle did not fail to attack, sword in hand. This brought the two champions together, in a public debate, at the forks of the Mehoopany. One of the questions discussed was the divinity of Christ. Dimack maintained that "Christ was not the eternal God, but the eternal Son of

God." Doolittle was too much for his antagonist, and he was finally left in possession of the field, as being armed with "too much human larnin'" for the redoubtable Dimack, who was only "taught in the school of Christ." The affair made a great stir, but resulted in little good. The orthodox generally considered that Doolittle acquitted himself passably, and had the decided advantage in the argument.

1819. This year the preachers on Bridgewater circuit were George Peck and Edward Paine. We regarded this circuit with a sort of horror, and made only one request of the presiding elder, and that was not to be appointed to Bridgewater circuit. When the appointments were read off we felt badly whipped. Brother Paine was in raptures, and took us in his arms and laughed heartily. Father Kemberlin seemed to delight in torturing us. "O George," exclaimed he, "you will starve to death; they will feed you on sorrel pie." The young wife to whom George had been but a few weeks married had not been used to living on "sorrel pie," and what should be done with her? We returned from conference with a heavy heart.

It was a year of great trials, but of some triumphs. It seemed a settled fact, that wherever we came into contact with any other denomination there was opposition to be encountered. Methodism had been long in existence in this region of country, but still it had to dispute every inch of ground, and, indeed, efforts were made to drive it from ground which it had long occupied.

The class in Hopbottom had been diminished and weakened by removals, and here we met with active hostility from Presbyterians and Universalists. Elder Davis Dimack was firmly intrenched in his stronghold at Montrose, and from that point spread himself as widely as possible in all directions; and wherever he came he was tolerably sure to strike a blow at Methodism. We heard him preach on a week day in Springville, and were chagrined to hear him fall upon "the Methodists" in a style of misrepresentation

and abuse. The occurrence resulted in a voluminous correspondence between us. "Sol Dimack," as he was familiarly called, vented his spleen in right down vulgar style. We heard him deliver one of the most confused, shapeless discourses we ever listened to; and after the service closed, being introduced to him by a mutual friend, had a regular set-to with him. He had any amount of confidence, but was most lamentably ignorant.

In spite of all the opposing elements, we had seals to our ministry, and a rising in the Church at all points. Our excellent colleague labored faithfully, and did much good. After concluding the labors of the third quarter, we were removed to Wyoming circuit.

A camp-meeting was held just before conference, in what is now called Lymanville, which we attended. Samuel Budd was present, and, in his slam-bang way, preached and exhorted, with considerable effect. Edward Paine delivered a most thrilling exhortation on the stand, which seemed to move everything.

Our conference was at Lundy's Lane, in Upper Canada. On arriving at the place we were overwhelmed with sorrow on receiving the information that Edward Paine had been drowned in the Susquehanna, on his way to the conference.

A just tribute is paid to the memory of this good man in a memoir, written by Rev. George Lane, and published in the Methodist Magazine for November, 1820, from which we will make a few extracts:

"Edward Paine was a native of Connecticut, and was born the eighth of February, in the year 1777, of respectable and pious parents. He was awakened to a sense of his lost condition when about fourteen years of age, by the sudden death of a sister. From this time he set out to seek the Lord, and soon obtained the pardon of his sins, and was enabled to rejoice in the love of God. At fifteen he joined the Baptist Church, of which he continued a member for several years. At length, becoming acquainted with the

doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and considering them to be more consistent with the Scriptures than those embraced by the Church to which he belonged, he withdrew from the Baptists and joined the Methodists.

“In the year 1809 he removed with his family to Waterford, Susquehanna county, Pa. Methodism was at this time in a low state in that place. Brother Paine, who about this time received license to exhort, discovered an uncommon solicitude for the salvation of those around him, who were perishing for lack of knowledge. He soon established meetings among them for prayer and exhortation, and labored day and night to bring them over to the faith of the Gospel; and, to his unspeakable satisfaction, it soon appeared that his labor was not in vain. The few that professed religion appeared to take encouragement, and set out with fresh ardor in the service of God. Awakenings also took place among sinners, and the cry for mercy was soon heard in almost every direction, and in a few months there were about forty added to society; the wilderness rejoiced, the solitary place was made glad, and the desert blossomed as the rose. He was soon licensed as a local preacher, and extended his labors to the adjacent settlements, where he was rendered a blessing to many.

“After having labored several years in the capacity of a local preacher with great acceptance, he began to be exercised about joining the itinerant connection, that he might labor more extensively. His motives on this occasion were undoubtedly the most pure. At home he possessed a good living, was highly esteemed by all his neighbors, was honored with the office of Justice of the Peace, and, above all, was greatly beloved by his family, for whom he felt the strongest attachments. But these, however strong their claims, were insufficient to deter him; he resolved to sacrifice all for the Church of God and for the souls of men.”

He was admitted on trial in 1818, and traveled two years on Bridgewater circuit.

1820. John Griffing was stationed on Bridgewater cir-

cuit this year. He was one of the most powerful exhorters in the conference, and was always successful in winning souls to Christ. Under his labors the tide in favor of Methodism set in strongly at several points where its influence had been but feeble. A revival had commenced under the labors of the preceding year at Skinner's Eddy, and several of the family of Sturtevant had experienced religion. They were Methodists in sentiment, they were the fruit of our labors; but Elder Davis Dimock by some means succeeded in getting them into the water. This year they came home, and remained firm and influential members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The foundation was then laid for an excellent society, and finally an independent charge.

TIOGA CIRCUIT.

The preachers appointed to Tioga circuit for 1811 are John Wilson and Samuel Thompson; in 1812 Marmaduke Pearce and Abram Dawson. Broom circuit being formed this year, and being almost wholly composed of the territory embraced in the northeastern portion of old Tioga, the latter is consequently considerably contracted. Settlements were constantly multiplying, and demands for preaching increasing, so that while the territory was contracted the number of appointments remained the same. The following communication, showing what Tioga was in 1818, is from Rev. Andrew Peck, of the Oneida Conference:

"You ask, brother, a contribution to your forthcoming work: a sketch of old Tioga circuit, and to tell something about our lamented friend, the Rev. John Griffing; some wild stories of the Cattaraugus swamps, etc.

"Now it so happens that I have no wild stories to tell of that old field of Gospel toil, where so many veterans have lived and labored, and have since gone to their resting place. Indeed, its church geography and history during a single year is all of which I can speak definitely, beyond what is known by yourself and others who are living witnesses.

“I find, however, in my biographical sketches (a manuscript which has slept quietly during these few years, and which it is likely will sleep on, and on, while its author and subject shall himself rest as quietly in his narrow home) the following, which I give with slight additions and alterations :

“The first year of my itinerancy (being then in my nineteenth year) was with Brother J. Griffing, on the Tioga, a four weeks’ circuit which extended from Spencer, then the county seat, and several miles to the west and north, and Owego, N. Y., on the Susquehanna, as its northeastern boundary, and settlements on the upper waters of the Towanda Creek in Pennsylvania, and several miles further as its south and southwestern extent. At one point we traveled some twelve miles through an unbroken wilderness, where we were met by female hearers who walked about the same distance to enjoy the sermon and class-meeting. From this we returned to our starting place on the Towanda. This Pennsylvania part included about one half of the circuit which embraced twenty-six regular, besides occasional appointments, and required some three hundred miles of travel to meet them. In all this extent of country we had two so-called meeting houses. The walls of one, situated on Sugar Creek, consisted of hewed logs, with a door, floor, seats, and pulpit ‘to match.’ The other, in the town of Tioga, was called ‘Light’s Meeting-house,’ from the venerable man living near who furnished the land upon which it stood, and with his worthy companion lived to an advanced age, to occupy their places in this movement of daring zeal of the early Methodists of that country. This house was actually roofed and inclosed, and whether the floor was really laid, or whether it consisted of rough, loose boards, as did the seats, I do not at this distance of time recollect. The Tioga circuit forms a sample of the first six of my itinerant labors, commencing with the year 1818, and throughout the bounds of those six large circuits we had only one finished house of worship in which to preach the

word of God, (and that costing twelve hundred dollars all told,) unless I except the log-church on Sugar Creek, which in its way was, I believe, a finished house. Our weekly and semi-monthly worship was held chiefly in school and private houses, both being often of the rudest character as to materials and construction. The quarterly and extra meetings were usually held in barns. Indeed, all and every part of our work then formed a striking contrast with the accommodations and elevated character of our worship now, both as to the appearance of the congregations, and as to the houses where we assembled. But the difference is chiefly exterior, while the Spirit and power of the Gospel were then exactly what it now is.

“Of our presiding elder, the reverend and lamented Marmaduke Pearce, whose labors blessed and encouraged us during this year of our early toil in old Tioga circuit, much might be written both of interest and profit, but I leave this responsible task to other pens. But of my colleague I cannot refrain a few words. The Rev. John Griffing, a most worthy and excellent minister of Jesus Christ, sleeps with his fathers. His fervent piety, his *powerful* exhortations and prayers, gifts in which he greatly excelled, his point and pathos in reproof, his tender and gushing sympathies for the erring of all classes, yea, those eyes which were used to weep, are mementoes ‘graven on my mind and heart’ as ‘with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever.’ Truly, ‘the memory of the just is blessed.’”

The territory of Tioga circuit was, at different times, divided up and other charges constituted, and we shall now proceed to notice portions of the territory under other heads, and more particularly mark the progress of the work.

BROOME CIRCUIT.

In 1812 Broome circuit—taking its name from Broome county, New York—is formed, and Elijah King stands as the preacher.

The circuit then extended across the Susquehanna at the Great Bend, as we have the evidence that Mr. King formed the first society in Gibson in 1812 or 1813. The names of the members were, George Williams, leader; Margaret Bennet, Sarah Willis, (subsequently the wife of John Belcher,) Susanna Fuller, and Jemima Washburne.*

1813. George W. Densmore and Peter Jones are the preachers. These were both working men, and were very successful. Densmore was an eloquent and powerful preacher, and Jones, an honest Dutchman, was simple-minded, and a great man for personal efforts and religious visits. There was an increase of members reported this year of 230.

1814. Broome circuit this year is within the Chenango district, William Case presiding elder, with G. W. Densmore and Israel Chamberlayne preachers. The work progressed this year upon this charge. The increase is 175.

1815. William Cameron is the preacher on the Minutes; Isaac Grant was employed on the circuit by the presiding elder. This was a year of sifting, and the numbers declined 144.

Mr. Cameron was an excellent preacher, but a stringent disciplinarian, and numbers who were united to the Church the two preceding years of revival were this year discontinued.

1816. Elisha Bibbins and George Peck are the preachers this year. This was our first year in the itinerancy, and was to us a most interesting period, though a year of some unforeseen trials.

Mr. Bibbins was deeply devoted, and applied himself to his work with great earnestness and industry, and some souls were converted and added to the Church; but great havoc was made in one of the best societies by the agency of two fanatical preachers, who called themselves *Christ-ians*, by the names of John Taylor and David Foot. The society

* Letter of Rev. William Round.

referred to was the one at Page's, five miles above Binghamton, on the Chenango.

Taylor and Foot professed to have a special mission to break down the old rotten Churches, and build up a new pure Church of Christ. They explained the book of the Revelation, which they professed fully to understand, declaimed against articles of faith, creeds, and disciplines, and bawled Union! union! They vociferated, ranted, jumped, and danced. They first made an impression upon several enthusiastic females who had great prominence in the society; then upon several weak-minded men; and finally produced almost universal distraction among our people. The society was mostly composed of persons not well read in theology, and not well informed on general subjects, and who seemed to be peculiarly exposed to that particular kind of influence which was brought to bear upon them. Some immediately quit the Church as a sink of iniquity; some hesitated until they lost their enjoyment and their moral power; some became discouraged, and others removed; so that it was but a few years before the class was broken up and the appointment abandoned.

The seceders were ruined. Some of them went to the Shakers, some to infidelity, and others back to the world. Taylor and Foot ran into one excess after another until they reached the ordinary terminus of heresy and fanaticism, an utter abandonment of the restraints of religion and virtue. They became objects of loathing and popular indignation, and finally, having done all the mischief possible, they absconded. Their footprints however still remain.

We have followed this terrible demonstration of heresy and fanaticism through a few years subsequent to the one under immediate review, as we have learned the history of events within the last few years, that the moral of the movement may be seen. Those "Christians" were such a scourge on the Church and whole region round about as we hope never to see inflicted again. The whole affair was an instructive lesson to us. It was then new and strange to

see persons who had stood high in the confidence of the Church, for whom the preachers had labored with great self-denial, and who had made many strong professions that they loved and revered the instruments of their conversion, so blinded and befooled as to forsake the counsels of their pastors and follow a couple of madmen.

There were some most excellent official members on the circuit. Dr. Grant, of Smithville, was an old Methodist, a man of great good sense, and deeply pious. He was the friend of the traveling preachers, and his counsel was always wise and safe. He was a local preacher and a sound theologian. Larnard Livermore was a local preacher of considerable talents, and a man of great influence in his neighborhood. Samuel Gurnsey and Ely Osborn were the leading stewards; they were men of means, and of large hearts and generous impulses. Moses Dyer and Isaac Turner were young married men, and young Methodists, but men of good character, stable, true to the Church, frank and free.

Nathaniel Lewis, a local deacon, was rough as a mountain crag, but deeply pious. He could read his Bible, and fathom the human heart, particularly its developments among backwoodsmen. He was fearless, shrewd, and often witty. His labors were incessant and widely extended. Rev. E. Goodell says: "Obtaining information of a place where there had been no religious worship, some distance from his place of residence, he visited the place. He went from house to house inviting the people to come out to meeting. He took for his text: 'Ye uncircumcised in heart and ear, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.' Many were pricked in the heart, a great revival followed, and *seventy* souls, who were happily converted to God, dated their conviction from that sermon."

In the year 1812 there was a great scarcity of provisions in the neighborhood. On one Sabbath morning Mr. Lewis was reading his Bible preparatory to preaching, when a deer came near his house. He laid down his Bible, and taking

down his gun shot the deer, dressed it, and divided the meat among his neighbors. He was called to an account before the Church for a breach of the Sabbath. He pleaded not guilty. He asked the brethren who were gravely remonstrating with him: "What do you suppose the Lord sent that deer into my field for?" "Well, I suppose it was to try you," one gravely answered. "No it wasn't," replied the accused, "for the Lord knows that when he sends blessings to me I don't wait till the next day before I take them." They finally let him pass without even a confession.

He was once preaching to a congregation who were disposed to behave disorderly. He bore it for a while, and then came out upon them with an entirely novel reproof. "You are," said he, "a hogmatrical set." One of his fellow local preachers happening to be present, after the service was over, and they had retired, gently hinted that he had committed an error in the use of the novel word.

"What do you mean?" demanded the old preacher.

"Why," answered his friend, "hogmatrical is not a proper word."

"Yes it is," replied the preacher; "you have heard of the word dogmatical, I suppose?"

"O yes, but—"

"Well," interrupted the old fox, "you can shame a *dog*, but a *hog* you can't."

The explanation, of course, ended the controversy. This same "Uncle Nat Lewis" was a most useful preacher, and the instrument of the awakening and conversion of many souls.

Joe Smith, the Mormon prophet, married a niece of Mr. Lewis. After the story of the golden Bible and the miracle-working spectacles had come out, Joe undertook to make a convert of "Uncle Nat." The old gentleman heard his tale with due gravity, and then proceeded: "Joseph, can anybody else translate strange languages by the help of them spectacles?"

"O yes!" was the answer.

"Well now," said Mr. Lewis, "I've got Clarke's Com-

mentary, and it contains a great many strange languages; now, if you will let me try the spectacles, and if by looking through them I can translate these strange tongues into English, then I'll be one of your disciples."

This was a poser, and the only way Joe had to escape from "Uncle Nat's" net was to get away and run.

Reuben Stevens was a local deacon in Randolph. He was rather a poor preacher, but was considered a very good man. He subsequently left our Church and united with the Protestant Methodists.

Sela Paine had been a traveling preacher in the southwest. He located and came to Oquaga, and settled on his father's farm this year, and began to preach wherever openings presented themselves. He had ideas, but was tediously long in bringing them out; his sermons being from two to four hours in length. He was a singular genius; always quarreling with some one. He managed to marry a Miss M'Alister, near Harrisburgh, a most estimable lady. He was in good standing at this time, received the preachers at his house, and treated them with great kindness. Judge Harper, of Windsor, experienced religion and united with the Church this year. He was a man of influence and of great simplicity of manners.

Among the women who exerted a good influence and enjoyed the confidence of the Church we place at the head "*Mother Grant*," the wife of Dr. Grant before mentioned, and mother of Isaac and Loring Grant, two of our old traveling preachers, the latter at the time of this writing still living, and one of our contributors. Mrs. Grant was a woman of great faith, a most devoted Christian, a true-hearted Methodist, and a great *exhorter*. The common idea was that she could *preach* if she had only been disposed to try. The venerable couple lived united and happy, as like Zechariah and Elizabeth as could well be imagined, to very advanced age, when they went home in triumph.*

* Doctor Isaac Grant died at the house of his son, Rev. Loring Grant, in Albion, Calhoun county, Michigan, November 9, 1841, aged eighty-

The circuit embraced twenty-eight regular appointments, and in meeting them we were required to ride over two hundred miles. We traveled around once in four weeks, and preached on an average seven sermons a week. This was probably a fair specimen of circuit work at this period.

The last four years, from 1817 to 1820 inclusive, had upon the whole been prosperous years upon Broome circuit, as the Minutes show an increase of two hundred and two members.

WYALUSING CIRCUIT.

The following carefully prepared sketches, from Rev. C. E. Taylor, of the Wyoming Conference, supply many interesting particulars of great historical importance, and so far as they go leave but little to be desired.

Mr. Taylor says: "I have been making considerable effort to obtain a correct knowledge of the introduction of Methodism into what was first called Wyalusing, but now Orwell circuit.

"The first Methodist minister that came into these parts was invited here under the following peculiar circumstances: In the year 1812 a youngerly married man in the state of Connecticut, who was about emigrating to these parts, was offered a new saddle by his father if he would have Methodist preaching in his house when he should get settled in the new country, and though he was a prayerless man the offer was accepted. The name of this man was Nathaniel Chubbuck. Soon after his arrival here and he had had time to erect a little log-house, he began to make inquiries for Methodist preachers. He was informed by William Myer, Esq., of Wysox, that one preached occasionally at a Mr. Gore's. He then called at Mr. Gore's and prevailed on him to get the preacher to send an appointment to his house on his next round; the appointment

one years seven months and five days. Mrs. Hannah Grant died at the same place October 30, 1841, aged seventy-six years eight months and six days.

was sent. The day finally arrived and quite a number had collected. Some began to express their fears that the preacher would not come. But just before the time arrived a stranger was seen coming through the woods. The man of the house went out to hail him. The stranger inquired, 'Can you tell me where Nathaniel Chubbuck lives?' 'Yes, sir,' was the reply, 'he lives here, and I am the man.' 'Well, were you expecting Methodist preaching here to-day?' 'Yes, sir, and the people are now waiting. Come, I will take care of your horse and you go right in.' The name of this minister was Marmaduke Pearce.

"A number of Methodists had moved in from New England, and from this time they had occasional preaching, but were not formed into a circuit until the year 1814."

Mr. Taylor next proceeds to introduce us to the old stewards' book, and makes from it several extracts which show the condition of the charge.

The title-page reads: "Circuit stewards' book; Joseph Ross, Joseph Utter, circuit stewards, Wyalusing circuit.

The minutes are: "Minutes taken at a quarterly meeting conference held at Joseph Ross's, Middletown, September 24, 1814. Present, George Harmon, presiding elder; Renaldo M. Everts, circuit preacher; Joseph Ross, Joseph Utter, stewards; Timothy Coggins, Edmund Fairchilds, exhorters; Ezekiel Brown, Andrew Canfield, Uriah Gaskill, leaders.

"*Collections*: A. Canfield's, \$3 12½; E. Brown's, \$3 20; D. Ridgeway's, \$1 34; J. Bull's, \$0 22; S. Gore's, \$0 50; Squire Smith's, \$2 45; A. Verbeck's, \$2 56; Lane's, \$0 87½; U. Gaskill's, \$2 99; total, \$20 41. Public collections \$3 15, less 87½ cents for the elements, \$2 27½; total, \$19 53½, from which deduct expenses, \$4 91; being \$14 62 for R. M. Everts's quarterage.

"Here then we see the old Wyalusing circuit as it was at first, its officials and its contributions.

"But an important inquiry here arises: What extent of territory was embraced in this circuit at the time of the

above date? We answer, all that is now included in the following charges: Owego, Nichols, Barton, Waverly, Factoryville, Athen's, Litchfield, Apalachin, Windham, Orwell, Skinner's Eddy, Rome, and the present Wyalusing circuit, being in extent about forty miles by twenty.

"The next quarterly meeting was held at Widow Gaskill's, Owego, December 25, 1814.

"The same presiding elder and preacher present. It appears that for all this vast territory they had but two stewards from September 14, 1814, to March 9, 1816, when Hiram G. Warner's name appears as steward.

"At a quarterly meeting held at Tioga, at the house of Mr. Nicholas Munday, June 3, 1815, Hiram G. Warner's name appears for the first time as an exhorter. By the minutes of a quarterly meeting held at Amos Verbeck's, Windham, September 30, 1815, it appears that there had been a change of presiding elder and preacher; Marmaduke Pearce's name standing as presiding elder, and E. Bibbins as preacher. The number of classes had increased from nine to eleven.

"Though there is no minute when H. G. Warner was licensed to preach, yet his name stands as a local preacher in the Minutes of a quarterly conference held March 9, 1816.

"At a quarterly conference held at the Widow Gaskill's, in Owego, October 5, 1816, while the name of Marmaduke Pearce stands as presiding elder, John Griffing's name appears as circuit preacher.

"In 1816, December 14, Aaron Chubbuck, now Judge Chubbuck, appears as circuit steward.

"It appears from the document before me that a quarterly meeting was held on the 17th of May, 1817, at Daniel Shoemaker's, in the town and county of Tioga, at which time the Rev. Michael Burdge was present as a substitute for the presiding elder.

"In 1818 the name of Elijah King appears as preacher on the circuit. But his name appears in the minutes of but

one quarterly conference, (October 9, 1818,) and at the next quarterly meeting (December 19, 1818) the name of E. Bibbin's appears as circuit preacher. M. Pearee still remains presiding elder.

"In the conference year of 1819-20 the circuit was supplied first three quarters by its two local preachers, namely, E. Buttles and J. Brainard, and they were visited by no presiding elder until their fourth quarterly meeting, which was held June 24, 1820, when G. Lane was present as presiding elder, and Ebenezer Doolittle and H. G. Warner as circuit preachers; at which time the name of Sophronius Stocking appears as exhorter, also Waitsdell Scarle. In the minutes of this quarterly conference appears the following interesting note: 'Jephthai Brainard is absent; his license is renewed as local preacher until the next district conference, upon condition that he gets his infant children baptized.'

"At a quarterly meeting held in Tioga, October 21, 1820, G. Lane stands as presiding elder, and Asa Cummins and John Sayre circuit preachers."

This year, 1820, Spencer circuit is organized and first appears on the Minutes.

OWEGO.

The following facts are communicated by Rev. George M. Peek for this work:

"In answer to your inquiries for facts connected with the early history of Methodism in Owego I forward the following, received from Mrs. Fanny Thurston, who was a member of the first class formed here. Mrs. Thurston came to Owego in September, 1813.

"The first Methodist preacher that preached in Owego was a Brother Fiddler, in 1813; he preached once, and an objection being made by an old man, who said, 'We hain't got any Methodists about here, and for my part I don't want any,' he did not return. There was no praying person in Owego at that time. Soon a local preacher, Hiram G.

Warner, came in and kept the ferry; he soon joined the conference and traveled away from home. Brother E. Bibbins preached occasionally. About 1815 Brother J. Griffing came. In 1816 there was a revival on the south side of the river, six were converted, and the first class formed, consisting of seven members: David and Fanny Thurston, Polly Warner, Abigail Thurston, Maria Thurston, her daughter, (now Mrs. Daniel Shoemaker,) David and Patty Darling. Brother J. Griffing formed the class and established regular preaching at the house of D. Thurston, who was appointed leader and steward. Soon Brother Griffing sent a young man by the name of Scovell. Then a man by the name of Cole came a few times; next a Brother Doolittle in the same year. Brothers Griffing, Judd, Bibbins, and Agard preached till the church was built. In those days our class was small and persecuted. Our meetings were held in a little school-house near the spot now occupied by the Methodist Episcopal Church in Owego. The appointment was for Brother Doolittle to preach; when our people came to meeting the house was well lighted up with candles in large silver-plated candlesticks, and shortly a smart dashy Episcopal minister, who had lately come into the place, came in preceeded by a martial band, and putting his hat on the bass drum took his place in the desk. After a while Brother Doolittle arose and said that it was publicly known that this was the evening for a Methodist meeting, and we had feelings as well as other people, and he did not understand the present appearances. Mr. Camp came forward in defense of the Methodists. The Episcopal minister read his credentials, and proposed to preach first and have Brother Doolittle preach afterward; he preached and dismissed the congregation, and left with the band and his friends, after which Brother Doolittle preached and our people had a good meeting and got home about twelve o'clock.

“On another occasion the schoolmaster and others got up an exhibition with the representation of grotesque characters.

The Methodists were compelled to remain and witness the performance or quit the ground ; they remained and held meeting after the clowns had left.

“The last interruption of our meeting was the appointment of a writing school upon the evening of preaching. Brother Warner was to preach ; the house was divided into two apartments by a swing partition. In the center of the room usually occupied for preaching sat the writing-master surrounded by twelve or fourteen little lads. Brother Warner asked him to retire, for it was public meeting night ; he said he would not, for it was a public school. He said to Brother Warner : ‘Go on with your preaching and we will with our writing.’ Brother Warner would not, but he and the congregation went into the little room. As soon as he began meeting the urchins would snap a rope that ran through both rooms, making a noise like the discharge of a pistol ; then they would run and kick against the partition, but Brother Warner kept on praying. Then a troop would scamper out doors and set up a shout, when the master would rap on the window and they would come thundering in again ; but some of the mothers of the boys were at meeting and carried home the news ; the fathers were incensed, and some of the boys were punished. In the morning Brother Warner went to Judge Burrows to get a warrant for the schoolmaster. The judge went with Brother Warner to see the young man, who confessed that he was urged on by others and promised to do so no more, so he was released. Since that time, the Methodists have worshiped in peace.”

The Northumberland, Lycoming, Shamoken, and Bald Eagle circuits, in 1820, were transferred to the Baltimore Conference. The large tract extending from the mouth of the Juniata up to Wyoming on the north branch of the Susquehanna, and embracing Buffalo Valley, Penn’s Valley, the Bald Eagle country, and the valley of the west branch, was taken from the Genesee Conference without its consent, and attached to the Baltimore Conference. We doubt if

there has ever been just such a case in the history of Methodism, and there certainly has been nothing like it since 1820. When large portions of annual conferences are detached it has always been done by the concurrence of the conference.

It was a matter of no special importance at the time to the Genesee Conference, for she had territory enough, and too much. In addition to the territory now contained in five annual conferences, she had both provinces of Canada under her supervision, and little reason for instituting a quarrel about four circuits on her southern wing. This is probably the reason why the thing passed off so quietly

CHAPTER II.

HOLLAND PURCHASE AND CALEDONIA.

1811. Loring Grant, Elijah Metcalf, and Marmaduke Pearee were appointed to this charge this year. The reader will be able to form a tolerably correct idea of the condition of things in this frontier field after perusing several scraps and two letters with which we have been furnished. The scraps are partly from letters and partly from conversations, all from the actors in the scenes described.

Mr. Grant set off for this new field of labor from Black Walnut, on the Susquehanna, with a young wife, on horseback. Mrs. Grant rode a beautiful little animal, a present from her father, which was called Fancy, and was as spry as a deer. She rode extensively over the circuit with her husband, and often followed his sermons with an earnest and melting exhortation. Of course the riding over log bridges and through almost bottomless mud-holes was toilsome, and often dangerous, and their lodging places were miserable, half-finished cabins, and their fare, of course, *the best that the country afforded*. We will now give a few specimens, which will illustrate the points above noticed:

Mrs. Grant once lodged with her husband at "Uncle Sol. Morris's, in Tonnawanda." Their house was a log cabin with a lean-to. The main building was erected for a barn, the appendage was both parlor and dining-room, but was without a floor. The ground had been packed down with a mall, and afforded a tolerable support for the feet; but upon sitting down you would find your chair sinking into the ground, and, unless you were fond of a very low seat, you would be under the necessity of frequently pulling your chair out of the yielding soil and trying a new place. This operation was often repeated by Mr. Pearce, whose corporeal weight run up to the figure of three hundred pounds. Of course Mr. Pearce was famous for smashing chairs and bedsteads, and very frequently found it the more comfortable and safe measure to do his sleeping on the puncheons or split logs which constituted the floors.

The bedsteads were made of poles inserted in a post at the end. Long strips of elm bark were strained over the poles, which answered the double purpose of holding them together and of supporting the bed. Upon the occasion referred to Mr. Grant and his lady enjoyed the luxury of sleeping upon one of these primitive bedsteads, while Mr. Pearce slept on the floor without blanket or pillow.

Next we will give a tale or two about the mud. Mr. Pearce set off on his tour, and having proceeded some four miles, came to one of those terrible sloughs which were so common in the country, and which a traveler might reasonably doubt whether he could pass without being fatally mired. Our itinerant had trained his horse to navigate the seas of mire alone, while he with his portmanteau upon his arm would find his way around among the trees. In this instance his horse proved unfaithful, for, having forced him into the slough and taken his zigzag journey around through the woods, on reaching the road on the opposite side, he saw to his great consternation that his truant beast had turned around and taken to his heels. He had now no alternative but to retrace his steps and walk back to the place which

he had left. This time he compelled his rebellious animal to plunge through the mire with his enormous load, which was almost enough to break the back of an ordinary beast of burden. This was Mr. Pearce's first year in the itinerancy, and this was the manner of his breaking in.

Mr. Grant set off on Fancy, trusting to her great agility for a passage through the sloughs. In one instance, however, he was brought up. Fancy lost bottom and went down to her mane and her hips. Appearing to be hopelessly mired, Mr. Grant alighted and found a sort of crust over the mud which would support him. He had great difficulty in relieving the animal of her saddle and bridle, but finally succeeded. He took his saddle-bags upon his arm and proceeded on several rods as though he intended to leave his pet animal to die in the mire. Fancy indicated her objections to such a fate by a furious whinny. Mr. Grant turning about called out with energy: "Fancy, come out of that!" The animal made a mighty effort, and came out completely plastered with the mire. Glad was the perplexed traveler to come off so. The mud upon his horse and his trappings and upon himself were small evils. He was soon mounted again, and went on his way rejoicing.

Mr. Grant says: "This charge included all the present Genesee Conference and nearly all the Erie Conference; all of Western New York from the Genesee river; one county in Pennsylvania, (Erie,) and all below Cleveland, in the state of Ohio. The part in Ohio, however, was not explored to any great extent. We had 'labors more abundant,' and thank God we had success, the eastern part increasing from three to six hundred." Again he says: "There we had mud, log-houses, smoky cabins, and hard fare, as described in a letter which I received a few days since from Brother Pearce."

We are happy to be able to present the reader with the letter referred to. A portion of it is not specifically upon the subject now under consideration, but is so characteristic, and full of point, that he will not regret its appearance entire.

MONTGOMERY, LYCOMING CO., PA., *May 16, 1850.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER GRANT:—Your letter, after going the rounds, reached me about two months ago, and I should have answered sooner, but by some means it was mislaid, and I did not know where to direct to, but two days ago I found it, and now hasten to reply. I was truly glad to hear that you and dear Sister G. were in the land of the living, and, I trust, bound for the heavenly inheritance. As to myself, I am a poor, helpless old man, seventy-four years old, crippled with the rheumatism, and hardly able to crawl about.

"Since I saw you last, in Pittsburgh, I think, I have had a world of trouble; but I have, by the blessing of God, nearly got through. My present wife has been sick altogether since we were married, thirty-one years ago, nearly half the time. This has been a source of great affliction to us both. I suppose you know something about such afflictions. Our three sons are doing well, which is some comfort. John, the youngest, has been traveling about five years, but was compelled, by bad health, to become a supernumerary last spring. He is married, and wife and myself live with him in this place, four miles below Williamsport, a place I suppose you have been in.

"The preachers in this country are nearly all young men of whom you know little or nothing. They are first-rate fellows, full of fun and very genteel; so much so that you can't get them to sell even a hymn book for fear it would look like peddling, and that would be a burning shame! The Presbyterians act differently. They have a place of deposit for their books in every church, and employ 'col-porteurs' to hawk their Calvinism about, and the preachers themselves are not too big to do a little at it. The consequence of all this is that our books are getting scarce, and the standing order are going ahead, preaching, praying, visiting from house to house, circulating old raw-head-and-bloody-bones, fitting it up and dressing it up until it looks like Methodism!

“When I reflect on these things I want to take the field, sword in hand, but it is no go. Here I am decrepit, crabbed, praising old things, and old times, and old preachers, and scolding the present preachers, and all they do, and what they don't do, but all to no purpose; so I have pretty nearly given it up, perhaps the sooner the better. I often think about the old Holland Purchase. O the good times we had at Tonawanda, Father Hoy's, Braddock's Bay, Bethany, Uncle Sol. Morris's, Father Hawkins's, Flisher's, Father Shafer's, Bronson's, Bennet's, Barlow's, and other places! and O the cold houses, the snow, the mud, the sage tea, the baked beans! These things, the recollection of them, is like 'the music of Carol, pleasant and mournful to the soul.'

“Let us, my dear brother, thank God for all that is past, troubles and all, and trust him for all that is to come. Give bushels of love to Sister G., all the children, and to all old acquaintances, if there are any in your place. Write again, and believe me to be,

“Very affectionately, yours,

M. PEARCE.”

This letter is instructive. It reflects the spirit of the itinerancy of half a century past, and the condition of things then in the great Genesee country. It shows with what tenacity the old preachers hold on to the usages of the olden times, and how the recollection of those times wakes up the lion in these old heroes as they lie upon the shelf, worn and maimed, awaiting their final release. God bless the veteran soldiers of the cross, and smooth their passage to their final resting-place!

The year 1811 is the last year the Holland Purchase appears on the Minutes. Thenceforward that vast and interesting field undergoes divisions and subdivisions until it becomes a territory of cities and towns; and instead of one great mission it is an aggregation of stations into a large and respectable conference.

We have a communication from Mrs. Lydia Seager, late

consort of Rev. Micah Seager, dated February 24, 1851, illustrative of the rise and progress of Methodism in the Holland Purchase, which we will here give the reader. Mrs. Seager's maiden name was Bennet. She was one of a family famous in Methodism in the Genesee country. She says :

"When we crossed the Genesee River it was said that the Sabbath had never crossed it. However, it crossed then, for my parents were Methodists of the right stamp. They imbibed their Methodism in Vershire circuit, Vermont, where Thomas Branch, and others of the like precious memory, were our circuit preachers, and Shadrach Bostwick and John Broadhead our presiding elders. James Bennet held the offices of class-leader, steward, and exhorter in Vermont, and subsequently in Bethany, Holland Purchase, until he departed this life in 1818. Rev. James Mitchell, now Dr. Mitchell, of Philadelphia, was the first itinerant that found us; this was in 1809. He was affable and ardently pious. He made friends everywhere, persuaded some to become truly pious, and gathered many into the Church; some Presbyterians and Baptists, who, when Brother Kimberlin came on, wished to be excused, alleging that they had joined Mr. Mitchell and not Mr. Kimberlin. The two men were quite dissimilar; Mitchell was very accommodating and courteous, while Kimberlin was a blunt Dutchman, resolved to have Methodism right up and down or not at all.

"Brother Mitchell labored a year, held a camp-meeting in East Bethany, attended with some good, and when he left the field he left his name embalmed in the affections of the people.

"I am pretty sure the first quarterly meeting was held at Middlebury; the communicants were James Bennet and son, Cyrus Story, and Jesse Vanorman and wife. Brother Story was then a local preacher, with more than ordinary preaching abilities. He often preached, in those olden times, in our barn. Peter Vannest was one of our early preachers;

his history you know. George Lane, our worthy Book Agent, was a year with us when we had no roads or bridges, and had poor fare. He visited our log-cabin on the bank of the creek. We often had the satisfaction of entertaining him, and of dividing with him our venison. I well remember the impressions made on my young heart by the truly Christian deportment and godly admonitions of our mutual friend. He made full proof of his ministry in the wilderness, and will doubtless meet souls in heaven whom he was there the instrument of bringing to Christ, and who shall be stars in his crown for ever and ever.

"Gideon Draper was long a presiding elder here. I have heard him preach with great power. When he canted his head on one side we unconverted folks expected to tremble. He was a hearty Methodist in doctrine and practice. When the quarterage was divided he would say, 'Well, I have enough to pay my toll over Genesee River.' The preachers of those days thought if they had money enough to pay their toll and postage, and a little more, they did very well.

"Loring Grant came to our circuit in 1811. He was zealous and successful. His amiable and pious young wife traveled much with him on horseback, and often followed his energetic sermons with an earnest and moving exhortation, which was always well received by the people.

"Several of the old members deserve particular mention. John Morris, of Warsaw, was a sound Methodist and a hearty supporter of the institutions of the Church. Benjamin Barlow, of Bethany, was a respectable local preacher and an every-day Christian. He was father of Rev. William Barlow. Father Waller and Brother How came from Wyoming to Batavia, now Elba, about 1811; they brought Bible religion with them. The former has gone to God, after serving his generation well as class-leader and exhorter. The latter, almost ninety, is waiting to see the old chapel, where many souls have been

born into the kingdom, come out in a new edition, and to see a new parsonage, which is to be built the present season."

These jottings are not only valuable as a historical record, but as evidence of the impressions which a minister of Christ is constantly making upon intelligent young minds. These impressions are generally truthful, and certain it is that they are enduring. The minister who mortifies and displeases the children is making an unenviable reputation, and a clouded, if not a dark history.

CHAPTER III.

GENESEE DISTRICT, 1812-1820.

THIS year Cayuga district disappears from the Minutes, and Genesee and Oneida appear. The creation of a new district necessarily resulted in the diminution of the territory embraced in the Susquehanna district. What was called "the lake country" was embraced within the bounds of the Genesee district, and the Susquehanna was constituted of territory lying in the northern part of Pennsylvania and the southern part of New York.

Gideon Draper was appointed to the charge of the Genesee district, and George Harmon to Susquehanna.

This year the Holland Purchase ceases to appear on the Minutes, and the territory is now divided into three separate charges: New Amsterdam, Chatauque, and Caledonia. New Amsterdam was the name given to the small town near the foot of Lake Erie, now Buffalo city; and this name was appropriated to the charge which extended from that point east and north.

The year 1812 is distinguished in American history by the declaration of war with Great Britain. The work on the line between the United States and Canada necessarily

experienced considerable interruptions in consequence of the constant alarms which agitated the people, and the disturbed state of the settlements.

Anning Owen stands for New Amsterdam this year, but did not go to the charge to remain. He attended Gideon Draper's quarterly meetings while he went to the south upon private business, and after Draper's return retired to his home in Ulysses. James Gilmore succeeded him.

We have already given some specimens of Gilmore's eccentricities. On his way to his charge he preached several times on Caledonia circuit. He came to Attica on the Sabbath and found the people all at their work, and the grist-mill running. He sent out a boy to publish that a new minister would preach at a certain place. The house was full, and Gilmore laid on the lash in his own peculiar style. Among other things of the same sort, he said: "Tell your miller that if he don't stop grinding on Sunday he'll be ground to all eternity. Hell will be the bed-stone, and God Almighty the runner." Some were awakened, and a considerable excitement was raised.

Gilmore visited the hospital in Buffalo, and conversed with the sick soldiers. An officer ordered him away with profane language. Gilmore replied: "If you do not stop swearing God will kill you and send you to hell." The guard presented his bayonet, and threatened to run him through. Gilmore stood his ground, reproving him for his blasphemy, and the officer repeated his threats. When the courageous messenger of God was ready he left, but in such wise as to prove that he had not been frightened away.

He called on a lady in Hamburg, who had been sick nigh unto death. She was not aware that he was a minister. Something having been said by the lady in relation to her dangerous illness, he asked her how she felt at the time. She said she must confess she did not feel as well as she could wish. He prayed with her, and before he left gave her some earnest words. This interview led to her conversion, and her conversion to that of others, who be-

came valuable members of the Church. The lady is said to be still living.

Mr. Gilmore's manner of visiting was to take the houses by course. He came in, and without being seated, asked, "Have you any religion here?" If the answer was not satisfactory, he added: "You must repent or you will go to hell. Good-by." His warnings were often considered as a foreshadowing of coming judgments, and sometimes resulted in salutary awakenings.

He preached in a place called Naples, and was so outspoken and fearless that the people concluded that he seriously interfered with their pleasures, and resolved to drive him from the place. At one of his meetings, after the service had commenced, a leading citizen swung his hat and hallooed "hurra!" All was confusion in a moment, and Mr. Gilmore finding it impossible to restore order left, and put up with a friend in the place. Before he retired he prayed with the family, and, referring to the disturbers, prayed that God would kill them and send them to hell, as they would probably never come to repentance. Fourteen of the rioters and their connections died suddenly within a short time. The facts were put together by the survivors, and the opposition ended.

1813. This year Gideon Lanning was upon New Amsterdam circuit. He was encouraged to preach to the soldiers at Buffalo by Generals Scott and Brown, who were among his regular hearers. His manners were modest and conciliatory, and he was treated with great respect.

On the last of December Buffalo was burned by the British, and there was a great scattering among the inhabitants all through that portion of the state. The people in the neighborhood of Buffalo fled to Batavia, and when they arrived there they found the people packing up to go on further east. There were many rumors of danger, and great consternation filled the minds of the timid, while brave-hearted and strong-minded men armed themselves for resistance. The general apprehension was that the Indians

would overrun the country, and murder indiscriminately men, women, and children. But a few brushes with the brave men, who were armed and organized for the defense of their hearths, sent the cowards across the Canada line. It was but a short time before the people took heart and returned to their homes, and quiet was restored.

Glezen Fillmore was then a circuit steward, and in the old stewards' book the following record is found :

"Owing to the British invasion, the burning of Buffalo, and the threatened spreading calamities of war, a general flight of the inhabitants of Niagara county took place, and consequently the quarterly meeting was not held ; but after the return the following collections and disbursements were made. The aggregate is \$21 25."

1817. This year James Hall was on Eden circuit, and visited Buffalo and Black Rock. He formed a class of eight or nine at the former place, and four at the latter. The people at the Rock had raised a subscription of \$60 for him, and requested him to return. This was doubtless a liberal subscription for the time and place, but Mr. Hall did not wish to return.

1818. This year Glezen Fillmore was received on trial in the conference, and appointed to Buffalo and Black Rock ; but where was he to preach ? and to whom ? We shall see presently.

Mr. Fillmore says that when he first visited Black Rock the people seemed, not much taken with his appearance. They intimated strongly that he was not the man they had asked for, and as to doing anything in the way of his support, that was very doubtful. Mr. Fillmore, however, gave out an appointment and preached, and the people concluded that after all he would do.

He visited Buffalo on the Sabbath, and, after some inquiry, found the little class together, consulting as to what they should do to secure the visitations of the preachers ; for they had heard nothing from the conference, and were not calculating on any such good luck as having a preacher stationed

at Buffalo. Of course they were overjoyed with the prospect.

There was no church at Buffalo. The Presbyterians occupied the court-house, and the Episcopalians the only school-house, and this was private property. Mr. Fillmore obtained leave of the proprietor to occupy the school-house when the Episcopalians did not want it. He called upon Mr. Clark, the minister, and he gave his consent that it should be occupied for Methodist meetings when he did not occupy it. So Mr. Fillmore appointed a meeting in the school-house "at sunrise," and another at "early candle-lighting." He had quite a congregation. It was not long before the Methodist meetings began to make quite a stir in the little town, and, as would seem, awakened some jealousy.

The Presbyterian minister sought an opportunity to speak with Mr. Fillmore, and, after a brief introduction, asked him if he intended to have regular appointments in Buffalo. The answer was: "Certainly; nothing short of it." He then proceeded to say that Buffalo was a small place, and could do no more than support the preachers who were already settled there, and he wished Mr. Fillmore would have the kindness to *leave*. Mr. Fillmore replied that he could not do that by any means. He was sent there by the bishop; he had a small membership, of which he was appointed the pastor, and he could not desert his post. "Well, sir, you cannot be supported here," urged the minister. "Well, sir, I will then preach without a support," answered Mr. Fillmore. The next movement of the minister was to crowd in a prayer-meeting in the school-house on Sunday evenings, and so to take away the only available plank the intruder had to stand upon.

Being shut up to the necessity of a bold experiment, Mr. Fillmore proceeded to lease a lot for a church, and to contract for the building. A church twenty-five by thirty-five was commenced on the eighth of December, and was dedicated on the twenty-fourth of January following. This was

the first church erected in the Holland Purchase ; and when it was dedicated, and was known to be a fixed fact, it was a matter of universal astonishment. Mr. Fillmore stood personally responsible for the estimates, and much more. He had, as he says, "no trustees, no time to make them, and nothing to make them of."

The people of Buffalo were poor, the place not having yet recovered from the fire and the prostration of business occasioned by the war. Still he found willing hearts, and obtained a considerable sum, for the circumstances of the people. He wrote to Thomas Mason, in New York, who was then book agent, and he begged and forwarded to him one hundred and seventy dollars. He then applied to Joseph Ellicott, Esq., and after a somewhat singular interview, obtained a donation of three hundred dollars.

The little church was filled with willing hearers, and the work of God went on gloriously. He preached at Black Rock, in a room fitted up for a school-room, in the barracks, and had good congregations.

1819. Mr. Fillmore was returned this year to Buffalo and Black Rock, and enjoyed a pleasant year. For his services the first year he received seventy dollars, and the second one hundred and fifty ; and at the end of the second year returned eighty-two members.

RIDGEWAY CIRCUIT.

The following interesting account of the condition of another charge west of the Genesee River is from the Rev. Dr. Paddock :

"In 1818, being then a little past my nineteenth year, I was admitted on trial in the 'Old Genesee,' and appointed to the Ridgeway circuit, in company with the Rev. Parker Buell as preacher in charge. When, however, I was told, as I was soon after conference, that I was appointed to 'Ridgeway,' I had no idea of the magnitude of the circuit, and indeed scarcely any of its locality, beyond the simple fact that it was somewhere in 'the wilds of western New

York,' and some two or three hundred miles from home. Though *very* domestic in my feelings, and local in my attachments, I started off from my father's house, in Warren, Herkimer county, for my distant field of labor, with all the cheerfulness and courage I could possibly command for the purpose; though in both qualities, it must be confessed, I was little better than a bankrupt. On horseback, and to a Methodist preacher there was then no other mode of conveyance, it took me nearly a week to reach my circuit. After two or three days of inexpressible loneliness I found appropriate company. Converging roads brought together several young preachers, and ere I had got half way to the Genesee River, I was happily associated with Revs. Alvin Torry, Samuel Belton, and C. N. Flint, who were on their way to distant fields of labor in Upper Canada. Though up to this time we had been utter strangers, we were soon all over in each other's sympathies. Truer friends could not be imagined. We went on together, praying and strengthening each other's hands. Passing through Rochester, then a village of only a few hundred inhabitants, we struck off upon the Ridge Road, and found refreshment a little after noon at the house of Brother Ketcham, in the town of Murray. Here it was soon ascertained that we were now actually in the Ridgeway circuit, and that the easternmost appointment therein was at a school-house only a few rods from our resting-place. But I had no plan of the circuit, and must go on into the town of Royalton, near the center of it, where I should probably find one. Accordingly, after dinner and prayer, we went on together. My traveling companions now became my *guests*, and I must provide for them. Good enough quarters were found at a log-cabin near 'Oak Orchard village,' where we passed the night, and then parted. The adieu of that morning had a pathos in it, the remembrance of which now, after the lapse of more than forty-one years, brings the tears to my eyes. In silence, and with averted faces, the dear young brethren mounted their horses, when one of them turned to me and

said, the tears running down his cheeks : 'Ah, Brother Pad-dock, if we could only stay at home as you do.' Only think of it, young brethren of the present day ; there I was, a youth of nineteen, between two and three hundred miles from my father's house, and in the woods, among strangers ; but was still at 'home,' simply because I did not have to go with them over the Niagara River, some one or two hundred miles into the dominions of George IV. Contrasting my destiny with theirs, I did indeed think I had been somewhat petted by the good bishop. But they were brave young men, and in their several fields of labor did honor to the cause of Christ.

"But my special topic is Ridgeway circuit. That this was at that time something of an *institution* will be readily seen, when it is stated that it extended from near Clarkson Corners on the east to the Niagara River on the west, a distance of full sixty miles ; and took in, upon an average, about eight miles each side of the Ridge Road, the north side being little else than an unbroken forest, without roads, quite down to the shore of Ontario lake. To go around it involved a ride of nearly three hundred miles ; each preacher delivering forty-five sermons every four weeks, a fraction over eleven sermons each week. At least this was the case at the end of the year, for we had taken in several new appointments.

"Some idea may be formed respecting what would now be considered the privations of those times, when it is stated that there was but one single lathed and plastered room in the whole circuit that invited the occupancy of the weary itinerant. Where there is now, almost literally, a succession of princely palaces, there were then merely log-cabins, covered with barks of trees, or with what the back-woodsmen call '*puncheons*.' It was no unusual thing for the young preacher to find his dormitory in the loft of one of these rude cabins, through whose multitudinous interstices it was an easy matter for him to count the stars. Nor was it unfrequent that he found the snow, when he

arose in the morning, two or three inches deep as well on his bed as on the chamber floor. But these were 'light afflictions,' as it was easy to take his pants from the pin, or from his bed-post, if indeed he chanced to have one, and with their lower extremities sweep the snow from a spot sufficiently large for personal occupancy while he dressed himself.

"Persecution, in some of its forms, was then the daily portion of 'the circuit rider.' He expected it as much as he expected his daily bread. Gibes, and groans, and derisive songs and amens were to him mere matters of course. Intending the remark specially for the preacher's ear, the miserable persecutor, generally prefixing or suffixing a horrid oath, would exclaim: 'There goes a young Methodist priest!' Such salutations have often entered his soul like the cold iron. To avoid 'running the gauntlet' of these sons of Belial at work upon the highway, for association strengthens vice as well as virtue, he has more than once taken a back road and gone materially out of his way. Sometimes, however, the quaintness of these sallies would, by a kind of counter-blow upon the sensibilities, excite mirth rather than give pain. In the autumn of 1818 the writer was riding along the Ridge Road late in the afternoon, when, feeling rather pensive, and supposing no one near, as there was a dense wood on the one hand and only a partially cleared field on the other, he began to sing a kind of melody very popular in those days, called 'The Gloom of Autumn,' beginning:

'Hail, ye sighing sons of sorrow,
View with me the autumnal gloom.'

He had sung but a verse or two when a man, doubtless of the class just referred to, started up from behind the fence and vociferated at the top of his voice: "Amen! amen! brother, my soul says amen!" meanwhile clapping his hands earnestly *a la* warm-hearted Methodist. The whole performance partook so largely of the ludicrous that

so far from adding to the melancholy of the preacher he was provoked by it to laughter. The consequence was that in a much more than usually cheerful mood he went to his evening appointment.

“But a kind of persecution came from a class of persons who professed to be followers of the Saviour, and who probably were, on the whole, good people. The country was new, and those who first settled it had belonged, before their emigration, to different religious denominations. Notwithstanding their strong partiality for their own ‘faith and order,’ however, they *must*, in many localities, attend the preaching of the itinerant or go to no meeting at all. But then, woe to the poor preacher if he could not pronounce ‘shibboleth’ according to the most approved nomenclature of their respective doctrinal systems. As soon as the service was concluded some offended hearer, not unfrequently a pious old lady, *pious* in the judgment of charity, would come forward to the stand, or await the egress of the preacher from the house, and say to him: ‘If I understood the elder’—*elder* he was, though only a licentiate, and still in his minority—‘he said thus and so. Now *my* Bible does not read in that way, but says so and so.’ Thus the gauntlet was fairly at his feet, and he must defend himself, or what he regarded as the cause of truth would suffer in the estimation of no inconsiderable part of the small assembly who would generally pause to hear. At this distance of time such things may seem amusing, but they were then full of painful interest to the young preacher. He wanted to please his neighbor for his good to edification, but was often distressed to find himself a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.

“But those were times not particularly distinguished for catholicity among the different Churches. Anything like ministerial courtesy was scarcely looked for outside of one’s own communion. The ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in particular, were regarded and treated by those of most other Churches as ‘blind leaders of the blind.’

At Lewiston, then the west end of Ridgeway circuit, every effort was made to keep 'the circuit riders' out of the little academy, which was about the only place in which a meeting could be held by any denomination. The Rev. Mr. S., pastor of the Presbyterian Church, and by no means a bad man, would find himself under the necessity of changing his appointment from one hour in the day to another, so as to meet some special emergency; but generally in such a way as to keep out these interlopers. By the time the itinerant had changed the plan of his circuit so as to harmonize with the new state of facts, the Lewiston wheel would turn back again, thus necessitating another change in the plan of the circuit, or obliging the circuit rider to take a belligerent attitude, which of course he was very reluctant to do.

"This same gentleman had the misfortune to get his thigh broken. He was overseeing some men who were employed in felling trees for him a few miles east of the village, when, by a rebound, the butt end of a small tree, then falling, struck and maimed him in the way indicated. He was confined away from home, was suffering much bodily pain, and was really an object of pity. Now, thought the young preacher, I will show him that I am his friend so far as I can do so by calling upon him and assuring him of my heartfelt sympathy. The visit was accordingly made, prayer was offered, and all the kind words said that could be thought of. The interview did seem to have a good effect all around. But before it was closed the Rev. Mr. C., then passing through the place, and since somewhat distinguished in the literary world, called in to see and comfort his brother in his affliction. The patient introduced to him the young itinerant, who rose to his feet, but was barely recognized by as cool a nod of the head as can be easily imagined. The Rev. Mr. C. talked piously to his unfortunate brother and then took his leave, by extending his hand to all present *save* the young preacher, toward whom he was careful to keep his back till he left the room. The

incident is now smiled at, but then occasioned an amount of mental suffering which would have been gladly avoided. Probably both men, if they still live, would now act a very different part.

“But in spite of these little trials we had good times on Ridgeway that year. Full one hundred were added to the membership of the Church, several new societies were formed, and matters put in train for securing that general *growth* which has since so wonderfully blessed that interesting portion of the Empire State.

“The manner in which one new class originated and was formed, will probably never be forgotten by the preacher while he remembers aught of earth. At the close of a Sabbath service at Oak Orchard village, a man came forward and spoke to him, praying him to come down into the woods and preach to a small neighborhood about equidistant from that village and the shore of Ontario. He was a backslider, but wanted to return to his duty, and would be glad to have his neighbors saved. They had never had preaching, and there were large children there who had never even seen a minister. It was in vain that he was told the preachers had not a single spare afternoon or evening, that the place was several miles one side from their route, and that an enlargement of their field of labor was almost utterly out of the question. *Preaching they must have.* If the preacher could not come in the afternoon or evening he could in the morning. They would turn out to hear him at any time. The preacher yielded, and told the applicant if he would meet him when he came round again, at a given time and place, and conduct him to the destitute neighborhood, he would preach to them on Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock. The proposition was accepted, and at the proper time the minister was conducted through the woods to the place of meeting. It was a little bark-covered cabin, so low between joints that one had to stoop, hat off, when he entered. But it was well filled; the whole neighborhood, men, women, and children, being present. The children

stared as if they had expected something unearthly in the person of the minister. All however, old and young, were quiet and attentive. At the close of the meeting the preacher took special pains to speak to all present, wishing to show them that he was interested in their individual welfare. At the second and third meeting all were present again; each occasion being more interesting than the preceding. Finally, all seemed glad to see the preacher, and urged a request that he would somehow contrive to spend a night with them, to the end that they might see more of him and get further religious instruction. By making sundry alterations in the plan of labor, it was found practicable to comply with their invitation. The next meeting, therefore, engrossed an afternoon and evening, the latter being devoted to a social meeting. The adult part of the neighborhood met at a house that promised the most comfortable quarters for the preacher, and the evening was spent in singing, hearing the preacher tell his experience, and in familiar conversation. As the company had come together from a distance of several miles around, they could not walk home without refreshments. A meal must be prepared, and all the women present volunteered a helping hand, some doing one thing and some another. Such were the simple, who will not say *lovely*, habits of the new country. While they were thus engaged, the preacher, scarcely thinking what he did, sang a verse from a hymn very popular among the warm-hearted Methodists of those days:

‘ I’m glad that I was born to die,
Glory, halleluiah !
From grief and woe my soul shall fly.
Glory, halleluiah !
I long to quit this cumbrous clay,
Glory, halleluiah !
And reign with Christ in endless day,
Glory, halleluiah !’

“Supper was now announced, and all were invited to ‘set by.’ When the meal was ended, the preacher drew back

from the table, and perhaps forgetting that he had sung it before, sung the same verse again. Ere it was concluded, however, a lady screamed out in unutterable agony, and falling to the floor called upon the preacher to pray for her. He was soon on his knees and all the company with him, each one crying for mercy. The whole scene was not only unique but quite indescribable. But the struggle was brief, for in the course of some twenty or thirty minutes all was calm again, when one after another arose and said, 'The Lord has spoken peace to my soul.' All were saved, and all were soon after formed into a class. The lady who cried out subsequently told the preacher that though when he first sang the verse her hands were in the biscuit-dough, she was at the point of falling to the floor, and probably would have done so had the singing continued a moment longer! Wonder whether the society then and there formed still lives?

"An allusion has been made to the wonderful changes that have taken place in the physical aspect of the country embraced in the Ridgeway circuit forty years since. A single fact will sufficiently illustrate this. Precisely where the city of Lockport now stands, the writer remembers to have got down from his horse under the shade of the trees, one warm day in the early autumn of 1818, rested himself, gathered nuts, read his Bible, prayed, and made ready to fill his appointment some eight or ten miles distant that afternoon. Probably there was then not a single house within a mile of the spot."

LYONS CIRCUIT.

In 1811 George Harmon and Palmer Roberts were appointed to Lyons circuit. There was an appointment about two miles from Vienna in a small place called Conger's settlement. A revival commenced at this appointment which influenced the minds of the people extensively over the surrounding country. The preachers were invited to preach in Vienna, and Mr. Harmon accordingly sent an ap-

pointment to that place. A Baptist preacher withstood him, and challenged him to a public debate. Mr. Harmon in those days always faced the enemy, and without hesitation accepted the challenge.

At the appointed time the gentleman who gave the challenge was not present, but sent on a friend to fight the battle. The champion did not wish to enter into any particular preliminary arrangements for the management of the debate, but preferred that Mr. Harmon should preach his sentiments first, and leave him to his option either to assault his opponent or defend himself, as he might judge expedient. Mr. Harmon made no difficulties, desiring to join issue with him in some way, and he cared but little about the mode of proceeding if the end could be reached.

Mr. Harmon proceeded to preach, taking for his text, "I also will show you mine opinion." He proceeded to give his views of those doctrines which are peculiar to the Methodists, or those to which the Baptists are especially opposed. His work was mostly to lay down his positions, leaving their defense for a reply.

His antagonist proceeded to review the sermon, and passed rather lightly over everything until he came to the subject of baptism. He professed to be utterly astonished at the views advanced. He then laid down the position with emphasis, that "no one was authorized to baptize who had not been baptized himself." Could he prove that Mr. Harmon had no right to administer the ordinance of baptism he would easily dispose of him and take the ground. Mr. Harmon wished "to ask a question." Consent was promptly given. He then asked, "Who baptized the apostles?" "John the Baptist," was the answer. And "who baptized John the Baptist?" asked Mr. Harmon. The gentleman was confounded, and left highly excited.

Mr. Harmon took the ground and formed a society there of one hundred members. Major Granger, Major Hawks, and other influential citizens were among those who united with the society at this time.

GENEVA.

"In 1812 the Rev. William Snow, a superannuated preacher of the East Genesee Conference, who now resides in Geneva, being in charge of Lyons circuit, maintained preaching in this village once in two weeks. After preaching it was customary for the preachers to meet the members in class, and thus ascertain from personal inquiry the real state of piety in the Church. Also all serious persons were invited to attend, and thus whatever religious feeling or conviction which might exist was carefully cultured and encouraged. Thus also both the leader and class were encouraged.

"In those days our preachers were entertained while in Geneva by Mr. Negley, a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, but whose wife was a Methodist. Mr. Negley was a gentleman of respectable standing in society, at heart a friend to the Methodists, and an earnest well-wisher to the cause of vital religion. He has often cheered and encouraged the ministers who labored there when the prospect of continued preaching in the village looked doubtful, and for years together his house was the home of the preachers. His name is justly classed with the friends and supporters of Methodism in Geneva.

"Those who are acquainted with our economy know well how to estimate the importance of a class-leader's office. On large circuits, where the absence of the preacher from each particular society during most of the time is unavoidable, the class-leader's office is next in importance to that of the pastor. Often a faithful leader, with sound judgment and piety, has accomplished as much in holding together and building up an infant society as the pastor himself. Under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the death of Mr. Loomis, the former leader, already noticed, had defeated for the time the hopes of the little class in Geneva. Years passed away before another suitable person could be obtained to fill his place. Mr. Edward Pratt was, indeed, subsequently appointed, but he did not long retain the con-

fidence of his brethren, and again the regular meetings were discontinued.

"These repeated disasters greatly damped the ardor and beclouded the prospects of the few friends who, with only occasional pastoral aid, endeavored to introduce Methodist meetings in Geneva. But the time was at hand when these unhappy vicissitudes were to terminate, and a more permanent order of things to be established.

"In 1818 the present society was organized by Rev. Ralph Lanning, then preacher in charge of Lyons circuit. At its organization it numbered only thirteen persons. Jenks Philips, now a local preacher in Wyoming county, was leader; besides whom there were Jonathan Chapin and Dorothy his daughter, Sarah Gregory, Hannah Gregory, David Osborne and wife, Silas Chapin and Deborah his wife, Elizabeth Dean, and a colored woman by the name of Mary Van Rensselaer. Such was the beginning of the present Methodist society in Geneva. Of all this number we believe but one survives, Mrs. Deborah Chapin, who still resides in Geneva, waiting in hope till her change come. She is a daughter of Judge Dorsey, of Lyons, in whose barn the first Genesee Conference was held. She was accustomed to wait on Bishop Asbury, sit on his knee, fetch him his slippers, kiss him good-night, and still holds some relics of the venerable bishop, among which are an old and well used pair of spectacles which the bishop superannuated long before his death.

"At first our society occupied the Mechanics' School-house, which stood upon the ground afterward occupied by the first Methodist church edifice. After worshipping here for a time they removed to a room in a cabinet shop on Water-street, kindly given to them for the purpose by Hiram Dox, Esq., who on more occasions than one befriended this infant Church. From this place, after the lapse of a year, they returned to the Mechanics' School-house. It was soon found, however, that their place of worship was insufficient to accommodate their growing congregation, though the

erection of a suitable church edifice was an enterprise wholly beyond their capabilities. In this situation, what was to be done? Without wealth, without a large inheritance of public favor, they saw no near prospect of being able to 'enlarge the place of their tent.' At this important moment Providence opened their way. The Mechanics' Society of Geneva was an incorporated institution, in possession of the school-house and premises already mentioned, together with some funds. Chiefly through the influence and agency of the late Richard Hogarth, Esq., then president of the society, an act was obtained from the Legislature dissolving the corporation, and transferring the property to the Methodist Society, by which they came into the possession of a lot and about one hundred and twenty dollars in funds. Mr. Hogarth was a man of public influence, of a liberal and ingenious mind, and well deserves the gratitude of Geneva Methodists for the generous interest he manifested in their behalf on this and other occasions.

"In 1821 Geneva appears for the first time on the annual Minutes. It was then united in a circuit with Canandaigua and some other places, and supplied by the pastoral labors of Rev. Loring Grant and Rev. Chester Adgate; the latter long since gone to his blessed reward; the former is still a superannuated preacher of East Genesee Conference, residing in Milo, Yates co., N. Y. Brother Grant, the preacher in charge, set himself at work at once and resolutely in rearing a house of worship. and after great labor and sacrifice the society beheld with inexpressible delight every difficulty surmounted, and a convenient edifice made ready for their use. The house was dedicated by Rev. Jonathan Heustis, now deceased, on Christmas day, 1821. On this occasion the Rev. Dr. Axtell, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in the village, attended and offered the opening prayer. He was a man of catholic spirit, and without disparaging his peculiar attachment to his own order, it is due to his memory to say he participated in a friendly interest in behalf of our Church.

"In 1828 the Geneva society was first constituted a separate pastoral charge, or station, with a membership of seventy-two whites and three colored communicants. During the first two years the pastorate was filled by Rev. Manly Tooker, who still moves in the effective ranks of our itinerancy. Through his faithful ministrations and prudent oversight, not only was there a state of general peace, but a more consolidated union, with some additions. At the end of two years the numbers were reported at eighty-seven."*

CORTLANDVILLE IN CAYUGA CIRCUIT.

"Rev. William Case was appointed presiding elder in 1810, and Anning Owen took charge of the circuit. Genesee Conference had now been organized, and Cayuga district was included within its bounds. The other districts were the Canada and the Susquehanna. The whole number of members in the conference was ten thousand six hundred and eighty-three, of which Cayuga circuit contained four hundred and eight.

"During these years the little band at Cortland had not increased as its members had hoped, but still they were far from being discouraged. They knew full well that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, since help cometh alone from God. The standard of the cross, under which they had enlisted, had here been planted, and from it they would not revolt. Anew their cry went up to God for help, and he in his mercy heard their prayer, comforted their souls, and led them on to battle and to victory.

"Elijah Batchelor was appointed preacher in charge at the next conference, with John Hazzard as his colleague. During this year the first quarterly meeting was appointed for this place. It was understood that the presiding elder would be present, and, as the members from the surrounding towns were expected, it promised to be a season of unusual interest to the families residing in the settlement.

* Rev. F. G. Hibbard, in Northern Christian Advocate.

In this they were not disappointed. The meeting was held in an unfinished barn, where a large congregation convened for public worship. Mr. Case selected for his text on the Sabbath, Rev. viii, 4: 'Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.' He is said to have preached with such a measure of the Divine Spirit that multitudes were not able to resist the appeals which he made, and from that day a deeper religious influence pervaded the community than had before existed. Elder Case did not visit Cortland again in the discharge of his official duties during his stay on the district, but the labors of that day were not in vain.

"The progress of the society had, for a few years, been hindered by difficulties among its own members. These finally resulted in the expulsion of one or two who failed to exhibit the spirit of the Gospel, after which harmony was again restored. The dark cloud which had overspread the little company of believers now began to give way, and a brighter day dawned upon the interests of Methodism in Cortland.

"In 1812, the period to which we have now arrived, the settlement of Cortland had scarcely begun to assume the appearance of a village. There were, at most, but twelve or fifteen houses, constructed according to the rude customs of the times, and located at considerable distances from each other. Numerous farms were being cleared up, and great improvements made with each successive year; but the forest still covered by far the greater portion of the surrounding country. The village was without any regular streets except those formed by the public highways leading to and from the place, and these would poorly compare with those of the present day.

"Cortland county, which had been previously included in Onondaga, was organized in 1808, and Cortland village selected as the county seat. The erection of the public buildings gave a new impulse to the business of the place,

and furnished assurances that at no distant day a thriving and prosperous village would arise into being.

"As will be readily seen, the religious privileges of the community were comparatively limited. Most of the inhabitants of the town who were pious resorted to the upper village as their place of worship, and as the Baptists had built their meeting-house between the villages, Cortland was in a great measure unprovided for. This circumstance caused Homer to become early distinguished for the excellence of its moral and religious character, while the settlement here became equally noted for the opposite qualities. The preachers on Cayuga circuit came regularly once in two weeks, and their ministrations constituted nearly all the public services with which the citizens were favored. Up to the time of the erection of their church the Baptists had occasionally preached here, but their meetings were now removed. In the minds of many no field was so unpromising as this, and such persons turned their attention and directed their efforts elsewhere. But amid all the wickedness that abounded, a few faithful souls were earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and trusting in God for the revival of his work and the upbuilding of his Church.

"The little class formed by Mr. Hill eight years before now contained about fifteen members. These were scattered over a considerable extent of territory, and were not able to sustain as they might otherwise have done the spiritual interests of the Church. Though they encountered a strong opposition, and found but little in the surrounding circumstances to encourage them, they were fully resolved to push the war to the enemy's gate. At the conference held this year James Kelsey was appointed preacher in charge. He was a man distinguished among the pioneers of Methodism for the untiring energy with which he engaged in the work of the ministry, and the glorious success that ordinarily attended his labors. Though not noted for the extent of his theological or scientific attainments, he

possessed an unusual adaptation for the work to which he was called. Almost every charge where he labored was favored with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the conversion of sinners. Many that were brought into the kingdom of Christ through his ministry yet remain in the Church below ; while hundreds have died in the Lord, and are already gone up on high.

“Mr. Kelsey had preached in Cortland but a few times before tokens of the Divine presence began to appear. Those familiar with the workings of the Spirit felt that the coming of the Lord was at hand. And they were not mistaken. A revival commenced which extended in its influence throughout this entire region of country. The progress of the work was so powerful that almost every family was visited with the grace of God, and great numbers were brought to the knowledge of the truth. So generally was the religious influence shed abroad in the hearts of the people that the work did not seem to be carried on by any particular branch of the Church, but was participated in by all who feared God and desired to promote the glory of his name. The exact number of conversions cannot now be ascertained. More than one hundred united with the Congregationalists at Homer, and almost an equally large number with the Baptists. A few only connected themselves with the Methodists, but among them were some who have remained pillars in the Church to the present day. At the close of the revival the society contained about twenty-five members.”

Methodism continued to advance but slowly in Cortland during the period now under review. The meetings were held in the public buildings as soon as there were any ; first in the school-house, then in the court-house, or the academy hall.

In the mean time there had been considerable revivals at different points in Cayuga circuit, and Methodism had become strong and influential in the country generally, but the towns were slow to receive this form of Christianity, for the reason that other denominations preoccupied the ground.

CHAPTER IV.

ONEIDA DISTRICT, 1812-1820.

WILLIAM CASE was appointed presiding elder on the Oneida district in 1812. It embraced the same ground over which he had traveled for the two preceding years, under the name of Cayuga district, with the exception of Cayuga and Scipio circuits.

The work was enlarging very much in the Black River country, which at this time was embraced within the bounds of the *Oneida district*. The following communication looks back two years previous to the present date, but is not inappropriate here, as it is a specimen of the breaking-up process which continued in this northern country for years.

BLACK RIVER.

In 1810 Methodism in the Black River country was comparatively in its infancy. The country was new and poor, and the hard frosts and heavy snows in winter made it most laborious traveling. There were two circuits in that country when the Genesee Conference was organized—Black River and Mexico. The process of breaking up new fields there may be tolerably well understood from the following communication from Rev. I. Fairbank, dated 1851 :

“I was one among those who stood in the itinerant ranks from the year 1810, when I received an appointment from William Case, presiding elder, on the Black River circuit, with old Brother Willis, which embraced the most part of the Black River territory. I preached in my own dwelling, it being a preaching place; and in 1811 was received on trial, and appointed to what was then called Mexico circuit. Reuben Farley was my colleague. This circuit

embraced a large territory: a part of Sandy Creek, Readfield, Camden, Bengal, Williamstown, Salmon River, Richland, Mexico, and as far west as Oswego Falls, having to pass through a twelve mile dense wilderness twice every tour around the circuit. This was a year of labor, sacrifice, and suffering, but of great spiritual prosperity. Although we had to preach often in log-shanties, yet we found warm receptions, warm hands and hearts, and were made welcome to the best their cabins afforded. There was more in those days than a cold 'How do you do?'

"One circumstance I will relate. At one of my Sabbath appointments an old Brother Bennet, who had come ten or twelve miles to meeting, requested me to preach in his neighborhood on some week-day; the place was ten miles through the woods on Salmon River, and was a fishing ground of ten or a dozen families. On visiting the place I found a people that had no Sabbath or religion, but abounded with family and neighborhood quarrels. But preaching being a novel thing, we had a full house. After preaching I told them that it made us twenty miles extra travel to preach to them, and we had no other object in view but the salvation of their souls; and if they would unite in society as seekers, we would give them regular preaching. They might have four weeks to think on the subject. I would leave an appointment for my colleague in two weeks, and would come again myself in four weeks, when the question would be determined. My colleague reported favorably, and when I visited the place again I found a good attendance. After preaching I read the Discipline and explained it; then wished all who desired to join society to arise. To my surprise all the congregation arose but one man, and he left the house. I suppose all were unconverted except Brother Bennet. One of the new members said to me he thought the man who left the house was much to blame that he would not join society, seeing we took so much pains to come and preach to them, and he would talk with him for that. I felt in singular circum-

stances; but told them I would preach in the evening, and met the class. The pine forest was literally illuminated with torches. I gave them a short talk, and proceeded to meet our new class. I found some deeply impressed in their minds, and they wept; but some very raw materials. I reported the state of things to my colleague, and told him to take into the class the balance of the neighborhood if he could. He did so, with the exception of one family, and he found that God was at work in power among the people; and, in short, before the year closed it was one of the most spiritual and deeply experienced societies on the circuit; some professed entire sanctification.

“To give a specimen of their zeal: At our last quarterly meeting in that year, which was held in June or July, they started with two sleds, with two yoke of oxen to each, a distance of ten miles; the women rode, the men went on foot, and they were the happiest company at the meeting. Brother William Case was our presiding elder. I received \$25 quarterage that year, and at the end of the year I owed nothing. We lived with the people; when they had venison we had it, when they had salmon we shared with them. I learn that this society has ever been held in high esteem for their Christian fidelity, and we have in its origin a proof of the benefit of that rule that admits all who desire salvation to join on trial. I think we received about one hundred on probation.”

OTSEGO CIRCUIT.

In 1810 William Jewett and Seth Mattison traveled on Otsego circuit. The writer was then thirteen years of age, and has a very distinct recollection of the men, and of their manner in private and in the desk, or rather *behind the chair*; for there were no pulpits or desks then, but the preacher stood behind a chair, and usually hung his red bandanna handkerchief on the back. Jewett was as handsome a man as ever walked; erect, or a little inclining backward, rosy cheeked, and sociable. He was called proud; this character,

he used to say, was given him for the only reason that God had made him a straight man. He articulated in a very rapid manner, so much so as to be indistinct. He was zealous and useful.

Mattison, physically if not mentally, was a perfect contrast to Jewett. He was stooping, lank, long-featured, drawing, always sighing, and appearing to be almost anything but an inhabitant of this lower sphere. His preaching was full of sympathy, and often attended with great power. He found occasion for all the grace he had in hearing the constant succession of eulogies which were pronounced upon the person and accomplishments of his colleague.

This was a year of prosperity to Otsego circuit. When a boy we were a close observer of the manners of the preachers, and from the remarks and discussions which were common in the family circle and social gatherings to which we were admitted in our father's house as a licensed spectator, we gathered what we now believe to have been the true standing of all the preachers, and their peculiar characteristics. The conversations of the preachers and the members, the spirit of the meetings, and the reports of conversions, all indicated unusual progress.

While editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal* we applied to our old friend Jewett for a plan of old Otsego circuit. He furnished two; the last is as follows. We publish the whole verbatim:

"New Lisbon, S. Abbey, Sunday morning, school-house.

"Craftstown school-house, Sunday afternoon.

"Ostewa, Young's, Monday.

"Butternut, Chapin's, Tuesday afternoon.

"Bedient's, Tuesday evening.

"Johnson's, Wednesday.

"Burlington, Rawson, Thursday.

"New Lisbon, Gross, "

"Burlington, Bloss, Friday.

"Rose's, "

"Richfield, Morris, Sunday morning.

"Steward, Patent, school-house, afternoon; lodge at Elwood's.

"Warren, Talcot; German Flats, Voorhis; German Flats, Lewis; Manhiem, Hendricks; Fordsbush, Arnold's; Minden, Howland's, Nicholson's and Johnson's; Springfield, Walrod's; Bowman's Creek, Wheeler's; Charlestown, Williams's and Mattison's; New Sharon, Van Schaick's; Bowman's Creek, Champlain's; Cherry Valley, Storms's; New Boston, school-house; East Hill, Ross's; Cherry Valley village, Farley's; Middlefield, Peck's, Blair's, Green's, and M^cAllum's; Bowerstown, Raxford's; Milford, Bivens's; Hartwick, Algar's and Lippit's; Pittsfield, Crane's; Piertown, Knowlton's; Cooperstown Village; and then ride to Middlefield for rest. We had a few occasional appointments I do not name. Yours in the Gospel,

"W. JEWETT.

"September, 1851."

Here we have the dimensions of one of the two oldest circuits within the bounds of the Genesee Conference, when that conference was organized, and an ample field it was.

In the summer of 1810 a camp-meeting was held in Minden, about twelve miles from our native place. We were present at the commencement and the conclusion of the meeting, and while there saw much that was done, and deeply felt the power of the truths which were delivered and of the devotional exercises.

When Cayuga district was formed, in 1808, Otsego circuit was a part of it, and Peter Vannest had been presiding elder on that district for two years, when the Genesee Conference was organized. At the camp-meeting referred to William Case, then a young man, was presiding elder; but Peter Vannest was present, and had considerable to say. It was with him a sort of farewell festival, as from this meeting he left the cold north and took his place in the Philadelphia Conference. He had then reached the period of grave age, and was called *father* by the younger class.*

We should judge the camp-meeting was a decided success. Two of the Middlefield girls, Betsy Peck and Polly Blair, were converted, and came home happy in God. This was a matter of great rejoicing in at least two of the old Methodist family circles.

The following winter "Father Green," who had been in a backslidden state for several years, broke down under a powerful sermon by Seth Mattison, at M'Allum's, and after a severe struggle came out rejoicing. We were right glad of this, although we were then a wild youth. The whole scene is now as vividly in our mind's eye as though it were an affair of yesterday.

In 1811 Isaac Teller and Samuel Ross came to Otsego circuit. The news that Ross was college-bred came on in advance of him, and great expectations were raised, for an educated Methodist preacher, in the technical sense, was then "a rare bird." The rumor of Mr. Ross's literary accomplishments was unfortunate. He made his first debut at the house of Luther Peck on a week-day evening. A full house was gathered at short notice, and some one else preached. Ross was well dressed; his jet black hair hung in curls on his shoulder; he was tall, his figure was imposing, and his countenance benignant, but his manner was singular. While the preacher proceeded with his discourse, Ross held his face in his hands, and often sighed and groaned. All that was well enough, as it was common, but scarcely met the idea of a man from college.

The sermon concluded, Ross arose, and before he was fairly up began,

"Soon as from earth I go,
What will become of me?"

Mr. Peck, the old chorister, led off, and all the congregation as usual sung. The singing finished, the new preacher poured forth a torrent of fire and brimstone upon us, which made the outsiders writhe and dodge as if the house was being shaken down by an earthquake. In our boyish

Methodistic simplicity we thought the thing well and thoroughly done up, but so thought not the multitude. When the preaching was on the turnpike at "Uncle Peck's" the smart folks of Middlefield Center came out; and this time they criticised and grumbled woefully. When Jewett preached his farewell sermon in the old Methodist castle but a few weeks before, and often broke down for weeping, and made everybody else weep, the neighborhood was loud in their praises of the fine young man; but when Ross made his appearance in a thunder-storm of warnings and premonitions of "fiery indignation," the tune was changed.

This, as near as we can judge, was a fair specimen of Ross's reception throughout the circuit. Teller was a plain, earnest, wordy man, and did not turn the tide. Ross was removed before the year expired, and John Hazzard, a good man, but an intolerable stammerer, was sent on in his place. Upon the whole it was a hard year for old Otsego.

1812. This year Ebenezer White and Ralph Lanning were appointed to Otsego circuit. Mr. White had the reputation of a revivalist of the old stamp. It was said that he always had revivals, but it was not by clap-trap, or eccentricities, or even protracted meetings, for they were not then known, that he produced revivals; but by the old apostolic Methodist method of preaching the truth in simplicity and earnestness, and everywhere breathing the spirit of holiness.

When Father White came on the tone of religious fervor began to rise immediately. The old devout members in the Middlefield class talked of his first sermon as a feast of fat things. The sermon was on a week-day afternoon, and few of the young people heard it; but the earnest conversation about it on the part of the Church members created an interest in their minds and a desire to hear the great preacher.

On his second or third round Mr. White visited the house of Mr. Peck, the class-leader. While Betsy was combing his long black hair, and the younger members of the fam-

ily were timidly skulking in corners, where they might hear what was said without being observed, the apostolic man began to catechise the class-leader.

"How many of your children have been converted, brother?"

"Only the one combing your hair, among those who live at home," was the answer.

"Do you pray in your family?"

"I do."

"Do you pray for your children?"

"I try."

"Have you given them to God in baptism?"

"Only that part of them born in Connecticut."

"Why have you not had the others baptized?"

The answer was simple and straightforward. "After coming to this country I lived for some years in a careless way, and thought but little about it, and now some of them are growing up in sin and are not fit subjects of baptism." Sundry of the children felt, That means me. After some godly council to parents and children, which the occasion demanded, and a fervent prayer, the venerable man departed; but the words he had spoken were like nails fastened in a sure place.

Soon after the new preacher had left Mr. Peck's house, Polly, a little girl of about eleven years, came to her mother in tears and asked her if she was "too wicked to be baptized." The answer was: "If you wish to be baptized, and will repent of your sins, and pray for mercy, and try to be good, Father White will baptize you." The dear child began to read the Bible, and weep and pray in secret. Andrew, about thirteen, conversing with his sister, caught her spirit and followed her example. The next Sabbath evening in the prayer-meeting the two children knelt and wept aloud. They were commended to God in the prayers of the members of the Church, and received comfort to their wounded hearts. A conversation with Andrew on the next day melted our hard heart, and we became deeply penitent.

From this beginning the work spread, and the children of the Methodist families shared largely in the reviving influence. When Father White came around the next time we were all ready for the baptism. He preached a glorious sermon on Heb. xi, 24: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter," etc. After the sermon a large number of adults and infants were baptized, and all who desired were received on probation in the Church. We, children of Methodist parents, Blairs, M'Allums, Greens, Pecks, and Ricters, were a class by ourselves, and a happy company were we.

The fire spread over the circuit. The same mode of visiting which we have described was pursued elsewhere with the same success, and an army of recruits was gathered into the Church before the first quarterly meeting for the year. That quarterly meeting was in a barn in Minden, in the month of December, and a warm time it was in the old barn, although it was severely cold without. On the stage were William Case, Ebenezer White, Ralph Lanning, and Jonathan Huestis, all now safely landed on the blessed shore.

Whenever Father White came round we had a pentecost. He drew large congregations, and great power attended his ministrations; and by the members of the Church, young and old, he was almost idolized.

This conference year, in the month of May, Ebenezer White finished his course. He died suddenly of a prevailing disease, and literally "ceased at once to work and live." Those who had been brought to God during the year felt themselves almost orphans, and were ready to exclaim like Elisha when Elijah went to heaven in a chariot of fire: "My father! my father! the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." This man held so prominent a position in the Genesee Conference, and exerted so wide an influence in the Church, that something more than a passing notice is necessary to do justice to his memory.

EBENEZER WHITE

was one of the first class of Methodist preachers raised in the interior. Although he died at the age of forty-two, such was the gravity of his character, and his paternal solicitude for the lambs of the flock, that for some years previous to his death he was called by all classes *Father White*.

Mr. White was a native of Blanford, Massachusetts, and was born May 18, 1770. He was converted to God, and became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the twenty-fourth year of his age, soon after the first entrance of the Methodist preachers into the field which we are endeavoring to explore. We believe he was a man of family before he was converted; and although he soon began to feel the burden of souls hanging upon his heart, manifested gifts for public speaking, and received license first to exhort and then to preach, yet he did not enter upon the work of an itinerant preacher until he had officiated in a local capacity for several years. The prospect of a meager support for a growing family, the necessity of being absent from home nearly all the year round, or of removing from circuit to circuit, and then finding no parsonage, were difficulties which staggered his faith, and called for very serious deliberation before he could consent to devote himself wholly to the work of the ministry.

He felt the woe of Paul upon him; but when he felt the sympathies of a husband and a father, saw his reluctant companion shrinking from the heavy responsibilities of training up her children and meeting their wants, with the small aid which a traveling preacher could afford in those days, he was ready to say, "Lord send by whom thou wilt send, but not by me." He sought to satisfy his conscience by preaching on the Sabbath, and laboring with his hands through the week to supply the wants of his family. This course, however, he came finally to see was not in the order of God. As a chastisement for disobedience to the call of duty, as he ever supposed and often said, he received an in-

jury in his thigh by the fall of a tree from which he never fully recovered. While writhing under the pain of a fractured limb, but more deeply distressed in his conscience under a sense of the divine displeasure, he made a solemn vow to God, that if he would raise him up he would devote himself wholly to the work of saving souls.

The Lord mercifully heard the prayer of his servant, and so far restored him that he was able to enter upon the active duties of a traveling preacher. In 1802 he was admitted on trial, and stationed on Mohawk and Herkimer circuits, with Benjamin Bidlack and John Husselkus. This field can now scarcely be defined, but we suppose it must have embraced nearly the entire Mohawk Valley, with considerable territory south and north.

Mr. White's residence was some three miles north of Cazenovia. Here he left his wife and children when he went to his first circuit, and it is believed that he never removed them. Having made for his family the best provision possible under the circumstances, he committed them to the care of a gracious Providence, and went to his field of labor with the utmost cheerfulness. It may be proper here to give a list of his circuits, that it may be seen what fields he cultivated. His first circuit was Herkimer and Mohawk, the second Chenango, the two following years Pompey; this charge embraced his residence. His fifth appointment was Scipio, sixth and seventh Westmoreland, eighth Herkimer, as a supernumerary; ninth and tenth Chenango, and eleventh Otsego.

From this view of his appointments it will be seen that Mr. White traveled over the whole territory of the present Oneida Conference, and was on the largest portion of it two years. All this was done in eleven years, and without removing his family.

According to our information Mrs. White was a feeble and timid woman. We saw her once some time after her husband's death. We believe it was her choice to remain at her humble but comfortable cottage with her little ones,

and endure the long absences of her husband, rather than run the hazard of an almost annual removal. It was a hard lot, but she endured it with the fortitude of a Christian. She was often asked by her little ones, "Why does papa go away, and leave us so much?" On one occasion she replied: "Ask him, and perhaps he will tell you." Accordingly, when he was about to depart, the little things came around him with countenances full of solicitude and sobbed out: "Papa, why do you go away and leave us and poor mamma alone so much?" The man of God paused, and calling them all around him, he proceeded to give them a formal explanation. Said he: "The people in this world are most of them wicked, and if they die in their wickedness they will go to the bad place. God has called me to preach the Gospel to them and get them converted, so that they may go to heaven. It is a dreadful thing for people to sin against God and be lost. O would you not be sorry to have all the poor sinners cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, and remain there forever?"

This talk brought about an entire change in the feelings of the little group, one after another saying: "Papa, you may go and preach to the wicked people, and get them converted, and we will stay home with mamma, and will be good, and say our prayers when we go to bed and when we get up. Mamma prays for you very much when you are gone." The apostolic man, always able to command his feelings, was nearly overcome this time; but he rallied and bid the little circle good-by, and went on his way with new zeal. After several weeks' absence he returned, and when he rode up to the door of his house the first salutation from the little band was: "O papa has come! Papa, have you got any sinners converted this time?" What a reception was this! What a question! This eminent servant of God gave this beautiful incident in love-feast the last year of his life. And after repeating the question with which he was met by his little children, being much affected, he added: "Thank God I could tell them that sinners had been converted."

Ebenezer White, in his time, was a great man and a great Christian. As a Christian he is exactly described in these words of the apostle: "Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer." His spirit and presence, saying nothing of his burning words, constituted the severest reproof to impenitent sinners and lukewarm professors. Religion with him was a serious business, and an earnest and hearty manifestation of the life of God in the soul. To the casual observer his piety might seem characterized by an excess of gravity; but those who were favored with a near approach to him, whether old or young, rich or poor, would receive a quite contrary impression. His heart was tender, his spirit kind, and his manners familiar and conciliatory. He often did reprove delinquents with great plainness of speech; but the weak and the wounded, the youthful and inexperienced, always found in him a sympathizing friend.

His prayers were the most perfect specimens of simple, earnest, and believing pleadings with God that can be imagined. They were always pertinent, and seemed to reach every particular case. He was always in the spirit of prayer, his mouth always filled with appropriate words, ready to speak to God without circumlocution, and almost without introduction. On one occasion, when the presiding elder, Rev. William Case, was opening love-feast by prayer, his feelings became so excited that he paused and gave vent to his tears. All hearts were melted and mingled in holy sympathy. A moment elapsed and the voice of Father White was heard. He took up the train of thought where Mr. Case left it, and proceeded for several minutes in the most earnest and devoted strain of supplication; then, on closing a sentence, he paused, and Mr. Case resumed the thread of the prayer and closed. There was a most glorious unity in *the prayer*, for there was really but one prayer made, although the two took a part in it.

Father White was a most excellent preacher. His ser-

nons were luminous expositions of divine truth, faithful warnings, or encouraging invitations, according to the circumstances and wants of his audience. His manner was solemn and impressive. An unction attended his discourses which told upon the hearts of all, and brought crowds to hear him. Perhaps he was as striking an instance as modern times have furnished of the real attractions of an earnest spirit, united with good sense, in giving utterance to the simple truths of the Bible. The worst reprobates would hang upon his lips in breathless silence while he poured upon them a tide of rebukes and warnings.

If there was anything in his sermons which seemed to contemplate awakening in his hearers feelings of curiosity or a love of novelty, it was his frequent use of metaphors and allegories. His taste inclined him to discuss the types and figures of the Old Testament. He studied them thoroughly, and constructed sermons upon them which produced wonderful impressions and excited a world of remark. A key to this tendency of mind, and the great ability with which it was managed, was given us by Father Bidlack. These men were kindred spirits and intimate friends. We once observed to Father Bidlack that Ebenezer White was great on the types. The old gentleman answered: 'Yes, and well he might be, for he committed to memory the whole of M'Ewen's book on the types, so that I believe he could repeat it all verbatim.' Here he doubtless found the substratum of his great sermons on Moses, Joseph, the good Samaritan, and several portions of Solomon's Song, which were such mighty instruments of good, and are still in the grateful recollections of some who linger upon the shores of time.

Perhaps this may be set down as an instance of the influence of *one book*. One book thoroughly mastered may form a character, and even make *a man of mark*. A man who has thoroughly mastered one great book, and made its great thoughts his own, will really know more, and possess

higher qualifications for usefulness than the one who has galloped through a hundred volumes without receiving a definite impression from one of them.

In labors Mr. White was more abundant. He seldom disappointed a congregation, and often taxed his strength severely by attending to extra calls where he saw openings for usefulness. Excessive labors and exposure frequently caused inflammation in his diseased limb, which not unfrequently made it necessary for him to preach standing upon his knees, on a pillow in a chair, and sometimes sitting. On such occasions he would seem to preach with the same freedom and as much power as when he was in the best possible condition for his work.

In addition to his daily sermons, meeting classes, visiting, and long rides, he found time to attend to the children. He formed them into classes for catechetical instruction, using that excellent little primer, the Scripture Catechism. He had an uncommon sympathy with children, and was able not only to adapt his instructions to their understandings, but to make them attractive. He could completely possess himself of the heart of a child, and his familiar illustrations were among the last things ever to be forgotten.

Father White was far removed from all tendency to rant or extravagance in his language, yet he often shouted aloud the praises of God. Brother G. Lane once related to us the fact, that, after asking a blessing at table, Mr. White became so filled with the Spirit that he could neither eat nor restrain his feelings; and hence he employed himself in what was to him far more agreeable than his necessary food, walking the floor and giving glory and praise to God.

Rev. William Jewett related to us an incident illustrative of the depth of Mr. White's religious feelings. While on Chenango circuit he preached in a neighborhood of Baptists, who were much opposed to what was often called "the Methodist power." This phrase refers to that loss of the power of voluntary motion which was common among the Methodists of those days. They said, however,

that "if Elder White should *have the power* we would believe in it." When he was preaching in that place on a certain occasion he became powerfully excited, and was seized with a strange sensation, which pervaded his whole system. He felt confident that he should soon fall prostrate upon the floor, and he shrank from the idea as being calculated to injure his influence, and consequently to restrict his usefulness. He paused for a moment and then ejaculated: "Stay thy hand, O God!" The nervous tremor subsided, but darkness succeeded, and he was sorely embarrassed through the rest of his sermon. His subsequent opinion was that he ought to have left God to work in his own way, whatever the consequences might have been. This is an incident similar to one recorded of Mr. Fletcher, followed by similar impressions.

Ebenezer White died on the 9th of May, 1813, at the house of Abram Lippett Hartwick. Three days before his departure he preached a powerful sermon from Hebrews iv, 9: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

The next quarterly meeting after the death of the venerable White took place at Middlefield, in McAllum's barn. Rev. Charles Giles then preached a funeral sermon on the occasion, of great power, from Rev. xv, 3: "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" It was a time of weeping, of mingled sorrow and joy. Mr. Giles had traveled with Father White four years, and well knew his worth. Rev. Seth Mattison published an elegy on the occasion, which, in sweet poetic strains, celebrated the virtues and the triumphs of the great and good man.

The late Rev. Abner Chase says of Mr. White: "He was unquestionably one of the most useful men ever connected with the Genesee Conference. Holiness was his theme in public and in private. But he was not one of those who profess and talk of holiness, and then disgrace or contradict their profession by irritability and peevishness,

or by trifling and vain conversation, or by exalting themselves and denouncing others. He was humble, gentle, and of a meek and quiet spirit; and his profession of holiness was not in word and tongue only, but was most forcibly proclaimed by his spirit and life. His manners were plain, yet dignified; his style in preaching was chaste, manly, and solemn. He aimed to inform the judgment and win the heart; and probably few have succeeded better in accomplishing this object."

Much more to the same purpose may be found in the "Pioneer," by Rev. Charles Giles. Abner Chase and Charles Giles both were Ebenezer White's junior colleagues in 1811 on Chenango circuit.

In 1813 Ralph Lanning and Asa Cummins were appointed to Otsego circuit. Mr. Cummins had been upon the circuit in 1803, and his excellent lady had taught the school, and lived with her children in the school-house. Of course he was an old acquaintance; but his health was bad, and he was getting advanced in life, and his physical strength was not adequate to the labors of a heavy charge. He held on until 1835, when he left the field of toil for a crown.

Ralph Lanning was a young man of good talents and unaffected piety. He was a thorough Methodist and a good disciplinarian. He was always something more than acceptable upon the charges he occupied. He died in Dryden, 1832, in hope of a glorious immortality.

Another camp-meeting, which was a season of power, was held in Minden this year on the old ground. Timothy Dewey, Luther Bishop, and others preached strong sermons, and the work of conversion went on in the prayer-meetings in mighty power, and in them Father White's converts took an active part.

A gracious revival of religion took place in various places on the circuit, under the labors of the Rev. Abner Chase, in 1817. Mr. Chase has left upon record some thrilling incidents connected with this revival which we will here copy: "At this conference I received my appointment to Otsego

circuit, where I was again permitted to witness the displays of divine power and grace in the salvation of many souls. Upon this circuit I found Josiah Keyes, who was then but a lad, and gave him his first license to exhort; who afterward became so famous as a preacher, and died while he was presiding elder on Cayuga district, so universally lamented. At a place called Fly Creek, a few miles west of Coopers-town, there was a little church or meeting-house which was bnilt or formerly occupied by Episcopalians, but was at the time of which I am writing mostly occupied by Methodists. In the month of December of that year we held a quarterly meeting in this little church. There had been something of a move among the people of the neighborhood for a few weeks preceding, and several young persons had professed to find religion or a change of heart. When the quarterly meeting commenced, therefore, the people seemed prepared to avail themselves of its privileges.

“Through the entire meeting, from its commencement, there was a heavenly influence resting upon the congregation. But Sabbath evening was the great and memorable time. The presiding elder, C. Giles, remained with us, and was much in the spirit of the work. At about the usual hour for closing the meeting, while some were relating what God had done for them, an old man by the name of Shepard, who, as he afterward stated, had felt deeply for several days, but had not divulged his feelings to any one, inquired of a lad who had spoken of the mercy of God to him if he thought there could be any mercy for such an old sinner as he was. It seemed that he made the inquiry of the boy because he was near him, and because he had not confidence to speak to any one else. The lad was rather taken by surprise, and did not answer immediately; but another person did, assuring the old man that there was mercy for him, and that he might find it then and there. Upon which the old man fell upon his knees, and many of us bowed with him, and while we were interceding for him God spoke peace to his soul, and he arose and testified it to the congre-

gation. This produced a powerful effect upon many. At the same time there arose a severe storm of lightning, thunder, and rain, attended or succeeded by a storm of snow. The thunder-storm at this season of the year added to the solemnity of the meeting, so that all idea of closing it was given up for the present, and cries and tears, and prayers and praise, were mingled together without intermission for several hours; some having no disposition to leave the house on account of the storm, while many more were induced to stay because of the interest they took in the meeting. Before the next morning dawned many souls in that house were delivered from the guilt of sin, and made to rejoice in God their Saviour. Of this number was Martin Marvin, now a member of the Oneida Conference.

"There lived at this time, in a little village called Millford, situated a few miles below Cooperstown, on the Susquehanna River, a Major Badger, a man who had enjoyed literary advantages above most of his neighbors; and whose mind was stored with general knowledge by reading and observation. But he was an unbeliever in revealed religion, and openly professed and advocated deism. He held at this time the first office in the town, and his influence was great. During the winter of 1817-18 some business had led him to attend the session of the legislature in Albany for several weeks. During his absence his wife had attended a Methodist meeting in a neighborhood at some distance from home, a privilege she could not enjoy with the knowledge and consent of her husband; and at this meeting she had become awakened, and had sought the Lord in secret, and found a sense of forgiveness of sin. But this, for the time being, she kept to herself; and when her husband returned she hesitated to mention what the Lord had done for her soul, fearing his opposition.

"In an adjoining town lived a man by the name of Marvin, the father of Martin Marvin, of the Oneida Conference, whom I have mentioned before. Badger and Marvin had formerly been intimately acquainted, but the latter

having some time before this embraced religion, their intimacy had been interrupted. But it happened, soon after Badger returned from Albany, that some business brought them together. After their business was accomplished, Marvin inquired of Badger if he ever attended Methodist meetings. 'No,' said Badger; 'you know I don't believe in such things, and why should I go?' Said Marvin: 'There will be preaching in such a place on such an evening, which is but two or three miles from your house, and I ask you as a friend to go, and at least for once hear a sermon.' Badger gave him no promise to attend, but on going home he asked his wife if she wished to go to a Methodist meeting. She was so astonished and overcome, as she afterward stated, on hearing her husband make this inquiry, that for some time she could give no answer. But after recovering herself a little, she replied, 'Why, do you wish to go?' 'I do not know that I do,' said he, 'but Marvin has been pressing me to go and hear a Methodist preacher at T.'s next Wednesday evening.' 'Well,' said she, 'if you wish to go I will accompany you.' He replied, 'Well, then, we will make our calculations to go.'

She afterward told me that she could with difficulty suppress her feelings until she could retire to her room, where she poured forth her gratitude to God for this unexpected event—that she was likely to have the privilege to attend a Methodist meeting with the consent of her husband. The evening arrived, and Badger and his wife repaired to the meeting. The preacher was entirely ignorant of the circumstances above narrated, but felt, in a rather unusual degree, the importance of his work, and endeavored to describe the wretched state of man by nature, his need of the mercy of God, and how that mercy could be exercised through Christ, and only through him.

"When the meeting was closed the major came forward and introduced himself to the preacher before all the congregation, by giving his name and the place of his residence, and added: 'If you have heard anything of Millford vil-

lage, you have probably heard that Methodist preachers have been abused there,' alluding to the case of Ebenezer White, who once attempted to preach in Millford and was abused by a mob. 'But,' continued he, 'I wish you to come and preach in Millford, and if you will consent I pledge myself that you shall be well used.' The preacher informed him that on such an evening he could be there, and if an appointment was given out he would, with the leave of Providence, fulfill it. The major assured him the appointment would be made, and requested the preacher to come to his house, and consider it his home while he remained in the place. This was assented to, and so they parted. When the day arrived the preacher came in the afternoon to Millford, and received a hearty welcome to the major's house, who soon brought forward his Bible and commenced stating his deistical objections, and pointing out what he thought to be inconsistencies and contradictions in it, though in a calm and gentlemanly manner. In this manner the afternoon passed, and the hour for meeting having arrived the congregation assembled in a large school-house, with a swinging partition in the center, which was raised, and the house filled to overflowing. The season was solemn and impressive, and all seemed to listen with deep attention. When the services were closed the major called the attention of the congregation, and said he wished to know if they desired the preaching to be continued, and called on those who were in favor to arise. The whole congregation were at once upon their feet, and an appointment was accordingly left for four weeks from that evening.

"After returning to the major's the subject of the Bible and revealed religion was resumed and continued to a late hour. When the preacher came from his room at an early hour in the morning the major met him, saying: 'I have had a fire, and have been waiting for you for some time.' The Scriptures were still the subject of conversation, until the preacher perceived that the major was evidently deeply wrought upon by the Spirit of the Lord. He there-

fore thought it best to leave him for the present to his own reflections, and immediately started for his next appointment, without dropping the least hint that he had discovered the major's agitation.

"On the day next preceding that on which the appointment was to be again met at Millford the major went to meet the preacher at an appointment a few miles distant, and on coming into the house where the preacher had put up he took him by the hand, and bathed in tears, exclaimed: 'I find myself a wretched sinner, undone, without the mercy of God.' After a little conversation they walked together to the school-house, where the meeting was to be held. The text was taken from Phil. i, 29: 'For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.' While explaining the former part of this privilege, given us in behalf of, or through Christ, the major found power by faith to lay hold on the promises of God in Christ; the bonds were broken, and his soul exulted in the joy of pardoned sin. The major stayed for class-meeting; and this being the nearest society to Millford, he offered himself as a probationer for membership before he left the house, and his name was enrolled among them. At the earnest solicitation of the major the preacher accompanied him home that night; and what a scene! Then, for the first time, the husband and wife unfolded to each other their views and feelings on the all-important subject of religion. The neighbors were called in, and praise and prayer, and sighs and tears were mingled together. The next evening the school-house could not contain the congregation which assembled, and the Presbyterian meeting-house was obtained, and many that evening felt that the word of the Lord was quick and powerful.

"To give the particulars of the revival which followed in Millford would fill many sheets; but I will only add, a society was raised, embracing the heads of many of the first families in the place. Among these was Major Eddy, the father of the Rev. L. A. Eddy, of the Oneida Conference.

Major Badger exemplified religion in life for a number of years, and left the world full of glorious hope of a blessed immortality."

In 1814 Charles Giles was appointed to the charge of Oneida district. Mr. Giles describes this district as follows: "It encircled a large tract of country abounding in hills and dales, and wild natural scenery, embracing the greater part of Otsego and Herkimer counties on the south and east, extending through Oswego county along the shore of Lake Ontario down the River St. Lawrence to Ogdensburgh, including all the Black River region, together with Oneida county."

The following brief sketches of the men with whom Mr. Giles was associated on this district will be recognized by those who knew the men as truthful delineations:

"The district included eight circuits, on which were stationed sixteen preachers. James Kelsey was one among the number, a zealous, warm-hearted pioneer, who has since been called away to the pilgrim's rest in Abraham's bosom. Abner Chase was another; a social friend indeed, renowned for goodness, who talked truth into the hearts of the people so pathetically that they could not refrain from weeping. Zenas Jones and Ira Fairbank stood like pillars on my right and left, courageous as lions, persevering and industrious as bees. Chandley Lambert was there, a soldier of the *cross*, famous for order and Methodistical things, who was so strict and stood so straightly while administering discipline, that the enemies of strictness said tauntingly, he leaned over backward. Seth Mattison, a shining star in the constellation, with his sympathizing spirit and poetical imagination, ready to pour consolation into my heart. Goodwin Stoddard was also among them, a stanch advocate for the truth, fearless as David, who drove on like Jehu. Nathan B. Dodson was a brother indeed, diligent and watchful, who fed the sheep in the wilderness. Isaac Puffer was there also, plain in style and manner, moving like a telegraph, with much of the Bible in memory, which flowed with chapter and verse from

his tongue like electricity, producing shocks and commotions among the conflicting creeds. And there was George Gary, also a faithful friend, cautious and deliberate, with a head full of thoughts and a tongue to tell them; a youth, though he had traveled and preached several years before. While in company with myself and others, all on our way out to conference, Brother Gary was seated on a large horse, with his flaxen hair playing in the wind. As we were passing some laborers near the road, they, on seeing us, respectfully stopped their operations and gazed wondering as the sanctimonious company passed along, knowing that we were Methodist preachers. While looking at us they beheld Brother Gary, our Benjamin, in the midst, attracted by his youthful appearance, which excited the workmen so that one said to the others, 'They have got the boys along too.' Being so near them, we haply heard the remark."

All these men are now numbered with the dead excepting one. So far as we know, N. B. Dodson still lives.

The following is an account of the work of God on the district in 1817:

"In September last we held a camp-meeting on Litchfield circuit; the season being cold and rainy, rendered our situation in the tented wilderness very unpleasant; but these gloomy circumstances did not impede the work of grace: both preachers and people were zealously affected in the good cause from day to day. At the close of the meeting about one hundred souls were found who professed to know that their sins were forgiven. Indeed, all our camp-meetings have been attended with glorious consequences: hundreds are now rejoicing that they ever saw those consecrated groves, where they were awakened to see their vileness, and where they first felt the renovating power of grace.

"In the revivals on Black River circuit the preachers have added three hundred members to the Church this year; and it is worthy of notice, that one of the subjects who has a place among them is a young man both deaf and dumb, who had a very remarkable view of the glory of heaven

and the misery of hell, which he communicated to me and to others by certain expressive signs. He appeared very happy and devoted to God. Another subject of this work was a man who had been a long time in despair: for several years he had wholly neglected his temporal concerns, but in the revival his bands were broken, and his soul released from the power of sin and Satan. On a memorable evening succeeding a quarterly meeting on Westmoreland circuit, twenty-three souls were brought into the kingdom of grace. To God be all the glory!

“At a certain time on Otsego circuit an effort was made to illustrate and enforce this text: ‘As he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.’ The assembly was large and very attentive, and while the discourse was coming to a close there was a wonderful move among them: the Spirit of God was evidently working on the hearts of the people. After the exercise was closed, as we were descending the pulpit stairs, I saw an aged man coming toward the altar with an anxious appearance; as I moved toward him he grasped my hand and earnestly inquired, ‘Is there any mercy for such a sinner as I am?’ I pointed to the Bible which lay on the desk, and assured him that it contained many promises for sinners; then with greater earnestness he seized my hand with both of his and said: ‘Is it possible that such an old sinner can find mercy!’ I continued to show him that God would save all who come to him through Jesus Christ. This moving event caused many in the congregation to wait. The aged penitent stood there in a state of bodily and mental agitation till he was requested to kneel at the altar. Then the congregation was invited to attend to the opening of a season of prayer in behalf of the subject at the altar. The exercise commenced immediately, and while our prayers were being offered for the aged sinner, others felt the same convincing influence of the Holy Spirit, and began to cry for mercy likewise; soon the mingled voices of prayer and lamentation filled the house. The scene was truly affecting.

While some lay helpless under the overpowering operations of the Holy Spirit, others stood weeping around them; parents and children, husbands and wives were mingled in the scene; they were mourning and rejoicing, singing and shouting, but fortunately there was no confusion in the house, no one was there to oppose. Jehovah reigned and wrought, and all was right and all was good.

“From the time of the commencement of this work, which was about three o’clock in the afternoon, there was no cessation till eleven o’clock that night. Eight souls were converted, still some went away sorrowing under the burden of their sins; soon afterward they came into the kingdom of grace rejoicing. Some who were converted that day were triflers in the morning. How wonderful are the works of God!

“One thousand members have been added to the Church this year on our district, but in consequence of numerous removals to the western country, the Minutes will show an increase of only seven hundred and forty.”

Paris, or Sauquoit station had two years of great prosperity under the labors of the Rev. Abner Chase; Conference years 1815 and 1816. The following summing of the results of his labors on this charge Mr. Chase gives us in his “Recollections of the Past.” Speaking of the conference for 1816, he says :

“At this conference I was reappointed to Paris, and the work of God in the awakening and conversion of souls went gloriously on during the whole of the following conference year. Many particular instances of the power of divine grace might be given. I shall not attempt, however, to detail the individual experience of any, but only state a few cases as they stand connected with other circumstances which I judge worthy of notice. There were two brothers, of the name of Smith, who had recently become citizens of that town, and who sustained a fair and respectable character. Both of these men became subjects of the revival, and shortly after they had united with the Church a gentleman

called on me, while I was laboring under a severe attack of quinsy, who was an entire stranger, and commenced a conversation on the subject of Dr. Clarke's Commentary, and wished to know whether I thought the doctor was in sentiment what was called a Trinitarian; to which I answered in the affirmative. This seemed greatly to displease him, as he made some ungentlemanly remarks in reply. I, however, was not in a situation to converse much, and therefore attempted to waive the subject. But he continued his remarks, and asked me if I held the views which I had ascribed to Dr. Clarke. To which I again answered in the affirmative; upon which he started from his seat, and laying hold upon the tongs which were standing by the fireplace, he raised them over my head in the most threatening attitude, and held them there for some time. My family were greatly alarmed; but I expostulated with him in few words, and desired him to put down the tongs, and be calm, and let me know the cause of his being so much excited. He by degrees became more cool, and ultimately let out the secret. He was a Unitarian preacher, on whose ministry the two brother Smiths had attended previously to their removal to Paris, and he charged me with having influenced them to embrace the Trinitarian doctrine, which he held to be false. Before he left, he acknowledged his rudeness, and stated that he was an Englishman, and had often preached in the church which was built for the celebrated John Bunyan. When he left me I advised him, if he wished to contend for the Unitarian doctrine, by all means to use some better argument in its support than the tongs.

"The Christian names of these two brother Smiths were Seth and Nathaniel; the former was the father of Professor A. W. Smith, of the Wesleyan University. He finished his earthly course in peace July 7, 1826, witnessing to the last the power and grace of the divine Saviour. See his memoir, written by the Rev. Z. Paddock, in the ninth volume of the Methodist Magazine. I may also mention, as the fruits of this revival, the Rev. Z. Paddock, of the

Oneida Conference; the wife of the Rev. E. Bowen, of the same, and the wife of the Rev. M. Tooker, of the Genesee, who, with many others I could name, have done honor to themselves and to the Church. But here memory calls up the names of many, both male and female, of those who so cheerfully, faithfully, and successfully wrought with me, by day and by night, in carrying forward, under God, this gracious revival. And where are they? Some of them are gone. 'Gone, but not lost.' Gone to receive the reward of their labors, the inheritance purchased by the Redeemer, and a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

CHAPTER V.

CHENANGO DISTRICT, 1814-1820.

IN 1814 Chenango district was formed from the northern part of Susquehanna and the eastern portion of Genesee. William Case was the presiding elder.

SCIPIO CIRCUIT.

The strength of Scipio circuit lay principally in the influence and zeal of the enterprising farmers who inhabited the fertile country east of the Cayuga lake. The village of Auburn, lying on the outlet of the Owasco lake, presented no opening for Methodism until the year 1816, when the Rev. James Kelsey organized there a small society.

The following facts have been furnished us by Talmage Cherry, Esq., the first class-leader:

Names of the first class: Talmage Cherry, then single; Jerusha Cherry, Enos D. Cherry, Mother Erwin, a widow; James Sawtle, Maria Jewett, a widow; Daniel Miller, Brother Sprague.

The Church was incorporated when Rev. Z. Jones was

on the circuit, 1817 or 1818. The class remained together until 1820, when it had increased to eighty members. It was then divided into four classes. Methodism had a severe struggle for existence in this growing town, which was the Presbyterian head-quarters from an early period. Auburn first appears on the Minutes as a station in 1820, Joseph Baker, preacher. With much difficulty the little society finally erected a comfortable church.

CHENANGO CIRCUIT.

¶ In 1813 Chenango circuit was favored with the labors of two earnest and laborious preachers, Loring Grant and Elisha Bibbins. This year it was embraced within the Susquehanna district. In the spring of 1814 Luther Peck removed from Middlefield, Otsego county, to Hamilton, Madison county, and settled on a ridge near the Brookfield line, in a somewhat new and secluded neighborhood. There were eight in the family who brought with them certificates of membership. There were no Methodists in the neighborhood, and no regular religious services. Mr. Peck immediately established a prayer-meeting on Sunday morning and Thursday evening. The preachers were next invited to come and preach in *the old log-house*. They came on without delay, and Mr. Grant organized a society of about a dozen members, embracing a few who lived in other neighborhoods. The people flocked in, and we had crowded congregations and most interesting meetings.

Here it was, at the parental fireside, that we formed our earliest acquaintance with our excellent old friends Grant and Bibbins. Here Dr. Dempster made some of his early efforts, and won some souls to Christ. And here "the preaching family" took their first lessons in theology, and made their first efforts in the way of warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and here they won their first triumphs in the name of the Lord. The class increased and "Father Peck's" became a regular appointment, and continued to be so until he left the country.

In the summer of that conference year a camp-meeting was held for Chenango circuit near Windsor's, on the hill east of the Unadilla. It was a season of refreshing, and a considerable number were converted to God. The preachers were indefatigable, and the word was attended with the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

John Eastwood was "captain of the guard," and a great curiosity he was. He organized his guard into first, second, third, and fourth "relief," and called in a voice like thunder for each relief. This he would often do in time of preaching. He was always bustling about, usually bare-headed, with his hair bristling like the quills of an enraged porcupine, and when he spoke it was with authority. He prayed as lustily as he called for "the relief of the guard." He was an old revolutionary soldier, and he was now a brave old soldier of Christ. Everything about him conspired to make him an interesting character.

There we saw John and Heman Bangs for the first time, and heard them preach. They were then local preachers, and lived not far away.

The next year, 1814, Ralph Lanning and Nathaniel Reeder were our preachers. Lanning was a sensible man, a sound theologian, and a systematic preacher. Reeder was earnest and eccentric. Another camp-meeting was held this year on the same ground which was occupied the year previous. Here Michael Burge appeared as elder in the place of William Case, who was making preparations to take charge of the Upper Canada district. Burge came from the South, and was impetuous, assuming, and overbearing. It was first supposed he came with the expectation of taking charge of the Chenango district the next year. If he had any ambition in this direction he was disappointed, for he did not take with the preachers, and never had anything in the conference but hard circuits. At the camp-meeting referred to Burge preached a slam-bang sermon, which made more people angry than it converted, while popular and telling discourses were delivered by George Harmon,

Israel Chamberlayne, George W. Densmore, and others. It was a time of power, and much good was evidently accomplished.

Here we received our first license to exhort, and from this time proceeded to appoint meetings here and there in school-houses and log-cabins, as the way opened and duty called. At this period the weekly meetings at "Father Peck's" were crowded and divinely blessed. Sinners were converted and added to the society who became bright and shining lights.

CORTLAND CIRCUIT.

In 1816 Cortland circuit was formed, being constituted mostly of the west half of Lebanon circuit. We here commenced our itinerant labors on the first day of April, and traveled until July, under the directions of Rev. George Harmon, the presiding elder, with Loring Grant and John Hamilton, the preachers on Lebanon circuit. Several new appointments were taken in, and Cortland was left in the form of a four weeks' circuit.

The Rev. William Cameron lived within the bounds of the new circuit, and was appointed to the charge of it the first year.

1817. Elisha Bibbins and George Peck were the preachers. The following is the description of the circuit: Cazenovia village; B. Williams's, two miles south of Cazenovia; Togg Flats, three miles east; John Bailey's, west of "the Gulf;" Allen Smith's, Fabius; Norton's; Wilson's, on the hill west of Keeney's Settlement; Keeney's Settlement; Keeler's, Truxton; De Ruyter village; Burdick's, on the hill southeast of Keeler's; Truxton Hill, Miner's; Albright's, on the turnpike east of Cortland; Cowles's, M'Grawville; Greenman's; Captain Anderson's; Rev. William Cameron's; Abram Mead's; Wier's; John Campbell's; Cincinnatus; Deacon Punderson's or Squire Stratton's, Brackel Creek; Fairchild's or Brewer's; Charles Jones's; Julius Hitchcock's, Lebanon Hill; Nathan Bailey's; . D.

Prout's, J. Sales's; Salisbury's; Brown's. The last five appointments east of Cazenovia.

This was a laborious circuit, and withal not very rich; but there were souls to be saved, and many were converted during the year. There was a considerable increase in the spirituality of the members. Mr. Bibbin's labored with untiring zeal and great acceptability. The junior preacher had an attack of inflammation of the lungs, and lost three months.

The courts had been removed from Cazenovia to Morrisville, and the vacated court-house was for sale. Elder John Peck, a Baptist preacher, occupied it as a preaching place, and seemed unwilling that the Methodists should have the privilege of using it at all, although it was the property of the county. A quarterly meeting was appointed in the village, and we went to Elder Peck and requested him to give the ground to us for one Sabbath, but did not succeed. The answer was short and decisive: "My appointment has been there for years and cannot be changed."

There was a vacated distillery a little east of the main corners, in the side hill. The floor of the second story was about on a level with the ground next to the street. Negotiations were entered into with the owner, and in a few hours the two preachers, with Benajah Williams, then a local preacher, and some others, with their coats off, were hauling lumber, and fitting up the place. Rough boards were laid down for a floor, seats were constructed of slabs, and a joiner's work-bench was prepared for a stand.

On Saturday everything was in readiness, and our presiding elder, Rev. George Harmon, preached us an encouraging discourse at eleven o'clock A. M. At the prayer-meeting in the afternoon we had a good time. In the love-feast on Sabbath morning a shower of blessings fell upon us.

At eleven o'clock Elder Harmon addressed a crowded congregation of seven or eight hundred, and came out in his very best style, laying heavy blows on several of "the five points of Calvinism." The discourse was a very effective one, and produced happy results. Our being driven

into *the old distillery* won us the sympathy of the public, and brought in many hearers who probably would not otherwise have attended the meeting.

Mr. Cameron the preceding year had formed a small class in the village, consisting mostly of young people. They were zealous and united. Several others united with the class before the first quarterly meeting. John Rowland, his wife and two daughters, Grace and Hannah; Eunice Parsons, subsequently extensively known as the devoted "Sister Cobb," whom we had the honor of receiving into society; Stephen Dodge and his sister; Luany Martin, Dolly Codwell, with a few others whom we cannot now name, together with some half a dozen who lived out of the village, composed the Methodist Episcopal Church of Cazenovia in 1817. Mr. Rowland owned the old grist-mill on the outlet, and was a man of some means; the remainder of the class were poor, a majority of them single persons.

The project of purchasing the old court-house for a place of meeting was conversed about and finally carried into effect. The property was to be sold on a given day, and our men had by some means ascertained that the Baptists intended to buy it, and expected to get it at about their own price. Several of the most able Methodists on the north part of the circuit were consulted, and manifested a deep interest in the undertaking. A bond was drawn and signed by John Rowland, Benajah Williams, Isaac Parsons, Joseph Keeler, Martin Keeler, and, we believe, Father Andrews, of Keeney's Settlement. Upon consultation it was feared that the Baptist brethren's bid would go beyond ours, and another bond was drawn for a larger sum, and that was \$1,810. The signers of the first bond were scattered more than a dozen miles apart, and somebody had to take the bond of the higher denomination to the men who were called "the trustees," and procure their signatures. We undertook the business, and rode one fearfully cold day from Cazenovia to Truxton to procure the signatures of the Keelers.

When the sale came off our agent bid the amount of the first bond. The Baptist brethren were indignant, and demanded of him what he wanted of the house?

"For a Methodist church," was the answer.

"You can't pay for it," was the response.

"That's my business," he rejoined.

"Well, you can't have it," said the Baptist, and bid up. The Methodist bid the amount of the largest bond and reached beyond the instructions of his competitors.

"They can't pay; they are good for nothing," roared the Baptist. The Methodist brother produced his bond.

"That is as good security as I want," answered the commissioner. The transaction was closed, and the Methodists took immediate possession of the house.

We commenced occupying the house early in the spring of 1818. The junior preacher was slow in recovering from his illness, and so soon as he became able to preach once a week he occupied the old court-house every Sabbath morning. The congregation increased until we had a respectable gathering of quiet and willing hearers. This was the commencement of regular Sabbath preaching in Cazenovia village. The old court-room was an awkward place to preach in, but was a decided improvement on the former arrangements for the accommodation of preaching. We had previously shifted about between different private houses and the old school-house according to circumstances.

The Baptists and Presbyterians were strong and influential in Madison county, and it was not uncommon for them to shut the school-houses against the Methodists. When these sectarians were trustees in a school district, which was a very common thing, we looked for no favor. The school-house two miles south of the village this year was locked against us, and we were obliged to preach in an old bar-room. This was the work of two zealous disciples of John Calvin, who happened to have the power to do it.

These measures stimulated doctrinal discussions, pro-

voked assaults upon the doctrinal systems of the prevailing denominations, and hastened on a reaction in the public mind in favor of the weak and persecuted party.

Some time in June a camp-meeting was held in Truxton, which was quite successful. The sermons from the stand were decidedly strong efforts. George Harmon, Timothy Dewey, James Kelsey, and others delivered telling discourses, and many were awakened and converted to God. A good revival followed in Keeney's Settlement, where our society was strong, containing many respectable farmers who, pecuniarily, were in good circumstances. Methodism had been long established here and in Truxton. We spent two weeks in the revival before going to conference, and were cheered with the conversion of sinners and the enlargement of the society. There was, however, one drawback to our success which was common in that country. A Baptist preacher, full of the spirit of proselyting, came in and persuaded some of the young converts to go into the water. He had no fellowship for camp-meeting religion, and yet it was a good qualification for baptism.

ITHACA.

Since the year 1800 there had been no Methodist society in Ithaca and no regular Methodist preaching. In August, 1817, David Ayres came from New York and commenced business in the place. He had been a Methodist about four years. He brought a letter of introduction from Dr. Bangs to Rev. George Harmon, the presiding elder of the Chenango district. Mr. Ayers was a thorough Methodist, was constitutionally and habitually active, and had great confidence in himself. He immediately commenced meetings in the village, on the first occasion reading one of Mr. Wesley's sermons. In connection with the Presbyterians he opened a Sabbath school. On the next Sabbath he hired the ball-room in the hotel for the meeting in the forenoon, and prevailed upon Rev. James Kelsey, preacher in charge of Cayuga circuit, to preach in the evening. The meeting

was held in the upper room of a warehouse, where the Presbyterians had worshiped. The house was filled to overflowing. The sermon was delivered with the preacher's usual earnestness and ability.

After the sermon Mr. Kelsey said, "Here we are determined to make a stand," and called for members to form a class. Mr. Ayres presented a certificate for himself and his wife; then the names of William Dummer, Anson Titus and wife, Elizabeth Sydney, (now Mrs. Bloom,) Maria Wright, and Mary Barber, eight in all. Mr. Ayres was appointed leader.

James Kelsey and John Kimberlin were the preachers on Cayuga circuit, and at the next quarterly meeting Mr. Ayres urged the presiding elder to give them a preacher to remain among them. Mr. Kimberlin's place on the circuit was supplied, and he was sent to Ithaca with the charge to "go and live on the Gentiles." Mr. Kimberlin's first efforts were discouraging. Every family of influence and means was fast in the Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. Mr. Wisner, the minister of that Church, publicly assailed the doctrine and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and used every effort to prevent their securing a foothold. Mr. Kimberlin attended to his own business, preaching a free and full salvation.

The class increased to eighteen, among whom was Jesse Merritt, a local preacher from New York, and his wife. Mr. Merritt was a man of good talents, and his wife was a lady of cultivated manners, but quite retiring.

At the conference of 1818 Rev. George Harmon was appointed to Ithaca, the charge being composed of the village and several appointments taken from Cayuga circuit. Mr. Harmon might have remained another year on the district, but excessive labor had begun to wear upon his health, and he thought to get along with lighter work, and withal to meet a pressing emergency. His first convert was Mrs. Burritt, the mother of the historian of Methodism in Ithaca; the second was James Barber, and the third Henry H. Moore,

who is now living, and has long been an official member and faithful laborer in the charge.

Incipient measures were soon taken for building a church. The first trustees were Josiah Tooker, Esq., James Egbert, Israel Brown, Jesse Merritt, and Daniel Ayres. The first three were members of other charges, residing several miles from the village. At the first meeting of the trustees they resolved to build a house of worship with galleries and steeple, forty-four feet by fifty-eight, estimated cost about five thousand dollars. It was also decided that a subscription should immediately be circulated, subject to the condition that no subscription should be binding unless two thousand five hundred dollars should be obtained.

Mr. Ayres was the only man who could command the courage to undertake the circulation of the subscription, and he was authorized to do the work. He assailed everybody, and took all sorts of commodities in payment, and after nine months of hard work he had upon his book the requisite amount.

General Simeon De Witt gave a lot to set the church upon, and a contract was made with Mr. Tillotson to erect the building, Mr. Ayres being the agent to furnish funds and superintend the work. The corner-stone was laid by Rev. Charles Giles, the presiding elder, who preached one of his stirring sermons to a large concourse. The frame was raised, the roof on, and the window frames in, when the builder refused to proceed without more pay. The trustees had exhausted their home resources, and now what could be done? It was resolved that Mr. Ayres should visit Albany and New York and solicit aid. He went, and as his own account of his labors is a rare document in its way, we will here give it entire:

"Hon. Obadiah German, father-in-law of Rev. George Harmon, was a particular friend of De Witt Clinton, then governor of the state. He lived some eighty miles from Ithaca. In company with Brother Harmon I went to Mr. German, and from him obtained a letter of introduction to

Governor Clinton. Thus armed, I started on my mission, resolved to persevere until I received enough to insure the completion of the chapel. I left in December, and in a few days had the satisfaction of seeing the governor's name at the head of my list for ten dollars, and of knowing that the money was in my pocket. I next called on Daniel D. Tompkins, Vice-President of the United States, and he gave me ten dollars. Then I went to Lieutenant Governor Taylor, who did the same. According to the plan I had struck out for myself, Chancellor Kent being next in office, I called on him and found him busily engaged in examining a chancery case. He did not look at my book, but at once gave me a peremptory refusal. Still I was not willing to leave without his name, and therefore took a seat, urging such arguments as I thought would gain my cause. I presume I staid over thirty minutes, during which time it was impossible for the chancellor to continue his investigations. At length his patience became exhausted, and he turned to me in anger, and said: 'Mr. Ayers, have I not told you more than twenty times I would not give you anything? do you want me to tell a lie, sir?' I, looking him full in the face, said mildly and firmly: 'Chancellor Kent, you know a bad promise is better broken than kept.' Quick as a flash he tapped me on my knee, and said: 'Good, good! that is a good *decision*. I never made as good a one in my life; hand me your book.' He put his name on the list, and handed me ten dollars.

"That night there was a grand political caucus at Albany, and Chancellor Kent, previous to introducing the business of the evening, said he had been called on that day by a 'little backwoods Methodist preacher, who was the most determined beggar he ever met with.' He added: 'I was determined not to give him a cent, but he stuck to me, and was so good-natured, so persevering, that he compelled me to give against my own will and inclination. If he should call on you, my advice is to give him at once, for you cannot get rid of him.'"

"The next morning I called on Hon. Elisha Williams, who directed me to be shown to his room, he being in bed when I called. As I entered he was putting on his pants, with but one leg on. He cast his eyes about him, and said: 'Are you the gentleman who called on Chancellor Kent yesterday?' On being answered in the affirmative, he, without putting his pantaloons on, took out his wallet, handed me a bill, and said, 'You can put it down.' I bid him good morning, and next went to Chief Justice Spencer, whose first salutation was, 'Are you the gentleman who called on Chancellor Kent yesterday?' and immediately, on being answered, said, 'Hand me your book,' wrote his name, and handed me his bill, and I went on my way rejoicing and praising God.

"I called on nearly every officer in the state government, every member of the legislature, and on the principal or leading inhabitants of Albany. The donations I got were all small, from fifty cents to ten dollars. When Albany had been thoroughly canvassed I started for New York.

"Here was a large and difficult field for me to occupy. The preacher in charge and board of trustees—all our churches were then in one charge, and under one board of trustees—were opposed to the circulation of my subscription book, and refused to give me an opportunity to take up a public collection in any of the Methodist churches, so that I knew not how to begin. At last I went to the Book-room, and laid my case before Messrs. Soule and Bangs, who were book agents. They treated me kindly, gave me their names, recommending me to the liberality of the public, and likewise a small donation. At this time there was lying in the hands of the mayor of the city a considerable amount of money, raised to relieve those who had lost their property by the great fire in the city of Charleston, which money the mayor of Charleston had refused to receive on the conditions on which it was sent him. I was informed that many of the contributors to this would not apply for their contributions again, and that the sum yet

unreclaimed was quite large. I went and asked to see the papers containing the names of the donors, and found that most which remained unreclaimed was in small sums, from fifty cents to five dollars. I copied the names; then went to the directory for their residences and called upon each, requesting them to authorize me to reclaim the donations. It was a laborious work to find them out, and often I went a dozen times before they would be at home. With many I succeeded, but some accused me of being an impostor, and treated me rudely. Nevertheless I persevered and got all I could. I purchased the window glass, the nails, paints, etc., and procured from the old John-street Church the brass chandelier, under whose light I had been often blessed."

The work was resumed, and after about two years from the time of the erection of the station, and Mr. Harmon had given place to George W. Densmore, was completed.

There was no bell in Ithaca, and Mr. Ayres had procured one for the chapel, and all at once the good people of Ithaca were taken by surprise with the sound of a church bell. "What is that?" was the inquiry. "A bell?" "Where is it?" "O it's on Ayres's chapel I'll warrant you." It was so, and the money was soon contributed by the citizens to pay for it.

After due notice the church was dedicated by the pastor, Rev. Mr. Densmore, and a sermon in the evening was delivered by Rev. J. Baker, of Auburn.

On the day of dedication Mr. John Perkins and his lady, from Nova Scotia, united with the society. They were most respectable and estimable people, and were eminently useful members of the Church during their stay in Ithaca. Amid all the turmoils and agitations of the Ithaca society in after years, these truly prudent and devotedly pious people were without reproach, and what was quite singular, enjoyed the confidence of all parties. They finally removed to the city of Norwich, in Connecticut, where they died in hope, and universally regretted.

The society in Ithaca increased in numbers, and the congregation became quite respectable. A difficulty arose between Mr. Merritt and Mr. Ayers which greatly injured its influence and impeded its progress, and continued for several years, but was finally succeeded by a glorious revival which almost annihilated its recollection.

CHAPTER VI.

ROMANTIC ADVENTURES — TWO OLD PRESIDING ELDERS, BISHOPS ASBURY AND M'KENDREE.

GIDEON DRAPER was appointed presiding elder on the Susquehanna district in 1809, and traveled over that large field for three years. It embraced a vast territory on the west and north branches of the Susquehanna, in Pennsylvania, and nearly the whole of what was called the lake country, and the country west of the Genesee River, in New York, up Lake Erie into Pennsylvania. Between the lake country and the west branch there was a wilderness characterized by high mountains and rapid streams. The way most commonly traveled through this terrible wilderness was down the Lycoming. This turbulent stream winds its way through the spurs of the Alleghanies, and makes a way for the traveler on the condition of his fording it as often as it turns across the narrow flats which border it, and rushes against the perpendicular rocks.

Col. Hartley first so cleared away the natural obstructions which beset the numerous passes along this stream that he marched two hundred men through from Muncey, on the west branch to Tioga, on his expedition against the Indians in September, 1778. (See his report, Archives of Pennsylvania.)

The presiding elder was perhaps the only individual who found it necessary to pass through this wild and dangerous

way periodically, and to him it became but too familiar. Mr. Draper once piloted Bishop M'Kendree through this terrible series of mountain passes and dangerous fords. The bishop rode in a chaise, Mr. Draper on horseback. The bishop was no novice in pioneer life, was perfectly accustomed to wild adventures, and of course was not likely to be worsted by any ordinary obstacles or dangers. He followed his guide, passing defiles and fords with great skill and courage, until they found a large maple tree lying directly across the track at the point where they were to enter a ford. Now the bishop laid the plans and gave orders. His horse was disengaged from the chaise, and the bishop brought up the wheels close to the fallen tree, sprang over, and placing himself between the thills ordered Mr. Draper "to push."

The bishop stood on the bank of the stream and pulled, while Mr. Draper lifted it easily for fear of shoving him into the stream. The wheels did not rise upon the log, and the bishop sung out, "Why don't you push?" Mr. Draper then laid out his strength, and the chaise went over, but with so much force that the bishop was forced down the bank into the water over his boots. "What," exclaimed the bishop, "do you mean to drown me?" Mr. Draper apologized and made the best of the matter possible, and they were soon on their way.

It was Sabbath morning and they came to the last ford, but found the water altogether too high for the chaise. Mr. Draper rode across and pushed on to Williamsport, where the bishop had an appointment, intending to procure help and bring him over in time. But it was not long before he drove up. He had found some men who had assisted him over the mountain, hauling the chaise up the steep by hand, while he led his horse. The old western pioneer was ample in resources, and something more than swollen streams and high mountains would be required to keep him shut up in the wilderness over the Sabbath when he had an appointment.

The bishop, however, was so much fatigued that a fit of

discouragement came over him, and while the whole country was in motion, and multitudes gathering to hear him, Mr. Draper was filled with consternation to hear him declare, with great earnestness and apparent sincerity, that he could not preach. It was in vain that Mr. Draper urged the fact that it would be a great disappointment to the congregation, who had assembled to hear *him and no one else*. "I cannot preach, I shall not preach!" was the answer. Mr. Draper was puzzled for a while to know what to do, for he could not endure the thought of preaching himself. He finally hit upon an expedient which succeeded. He had heard that the bishop was a great expounder of the ninth of Romans, and he proceeded quietly to say: "Bishop M'Kendree, there are a great many Calvinists in this country, who are everlastingly repeating passages from the ninth of Romans in proof of their doctrine, and give our people great trouble, who are not always able to meet them. Now preach us a sermon on that subject and it will do a vast amount of good." The bishop seemed to wake up from a quandary. "Do you think that will do?" asked he. "Nothing could be more suitable," replied Mr. Draper. "Well," said the bishop, "I will see." When the hour came he proceeded, and had great liberty. He conclusively refuted the Calvinistic understanding of that passage, and in an overwhelming argument established the Arminian exposition. The sermon was a wonder, to be talked about for years.

Mr. Draper conducted the bishop on his way to Pittsburgh as far as Bloody Run.

The old preachers often passed through ludicrous scenes, which varied the monotony of hard work and exposure, and gave them a little amusement. After a quarterly meeting in Canisteo Mr. Draper set off for Lycoming. He saw a man chopping wood by his door, who no sooner recognized him than he sung out, "How do ye do, Draper. I want you to stop with me and baptize my children." "Baptize your children!" responded Mr. Draper, "you need baptizing or something else yourself, here chopping wood on

Sunday !” Mr. Draper turned in, however, and baptized a lot of poor wild children. The father seemed greatly pleased with the transaction, and complacently remarked, “Now we are not heathen any more.”

A poor lazy fellow, who lived on the way Mr. Draper would travel the next morning, came in, and hearing his friend brag of the baptizing, asked Mr. Draper to call at his house and baptize his children. Mr. Draper accordingly called at the hut, and the fellow began to collect the children. After a great amount of blustering all were present excepting one, and he had hid in the brush. The indignant father roared, and applied to the truant sundry unseemly epithets, but he kept close to his retreat. Mr. Draper finally told him that he would be along again, and as he was in haste to proceed on his journey he would baptize those who were present. With some reluctance the father consented, and the service went on ; but his anger at the frightened urchin, who had made his escape, continued furious. It was afterward found out that he had crawled under a brush heap.

In crossing the mountain Mr. Draper was obliged to put up for the night in a place called Jones’s Settlement. Thomas Elliott, one of the preachers, was with him. They put up at a miserable place. The woman seemed embarrassed, and supposing her embarrassment originated from the fact that she could not give the travelers a comfortable meal, Mr. Draper said they wanted some milk for supper, adding that Mr. Wesley, in his philosophy, said that hearty suppers were unhealthy. The woman seemed relieved, and the matter was soon settled that they would make their supper on stewed pumpkin and milk. Wishing to avoid the use of dirty dishes, Mr. Draper arranged that the pumpkin should be divided through the center, and stewed in two parts. When cooked and cooled, each man took his half and pouring milk into the concave, took a spoon and scooped out the meat of the pumpkin, and thus made his supper. This was an original plan of eating pumpkin and milk, and very convenient withal, especially as it enabled the travelers

to avoid the use of wooden bowls which probably had never been washed since they were made.

The Rev. George Harmon took charge of the Susquehanna district in 1812, and traveled upon it three years. The following incidents and adventures we have taken from "a short sketch" of the life and labors of Mr. Harmon, written by himself, from the papers of his daughter, the late Hester Ann Harmon, and from Mr. Harmon's mouth on a late visit at Camillus.

In relation to his district Mr. Harmon says: "I commenced on the south end, about one hundred miles north of Baltimore. It extended north to within twenty miles of Utica, in the State of New York, and from the Delaware River on the east to the Genesee on the west. It was at least one thousand miles around it. Such roads! such hills! such mountains! I broke down several horses during my term of service on this district."

The great point of adventure and romance in real life was the Lycoming route, between Western New York and Williamsport, on the west branch. Towanda Creek, Sugar Creek, and Lycoming head near together; the two former emptying into the north branch below Tioga, and the latter into the west branch near Williamsport. From the head of the Lycoming to its mouth is about thirty miles, and in passing down it had to be forded thirty-four times. It is a deep and rapid stream, upon which small rafts of lumber were run in the spring. One of Mr. Harmon's perilous trips through this route he gives as follows:

"I held a quarterly meeting on the north part of the district, my next being on the south part. I had to pass through the sixty mile wilderness. I took what was called the Lycoming route. It was in the winter, the snow between two and three feet deep. I lodged all night at Spaulding's tavern, near the head of the Towanda. I started early the next morning and rode some eight miles to Brother Soper's, on the Lycoming, and took breakfast. I then set out for Williamsport. When I came to what was considered the

most dangerous crossing place on the route, I found the river frozen over about one-third of the way on each side. The snow, as above stated, was from two to three feet deep, and no one had passed to open the road. I paused but for a minute. I could not go back to Brother Soper's, some ten or fifteen miles, the last house I had passed; the sun had gone down. If I could cross there was a log-tavern within about one mile. I knew the greatest danger would be in getting on the ice on the other side, for should the ice break I and my horse would both go under. I must venture it. I saw no other course. I was on a very spirited and powerful horse. I urged him forward, and when his feet touched the bottom his head went under water. As he arose on his hind feet I put both spurs into his flanks and he at once bounded off into the river. The water was so deep that it ran over the tops of my boots as I sat upon his back. I got through without further difficulty.

"When I reached the tavern my first care was to have my horse attended to. But when I attempted to take off my boots they were frozen to my stockings. I succeeded after a while in removing them. I had, not long before, read Dr. Rush on the use of spirituous liquors. That great man acknowledged they had their use in certain cases, but there could be no case in which it would not be better to pour them in the swill-pail, and put both feet in, than to drink them. I bought half a pint of rum and bathed myself with it. I slept comfortably and took no cold. But my poor horse! the fatigue of worrying through the snow, and so often fording the river, so affected his limbs that I had to part with him at a great sacrifice."

The next spring Mr. Harmon held a quarterly meeting for Canisteo circuit at Squire Bulkley's on the Cowniskey. He says: "My next meeting being at or near Williamsport, I resolved to take a new route through the wilderness. I passed through what is now called Wellsborough, a flourishing village and county seat, but at that time the enterprising pioneers were just commencing their settlements.

When I reached the last house in the settlement it was about one o'clock. I took some refreshment and fed my horse. The family told me it was doubtful whether I could get through, it being early in the spring, and there being nothing to guide me but marked trees. Not even a footman had been through since the last autumn, and it was probable that the path would be blocked up with fallen trees.

"Being on an excellent horse I ventured on, but had not gone far before my difficulties commenced. Trees were blown down, and the path, at best a blind one, was blocked up. In some places I had to ride ten or fifteen rods around to get through, and then work my way on to find the path again. At length it began to be dark, and in a short time I could not see the path or the marked trees. My horse seemed bewildered. In the midst of my perplexity I thought I heard the sound of an ax. I started for it as straight as possible, and soon saw a light and a man chopping. He had taken up a lot in the wilderness, there being no house within six or eight miles. He had built a large fire and was chopping by its light. As soon as I thought I was near enough to make him hear me I hailed him. He was astonished to hear a human voice at that distance in the wilderness, and told me to stop immediately, as I must be on the brink of a precipice. There was a gulf between us and he would try to get to me with a torch light. Of course I came to a full stop. When he reached the place I was astonished to find that not more than a rod before me there was a yanning gulf, and a steep pitch of some fifteen or twenty feet down. The cold chills ran through me. The good woodsman hunted around and found the path. If I could have crossed the gulf with my horse I should have stayed with the man in the woods, but that could not be done, and it was unsafe to leave my horse alone, as he might be devoured by the panthers, wolves, and bears. So I concluded to try to get to the black house, some six miles ahead. The black house was a mere whisky shanty.

"When I reached the desired house, behold! the family

had deserted it, and I had no alternative but to push ahead. Some six or eight miles farther across Laurel mountain I found a stopping place. Here I found a comfortable log-tavern, with good accommodations for man and beast. It was then about eleven o'clock. I had my horse well taken care of, eat a good supper, prayed with the family, went to bed and had a refreshing night's rest. The rest of the route was more pleasant, and I reached Williamsport in safety."

The following incidents and adventures are selected from Miss H. A. Harmon's papers :

A TRIP TO QUARTERLY MEETING IN OLDEN TIMES.

"In the spring of 1814 my father attended a quarterly meeting at Painted Post, in the northern part of Pennsylvania. His next was eighty miles distant, and the streams were so high that it was impossible for him to go the usual route across the wilderness.

"Should he remain where he was, or make an attempt to attend the quarterly meeting ?

"Very proper inquiries, but somewhat difficult to answer, for the best of reasons—he did not know how he should get to it. He pondered the matter some time without arriving at any conclusion.

"He, however, had his horse made ready for a start, and mounting him, rode to Tioga Point, where he met with Brother Minier, who was going down the river with lumber. He invited my father to go down with him on his raft.

"Accordingly he embarked with his horse and baggage. The raft was pushed out into the stream, and they were fairly on their way, floating with the swift current down the majestic Susquehanna in a very short space of time, sweeping now under the shadows of the trees along the shore, which were just putting on their spring dress, and anon over the broad, glassy surface, where the bright sunlight was reflected most dazzlingly on the water.

"The majestic river, through its whole course, is accompanied by ranges of hills and mountains, which renders the

scenery grand, wild, and majestic to an extraordinary degree; for the abrupt and lofty precipices plainly indicate where the pent-up waters have forced their way through the rocky barriers. For several miles the chafed and troubled stream literally fills the narrow chasm which, in the northern part of Luzerne county, constitutes the valley of the Susquehanna, there not being space sufficient for the track of the wild deer along the sides of the steep declivities. Then the highlands fall off from their abruptness, and recede to a greater distance, so that the valley is broader; and islands more beautiful than any in the world here and there divide the unruffled stream.

"The Susquehanna has been called a most beautiful summer river; but when swollen by winter torrents there are no bounds to its furious raging. In the depth of winter it freezes over from its rise to its mouth; and as snow falls to a great depth on the mountains among which it winds its devious course, when the spring thaws come on the ice is broken up, and sweeps everything before it to destruction. Fences, and bridges, and even buildings are carried away by these sudden breakings up; the trees along its banks are often cut asunder by the immense sheets of ice. Rafts are often exposed to great danger by the swift current, and by encountering breakers and shoals.

"The first night the company landed at a place that is now called Skinner's Eddy. At that time there were a few log-houses scattered about, and a tavern. The ax-bearing pioneer was reclaiming the wilderness round about.

"There were so many companies got in before them that it was near midnight before their turn came to eat supper. It was rather scanty fare, for the table had been cleared, and the landlady said her cupboard had been gleaned of every thing eatable—that she had done the best she could for them.

"There was a woman at the house that knew my father; she had seen him at quarterly meeting; she placed a large arm-chair in the corner by the fire, and told him to take that, for there was no bed to be had. They were all taken

up before their company came in. The floor was covered with men stretched out on buffalo skins and overcoats; and it took some time to adjust bodies and limbs so as to afford to each one some faint chance of securing slumber.

“My father passed the night most restlessly in his arm-chair, in the midst of a score or two of most musical nasal organs, and in the morning embarked again on the rapid river; and in appreciation of the scenery, doubly beautiful in the early morning, he forgot the discomfort of the night.

“The second night they landed at a settlement not far from Wilkesbarre. They were more fortunate this time, and got in before the greater part of the raftsmen, and had an early supper and a plentiful one. The hostess was a Dutch woman, and she was very suspicious of the Yankees. There had been so many tricks played upon her by the raftsmen that she watched them closely, and would not allow them to leave the table until they had paid for their supper.

“When it came the turn for our party to eat my father asked a blessing, and when they had finished their supper Brother Minier, who was a local preacher, returned thanks. The hostess looked perfectly astonished. She said nothing to them about paying before they left the table. They got the beds that night and slept well.

“In the morning when they settled their bill she said if all the raftsmen that stopped there behaved as well as their company she would have but little trouble. How true it is that there is never anything lost by acknowledging Him who is the protector of our lives everywhere and in all places! Prayer has its influence upon the roughest people, and softens many difficulties, and smoothes many rough places.

“The fourth day they reached Northumberland. Here the noble river receives the water of its sister stream, the west branch, and after the union continues its course southward. Here my father left the raft. In going on shore they nearly met with an accident. The shore was so crowded as to make it difficult to land. Their raft got jammed between two others that were in motion, and such

a cracking as the ribs of their raft made proved the sense she felt of injury. Luckily one of the rafts hauled off, or they would have been crushed most certainly.

"The next morning my father mounted his horse and rode on to his quarterly meeting, which was forty miles distant. On his way he overtook a man, a Dutchman, and they rode on some distance together, chatting very pleasantly. They passed a church just as they were entering a quiet little village. My father inquired of him what church it was.

"It is a Lutheran church,' he replied.

"Is there no order of Christians here but Lutherans?' he inquired again.

"Yes, dare is some Presbyterians and some Metodis.'

"Ah, are there many Methodists about here?"

"Not a great many; dese Metodis are a pad beople. Is dare any of dem up where you come from?"

"Yes, a good many; but what makes them such a bad people?"

"Why, dey tells lies; dey say dey can live mitout sin, but they can't, dough.'

"If they say they can, when they cannot, they must be a very bad people, sure enough. But what do you say to such a passage of Scripture,' quoting it.

"If I furstood de English I would meet you dare.'

"My father quoted another passage.

"I tell you I don't furstand de English; I can read only de Dutch. I say dase Metodis are a pad beople, dey quarrels mit everybody dey meets along de road. I am a Lutheran, and you are a Metodis, and I an't going to tell you what I be, so dare, now.'

"He whipped up his horse and rode on, and left his Methodist friend to pursue his journey alone.

"His quarterly meeting was on Lycoming circuit. It was held in a barn, and the meeting was highly favored of the Lord. In those days there was seldom a quarterly meeting held where there were not souls converted. The Methodists would attend from every part of the circuit.

Twenty, or thirty, and even fifty miles was not so far off, but they would make an effort to attend, and look upon it as a great privilege to go to quarterly meeting. They would come on horseback through the woods, and from the settlements and towns in their great old-fashioned wagons, drawn by oxen very often, and crowded full; sometimes they would come down the river in canoes. They came with their hearts alive to God, and every one was ambitious of excelling in getting nearest to, and in doing most for God and truth.

“Consequently many sinners were converted before the meeting closed. Such exhortations and prayers, such shouting, for old-fashioned Methodists would shout. Their thorough enjoyment, their genuine tokens of holy delight, their ready responses, always expressed in a hearty manner, bore the preacher onward to success. To preach tamely before such an audience would be an impossibility. No Christian could slumber in such a vivifying atmosphere, no aspirations become weary, no ardor grow cold.

“During the preaching on the Sabbath there was such a peal of shouts broke out from the audience, that a school-teacher, seated in the hay-loft, who had lately come into the place, and who thought himself a little above par, was so startled that he sprang from his seat, and down he came, heels over head, right in the midst of the congregation, knocking several off their seats, and raising quite a commotion. This frightened the fellow still more.

“‘Where’s my hat—my hat,’ said he; but no hat appeared, and he made a bound for the door.

“‘Lord have mercy on him, and alarm him to some purpose,’ cried a good old gray-headed brother.

“‘Amen,’ rang out from a score of voices.

“At this the poor fellow was so frightened that he fell prostrate, and they had to carry him out.

“The meeting proceeded with its usual interest; the interruption was only for a minute or two, and the preachers in those days were so accustomed to interruptions and criticisms,

expressing gratification or displeasure in very decided terms, that it seldom confused them. Such expressions as, 'That's the truth,' 'I believe it,' 'It's so;' and occasionally, 'I don't believe that,' would echo from some part of the audience.

PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE.

"It was in the gloomy month of November that my father was on his way to attend a quarterly meeting in the northern part of his district. He expected to have reached Dr. Grant's, on the hills, some three or four miles from Oxford, before night. He was a stranger, and unacquainted with the country. Night was closing in, and he was riding slowly along through the thick forest, scarcely knowing what direction to take. At length he came to where several wood roads branched off in different directions. He stopped and cast an inquiring and eager gaze around, but he saw no alternative except to make choice of one of the roads and go on; but he soon found that he had missed his way.

"'This is abominable,' said he, as he pulled the reins to stop his tired beast; 'I should be quite unwilling to make a supper for some hungry wolf or bear; it would be a most inglorious end to my journey; but perhaps there are no such prowlers here, and at all events it is a straight path; I can try it a mile or two, and if I see or hear nothing of the house I am in quest of I can return and try another road; it must be somewhere in this region; I'm sure I can't be far from it, so come on, my tired dapple.'

"It was very dark, and he could only ride slowly, and with great caution, as the stumps of the trees often stood many feet high and much impeded his progress. He descended a tedious hill and crossed a stream of water; and after going on some distance farther, his horse came to a full stop, and he could not urge him on. He got off his back to find out what the difficulty was, and he found, by feeling round, that a tree lay right across the path, and that his horse was completely wedged in among the limbs. He began to be seriously alarmed, and for a minute he was

at a loss to know what to do, when the thought struck him that he would climb a tree, perhaps by so doing he might discover some signs of human beings. But suddenly a bright light shone through the underwood at no great distance. He threw the bridle around a limb, and springing over the tree, made his way toward it, and saw, to his delight, a comfortable-looking log house. He stepped quickly to the door and knocked.

“‘Come in,’ said a voice, and the traveler entered.

“‘Will you give me shelter for the night, sir,’ said he; ‘I think I must have lost my way, and my horse is worn out with this day’s travel?’

“‘With pleasure, sir,’ was the reply.

“Upon inquiry he found to his joy that it was the house of Dr. Grant’s son, and that the old gentleman lived near by. He procured a light, and Mr. Grant went with him for his horse, which was getting very restive, for the rain was falling fast. It was with some difficulty they got the horse loose, and around the fallen tree, which had filled up the pathway entirely. Mr. Grant told the wearied preacher to go immediately to his father’s, and he would take care of the tired beast.

“Soon after he had taken a seat by the comfortable fire Dr. Grant began asking him about the road, how far he had traveled, etc., etc. The preacher told him his route through the forest.

“‘Why,’ said the doctor, ‘you have come several miles out of the way. How did you get across the creek?’

“‘I crossed on the bridge,’ he replied.

“‘It can’t be possible,’ said Dr. Grant. ‘That is an old foot-bridge that has not been thought safe for a man to pass on for a long time.’

“‘Well,’ said the preacher, ‘my horse brought me safe across. I did not know but it was a good bridge, for it was so dark that I could not see my horse’s head, and I let him take his own course.’

“‘How in the world your horse brought you safely

across that old rotten string-piece is certainly mysterious. The hand of Providence was most certainly in it, brother, said Dr. Grant.

"Mrs. Grant set out her table, and placed upon it the plain fare of the new country. The weary, hungry traveling preacher thought he never made a more delicious meal. This kind family eagerly exerted themselves to make him forget the dangers and discomforts of his journey, and taste the sweet solace of the hospitable hearth. It is easy to forget discomforts, or only so to remember them as to make them enhance the zest of brighter things that follow."

At the session of the Genesee Conference in 1814, Mr. Harmon says: "Bishop M'Kendree wished me to procure a horse for him, old Gray having seen his best days. I succeeded in getting a very valuable young horse, but he had never been properly *broke* to the saddle. As I had to accompany the bishop through my district, he wished me to take charge of his young horse and break him. Accordingly we made a pack-horse of my beast and I mounted the colt. He was a little headstrong at first, but a day's labor on the road sobered him down so that he became a very pleasant saddle-horse.

"After we had traveled about a week in company, the bishop insisted on mounting the colt. I tried to dissuade him, but it was in vain. He would have his own way, so we exchanged horses. He mounted the colt and seemed pleased with him. We had, however, traveled but a few miles when the colt took fright at the old gentleman's big white hat, as he took it in his hand, and threw him upon a pile of stones. The bishop received an injury in one of his hips from which he never fully recovered. I immediately went for assistance: I hired a one-horse lumber-wagon, and with a rope made a swing bed, and drove about ten miles to a very convenient place with a good Dutch Methodist family. I remained with him about a week and then left him in the care of the family. This was at the place known as the Warrior's Mark, in Pennsylvania, between Bellefonte and Pittsburgh."

In the journeyings of Bishops Asbury and M'Kendree through our territory many interesting incidents occurred which are remembered and related. Bishop Asbury was sometimes stern and almost testy. But he would, not unfrequently, unbend himself and appear not only free in conversation but quite amusing.

He once came to Father Giles's, in Brookfield, through the rain, in company with Bishop M'Kendree and several presiding elders. George Harmon was the pilot. After leaving Saquoit Mr. Harmon called at a school-house for directions, and a young lady, the teacher, came to the door. In answer to his inquiries the lady told him that they must keep on down the river about four miles, and then turn to the right. They traveled on at least seven miles, and did not find the road which the young lady described. The bishop called out: "O George! George! you must look out for these girls, for I am quite sure one has deceived you this day!"

In due time the company reached "the preachers' home," and Bishop Asbury took his seat in an arm-chair, but soon hastily arose and called "Betsy," who had taken great pains to seat him on a fine cushion. "Here," said he, "you girl! what have you put pins in my chair for?" Half-frightened out of her wits, Betsy said she was sorry indeed if there were pins in the cushion, she knew not how it had happened. She examined the cushion, and others examined it, and found no wicked pin sticking in it anywhere. The bishop took his seat again and was again disturbed. Upon farther examination he found the annoying little instrument was in the skirt of his coat, where he had put it himself to prevent it from being soiled by falling upon the sweaty side of his horse. "Where," said the bishop, "is that dear child? I must see her immediately!" Betsy was called, and she entered expecting another reproof for some cause, she could not tell what. But when she came the old gentleman said: "O my dear child! will you please to forgive me for charging you with something which I did myself? That naughty pin was in my coat; I put it there myself and

had forgotten to take it out. Pardon me, child, will you?" Betsy, who in her mind had accused the bishop with peevishness, and even rudeness, now returned, and with tears said to her mother: "What a blessed old man Bishop Asbury is! he has been asking my pardon."

After dinner Bishop M'Kendree sat in his chair with his fingers locked upon his breast in a meditative mood, while Bishop Asbury was walking the room interesting the preachers with stories. All at once he looked at Bishop M'Kendree, as though the difference between himself and his dignified colleague had just struck his mind. "I suppose," said he, "the people here will think that Bishop M'Kendree has a great deal more religion than I have, and so he has; but if I should be as sober as he is I should not live a month." The preachers laughed, while Bishop M'Kendree smiled, but made no reply.

On one occasion Bishop Asbury was traveling through the lake country with a company of preachers, among whom was Benjamin Bidlack, then a venerable, portly man. The company were to stop for refreshments at the house of a respectable Methodist. As they approached the place Bishop Asbury led the train. The gentleman saw them coming, and as he met the bishop he said: "You pass on, sir, and open the gate for the bishop;" and walking up to Father Bidlack he addressed him most respectfully: "Please alight, bishop, and I will order your horse to be taken care of, and will bring in your saddle-bags." By this time Bishop Asbury had sprung from his horse, opened the gate, and as the gentleman came along with his hand under the arm of the man whom he took for the bishop, the man at the gate bowed respectfully saying, "Walk in bishop, I will see that all is right with your baggage." Father Bidlack did not object to an innocent joke and he preserved his gravity and acted the bishop until the merriment of some of the company broke over the barriers of strict etiquette and called for an explanation. The hospitable old gentleman at first was mortified at his mistake, but when he saw how it acted upon Bishop Asbury and amused the whole company he laughed as heartily as any of them.

Bishop Asbury was very infirm and yet performed a vast amount of labor. Although an invalid and a cripple, he rode thousands of miles on horseback over the most wretched roads, and often being subjected to the most wretched fare. From the Paris Conference, in 1811, he passed down through Pennsylvania, conducted by Gideon Draper through the Susquehanna district. He rode a pacing jade, carried his crutches, and when it rained he covered himself with a large cape of calf-skin, which extended below his knees. On the road between Oquaga and the Great Bend his leg became so painful that he stopped at a small log-house and bathed it with vinegar. They came to the Great Bend in the rain, and, as the bishop says in his Journal, "found shelter under the hospitable roof of Lawyer Catlin." Mr. Draper says: "Squire Catlin and his son literally took the bishop off from his horse and carried him into the house." The bishop lectured beautifully in the morning, to the admiration of his intelligent host, and greatly to the edification of all present. Indeed, in spite of his infirmities, he preached almost daily while passing so rapidly through the country.

Mr. Draper relates an interesting incident of the bishop at a conference in the city of Philadelphia. When the conference was about to adjourn the morning session the bishop remarked: "There will be no session of the conference this afternoon as I am to preach to the preachers' wives." When the hour arrived the preachers with their wives were present. In his discourse the venerable man drew a vivid picture of the privations and sufferings of the preachers. This of course deeply affected the ladies. He then turned to the peculiar trials and hardships of the preachers' wives, and took occasion to point out to the preachers the manner in which they should treat their wives. "It was," says Mr. Draper, "a melting time." The preachers and their wives, and all others present, wept freely, and the parties for whose benefit the discourse was designed resolved to be more brave and more patient under their peculiar trials.

BOOK IV.

PROGRESS OF THE WORK, 1821-1828.



CHAPTER I.

THE OLD WYOMING CIRCUIT.

WE have now taken a general view of the development and enlargement of the Church to the year 1820, inclusive. From this point facts multiply with such amazing rapidity that the difficulties of history are proportionably increased. Some relief is furnished by the comparative recency of the facts, and the existence of our periodical literature. Memory furnishes some materials; the Methodist Magazine and the Christian Advocate and Journal furnish some. The revival intelligence in these periodicals is exceedingly rich in facts which illustrate the influence of Methodism as an institution of modern Christianity and an agency of reform. The rapid filling up of the work, and the consequent multiplication of districts, circuits, and stations, will be remarked as a characteristic of this period.

The old Genesee Conference has lost a large territory on the south, which was annexed to the Baltimore Conference by the General Conference of 1820. The Canada Conference is formed in 1824, which further contracts our territory; but still we have a vast field embraced within our bounds, and that field constantly increasing in interest and multiplying the number of members and the number of charges.

The Susquehanna district is now one of nine which are

embraced within the bounds of the Genesee Conference. It contains eight charges; George Lane, presiding elder.

WYOMING CIRCUIT AS DURING THE PRESENT PERIOD.

The Rev. Elisha Bibbins had charge of the Wyoming circuit during the years 1820 and 1821. The following statement of the plan of the circuit and the progress of the work was communicated by him for this work:

"In 1820-21 I was returned to Wyoming as a part of the old circuit that I had traveled in 1812, Bridgewater circuit having been cut off from it previously. The following were the appointments, as near as I now remember: Wilkesbarre was the center of operations. Thence we passed to the Plains, thence to Pittston, thence to Providence, thence we crossed the river into the neighborhood of Brother Wilson, as stated in reference to my first term on this circuit. Thence we passed up on the mountain to Centre Moreland thence down to Kingston, and preached at Forty Fort meeting-house, thence to Plymouth, then back on to the mountain to Dallas. From this place we went down to Hanover, preached in the neighborhood of Comfort Cary's, and occasionally preached in the region of Captain Lee's; thence to Wilkesbarre.

"The first year I was on this circuit, the last time, I had as my helper Rev. Jacob Shepherd. He was a man of more than ordinary preaching talents, possessed of a fearless spirit, and was prepared to meet all the *isms* of the day, especially *Calvinism*. At any time he would rise from his meals and enter the lists of controversy with great zest. During the first year we had good times at most of the appointments, especially at Wilkesbarre. In this place we had to hold our prayer-meetings at private houses, and were often annoyed by some of the would-be *elite* of the place, who, if they were now alive, no doubt would be ashamed of their conduct.

"Still we had some staunch friends, who, though they were not members of the Church, yet occupied high posi-

tions in society. Such were General Bowman, Judge Scott, Joseph Slocum, and others.

"During the second year we gathered into the Church about eighty members. They were mostly young persons, but notwithstanding their youth they were the most active young converts, as a class, I ever knew. Among the number were Z. Bennett, Hannah Slocum, L. Butler, S. D. Lewis, Anning O. Cahoon, and others I cannot now name. These, and others that joined, were mighty in faith and prayer. I remember Judge Scott once remarked to me in reference to these converts: 'You can convert the world with such a company of Christians.'

"It was at or about this time that Brother Samuel Griffin was brought into the fold of Christ. Some of his friends were strongly opposed to his profession of religion, and especially to his uniting with our Church. His relatives were Quakers; hence their opposition. He desired baptism, and accordingly I baptized him in the Lackawanna; and when I was about to baptize him I turned his back up stream, or was about to do so; he said to me: 'I want to go *forward*,' or in other words, 'Baptize me face *foremost*,' and accordingly I did so.

"I ought to have mentioned that from Wilkesbarre we used to go to Stoddardsville. Here we had a small but good society. You will observe that we traveled thirty-four miles to accommodate a very small society and a very small settlement, but we got ample pay at each appointment in the outpouring of the Divine Spirit. We had some glorious seasons of refreshing from the presence of our God."

A letter to us from Mr. Bibbins, which we have preserved, dated Wilkesbarre, October 8, 1821, gives a glowing description of the work of God on the circuit:

"I know that you will rejoice to hear what the Lord is doing for the people on Wyoming circuit. Our camp-meeting commenced on the 13th of September, on Spring Brook, about two miles from Ebenezer Marcy's. After the first discourse our brethren began their prayer-meetings. Even

before preaching they had begun to pray in their tents. God soon began to pour out answers of prayer, both in the awakening of the careless and comforting the mourning. On Saturday the work became general. Abi Slocum, Ann Ike, Caroline Scofield, Sally Perkins, Ziba Bennet, and others were converted to God. The work spreads like fire in dry stubble. Hannah Cortwright, her sister, and one of their cousins found rest to their souls. William Hancock was awakened, and has since found peace.

"On the Sabbath, at twelve o'clock, it began to rain. The rabble were driven off, and the praying people, together with the serious, were driven into the tents, where they went to work, and God was very present to heal the lame, to bind up the bruised, and to raise the dead to life. Among those who found rest that night were Nancy Hancock, Mary Colt, Miss Pruner, Miss Chrisman. John Colt came forward; also Augustus Gordon, Benjamin A. Bidlack, James Gallup, Mrs. Cahoon, Mrs. Bowman, Mrs. Ely, and Mrs. Raynor. I suppose there were not less than fifty that found rest to their souls. The work is still going on both in Wilkesbarre and other places.

"We received twenty-two at camp-meeting. Last Sunday I received Ziba Bennet, Peter Williams, Platt Hitchcock, Mary Colt, Miss Dennis, and Fanny Taggers. Nancy Hancock is very much opposed by her friends, but I hope her way will be cleared before her, for she seems very much engaged. When the Lord converted her soul she *shouted* and *screamed* as loud as she could. So did Polly Colt; and they are shouting happy yet.

"Our camp-meeting had a most awful and yet glorious effect on the people. Judge Scott and Judge Fell were almost brought over to the faith. Judge Scott told me that if he had stayed all night he should have made as much noise as any of us; and I should not think strange if he should yet become a Methodist. I did not know but Betsy and Temperance would go crazy. For a while Betsy screamed as loud as she could. Temperance set to jump-

ing soon after she saw me, and seized me by the collar of my coat, and I believe she would have thrown me down if I had not held on to some that were standing by.

“Your affectionate brother, ELISHA BIBBINS.”

To those who have been acquainted in the Wyoming Valley for thirty or forty years past this letter will have a peculiar interest. And for the information of others we would say that nearly all the names above-mentioned have had a history which is instructive. Some few failed to carry out their convictions and purposes, and became as careless as ever. Some ever after maintained a sort of semi-religious character. Some united with other Churches, but the greater part of them held on their way. A part of these have passed the flood, and the remainder are worthy and influential members of the Church.

Among those not named in the letter, who were brought into liberty at that camp-meeting, and who deserve a permanent record, are Laura Smith, sister to General Bowman's wife, and subsequently married to William Hancock. During her life she was a most ardent Christian, and active member of the Church. She died in peace in Kingston. Robert Miner, son of Asher Miner, Esq., was a beautiful little boy when he was converted, and united with the Church; but even then he had about him the gravity and the dignity of mature years. He was a devoted and consistent Christian, and for years class-leader and steward in the Wilkesbarre charge. He died in great triumph in the prime of life, and was universally lamented. He was one of the few of whom no one ever said anything but good.

This camp-meeting revival gave an impulse to Methodism in Wyoming, which has gone on with the lapse of years and still remains.

In 1822 the preachers were John D. Gilbert and William W. Rundell, and in 1823 George Lane and Gaylord Judd. During these three years the cause of religion was in a state of steady progression, but there was no general revival.

The Rev. Fitch Reed had charge of the Susquehanna district this year.

In 1824 the preachers were Morgan Sherman and Joseph Castle, and George Peck had charge of the district. The Susquehanna district then embraced the following charges : Ithaca, Spencer and Wyalusing, Owego, Bridgewater, Broome, Tioga, Bainbridge, Caanan, Wyoming, and Caroline. The district was bounded by the Delaware on the east, Bainbridge and Norwich on the north, Ithaca and Wellsborough on the west, and Wyoming on the south; embracing a considerably larger amount of territory than is now contained within the bounds of the Wyoming Conference. This year Wyoming circuit exhibited strong marks of healthy progress. The Church was awake and the congregations were large. There was an increasing interest toward the latter part of the year in various parts of the circuit.

In 1825 John Copeland and Philo Barbary were the preachers. The year opened with unusual indications of the divine blessing. Souls were awakened and converted. A camp-meeting was held in September, near Truxville, on ground owned by the late Jacob Rice, which proved a great blessing to the Church. The Church was prepared for a strong effort at this meeting. The ground was rough and unpromising, but it was soon made evident that, like the place where Jacob laid his head upon a pile of stones, it was "the house of God and the gate of heaven." The first prayer-meeting in the altar resulted in the conversion of a prominent citizen of Kingston, Reuben Holgate, Esq., and the penitent cries and tears of many others. From the commencement to the close of the meeting the work progressed without interruption. Every sermon, exhortation, and prayer-meeting was a triumph. Souls were brought into liberty in the altar, in the tents, and in the woods.

On Monday the crowd had retired, but there was still a large number of earnest listeners to the services on the ground. In the morning, after an appropriate discourse, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered. It was

a melting occasion. After the service the mourners were invited into the altar, and although it would contain a hundred persons it was soon filled, and numbers hung upon the railing weeping. The poles were removed, and when those who desired prayers, and those who came forward to labor with them, were upon their knees, a large space extending from the stand out among the seats prepared for the congregation was densely filled. Now a murmur was heard coming up from the mass of earnest oppressed spirits. One led in prayer until his voice was drowned with the wailings of the seekers and groans and intercessions of the pious who were mingling among them, and fully entering into their sympathies. A scene of holy confusion now followed. It was a deep-toned roar like the voice of many waters. One incessant tide of prayer and praise rolled on for many hours. No pause was called for, either for refreshment or for preaching. One and another, and sometimes half a dozen together, would break their chains and shout "Glory to God!" and then commence laboring for others. The prayer-meeting was only interrupted at twelve o'clock for a *midnight cry*, and was then resumed and continued until sunrise.

Many saw the sun rise for the first time with truly devout feelings. Before leaving the ground one hundred came forward and testified that God had power on earth to forgive sins, and ninety-seven offered themselves to the Church as probationers for membership. Before the final close about forty again presented themselves as subjects of prayer, and many of them were converted before they left the place. The people took down their tents, but the prayer-meeting before the stand went on; and when compelled to leave, we heard the sound of prayer and praise until we were half a mile from the ground.

The work spread over the circuit, and extended to adjoining charges. Meetings were continued every night in Kingston for several weeks, and those meetings were seasons of refreshing and of salvation. Darius Williams was

in his glory. He prayed, exhorted, shouted, and sung in a manner peculiar to himself. On one occasion he declared he believed the work would go on until the millennium. A mighty man he was in a revival. There was more salvation, awakening, and converting power in his singing than in that of any other man we ever heard sing.

The camp-meeting at Rice's is still spoken of as "the great camp-meeting." We now frequently hear in love-feast, "I was converted at the camp-meeting at Jacob Rice's;" "I was awakened and resolved to seek God under 'the midnight cry,'" and the like. Few fatal backslidings among the converts of that blessed revival have been witnessed, but many who were then brought to Christ have gone to glory.

1826. The conference held its session this year in Palmyra, N. Y., June 7. At this conference we requested the bishop to release us from the charge of the district, and recommended Rev. Horace Agard as a suitable person for the place. The change was made, and we were appointed to the charge of Wyoming circuit. After spending one quarter in performing the regular rounds, the society in Wilkesbarre petitioned the presiding elder to appoint us to labor exclusively in that place. This was done, and Daniel Torrey was employed to labor on the circuit.

The society had suffered serious inconveniences for want of a suitable place of worship, and during the present year they petitioned the county commissioners to give them a lease of a hall in the upper part of the court-house for a chapel. By the kind aid of Hon. David Scott, Hon. George Denison, and others, we succeeded, and turned the old place of music and dancing into a house of God.

The lease is now before us. It is dated March 8, 1827, and is signed by Deodat Smith, Arnold Colt, and John Bittenbender, commissioners; and David Scott, George Peck, and Sharp D. Lewis, trustees. It held for ten years and the consideration is the nominal sum of ten cents per annum.

1827. This year the conference held its session in Wilkesbarre, commencing June 14. This was the first annual con-

ference ever held in this part of Pennsylvania, and of course was an object of great public interest. Bishop George presided, and Rev. John Emory, subsequently Bishop Emory, was present as book agent. Both preached on the Sabbath, greatly to the edification of the people.

The best families in the place opened their doors for the reception and accommodation of the preachers. Several Presbyterian families, as also some members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, made liberal provisions for the accommodation of the conference, and the citizens generally manifested great interest in the occasion. Everything moved on pleasantly until a sermon came off against "*Calvinism*," which was not suited to that meridian.

A member of the conference had been appointed at the preceding session to preach a sermon at this session on *Natural and Moral Ability*. The sermon was prepared under certain irritating causes, and assumed the character of a furious assault upon "Calvinism." The different denominations in Wilkesbarre had been upon good terms, and the general feeling was most kind toward us as a Christian denomination. This sermon came upon us all like a clap of thunder from a clear sky. The Presbyterians were irritated, the Methodists were grieved, and everybody regretted the affair.

The next morning we were waited upon before breakfast by several of the Presbyterian brethren, and asked if we "approved of the sermon." We stood upon our dignity, and refused to answer, alleging that we had no responsibility in the matter, and if they had any complaint to make they should go to the preacher, who was of age and could speak for himself. They concluded that we were right, and left in as pleasant a state of mind as could be expected. That terrible sermon is still referred to as a most unfortunate affair by persons of all shades of opinion.

We were appointed this year to Wilkesbarre, where we labored for the term with great comfort and with some success. The support was small, exceedingly small. We re-

ceived during the year *less than one hundred dollars*, but with good economy and the assistance of kind friends we managed to live. The members of the Church were generally poor. A few exceptions there were. John Cary and David Richards, who were old residents, and Moses Wood, who came from England, a Wesleyan Methodist, and settled one mile below Wilksbarre, in what is now called after him, Woodville, were all men of respectability and of means. Mr. Joseph Slocum was a hearty supporter of Methodism; his wife and three daughters were members.

In 1828 Joseph Castle and Silas Comfort were the preachers, Wilkesbarre and Wyoming being united. This union continued for two years, when Wilkesbarre was again made an independent charge, which thenceforward it continued to be.

CANAAN CIRCUIT.

In 1821 John D. Gilbert traveled on Canaan circuit. He was a man of considerable preaching abilities, and succeeded very well upon the charge, as he usually did. He finally left us and united with the Protestant Episcopal Church, since which but little has been known of him in Methodist circles.

In 1822 and 1823 Elisha Bibbins labored on this circuit. A brief account of the work of God during these years upon Canaan circuit, has been furnished us by Mr. Bibbins which we here insert:

“In 1822 and 1823 I had charge of Canaan circuit. This circuit embraced the following appointments: Canaan Four Corners, Mount Pleasant, Bethany, Cherry Ridge, Salem, Sterling, Bennet’s Settlement, Lackawaxen, and the Dutch Settlement. Rev. Solon Stocking, a local preacher, was my colleague the first year. He was a most devoted and untiring servant of God, and an excellent colleague. We had a good year. At most of the appointments we had seasons of refreshing.

“At Bennet’s Settlement there was a sweeping revival; every man and woman, and every child old enough to under-

stand the power of pardoned sin, were brought to a knowledge of the truth except two. God wrought wonders for Canaan circuit that year.

"At Bethany our people were very much annoyed for a time by the son of a Baptist deacon and another young man. They were accustomed to remain in the room where we held class-meeting, but would not come within the bar we occupied the court-house. On one occasion when I was present they remained as usual. While singing I walked to where they were sitting in one corner of the room, and after singing I addressed the deacon's son as follows: 'Did you ever experience religion?' 'No, sir.' 'Do you not intend to seek the pardon of your sins?' 'Yes, when God's time comes. 'Will you be as good as your word, and seek religion now if I prove to you that God's time has already come?' 'Yes.' I then quoted: 'Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.' And getting upon my knees requested him also to kneel, appealing to him as a man of honor. I made the request somewhat imperative, demanding that he should *get down*. But, though he appeared confounded and knew not what to do, he would not kneel down. I prayed for him, however. They embraced the first opportunity to leave, and we were not troubled with them afterward.

"The second year I was on this circuit I was supernumery and had a colleague and preacher in charge, Rev. Hiram G. Warner. Brother Warner is still alive in this state (Illinois) and is laboring among the Congregationalists, and has been for some years past."

In 1824 Joshua Rogers and Mark Preston were the preachers. There was no general revival, but a good state of religious feeling prevailed on the charge.

In 1825 Joshua Rogers, Sophronius Stocking, and Joseph Castle stand on the Minutes in connection with Canaan circuit. Joseph Castle, however, did not travel upon the circuit, but supplied Bethany, the county seat.

This year a camp-meeting was held in Canaan, commenc-

ing on the seventh of September, which was a great blessing to the circuit. The following is our report of this meeting, as published in the Methodist Magazine for this year :

A good degree of engagedness was manifested among the preachers and members from the commencement of the meeting. Many felt the need of a deeper work of grace in their hearts. All the exercises were spiritual and impressive. At an early stage of the meeting several presented themselves as penitents, and desired the prayers of the people of God. A travail of soul increased. The thunder of the law sounding from the stand, accompanied by divine influence, alarmed the conscience, and the light of Gospel truth flashing from the tongues of the heralds of salvation proved a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Many of the gay were pricked in their hearts, and many cried, "What shall we do?" The work of conversion in many instances, though deep, was gradual, and the evidence at first not so clear; but in general light increased until joy and gladness filled the soul.

There were several instances of powerful conversion, and some instances of persons who had not sufficient confidence to come into the prayer-meetings, but went into the woods to pray, and were there set at liberty, and came into the encampment and testified how great things God had done for them.

On Sabbath morning a number who had become cold, had lost their first love, and had got into the spirit of the world—some of them members of our Church and others of the Presbyterian Church—presented themselves with the mourners as subjects of prayer. They felt the necessity of being renewed, and to them the Lord graciously appeared the second time without sin unto salvation.

It was a time of general grace, and we trust will be of lasting benefit to many individuals and to the circuit generally. Nearly forty professed to have been converted at the meeting, and many, we trust, seriously resolved to seek the Lord.

BRIDGWATER CIRCUIT.

This circuit continued in a reasonable state of prosperity, being supplied by men of medium talents, or those who were rather young in the ministry, through the term of eight years. The leading events of this period are those connected with a camp-meeting held in Lyman's Settlement, Springville, in 1826. The Rev. Philetus Parkus, the preacher in charge, was lying upon a sick bed in the parsonage in the neighborhood, where he remained until he was called to his glorious reward. The circuit was deprived of the services of its regular pastor, but there was a good degree of life among the membership. We had some strong sermons, among them was one from Mr. Castle, now Dr. Castle, of Philadelphia. Rev. Elisha Cole, of Towanda, then commonly called "Father Cole," preached a characteristic discourse from the "cloud coming up from the sea the bigness of a^s man's hand." In treating his subject he said he should first philosophize it, second analogize it, and third theologize it. It was a singular sermon, but quite ingenious, and not without practical effect.

There were many interesting cases of conversion during the meeting; but one particularly interested us. A young couple attended; the wife was awakened, but the husband seemed as hard as a stone. He undertook to force his wife away from the ground, but she was so deeply affected as scarcely to be able to support herself. He had hard work to get her along, she weeping, and begging him to let her remain for at least a short time. He finally said, "You may stay an hour if that will do you any good." Several preachers were standing around, to whom she looked imploringly, and exclaimed: "O do pray for me *now, right away*, for the time is 'precious';" and, falling on her knees, she began to cry mightily to God for mercy. She was in a tent; her husband took a seat, and she, as she knelt, laid her head upon his knees. Fervent prayer went up to heaven, and before the hour expired she was blessed. She

arose, and smiling, said to her husband, "Now I am ready to go home." He was not now in so great haste to get away, but remained to witness the songs of praise and shouts of triumph which naturally followed. Before the meeting closed he sought and found the pearl of great price.

A high degree of religious interest followed the camp-meeting in Brooklyn, the place formerly called Hopbottom. Rev. E. Bibbins was residing there at the time, and was very useful. Accompanied by the Rev. J. Castle, we visited the place and spent a few days there. At an afternoon meeting an interesting little girl of perhaps ten years of age was converted and was very happy. She was on a visit to her uncle's, James Noble, Esq. Our friend Bibbins invited us to attend the child with him to Mr. Noble's, who was a friend to the Methodists, but not a professor of religion. We were anxious to witness the meeting of the uncle and niece, having no idea of the manner in which she would conduct herself. All doubts were soon settled, for the moment she saw him she threw her arms around his neck exclaiming: "O my dear uncle, the Lord has blessed my soul!" Mr. Noble was evidently taken down. He blushed, and for a moment hesitated, but finally responded: "Has he, indeed? I am very glad;" and being seated he took her in his arms, and struggled hard against the emotions of his soul. The sweet face of the little joyful convert was bathed in tears, but they were tears of gladness. At the next meeting the squire came down upon his knees. We have the following scrap from the pen of our friend Bibbins, in relation to the revival in Brooklyn, which we have no doubt will be acceptable to the reader:

"In 1825 I resided in Brooklyn, on Bridgewater circuit, sustaining a superannuated relation. The Rev. Philetus Parkus was preacher in charge. I was put in charge of the Brooklyn society. In the course of the year a most glorious revival of religion took place, as you will recollect. A niece of Squire J. Noble was brought to a knowledge of the truth when you and Brother J. Castle were present.

Many were converted to God. Rev. Mr. Marsh, a Universalist minister, was in the habit of attending our evening prayer-meetings. One evening, as we were walking together to meeting, he remarked that he would like to speak in our meeting if there were no objections. I replied that he was at liberty to do so provided he would confine himself to experimental and practical godliness; and he did so, but he seemed like a man in a straight jacket.

"I am confident he was greatly excited, and no marvel, for there was an awful sense of the majesty of God pervading the minds of the people. Squire Noble and his excellent wife, and many others, were fruits of that revival, many of whom I have forgotten."

James Noble, Esq., died in triumph, in Williamsburgh, while we were in the Book-room.

From this point the Brooklyn society continued to prosper until a new church was erected and Brooklyn became a station.

CHAPTER II.

OLD TIOGA CIRCUIT.

OLD Tioga circuit had been divided and subdivided until 1827, when it lost its identity and its name. Several strong circuits and stations had been constituted of the territory which was originally embraced within the bounds of Tioga. We shall next proceed to inquire into the origin and progress of such of these charges as originated previous to the year 1828, together with those which have taken the places of such charges and superseded their names on the Minutes.

WYALUSING CIRCUIT.

"In 1821 G. Lane still remains as presiding elder, and the preachers are Asa Cummins and Gaylord Judd. The local preachers are S. Stocking, Elihu Buttles, and J. Brainard.

"In 1822 Brother G. Lane still remains as presiding elder, and John Griffing and James Hodge appear as preachers. On the minutes of a quarterly conference held September 28th of this year, appears for the first time the name of the late Joseph Towner as exhorter. He had been class-leader since 1819, and thus was rising step by step to that position of eminent usefulness at which he has since arrived. Our system is wonderfully adapted to the development of the intellectual and moral man. Brother Towner was one of nature's noblest sons. But his early opportunities were small. When he was converted it was with difficulty that he could read a hymn; but by persevering effort he obtained a tolerable knowledge of the English language, and he became one of our most popular and useful men. His gift was more for exhortation than preaching, and often under his powerful appeals the vast multitudes would melt like wax before the fire. His knowledge of human nature was wonderful; and if a camp-meeting became uncontrollable, if his services could be secured peace would soon be restored. But he has finished his course, and gone the way of all the earth.

"In 1823 the name of Nathaniel Chubbuck appears as exhorter. This is the man that was hired by his father for a new saddle to have Methodist preaching at his house. A few years after this he was powerfully converted to God, and soon his brethren saw fit to give him license to exhort, which license has been renewed from time to time for the space of about thirty-four years, and he has been among the most useful exhorters. He is now, in a good green old age, still holding on his way."—*Rev. C. E. Taylor.*

The church was built in Nichols, near Judge Coryell's this year.

In 1824 Spencer and Wyalusing were connected, and John Griffing, Caleb Kendall, and Philo Barbary were the preachers. This was a strong charge, and was well manned.

A camp-meeting was held for this charge in Nichols, just

before the session of the conference, commencing on the 11th of August, which was a great blessing to many. The following account of this meeting may be found in the Methodist Magazine for this year :

From the commencement the preaching was plain and pointed, and the prayer-meetings characterized by warmth and ability ; but nothing unusual occurred until Sabbath afternoon, though the way was doubtless gradually preparing for some signal displays of divine power and goodness. At this time a cloud of blessings broke upon the assembly. The mourners were called into the altar, which was soon filled to overflowing. Their cries and bitter lamentations were enough to melt the hardest heart, and to excite the feelings, and call forth the sympathies of the most philosophical and stoical Christian. With the groans, sobs, and cries for mercy soon began to be mingled some shouts of victory. These increased until at length they prevailed. The whole mass seemed to experience a shock of divine power which burst the bonds of the poor captives, and brought them at once into liberty. The work went on gloriously to the conclusion. Thirty-seven presented themselves as converts. As several had retired, the number converted was probably near fifty.

Our parting scene was truly affecting. Several, who had not done it before, bowed themselves and asked our prayers. For one of them in particular great solicitude was felt ; and for him prayer was continued while the people were taking down their tents and dispersing. He has since become happy in God. The appearance of many indicated that they left the place smitten with a sense of their sins.

SPENCER CIRCUIT.

The following interesting details of the origin and progress of Methodism within the bounds of Spencer circuit are communicated for the present work.

“ The first class formed anywhere in this part of the country was formed in 1807, about four miles to the southeast

from Spencer, now known as Pleasant Valley. When this class was first started there were but seven members in it. They have now nearly all gone to their reward. But one or two of them still linger, and these live with one foot in the grave.

"The names of all are dear to those that survive. Particularly so are the names of Peter Lott and his wife, or 'Father and Mother Lott,' as they are familiarly called. Of these much might be said, as they were significant characters when this country was new, and especially as they did so much toward laying the foundation of the Church of God in these parts. We hear nothing of Methodism, and but little of any other religious body previous to this time.

"Father Lott was born in Salisbury, Connecticut, where he experienced religion about the year 1790. His wife started for heaven the previous year. There they lived for some time, and gave good evidence of a change of heart. From that place they emigrated to this country and settled in Pleasant Valley, and there commenced laboring for God. Shortly after the class was formed in their own vicinity. Father Lott commenced traveling over the hills and through the valleys to tell the story of the cross, while he labored through the week on his farm.

"He was a man of deep piety, fervent zeal, and strong to work for God. His wife was equally famous for her devotion to the cause of Christ. Like Zachariah and Elizabeth of old, they walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. They generally went together to meeting; he would preach and she would shout, and as soon as he was done she exhorted with great power and effect. It is a very common remark among the people that they loved to hear them shout, for it came from the heart, and reached the heart of those that heard. They traveled from ten to twenty miles on foot to his appointments and to the quarterly meetings. If a camp-meeting was held in any part of the country they were sure to be

there, and they were always ready to work for God. They did not have to go there to be converted every year, or to warm themselves by the fire of others, but with the armor on they went to join the army of the Lord. After Father Lott had formed the classes in this region of country the traveling preacher would take them into his plan. The class in Spencer village was formed in 1809. The names of Andrews, Dean, Gary, and Purdy were among the first who joined. For years their weekly prayer-meetings were attended by Father and Mother Lott, while they lived four miles up the valley. At or about this time the preachers came from the river up here. It then belonged to old Tioga circuit."

In 1811 a class was formed in Danby, at Father Wyatt's, and was for the time supplied with preaching by the preachers of Cayuga circuit, but soon fell into Tioga and afterward into Spencer circuit. Rev. William Wyatt says the class consisted of Nathaniel Wyatt, leader, Amy Wyatt, his wife, Fanny, Clarissa, and Anna Everett. Father Wyatt soon after he settled in Danby mounted his horse and set off in pursuit of a Methodist preacher. He found John Hazzard near Auburn, some forty miles distant.

Mr. Wyatt had been converted under the labors of Freeborn Garrettson, in Newburgh, at an early day, and was ill at ease until his house was turned into a sanctuary, and his neighbors were called there to hear the word of God. Having been educated in Methodism under Abbot, Garrettson, and the Woolseys, he was a thorough Methodist and a thorough Christian. With him the preachers found a home while he lived.

BROOME CIRCUIT.

The facts the most material to history connected with Broome circuit during the period now under review, are those which relate to the introduction of Methodism into Binghamton. This old town resisted the advances of Methodism

until the conference year of 1818. It was during this year that the first class was formed by Ebenezer Doolittle, when he traveled Bridgewater circuit. The members of the class were: Joseph Manning, leader, Lydia his wife, Sallie Manning, Peter Wentz, and Margaret his wife. The meetings were in the third story of Mr. Manning's house.

In 1821, toward the close of the year, a revival took place under the labors of John Griffing and James Hodge, the preachers on Broome circuit. Luther Whiton, a respectable mechanic, was converted and united with the society, and by his earnestness and holy living rendered the small society great aid. For years he was a useful official member in Ithaca, where he died in the full assurance of hope. The society soon acquired a good degree of strength and influence.

Among the papers of the late Ely Osborn, Esq., have been found several old documents of no small interest, which are now before us, and for which we are indebted to the kindness of his grandchildren, Mr. and Miss Bump. One is the minutes of "a meeting held in the village of Binghamton, in the county of Broome, and state of New York, the first day of March, 1819, pursuant to legal notice." At this meeting a society was organized, trustees appointed, and a resolution passed to make application for a legal incorporation to be styled, "The trustees of the first Methodist Episcopal Church of the towns of Chenango and Union." This document is duly attested, and was recorded May 4, 1819.

This corporation was superseded by another constituted November 24, 1821, styled "The first society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Binghamton," and was admitted to record by the commissioner, in the clerk's office of Broome county, the second day of July, 1822. The trustees were: "Ely Osborn, Isaac Page, and Moses Dyer, of the first class; Josiah Mushprat, and Sela Paine, of the second class; and John Whitam and Charles Stone, of the third class."

We have also the original conveyance by Joshua Whitney to the above trustees, for the sum of *two hundred dollars*, of "that certain piece or lot of land lying on the east side of Chenango River, and on the south side of Court-street, in the village of Binghamton, described as lot number forty-two in the plot of said village, containing two acres of ground, be the same more or less."

We also have a bill of moneys received and paid out, with an account of subscriptions due, which shows that the trustees purchased and removed to their lot a chapel, and fitted it up to suit their convenience. For removing the chapel a charge is made of \$194 66. This is what is at the present time called the Henry-street Church. The acting trustees were Sela Paine, Charles Stone, and John Whitam. The final statement was made up at a meeting of the above trustees, held at Peter Wentz's, in Binghamton, December 19, 1822.

Binghamton remained an appointment upon Broome circuit until 1828, when it first makes its appearance on the Minutes as a separate charge.

The Methodists now had a church in Binghamton, but it was a circuit enterprise. The trustees all lived out of town, and were members of other classes, and the funds were raised by the agent in small sums by traveling over the country generally.

WINDSOR was an old battle-ground of Methodism long before there was a Methodist in Binghamton, although it does not appear on the Minutes as a charge until 1832. We shall now attempt to trace the early history of Methodism in this old town.

The first school which was kept in the river settlement was a very important institution. There two boys studied their spelling-book, reading-book, and arithmetic, and made good proficiency; these were George Lane and Sela Payne. Their highest ambition was to prepare themselves for school teachers, a business in great demand in the new settlements. Lane was an excellent hand on the farm, and hired him-

self out to labor through the summer, and finally tried his hand at school-keeping during the winter. He was engaged by Putnam Catlin, Esq., at the Great Bend, during the summer of 1802. Mr. Catlin was in the habit of entertaining the Methodist preachers, and it is probable that young Lane's acquaintance with the Methodists commenced here. We well recollect hearing him relate the fact of a visit to Squire Catlin's, when he lived with him, of three of the old preachers, Benjamin Bidlack, Ebenezer White, and John Husselkus, on their way to Philadelphia to conference. From the Minutes we learn that these three men had traveled together on Herkimer circuit this year, and this point would be in their way. The particular fact which Mr. Lane referred to in the visit of these itinerant preachers was, that they resorted to the barn for a sort of prayer-meeting, and that they returned to the house full of the spirit of praise. They seated themselves on the stoop and began to sing. And such singing as that was! They had great voices, splendid voices, and they made the whole neighborhood ring with heavenly melody, occasionally interrupted with shouts of praise. We can realize this scene, for we have heard with our ears their melodious voices, and our poor heart has felt the overwhelming power of their songs of praise and their shouts of triumph.

Lane felt that these were extraordinary men, and that God was in their prayers and their singing. After he was converted and became a preacher, Squire Catlin often made merry over the witty remarks of the young man when he lived with him. On one occasion he jokingly said: "I am going to be a Methodist preacher, and I'll make the tears roll out of the old women's eyes." But young Lane made an end of his joking and frolicking soon after this.

The following winter, that is, the winter of 1802-3, Mr. Lane engaged in a school in the neighborhood where Kirkwood now stands. We here give an authentic account of his conversion, and of the events which followed, communicated by Rev. William Round:

"Mrs. Moore, of Kirkwood, says that she experienced religion and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church while George Lane was teaching school near where Kirkwood now stands, in 1803. Brother Lane experienced religion himself during that winter. He was absent from the school a few days, and when he returned he told his scholars that he had experienced religion, and exhorted them and prayed with them, and a great revival broke out immediately. There had been a small class there previous to this, consisting of Asa Rood and wife, Peter Wentz and wife, Clara Mapes, and Thomas Gray. The first preacher she recollects was Frederick Stier. Father Lewis preached to them also."

At this place Methodism has existed from the date of Mr. Lane's conversion, but has never acquired any great strength.

The following interesting account of the introduction of Methodism into Randolph, is communicated by William Goodell, Esq., of New York, in a letter to his brother, Rev. Ezekiel Goodell. Mr. Goodell is the only surviving member of the first class in that place, and speaks from personal knowledge.

"The first sermon I can remember to have heard was from a Methodist preacher, a Mr. Dunham. I suppose it to have been the first sermon preached by him or by any Methodist minister in Windsor, or at least in our part of the township called Randolph. He may have preached a sermon previously at some place 'on the river,' but I am sure that this was the first in Randolph. Notice of it reached our neighborhood a week or two beforehand, and was the topic of earnest conversation and interest. The day arrived, and most if not all our family were in attendance. The meeting was held in a private house, which was on the 'main road' toward the river, the residence then, if I mistake not, of a Mr. Jewell, the same house afterward occupied, I think, by Mr. Bidwell. I well remember the appearance of Mr. Dunham. He was dressed in a suit of dark 'bottle green' with a black vest. His deport-

ment was remarkably serious. He gave out a hymn from his pocket hymn book, and led in the singing. He prayed fervently, and after a second hymn opened his pocket clasped Bible and read his text? 'For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?' Rev. vi, 17. I remember something of the outline of the sermon. He noticed a number of great events of past times that might properly be denominated days of God's wrath, such as the flood, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, the destruction of Jerusalem, each of which he described with marked effect. 'But,' continued he, with increasing solemnity, of manner, 'the GREAT day of God's wrath,' alluded to in the text, 'is yet to come, and we shall all see it.' He then recited a number of passages of Scripture relating to the final judgment, the final separation and contrasted destinies of the righteous and the wicked. With a brief statement of the way of salvation by Christ, and an earnest exhortation to escape from the wrath to come, the sermon was closed.

"Notice was given that Mr. Leach would preach at the same place in two weeks, and the appointment was fulfilled. We attended again. I remember Mr. Leach as a man of portly appearance, pleasant countenance, and a largely developed forehead. On his taking his text the audience were struck with the utterance of the same words they had listened to a fortnight previous: 'For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand.' The plan of the discourse I do not so particularly remember, but the great practical application was the same. From these two sermons a deep impression was made on many minds. Professors of religion of different sects were awakened to a greater seriousness of deportment and circumspection of living. Religious conversation became common. Some, like myself, had heard the preaching of the Gospel for the first time. Others who had not heard it for years had heard it again. From that time we had preaching once in two weeks from Messrs. Dunham and Leach, alternately.

"The place of preaching was soon removed to the house of our uncle, Roswell Higley, who then resided on the same road about a mile farther west, and about the same distance from our residence, north; the place afterward owned by Mr. Beecher, near 'the Bennet neighborhood.' This stated preaching of Messrs. Dunham and Leach was in the spring or summer of 1799. I was then in my seventh year, and the impression on my own mind was never effaced. In the autumn of that year I passed through a dangerous sickness, which left me an invalid for a long time, and my recovery was very slow. The beginning of my religious life and experience dates from that sickness, the winter of 1799 and 1800.

"The preachers on that circuit for 1800 were Jacob Gruber and, I think, — M'Caine, or M'Kean, the latter now residing (I am informēd) in Saratoga county, and father of Judge M'Kean. J. Gruber (the only one whose name appears on the Minutes) was a Dutchman from Pennsylvania, and was quite young. Notwithstanding his youth and broken dialect, he gave promise of the life of usefulness for which he was afterward distinguished. Our preachers for 1801 were Gideon A. Knowlton and Moses Morgan; for 1802, Joseph Osborn and Sharon Booth; for 1803, J. Heron, Samuel Budd, and John P. Weaver."

"A quarterly meeting was held at Windsor Village (as it is now called) early in the spring of 1803, before the sleighing was over. The exercises were held partly in the new Presbyterian meeting-house, then in an unfinished state, and partly at the house of David Hotchkiss, Esq., where the love-feast was celebrated.* This I suppose to have been the first quarterly meeting held in Windsor. It was, I think, soon after this quarterly meeting that the society was regularly organized. It was at the house of our

*It was held in the bar-room. William Colbert was the presiding elder. That part of Mr. Colbert's diary which covers this period is wanting. We find him in December following holding quarterly meeting at Noah Hoadley's, in Randolph.

uncle, Roswell Higley. The names of those who joined were Mrs. Molly Andrews, wife of Levi Andrews, Reuben Stevens and his wife, our parents, Frederick and Rhoda Goodell, and myself. I can distinctly recollect all these, and am not certain that there were any others who joined at that time, though several joined not long afterward, as our cousin, Isaac Higley, Uncle and Aunt Higley, and William Gurnsey. Reuben Stevens and wife, who had just come into the place, had been Methodists in Connecticut. Mrs. Andrews too had been, I think, connected with the Methodists. Our father had been educated a Congregationalist in Connecticut, but I do not know that he had been a Church member, though a religious man. Our mother had made a profession with the Baptists in Dutchess county.

“Reuben Stevens was appointed class-leader, and with the assistance of our father conducted meetings when there was no preaching. The meetings were removed to Noah Hoadley’s. Another quarterly meeting was held at his house in November or December, 1803.

“I have no remembrance of *other* than Methodist preachers in Windsor, especially in Randolph, until after Messrs. Dunham and Leach came among us in 1799. Messrs. Bushnell, Badger, Andrews, and Willeston, from Connecticut, came as missionaries at an early date from the Congregationalists of New England. I remember to have heard Mr. Andrews once on the river above Windsor Village, and Seth Willeston several times in Randolph. Mr. Sage was settled as Presbyterian minister at the village (or preached statedly there) during some part of the time included in the above sketch. I remember to have heard much of a Presbyterian preacher at or near Great Bend, commonly called ‘*Major Buck*,’ said to have been a godly and useful man, but I think I never heard him. I am told that he had preached in Randolph before the arrival of Messrs. Dunham and Leach.

CANDOR CIRCUIT.

The able manner in which Spencer circuit had been served, under the divine blessing, had resulted in great enlargement both as to the numbers and resources of the Church. Candor had become a strong point, and demanded more ministerial service than could be afforded at an appointment upon the circuit. Accordingly in 1834 it was constituted an independent charge, and that good man, Gaylord Judd, was the first preacher in charge.

The following account of the rise and rapid advancement of the society in Candor is communicated by Rev. D. C. Olmstead :

"In 1826 Hiram G. Warner and William D. Overfield were the preachers on Spencer circuit. In the fall of this year, at what has since been known as 'the Red School-house,' two miles below Candor village, the first revival under the auspices of Methodism commenced. Rev. Thomas Hewitt, a local preacher, long and familiarly known in this region, was honored of God as a main instrument in the promotion of this good work. Brother Overfield preached, Brother Hewitt exhorted and prayed, and so powerfully did the Holy Ghost come down upon the people that some eight persons were converted the first evening. The work so encouragingly commenced went on and prevailed. A class was soon formed, of which Moses Darling, lately deceased, was appointed the leader. A few members of this class continue to this time, but the greater number have fallen asleep.

"From this point the work of revival extended northward to Candor village, and it was deemed advisable to form a new class in or near the village. This was done by Brother Hewitt, at the house of Brother Jared Smith, where the Methodist preachers have found a 'prophet's chamber' and a hearty welcome ever since. Brother Hewitt was appointed the leader."

In 1827 John Griffing and Joseph Towner, and in 1828

John Griffing and Miles H. Gaylord were the preachers, all men of mighty faith and prayer, and of eminent qualifications for usefulness. Under the ministrations of these faithful servants of God, all of whom have since been called to their reward, the cause of Methodism continued steadily to prosper in Candor. The society experienced no little opposition and persecution from a few scoffers, and from bigoted professors of religion as well. But, like the children of Israel in Egypt, "the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew."

Candor has a church and parsonage, and an excellent membership. Here lived from the commencement of the station, and here died, the Rev. Gaylord Judd, one of the most pure-minded and unexceptionable Christian ministers of modern times. His death is reported in the Minutes for the year 1859. He died on his knees while engaged in family prayer, a mode of dying which he would doubtless have selected if he had had his choice.

BARTON CIRCUIT.

The following account of Barton circuit is communicated by Rev. N. S. Dewitt:

"Barton circuit was formed in 1829 from territory embraced within the bounds of Spencer charge, for the especial accommodation of Rev. John Griffing. He had labored long in the regular itinerant work and had suffered much. The advancing infirmities of age rendered it proper that his field of labor should be a little more circumscribed than in the days of his early vigor. Besides, he had purchased a small farm on the west bank of the Susquehanna, a short distance below the village of Owego, on which his family was located, and it would be convenient that his field of labor should be contiguous to his home. Accordingly Barton circuit was formed, embracing all the territory on the west bank of the Susquehanna from Owego to Athens, thence up the Chemung Valley to Elmira. This territory in those days was regarded as a small circuit—almost a station. Mr. Griffing

humorously styled it his '*turnip-patch*.' This circuit has been repeatedly divided and circumscribed until it contains but five appointments, known respectively as Barton, Ellis town, Smithborough, Taylor's Settlement, and Oak Hill. The history of the societies at these places will carry us back to a period considerably anterior to the time when they became a part of the Barton circuit.

"The society at Ellistown was formed by Frederic Stier and Timothy Lee, in 1805. It was the result of a general revival of religion which swept along that portion of the Susquehanna Valley under the labors of these men of God. The class originally consisted of nine members: John Hannah and wife, Luke Saunders and wife, Ebenezer Ellis and wife, Samuel Ellis and wife, and Sarah Bingham. Samuel Ellis was appointed leader, and continued in this relation many years. John Hannah was a marked character in this little band. He was a Scotchman by birth, but obtained religion among the Methodists, and became a devoted and hearty supporter of this form of Christianity. For many years after the organization of the class his house was the preaching place of the neighborhood. He died at the advanced age of one hundred and one years, and his remains sleep in the rear of the Ellistown Church. His numerous family are now mostly members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"The Society at Barton was organized, as nearly as we can ascertain, cotemporaneously with that at Ellistown, and by the same men. Among its early friends and members may be named, Mr. J. Bensley, who died some years since; Mr. Mills, also dead; Nathan Smith and Gilbert Smith, still living in extreme old age.

"A class was organized some two miles east of the present site of the village of Smithborough rising of fifty years since. For many years the only preaching place was a private dwelling. The house of Mr. S. Light was the place where the ark of God long rested. Subsequently the neighborhood school-house was used as a place of worship. Still

later a meeting-house was built, which was owned jointly by the Methodist and Baptist denominations, and occupied by each on alternate Sabbaths. Mrs. Amy Brooks, who was a member of the first class formed in the vicinity of Smithborough, was gathered to her final rest about a year since, at the advanced age of seventy-nine years. She was a Methodist of the primitive stamp, often traveling the distance of thirty and forty miles on horseback to attend quarterly meetings. She often went as far as Oxford, N. Y. Her son, Mr. Benjamin Brooks, and his excellent family, still remain at Smithborough, and are the principal supporters of Methodism in the place. Father Bonham, who has held the post of class-leader at Smithborough for the last forty years, is still alive, though bending beneath the weight of age and infirmity. Though his mind is much clouded, he often speaks with great interest of a remarkable revival of religion which swept along the Susquehanna Valley some forty years since, which caused the stoutest sinners to bend before the power of truth as bends the sturdy oak in the midst of a gale. These old Methodists are passing away, and will soon be gone. It is well to obtain from them all the information respecting the early history of our Church that they are able to give. It is worth preserving, and will soon pass beyond our reach."

NICHOLS CIRCUIT.

Nichols is a township in Tioga county, N. Y., lying on the southeast side of the Susquehanna, ten miles below Owego. It embraces the Mauhontowango Flats, of Indian notoriety. Here Daniel Shoemaker and Judge Coryell settled in an early day. Shoemaker married a M'Dowell, sister to Daniel and Robert, mentioned in his journal by Mr. Colbert, who found one on the Chemung, and the other at the head of the Cayuga Lake. Judge Coryell was an officer in the Revolutionary war, and was a man of talents and high standing. The Coryell and Shoemaker families finally became enlisted in the interests of Methodism, and several

individuals from each family became devoted Christians and very useful members of the Church. Rev. V. M. Coryell is a son of the judge. William Colbert, who organized Tioga circuit in 1792-3, extended his labors to this locality.

It is said that Valentine Cook and John Broadhead preached in this place in 1795, but there seems to have been no society formed here until 1819. The class was formed by John Griffing, and consisted of four persons: Elijah Shoemaker and his wife, Daniel M'D. Shoemaker, and Ann Shoemaker.* An appointment was established there and was taken into the Wyalusing circuit, to which it continued to be attached until it became an independent charge in 1835.

Among the older class of preachers who bestowed much labor upon this place, and whose labors were greatly blessed, are Griffing, Bibbins, Agard, and Judd.

A church was erected near Coryell's in 1823, which is called Asbury Chapel—the first new church built and finished, and belonging exclusively to the Methodists, within the present bounds of the Wyoming Conference.

Here, in 1825, *Rev. Horace Agard* made his earthly home, and here are deposited his earthly remains. He was a man of great purity of character, of extensive information, and of fine talents. He was received on trial in the Genesee Conference in 1819, was an effective preacher for nineteen years, and for eleven of these years held the office of presiding elder. He was a well-bred gentleman, a thorough theologian, and an unexceptionable Christian. He could be trusted; he never deserted the post of duty, never shrank from responsibility, never forsook a friend. He was untiring in labor, and saw much success. The whole of his ministerial life, with the exception of one year, was spent within the present bounds of the Wyoming Conference, and wherever he labored he enjoyed the affections, confidence, and respect of the people. His modest and dignified deportment secured him a passport to the best families and the most elevated

* Communication from Rev. O. M'Dowell.

circles of society wherever he sojourned, and where he was the best known he was most esteemed.

Hard service and exposure finally impaired the constitution of our old friend, and in 1838, with great reluctance, he asked for and received a superannuated relation. Relaxation brought no relief to his failing physical system. A partial paralysis, followed by a derangement of the nervous system, occasioned a decline of his mental vigor and a depression of spirits, and for some two years he indulged in the most gloomy forebodings with regard to his eternal state. No reasoning on the part of his friends could rally him. Two days before his death his gloomy apprehensions all vanished, and he exclaimed: "Praise the Lord!" "Glory to God!" "Jesus is precious!" "Precious Saviour!"

"I'll praise him while he lends me breath,
And when my voice is lost in death
Praise shall employ my nobler powers."

On different occasions he uttered the following triumphant exclamations: "I see heaven open before me!" "I gaze on sparks of dazzling light, which are undimmed by the gaze!" "Yes, I shall go to heaven!" "O the prospect! It is worth a whole life of toil. Glory to God! glory to God!" "Beautiful! beautiful! beautiful!" His last words were: "Amen! halleluiah! halle—!" On the last triumphant exclamation the power of utterance failed, and he was removed to the world of the blessed to complete it. "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

CAROLINE CIRCUIT.

The Rev. Loring Grant informed us that the oldest appointment in this charge is Rawson's school-house. Best and Kimberlin, the preachers on Tioga circuit, preached there and formed a society in 1808. In 1809 Mr. Grant preached there himself. Here he found John Griffing, then a local preacher. The Methodists scattered through the

neighboring settlements belonged here; Mrs. Lucas at Berkshire, and the Whitings on Whiting Hill; Eleazer Valentine, and others.

Caroline circuit first appears upon the Minutes in 1821, Benjamin Landon, preacher. The two following years it was connected with Ithaca. In 1822 Fitch Reed and Dana Fox, and in 1823 Loring Grant and William W. Rundell, were the preachers. In 1824 Caroline was a separate charge; Loring Grant and John Wiley were the preachers. The charge then embraced Caroline, Slatersville, Speedsville, Jenks's, Berkshire, Newark, Richford, and several minor appointments.

During the conference year of 1824 a camp-meeting was held in Caroline, which was very successful. Some apprehended a failure, but God was present from the beginning. A goodly number of awakened persons presented themselves as subjects of prayer in the intervals of preaching. Numbers were soon powerfully converted and praised God aloud. The congregation was perfectly orderly, and there was not the least opposition. The prejudices which had existed against the camp-meetings were demolished, and all felt that God was evidently present to bless his people. At the conclusion between thirty and forty professed to have found the pearl of great price during the meeting. A blessed influence went out from this meeting, and a revival of religion extended to several parts of the circuit.

SPEEDSVILLE.

The following is communicated by Rev. R. Van Valkenburg for the present work:

"A little more than half a century ago this now beautiful rural district was one unbroken wilderness, where the savage roamed in sullen and solitary pride, and nought was to be heard but the scream of the panther or howl of the wolf, excepting when the stillness was broken by the crack of the hunter's rifle, or the rustling of the breeze through the forests.

"But soon the sound of the pioneer's ax and the crash of falling trees were heard, and the mighty forest vanished away as by magic; beautiful cottages were erected and dot here and there the landscape, and now there is to be found all the arts and luxuries that accompany the highest stage of human refinement.

"But no sooner had the hardy pioneers entered this region than the Methodist itinerant found his way among them, and began his mission of love and mercy, proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. A few were converted, but there was no society formed till 1821, when Rev. Benjamin Landon and Caleb Kendall came and preached at Caroline Centre, and formed a class of about twelve members, and attached them to Ithaca. John James Speed and wife, Martha Nicholson, William Jackson, widow Rich, Jeremiah Kinney, John Kinney and wife, and Mary Cole, were among the first members. John James Speed was the leader. Most of this number have gone to join the Church triumphant above, others are in distant lands, and there is not a single member now belonging to the society that first joined it. The next year there was a revival, and a goodly number added to the Church; but they are all gone except one, that is, Calvin Clark, a venerable father in Israel, who yet remains among us to bless the Church and the world.

"The corner-stone of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Caroline Centre was laid by Dana Fox in 1822, and the work progressed until the house was so far completed that it was occupied for a place of worship, but it was never finished or dedicated. The place has been blest with a number of revivals, but at present there are only twenty-five in society, many having died, and others removed to distant lands."

BERKSHIRE STATION.

In 1827 James Kelsey and Gaylord Judd were the preachers on Caroline circuit. In 1828 Berkshire was con-

stituted an independent station, and Gaylord Judd was appointed to the charge of it. The following facts are communicated by Rev. R. S. Rose:

"The Methodist preachers commenced preaching at Berkshire about the year 1809. A Methodist class was formed about the same time, and there has been a class and preaching ever since.

"A Mr. Heman Smith was leader for a time, and then Samuel Smith was leader for many years; but both of them long since departed this life in peace.

"The first settlers of the town of Berkshire were mostly from New England. As Methodism began to grow and prosper, it met with opposition and persecution from the Congregational society. They considered the Methodists as intruders, and consequently assailed their doctrine, worship, and members with ridicule and sarcasm.

"A Rev. Mr. Osborn was pastor of the Congregational Church, and missionary, perhaps, for some years along in 1808-9-10, etc.

"When the Methodist itinerant was coming to fill his appointment, Mr. Osborn saddled his horse and rode some distance to meet him, in order to ride in his company, that he might abuse him. He asked questions like this: 'Are you not ashamed to be going about the country living on the people, teaching such and such doctrines?' Mr. Osborn, after being convinced of his wrong, confessed his abusive treatment, as described to Brother Wm. Whiting and others.

"But Mr. Osborn's becoming convinced of his wrong and confessing it did not counteract the poison that in some way was diffused in some of the members of his congregation. A Captain Leonard, on being asked by his boys on Sabbath if they might go to Methodist meeting, replied: 'There are the hoes, and you may take them and go into the field to hoeing; but you cannot go to Methodist meeting.'

"A Mr. Manning, of Middlefield, observed he knew the Methodists were a crazy set, for he was knowing to their

throwing down about twenty rods of old log fence hunting for the Saviour."

Rev. Fitch Reed was stationed on Ithaca and Caroline in 1822, and was the first Methodist preacher who made a very deep impression on the minds of the staid people of Berkshire. Under his ministry several influential families were won over to the interests of Methodism, among whom was the family of Collins. In 1824 we attended a quarterly meeting in the old school-house, and then the interest was high in favor of our doctrines and usages. Revs. L. Grant and J. Wiley were the preachers on Caroline circuit, which then embraced Berkshire.

"The Methodist meeting-house was commenced in or about the year 1823. When Brother Joseph Belcher commenced circulating a subscription for it, an old Mrs. Waldo observed: 'If you will build a meeting-house for the Methodists, I wish ye would set it on Methodist hill.' This is but an index to the spirit that existed as to the house.

"The house remained unfinished for some five or six years. Then Brothers E. Scott and J. Belcher took it in hand, and completed it at an expense of about one thousand dollars above the regular subscription. The first quarterly meeting held in the house was probably September 21, 1829."

CHAPTER III.

OLD GENESEE.

CAZENOVIA.

THE first principal of the Cazenovia seminary was Rev. Nathaniel Porter, a young man of good education, pleasing manners, and a thorough acquaintance with Methodism. He often preached in the seminary chapel, and as a preacher attracted general attention; and his character and talents,

both as principal of the seminary and a preacher of the Gospel, made favorable impressions on the minds of the citizens of Cazenovia in relation to Methodism. Up to this point the Methodist Episcopal Church had been considered by the respectables of this village as a Church for the poor and the ignorant. Now public sentiment was rapidly undergoing a revolution upon this subject.

Mr. Porter married into a respectable family of the place, which very much strengthened his influence. Professor A. W. Smith (late President Smith, of Middletown) was employed as a teacher. His learning and talents as an instructor, correct habits, and gentlemanly bearing procured him universal respect. He also married into one of the best families in town, and with results similar to those which followed the marriage of Mr. Porter. Their ladies both united with our Church, and became heartily attached to the doctrines and institutions of Methodism.

Several respectable families soon became connected with our society, and gave it their hearty support. Among these we may mention David B. Janson, Esq., and his wife; Doctor Josiah Natton and his wife; Doctor Wright, and others.

The duties of Mr. Porter in the school were so onerous as to make it impracticable for him to preach regularly in the chapel for any considerable length of time, and hence the little society began to contemplate an application to the conference for a preacher to reside among them, whose only business should be to attend to the spiritual wants of the people who might be disposed to wait upon his ministry.

In 1825 the Rev. Fitch Reed was stationed in Cazenovia. The society was feeble and the support small; but Mr. Reed soon won his way to the hearts of the people, and gained a large share of public confidence. The seminary chapel was his preaching place, and he there had, embracing the students, a congregation highly respectable both for numbers and intelligence. In the *Advocate* for October 7, 1826, Mr. Reed writes:

“The Lord has graciously visited this place, and filled the hearts of his people with gladness. A good work has been gradually progressing for some weeks past. As the conference located our seminary in this village, our friends have long felt a peculiar anxiety that the cause of religion might prosper, and give a tone to the literary establishment. Their many prayers have been answered, and God is enlarging the borders of Zion. The society in this place consisted of twenty-four when I came here, and we now have about seventy; and more or less are uniting with us nearly every Sabbath. Our young brethren, students in the seminary, have been rendered a peculiar blessing to the people by their fervent prayers and godly examples. Between thirty and forty have given evidence of a gracious change, and many others are anxiously inquiring what they shall do to be saved.”

AUBURN.

1828. Rev. Manly Tooker writes to the Christian Advocate and Journal, February 13:

“The Lord has recently made bare his arm in this hitherto afflicted and unfortunate station. In entering upon the duties of my charge in this place (July, 1826) the state of affairs presented a most gloomy aspect. The society had suffered much in consequence of the apostasy of some of its most prominent members, which, together with the embarrassed and unfinished state of the house, served to depress my spirits, and scatter thorns over the desolated field of my labors. To extricate the Church from a considerable debt, and to finish the house of worship, which had lain waste for several years, were objects which, in their bearing upon our future success, appeared indispensable. After making several unsuccessful efforts to enlist some person for this enterprise who could truly feel its importance, and who could accomplish it without prejudice to ‘the word of the Lord,’ we were in doubt for some time whether misery and destruction were

to be feared, or joy and prosperity hoped for. Necessity having been laid on me, I have not whereof to glory in saying that, at an expense of labor and anxiety more than equal to my health, our chapel was completed in a style of simple elegance, and dedicated to God on Sunday, 25th of November, 1827.

"After addressing the congregation on Sunday evening, Jan. 27, from 1 Kings xviii, 21, 'How long halt ye between two opinions?' we called for such as were decided in favor of the Lord's service to approach the newly erected altar, where the people of God would join in solemn prayer for his pardoning mercy. In a few moments the altar was thronged, and before the meeting closed three professed to have obtained the knowledge of God by the remission of sins. On Thursday evening following four more were added to the number of the justified, and many are now anxiously inquiring, 'What must we do?' We have received thirteen to probationary membership who have professed faith in Christ, and who are earnestly waiting for greater displays of the power of God among us. Let all who 'pray for the peace of Jerusalem' be joyful in their King."

REVIVALS AND ENLARGEMENT.

From the year 1824 to 1828, inclusive, was a period of great spiritual enlargement within our territory. The old Genesee district embraced the territory which, in 1828, was divided between Genesee, Ontario, Chenango, Oneida, Black River, and Pottsdam districts, and a part of Susquehanna. During the period above alluded to the results of the labors of long years became more fully developed than at any previous period, and the fruits of recent labors were unusually abundant. These years were characterized by wonderful outpourings of the Holy Spirit, numerous conversions, and, consequently, the multiplication of circuits and stations. We can only occupy space for a few specimens, in addition to those we have already given, by way of illustration of this position.

In the summer of 1826 a great revival occurred in ITHACA, under the ministry of Rev. Benjamin Sabin. The work commenced at a camp-meeting in Asbury, Cayuga circuit, and went on with great power, as related by Mr. Sabin in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, and may be found in Burritt's History.

The following paragraph, copied from a communication from Rev. Horace Agard, is a brief and comprehensive review of the work and the power with which it was carried forward :

"At our quarterly meeting on the first Saturday and Sabbath of this month, we think that at least twenty-five found peace with God in two days in our society alone. It appeared that the glory of the Lord descended on the congregation of the saints, while weeping penitents in great numbers crowded to the altar for prayer. Their convictions were generally deep and rational, and their conversions clear and free from enthusiasm. On the fourth day of this month one hundred and sixty joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, and thirty-nine the Presbyterian. This work is glorious indeed."

In August, 1827, a camp-meeting was held in Danby, under the direction of the presiding elder, aided by the preachers and leading members of the Ithaca charge. The revival in Ithaca had attained great notoriety, and a large gathering from all parts of the country was the result.

This camp-meeting had more of art and external comfort about it than had then been common at meetings of the sort in the interior. It was withal a very successful meeting. We were present, and distinctly recollect the great efforts on the stand. There were present three presiding elders and one who had retired from the field at the preceding conference. The great efforts of the occasion were a sermon by Rev. Robert Burch and one by Rev. George Gary. These sermons produced deep impressions. It is affecting to think that nearly all the preachers who took a part on the occasion are now in the land of spirits: Horace Agard,

Abner Chase, George Gary, Benjamin Sabin, John Griffing, Dennison Smith, Dr. Bartlett, James Kelsey, Gaylord Judd, Joseph Tower, and perhaps others.

A communication in the Methodist Magazine from Rev. Goodwin Stoddard, presiding elder of the GENESEE DISTRICT, dated February 9, 1825, gives a summary view of the work of God in this district :

“Our affairs at Rochester are much more favorable than formerly, and several have been recently converted and added to our Church in that place. On Sweden and Batavia circuits we have some happy revivals, and also on Perry and Geneseo, especially in Geneseo village. Indeed, there is not a single circuit in the district but has had more or less converted, and appearances of revivals commencing.”

Letters from Rev. Asa Abel, presiding elder of this district, written to the Christian Advocate and Journal in November, 1827, and March, 1828, contain encouraging accounts of revivals, and increased attention to the Sabbath-school and tract interests upon the district.

Rev. Z. Paddock writes from Rochester, under date of January 9, 1828, cheering intelligence from that rapidly rising town. He states that under his predecessor, Rev. John Dempster, “the number of penitents became so great that it was difficult to find room for them to kneel at the altar. The work went on with great power until some time in the spring. Before conference not far from two hundred members were added to the Church as the fruit of the revival.”

Mr. Paddock further says : “Every week since conference has witnessed the conversion of some immortal souls.”

A communication from Ontario district to the Methodist Magazine by Rev. Abner Chase, the presiding elder, dated July 1, 1824, bears cheering tidings. The following is a specimen :

“But we have the greatest and best news from Lyons circuit. Brother Sabin, the preacher in charge of that circuit, writes as follows : ‘We have on this circuit five

chapels and one parsonage, thirty classes and eight hundred and fifty members. Some of them were among the first-fruits unto God under the labors of *Wesley* and *Fletcher* in Europe; others the first-fruits of Methodism in the Southern States. In them we yet discover many lively traits of that pure love and zeal which characterized those holy men and ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"How many have been converted cannot now be easily ascertained. About two hundred and eighty have joined the different societies on the circuit the present year. The work has been gradually progressing for eight or ten months; perhaps the seed sown years ago by the servants of the Lord is now springing up and ripening. Indeed, we have been all the year harvesting, and are yet in the midst of the harvest, and who can tell what the Lord will yet do while his people pray and believe!"

In 1827 Mr. Chase gives an account of revivals at the Sulphur Springs, Palmyra, Penn Yan, Ulysses, and generally upon the district.

The ONEIDA DISTRICT shared in the reviving influences of this period. A letter from Rev. Joseph Baker, dated Camden, February 11, 1825, speaking of a revival in that place, says:

"This glorious work commenced last June, at a camp-meeting held in this town, when about thirty professed a saving change, and many others were deeply awakened. A number of the converts belonging to Camden carried the holy fire to that town, and in a few days an awful solemnity was depicted on the countenances of old and young, and scarcely a meeting was held in Camden for months afterward without some instances of awakenings or conversion in our congregations."

In a letter from Rev. Charles Giles, dated New York Mills, March 26, 1827, we have the following encouraging account:

"A powerful work of the Lord is now going on at this place. A great engagedness of soul has been manifested

in the church during the winter, and an unusual solemnity has pervaded the congregation for some time past. On the day of our quarterly fast the cloud broke and sinners began to cry for mercy. The quarterly meeting coming at this favorable time proved a powerful auxiliary in carrying on the work. All the exercises were remarkably moving, and tended to increase the excitement. Saturday and Sunday evening sinners were crying for mercy around the altar, and a number found peace. Our meetings are attended, from time to time, with the power of a Saviour's love unto salvation. About twenty within a few days have given evidence that they have passed from death unto life."

Rev. John S. Mitchell communicates cheering intelligence of the work of God at Paris under date of January, 1828.

The BLACK RIVER DISTRICT shared in the reviving influences of 1825. Rev. Dan Barnes, the presiding elder, gives interesting details.

The work continued under the administration of Rev. Goodwin Stoddard, Mr. Barnes's successor, and is by him duly reported.

Several communications from Rev. B. G. Paddock give glowing accounts of the power and progress of the work in Potsdam and the neighboring charge, in 1827.

Rev. Isaac Puffer writes from the Black River circuit under date of June of this year:

"This circuit has been greatly blessed the past year. In several of the societies the Lord has poured out his Spirit. Christians have been quickened; several have professed to experience perfect love, and others are seeking to obtain it. Several camp-meetings were greatly blessed in the conversion of souls. Upward of a hundred have been received into society, and some have joined the Presbyterians and Baptists. Among the converts is one who was formerly a Universalist preacher; but now, knowing the terrors of the Lord, is striving to persuade men."

The enlargement of the work in this part of the conference called for a new district, which was formed, and appears upon the Minutes for 1828, and is called POTSDAM DISTRICT, B. G. Paddock presiding elder.

CHAPTER IV.

HOLLAND PURCHASE.

In 1821 the old Holland Purchase circuit was constituted a district, called Erie, Glezen Fillmore presiding elder. The country was then comparatively new, and the work of the preachers consisted in strengthening feeble societies and introducing preaching into new places. During Mr. Fillmore's four years' term the increase was not large, but a foundation was laid for a magnificent superstructure.

In 1825 the name of the district was changed from Erie to Buffalo, and Loring Grant was appointed presiding elder. A season of revivals followed which resulted in a large annual increase.

A letter from Mr. Grant, dated November 25, 1826, published in the *Christian Advocate*, reports revivals in Ridgeway circuit, Gainesville, Batavia, Barton, Buffalo, Black Rock, and other places, the work being very materially aided by a series of camp-meetings.

In April of 1827 Mr. Grant reports that "Buffalo district is still rising." Another series of camp-meetings was blessed in the conversion of souls and the enlargement of the Church.

Mr. Grant writes (December 31, 1828) that the series of camp-meetings for the district had resulted in the addition to the Church of "nearly three hundred" members. Church building had been progressing. "A good sized brick church is to be completed this winter in the flourishing village of Le Roy." "In the village of Scottsville a neat

and convenient brick house has been erected." "In the village of Brockport a very commodious, well-finished brick church has recently been erected."

Mr. Grant claimed to have one of the best set of workers in his district that could be found, and certain it is that they were greatly owned and blessed of God. It was a period of rapid growth and church extension. The wealth of the Church in this rapidly rising portion of the state of New York had greatly increased, and was advancing with constantly accumulating force. Many good churches were built, and comfortable accommodations for the congregations were rising in all directions. God shed down his blessings upon the labors of his servants, and a mighty army was raised up to fight the battles of truth and of righteousness.

We are only able to occupy space for mere glimpses of the progress of the work of God in this region during the period now under review in this interesting portion of our field. It was a wilderness for some years after Methodism had made considerable progress east of the Genesee River, but from 1820 to 1828 it fairly rivals the older portions of the field in the rapidity of its progress and the power of its influence. At the commencement of 1829 it was a great country for Methodism and Methodist churches. Ministerial labor was largely demanded, and the want brought the supply. Stations were constituted in the towns, and circuits were multiplied by divisions and subdivisions.

The old Holland Purchase circuit now constitutes the Genesee Conference; and what was the little town of Buffalo from 1810 to 1820 is now a powerful commercial city, and the seat of the General Conference for 1860. Well may we look back and with adoring wonder exclaim, "What hath God wrought!"

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STATISTICS.

In 1810 the numbers in society stand as follows :

Susquehanna district.....	3,966
Cayuga district	4,124
Upper Canada district.....	2,803
Traveling preachers, 57. Members	<u>10,693</u>

In 1820 there were :

Oneida district.....	4,556
Chenango district.....	5,103
Ontario district.....	3,147
Genesee district.....	2,536
Susquehanna district.....	3,048
Upper Canada district.....	2,558
Lower Canada district.....	2,999
Traveling preachers, 117. Members	<u>23,947</u>

In 1828 the numbers reported are :

Ontario district.....	4,078
Oneida district.....	5,303
Chenango district.....	4,873
Black River district.....	4,128
Susquehanna district.....	4,434
Genesee district.....	3,905
Buffalo district.....	5,228
Traveling preachers, 138. Members	<u>31,949</u>

The Canada districts, which had been constituted a separate conference, reported this year 9,678 members and 48 traveling preachers, making altogether a total of 41,627 members, and 186 preachers. Upon a careful calculation it will be found that the numbers more than double in ten years.

CHAPTER V.

C H A R A C T E R S.

JOSIAH KEYES

Was born in Canajoharie, New York, December 3, 1799. He was received on trial in the Genesee Conference in 1820. He was twice elected to the General Conference, and died April 22, 1836. When that body was in session in Cincinnati we learned that our dear friend had gone home. As he was about to leave the world he said: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

He was a man of an earnest spirit and unaffected piety, and was a successful preacher. The characteristics of his mind were marked by strength, patient investigation, and perseverance in application to study. He had an unconquerable thirst for knowledge, and in its attainment overcame great difficulties.

Soon after he commenced the work of the ministry he formed a resolution to study the dead languages. He only had the opportunity of occasional assistance in his course, and was placed from year to year upon laborious circuits. Under all these disadvantages he proceeded first to the study of Latin. Then he studied Greek and Hebrew through the Latin. It was not many years before he became familiar with the Greek Testament and the Hebrew Bible, and had read nearly all the Greek and Latin classics.

Our acquaintance with his character and habits commenced in 1825, while he was stationed at Owego. He always had his Greek Testament at hand, and when he visited in families every interval of conversation was improved in reading Greek or Hebrew.

After he had once fairly mastered a principle he never

lost it. He remembered words, and quoted and used what he had read with great facility. His knowledge of the classics, and of the best writers in the English language, enabled him to enrich his discourses with rare and beautiful illustrations. Upon controverted questions he referred to the original, and here he never failed to show himself a scholar.

Josiah Keyes was a powerful preacher. When in his happiest moods he would enchain a congregation for two hours together, and produce the most powerful impressions. He held the office of presiding elder for several years, and in presence of the great crowds at his quarterly meetings he was sure to come out in his best style, and then his eloquence was often overwhelming.

The subject of our sketch was artless, frank, and ingenuous, and in childlike simplicity had few equals. We once heard him debate the question of capital punishment before a debating club. He doubted the justice and expediency of capital punishment; but, to accommodate matters, he took the affirmative. He constructed an argument which was so overwhelmingly conclusive that he won the decision, converted his opponents, and converted himself. He afterward ingenuously confessed that he had changed his mind; that the argument which he had advanced had reacted upon himself and won him over to the side which he had taken, not from conviction, but merely to carry on the discussion, as there was no one willing to take that side. Lawyers and doctors were opposed to him, but he was victorious in the argument, and then yielded to the force of his own logic.

Our friend had his eccentricities, and they were of the class which are often found in hard students. He was absent-minded and careless of appearances. We have seen him walk in the middle of a dusty street when there was a clean walk on each side. His horse and equipage always looked neglected, often were in a most horrible plight. When on Owego station he visited Deacon Mersereau, who was notoriously peevish.

"Brother Keyes," said he, "why don't you grease your carriage?" Keyes laughingly replied:

"Why, does it need greasing?"

"Need greasing! I should think so, when it squeaks so loud that it can be heard half a mile." "Come along now," added the deacon, "and I'll help you. It's a burning shame for a Methodist preacher to drive such a carriage."

Mr. Keyes really took time to go through the operation, and was much surprised to find what was the real condition of the parts which are exposed to friction and need frequent lubrications.

Mr. Keyes was a tall and rather majestic figure, but his walk was ungainly, and his manners generally quite unstudied, sometimes uncouth. His voice was coarse and heavy, and his movements in the pulpit were measured and often ungraceful, but were not artificial. They were the natural workings of an engine of great power, a soul convulsed with an irresistible tide of excitement. He had a keen black eye, black hair, a bilious complexion, and a staid, thoughtful countenance. See him alone, driving on the highway, or walking the streets, and you would take him at once for a man of study, and almost wholly abstracted from the objects and scenes around him. Speak to him pleasantly and he would smile; tell him something amusing and he would laugh. He was a pleasant companion, a true friend, a lover of good men, a brother of the race.

A noble specimen of a man was Josiah Keyes; by nature a great man, by grace an eminent Christian. He was cut down in the zenith of his usefulness; his powerful physical frame was early worn out by the over action of his mighty soul. He died in consequence of a derangement of the functions of the liver, brought on by exposure and excessive labor. He lived long enough to make his mark upon the mind of the age, and actually did the work of many years during his brief career.

GEORGE EVANS

Was of Welsh extraetion. He was born in Milford, Pike county, Pennsylvania, January 31, 1790. It may be said that he had *no* opportunities for education until he was converted, and that was when he was nineteen years of age. Until that period he ran wild, never having learned to read, or scarcely ever having worn a shoe.

Religion aroused his manhood, and he immediately betook himself to the means of improvement which were within his reach. It was soon made evident that under a rough exterior was concealed a diamond, which under proper circumstances might be made to shine and sparkle among the brightest gems of genius.

He commenced exhorting his fellows to turn to God, and at the same time made excellent progress in learning to read the Scriptures. He was licensed as a local preacher, and the first knowledge we had of him he lived in a log-cabin near Hunt's Ferry, on the Susquehanna. Here he toiled for a living, running small rafts of rails and posts down to Wyoming, and there carrying on a little trade with the farmers.

In the spring of 1819, at the time of the last quarterly meeting for the year, we were seated on the stoop of the old Myers house, at Forty Fort, in company with Marmaduke Pearce and Mr. Myers. A stalwart, ill-clad raftsmen came up the bank of the river with his collar open, and his coat upon his arm. His feet were partially protected by an old pair of shoes tied up with bark; he wore no stockings. He was sun-burned and unshaved, with a brown linen shirt and pants of the coarsest fabric. And what did this rough looking mountaineer do but walk up to the presiding elder and Squire Myers, hold out his brawny hand, and address each with as much confidence and familiarity as if he had been a lawyer just from the city. He took a seat and talked freely, and made not the slightest apology for his appearance. He had brought a raft into the eddy, and

evidently had made his calculations to be at the quarterly meeting. On our way to church Mr. Pearce touched us with his elbow, and in an under tone said, "I intend to set George to exhorting after me." The sermon as usual was short, and George was called up into the high old-style pulpit and told to exhort. Nothing daunted, he proceeded. He soon fired up, and his words told upon the hearts of the people. He was generally known, and no great surprise was expressed; but all were pleased, and many a hearty "Amen" and "Glory to God" cheered on the rustic exhorter until his soul was in a perfect blaze. His language was lofty, and the power of his eloquence was overwhelming. Mr. Pearce wept and laughed together, and shook with emotion through his entire frame.

Mr. Evans was employed by the presiding elder to travel on Tioga circuit in 1824, and in 1825 was admitted on trial. When his probation expired he failed to satisfy the committee of his knowledge of the prescribed course of study, and came near being dropped. The next year he came up to conference well prepared and was received.

He traveled twenty-four years, and was generally returned a second year. His range, with the exception of two years, was through the Susquehanna district, and wherever he was appointed he was received with open arms.

He was a man of reading and study, and finally became a thorough theologian and considerable of a scholar. On great occasions he sometimes broke out in strains of eloquence which astonished everybody. At camp-meetings he often preached *the great sermon*, which was matter of animated conversation for years. At night on a camp-ground, when the pale moon began to peer above the horizon, and the stars were seen twinkling through the leaves of the trees, he would make his highest flights. On one occasion the star-bespangled arch of heaven was "God's chandelier;" and on another, after the most brilliant description of God's handiwork in marshaling the hosts of heaven, "the star-studded canopy was but the under side of God's temple."

George Evans had a great fiery Welsh soul. When fully on a blaze the flames ascended high, and excited mighty sympathies in the hearts of his entranced hearers. His voice at first was a little husky, but when fully brought out was like the sound of a trumpet.

He died January 25, 1849. His last words were: "My heavenly Father knows best what world to have me in; I enjoy a blessed peace, a perfect reconciliation."

The following truthful character of our subject has been prepared by Rev. Asa Brooks, one of his old colleagues:

"His personal appearance was not prepossessing. His dress was always plain, and evidently of home manufacture, and he was a little careless how it was put on. He rode an old horse, over which was usually thrown the old-fashioned saddle-bags well filled with books and articles of clothing. And as he rode along strangers would have taken him for a root doctor rather than a Methodist preacher of modern date. But those who knew him would recognize in that homely attired man in the distance, jogging along slowly and steadily on 'Old Roan,' the respected and loved pastor of Windsor circuit.

"As a pastor he had but few equals. His visits were usually short, but he contrived in a brief interview to leave a good religious impression on the mind of each member of the family. He was instructive, and hence the religious impressions made were lasting, being based upon some important truth impressed upon the memory.

"Faithful dealing with souls over whom the Holy Ghost had made him overseer, was a rule which he never violated, though occasionally in the discharge of duty he gave offense. At one of his appointments the wife of the class-leader was notorious for her habit of backbiting. Whenever the preacher called at her house he was compelled to listen for an hour or more to a recital of the wicked deeds of her neighbors, not one of them escaping. On one of his visits Father Evans had been listening to her a while, and his righteous soul became exceedingly vexed, and stepping up to

her he exclaimed in a voice of authority : ‘ Woman, stop ! stop ! don’t you know that your tongue is too long ? I advise you to cut it off this moment. Why, it is so long that it reaches to every one in the neighborhood, and stings them like an adder.’ This silenced her. She left the room and ever after refused to see him. But we heard no more of the woman’s scandal, and the society had peace the remaining part of the year. During the year we labored together we had a precious revival ; and though it was not convenient for him to be present much at the extra meetings, he did great service by his visits at the right time and place, and so framing his discourse on the Sabbath as to help on the good work. He would also manage so to bring into exercise the gifts of the Church and young converts as to make them very useful. To his skill as a pastor may be attributed in a great degree the prosperity of the Church during that year.

“ He drew large congregations, no small share of which was composed of the most intelligent classes. It was no uncommon thing for members of other Churches to leave their own ministry to hear him when it was his turn to preach. His style was somewhat peculiar. He had a rare faculty of illustrating and rendering instructive his discourses by important principles in science ; and it was this, no doubt, that made the intelligent so eager to hear him.

“ There was also an adaptation in his theme and method of treatment which could not fail to make his discourses useful. At one appointment the Scottite excitement had broken into the society and drawn off some of the members from the Church, and others were disaffected. We held an extra meeting in the neighborhood, which the disaffected and seceding brethren attended. In his discourse at this meeting Father Evans compared the Church to a well-regulated household, where the mother, ever watchful over the welfare of her children, arranged everything in the best order possible for their comfort. He said : ‘ Children sometimes think they know more than their mother, and want to have things their own way. Sometimes when the mother

is absent they will change the position of every article of furniture, so that when she returns she will hardly know that she is in her own house.' And then he spoke of the folly and ingratitude of such a course. He then made the application of the comparison instituted in such a way as to bear directly on the disaffected members present. This was all done with such a spirit and in such a manner as not to offend, while at the same time it had its designed effect. We lost no more members that year at this appointment, and those who had left ceased almost entirely their opposition to the Church which had nourished and brought them up.

"Father Evans sometimes made a failure in preaching, but never except when he was preaching to a small congregation. He needed the stimulus of a large and intelligent audience to bring out his powers. We held several grove-meetings, and multitudes gathered to them. On these occasions his eloquence was overwhelming, and the vast assembly would leave the spot in breathless silence, unbroken save by the sobs of the stricken penitent."

MARMADUKE PEARCE

was of Irish extraction. His ancestors were Protestant soldiers, who entered Ireland from England with the army of Cromwell in 1649. Receiving confiscated lands in part pay for military services, a portion of the family settled near Enniskillen, in the province of Ulster. In 1690 his great-grandfather, in company with eight brothers, entered the army of William III., and fought shoulder to shoulder with Huguenots and English Blues against the Catholic king, James II., at the celebrated battle of the Boyne.

The subject of this sketch was born at Paoli, Chester county, Pa., August 18, 1776, and was baptized in St. Peter's Church by its first pastor, Rev. William Currie, June 15, 1777.

Born in the midst of the Revolution, in a country constantly overrun by English soldiers, and which did not

recover from the ravages of war for many years after peace was declared, he received little scholastic education ; but having a taste for books and study, he improved himself until he became qualified to teach a country school. He excelled in penmanship, and when quite a young man was employed by the proper authorities to transcribe the records of Chester county, which occupied him about one year.

About the year 1805 he engaged with General Benner, an extensive iron-master in Center county, Pa., in the capacity of a book-keeper.

About the year 1808 the Methodist preachers preached at Benner's iron-works, near Bellefonte, Center county, Pa., when he became convicted, and after seeking the Lord for six months, during which time he lost sixty pounds of flesh, he was converted to God.

Soon after his conversion he was deeply impressed with a belief that it was his duty to preach the Gospel, and with this impression came a proposition from citizens of Bellefonte to teach the academy in that village, and for said service they would pay his board and give him five hundred dollars per annum. Here was a trial of his faith and the genuineness of his call to preach Jesus : to become a poor Methodist preacher and wander about from place to place, without receiving perhaps fifty dollars a year, or to become the teacher of an academy, with a good salary, in a pleasant village. He resolved to take his stand on the walls of Zion and declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. His first efforts at exhortation were failures, and he frequently retired from the congregation to the woods ashamed and mortified, praying God to relieve him from the work.—*S. Pearce, Esq.*

His convictions of a call to the ministry were clear and satisfactory, but such was his natural timidity and desire for retirement from the public gaze, that he resisted the call until he became convinced that disobedience would result in the loss of his soul. He received his first license to preach in June, 1811. The same year he was received on trial by the Genesee Conference, and appointed to the Holland Pur-

chase; in 1812 to Tioga; in 1813 he was ordained deacon, and appointed to Wyoming; in 1814 he was appointed to Shamokin; in 1815 he was ordained elder, and appointed to the Susquehanna district, where he remained four years. In 1819 he had his appointment on Wyoming circuit; in 1820 Shamokin, in the Baltimore Conference; in 1821 Northumberland; in 1822, Chambersburgh; in 1823-4 Carlisle; in 1825 he was appointed to the Northumberland district, where he remained four years. In 1829 he was appointed to Baltimore circuit; in 1830-31 to Baltimore City; in 1832 to Northumberland circuit; in 1833 to Owego, Oneida Conference; in 1834 to Pittston; in 1835-36 he was connected with the Wyoming circuit as a supernumerary. In 1837 he became superannuated, and remained so until his death.

Mr. Pearee's manner in the pulpit was simple and unstudied. He talked straight on in the most unimpassioned manner. Every word meant something, and was in the right place. There was no effort for effect or display of learning. His object was to instruct and improve his hearers. When he grappled with a difficulty in criticism or in reasoning he did it with the strength and skill of a master, but always without any flourish of trumpets. Although in general his manner was quite dispassionate, he would, upon great occasions, soar to the higher regions of the pathetic and the sublime. When this was the case he would raise his voice and employ violent gestures. We have heard him roar like a lion, and seen him clap his hands and stamp his feet, and pour out a flood of tears. When he became thoroughly aroused, and his soul was set on fire and became overwhelmed with some sublime thought, or a tide of passion, his utterances produced amazing effects upon his audience. One burst of feeling, which might not last ten minutes, would raise a storm which would career on and on, while he would sink into silent adoration, or seek relief from the pressure of excitement in tears.

Our subject was withering in his rebukes and sarcasms. A Baptist preacher in Bradford county, Pa., in 1818, pub

lished an offensive attack upon Arminians in connection with the minutes of an association. Mr. Pearce gave the author a most killing rebuke in a sort of fly-sheet, couched in plain Quaker language, and signed "Obadiah Broadbrim." The elder had unfortunately charged the Arminians with a spirit of persecution. Obadiah retorted his accusation upon him, and presented as many facts from ecclesiastical history to show where the spirit of intolerance and persecution had always been manifested in the controversy on "the five points," as could well be crowded into the same space. The paper was scattered broadcast over the country, and whether the redoubtable assailant of the Arminians was annihilated, or hid himself, we know not; but we believe he gave the *persecuting* Arminians no more trouble.

Mr. Pearce was very sensitive on questions of order and promptness. He would never wait for the tardy. We have known him to commence and conclude his service by the time the people had begun to come. At a quarterly meeting in Kingston he woefully disappointed a large congregation, on Saturday, at eleven o'clock, by this course. But he made ample amends by giving them a rich discourse at two P.M., at which the old church was full in due time, and a powerful sermon on Sunday. Anything out of order made him uncomfortable, and was sure to bring from him a scathing rebuke. Replies were useless; the utmost that the victims of his reproofs and sarcasms ever attempted was to charge him behind his back with "scolding."

Quite frequently Mr. Pearce suffered from hypochondria, but prayer or good company would always bring him relief. He sometimes, but not often, broke down in the pulpit, but he was sure to gain by the operation. Once at a camp-meeting, after he had become superannuated, he was put up to preach. He read his hymn, made a short prayer, and announced his text. He preached with great deliberation for a few minutes when a streak of the *blues* came over him, and suddenly he came to a pause, and, turning his back upon the audience, said, "I can't preach!" Picking up his

hat he immediately left the ground. Thinking, and praying, and weeping over the matter through the night, early the next morning he made his appearance again on the campground. He found his way to the stand, and, addressing the presiding elder, he asked, "Will you let me try again?" "O yes, certainly, Father Pearce," was the answer. He took the stand again and read the same hymn, knelt, and made about the same prayer, took the same text, commenced with the same introduction, but made a very different finish. This time he had a clear sea, and he made a successful voyage. His sermon was closed amid tears and shouting. Everybody rejoiced to see the old lion shake his mane and rush upon the prey, after being ensnared and well-nigh taken captive by his adversary.

Mr. Pearce was a companionable man; he loved his friends and enjoyed their society. He could tell a good story, and enjoyed true wit and humor; but no man could appear to be more unamiable than he in the presence of conceited fools. Such persons were sure to pronounce him "cross."

Marmaduke Pearce was both a man of genius and a man of study. As a preacher, he had few equals. His mighty mind would grasp the contents of a volume, and compress them into a sermon with such skill that the sermon would give a better view of the subject than the book. He loved the old English authors. With Butler, Sherlock, Tillotson, Taylor, Horsley, and many others of the same class, he was perfectly familiar. His memory had a tenacity which allowed nothing of importance to escape. He was a master of English style, and a most able critic in grammar, logic, and rhetoric. But he made no display of his learning. He sought the shade, wishing, as he once expressed himself, if he could not be *little* to be *unknown*. He was constitutionally diffident, and if this tendency sometimes betrayed him into a shrinking from great responsibilities, it still acted as a safeguard to strong passions and a mighty will.

Our brother was a man of earnest piety. He prayed

without ceasing. He had a rugged nature to struggle with, but grace was adequate to the conquest which he sought. The latter portion of his life was marked with severe bodily afflictions and great spiritual conflicts. Toward the closing scene the enemy thrust hard at him. Infidelity, with its grim visage, came up to make a last desperate assault upon his faith. He had put to flight this cruel foe a thousand times, and he did not fail in the final conflict. After the struggle was over he said to his old friend, Rev. G. Lane: "Brother Lane, the Lord has given me the victory. Glory be to the Father! glory be to the Son! glory be to the Holy Ghost for the glorious deliverance he has wrought! Satan has desired to have me, that he might sift me as wheat. He has tried to destroy my faith in the Holy Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, the great atonement, and all the fundamental doctrines of our holy religion; but God has given me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Glory be to his name forever! How wonderful that such a being, so great, so wise, so holy, could condescend to hear the groanings and supplications of one so utterly unworthy of his notice!" When almost gone he whispered, "Happy! happy! happy!" and the last words which fell from his lips were, "Come quickly!" Thus died Marmaduke Pearce on August 11, 1852, aged seventy-six years and twenty-four days.

After his death a paper was found with his signature attached to it, dated July 1, 1852, giving particular directions in relation to his funeral and burial. And, should his sons see proper to put a tombstone over his grave, he wished the following to be put on it, "*not one word more or less.*"

"The mortal remains of Marmaduke Pearce lie beneath this stone; the immortal part lives where the weary are at rest. He was born in Wiltstown, Chester county, Pa., August 18, 1776, and died in on the day of

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"Reader, prepare to meet thy God. M. PEARCE."

His three sons erected a stone by his grave, with the inscription upon it which he had prepared.

GEORGE GARY

Was born in Middlefield, Otsego county, N. Y. His mother died when he was an infant, and his father being a man of very intemperate habits, he was adopted and raised by an uncle in New England.

When Mr. Gary was a small boy he attended Methodist meetings, and there being an awaking among the people he became a subject of the gracious influence which was abroad. One evening, the meeting being in a private house, and the place much crowded, he took his seat on a pile of wood in the corner. As the meeting waxed warm his heart became deeply moved. As he often described his feelings, his little heart was as full of sorrow as it could hold, and he thought if some of the good people would only pray for him it would be a great favor; but he could not hope that they would notice a poor, wicked little boy. Finally, some one seeing him weeping, asked him if he did not want the people to pray for him. "O," said he, "how glad I was of an opportunity to kneel down and be prayed for." He struggled for a while with unbelief and temptations, and then found relief.

The boy, George Gary, was soundly converted, and soon began, with many tears, to tell how great things God had done for him. There was a beauty and a pathos in the relations of his experience and his exhortations which excited universal admiration and produced deep impressions. He was encouraged by the preachers, and soon put up to exhort at quarterly meetings. His hair was very light, and he had a young appearance for his years, and his exhortations were a marvel.

In 1809 his name appears on the Minutes in connection with Barre circuit, Vermont district, New England Conference. He was then in his sixteenth year. In 1813 Mr. Gary was ordained elder and transferred to the Genesee Conference. In 1819 he was appointed presiding elder, and continued to hold that office for many years.

In 1843 the condition of our mission in Oregon was

thought to demand the supervision of some person of financial ability and practical wisdom. Mr. Gary was applied to and consented to take the appointment, and took passage in a vessel and sailed around the Cape. He remained in Oregon four years, and then returned. He resumed his position in the Black River Conference, and served the Church with his usual ability.

Mr. Gary was a man of great shrewdness, and a profound judge of human character. He read men most accurately, and knew well how to approach them. He was cautious almost to the verge of timidity, and was seldom committed to an untenable position. He could plan a campaign, but did not much like to head it unless the ground was perfectly clear, and there was no doubt with regard to his men. He was a shrewd calculator of chances, and never overrated his prospects of success. He was a wise counselor, a safe adviser, a firm friend, and an agreeable companion. He was pleasant in conversation, sometimes jocose, loved specimens of genuine wit and humor, and had a fund of these commodities to dispose of upon suitable occasions. He had a mean opinion of sour godliness, and believed it no sin to indulge in a good hearty laugh when in a select circle. Once he was taken to task by a brother minister, who never laughed, for his "light and trifling" manners. He heard the rebuke with due gravity, examined himself, and looked the whole matter through, and finally came to the conclusion that his friend had become "righteous overmuch," and that an excess of good cheer was quite as tolerable as monkish austerity and uncharitable judging.

In the pulpit George Gary was a strong man. Not that he always preached great sermons. He sometimes fell below himself, and when this was the case no one knew it better than he did; at others he was quite above himself, and he then created a great sensation. Usually he preached with much deliberation, and was simply instructive; but on great occasions his soul fired up and he was overwhelmingly eloquent. His fort was in the pathetic. When

he became thoroughly moved his efforts were the very soul of passion. Persuasion, melting, overpowering eloquence, is the creature of passion, and we never witnessed a more perfect triumph in this line than was often achieved by our much loved friend when in the zenith of his ministerial life. On the camp ground thousands have melted under his burning words; saints shouted, and sinners stood aghast.

There was only one thing wanting in our subject to have placed him among the greatest men of his time, and that was the habits of a hard student. These he had not, although he was respectably read. He talked of men and books in a way to impress the uninitiated with the idea that he was a reader. But much of what he knew was gathered from conversations with scholars and readers. What he heard said he never forgot, and by a synthetical process which seemed natural, he put things of the same class together which were gathered from distant points and at different periods.

Mr. Gary stood high in the confidence of his brethren in his conference. He led the delegation in the General Conference of '52, the last one that he attended, and was there put forward by his friends as a candidate for the episcopacy. The Genesee, Oneida, and Black River Conferences gave him their suffrages for that office in the general ballot, although he never sought the nomination, and no one knows that he would have accepted the office if he had been elected.

His health was far from being what it had generally been when at the General Conference, and it continued to decline. At the conference of 1854 he asked for and received a superannuated relation. The remarks upon the occasion were truly affecting, and produced a profound sensation in the conference. He finished his course with joy on the 25th of March in the following year.

ELISHA BIBBINS

Was born in Hampton, Washington county, N. Y., July 16, 1790, and died at Scranton, Pa., on the 6th of July, 1859, of disease of the heart, aged about sixty-nine years. He was converted November 8, 1805, under the labors of Rev. Bradley Silleck; was licensed to preach in January, 1812, and was admitted on trial in the Genesee Conference in July of the same year. He was for twelve years of his ministry in the effective ranks, three years a supernumerary, and, including the present year, thirty-two years a superannuated preacher. He, however, did much valuable service in the way of filling vacancies during the years of his superannuation. During this period he preached many sermons, and won many souls to Christ. The last twenty years of his life he spent in the state of Illinois. His strong attachments to his old friends, and a desire once more to visit the fields of his early toils, led him to form the resolution to be present at the session of the Wyoming Conference to be held in Newark Valley. This purpose he executed, although he was very feeble; so much so that perhaps prudence would have dictated his remaining at home in the bosom of his family.

He met his old friends and fellow-laborers with the genial spirit, the same hearty "God speed" which characterized his early conference associations. He considered it his last visit, but still bade the brethren "farewell" without any indications of gloomy forebodings.

Soon after the close of the conference Dr. Everets, of Nichols, after a thorough examination of his case, informed him that there was every evidence that his heart was diseased, and he would die suddenly. The information did not startle him in the least, although it seemed to be new. His cheerfulness abated not for a moment, and he subsequently referred to this medical opinion as one well founded, but with no other remark than, "I am trying to be ready for the summons."

He traveled slowly, and with intervals of rest, with his friends, through Bradford county to Tunkhannock, where he spent the 4th of July. Here the blandness of his manners, and the freedom of his intercourse with the people, excited great admiration.

On the morning of the 5th, rather suddenly, he resolved that day to visit the writer at his home in Scranton. At eleven o'clock A. M. of that day he was seated in our study. During the afternoon he spent the time in free and cheerful conversation. At a few minutes before ten o'clock he prayed with us and retired. The house was alarmed in the night by a call from his room. We hastened to him with a light, and found him in a violent paroxysm of coughing, and freely expectorating blood. He was in a severe chill, and expressed a desire to be where there was fire. We immediately removed him to our room, kindled a fire in the stove, and sent for a physician. Medical aid relieved his sufferings, and he seemed disposed to sleep. We staid by his side for a short time, and when we next noticed him, which was at early dawn, he had quietly fallen asleep in Jesus. He had not changed his position in the least, and from every appearance died without the disturbance of a muscle. A post mortem examination verified the opinion of Dr. Everets; he died of ossification of the heart.

The Rev. Elisha Bibbins was a man of good natural abilities. His powers of perception were quick, and his reasoning faculties vigorous. His sensibilities were strong and well disciplined. He had a strong sense of the ludicrous. He readily formed unusual associations, and exhibited a striking tendency to wit and humor, a tendency which showed itself to the very last. He was capable of the most biting sarcasm, but seldom indulged this dangerous faculty to the annoyance of his friends. His cuts were usually modified by so much good-humor that they inflicted no pain. He was a man of great energy of character and great industry. He was always in earnest. It was this which gave almost overwhelming power to his sermons,

exhortations, and prayers. He was a good theologian, but a better preacher. In his best moods and his highest flights he poured out a torrent of eloquence which would melt the very rocks. He was a good singer, and in his prime his singing had fire and power in it, and was often the means of awakening and conversion.

Many souls were brought to Christ by the instrumentality of this zealous and faithful minister of the Gospel. The fruit of his labor is thickly scattered over the fields which he occupied as a pastor or as a temporary laborer. Influential members of the Church, and ministers of high standing, now doing good service, acknowledge him as their spiritual father. The Rev. George Landon, on the occasion of his funeral, gave an interesting account of his awakening and conversion, and in the most affecting language claimed the man whose mortal remains lay before the desk as the means, under God, of that great change. So literally true is it that "he being dead yet speaks" in and through those "living epistles, known and read of all men," who were redeemed from sin and death through his instrumentality.

He was of medium size, well formed, with a prominent nose, a piercing but benignant eye, of a nervous temperament, and but for the excess of the sensitive in his nature might have done good service down to old age and enjoyed good health. But the sword was too sharp for the scabbard. The fire within consumed him. His great efforts in revivals early reduced a splendid physical organism to a wreck; still there was life in him, which manifested itself in efforts to do something for God and the world to the close of life.

His piety was sincere, deep, and earnest. He prayed without ceasing, and trusted in God. His religion was of the hopeful, cheerful cast. I have known him under great pressures, but never knew him to lose heart. In poverty and want, in sickness and sufferings, he was happy, often buoyant and even playful. He had a young soul in him, and was a brother and companion even to the children when he was old and gray-headed. He enjoyed himself,

enjoyed the world, and enjoyed God, in spite of a hard lot and many adverse winds. He was a man of a thousand, a man of noble impulses, of a great soul, of a genial nature, of a lofty spirit, of a strong will, and of inexhaustible patience. As a husband, a father, a brother, and a friend, he occupies an elevation which few have reached. He rests from his toils and his works follow him.

GEORGE LANE

Was born in the state of New York, not far from the Hudson, after his parents had set off from Massachusetts for the wilds of the Susquehanna, on the 13th of April, 1784. His father was the first white settler in Oquaga, Windsor, Broome county, New York.

The early history of George Lane was marked by the toils, hardships, and exposure common to the life of a boy in a new country. The common fate of all, old and young, then was hard work, coarse garments, simple food, often deficient in quantity, and few of the means and appliances of intellectual improvement. In those disadvantages he shared a common lot with his fellows. The Puritan morals, piety, books, and reading of his excellent mother exerted a strong moral influence upon his mind while very young; yet he lived in a state of impenitence until 1803, when the Methodist preachers began to make decided impressions upon the population scattered through the wilderness of Northern Pennsylvania and Southern New York.

During this year he was awakened under the preaching of James Herron, and received into the Church by Samuel Budd. He was admitted on trial in the Philadelphia Conference in 1805, and located in 1810; readmitted in 1819, and again located in 1825; and readmitted again in 1834. In 1836 he was elected assistant book agent, and for sixteen years served in this capacity, or that of principal agent. In 1852 he retired from active duties, and from this period experienced a physical decline, which enfeebled his mental powers. He died May 6, 1859.

His religious habits were so deeply imbedded in his nature that they never forsook him. He often asked a blessing at the table, and prayed with as much propriety as when in health. The day before his departure he prayed twice fervently and eloquently. He died suddenly in convulsions.

Our excellent old friend, for about the term of twelve years, was treasurer of the missionary society. In this latter capacity he was not content with merely keeping the funds, but was deeply interested and earnestly engaged in the means of procuring them.

When Mr. Lane took charge of the missionary treasury it was laboring under a heavy debt. The debt continued to increase from fifty to sixty thousand dollars. All the means which could be spared from the funds of the Book Concern were loaned to the society until the debt became unmanageable in that form. He applied to two of our most worthy and generous citizens to indorse the treasurer's notes in bank, but they declined. Such, however, was the confidence reposed in him at the banks, that one of the heaviest of these institutions gave him all the money he wanted upon his own individual security. He thus became responsible for more money than he was worth, and went on paying drafts and trusting in God. His good management and his graphic appeals through the Advocate in behalf of the cause, were principally instrumental in bringing money into the treasury, until, after years of painful effort, the society was declared free from debt. Such was his concern for the missionary cause, and such the earnestness and consistency of his appeals in behalf of the treasury, that he was not unfrequently entitled "The Father of the Missionary Society," and the society called "Brother Lane's pct." Having seen the society through a fearful crisis, he then favored extension, and zealously urged the duty of entering every open door.

Such is a mere outline of the official history of Rev. George Lane. What remains is a brief survey of his character as a Christian, as a minister, as the head of a family, as a business man, and as a member of civil society.

As a Christian our old friend and brother was conscientious, earnest, and uniform. He was emphatically a man of prayer. His communion with God was deep and constant. Whether in the pulpit, in the family, or in the closet, his prayers were characterized by deep agony of soul and firm confidence in God. His piety was a burning flame, which arose to heaven and shone out as widely as his name and his fame were known.

As a preacher he was thoroughly orthodox, systematic, and earnest. His sermons exhibited a thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures and with the human heart. In the palmy days of his itinerancy he was often overwhelmingly eloquent. Sometimes under his powerful appeals vast congregations were moved like the trees of the forest before a mighty wind. Many a stout-hearted sinner was broken down, and cried aloud for mercy under his all but irresistible appeals. His language was unstudied, but chaste, correct, simple, and forcible.

As a business man our friend was conscientious, prudent, industrious, economical, conciliatory, and persevering. These qualities made him successful as a merchant, and gave him the confidence of the Church and the public generally as a book agent and as missionary treasurer. Everybody considered him both prudent and honest; and hence it was often remarked, in all sorts of circles, "Brother Lane is a very safe man." Under his carefully considered measures the publishing house at 200 Mulberry-street rose from feebleness to strength, from comparatively small beginnings to gigantic proportions. He kept his own secrets, made little noise, but touched the springs which commanded the channels of business, and brought in a tide of success. His business intercourse in his office and at the conference was characterized by promptness, courtesy, forbearance, and dignity. He dealt with men as men, ever conceding to them the rights of men of honor and principle until they had evidently forfeited all claim to that character.

As a husband and father he was kind, liberal, and emi-

nently religious. He provided well for his own household. Small attentions were not spared, great pains and large outlays, when called for, were not withheld. The education of his children, their comfortable settlement in a profession or a business, and the arrangements for the comforts of his home, were provided for without parsimony.

Socially our dear old friend was grave and dignified, and yet perfectly accessible. He was frank and free in his intercourse with men. He was a man of simple manners, chaste conversation, and a charitable spirit. He was a *Christian gentleman* at all times and in all places. No one could be long in his society without feeling for him something more than common respect; and Christians could not long commune with his spirit without feeling the power of his sanctified sympathies and holy life. He was a most profitable companion and trustworthy friend. His hospitable dwelling was ever open, and all its comforts as free as air. He was emphatically "a good man, and full of faith and the Holy Ghost." He won many souls to Christ, and laid the Church under lasting obligations of gratitude.

After a most intimate acquaintance of more than forty years, with the Rev. George Lane, observing him under a great variety of circumstances, and some of them exceedingly difficult and trying, we can say, what we can say of only a few individuals, that we never saw in him anything to reprove, or anything which, all things considered, deserves to be characterized as a *fault*. We love to contemplate the history, both the inward and the outward life, of this holy man and eminent servant of Jesus Christ. He has a high seat in heaven. He "turned many to righteousness," and he "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever." He was, in deed and in truth, our friend for many long years—we loved him—and now that he has gone to heaven in a chariot of fire may his mantle fall upon his sons in the Gospel!

CHAPTER VI.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENESEE CONFERENCE.

THE original Journal is before us with the following title-page: "Journal of the Genesee Conference, which met in session at Captain Dorsey's, Lyon's Town, State of New York, July 20, one thousand eight hundred and ten. At which Francis Asbury and William M'Kendree presided."

The first record is as follows:

"*Friday*, nine o'clock A. M., July 20, 1810. According to an appointment of Francis Asbury and William M'Kendree, bishops of the Methodist E. Church in America, the Genesee Conference, composed of the Susquehanna, Cayuga, Upper and Lower Canada districts, met in session at Captain Dorsey's, in Lyons town, state of New York. A majority of members being present, William M'Kendree took the chair and proceeded to business."

An old rule of the Discipline prohibited a traveling preacher from publishing anything without first obtaining the leave of his conference. Under this rule the Genesee Conference, at its first session, provided a weighty committee, composed of nine members, five from the United States and four from Canada, "to examine all compositions prepared by any of its members for publication, and that those compositions shall or shall not be published according to the resolution of the committee."

To make the Church entirely safe, it was on a subsequent day resolved that the committee "shall not without the concurrence of four fifths of its number in the states, and three fourths in Canada, permit any publication to be made." This does the whole thing up strong. If scribblers had been as numerous in those days as they are at present the committee

of censors would have been tasked with an onerous duty ; but then writers among the traveling preachers were few and far between. This committee was kept up from year to year until the rule was abolished in 1824,* but never had anything to do. Then Methodist preachers within our bounds gave themselves to preaching and prayer. These duties, with their long rides and a little necessary reading, used up their time. Then we had no periodicals through which to communicate with the public, if the preachers had been disposed to write, and a new publication of any sort by a Methodist preacher was a strange thing. Still the press must be guarded. The whole thing now seems little less than ludicrous ; but those were days of simplicity, of caution, and of timidity. If we have not now reached the opposite extreme we are but too near it. The old caution, like the old defenses, is gone, and what is exultingly called *a free press* is often a rampant invader of the old foundation and the old landmarks. We would not wish for the return of the old restrictions upon the press, but we would like to see the old feelings of brotherhood prevail, and the authorities and doctrines of the Church respected as of old. Precisely where the liberty of the press ends and its licentiousness begins is sometimes a delicate point, but one that needs to be studied at the present time.

The Genesee Conference was called by the bishops in the interval of the General Conference, but the "institution" of the new conference was not a finality. The act was subject to be reconsidered by the General Conference, and the bishops, it would seem, considered it important to fortify themselves against the charge of rash and arbitrary administration in the case, by an act of the conference itself, which should set forth the grounds of the proceeding. A committee of three was appointed "to prepare a resolution expressive of

* Then the General Conference placed this subject upon its true basis, by passing the following rule : "Any traveling preacher who may publish any work or book of his own, shall do it at his own responsibility, and he shall be answerable to the conference for any obnoxious matter or doctrine therein contained."

the opinion of this conference relative to its institution by Bishops Asbury and M'Kendree." The report of the committee is an argumentative document, but contains nothing more than we have already presented upon the subject.

1811. July 20, the conference met in Paris, at the old meeting-house in Saquoit, Bishop M'Kendree in the chair.

The judicial proceedings of the conference were not so conformable to proceedings in civil causes as such proceedings are now in annual conferences. Here is a specimen :

" *William Hill* was charged with intoxication, and of having indelicately censured his wife.

"The first charge was sustained by certificates from S. B., G. T., and M. T.

"Hill acknowledged their testimony to be correct.

"In confirmation of the second charge, William Jewett stated that Hill's wife told him, in the presence of Seth Mattison that Hill, her husband, did indelicately censure her, and ordered her out of doors.

"*Resolved*, That William Hill be excluded from the Methodist connection."

This is the whole record. The charges are sustained by no specifications. The first is proved by *ex parte* evidence. Indeed, acknowledged "to be correct" by the accused, probably on being catechised. The second is sustained by second-hand testimony. These would be strange proceedings in an ecclesiastical court now; but we should not hazard much in saying that the ends of justice were then answered, to say the least, as often as now.

The conference was strict, if not severe, in the examination of characters. One was tried for faulty business transactions; and, in another case, it was resolved that "the chair inform Brother — that conference thinks that he is not so solemn and profitable in families as he ought to be; and that he manifests too great a wish to accumulate money."

There was liberality in the body. The last act of this primitive little conference, previous to adjournment, was to

raise "a subscription for the poor and needy preachers." "The subscription amounted to \$144." This was a noble expression of generous sympathy.

The delegates to the General Conference were Elijah Batchelor, Wm. B. Lacy, Jas. Kelsey, Anning Owen, Timothy Lee, and Abram Dawson.

July 25 the conference adjourned.

In 1812 the conference was to meet at Niagara, in Upper Canada; but in consequence of the declaration of war with Great Britain, on the part of the Congress of the United States, the session was held at Judge Dorsey's, in Lyons, in the building occupied by its first session. The conference opened July 23, Bishop M'Kendree in the chair.

There is but one act of this session out of the common routine of conference business, and thus specially noteworthy. It is as follows:

"*Resolved*, That this conference shall give their assistance in procuring materials for composing a history of the Methodists." Had this resolution been carefully acted upon, much material for "a history of the Methodists" might have been saved which has gone into oblivion. The conference adjourned on the 27th.

In 1813 the conference assembled at Westmoreland on July 9. Bishops Asbury and M'Kendree were present.

There is in the Journal a particular account of the proceedings of the conference in the case of William B. Lacey, who had left the Church and joined the Protestant Episcopal Church. He was charged with "attempting to make a schism in our Church," "Leaving his circuit without permission," and "Dissimulation." A committee to whom the case had been referred for examination reported the facts as they were stated by witnesses, who were all members of the conference, and a statement of the case, to be inserted in the Minutes. The following is the record which was transferred to the Minutes:

"Wm. B. Lacy took his station on Herkimer circuit in 1812; after about five or six weeks he left his circuit in an

unofficial manner. In the examination of characters it appeared that he absented himself from conference, and we had no regular representation of him; but it satisfactorily appeared to the committee appointed to examine the case that he had attempted to sow discord among the people of our charge, and left the connection in an improper manner. If this conduct entitles him to the wisdom of the serpent, does it not deprive him of the harmlessness of the dove?"

The last minute before the adjournment is as follows: "It was stated by a member that dissatisfactions have arisen in consequence of preachers talking too freely of cases and circumstances during the sitting of conference.

"Resolved, That we will be more cautious in future."

Conference adjourned on the 13th of July.

In 1814 conference met at Genoa, July 14, Bishop M'Kendree in the chair.

Heretofore the conference had appointed "a Committee on Temporal Economy," to manage the fiscal concerns. This year we have the following record: "James Kelsey, Abner Chase, and Jonathan Huestis were chosen a committee, under the name of *stewards*, to transact the temporal business of the conference."

At this session it was

"Resolved, That the members of this conference shall sell no books but those belonging to our Concern."

Conference adjourned July 16th.

In 1815 the conference met at Lyons, June 29, Bishop M'Kendree in the chair. This year the following persons were elected delegates to the General Conference: W. Case, H. Ryan, G. Harmon, C. Giles, T. Madden, D. Barnes, Jas. Kelsey, S. Mattison, A. Chase, I. Puffer, C. Lambert, and G. Gary. Conference adjourned the 3d of July.

In 1816 the conference met at Paris, July 17, Bishop M'Kendree in the chair. Nothing out of the common order is found upon the record. Conference adjourned July 22.

In 1817 the Conference met in Elizabethtown, Upper Canada, June 21, Bishop George in the chair.

The state of the Church in Canada at this time excited considerable interest in the conference. During the war the British Conference had been addressed by some of the loyal Methodists in Canada and requested to send them preachers. That conference had listened to the application so far as to send missionaries to Kingston and York, and to some other principal points. Upon the conclusion of peace between the two countries the English missionaries had made a party, and continued to keep their posts, and the natural consequence was collisions between the two classes of Methodists. The American preachers labored under the disadvantage of not being able to perform the marriage ceremony, and of lying under a weight of prejudice as *aliens*. These circumstances naturally led to a desire on the part of the Canadian Methodists to have an independent existence as a Church, that they might enjoy the privileges of other dissenting bodies, and be recognized by the laws, and under them possess the rights and privileges of a body of Christians, composed of the subjects of the British crown, and enjoying its protection. The conference was memorialized upon this subject this year, and a committee was appointed to respond to the memorialists, who reported "an address to the members of the connection in Canada, also an address to several persons who had petitioned the conference for a separate establishment, which were severally canvassed and adopted."

The conference adjourned the 26th of June.

In 1818 the conference met at Lansing, July 16, Bishop Roberts in the chair. A committee was appointed to take into consideration the state of the Church in Canada. It was also voted that a committee of seven be appointed to report measures for an incorporation "to receive donations and legacies." The reports of both committees were adopted.

A resolution was passed against the circulation and encouragement of "any hymn books or songs except such as are published by the Book Agents, or authorized by the conference."

A resolution was also passed for the second time during the brief history of the conference against joining the Masons or frequenting the lodges.

Conference adjourned on the 20th of July.

In 1819 the conference convened at Vienna, New York, July 1, Bishop Roberts in the chair.

A committee of six was appointed "to take into consideration the state of our societies within the bounds of this conference."

A Missionary and Bible Society, auxiliary to the Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was organized, to have its "center at Ithaca." George Harmon was made "vice-president of the parent society at New York."

"It was resolved that the Genesee Conference take measures to establish a seminary within the bounds of this conference." A committee was appointed, consisting of Charles Giles, Abner Chase, Wm. Barlow, Jonathan Huestis, and Thomas Madden, to consider and report thereon. The report was adopted.

Eleven delegates to the General Conference were elected, as follows: Charles Giles, Wm. Case, Abner Chase, M. Pearce, H. Ryan, L. Grant, J. Huestis, J. Kimberlin, W. Barlow, I. Chamberlaine, and Ralph Lanning.

By compromise between the parties the delegates were selected both from "the old and new school" on "the Presiding Elder question." The first five were in favor of the old plan, while the others were for a modification of the rule; and those of them who attended voted for what is known in the history of the General Conference of 1820 as "the suspended resolutions." Adjourned July 8.

1820. Conference commenced its session at Lundy's Lane, Upper Canada, July 20, Bishop George in the chair.

This year William Barlow is reported to have left his charge and united with the Protestant Episcopal Church. It was accordingly "Resolved, that William Barlow left the Methodist Episcopal Church in an irregular, unofficial man-

ner," and that "his case be referred to a committee to be called by the presiding elder of the Ontario district, and that they report to the next annual conference."

The old court-house and grounds in Cazenovia, purchased in 1817 for a meeting-house, were embarrassed by debt, and the trustees, who were personally responsible, petitioned the conference for relief, upon which the following action was taken:

"The subject of the Cazenovia house brought before the conference. It was stated that after the resolutions of conference last year, and after the committee had prepared subscriptions, the subscriptions were forwarded at a late period, and but little exertion had been made by the preachers and very little had been subscribed; and that the house purchased by the brethren in Cazenovia was deeply involved in debt, and unless those brethren might be relieved the house must be sold.

"*Resolved*, That the presiding elders and preachers in different parts of the conference use their exertions, by circulating subscriptions, to obtain money to save the house. Adopted."

The Methodists in Canada, having been brought to God by the instrumentality of the preachers from the States, desired to hold a connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church. But the disabilities under which they labored, and the advantages maintained by the British missionaries over them in competing for the desirable positions, led many of the people to desire some arrangement by which they would not be obliged to receive their pastors directly from the United States.

Their grievances had been duly laid before the General Conference in May, and that body had appointed Rev. John Emory as a delegate to the British Conference, with instructions to represent the condition of things in Canada, and desire that the Wesleyan missionaries might be withdrawn, particularly from the Upper Province. The arrangement was made, but was long in being carried into full effect.

The General Conference also sent a conciliatory letter to the Canada brethren, and assured them of their continued pastoral oversight. The case had its difficulties, and was a subject of consideration at each session of the Genesee Conference, from the time of the origin of the feud in 1812.

This conference passed a resolution in favor of the organization of a separate annual conference in Canada. Its passage at this time was designed to allay an unpleasant excitement, which continued to be fermented in certain localities in Canada.

An elaborate report, forwarded from the General Conference, "on literature," was presented by the bishop and spread upon the Journal. It is the embryo of our present system of education by means of conference seminaries and colleges.

A series of resolutions was passed on the subject of the *dress* of the preachers, etc., which in practice, like many conference resolutions, amounted to little. The old-fashioned round-breasted coat, flat white hat, and smooth hair were doomed usages, and all efforts on the part of the old-style preachers to keep them up were in vain.

Conference adjourned 26th of July.

1821. The conference met at Paris, N. Y., July 19, Bishop George in the chair.

The most important measure adopted at this session was a resolution to establish a seminary of learning at Ithaca, Tompkins county, N. Y. The conference had previously resolved to locate the seminary at Cazenovia, Madison county. This year a petition came up through "certain friends from Ithaca," and large promises of funds were made, and the conference was induced to change the location, and yet to give some hope of relief to the trustees of the "Cazenovia house." The following are the votes of the conference on the subject: "Voted, that the site of the contemplated seminary heretofore fixed at Cazenovia be relinquished. Voted, that the site of the seminary be fixed at Ithaca." A committee was appointed "to confer with the trustees of the

Cazenovia house." It was voted "that David Ayers be appointed to the superintendence of the subscription."

A splendid castle was now built in the *air*, and the poor Cazenovians, who had less *gas* than "certain friends from Ithaca," were left to grapple with some grave matters of fact which they felt pressing upon them.

Conference adjourned 25th of July.

1822. The conference met at Vienna, Ontario County, N. Y., July 24, Bishop Roberts in the chair.

The conference formed "themselves into a missionary society under the following title: The Genesee Conference Missionary Society, auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Considerable agitation in the annual conferences had grown out of the conduct of the Rev. Joshua Soule in the General Conference of 1820. That gentleman had been elected bishop, and after the conference had passed a rule providing for the election of presiding elders, he signified his scruples with regard to the constitutionality of the rule, and declared that, should he be ordained a bishop, he could not carry it out. This movement was known to have the sympathy of Bishop McKendree, and a great excitement was produced in the body. Finally, the measure was suspended for four years by a vote of "forty-five to thirty-five."

From this case originated the question of a constitutional test. The General Conference invited the annual conferences to recommend to the next General Conference the adoption of "a rule for the determination of constitutional questions." The New York Conference originated a series of resolutions upon the subject which were laid before the Genesee Conference by the bishop. The resolutions were postponed to the next session, and then postponed indefinitely.

A communication from Bishop M'Kendree was also presented to the conference by Bishop Roberts, objecting to the said "suspended resolutions," on the ground that they infringed upon the restrictive rule, which prohibits the General Conference from so altering the form of our gov-

ernment as to do away episcopacy or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency.

The following resolutions in relation to the bishop's paper were drawn up by Rev. Israel Chamberlayne, and were presented by him, seconded by Jonathan Huestis:

"Whereas Bishop M'Kendree, in his communication to this conference, has pronounced that the resolutions of the last General Conference relative to the election of presiding elders are, in his belief, an infringement on the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church: therefore,

"*Resolved*, 1. That, in the opinion of this conference, there is nothing in the said resolutions that makes any infringement on the constitution or restrictive regulations of our Church.

"*Resolved*, 2. That the restrictive regulations do not, in our opinion, prohibit or restrict any changes or new modifications of the episcopal powers or duties: provided such changes or alterations do not do away episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency."

These resolutions were discussed pro and con by the ablest speakers of the conference, and finally passed by a considerable majority, which showed that the Genesee Conference had gone over to "the new school."

The Ithaca seminary had grown into a college, and already stood in a doubtful attitude. The reports of the agent and of the trustees were given to a committee, and as favorable a report as possible was made, and Rev. Dan Barnes was appointed agent. Jesse Merritt, as the representative of the trustees, appeared in the conference, and by invitation made a speech in favor of Ithaca as the location of an institution, but gave it as his opinion that an *academy* and not a *college* would be the true policy of the conference. He made a neat and sensible speech, the suggestions of which were followed by the committee in their report. The Cazenovia brethren stood before the conference again and received some kind words.

The conference adjourned on the 2d of August.

1823. The conference met July 15 at Westmoreland, Oneida county, N. Y., Bishop George in the chair.

A committee was appointed "to take into consideration the business of the seminary." By this time the Ithaca scheme had fizzled out, and Rev. George Gary, having made Cazenovia his residence, had entered with spirit and ability into the enterprise of a seminary in that place in the old court-house. The scheme, nearly ruined by counter influences and long delays, now presented the only ground of hope for a conference seminary. The report of the committee embraced a plan for the fitting up of the building and opening the school with all convenient dispatch. The report was adopted and the question settled.

The conference elected sixteen delegates to the next General Conference. The following are the names: Jonathan Huestis, Fitch Reed, Joseph Baker, Wyatt Chamberlayne, William Snow, George Peck, Israel Chamberlayne, George Harmon, George W. Densmore, Seth Mattison, Benjamin G. Paddock, John B. Alanson, James Hall, Gideon Lanning, Isaac B. Smith, and Loring Grant.

The conference adjourned 23d of July.

1824. The conference met at Lansing, Tompkins county, N. Y., Bishops George and Hedding being present.

In the election of the delegates to the General Conference, which sat in May of this year, the old presiding elders in Canada, Ryan and Case, were left out; but two other members who were identified with the work in Canada, Isaac B. Smith and Wyatt Chamberlayne, were elected. Messrs. Ryan and Case came on to the General Conference in the character of "messengers," with petitions from certain parties for the organization of an independent Church. Their petitions were received and referred; but when an effort was made by a friend, S. G. Roszel, to allow "the messengers from Canada" to address the conference, it was not successful, it being considered that the regular delegation were fully competent to represent the interests of that portion of the work. The condition of things in that country,

it was thought, by the General Conference, would be materially improved, if the wants of the people would not be fully met, by the organization of an independent conference. This was accordingly done. The Lower Province, in the arrangement made by Dr. Emory, had been given up to the English missionaries, and the Canada Conference simply embraced the Upper Province. This conference remained in connection with the General Conference for four years.

A committee on the business of the seminary was announced by Bishop George as follows: George Peck, Dan Barnes, B. G. Paddock, John Dempster, and Zenas Jones.

The committee reported the condition and wants of the institution at Cazenovia, which was now fully organized. The committee requested the privilege of making an appeal to the conference for immediate aid. Rev. G. Gary, Rev. Dr. Bangs, and Bishops George and Hedding addressed the conference, when a subscription was taken up for the object. Conference adjourned on the 3d of August.

Here terminates the first volume of the journals of the Genesee Conference. The "report of the committee of safety," passed by the General Conference, and required to be spread upon the journals of the annual conferences, is the last thing in the book. It is designed to keep the conferences up to the standard of Methodism, both in doctrine and administration. It contains some things which are now obsolete: a reference to economical rules which the General Conference has since done away, but the spirit and objects of the document are above all praise. It shows how jealous were our fathers of innovations upon the principles and usages of Methodism, and with what tenacity they adhered to those primitive practices which, to many, may now seem to be of small consequence.

1825. The conference met this year at Asbury Chapel, Lansing, Tompkins county, N. Y., 17th of August, Bishop Hedding in the chair.

Much time was occupied by the conference in the consideration of mutual charges, presented by C. Giles and E.

Bowen. The case was finally disposed of according to a plan proposed by Dr. Emory and consented to by the parties. The conference settled certain law questions which had been matters of difference between them, and they settled their personal differences between themselves.

A communication from the Church in Ithaca resulted in the appointment of a committee to visit the place and report the state of that Church. The report was made and adopted, but not being spread upon the journal, we are not able to give its substance here. We think it related to a difficulty in the Church on the subject of singing.

It was voted that George Lane have his portrait inserted in the Magazine.

The session was closed 26th of August.

1826. The conference met at Palmyra, 7th of June. Bishops M'Kendree and Hedding were present.

This session of the conference is noticeable as the one in which Bishop M'Kendree made his appearance among us for the last time. He was at the first session and signed the journal. He had presided at the sessions up to the year 1816, inclusive, since which he had not paid us a visit. He came to take leave. He opened the first session, made an instructive address in the form of an exposition upon the lesson read from the Scriptures, and finally gave us his valedictory. In the journal for Monday it is recorded that

“Bishop M'Kendree delivered a very appropriate address to the members of this conference, which he supposed to be his valedictory.” It did not prove to be, as he supposed, his valedictory! He appeared in the conference on the last day of the session, as the following record shows:

“Bishop M'Kendree having addressed the conference on the importance of missionary exertions and Sunday schools, therefore,

“*Resolved*, That this conference heartily concur in the sentiments expressed by the bishop, and plédge themselves to use their influence to promote the cause of missions and

of Sunday schools throughout their respective circuits and stations."

The following resolution is added :

"*Resolved*, That the conference rejoice that the valuable life and health of Bishop M'Kendree have been spared to visit us again, and that a vote of thanks be given him for his attention to the affairs of the conference during its present session."

He was quite feeble, and his splendid frame had begun to bend under the pressure of years ; but in reviewing the past, and referring to our small beginnings, and what we had become, his soul seemed to take fire and he was almost young again. He exclaimed with emphasis and pious gratitude : "What hath God wrought !" and shaking hands with the brethren, with manly tears glistening in his eyes, he said : "Farewell ! God bless you !" and was conducted through the aisle. He signed the journal with Bishop Hedding.

Conference adjourned 14th of June.

1827. The conference met at Wilkesbarre, Luzerne county, Pa., June 14. Bishop George in the chair.

A motion for a committee to take into consideration the subject of the division of the conference was lost.

The following persons were elected delegates to the next General Conference : Loring Grant, Horace Agard, George Peck, Josiah Keyes, Robert Parker, Morgan Sherman, Edmond O'Fling, Ralph Lanning, Isaac Grant, Zechariah Paddock, James Hall, Manly Tooker, Gideon Lanning, Seth Mattison, Israel Chamberlayne, George Harmon, John Dempster, and Jonathan Huestis.

A resolution was passed at this conference "that we use our influence to prevent young preachers and local preachers who have no business with this conference from attending the session of the conference in future, that they may stay at home and pursue their regular work." This was in the spirit of the olden time, but at the present would be thought quite proscriptive. Conference adjourned June 22, having assem-

bled at five o'clock A. M., and we having received our appointments before breakfast.

1828. The conference met at Ithaca, N. Y., July 24, Bishop Roberts in the chair.

The most important act of this conference was that which related to the division of the conference, and resulted in the organization of the Oneida Conference. The delegates from the Genesee Conference, although they had no specific instructions upon the subject from their constituents, had procured the passage of an amendment to the report on boundaries, which provided for the division of the conference in the interval of the General Conference. A committee was appointed on the division of the conference, who made the following report:

"The committee to whom was referred the subject of the division of the Genesee Conference beg leave to report, That in consideration of the magnitude of the conference, the length of time necessary to be devoted to its annual sessions, the burdens imposed upon our friends in those neighborhoods where our sessions are held, arising from the supporting of so large a body of men during a week or ten days together, with the amount of time and money which must be spent in going to and from the places where its sessions are held, are of opinion,

"1. That it is expedient that the conference be divided.

"2. That if divided it be so divided that the Genesee Conference be composed of all that part of the state of New York lying west of the Cayuga Lake, not included in the Pittsburgh Conference; and so much of the state of Pennsylvania as is included in the Genesee and Buffalo districts.

"3. That the remaining part of the territory now embraced in the Genesee Conference be denominated the Oneida Conference.

"4. That a committee of five be appointed by the body to petition the honorable Legislature, at its next session, to pass an act to change the name of the seminary at Cazenovia from that of the 'Seminary of Genesee Conference,' to

that of the 'Seminary of Genesee and Oneida Conferences,' and also to pass an act to change the title of 'The Trustees of the Genesee Conference,' to that of 'The Trustees of the Genesee and Oneida Conferences.'

"5. That if the Legislature shall grant the prayer of the petitioners, the committee shall immediately thereafter announce to the bishop and conference, through the medium of the Christian Advocate and Journal, the passage of the act prayed for.

"6. And that in case the above prayer shall be granted, then in that case the conference shall be divided as above recommended, and the Genesee Conference hold its next session in —, and the Oneida Conference in —. But in case the petition be not granted, then the Conference, not being divided, shall hold its session in —."

The report was adopted, the first blank being filled with Perry, and the second and third with Cazenovia. A committee was appointed to memorialize the Legislature, the necessary legislation was obtained, and the division was consummated.

THE END.

